



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

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4 November 2025

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Dear Ian

**MEMORANDUM OF REPLY: DEVELOPING THE SKILLS FOR NI'S
FUTURE**

Developing the Skills for Northern Ireland's Future – Follow-up

Thank you for your correspondence of 13 October 2025 regarding the Committee's letter of 26 September.

The Committee formally considered your response at its meeting of 23 October. Members welcome the clarification provided, particularly in relation to governance, industry engagement and disability inclusion. However, the Committee noted there were a number of areas where greater clarity and precision was required.

1. Data Sharing (Recommendation 6)

The Committee notes the reference to legislative constraints and ongoing scoping work under the DE SEN Delivery Plan Implementation Group. However, Members remain concerned that no delivery timetable, work

programme or responsible lead has been identified.

As emphasised during the Committee meeting, data sharing is essential to improving outcomes for young people, including those transitioning from school to further/higher education and those at risk of becoming NEET.

The Committee therefore requests:

- A clear timetable for completion of the scoping exercise
- Identification of the lead department responsible for resolving legislative barriers
- Details of any planned proposals to address legislative or policy constraints

2. Timelines and Delivery Detail (Action Plan, Recommendation 6 & Recommendation 8)

While your response provides helpful narrative, the Committee remains concerned about the absence of firm delivery milestones – particularly in relation to:

- The publication of the fully costed Skills Action Plan
- *Recommendation 6* (data sharing), where no timetable has been provided
- *Recommendation 8* (business engagement), where the proposed evaluation date of May 2027 extends beyond the mandate and would request this is reconsidered.

To enable scrutiny, the Committee has requested:

- A clear implementation schedule with milestones for key actions
- Confirmation of when the fully costed Skills Action Plan will be published.

The Committee has requested a response by **21 November** to these particular issues and an update on all other recommendations in 12 months' time.

Yours sincerely,



Daniel McCrossan
Chairperson
Public Accounts Committee

