



States Greffe

Deputy Rob Ward
Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Deputy Kirsten Morel
Minister for Sustainable Economic Development

BY EMAIL

14th April 2026

Dear Ministers,

Scrutiny Review: Lifelong Learning

The Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel (the 'Panel') has reviewed the Joint Ministerial Response in detail and would welcome clarification on a number of matters in order to support its understanding of the Ministers' position.

Finding 3: Central Information Point

In relation to the Ministerial Response to Finding 3, concerning the need for a central information point, the Panel notes that the Ministers have not agreed with the recommendation and have stated that Skills Jersey fulfils this role. The Panel wishes to highlight that the desire for a single, clearly identifiable central information point was a strong and consistent theme throughout the feedback received during the review. The Panel therefore considers it important to emphasise the significance of this need as expressed by stakeholders.

Finding 24 and Recommendation 15: Sole traders and the Better Business Support Package

With regard to the Ministerial Response to Finding 24, relating to sole traders, the Ministers state that this finding is incorrect, and note that sole-person businesses which hire their first employee, and thereby cease to be sole traders, are eligible under the Better Business Support Scheme. However, in the Ministerial Response to Recommendation 15, it is stated that "sole traders remain out of scope for the BBSP unless they make their first hire." The Panel considers these two statements to be contradictory and would request clarification, and an explanation of how these positions align.

Recommendation 3: Further research

In the Ministerial Response to Recommendation 3, which called for further research, the recommendation is rejected on the basis that the Children and Young People's Survey 2026 will cover this area. The Panel wishes to reiterate that its recommendation was not limited to children and young people. The Panel considers it essential that research also encompasses adults, and in particular individuals who have recently completed apprenticeships. The Panel

notes that children and young people do not represent the full cohort relevant to lifelong learning, and therefore the Panel does not consider this response to be sufficient.

Recommendation 9: Modular courses

In relation to the Ministerial Response to Recommendation 9, the Ministers have rejected the recommendation on the basis that “Jersey cannot award new qualifications.” The Panel believes that this response suggests a misunderstanding of the recommendation, as this was not what was being proposed by the Panel. The Panel wishes to reiterate that the proposal was for the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to launch a modular, stackable, and blended adult career-changer programme. The Panel did not propose the creation or awarding of new qualifications. The Panel would therefore welcome clarification as to whether the Ministers agree with the principle and intent of this proposal as set out above.

Recommendations 13 and 16: Proposed timeline

The Panel also notes that Recommendations 13 and 16 have been rejected solely on the basis of proposed timelines. The Panel would welcome further detail to better understand this position, including clarification on how the timelines have informed the decision to reject these recommendations, as it considers that the response provided does not fully address the rationale for this conclusion. The Panel would also welcome clarification on what alternative timelines the Ministers would consider to be acceptable.

Recommendation 14: Sustainable Funding Model for Shortage Sectors

Furthermore, Recommendation 14 has also been rejected on the basis that the Ministers consider the recommendation to already be in place. The Panel would note that, in such circumstances, responses are typically recorded as “*partially accepted*,” and the Panel therefore seeks clarification as to why the recommendation has been rejected rather than partially accepted.

Recommendations 18 and 19: Skills report and annual Skills Policy review

The Panel also seeks further clarity in relation to the Ministerial Responses to Recommendations 18 and 19. As the Ministers have indicated that these functions are already being undertaken, the Panel would welcome clarification on where the outputs of this activity can be accessed, including details of any reports, or published materials resulting from this work.

Ministerial Response Conclusion

With regard to the conclusion of the Ministerial Response, the Panel finds that reference to the scope is unnecessary, as is the reference to the number of stakeholder submissions received. The Panel wishes to reiterate that a number of private submissions were received during the review. The Panel greatly values and appreciates the time taken by individuals to provide evidence and engage constructively with the review and considers the Ministerial Response to be dismissive of this feedback. The Panel also finds that comments relating to the scope of the review are unnecessary, as the scope was clearly explained, with explicit reasons provided for the decision to exclude higher education.

Additionally, the Panel wishes to reiterate that the review was supported by an eminent expert adviser, Professor Ellen Boeren, who provided valuable insight into lifelong learning, including comparative analysis and lessons from other jurisdictions relevant to Jersey. The Panel is disappointed that the Ministerial Response appears to give insufficient consideration to this expert contribution.

Overall, the Panel considers lifelong learning and apprenticeships to be matters of critical importance to the future development of the Island's skills base and wider economy. For this reason, the Panel would invite the Ministers to reconsider some parts of the Ministerial response with regard to the Panel's findings, recommendations, and evidence, in light of the points raised in this letter.

The Panel appreciates that this request falls within a relatively short timeframe ahead of the commencement of the electoral candidate nomination period. Nonetheless, the Panel would be grateful to receive your response to these requests for further clarifications by **Friday 17th April 2026**.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Curtis', written in a cursive style.

Deputy Catherine Curtis
Chair
Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

