



Briefing 21-18

March 2021

Scottish Government Consultation on Scottish skills requirements for energy efficiency, zero emissions and low carbon heating systems, microgeneration and heat networks for homes

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts in Scotland. For information only: England, Northern Ireland and Wales

Key Issues:

Scottish Government is consulting on the proposals for energy efficiency, zero emissions and low carbon heating systems, microgeneration and heat network skills requirements in conjunction with its draft Heat in Buildings Strategy consultation.

The consultation can be completed by visiting:

<https://consult.gov.scot/energy-and-climate-change-directorate/skill-requirements-for-energy-efficiency-homes/>

The consultation paper is available here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-scottish-skills-requirements-energy-efficiency-zero-emissions-low-carbon-heating-systems-microgeneration-heat-networks-homes/pages/2/>

The consultation paper on the Heat in Buildings Strategy is available here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/heat-buildings-strategy-achieving-net-zero-emissions-scotlands-buildings-consultation/pages/4/>

1.0 Introduction

Scottish Government are consulting on its draft Heat in Buildings Strategy (also see APSE Briefing 21-17) which builds on the 2018 Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map and the 2015 Heat Policy Statement. It sets out the vision for decarbonising heat and reducing energy demand across all buildings and sets out the scale of investment opportunity supporting Scotland's green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. It notes that due to the scale of the draft strategy, it's expected that the supply chain will need to grow significantly over the coming years. Highlighting therefore that the vision can only be achieved if there is a robust supply chain with the necessary skills to deliver.

The consultation states that "Developing Scottish specific skills requirements for energy efficiency, zero emissions and low carbon heating systems, microgeneration and heat networks is important as the current skills landscape can be fragmented, open to interpretation and is often provided by non-accredited training providers". With the implementation of Scottish skills requirements helping to provide career paths within this sector, especially for young people which will be crucial for the future of the sector.

As part of the draft Heat strategy and programme of Government 2020-21, the following commitments have been outlined to help achieve the vision:-

- Developing and implementing a supply chain action plan in partnership with our enterprise agencies by end of 2021 to support the growth and preparedness of the zero and low emissions heat supply chain.
- Providing capital investment for Scottish colleges for equipment to deliver training for energy efficiency and microgeneration.
- Ensure the supply chain can benefit from the support available from our National Transition Training Fund, the Flexible Workforce Training Fund and the Young Persons Guarantee.

Scottish Government have also established a group of experts to explore the potential of a Heat Pump Sector Deal, with the aim to help understand how industry and Government can work together with the goal of an accelerated deployment of heat pumps.

Recommendations from the group are scheduled to be provided to Scottish Government by summer this year (2021).

This consultation also builds on the responses from the 2019 Energy Efficient Scotland Regulations which included a proposed skills and qualifications matrix as well as aligning the supply chain in Scotland to the requirements of PAS 2030/2035. The key proposals for this consultation therefore are:-

- The installer skills matrix developed by the sector skills bodies, industry and other key stakeholders in Scotland is adopted and fully integrated into the British Standards Institution (BSI) Publically Available Specification (PAS) 2030 installer standards and Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) installer standards to reflect Scotland's skills needs.
- To adopt the BSI PAS 2035 retrofit standards for Scotland and the associated skills and competency requirements for other retrofit roles where we will work with skills agencies including the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to consider the need for qualifications and / or further training in Scotland for these roles, particularly where no qualifications currently exist in Scotland.

As well as seeking views on the impact of these requirements on the Scottish supply chain, in particular in relation to remote rural and island areas.

2.0 Consultation Questions

The consultation questions are outlined below:

Installer skills requirements

1a. Do you agree with our proposal to integrate the installer skills matrix into the Publically Available Specification (PAS) 2030 and Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) installer standards?

1b. Do you agree with our recommendation that manufacturer training should be in addition to, not instead of, these skills requirements?

1c. If you disagree with these proposals, please let us know why.

2. What are your views on the timing for integrating the installer skills matrix into the PAS 2030 and MCS installer standards? What do you think would be a reasonable timescale for the making the skills matrix mandatory in the standards?

3. What are your views on how installers can meet these skills requirements, in particular the Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) route?

PAS 2035 requirements for other roles

4. What are your views on the competency requirements for the retrofit coordinator, advisor, assessor, designer and evaluator roles?

Heat networks

5. What are your views on our plans for developing heat network skills? For example, are there any gaps in heat network skills that we haven't identified?

General questions

6a. What impact do you think our skills requirements will have on the energy efficiency, microgeneration and heat networks sector in remote rural and island communities?

6b. What impact do you think our skills requirements will have on the energy efficiency, microgeneration and heat networks sector in Scotland more generally?

7. What impact do you think our skills requirements will have on competition including training provision, quality, availability or price of any goods or services in a market?

8. What suggestions do you have for how digital technology could be used effectively to meet our skills requirements?

9. Are there any areas of skills we have not covered in this consultation that you think we should consider?

10. What support you think would help the sector achieve these skills requirements?

3.0 APSE Comment

APSE encourages our members to respond to the above consultation on the proposals for energy efficiency, zero emissions and low carbon heating systems, alongside microgeneration and heat network skills requirements in conjunction with the draft Heat in Buildings Strategy consultation. This will ensure that local authorities' opinions are taken into consideration in the process of implementing the outlined skills requirements which will then create a best practice standard for the sector. This will be a minimum requirement for Scottish Government programmes. The deadline for responding is 30 April 2021, so please make sure to submit your responses by then.

APSE has continued to host online Renewables and Energy Efficiency advisory groups throughout the global COVID-19 pandemic to allow officers, managers and councillors to stay up-to-date on important issues and developments in the field, and to share knowledge and best practice. For more information on upcoming meeting dates, please [visit our website](#) or contact the APSE Scotland office at glee@apse.org.uk.

In addition, our bespoke Local Authority Energy Collaboration (APSE Energy) is a partnership by our member authorities which looks to leverage and maximise the opportunities afforded to local authorities by working together on a national scale in the green energy agenda. For more information on our APSE Energy services please contact Phil Brennan, Head of APSE Energy on PBrennan@apse.org.uk.

APSE Training also provide a [Carbon Literacy for local authorities](#) course, by attending this training you will:-

- Understand and be able to explain the basic science of climate change and how climate change will affect us both globally and locally.

- Evaluate the climate change objectives in local authorities and analyse the impacts.
- Construct your own strategies to take action on climate change.

For more information on this course or any others please contact training@apse.org.uk.

Reminder: APSE has set up a COVID-19 Information Hub to deal with frontline service issues as they arise, ensuring greater resilience and learning between each other during this difficult time. You can access this hub by [clicking here](#) and you can also join our WhatsApp Support Network by [clicking here](#).

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