



**The Rt Hon Baroness Jacqui Smith
Minister for Skills**

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Lord West of Spithead
House of Lords
London
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20 March 2025

Dear Alan,

I am writing to follow up the point you raised during the recent Lords Oral Question on 10 March regarding apprenticeships in the maritime sector.

As you highlighted, the maritime sector makes an important contribution both to economic growth and to the everyday lives of people across the country. We are supporting employers in the sector to develop the skilled workforces they need through a range of industry-designed apprenticeship standards. Apprenticeship standards include level 2 Seafarer, level 3 Maritime Electrical Fitter, level 3 Officer of the Watch, and level 5 Marine Pilot.

We offer financial support for employers to offer apprenticeships, including £1,000 payments to both employers and providers when they take on apprentices aged 16 to 18 or for apprentices aged 19-24 who have an Education, Health and Care Plan or have been in local authority care.

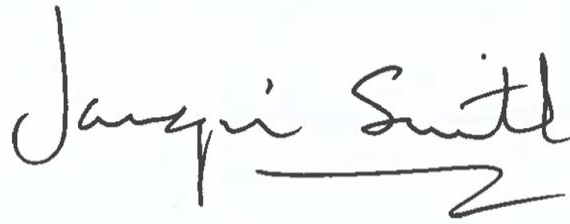
As we also discussed, the Government has committed to widening the apprenticeships offer into a growth and skills offer, in order to offer greater flexibility to employers and learners, aligned with the industrial strategy.

As a first step, this will include shorter duration and foundation apprenticeships in targeted sectors – helping more people learn new high-quality skills at work, fuelling innovation in businesses across the country, and providing high-quality entry pathways for young people.

We are taking advice from Skills England are working closely with employers, training providers, unions and other key partners to identify priority skills gaps, helping ensure that the levy-funded growth and skills offer delivers value for money, meets the needs of business, and support long-term growth.

Thank you again for taking the time to engage on this important topic. I hope these further details have been useful and I will place a copy in the House libraries.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light blue background. The signature reads "Jacqui Smith" in a cursive script. The word "Jacqui" is written in a larger, more prominent hand, while "Smith" is written in a smaller, more compact hand. A horizontal line is drawn under the word "Smith", and a small flourish extends from the end of the line.

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