

Good morning

Please see below response from Mr Dey;

Dear James

Many thanks for submitting your final Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape to Ministers. I acknowledge receipt of the report and wish to thank you for the thorough and thoughtful approach that you have taken to this work.

I am also grateful for your offer to support the Review's communication process.

Once a final date for publication is agreed we will be in touch with further details.

*Yours sincerely
Graeme Dey*

Thanks
[redacted]

[redacted]

Private Secretary (Interim)

Graeme Dey MSP, Minister for Higher Education, Further Education & Veterans
St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

[redacted] | ministerhefev@gov.scot

From: James Withers <james@jrwithers.com>

Sent: Friday, May 12, 2023 3:52 PM

To: Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, and Veterans <MinisterHEFEV@gov.scot>;
Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills <CabSecforES@gov.scot>

Cc: Stephen Pathirana <Stephen.Pathirana@gov.scot>; Adam Reid <Adam.Reid@gov.scot>; Skills
Delivery Review <skillsdeliveryreview@gov.scot>

Subject: CONFIDENTIAL: Skills Delivery Landscape Review - Final Report submission

Dear Ministers,

As outlined in my Terms of Reference for the Skills Delivery Landscape Review, please find attached as .pdf documents:

- A cover letter
- My final report: "Fit for the Future: developing a post-school learning system to fuel economic transformation"

- The Analysis of the Call for Evidence Responses, as provided by Craigforth consultancy

I will of course be happy to discuss any of this further with you.

All the best
James

James Withers
JR Withers Advisory Ltd

M: [redacted]
E: james@jrwithers.com



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All the best

James

James Withers

JR Withers Advisory Ltd

M: [redacted]

E: james@jrwithers.com

Minister for Higher and Further Education and Veterans
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

12 May 2023

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE SKILLS DELIVERY LANDSCAPE

Dear Ministers,

Thank you for meeting with me on 25 April to discuss my progress on the Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape.

In line with the timescales that I set out when we met, I am writing to you now to submit my final report and recommendations. This builds on the early draft report that I submitted to the Scottish Government in March.

Whilst the substance of the report and the recommendations are largely unchanged, as indicated, I have further refined and developed my thinking, building in particular on the independent analysis of the call for evidence responses and further discussions with key stakeholders. I wish to flag some of the additions I have made:

- For most of the recommendations, I have added more detail as I have considered the issues and their interdependencies in more depth.
- I have reframed and reordered some of the recommendations and accompanying text to improve the narrative and to ensure that the rationale for my recommendations is clear.
- I have sought to achieve a balance in how prescriptive I am about aspects of my recommendations, including, for example, the status of new public bodies that I am proposing.
- I have added concluding chapters that summarise and contextualise my recommendations including within the wider programme of related reforms and reviews that are underway.
- I have sought to differentiate between recommendations for structural reform of the public body landscape and those that relate to operational delivery of the system.

Alongside the report containing my recommendations, I am submitting a report containing an independent analysis of the submissions that I received to the written Call for Evidence for the Review. Where respondents have given their permission, I understand that the individual responses will also be published on the Scottish Government's consultation hub, Citizen Space, to coincide with the publication of the reports.

As confirmed when we met, my understanding is that publication of the report and sharing the recommendations with the relevant public bodies will be a matter for the Scottish Government. Following your receipt of my report and consideration of timings, I should be grateful if you could confirm the planned date of publication with me in advance. I also want to reiterate my offer to support the communication of my findings to relevant stakeholders should that be helpful.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to work on the Review over the last seven months. It has been an engaging and thought-provoking experience. I began this process excited about the potential of our skills delivery system to play a central role in Scotland's economic transformation over the coming years. The many people and organisations I have met during my review have only re-emphasised this. Change is never easy, particularly the substantive change I am proposing, but I believe this is a moment of real opportunity to embrace it, with all the benefits it could deliver.

Finally, I would like put on record my sincere thanks to the Review Secretariat team. [redacted] have been a huge support to the process and to me personally; without them, the review would not have had the breadth and depth it has had.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

James Withers
Independent Advisor

Hi Adam/[redacted],

Mr Dey would be grateful if he can be included in any meeting.

Thanks,
[redacted]

From: [redacted]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023
Sent: 06 April 2023 13:05
To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023 <CabSecforES@gov.scot>; Adam Reid <Adam.Reid@gov.scot>; Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills <DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>; [redacted]@gov.scot>
Cc: Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, and Veterans <MinisterHEFEV@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: TO NOTE URGENT - FW: official: sensitive - Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape - interim report

Hi [redacted]

Ms Gilruth would be keen to meet with James, would it be possible to set this up for next Wednesday?

Thanks
[redacted]

[redacted]

Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills | T: [redacted] | M: [redacted] | | E: cabsecES@gov.scot | The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

From: Adam Reid <Adam.Reid@gov.scot>
Sent: 31 March 2023 12:14
To: Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, and Veterans <MinisterHEFEV@gov.scot>
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023 <CabSecforES@gov.scot>; Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills <DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; [redacted]@gov.scot>
Subject: official: sensitive - Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape - interim report

[redacted]– re-sending using new ministerial mailboxes.

Adam

Adam Reid | Deputy Director, Skills | Skills Division | Directorate for Lifelong Learning and Skills | Scottish Government

5 Atlantic Quay, Glasgow
[redacted]
[@AdamM_Reid](https://twitter.com/AdamM_Reid)

From: Reid A (Adam)

Sent: 30 March 2023 19:07

To: [redacted]@gov.scot>

Cc: Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills <DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; [redacted]@gov.scot>

Subject: official: sensitive - Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape - interim report

[redacted],

copying [redacted] given the scope of the report/recommendations.

Attached is the interim review from James Withers, alongside a slide pack that summarises his key themes and emerging recommendations.

When the Government announced the review last September, we set out that it would conclude in Spring this year. James remains on track for his final report to be published in late April/early May.

We'd welcome an early discussion.

Thanks,

Adam

Adam Reid | Deputy Director, Skills | Skills Division | Directorate for Lifelong Learning and Skills | Scottish Government

5 Atlantic Quay, Glasgow

[redacted]

@AdamM_Reid

[redacted]
Thank you.

James can make that time and date and will attend in person.

From: [redacted]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023
Sent: 12 April 2023 09:59
To: [redacted]@gov.scot>; Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills
<DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>; [redacted]@gov.scot>
Cc: Reid A (Adam) <Adam.Reid@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023
<CabSecforES@gov.scot>; Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science
<MinisterFEHES@gov.scot>; Skills Delivery Review <skillsdeliveryreview@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: TO NOTE URGENT - FW: official: sensitive - Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape - interim report

Good morning [redacted],

Thanks for getting in touch. We are happy to get something set up for Ms Gilruth and Mr Dey to meet with James however, week commencing 17th doesn't work for both minister and cab secs diaries. Can we please offer James **Tuesday 25th April 13:15-14:00**? Ms Gilruth has a preference of an in person meeting but does understand if James wont be able to make it into parliament.

Many thanks,

[redacted](she/her)

Assistant Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills

T: [redacted] | E: cabsecforES@gov.scot

The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

From: [redacted]

Sent: 06 April 2023 16:26

To: Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills <DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>; [redacted]@gov.scot>

Cc: Adam Reid <Adam.Reid@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023
<CabSecforES@gov.scot>; Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science
<MinisterFEHES@gov.scot>; Skills Delivery Review <skillsdeliveryreview@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: TO NOTE URGENT - FW: official: sensitive - Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape - interim report

Hi all

James has come back fairly quickly.

Unfortunately he has family commitments in England next Wednesday that he is unable to get out off.

However, James is very keen to meet with Ministers.

If possible would we be able to arrange something for the following week.

James has good availability w/c 17 April with only 13-00 to 14-30 Monday the 17th and 11-00 to 12-30 on Wednesday the 19th out for him.

Happy to discuss.

From: [redacted]

Sent: 06 April 2023 16:11

To: Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills <DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>; [redacted]@gov.scot>

Cc: Reid A (Adam) <Adam.Reid@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023 <CabSecforES@gov.scot>; Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science <MinisterFEHES@gov.scot>; Skills Delivery Review <skillsdeliveryreview@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: TO NOTE URGENT - FW: official: sensitive - Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape - interim report

Thanks [redacted]

[redacted]- James has been on leave.

He is out of the country this week but might have some availability next week.

I've messaged to ask and will revert when I know.

From: [redacted]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills

Sent: 06 April 2023 15:59

To: [redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted]

Cc: Reid A (Adam) <Adam.Reid@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023 <CabSecforES@gov.scot>; Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science <MinisterFEHES@gov.scot>; Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills <DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: TO NOTE URGENT - FW: official: sensitive - Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape - interim report

Hi [redacted],

Have you seen the request for a meeting with James Withers on Wednesday next week? Perhaps you could speak to [redacted] in POs to discuss what might be possible.

Thanks

[redacted]

[redacted] | Business Manager | Directorate for Lifelong Learning and Skills | [redacted]

From: [redacted]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, and Veterans

Sent: 06 April 2023 15:51

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023 <CabSecforES@gov.scot>; Reid A (Adam) <Adam.Reid@gov.scot>; Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills <DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>; [redacted]@gov.scot>

Cc: Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, and Veterans <MinisterHEFEV@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: TO NOTE URGENT - FW: official: sensitive - Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape - interim report

Hi Adam/[redacted],

Mr Dey would be grateful if he can be included in any meeting.

Thanks,
Craig

From: [redacted]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023
Sent: 06 April 2023 13:05
To: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023 <CabSecforES@gov.scot>; Adam Reid <Adam.Reid@gov.scot>; Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills <DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>; [redacted]@gov.scot>
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Thanks
[redacted]

[redacted]

Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills | [redacted]
E: cabsecES@gov.scot | The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

From: Adam Reid <Adam.Reid@gov.scot>
Sent: 31 March 2023 12:14
To: Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, and Veterans <MinisterHEFEV@gov.scot>
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills 2023 <CabSecforES@gov.scot>; Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills <DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; [redacted]@gov.scot>
Subject: official: sensitive - Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape - interim report

[redacted] – re-sending using new ministerial mailboxes.

Adam

Adam Reid | Deputy Director, Skills | Skills Division | Directorate for Lifelong Learning and Skills | Scottish Government

5 Atlantic Quay, Glasgow
[redacted]
[@AdamM_Reid](https://www.instagram.com/AdamM_Reid)

From: Reid A (Adam)

Sent: 30 March 2023 19:07

To: [redacted]@gov.scot>

Cc: Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills <DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>; DG Education & Justice <dgej@gov.scot>; [redacted]@gov.scot>

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[redacted]

copying [redacted] given the scope of the report/recommendations.

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We'd welcome an early discussion.

Thanks,
Adam

Adam Reid | Deputy Director, Skills | Skills Division | Directorate for Lifelong Learning and Skills | Scottish Government

5 Atlantic Quay, Glasgow

[redacted]

@AdamM_Reid

PS/First Minister
PS/Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance
PS Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy,
PS Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade,
PS Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Just Transition,
PS Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity,
PS Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands
PS Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills and I previously wrote to the First Minister, copying Ministers with an interest, to update on the Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape. In that communication we outlined that we would be in touch with an offer for James Withers to do a briefing session on his report.

James will be hosting a Teams session on **Monday 5 June 17:00 to 17:30**

I'm conscious this may be tricky given it is a constituency day, however, I would be grateful if you could indicate whether you can attend the session.

If you would like to feed in any comments on the Report and its recommendations I would be grateful if you could send contributions to me.

Kind Regards,

[redacted]

[redacted] (he/him)

Private Secretary to Minister for Higher and Further Education and Minister for Veterans –
Graeme Dey MSP

Scottish Government | St Andrews's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG |

Mob: [redacted] **Email:** MinisterHEFEV@gov.scot

The Minister's preferences can be found [here](#).

All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments

Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

This email is for the official record and confirms a Ministerial Decision. This email must be placed in the official record (eRDM) by your team [in line with SG records management policy](#).

[redacted]

Mr Hepburn has asked me to pass on his thanks to James for the update.

In the note, he feels this is okay apart from one word not making sense in the wider context.

Thanks

[redacted]

[redacted]

Private Secretary – Minister for Higher/Further Education, Youth Employment and Training – Jamie Hepburn MSP

St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG - [redacted]

Email: MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot

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From: [redacted]@gov.scot > **On Behalf Of** Skills Delivery Review

Sent: 28 November 2022 15:43

To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>

Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>; Reid A (Adam)

<Adam.Reid@gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>; Gray H (Helena)

<Helena.Gray@gov.scot>; Skills Delivery Review <skillsdeliveryreview@gov.scot>

Subject: Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape- 1st progress report

PS Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Please find the first (4 page) progress report from James Withers as outlined in the Terms of Reference.

Please also find a note of the meeting held on 15 November.

Please do come back to me if you need any further information.

[redacted]

Independent Review Secretariat| Skills Delivery Landscape

I can be contacted by:

Email: [redacted]@gov.scot

Mailbox: skillsdeliveryreview@gov.scot

Good afternoon,

Ms Gougeon will be unable to attend due a planned Ministerial visit on the Monday.

Kind regards,
[redacted]

[redacted]

Assistant Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform & Islands: Mairi Gougeon MSP

The Scottish Government

St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

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From: [redacted]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, and Veterans

Sent: 01 June 2023 17:18

To: First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance <DFMCSF@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work & Energy <CabSecWEFWE@gov.scot>; Minister for Small Business, Innovation & Trade <MinisterSBIT@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero & Just Transition <CabSecNZJT@gov.scot>; Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity <MinisterforGSCEB@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands <CabSecRALRI@gov.scot>; Minister for Children, Young People & Keeping the Promise <MinisterCYPKP@gov.scot>

Cc: Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, and Veterans <MinisterHEFEV@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills <CabSecforES@gov.scot>; Sean McGivern <Sean.McGivern@gov.scot>

Subject: Update on the Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape

PS/First Minister

PS/Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance

PS Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy,

PS Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade,

PS Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Just Transition,

PS Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity,

PS Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands

PS Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise.

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Kind Regards,

[redacted]

[redacted] **(he/him)**

Private Secretary to Minister for Higher and Further Education and Minister for Veterans –
Graeme Dey MSP

Scottish Government | St Andrews's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG |

Mob: [redacted] | **Email:** MinisterHEFEV@gov.scot

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