

# **Scottish Government Response to the Independent Commission for Land- Based Learning Review and Implementation Plan - Progress report**

June 2025

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## Introduction

The independent Commission for the Land-Based Learning Review [report](#) was submitted to Ministers in January 2023, and we have accepted or accepted 'in principle' all 22 of its recommendations. The Scottish Government published a [response](#) in April 2024 and an [implementation plan](#) in January 2025.

As stated in the Scottish Government response, the Cabinet Secretaries for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands; and Health and Education are committed to attracting more people into our land-based and aquaculture sectors and equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed, informed by improved evidence gathering and its use. This will be achieved by working together; public bodies, businesses, voluntary organisations and people; to contribute to Scotland becoming a wealthier, fairer, greener and more equal country.

Publishing a progress report was a recommendation accepted by the Scottish Government. This report will detail the progress of the actions in response to all the recommendations from the Review of Land-Based Learning in the 12 months since the Scottish Government response report was published.

As explained in the implementation plan, the recommendations vary in their scope and scale; ranging from specific, practical changes to being part of broader policy and delivery. The implementation plan sets out the outputs, actions and timescales as far as possible. In some cases, further exploratory or other policy development work is required, particularly in a changing policy context. Implementing the plan's actions will support the delivery of green solutions in the agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and environment sectors. This is important in building prosperous rural areas and a Just Transition to Net Zero, contributing to the First Minister's priorities on Boosting the Economy and Tackling Climate Change.

Actions relating to implementation for all recommendations have commenced with progress including the development of the Learning for Sustainability action plan, the online portal going live, publication of research into transferable skills and the opening of the outdoor learning hub at Queen Margaret University. At the time of this report five (2, 2.2, 3, 6 and 12) of the twenty two recommendations are now complete.

**Recommendation 1:** Work towards the reframing of the land-based sectors as nature-based.

### **Output**

A Scottish Government decision on whether to work towards adopting the term “nature-based” to refer to the land-based and aquaculture sectors collectively.

### **Implementing Actions**

We will undertake research and engagement to inform a decision on adopting the term “nature-based” and have already commenced work to develop this with Lantra. Timescales are still to be established. The findings from the research and engagement will be used to understand key relevant groups’ views, i.e. young people, and potential career changers, on using the term and the potential to contribute to attracting more people to work in the sector.

### **Progress Update**

Scottish Government are co-delivering this recommendation with Lantra. They have research on perceptions of the terms “nature-based” and “land-based” planned with 6 secondary schools over 6 months, with workshops and interviews with classes, teachers and DYW / career influencers. Surveys will also be sent out to parents and to industry. Lantra are working with the University of Highlands and Islands, who have conducted research in this area before, to ensure the most effective approach is adopted and that we best reach potential career changers. The plan is to then engage with key relevant stakeholders in the autumn to present early findings and discuss the best next steps.

### **Timescales**

Initial development and potential research 2024/2025 - in progress. Initial development and potential research partner has been identified.

Analysis and engagement 2025 - the analysis and engagement will take place from May to September 2025.

Advice to Ministers for decision in 2025.

### **Milestones**

Research completed 2025

Stakeholder consultation and workshop held 2025 – this is on track to achieve milestones.

**Recommendation 1.1:** Develop an effective communications strategy to support the reframing of the Sector.

### **Output**

Delivery of a communications strategy to support reframing to nature-based in the first quarter of 2025 (subject to decision on Recommendation 1).

## **Implementing Actions**

We will develop a communications strategy with stakeholders to support a wider understanding and use of the term 'nature-based.' This will be progressed by Scottish Government staff working with stakeholders and via their networks.

## **Progress Update**

This is dependent on a decision about Recommendation 1, which is in progress and once an informed decision has been made, we will progress this Recommendation.

## **Timescale**

Deliver a communications strategy 2025/26 – in progress.

## **Milestones**

Communication plan developed with stakeholders 2025 - this is on track to achieve the milestone.

**Recommendation 2:** Establish clear progressive experiences for nature-based learning and climate literacy across all levels of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).

## **Output**

Work by Education Scotland, Keep Scotland Beautiful, other public bodies and stakeholders to facilitate experiences for nature-based learning and climate literacy across CfE.

## **Implementing Actions**

Education Scotland has developed a dedicated Learning for Sustainability (LfS) themed webpage that will provide examples of LfS in practice, including content on nature-based activities. Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB) continues to deliver their Climate Actions Schools programme which includes content on nature and climate literacy. LfS is one of the core competencies that is being looked at as part of the curriculum improvement cycle.

## **Progress Update**

Through our refreshed [Learning for Sustainability Action Plan](#) we have committed to embedding Learning for Sustainability, which includes nature-based learning and climate literacy across all levels on the Curriculum. This ties into several of the Actions, most notably in Actions 1 and 10-12.

Through the ongoing work of Scotland's Curriculum Improvement Cycle we are continuing to consider how to better align cross-curricular themes, such as Learning for Sustainability, with subject areas. We are considering how this relates to the relevance of curriculum content, role of knowledge, transitions between primary and secondary and alignment between Board General Education and the Senior Phase. Education Scotland have developed their [online portal for LfS](#).

## **Milestones**

Embed this activity into the Learning for Sustainability refreshed Action Plan actions and milestones - complete.

Commencement of Curriculum Improvement Cycle from December 2023 - complete.

Education Scotland to launch LfS online portal Autumn 2024 - complete.

**Recommendation 2.1:** Identify ways to support an increase in Sector school/college partnership learning pathways, offered and undertaken by schools.

### **Output**

Desk-based research, mapping out the current land-based and aquaculture learning pathways.

A workshop with stakeholders to identify good practice and barriers.

A paper, collating evidence and identifying ways to support an increase in sector school/college and other partnerships.

Education Scotland engagement on key lessons learned with schools and colleges on land-based and aquaculture learning pathways.

### **Implementing Actions**

Preliminary research, reaching out to key partners, to map the land-based and aquaculture learning pathways which currently exist across Scotland.

Present research to Education Scotland's Learner Pathways co-design group and undertake discussion on what's working well – why is it working well? What barriers are being faced in other areas?

Production of paper to support improvement.

Education Scotland to engage schools/colleges nationally on the issue.

### **Progress Update**

Education Scotland and Scottish Government are in the process of reviewing the evidence gathered for the original report to identify any gaps in data before going out to stakeholders, working towards completing the first milestone before progressing work on the remainder.

### **Milestones**

Research and discussions with key stakeholders to understand what learner pathways are already available for land-based learning, July – October 2024.

Education Scotland to convene the meeting of the Learner Pathways Co-Design Group to present findings of preliminary research and undertake a fuller discussion of the barriers and opportunities that currently exist in relation to sector specific pathways.

Production of a paper following workshop discussions including actions to support an increase in sector specific school/college partnerships where this is in line with regional economic needs and the college's strategic planning.

Education Scotland to take forward the suggestions in the paper.

The first milestone is likely to be complete by September 2025. Other milestones will follow sequentially.

**Recommendation 2.2:** Provide ongoing Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) support for school-based staff and volunteers across all education authorities, supported by education providers to improve their knowledge and understanding of the opportunities within the Sector. Include practical training in supporting learning in the natural environment.

## **Output**

Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) support provided to staff and volunteers in education authorities. This will include practical training in supporting learning in the natural environment.

## **Implementing Actions**

Education Scotland has established the Learning for Sustainability (LfS) Peer Mentor Network with 25+ mentors recruited from a range of sectors, backgrounds and local authorities. In the 6 week pilot period, over 97 engagements were undertaken reaching some 600+ practitioners across 20 local authorities. The next phase of the programme for Financial Year 2024/25 has commenced.

Education Scotland has developed a dedicated online LfS themed webpage that will provide examples of LfS in practice, including signposting educators to professional learning opportunities.

## **Progress Update**

CLPL has been embedded in the refreshed [LfS Action Plan](#), specifically through Actions 21-25.

The next phase of the Peer Mentor Network for Financial Year 2024/25 has commenced.

The Education Scotland LfS themed webpage is now live - [Learning for Sustainability | Resource Themes | Education Scotland](#)

## **Milestones**

Embed this activity into the Learning for Sustainability refreshed Action Plan actions and milestones - complete.

Next phase of LfS Mentor programme underway in 2024/25 - complete.

Education Scotland to launch LfS themed webpage Autumn 2024 - complete.

**Recommendation 3:** Ensure that the Learning for Sustainability (LfS) Action Plan refresh encompasses strong progressive learning experiences relating to nature-based learning.

## **Output**

LfS Action Plan includes progressive learning experiences for nature-based learning.

## **Implementing Actions**

The LfS themed webpage will provide content on this. LfS is one of the core competencies that is being looked at as part of the curriculum improvement cycle.

## **Progress Update**

Through our refreshed [Learning for Sustainability Action Plan](#) we have committed to embedding Learning for Sustainability, which includes nature-based learning and climate literacy across all levels on the Curriculum. This ties into several of the Actions, most notably in Actions 1 and 10-12.

Through the ongoing work of Scotland's Curriculum Improvement Cycle (CIC) we are continuing to consider how to better align cross-curricular themes, such as Learning

for Sustainability, with subject areas. We are considering how this relates to the relevance of curriculum content, role of knowledge, transitions between primary and secondary and alignment between Board General Education and the Senior Phase.

Education Scotland have developed their [online portal for LfS](#).

### **Timescale**

2024-2025 and beyond - in progress.

### **Milestones**

Embed this activity into the LfS refreshed Action Plan's actions and milestones – complete.

Commencement of Curriculum Improvement Cycle from December 2023 - complete.

Education Scotland to launch LfS themed webpage Autumn 2024 - complete.

**Recommendation 3.1:** Establish a robust approach to monitoring quality of the curriculum delivery of Learning for Sustainability (LfS), including the quantity and quality of nature-based and outdoor learning.

### **Output**

A refreshed version of Education Scotland's self-evaluation tool for LfS.

### **Implementing Actions**

The Scottish Government will run a series of workshops with a group of stakeholders to collaboratively develop an approach to Measuring Success and Driving Improvement. Children and young people's groups are being consulted on this work.

### **Progress Update**

Work is ongoing on developing an approach to Measuring Success and Driving Improvement, with more progress expected throughout the year.

Through our refreshed [Learning for Sustainability Action Plan](#) we have committed to monitoring the quality of curriculum delivery of LfS in Action 7.

The LfS Working Group has been established and is working on developing an approach.

### **Timescales**

2024-2025 - in progress.

### **Milestones**

Embed this activity into the LfS refreshed Action Plan actions and milestones - complete.

Establish LfS working group to lead development of approach Summer 2024, this is ongoing.

**Recommendation 3.2:** Promote the delivery of more outdoor learning by supporting local authorities and colleges to undertake a review of their estate, to identify the potential for carbon reduction, climate change mitigation and the creation of accessible nature spaces.

## **Outputs**

Creation of Discovery Trail and The Howff (sheltered outdoor learning space) on the Queen Margaret University (QMU) Campus, development of digital resources and the Masters Module. These resources are aimed at teachers, student teachers and local authorities etc.

The Climate Ready School Grounds (CRSG) project provides resources, case studies, School Grounds Climate survey, lesson plans and guidance for teachers and local authorities.

Guidance on developing interventions in school grounds to help support schools in creating more inspirational outdoor settings, including guidance to help create spaces that mitigate against climate based issues. This will be aimed at schools and local authorities.

The Co-designing Sustainable Learning Settings project is about supporting the delivery of the Learning for Sustainability policy in our places and communities. This will be tested through delivering pilot projects which co-design sustainable learning settings in varied school contexts such as urban, rural and town settings.

The College Infrastructure Investment plan being developed in 2025 will identify net zero projects and evaluation guidance is likely to consider issues such as climate mitigation, carbon reduction and biodiversity.

## **Implementing Actions**

Making Places for Outdoor Learning module and digital resources, which are aimed at e.g. teachers, student teachers and local authorities. School workshops to test ideas and develop action plans and case studies based on pilot projects.

Resources with design ideas, guidance, tools and risk assessments, aimed at e.g. schools and local authorities. Place-based workshops, case studies and guidance.

## **Progress Update**

We are progressing with this work with 3 of the milestones completed, the remaining one is ongoing and on target for completion.

The outdoor spaces toolkit was published in April 2025 - [Design Elements for School Grounds](#)

The co-designing Sustainable Learning Settings project started in 2024/25 and the report was published in April 2025 - [Learning Locally: Co-designing Sustainable Learning Settings](#)

## **Timescale and Milestones**

Outdoor Learning Hub at QMU was officially launched by the Minister for Higher and Further Education in March 2024 - complete.

CRSG project was launched in September 2023 - complete.

Outdoor spaces toolkit is due to be published in 2024/25 - complete.

Co-designing Sustainable Learning Settings project starts in 2024/25 and is ongoing.

**Recommendation 4:** Ensure funding to support core and innovative nature-based education and training programmes, to ensure sustainable provision to allow for fluctuating uptake.

## **Implementing Actions**

In this challenging funding environment, the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council (SFC) continue to take a considered approach to college and university funding with the focus on sustainability and the delivery of high-quality provision to meet the needs of learners, employers, communities and regional economies. Institutions are responsible for their own sustainability and operational decisions, including course provision, and are best placed to respond flexibly to emerging trends at local and regional level.

## **Progress Update**

Following the 2025-26 budget announcement, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) has engaged with both sector bodies and individual institutions as part of the engagement around the annual process of allocating institutional funding, university funded places and college credits.

For universities, the SFC has been able to support teaching by increasing the teaching price, the investment in each individual learner by 3.3%, while also removing the 2,500 temporary SQA Covid places. The SFC has re-allocated places to reflect patterns of demand over recent years, and to ensure that opportunities are offered to meet current student demand. This is a 3.6% increase in core funding for research and innovation, meeting a direct ask from the sector which will benefit Scottish universities.

For colleges, the SFC has responded to sectors demand as well as the Minister Letter of Guidance regarding transparency and funding comparability between learners on similar courses and colleges, and modified the funding formula. For the allocations to be published, SFC have mapped college activity across price groups to reflect the actual (current) split of activity (rather than historic). In addition, SFC have removed the premia from the core allocation and split colleges into groups. A single premia rate per credit will be applied to colleges in the same group.

The SFC published the indicative university funding allocations for Academic Year (AY) 2025-26 on 3 April 2025. The indicative college funding allocation for AY 2025-26 was published on 10 April 2025.

The final funding allocations for both universities and colleges are expected to be published by the end of May 2025.

[Funding announcements - Scottish Funding Council](#)

## **Timescales**

The funding process for colleges and universities follows an annual cycle, through the SFC's allocation process. SFC work closely with the sectors to identify the best split of the available resources, taking into account Government priorities and the sectors' needs. The allocations enable colleges and universities to move forward with their planning for the forthcoming Academic Year and offering student places - complete.

## **Milestones**

Publication of Scottish Funding Council's annual funding allocations for colleges and universities - complete.

**Recommendation 5:** Ensure that accreditation bodies (at all curriculum levels) have sufficient capacity to respond timeously to review existing awards and develop new awards, guaranteeing the skills and knowledge requirements of the Sector are met.

### **Output**

Identify options for a change in scope with a view to providing advice to Ministers.

### **Implementing Actions**

Flexible qualifications and the reform of the post-school education and skills system were highlighted in our response to the review. As part of this work, a Short Life working group on the scope of accreditation has been established. A series of stakeholder events have also taken place. Ministers will be asked to consider options for change early in 2025.

### **Progress Update**

The final meeting of the Short Life Working Group was held in February 2025. An options paper on the scope of accreditation of Qualifications Scotland (QS) and its oversight role of all publicly funded qualifications in Scotland, developed by Scottish Government officials, was discussed during the group's final meeting and the Group's input has been incorporated into the paper. Advice will be sent to Ministers in due course.

### **Timescales**

Spring 2025 – expected to be met.

### **Milestones**

Stakeholder engagement meetings carried out Autumn 2024 – complete.  
Short life working group meeting notes and action taken - Early 2025 – complete.  
Submission of advice to Ministers in Spring 2025 - in progress.

**Recommendation 6:** Contribute to the Skills delivery landscape independent review, ensuring that the complex needs of the sector are understood and addressed.

Completed prior to the development of the Implementation plan.

As stated in the SG response - One of the Commission's Co-chairs met James Withers to discuss land-based skills and a copy of the Review report was provided to inform the Skills Delivery Landscape Review. In the Skills Delivery Landscape Review the needs of the land-based sector are explicitly recognised and its recommendations are consistent with those of the Land-Based Learning Review.

Ministers have accepted the basis of the Skills Delivery Landscape Review recommendations through the Initial Priorities paper that will support delivery of the Purpose and Principles for Post-school Education, Research and Skills. The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring the needs and benefits of the land-based and aquaculture sectors are recognised and addressed in the process and delivery of the new skills landscape.

**Recommendation 7:** Contribute to the Skills delivery landscape independent review, ensuring that the 16+ Data Hub captures the wide range of job roles undertaken across the Sector to allow for effective monitoring and impact.

### **Output**

The issue of capturing job titles in the sector was raised by the Land-based Learning Review's Co-Chair as part of their evidence to the Skills Delivery Landscape Review. We will develop an understanding of the job titles and data sets used by the 16+ Data Hub to identify practicable opportunities for improvement to better reflect the range of careers in the sector.

### **Implementing Actions**

Work with stakeholders, including Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Data Hub users to understand and identify opportunities for improvement.

Share the issues raised in the Land-based Learning Review regarding data sets and job titles with data collectors.

Work with users of data e.g. SDS, Lantra, careers advisors, local authorities to explore how jobs in the sector can be better captured.

### **Progress Update**

Scottish Government are co-delivering this recommendation with Lantra. Lantra are engaging with stakeholders to learn more about the review of the 16+ Data Hub. Key skills groups have been identified relating to Horticulture, Game and Wildlife, Agriculture, Forestry and Peatland restoration. Discussions are ongoing regarding the most appropriate forum for Aquaculture as there is not currently an active skills group in that area.

For the project, it is likely that different approaches will need to be adopted to suit the needs of different stakeholders. To this end, in April 2025 contact will be made with the chairs of each of the Skills groups to establish the best meeting time/date to meet with attendees and discuss the most appropriate next steps within each sector. Alongside these communications, reports will be sought from SDS that list the current job titles associated with each area, the definitions that the roles sit under and any pertinent data/context that might be useful to present to the group.

Plans for each sector will be generated after these meetings, and further consultation route maps developed as appropriate.

Analysis and recommendations to be made available by June 2025, depending on the availability of each Skills Group. Meeting to then be held with SDS and key 16+ Data Hub staff to discuss how best to implement the recommendations and define the timeline for the work required.

### **Timescales**

2024 – 2025 - expected to be met.

### **Milestones**

Scope a project working with industry skills groups to provide an understanding of which job titles are priorities for change by spring 2025 - in progress.

**Recommendation 8:** Support the retention of critical Higher Education (HE) provision in areas such as forestry and aquaculture by developing innovative ways to extend the reach of their delivery.

## **Output**

A Scottish Government led skills planning approach will help develop a better understanding of skills needs at the national level and how we can better address them, particularly where solutions lie within the education and skills system. This work will be critical in ensuring that the system is more responsive and in a better position to meet our economic, environmental and social needs and ambitions. However, universities and colleges are responsible for their curriculum and course choices responding to local, regional, national and in some cases international economic need and learner demands.

## **Implementing Actions**

Relevant Scottish Government policy areas to support and feed into the skills planning work led by the Scottish Government's Lifelong Learning and Skills Directorate.

## **Progress Update**

In the 2025/26 Programme for Government we committed to introduce a new Scottish Government-led approach to national skills planning, and strengthen regional skills planning, to ensure that post school provision becomes more responsive to Scotland's strategic skills needs and priorities. We have established a SG Skills Planning Policy Unit, undertaken extensive engagement and evidence gathering on existing arrangements, and drafted a strategic case for skills planning reforms. Close collaboration is taking place with Skills Development Scotland and Scottish Funding Council on this reform project. Draft regional guidelines were discussed with Regional Economic Partners over October-December 2024. Overall, we have identified a proposed direction of travel for a future skills planning model and are currently engaging with key stakeholders on this.

## **Timescales**

Cross-government work and external engagement on skills planning is well under way and will inform the design of new skills planning approaches in 2025 - expected to be met.

## **Milestones**

Guidelines for developing a strengthened approach to regional skills planning – September 2024 - in progress.  
Options identified for future skills planning models in spring 2025 and announcement of chosen option in late 2025 - in progress.

**Recommendation 9:** For the new Agriculture Scotland Bill, as part of Tiers 3 and 4, to include provisions to enable support to fund upskilling/Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training for farmers and employees to support priority, quality non-legislative training towards a just transition to a green economy.

## **Outputs**

The Agriculture and Rural Communities Act 2024 has now been brought into force and this includes provision to introduce CPD as part of an Agricultural Knowledge

and Innovation System (AKIS) by way of regulations. The Act also makes provision for support being provided for other knowledge exchange and transfer activities. The need for secondary legislation and further engagement with stakeholders is currently under consideration.

Preliminary analyses, following informal stakeholder consultation and research is now complete. The next stage is to refine and prioritise options.

We have also finalised and implemented a [research fellowship](#) from SEFARI (Scottish Environment, Food and Agriculture Research Institutions) that is due to report around November 2024.

### **Implementing Actions**

Powers in Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act.

Consultation on secondary legislation for CPD regime.

CPD regime procurement and coming into operation.

Continuing to make progress with AKIS preparations following enactment of Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act, to be introduced from 2027 under Tier 4 of Agriculture Reform Programme.

### **Progress Update**

We aim to have a CPD regime introduced in 2027.

Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act received Royal Assent in July 2024. CPD provisions were successfully enacted in Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act 2024.

Evidence from informal consultation considered and further scoping work has been undertaken to help inform the development of the CPD regime.

Research through SEFARI to support the development of a Scottish AKIS was completed in December 2024.

Consultation on options for CPD regime to be developed and issued in 2025.

Secondary legislation on CPD regime to be developed.

### **Timescales**

2024 – 2027 - expected to be met.

### **Milestones**

Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act introduced in July 2024 – complete.

Consultation on secondary legislation for CPD 2025 - in progress.

Procurement of CPD 2026 - in progress.

**Recommendation 10:** Strongly recommend that Scottish Government incentivise uptake of structured Education and Training programmes to support the Agricultural sector.

Whilst Scottish Government does not propose to develop and implement a structured programme for education and training for agriculture, work will be undertaken as part of the Agricultural Reform Programme to develop a Continued Professional Development system to enable farmers, crofters and land managers to record personal and professional development activities. This initiative aligns with

recommendation 9 and will form part of an Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS) to be introduced from 2027.

### **Progress Update**

Work is ongoing as detailed in Recommendation 9.

**Recommendation 11:** Amend the annual compulsory Agriculture Census to include specific Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) questions, which can be used by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and others to inform the Sector's skills needs more accurately.

### **Output**

Scottish Government Agriculture census will be amended to include specific LMI questions to inform the sector's skills needs.

### **Implementing Actions**

Once the Agriculture Census Survey is completed and results published in October, new questions can be considered for 2025.

### **Progress Update**

The new Agricultural Household Survey, due to be launched in summer 2025, will include some questions relating to skills and aims to capture this data. Therefore it was decided not to include LMI questions in the 2025 modular part of the June Agricultural Census. However each year there will be an opportunity to consider new questions in the modular section so there may be scope to do this in future years.

### **Timescales**

2024 – 2025 - in progress.

### **Milestones**

New LMI questions considered for the Scottish Government Agriculture census; agreed questions added to 2025 census 2024-25. Expected to be met but via the Agricultural Household survey

**Recommendation 11.1:** Identify opportunities to add LMI questions to other Sector surveys sent out by the Scottish Government or related agencies.

### **Output**

The Scottish Government will seek opportunities to add LMI questions to other relevant sector surveys.

### **Implementing Actions**

We will engage with survey managers across Scottish Government to assess where there are opportunities to add LMI questions to surveys in alignment with those added to the Agricultural Census.

### **Progress Update**

As mentioned above, work is currently ongoing to develop a stand-alone Agricultural Household Survey and is aiming to capture some of this data instead. We will continue to engage with survey managers to consider other surveys in this space.

### **Timescales**

October 2024 to March 2025 - in progress.

### **Milestones**

New LMI questions considered for relevant sector surveys - in progress.

**Recommendation 12:** Undertake research which identifies key transferable skills required across different job roles within the Sector.

### **Output**

Final report and summary paper of key transferable skills required across different job roles within the land-based and aquaculture sectors in rural Scotland.

### **Implementing Actions**

Desk-based evidence review of key transferable skills required across different job roles within the land-based and aquaculture sectors in rural Scotland.

Stakeholder engagement and primary research, e.g. workshops or interviews.

Research questions and methods to be agreed.

### **Progress Update**

This report was published on 18 March 2025 – [Review of transferable skills in Scotland's land-based and aquaculture sectors](#) along with a visual summary - [‘Transferable skills in Scotland’s land-based and aquaculture sectors’](#)

### **Timescales**

Begin in early 2025 – complete.

### **Milestones**

Final report and summary paper 2025 – complete.

**Recommendation 13:** Ensure learning from interventions such as the Women in Agriculture Taskforce and Women in Scottish Aquaculture is used to inform actions to attract more women into sectors where there is a gender imbalance.

### **Recommendation 13.1:**

Ensure learning from interventions supports other groups which are under-represented in the Sector.

### **Outputs:**

Examples of good practice and evidence of barriers and challenges gathered from desk-based research, and shared with relevant sectors.

### **Implementing Actions:**

Provide grant funding to relevant stakeholder organisations (set out in the table below), supporting a number of programmes empowering women living and working in the agricultural sector.

Engage regularly with relevant stakeholders to continue support where required, and to ensure grant funding KPIs are met.

Gather examples of good practice from Women in Agriculture, Women in Scottish Aquaculture, Scottish Government Practical Training Funds (PTFs), stakeholder organisations, Industry Leadership Groups and skills groups.

Gather information on barriers from Women in Agriculture, Women in Scottish Aquaculture, Scottish Government Practical Training Funds, sector groups and delivery organisations.

Gather information from Women in Agriculture Programme Outcomes Mapping.

Quarterly meeting between Women in Agriculture and Women in Business team.

Work with Scottish Government policy teams and organisations that comprise of and work with under-represented groups.

Gather any relevant information from the development of the Gender Strategy for Agriculture that can be used by other sectors with a gender imbalance.

### **Progress Update**

We continue to support and provide grant funding to a number of organisations working to empower women living and working in agriculture, and as a result improve their lives, encourage business innovation (and therefore resilience), and increase equality of opportunity throughout the sector.

In 2024-25, we committed £600,000 to deliver support for:

- Women in Agriculture (WiA) Knowing Your Business
- WiA Practical Training Fund
- Gender Strategy for Agriculture
- Scottish Association of Young Farmers' Clubs (SAYFC) Board Training
- Crofting Federation
- Grass Ceiling
- WiA Scotland group

A contract has been awarded for a survey of agricultural households. The results are expected to be available towards the end of 2025/26.

The Gender Strategy for Agriculture, which is currently being developed. Stakeholder roundtables are expected to take place towards the end of 2025/26.

### **Timescales**

August 2024 to April 2035 - in progress.

### **Milestones**

Provision of grant funding to relevant stakeholders, supporting a number of programmes empowering women living and working in the agricultural sector  
Continued engagement with stakeholders – complete.

Designing an agricultural household survey to be conducted and analysed to understand the prevalence of child poverty within the agricultural population - in progress.

Desk-based research, including using data from the Scottish Government Practical Training Funds' reports on uptake and interest - in progress.  
Bank of good practice examples that can be shared with stakeholders, funders and training providers - in progress.  
Continued development of the Gender Strategy - in progress.

**Recommendation 14:** Sector 'Industry Leadership Groups' (or equivalent) to establish what help or interventions would enable their industries to meet fair work requirements.

### **Outputs**

Desk-based research to establish a baseline on barriers, opportunities and current good practice on Fair Work in the Sector.  
For example, data will be gathered on Fair Work practices in the Sector. Lantra Scotland will continue to work with Forestry Industry Leadership Groups to ensure progress on Fair Work First. The aim will be to identify good practice from this that can be shared with the sectors through the Industry Leadership Groups and skills groups.  
Work to raise awareness with Industry Leadership Groups and skills groups to identify what help or interventions that employers in the sector require.

### **Implementing Actions**

Recipients of Scottish Government funding must meet Fair Work First Conditionality. Lantra will support Fair Work practices with Skills Hub training providers that may then be developed and extended to more providers and stakeholders.  
Establish links with Industry Leadership Groups and skills groups for each part of the Sector e.g. aquaculture, horticulture, agriculture.

### **Progress Update**

Scottish Government are co-delivering this recommendation with Lantra. In 2024/25 Lantra commissioned and supported Flexibility Works to undertake research into Fair Work within the Land-based and Aquaculture Sector. The final report was received in March, and although the difference between those surveyed and the average was not as diverse as we had thought it could be, there are clear gaps in terms of documentation and communication  
In April 2025, contact will be made with the chairs of the ILGs, then the skills group and Partner organisations such as Forestry and Land Scotland, the Rings and Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society to find a way to support improvements in this area.

### **Timescales**

2024/2025 - expected to be met.

### **Milestones**

Lantra pilot research complete in December 2024 - in progress. Although slightly delayed full achievement is still anticipated.

**Recommendation 15:** Annually review recommendation progress, whilst sharing best practice and lessons learned.

### **Outputs**

A meeting to review progress and share good practice involving former Commission members and stakeholders 12 months after publication of Scottish Government response.

Progress update report published.

### **Implementing Actions**

Scottish Government policy teams will monitor actions to progress the response to the recommendations.

Scottish Government will host a meeting with former Commission members in Autumn 2024.

### **Progress Update**

Responses have been collected to produce the progress update report for each recommendation to complete the annual report. This will be published June 2025.

The Annual review event is still under consideration.

### **Timescales**

End 2024 – Spring 2025 – complete.

### **Milestones**

Implementation Plan published - complete.

First annual reporting on progress published Spring 2025 - complete.

Annual review event held spring 2025 - in progress.



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