[News story: New opportunity for employers to play major role in setting new apprenticeships standards](#)

Employers and experts from across different industries are being given the opportunity to take an active role in shaping apprenticeships across England.

The Institute for Apprenticeships, the new governmental body covering apprenticeship standards, has for the first time issued an open call for leaders from across industry to apply to become route panel members. Successful applicants will play an important role in shaping the requirements of apprenticeships in their sector.

Route panels are employer-led groups formed of experts from within a particular industry sector. The Institute for Apprenticeships oversees 15 route panels in total, each covering different sectors such as agriculture, social care or legal and finance. Their aim is to review the quality of standards for apprenticeships and make sure they provide the right basis for future employment.

Peter Lauener, Chief Executive of the Institute for Apprenticeships, said:

> We are taking important steps to ensure the quality of apprenticeships. They are crucial routes in helping young people reach their potential, and they provide excellent career development, as well as retraining opportunities later in life.
>
> Apprenticeships are playing an increasingly important role in British industry, and it is important that the right structures are in place to ensure they equip people with the right skills. This is a fantastic opportunity for employers and experts to bring their knowledge to the table and make their voices heard.

For [more information and to apply](#), the advert is open until 12pm on Friday, 4 August 2017 via Public Appointments on GOV.UK.

Notes to Editor

The Institute for Apprenticeships launched on 1 April 2017 as an employer-led body ensuring high-quality apprenticeship standards and assessment plans in England. It is expected that from April 2018, this remit will expand to include responsibility for technical education.

[Speech: Matt Hancock's speech on technology at the Margaret Thatcher Conference on Security](#)

It is commonplace to say that technology is changing almost every aspect of our lives.

Some say the change is greater than ever before, and they may be right.

I wonder, if the child born in 1820, when the fastest anyone could travel was by horse, and any information could travel was by pigeon, would have experienced more change over a lifetime than a child born in, say, 1970, or 1980 will experience over their lifetime.

But there is no doubt that the changes we have lived through, and are living through, are huge.

And they are ultimately underpinned by one thing. The cost of storing and transmitting information has collapsed over a generation, in a way unprecedented since the invention of the printing press in 1454. And now, communication, around the globe, is almost costless — so long, that is, as you can get a signal.

This change has created huge advantages, many beyond measure.

It has allowed ideas to spread, collaboration to happen, people to learn. It has entertained us; saved us time, brought people together.

It has replaced jobs, changed jobs and created new jobs.

And yet we are only at the cusp of the impact of this free flow of data: of artificial intelligence, machine learning, automation of the means of production, distribution and exchange, not just by hand, but increasingly by brain.

As someone who comes from a tech background, I find this change both exciting and daunting.

It offers great promise for humanity, and has the potential to bring dark new threats.

The question we face as a society, is to harness the power of new technology for good, to improve the condition of mankind, and to mitigate those threats.

Rising to the challenge posed by new technology is one of the great challenges of our age.

To get our response right, first we've got to get our thinking right.

Let's just take two areas of impact: the impact on jobs, and the impact on society. Each is itself a huge canvas.

First, the impact on jobs.

Throughout history, new technologies have disrupted the world of work. Today, people worry, in seemingly equal measure, of how we will fill the countless jobs being created by new technology, and what we will do with those made unemployed by new technology.

This argument has been run repeatedly through the ages.

Harold Wilson feared the machines would take all the jobs.

John Maynard Keynes lamented a future of "technological unemployment".

The Luddites smashed looms because they were replacing the hand weaving technologies of the time. And I should know, because they were led by the Hancocks of Nottinghamshire, and I'm descended from them.

Yes, jobs are being destroyed, and jobs are being changed, but so too are jobs being created. Some say the new blue collar job is coding.

The vital task is to ensure we see redeployment, not unemployment. That we automate work and humanise jobs. And that we harness new technology to save money, improve safety, and build the UK as the best place in the world to develop and deploy new technology.

As Margaret Thatcher herself said:

"Technology is the true friend of full employment, the indispensible ally of progress, and the surest guarantee of prosperity."

We need to make that true today not by burying our heads in the sand but by equipping people with the skills they need to thrive with the new technology.

The second area where we've got to get our thinking right is the impact of technology on society.

While the internet brings incalculable benefits, so too it brings harms, and to harness its benefits we must mitigate these harms.

Parents worry that their children may be vulnerable online in ways they don't understand. Customers worry what tech companies are doing with their data. Citizens worry that terrorists can use the internet to plan with impunity.

The basic problem is that technology is developing faster than the speed at which society has built new rules to deal with the challenges it creates. As a result, we do not yet have a shared understanding of what is and isn't acceptable online.

It is the role of Government to lead the way in closing this gap and ensure the right balance between freedom and security in the new digital age.

The internet grew up on a libertarian dream that a lack of rules would bring out the best in everyone. It does bring out the best in most people. But just like offline, not everyone. That's human nature. So we need to ensure both that people are free, and are kept safe, online as well as off.

This is the underlying thinking behind the Digital Charter that we will introduce.

It will set out a rules-based framework for how businesses, individuals and wider society should act in the digital world.

Our starting point is that the delicate and careful limits that we have honed over generations for life off-line should apply online too. For example, we cherish the long-held principle of free speech. Yet that freedom has established boundaries, which stop people inciting terrorism or violence. And these boundaries must apply equally whether someone is using pen or paper or are writing it on social media.

And if we are successful, the reward is significant. Our aim is to create a world-leading framework that provides the basis for an understanding of the best way to bring this balance throughout the free world.

The stakes are huge. On both counts, the impact of getting things right will be enormous. No country yet has managed it and if we can do so we will have a big advantage, strengthen our digital economy, and make our country more secure.

Ultimately, the prize is significant.

Business, done right, is a force for good in the world. Technology, harnessed right, solves human problems and makes life better. Using data well, and according to sound ethical principles, is fundamental to ensuring we maximise the benefits, and limit possible harms, from all of this innovation.

This is our goal. And our goal is not just practical, but deeply moral too: to improve the human condition by harnessing technology for good. That surely is a prize worth working for.

[News story: Charity Commission online forms maintenance](#)

Essential maintenance is being carried out on the forms you use to contact us.

This evening (Tuesday 27 June) we are updating the online forms you use to get in touch with us.

The updates include changes to the layouts so they are easier to use.

If you can't access our online forms, it could be that they are still in maintenance mode. Just try again at a later time.

We will let you know when the maintenance is complete.

[Press release: Expert panel appointed to advise on immediate safety action following Grenfell fire](#)

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid today (27 June 2017) announced a new independent expert advisory panel to advise on any immediate measures that can be put in place to make buildings safe following the Grenfell Tower fire.

A separate independent Public Inquiry will investigate what happened and who was responsible for the disaster. This expert panel will look at any immediate action that is required so the public can be confident everything possible is being done to make all public and private buildings safe as quickly as possible.

The Panel will be made up of a range of building and fire safety experts, and will be chaired by Sir Ken Knight, former London Fire Commissioner and former Government Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser.

Other core members of the panel will be Dr Peter Bonfield, Chief Executive of the Building Research Establishment, Roy Wilsher, Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council and Amanda Clack, EY partner and President of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The panel have a wealth of experience in fire and building safety, including testing processes. They will also draw in wider technical expertise as necessary to inform their advice to the Communities Secretary. It is intended that a first meeting of the Panel will take place this week.

Sajid Javid said:

> It's absolutely right that there will be an independent public inquiry to get to the truth about what happened and who was responsible for the Grenfell Tower tragedy.
>
> However, I want to know if there are measures we can put in place now to keep people safe and I want them done immediately. I want the public to be confident everything possible is being done.
>
> That is why I am announcing a new expert advisory panel to advise

government on any immediate action that is required to ensure all buildings are safe.

Sir Ken Knight said:

I thank the Secretary of State for appointing me to chair this panel and welcome the opportunity to work with other experts to ensure that our buildings are safe and that we take whatever steps are necessary to ensure such a dreadful incident never happens again.

Dr Peter Bonfield said:

It is important that the best expertise from across our industry, the research communities, the professions and the public sector is drawn out to support the government and society at this critical time of need. I look forward to working with Sir Ken and drawing in expertise which will help address the challenges faced. I know that the will to positively contribute from professional bodies and others is strong and we will deploy this to support our work.

News story: Civil/crime news: LAA Portal upgrade

Rollout of improvement work to the LAA Portal has been delayed.

The original intention was to complete this work in May 2017. But we are now working on a new rollout schedule and will be providing updates on GOV.UK.

Keep an eye on our e-alerts and GOV.UK news stories in the coming weeks. These will give you the information you need on accessing the Portal.

As we told you in April, the upgrade will require an IT outage to the Portal and all the applications accessed through it. This will be done during an off-peak period in order to cause minimal disruption.

Once the work has been finalised you should see the following improvements:

- increased stability
- quicker log-in times
- more user-friendly password reset process
- status bar for all applications, providing up-to-date information on any

issues affecting performance

Updating your password

You will need to reset your password once the upgrade has been completed.

It is vital that that you know your password for the current Portal in order to do this. If you cannot recall your current password you will need to use the 'Password Resets' link below.

If you know your password you will not need reset it at this stage.

Further information

[Password Resets](#) – use this link and select the password reset video from the list of options

[Portal upgrade guidance](#) – advice on logging into the new Portal and frequently asked questions

[Upgraded Portal password resets](#) – a short video on what to do if you forget your password in the upgraded Portal (video will load automatically).