

National Grid CEO repeats call for greater business involvement in schools

Steve Holliday used speech at CBI Education conference to encourage more businesses to help close the skills gap

09 Sep 2014

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- There are 10 people chasing every one single job in culture media and sports, yet every year there's a shortfall of 30,000 graduates needed for engineering roles.
- Businesses need to work with schools to provide real insights into the breadth of opportunities available in the world of work

National Grid CEO Steve Holliday will be using a speech at the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) Education Conference this morning (Tuesday September 9, 2014) to again call for greater business involvement in schools.

The energy boss, who is Chair of the Talent and Skills leadership team for Business in the Community and also Chair of the country's largest Government backed Employer Ownership of Skills scheme (EEIP) says National Grid and other key business have to get more proactive if the skills crisis is to be averted.

"There are 10 people chasing every one single job in culture media and sports, yet every year there's a shortfall of 30,000 graduates needed for engineering roles. Add to that nearly a million young unemployed and you can see where the disjoin is," he says.

"There's a wealth of really interesting, exciting and well paid jobs out there, but young people just don't know about them, or they have an incorrect perception of what that job entails. It's vital for businesses to play an active role in providing real insights into the breadth of opportunities available in the world of work, helping align young people's aspirations and future opportunities.

Speaking to a business audience at The Royal Society, Mr Holliday will encourage more companies to get involved in schemes that get businesses into schools, such as Business in the Community's Careers Lab programme, City Year and Movement to Work.

He feels a more active partnership with education is vital to grow British industry and improve the economic prosperity of the UK as a whole.

“According to a report by the Education and Employers Task Force, students receiving four or more employer contacts during school will be five times less likely to be NEET (that’s not in employment, education or training), they will receive an 18 per cent wage premium in work and will be two-and-a-half times more likely to be confident about finding a job. That’s an incredible statistic for just 4 employer contacts.

“Over the next 10 years 60% of all new jobs created in the UK will need science, technology, engineering and maths skills, yet not enough school children succeed in these areas. Of those that do, less than half continue pursuing engineering disciplines into apprenticeships or university, and then to work.”

National Grid is starting to see a return on investment in school programmes. Some of the students enrolled in this year’s ‘alternative to university’ Engineer Training Programme were inspired to work for National Grid after taking part in a week-long work experience programme for 12 to 14-year-olds prior to choosing their GCSE options.

As well as offering apprenticeships, the engineer training programme and graduate placements, National Grid also run traineeships for the young unemployed and people with disabilities such as Autism to help them get find permanent paid employment.

NOTES TO EDITORS

For more information on Careers Lab visit the [Careers Lab pages on our website](#)

National Grid is one of the largest investor-owned energy companies in the world. We own and manage the grids that connect people to the energy they need, from whatever the source. In Britain and the north-eastern states of the US we run systems that deliver gas and electricity to millions of people, businesses and communities.

In Britain, we run the gas and electricity systems that our society is built on, delivering gas and electricity across the country. In the North Eastern US, we connect more than seven million gas and electric customers to vital energy sources, essential for our modern lifestyles.

National Grid in the UK:

We own the high-voltage electricity transmission network in England and Wales, operating it across Great Britain

We own and operate the high pressure gas transmission system in Britain

Our gas distribution business delivers gas to 10.9 million homes and businesses

We also own a number of related businesses including LNG importation, land remediation and metering

National Grid manages the National Gas Emergency Service free phone line on behalf of the industry - 0800 111 999 (all calls are recorded and may be monitored).

Our portfolio of other businesses is mainly concerned with infrastructure provision and related services where we can exploit our core skills and assets to create value. These businesses operate in areas such as Metering, Grain LNG Import, Interconnectors and Property. National Grid Carbon Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of National Grid. It undertakes Carbon Capture Storage related activities on behalf of National Grid.

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Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

National Grid undertakes no obligation to update any of the information contained in this release, which speaks only as at the date of this release, unless required by law or regulation.

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