

# Competition opens for new wave of Institutes of Technology

A [competition](#) – backed by £120 million – to establish the next wave of Institutes of Technology (IoT), unique collaborations between Further Education colleges, universities and business, has been launched today by Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson.

Institutes of Technology's will be the pinnacle of technical training; offering higher technical STEM education and training (mainly at Levels 4 and 5) in key sectors such as digital, construction, advanced manufacturing and engineering, which will play a key role in helping to rebuild the economy after coronavirus.

By bringing together Further Education and Higher Education providers with employers, Institutes of Technology will deliver the technical knowledge and practical workplace skills that employers are demanding, unlocking the potential of home-grown talent and ensuring they are equipped with the skills of tomorrow.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

I'm thrilled to launch the competition to find the next wave of Institutes of Technology, which will play such an important role in levelling up skills and opportunity across the country.

Institutes of Technology are the pinnacle in higher technical education. By bringing together Further Education colleges, universities and businesses we can make sure more people can get the skills they need to secure rewarding careers, and employers can get the talented workforce they need to grow.

The expertise Institutes of Technology will help to deliver in vital sectors, including digital, construction and engineering, will be even more important as we build back better after the pandemic. I'd encourage any providers interested to apply.

The government plans to invest £290 million to establish a comprehensive network of 20 employer-led Institutes of Technology so every area of the country has access to one.

£120 million has been made available for this second wave, to make sure the benefits can be felt nationwide and to ensure everyone has the chance to gain the higher technical STEM skills they and the economy need, helping to level up opportunity and unlock growth everywhere.

Wave Two is open to all regions of the country without an Institute of Technology, including the North West, Midlands, East of England and parts of

the South East.

The launch of the competition builds on the success of wave one which selected 12 Institutes of Technology, with many already up and running in areas of the country including the South West, Midlands, Yorkshire, the North East, and London.

Institutes of Technology will play a key role in our reforms to higher technical education. [Earlier this year the Education Secretary announced a package of measures to boost the quality and take up of the qualifications](#) to help plug skills gaps and level up opportunity across the country, including newly approved higher technical qualifications from September 2022 supported by a government-backed brand and quality mark.

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## **Building stability and peace in Mali**

Thank you, Mr. President, and my thanks also to SRSG Annadif for his valuable briefing. Mr. President, let me begin by saying that the United Kingdom very much welcomes the establishment of a civilian-led transitional government in Mali. We commend the decisive action taken by ECOWAS in response to events in Mali in August, and the strong role of the sub-region in supporting progress since then.

Last time we met to discuss Mali on the 19th of August, the United Kingdom called for a return to civilian Government as soon as possible, to deliver for, and engage with the frustrations of the long suffering Malian people. So we echo the Secretary-General's call for the transitional authorities to take ownership of implementation of the 2015 peace agreement. The 2015 agreement remains the bedrock of building stability and peace in Mali. I'm pleased to hear from SRSG Annadif that a signatory group has entered the government, and I'm pleased to hear that implementation of the agreement is a key part of the new Government's mission. But colleagues, let us be frank. There has simply not been enough progress on the political track since 2015. Neither has the former Government and its Ministers nor the signatory groups taken seriously enough their obligations to deliver that agreement. Meanwhile, the people of Mali have suffered and peacekeepers in MINUSMA have paid with their lives. So I want to pass today a clear message to the new government of Mali and to all the signatories of that 2015 agreement. There is no time to waste. There can be no more evasion of responsibilities. You must now demonstrate that you are serious. Serious about securing the country, serious about providing services to your people who need them, especially in the north and in the centre.

Now I see in the chamber the distinguished representative of Mali and I look forward to hearing from him later. He is an excellent colleague and always has important things to say. But I'd just like to say to him that I hope he can report to his Government that by our next meeting he will be able to tell us about substantive progress on the following five issues. Firstly,

implementation of the 2015 agreement, not words about an intention to do so, but actual steps in that direction. And I want to echo the Estonian ambassador's words on the importance of the participation of women. Second, concrete steps to return the state to the north and the centre of Mali and to provide services to the people who live there. Thirdly, completion of the catch up phase of the DDR process. Fourth, to investigate reports of human rights violations and abuses and take action against impunity. And fifth, on the political, administrative, electoral and institutional reforms to prepare the ground for elections.

Now, none of us expect miracles in three months, but I think we need to see action on all those strands and evidence of progress. And we are there to support Mali. The UK will be following up both in New York and in Bamako. We continue to play our part. Our bilateral spend in the Sahel is now over \$100 million a year, which is primarily humanitarian, and through multilateral channels we contribute a further \$390 million a year and the UK will deploy a long range reconnaissance task force to MINUSMA this year.

Mr. President, with respect to MINUSMA, may I just say that we welcome the progress made by the mission under trying circumstances, including the difficulties and challenges of COVID-19. The rationale for mission adaptation to increase MINUSMA's flexibility and mobility of operations remains strong. MINUSMA will, of course, continue to have a vital role to play in supporting implementation of all of the points I have just made. But we will look to the Malian authorities, of course, primarily with MINUSMA to reinvigorate the process. Let me end, please, by just saying again, we are here to support Mali. We are here to support the people of Mali and the government of Mali, and we are here to support Mali's transition. But we expect to see tangible progress in the next reporting period. Thank you, Mr. President.

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## [Greek islands of Lesbos, Santorini, Serifos, Tinos and Zakynthos added to travel corridor list](#)

- Lesbos, Santorini, Serifos, Tinos and Zakynthos added to list of travel corridors for England having been assessed by the Joint Biosecurity Centre as posing a lower infection risk
- no countries removed from travel corridor list this week
- travellers urged to check the latest advice from the FCDO before travelling and will be required to fill in a [passenger locator form](#) before returning home

The Greek islands of Lesbos, Santorini, Serifos, Tinos and Zakynthos have been added to the government's [travel corridor list](#) following a decrease in

confirmed cases of coronavirus.

From 4am on Saturday 10 October 2020, passengers arriving to England from these destinations will no longer need to self-isolate, so long as they haven't been in or transited through any other non-exempt countries in the 14 days preceding their arrival.

The JBC's latest risk assessment for these Greek islands indicates that the risks to UK public health from travellers returning from these destinations has decreased to an acceptable level. A range of factors are taken into account when deciding to add or remove a destination from the exemption list, including the continued increase of coronavirus within an area, the numbers of new cases, information on a destination's testing capacity, testing regime and test positivity rate and potential trajectory of the disease in the coming weeks.

At the same time, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has also updated its [travel advice](#) with Lesbos, Santorini, Serifos, Tinos and Zakynthos now exempt from the FCDO's global advisory against non-essential travel.

No countries have been removed from the travel corridor list this week.

The government has made consistently clear it will take decisive action if necessary to contain the virus, including removing countries from the travel corridors list rapidly if the public health risk of people returning from a particular country without self-isolating becomes too high.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) has profoundly changed the nature of international travel. Travellers should always [check the latest advice from the FCDO](#), given the potential for changing coronavirus infection rates to affect both the advice about travelling to other countries and rules about self-isolation on return.

All travellers, including those from exempt destinations, will still be required to show a [completed passenger locator form](#) on arrival into the UK unless they fall into a small group of exemptions.

Penalties for those breaching the [self-isolation rules](#) when returning from non-exempt countries have increased from £1,000 for first offences up to £10,000 for subsequent offences, mirroring penalties for those breaching self-isolation following a positive COVID-19 test or contact from Test and Trace.

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**[From Portsmouth to Odesa, UK and](#)**

# Ukraine naval cooperation on show as Ukrainian President visits HMS Prince of Wales

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace was able to showcase the awesome capabilities of UK defence whilst hosting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Defence Minister Andriy Taran aboard HMS Prince of Wales, docked at Her Majesty's Naval Base Portsmouth.

It came as Royal Navy Type 45 destroyer HMS Dragon sails in the Black Sea in support of freedom of navigation. A port visit to Odesa will enable interactions with Ukrainian counterparts and showcase the UK-led Maritime Training Initiative.

Mr Wallace, Mr Zelenskyy and Mr Taran took part in a roundtable with representatives from the British defence industry in which they explored how the UK could support Ukraine in strengthening its Navy. The Defence Secretary and his counterpart then signed a Memorandum of Intent in which both countries asserted they would continue to work together on developing Ukraine's naval capabilities.

## **Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:**

Defence is at the heart of the UK's special partnership with Ukraine. I've been fortunate enough to visit Ukraine twice in the past year, where I expanded our commitment to supporting the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Now I am delighted to be able to welcome President Zelenskyy and Defence Minister Taran to explore how we can strengthen that relationship even further.

The UK's commitment to supporting Ukraine's security was demonstrated with engagements in both countries this week.

In Portsmouth on Wednesday, aboard a world class aircraft carrier that signifies UK defence's state-of-the-art shipbuilding capabilities, Ukrainian President Zelenskyy witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Intent for both countries to cooperate further. Meanwhile in Odesa, a strong and visible demonstration of the UK's commitment to its defence relationship with Ukraine was on show by the visit of HMS Dragon to the port of Odesa.

Following the Ukrainian President's visit, the head of the Royal Navy First Sea Lord Admiral Tony Radakin delivered a speech aboard HMS Prince of Wales in which he discussed the future of a Global Navy for a Global Britain, forward deployed around the world – just as HMS Dragon currently is by sailing in the Black Sea.

## **Maritime Training Initiative**

In August the Defence Secretary announced on a visit to Ukraine that the UK will lead a multinational Maritime Training Initiative for the Ukrainian Navy that will boost its ability to combat threats in the Black Sea.

Ukraine lost much of its naval capability during Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 and Ukraine has since continued to face a rising number of threats in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. In response, Ukraine has been building its Navy to protect its economic interests and its right to freedom of navigation and the UK is supporting this effort.

At the defence industry roundtable, President Zelenskyy, Defence Minister Taran and the Defence Secretary were delivered presentations from leading companies in the British defence industry.

The Defence Secretary and the Defence Minister Taran followed up their visit to HMS Prince of Wales with a bilateral meeting at the Ministry of Defence in Westminster on Thursday. The pair discussed wider regional security and key aspects of the Memorandum of Intent.

## **Operation Orbital**

Since the UK's training mission to Ukraine Operation Orbital began in 2015, British troops have trained over 18,000 members of the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF). Their efforts have made a real difference and saved lives as Ukraine faces down Russian aggression and threats to its sovereignty. Last year the Defence Secretary extended Operation Orbital until 2023.

The UK's Operation Orbital and Maritime Training Initiative is complemented by US security assistance support. This will further enhance Ukraine's capabilities and situational awareness in the maritime domain to more effectively defend itself against Russian aggression. The UK continues to urge all allies and partners to enhance their support for Ukraine.

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## **[Case of Mr Yuri Dmitriev: UK statement](#)**

Mr Chair,

We previously raised our concerns about the case of Mr Yuri Dmitriev at the Permanent Council on 21 May and 16 July 2020.

On 29 September the Karelia Supreme Court increased Mr Dmitriev's sentence from 3.5 years to 13 years imprisonment in a high-security penal colony. The United Kingdom is deeply concerned by this sentencing. In addition, we have concerns that at his most recent hearing Mr Dmitriev was forced at a very late stage to accept a lawyer he did not choose and who was unfamiliar with

the case.

Mr Chair,

The United Kingdom believes his case is a politically-motivated prosecution, triggered by Mr Dmitriev's work as a historian and representative of the human rights organisation Memorial.

We remind the Russian Federation of their OSCE commitments on Human Rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. In particular, we highlight the extensive OSCE commitments made in Copenhagen in 1990, including the right to a fair trial; the reaffirmation of those commitments in the 1991 Moscow Document; and the Ljubljana Decision of 2005 on Upholding Human Rights and the Rule of Law in Criminal Justice Systems.

Mr Chair,

We reiterate our call for the immediate and unconditional release of Mr Yuri Dmitriev, also noting that in light of Mr Dmitriev's age, health, and the Covid-19 pandemic, there is also a strong humanitarian case for his release.