**Guidance on Green NOS as an addition to the Guide to Developing National Occupational Standards**

**Executive Summary**

This document provides guidance on the approach to the review and development of Green NOS as an addition to the ‘Guide to Developing National Occupational Standards’ and other guidance documents.

**This Net Zero/Green NOS guidance will outline:**

1. **The growing prominence of the green agenda**

In 2019, the UK Government established a legally binding target, committing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. The green agenda – consideration for the environment and for the impacts of human activity on climate change – has grown and now influences all areas of policy.

1. **A “NOS” definition of Net Zero/Green**

National Occupational Standards are important for their definition of work activities. Occupational activities will change as they evolve to support decarbonisation. A “NOS” definition of Net Zero/Green will provide coherence, and uses the UK Office for National Statistics definition as “Employment in an activity that contributes to protecting or restoring the environment, including those that mitigate or adapt to climate change.”

1. **Identified/listed green jobs/occupations**

The increasing numbers of new jobs or occupations that are evolving in response to the green agenda, mean that increasing numbers of ‘green’ suites of standards are being developed. Of the 18 suites identified on the National Occupational Standards Database during Autumn 2024:

* 8 relate to assessing and advising on energy use and promoting green options,
* 6 relate to installing, producing and maintaining green energy systems and infrastructure
* The remaining 4 relate to Environmental Conservation, Sustainable Manufacturing and Managing Organisational Environmental Performance.

The suite titles and SOC codes are listed in the main body of the Guidance.

1. **Promote the existing full NOS Suites for “Green Jobs/Occupations”**

While most of these suites of standards will have little or no relevance to non-related sectors, those such as Sustainable Food Production and Organisational Environmental Awareness and Management, may provide a useful starting point for other sectors when developing standards for newly evolving green jobs.

1. **Importance of identifying transferable green skills within non-green jobs/occupations**

Demographics, time-to-competence, and the competitive nature of talent attraction mean that programs to re-skill and up-skill existing staff will be particularly important in the green jobs agenda. Identifying individuals’ existing transferable green skills will be key to the sufficient supply of the competent workers that Net Zero needs.

1. **Grouping together/adaptation of existing transferable green/environmental skills NOS**

The new NOS Development Model aims to reduce the proliferation of ‘green’ standards and improve the robustness of ‘green’ standards content by:

* Creating some transferable, pan or multi sector ‘green’ standards.
* Creating a ‘green’ area on the National Occupational Standards database to group together ‘green’ standards.
* Producing some ‘green’ performance criteria and knowledge statements for use in non-‘green’ standards.
1. **Benefits of using and availability of job-specific, sector-specific, and multi-sector NOS on the database**

With the growing focus on the importance of green issues, sector representatives should consider the impact of the green agenda on sector practice and ensure that green issues are robustly represented in their sector’s standards. As part of this process, they will need to consider the existing ‘green’ standards currently available on the National Occupational Standards Database.

As well as the ‘green’ suites of standards mentioned above 151 individual standards from non-’green’ suites, but with ‘green’ wording at title level were also identified:

* 54 of these relate to minimising own environmental impact,
* 44 relate to managing the environmental performance of an organisation,
* 19 relate to evaluating environmental impact,
* 17 to installing, producing and maintaining green energy systems and infrastructure,
* The remainder relate to a mixture of other themes which are detailed in the guidance.

Of these 151 standards, 56 have a discrete ‘green’ function while 95 integrate it with another function. 43, for example, integrate it with health and safety. Whilst this dual function ensures that green practice is integrated within all aspects of workplace practice, in many cases, the ‘green’ content is not in proportion to its prominence at title level and is not robust. To avoid proliferation of non-robust ‘‘green’’ content, potential imports should be chosen with care.

Using or adapting existing job-specific, sector-specific or multi-sector ‘green’ standards will reduce proliferation of standards, increase job transferability, save in development time and, provided imports with robust ‘green’ content are chosen, improve sector practice and ultimately secure achievement of net zero targets.