

# Sky to sponsor the COP26 summit in Glasgow

- Sky will join National Grid, NatWest Group, Scottish Power and SSE as Principle Partners for the COP26 summit
- Sky announce a new ambitious climate action strategy in addition to their Sky Zero campaign
- UK businesses continue to show commitment in pushing forward climate action

The UK has today revealed Sky as a new sponsor for COP26 as it gears up for a year of climate action ahead of the international climate change summit in Glasgow this November.

Sky becomes the fifth Principal Partner who will support the delivery of a successful and ambitious COP in November. SSE, ScottishPower, NatWest Group and National Grid were announced in November 2020.

Through these partnerships, the COP26 Presidency is showing a clear commitment to working with businesses who are taking real steps towards net zero.

In February 2020, Sky set its commitment to be net zero carbon by 2030 across its entire value chain. Since then, Sky has become the first broadcaster to sign up to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Sports for Action Framework and has achieved CarbonNeutral® certification for all of its UK Sky Original productions.

Sky is also building what aims to be the most environmentally friendly film and TV studios in the world at Sky Studios Elstree.

And today, Sky has announced a series of new commitments for its TV productions. Every future Sky Original will now adhere to clear guidelines to help achieve Albert Sustainable Production Certification, in addition, Sky Sports is targeting certification for every live host broadcast in 2021.

COP26 President Alok Sharma said:

This is an exciting year as we prepare for COP26 in Glasgow. Businesses have a key part to play in the summit and in building back greener, so I am delighted to welcome Sky as a Principal Partner for COP26. Their Sky Zero campaign shows how ambitious they are to take meaningful action for the future of our planet and I look forward to working together in the run up to COP26

Jeremy Darroch, Executive Chairman Sky, said:

This year will require us all to focus and adapt as we accelerate our efforts to tackle the climate crisis. At Sky, we believe that our voice and reach can play a vital role in empowering our customers, partners and industry peers to build a better world, because it's the actions of business, the government and individuals, that will define our generation. I hope Sky's new Planet Test and Sustainable Production Principles will spur others to make the transition to net zero with us.

## Notes to editors

For press queries contact [COP26media@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:COP26media@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

- Principal Partners are the top tier of sponsorship for COP26.
- We will release information on the details of sponsorship agreements after the event.
- We are ensuring that COP26 provides value for money for the taxpayer.
- All sponsors have committed to the Science-Based Targets initiative, this requires them to set ambitious targets for emissions reductions, including having a credible action plan. All in line with what the latest climate science says is necessary to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

## Sky

Through its Sky Zero campaign, Sky plans to:

- Transform its business to achieve net zero carbon emissions across its entire value chain by 2030 – this includes its supply chain, TV productions, use of its products in customer homes and the transition of 5,000 vehicles to a zero emissions fleet
- Help millions of customers understand and reduce their carbon footprint
- Work with policymakers to create a supportive environment that allows businesses to meet ambitious carbon targets

More details can be found here: <https://www.skygroup.sky/sky-zero>

## The Science Based Targets initiative

- SBTi mobilizes companies to set science-based targets and boost their competitive advantage in the transition to the low-carbon economy.
  - It is a collaboration between CDP, the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), World Resources Institute (WRI) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and one of the We Mean Business Coalition commitments.
  - The initiative defines and promotes best practice in science-based target setting, offers resources and guidance to reduce barriers to adoption, and independently assesses and approves companies' targets.
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## Transport update: M25 Junction 10 and A3 Wisley Interchange decision extension



I have been asked by my Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State, to make this written Ministerial statement. This statement concerns the application made under the Planning Act 2008 for the proposed alteration and upgrading by Highways England of the existing M25 Junction 10 Roundabout.

Under section 107(1) of the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary of State must make his decision within 3 months of receipt of the examining authority's report unless exercising the power under section 107(3) to extend the deadline and make a statement to the House of Parliament announcing the new deadline. The Secretary of State received the examining authority's report on the M25 Junction 10/A3 Wisley Interchange development consent order application on 12 October 2020 and the original deadline for a decision was 12 January 2021.

The deadline for the decision is to be extended to 12 May 2021 (an extension of 4 months) to enable the Secretary of State to consult further on the application including on the question of appropriate provision of replacement land to compensate for the proposed special category land to be compulsorily purchased under the development consent order.

The decision to set a new deadline is without prejudice to the decision on whether to grant development consent.

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## [DAO 01/21 Control Totals 2020-21](#)

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## [Applying for Ofqual recognition](#)

In these case studies, we will take a look at the experiences of 4 end-point assessment organisations (EPAOs) who have achieved Ofqual recognition: Autoexel, EMPI Awards, Awarding UK and Achieve and Partners.

We have collected feedback from these organisations which we hope will help others thinking about, or in the process of, applying for recognition. We share the benefits they found, challenges they experienced and their top tips on applying for recognition.

At the end of the case studies you will find useful links to further resources, as well as how to get in contact with us.

### **What were the additional benefits of applying for Ofqual recognition to your organisation?**

All of the organisations realised additional benefits that have improved their organisations in a variety of ways, such as:

- improved organisational policies, procedures and operations
- strengthened governance
- improved knowledge and expertise within the organisation

Autoexel told us that they used the rigorous process of gaining recognition as an opportunity to take an in-depth review of how their organisation was operating and will operate in the future, asking themselves if it was the best it can be and in line with their long-term goal of “doing the right

thing for their industry”.

We reviewed how we did things and how we can improve things, this made Autoexel a much less vulnerable organisation and a safer organisation.

Autoexel

Achieve and Partners and Awarding UK used the General Conditions as well as the Criteria for Recognition to reflect on their organisation’s operations, policies and procedures to ensure that they are the best that they can possibly be. For Achieve and Partners, this helped them to build in compliance from the beginning, and ensured that they had a strong understanding of how their policies and procedures worked in practice across the full qualification lifecycle.

All 4 organisations also highlighted the benefit of improved governance. All organisations reported a strengthened body of governance, either by adding more independence to their governing boards or building a stronger network of advisory voices available to their organisations. This strengthened their organisation’s wider proficiency and capabilities in assessment and managing risk, which in turn helped to improve their application further.

EMPI Awards also found that in reviewing operations, processes and procedures for their end-point assessments as part of the application, they improved the way that they design, deliver and award other non-regulated qualifications for their industry.

## **What were the greatest challenges and realisations?**

The bar to achieving recognition is the same, whatever type of qualification or EPA you are offering. It is a high bar because of our statutory duties to maintain standards and protect learners. This means that applicants must spend time demonstrating what they are capable of, and consider the evidence required to meet these standards.

Each organisation shared some of the challenges that they found in achieving recognition. Every organisation is different, so some of these challenges may or may not be similar to those that others experience.

Some of the challenges the organisations faced were:

- the timescales and resources required
- the language used in our documents
- the way that EPAs are regulated as qualifications
- managing and mitigating against conflicts of interest

Awarding UK found that the timescales required were a challenge. Being able to maintain organisational buy-in and resources over a period of months was important and something they had to manage throughout the process.

EMPI Awards' greatest realisation was that previous work on their application to the ESFA's register of end-point assessment organisations was very different to our requirements, therefore taking more time and resources than originally planned. While there is some crossover in the 2 applications, and we are actively working with the ESFA on aligning the processes, they found that we required more detail on qualifications and assessment, and a more holistic view of how policies and procedures worked in practice throughout the entire qualification lifecycle. If you would like more information, or have any questions relating to our recognition process and the ESFA's register of EPAOs, get in touch with us using the details at the bottom of this page.

Autoexel also found that the greatest challenge to overcome was the time and extra resources required for developing the application, and the wider commitment needed to take on the responsibility of becoming a regulated EPAO. Although Autoexel found the application itself mainly straightforward, they noted that they found our language different to that already used in their organisation, particularly around treating EPAs as qualifications and referring to training providers as centres.

Language was also a challenge for Awarding UK and Achieve and Partners. Awarding UK found recognition as "a variation on a theme" having significant experience of regulation in Higher Education, but they found that the language used in regulating university qualifications was different from that used by us. A challenge for them was writing policies where their internal/sector vocabulary was different to that of ours and the apprenticeship assessment plans'. In some instances, they had to separate out their HE policies and their EPA policies, and with hindsight believe that this was a good thing to do, as there are some differences in the regulatory requirements for certain areas, for example in appeals policies and procedures.

Achieve and Partners encountered challenges around EPAs being treated as a qualification for regulatory purposes. Although their team is made up of experienced Responsible Officers, they found it a challenge to take the apprenticeship assessment plans, which were not designed and developed by themselves, and work out how they could apply their organisation's assessment policies, procedures and infrastructure in a compliant way. EMPI Awards found that they did not foresee some of the conflicts of interest that existed within their organisation, and had to develop policies and procedures to manage those conflicts. We have recently published further guidance on conflicts of interest, which you can find a link to below under further resources.

## **What are your top tips for organisations applying for Ofqual recognition?**

Achieve and Partners recommend that organisations take the time to consider what it means to be a regulated Awarding Organisation, and the responsibility that goes with that. It is important to make sure your organisation is capable and has the appropriate resources and assessment expertise in place.

Do your homework to understand what it means to be regulated – what does it mean to be an awarding organisation and the responsibility that goes with it – that every learner has a fair assessment.

## Achieve and Partners

Awarding UK also recommend taking the time at the start to read and fully understand our Conditions, Criteria of Recognition and guidance documents, and to make sure you have the most up-to-date information. They recommend using the process as an opportunity to double check everything that you are currently doing and ensure that everything is the best it can be.

If you have any questions then don't be afraid to ask Ofqual, and don't see feedback as negative, Ofqual is asking these things for a reason and their questions and feedback need to be considered seriously.

## Awarding UK

EMPI Awards recommend that organisations consider the General Conditions of Recognition as a starting point, and do a self-assessment of compliance against them. They used a traffic light system of green (compliant), amber (partially compliant) and red (non-compliant). This was useful as it enabled them to fully understand both the language and our approach to regulation. While this took time, it helped in the long run as it ensured that their application was as strong as it could be.

EMPI Awards also emphasise the importance of considering key questions throughout the application such as:

- is it the best it can be?
- what does good look like?
- who does what, where, when, why and, most importantly, how?

Autoexel recommend considering how other organisations have approached the application, but coming up with your own way of doing it. Each organisation is different and our recognition application allows for creativity and individuality. It is not a checklist. We will tell you what needs to be achieved, but not how to do it. Therefore, it is important to show us your way of doing things, what good looks like for you and your sector, and how that all works in practice.

Own the application, you have to live and breathe it as you will be questioned on it at the panel meeting.

## Autoexel

All 4 organisations also told us that EPAOs should fully understand

everything that's written in their application.

An EPAO must take ownership over their own application, even when using consultants – own your homework, it's okay to have a tutor to clarify, challenge, add value, but you have to own your homework to be successful.

Awarding UK

## Further resources

If you are considering applying for Ofqual recognition and have any questions then please get in touch. If you want to talk to us about applying for recognition please [register on the Recognition Gateway](#). Once you have registered on our Recognition Gateway, we can arrange a meeting with one of our team to talk you through the recognition process in more detail and answer any questions that you have.

Alternatively, please email [Strategic.Relationships@Ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:Strategic.Relationships@Ofqual.gov.uk)

The resources below will help you with the process, including next steps and further information.

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## [Rolls-Royce and UK Space Agency launch first ever study into nuclear-powered space exploration](#)

This new research contract will see planetary scientists work together to explore the game-changing potential of nuclear power as a more plentiful source of energy, capable of making possible deeper space exploration in the decades to come.

Nuclear propulsion, which would involve channelling the immense energy released in splitting the atom to accelerate propellants, like hydrogen, at huge speeds, has the potential to revolutionise space travel.

By some estimates, this kind of engine could be twice as efficient as the chemical engines that power our rockets today. Spacecraft powered by this kind of engine could, conceivably, make it to Mars in just 3 to 4 months – roughly half the time of the fastest possible trip in a spacecraft using the current chemical propulsion.

Nuclear space power is anticipated to create new skilled jobs across the UK

to support the burgeoning UK space economy.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

As we build back better from the pandemic, it is partnerships like this between business, industry and government that will help to create jobs and bring forward pioneering innovations that will advance UK spaceflight.

Nuclear power presents transformative possibilities for space exploration and this innovative study with Rolls-Royce could help to propel our next generation of astronauts into space faster and for longer, significantly increasing our knowledge of the Universe.

Dr Graham Turnock, Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency, said:

Space nuclear power and propulsion is a game-changing concept that could unlock future deep-space missions that take us to Mars and beyond.

This study will help us understand the exciting potential of atomic-powered spacecraft, and whether this nascent technology could help us travel further and faster through space than ever before.

Dave Gordon, UK Senior Vice President, Rolls-Royce Defence said:

We are excited to be working with the UK Space Agency on this pioneering project to define future nuclear power technologies for space. We believe there is a real niche UK capability in this area and this initiative can build on the strong UK nuclear network and supply chain.

We look forward to developing this and other exciting space projects in the future as we continue to develop the power to protect our planet, secure our world and explore our Universe.

It would not just mean a time saving – it would also radically reduce the dose of radiation taken on by astronauts that would be making future trips to Mars or other planets. The size of the dose increases the longer you spend in deep space, away from the bubble of protection given by the Earth's magnetosphere.

The appeal of a small nuclear power generator for propulsion also comes from the fact that power in space becomes increasingly precious with distance from the Sun. In the outer Solar System, sunlight gets too dim for solar panels, and other technologies like fuel cells are often too patchy as a source of energy.

Nuclear propulsion is an idea that has existed since the 1950s, when the United States attempted to develop a rocket propelled by small atomic bombs tossed out the back.