

# Making sense of Parliament, virtually

The Parliamentary Capability Team (PCT) part of the Government Skills and Curriculum Unit (GSCU) helps civil servants better understand how Parliament scrutinises the work of government and how they can effectively support their department's parliamentary work through training and learning resources. These are created and delivered with the support and advice of senior officials in Parliament, departmental parliamentary teams, the offices of the Leaders of the House of Commons and Lords, the Government Whips' Offices and the Office of Parliamentary Counsel. Making these training courses relevant to current government business and answering the questions about Parliament that civil servants actually want answered is crucial to supporting civil servants.

Given the unique challenges the Civil Service currently faces, it has never been more important that we all understand Parliament and factor it into all our decisions.

When the first lockdown was announced in March 2020, like many in the learning and development space, the PCT quickly took the predominantly face to face training courses online. Colleagues working to deliver the government's response to COVID-19 needed training and resources which were easily accessible whether they were based in the office or at home and could be completed at their own pace.

In moving to a new remote workshop format, the PCT split up their longer face to face courses (covering multiple parliamentary procedures) into 7 courses (one procedure per course). They utilised aspects of their highly-rated face-to-face training with interactive elements to engage learners and used questioning to check understanding at regular intervals to create high-quality virtual workshop content.

After testing the first workshops internally in the Cabinet Office and with trusted learning and development partners in departments such as the Department for Trade, they opened up registration wider to all civil servants.

In 2020/21 the PCT delivered over 200 events and workshops to 6,670 civil servants (up from 3,603 the previous year). With participants scoring the training on average 9/10.

Introduction to Parliament, 13 July 2020:

...this is one of the best workshops I've ever attended, inside and outside of government. It was easy to understand, delivered with confidence and clarity, and the small quizzes throughout helped to test learning...Opportunities for audience interaction/engagement were spot on and I noticed that you offered many ways for audiences to participate so that nobody felt left out.

Introduction to Parliament, 19 Oct 2020:

I found this workshop very helpful. Clear examples were given with the information which assisted understanding.

Written questions, 11 August 2020:

Really good level of detail – not too much that a newbie is overwhelmed, but enough that you walk away with a solid grasp of the topic

The team hasn't stopped improving their training and resources. Since the first redesign in March 2020, they have added [desk aids](#) and carried out a comprehensive review of the curriculum. This resulted in the launch of their [blended learning courses](#) in May 2021. These take their popular remote workshops and incorporate e-learning, consolidation tasks and suggested reading to allow civil servants accessing their resources to challenge themselves and take their understanding of Parliament to new levels.

To find out more about the Parliamentary Capability offer, visit the [learning portal](#) and sign up for the [monthly newsletter](#).

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## [Transforming training experiences at pace](#)

Even before the pandemic, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had a strong desire to modernise its learning offer. The need for a safe and efficient method of supporting over 13,500 new recruits accelerated this greatly, resulting in the DWP Transforming Learning Project.

The Learning Project moves away from traditional and often lengthy learning journeys. Science tells us how adults learn best and DWP is aligning themselves to this by moving away from classroom-based learning into the 70:20:10 learning model with support from leaders, coaches and mentors outside the classroom.

We are now seeing the impact from the Transformed Universal Credit Work Coach learning journey which has already helped make 13,500 new recruits operationally capable more quickly which helps meet the unprecedented Universal Credit customer demand. JP Marks, the Universal Credit Director General said:

This is fabulous progress, and a great example of innovation in delivery to transform experiences at pace – 52 down to 25 days is a huge leap; and great you'll continue to iterate, test and learn.

The compression of the journey into a 25-day-format allows new recruits to streamline their learning and afford more time to continual improvement and operational learning. The future impact of DWP's Transforming and Modernising Learning strategy will make learning more focused, engaging and supportive to colleagues, not only in the classroom but in the flow of their day-to-day work.

The new learning journey is an excellent example of using lessons learnt from across government and the Private Sector; it is also an exemplar of 'domain knowledge' building, strand 5 of the new Government Campus. DWP has also set up working groups with other departments including HMRC, DEFRA, MOJ and the DVSA. This helps share good practice and identify lessons learned. Cath Cant, DWP's Transforming Learning Project Lead said:

The work we have done so far to transform our learning service, in particular the more modular approach, will give us a sound base on which to build on as DWP's service for customers continues to transform and evolve. Moving to this approach has given our people more flexibility to learn in the flow of work and supports our hybrid way of working planned for the future.

If you want to find out more about the DWP Transforming Learning Project or get involved, contact [Cath.Cant@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:Cath.Cant@dwp.gov.uk) for more information.

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## [The vital role of the academic community in delivering COP26 aims](#)

Good morning. It is a pleasure to join you.

And thank you to everyone who has helped to organise this event.

Particularly our Italian partners. And it is a pleasure to speak alongside my friend Minister Cingolani.

Over the years, it is academic evidence, research and rigour that have helped to make the case for climate action.

To push the issue up the political agenda.

And to shape the world's response to it.

Whether that is James Hansen at the Senate Committee.

Or, indeed, the Stern Review.

Or the IPCC.

And that's not mentioning the countless innovations and insights that have helped us to find solutions to the challenges that we collectively face.

From engineers working on wave energy. To anthropologists assessing adaptation.

And today, I am asking the global academic community to deploy that research and that rigour, through innovations and insights, to help us deliver on our aims for COP26.

And particularly our ambition to put the world on the path to net zero.

And our COP26 campaigns. These campaigns are driving progress in five areas where action is absolutely vital:

On adaptation, on finance, nature based solutions, clean energy and clean transport.

Of course, academics are already using their knowledge to support these efforts.

The UK COP26 Presidency is very pleased to be working closely with the COP26 Universities Network.

They are doing a great wonderful job, bringing research to governments and the public, and to support action on climate change.

And it is fantastic to see that this conference today is focused so closely on our key COP26 priorities.

Because, frankly, your involvement is vital.

We need you to drive solutions.

Improving technologies in areas like zero emissions vehicles and clean energy.

And developing solutions to adaptation, including by joining the Adaptation Research Alliance, which will launch at COP26.

But we also need you to get involved in practical action, like helping health systems build their climate resilience.

And to keep modelling the risks of climate change.

Mapping those effects that could unravel if we pass certain tipping points.

We need you to bring together current knowledge.

And fill gaps where they exist.

In areas like nature-based solutions, for example.

And, crucially, we need you to communicate your findings to governments.

Enter the public debate. And inform policy.

Because your research can help to drive up government ambition and action.

By demonstrating the scale of the threat we face, the knock-on benefits of action, and the solutions available.

And your evidence is essential if government responses are to be grounded in the science.

Which they, of course, must be.

So please, get involved in discussions with politicians and policy makers.

Make clear to them the full scale of the threat of climate change, and the crisis that we will unleash if we do not act in time.

And show them the benefits of the resilient, zero emission economy, whether for jobs, GDP, nature or health.

Help governments to see clearly that they can, and they must, take critical steps now.

From closing down coal plants, to protecting forests, and moving to zero emission vehicles.

Show them the solutions available, from mangroves to wind farms.

And help them visualise how they can apply them.

Because it is only through a collective effort.

In this vital year for climate action.

That we can build a cleaner, more resilient world.

Thank you.

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## **Appointment of Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Cheshire: 17 May 2021**

Press release

The Queen has been pleased to appoint Lady Redmond MBE DL as Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Cheshire in succession to Mr David Briggs CVO MBE.



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Alexis Redmond is a chartered accountant, enjoying several years in the profession before she moved on to build a successful career establishing one of the largest independent television drama production companies in the UK with her husband Phil. She has held many senior non-executive, governor and trustee positions including National Museums Liverpool, Riverside Housing Association, Liverpool John Moores University and Alder Hey Hospital NHS Children's Charitable Trust. She has supported many charities and currently chairs a regional centre of the cancer charity Maggie's, covering Cheshire, Merseyside and North Wales; sits on the Poverty Truth Advisory Board set up by Cheshire West and Chester Council; and is President of St Luke's (Cheshire) Hospice.

She was born in South Wales and has lived in Cheshire for over 30 years with her husband and now adult children, achieving great satisfaction in the protection and development of her Registered Grade II garden at her home in Willington supporting local charities and the NGS. In 2003 she was made a Fellow of John Moores University, is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and was awarded her MBE in 2011 for services to the community.

Alexis was High Sheriff of Cheshire in 2018/19.

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**[Lord-Lieutenant of East Sussex: 17 May](#)**

# 2021

News story

Queen appoints Lord-Lieutenant of East Sussex.



The Queen has been pleased to appoint Mr Andrew Blackman DL as Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the County of East Sussex in succession to Sir Peter Field KCV0.

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