

# Aligning Offshore Energy Standards Action Plan

---

The transition to net zero will have a substantial impact on the labour market for the offshore energy industry. Consequently, a robust action plan is essential to support the effective transition of the workforce.

As a result of net zero targets there will be a large transition of the current oil and gas workforce (comprising 118,400 direct and indirect jobs in 2021) to other sectors of the offshore energy industry. Many will seek employment in new energy sectors such as offshore wind, hydrogen or carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS). It is important that this is a just and managed transition.

To enable people to move between sectors there is a need to integrate the technical, and safety and survival standards. The lack of a robust, integrated framework results in siloed working and creates barriers that inhibit the opportunity for the existing workforce – particularly those in technical offshore roles – to work between the different sectors of the offshore energy industry.

Currently, the career pathways and transitional opportunities between the offshore energy sectors are unclear and fragmented. This results in workers regularly having to repeat training when transitioning between sectors, incurring substantial financial costs (often, at personal expense), creating duplication and requiring a considerable time commitment from attendees.

This Action Plan forms part of the wider North Sea Transition Deal (NSTD) Integrated People & Skills Strategy (Integrated People and Skills Strategy) which highlights a series of strategic priorities to help create a diverse, integrated offshore energy workforce. It highlights the different activities that will be completed to align offshore energy standards and develop a digital solution that supports the transition of skilled workers between sectors.

## Current situation

The UK currently has a highly-skilled oil and gas workforce; however, this has been in steady decline with the loss of around 50,000 jobs over the last four years. In contrast, the offshore wind sector has seen major growth, reaching 31,000 jobs in 2021/22 (with further increases forecast across all skill areas). The hydrogen and CCUS sectors are at an earlier stage of development, with their respective skills frameworks currently in the design phase.

In response to both these trends and net zero targets, the industry recognises that there is a need to retrain the existing personnel. This will help the workforce transition to new sectors, whilst also positioning the industry at the forefront of the green agenda, supporting recruitment activities to attract the best talent in a competitive market.

## Aligning Offshore Energy Standards Action Plan Stakeholders

The mapping of existing standards and development of an integrated framework across the industry will be completed with stakeholder input from awarding bodies, trade associations and trade unions. This will enable the different stakeholder groups to confirm the different areas of overlap for standards within the existing sectors.

Building on this, stakeholders from across the industry (operators, supply chain, industry bodies, trade associations and trades unions) will play a role in creating the Skills Passport, helping to design a comprehensive digital solution that meets industry requirements.

# Action Plan Activities

## Strategic Priority 1 from the Integrated People and Skills Strategy

### Create a coalition of standards bodies to map, align and mutually recognise offshore energy safety and technical training standards

A clear and progressive memorandum of understanding (MoU) will be agreed between different parties representing the different sectors within the offshore energy industry. Under the MoU, the recognised awarding bodies will map, align and mutually recognise offshore energy safety and technical training standards.

There will be a formal agreement between the awarding bodies and trade associations on which technical qualifications and training will be recognised by each sector for skilled workers and apprentices, as well as clear signposting to any additional top-up training.

#### Activity Plan

ACTIVITY	DATE
Agree Memorandum of Understanding between key industry stakeholders	Q2, 2022
Agree structure of standards bodies' coalition	Q2, 2022
Publish Memorandum of Understanding across the offshore energy industry	Q3, 2022

## Strategic Priority 2 from the Integrated People and Skills Strategy

### Develop an integrated framework of offshore energy safety and technical training standards built on recognition, which is simple, flexible, visible and equitable, and avoids duplication of training wherever possible

In the immediate term, the mapping of safety and technical skills and qualifications will initially be conducted for a first tranche of job roles selected based on a number of factors, including workforce critical mass and perceived skill shortages. On completion, this work will be published to the wider industry, enabling workers who wish to transition between sectors to understand which of their existing safety and technical qualifications and training will be recognised and whether any additional training is required to enable cross-sector movement.

In the short term, the remaining on-site roles will have their safety and technical qualifications and training mapped (where applicable) to show which qualifications are recognised between the different sectors. This will be complemented by the development and launch of the required transitional safety and technical training standards across the different sectors.

In the medium term, a robust, integrated skills framework will be developed. This will provide a consistent approach to the management of safety and technical qualifications and training across all sectors of the offshore energy industry, while also enabling the industry bodies to confirm the impact of any additional qualifications across the industry.

In the long term, an integrated framework will be developed for future needs while also establishing an ongoing process for annual and scheduled updates to standards. This will allow representatives from the different sectors to understand the impact across the wider industry from any new standards or any updates to existing standards. This will support the ongoing development and use of a Skills Passport solution as new qualifications are released across different sectors, allowing the different sectors to identify the impact of future skills across the wider industry.

## Activity Plan

ACTIVITY	DATE
Complete mapping of Safety and Survival training programmes and identify recognition opportunities	Completed Q4, 2021
Formal agreement on recognition of common Safety and Survival training reached and results published	Q2, 2022
Mapping of 1st tranche of common Technical Qualifications and Training completed, approved, and published	Q2, 2022
Development and launch of required transition Technical Training Standards completed, credit rated and published	Q2, 2022
Mapping of 2nd tranche of common Technical Qualifications and Training completed, approved, and published	Q3, 2022
Development and launch of required transition Safety and Survival Standards completed	Q3, 2022
Develop an integrated skills framework	Q4, 2022
Establish annual and scheduled updates to standards and associated mapping	Q4, 2022
Develop an integrated skills framework for future needs	Q1, 2023

## Strategic Priority 3 from the Integrated People and Skills Strategy

### Implement a digital solution that allows skilled workers to move easily across sectors, creating a more mobile and flexible workforce

In the short term, a cross-sector Steering Group and an Industry Sponsor will be established, both of which will support the development of the Skills Passport by providing industry guidance and support where required. An industry funding model will need to be confirmed to deliver the solution and agree the preferred design option.

In the medium term, the focus will be on progressing with the build of the solution using an agile delivery model. This will enable industry stakeholders to view the iterative development of the solution, making sure that the designed solution performs as required. Once developed, it will undergo robust testing with a pilot scheme before it is deployed across the offshore energy industry.

In the long term, once the solution has been successfully deployed across the industry, future enhancements and capabilities will be identified that could be added to in response to changing industry trends or technological advancements. This will enable the solution to feature the latest innovative technologies, while also adding value for the industry in other scenarios, such as CAPEX investment or workforce planning.

## Activity Plan

ACTIVITY	DATE
Develop high-level requirements for Skills Passport	Completed Q1, 2022
Develop high-level options for Skills Passport	Completed Q1, 2022
Establish cross-sector project steering group	Q2, 2022
Industry sponsor for Skills Passport in place	Q2, 2022
Agree funding model to deliver Skills Passport	Q2, 2022
Agree a preferred option for Skills Passport	Q3, 2022
Agree delivery model and solution	Q3, 2022
Skills Passport Proof of Concept	Q4, 2022
Build Skills Passport	Q1, 2023
Test Skills Passport	Q2, 2023
Pilot Skills Passport	Q2, 2023
Deploy Skills Passport	Q3, 2023
Identify future development and enhancements to Skills Passport (v3)	Q1, 2024
Identify future development and enhancements to Skills Passport (v4)	Q3, 2024

## Strategic Priority 4 from the Integrated People and Skills Strategy

### Develop a plan to extend existing training standards to emerging sectors such as hydrogen and CCUS to achieve high levels of safety, operational and technical performance

In the medium term, a plan will be developed to broaden the scope of the mapped technical qualifications and training, and the mapped safety and survival training, beyond the immediate industries to incorporate emerging sectors (such as hydrogen and CCUS). The integrated framework of offshore energy safety and technical training standards will both be expanded to accommodate these new sectors and will help future-proof both the mapped qualifications and the associated Skills Passport functionality.

In the long term, key industry stakeholders will complete the mapping of the different technical qualifications and training, and safety and survival training for the emerging sectors, integrating these into the mapped qualifications to provide a comprehensive view of qualifications recognised across the offshore energy industry. This activity will also be aligned with the ongoing development and growth of these emerging sectors, to provide a comprehensive view of the mapped qualifications for the specific roles within these sectors.

## Activity Plan

ACTIVITY	DATE
Develop a plan to extend Technical Qualifications and Training to emerging sectors	Q3, 2022
Develop a plan to extend common Safety and Survival training to emerging sectors	Q3, 2022
Complete mapping of Technical Qualifications and Training for emerging sectors	Q1, 2023
Complete mapping of Safety and Survival training for emerging sectors	Q1, 2023
Set out plan for phased extension of training standards into CCUS, hydrogen and other emerging sectors	Q4, 2024

## The industry input to support the successful development and delivery of the Action Plan

As the Integrated People and Skills Strategy sets out, this is a complex cross-sector strategy which needs the industry to work in different ways to achieve the strategic priorities. The areas below set out some of the key factors that will enable the delivery of the Action Plan.

- **Industry collaboration at leadership level that aligns around a common, integrated solution – this is a first, to enable a cross-industry solution that lowers the barriers to transition. It will require leadership that puts aside commercial and personal interests to deliver the best industry result.**
- **Empowered working groups collaborating and prioritising the interests of the industry and the workforce – strong collaboration will be required to develop a solution that is designed appropriately and accepted by the industry.**
- **A funding model that supports the development of an industry-level solution and lowers the barriers for workforce transition – this will require a cross-industry solution and financial support from a number of organisations to avoid any bias towards an individual sector or organisation.**

---

## Outcomes

**Safety:** help reduce the duplication of safety training for the workforce when transitioning between sectors, and display the required safety and emergency response qualifications for each sector within this safety-critical industry.

**Finance:** reduce the incurred cost for the existing workforce when transitioning between sectors. Currently there is a siloed approach to training the workforce when transitioning between sectors with individuals often having to repeat training at significant expense.

**Performance:** reduce the time spent by the workforce in completing the required training to transition between sectors.

**Reputation:** demonstrate that the industry is thinking innovatively by developing a solution that both meets the needs of the wider industry and supports the transition of the existing workforce between different sectors.

**Collaboration:** sectors will work collaboratively when updating the required standards across the industry under an integrated standards framework.

---