

High-growth Industries Call On Government to Pause and Rethink Apprenticeship End-point Assessment Reforms

4 months ago



Leaders across the science sector have made an urgent call to government to reconsider potentially harmful reforms to the way apprenticeships are assessed.

Members of two leading employer bodies representing tens of thousands of workers across science-based industries – the [Science Industry Partnership](#) (SIP) and the Nuclear Industry Skills Partnership (NISP) – have written to the skills minister, Baroness Jacqui Smith, raising their concerns.

SIP represents companies in the life sciences and industrial science industries, while NISP’s membership includes companies of all sizes in civil and defence. Both sectors are critical to the UK’s economic growth.

Among the concerns raised is that shortening apprenticeships and making assessments ‘lighter touch’ will compromise learner competence and increase operational risk.

The employers also say reducing their involvement in designing the standards which underpin apprenticeships will lead to qualifications with less credibility and that won’t meet industry needs.

Life sciences, defence and advanced manufacturing are among the critical sectors of the economy which the government has prioritised for driving growth and greater prosperity around the country.

Chair of SIP, Alex Felthouse, said: “The government’s commitment to making the UK a global life sciences

superpower relies on a first-class workforce with the right knowledge, skills and behaviours.

“However, we’re concerned these reforms put workforce competence at risk – so we’re urging government to work with us in rethinking them and to understand what businesses of all sizes need to thrive.”

Chair of NISP, John Male, said: “Our industries have enormous potential to drive much-needed economic growth and the right workforce is absolutely fundamental to this. But these changes could undermine the integrity of technical education and jeopardise the UK’s ability to deliver on its clean energy and innovation commitments. “Employers have the expertise and we believe government should make the most of that in reshaping the apprenticeship system to help deliver the workforce of the future.”