



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero



Appointment of

Chief Scientific Adviser

May 2025 OBTWA

Saxton Bampfylde



Contents

- 3 Opening messages
- 5 Context
- 6 What does the role involve?
- 8 What experience will you need?
- 9 Our recruitment process
- 10 Detailed terms
- 11 How to apply

Why join the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero?

A personal message from Jeremy Pocklington, Permanent Secretary

This is an exciting opportunity to join the senior leadership team at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). I wanted to add a personal note about this role and why I think it is an exciting opportunity for the right person.

DESNZ has one of the key remits in Whitehall, delivering our mission to make the UK a clean energy superpower, with clean electricity by 2030 and accelerating the UK's journey to net zero. My vision for DESNZ is an inclusive, professional and high performing mission-led Department. Meeting this ambition will require being productive and agile, focussing on delivering for citizens and adapting to our rapidly changing world.

The role of DESNZ Chief Scientific Adviser is vital to leading and delivering that vision. This is a great job for an outstanding scientist that provides the opportunity to help shape the Department's strategy, working with policy officials, Ministers and external stakeholders to advise on key scientific

matters and to embed and champion scientific and research-based approaches in all the work we do.

I am committed to leading an organisation in which fairness and equality of opportunity are central to our approach in business and working relationships and where the organisational culture reflects and supports these values. I would therefore particularly welcome applications that are representative of the broad range of views and backgrounds we have in our society.

Expert scientific advice in a changing world is clearly of vital importance to top decision-makers in Government. If you are interested in being the Chief Scientific Adviser to the Department responsible for the Government's Net Zero science, then I would like to hear from you.

Jeremy



A message from Professor Dame Angela McLean, Government Chief Scientific Adviser

Thank you for your interest in this role as Chief Scientific Adviser for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. This is an exciting and interesting role which cuts across the whole of the Department's work at a time when the importance of scientific evidence and advice is at the forefront. You will play a key role as part of the top team in the Department, providing independent challenge and ensuring that the Secretary of State and Ministers have access to expert science advice.

You will be nationally and internationally recognised in your field of science or engineering and will need to be an exemplary science communicator. You will also be collaborative to enable you to work across the many sectors in the Department's remit as well as making links with other Government departments and academia. As an active participant in the cross-government

Chief Scientific Adviser network, you will help ensure that policy decisions are evidence based and underpinned by the highest quality science and engineering evidence and understanding.

You will also act as Head of Profession for Government Science and Engineering in the Department and will help to build their wider capability. As part of the Science and Technology Framework, all our Chief Scientific Advisers will support their departments to ensure that excellent science underpins all cross-government work, including missions to build on existing strengths in science, technology, finance, and innovation in the UK.

If you are interested in this post, and your skills and experience are a good match, then we very much look forward to hearing from you.



Context

The Civil Service delivers public services and supports the government of the day to develop and implement its policies. Much of this work happens in our individual Departments (of which there are over 40), but we also have 12 cross-Government functions - along with numerous arms' length bodies who work across the public sector.

This role is a Director General role. If you have never worked in the Civil Service, as a general guide, each Department is headed by a Permanent Secretary, and their direct reports (usually the Departmental Board or functional leadership) are our Directors General. Although comparisons are not always straightforward, that means this role is equivalent to an Executive Committee role in the private sector. The size and shape of Director General portfolios varies by Department, but each role will have its own delivery priorities, plus a contribution to Departmental leadership - and a broader commitment to collective leadership across the Civil Service as part of our Civil Service Leadership Group (the most senior 250 civil servants).

What does the role involve?

As a key member of the Departmental board and Executive Committee, the role reports directly to the Permanent Secretary.

The CSA delivers independent and impartial science and engineering advice to ministers and policymakers across the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) policy and delivery portfolio and Clean Energy Superpower Mission. The CSA is also responsible for ensuring the department has robust systems in place to access science and engineering expertise, including as co-chair of the DESNZ Science and Technology Advisory Council (STAC) and as departmental Head of the Government Science and Engineering Profession.

The Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) will have direct access to Ministers to enable them to provide independent advice. The individual will:

- Participate in the oversight and quality assurance of the Department's reasoning and investment decisions
- Work collaboratively with senior leaders in external organisations to secure efficient delivery of evidence projects, programmes and services
- Contribute to the leadership of wider cross-Civil Service issues, including the role of science and evidence in policy making
- Play a leadership role in progressing the Department's programme of changes, working with colleagues at all levels in the Department and its partner organisations
- Play a key role in communicating publicly the science and evidence underpinning Government policies on DESNZ areas of responsibility, including on contested issues.



The CSA has responsibility for:

- Providing independent advice to Ministers and the Department on the evidence underpinning policy decisions, drawing in other experts as needed
- Communicating with the public, DESNZ stakeholders and the scientific community on the evidence underpinning DESNZ policies, and supporting Ministers and officials in negotiations where evidence is a key element
- Championing evidence-based policy making and challenging the Department and its network on plans for evidence gathering and analysis
- Challenging the Department's horizon scanning, playing a role in strategy development and advising on strategic risks and opportunities for departmental policies and emerging research and innovation
- Supporting and promoting innovation in technologies where Government involvement is justified
- Working with CSAs from other departments under the guidance of the Government Chief Scientific Adviser on cross-Whitehall issues
- Supporting Ministers as necessary during emergencies.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Assuring and testing Government plans for meeting its Clean Energy Superpower Mission, ensuring that they are scientifically robust, feasible, costed and deliverable
- Ensuring excellent advice on climate science and accurate reporting of greenhouse gas emissions
- Ensuring that the right science and engineering capacity and capability exists within the Department, through involvement in the Department's workforce and business planning and its learning and development programmes
- Chair of the DESNZ Science and Technology Advisory Council (STAC)
- DESNZ Head of the Government Science and Engineering Profession.

What experience will you need?

To help you succeed in this role, you will meet the following key essential criteria for the role:

- Will have a first class reputation in science or engineering demonstrated by international recognition, a track record of publications in journals with high status or other relevant contributions
- A track record of influencing a diverse range of audiences such as academia, industry, government or the public with the ability to communicate complex issues clearly and be an effective advocate and ambassador in politically sensitive, high-scrutiny environments.
- Demonstrates the ability to operate at a senior level in a medium to large organisation with the ability to think and act strategically to address complex challenges, while championing performance and talent management, and fostering a culture of continuous learning and knowledge sharing
- Proven ability of assimilating, evaluating and interpreting scientific findings and advice across the full spectrum of disciplines, where necessary at short notice and under pressure
- Ability to identify and draw on the advice and experience of experts across a wide range of fields in order to reach successful conclusions.

Diversity is vital to the success of this role, and to the Civil Service as a whole. We actively welcome applications from candidates from all backgrounds, with different experiences and perspectives - and we are committed to ensuring that we work in an inclusive way that means everyone in the Civil Service can perform at their best.





Our recruitment process

Civil Service recruitment processes at Director General level are regulated by the [Civil Service Commission](#), and we follow clear guidelines to ensure that our recruitment is fair and open. We also design our recruitment processes to reflect our values-based approach to HR (using staff engagement panels, for example) and to ensure that shortlisted candidates have the opportunity to meet key stakeholders for the role, before they join us.

We expect the process for this role to be as follows:

- **The closing date for applications will be 23:55 on Thursday 29 May 2025**
- Longlisted candidates will be invited to meet with Saxton Bampfylde for a preliminary interview
- A shortlist of the applications will take place on 24 June.

- Between 25 June – 10 July, shortlisted candidates will then:
 - Participate in a staff engagement panel with a selection of people from across the DESNZ
 - Meet with key senior stakeholders
- Inputs from all of those steps will then form the basis of a panel interview on 11 July, chaired by **Atul Devani** from the Civil Service Commission.

Other panel members at the interview will include but may not be limited to Jeremy Pocklington, Permanent Secretary DESNZ and Angela McLean, Government Chief Scientific Adviser.

Please note that references and open-source due diligence checks (including into social media accounts) may be undertaken for all short-listed candidates.



Detailed terms

- This role is being offered on a **Fixed Term** basis (3 Years with flexibility for extension). The role can also be offered on a secondment basis.
- If you are successful and are from outside of the Civil Service, you can expect your salary on appointment to be **up to £149,000 per annum**. If you're an existing Civil Servant, your salary will be agreed in line with the Civil Service pay rules in place on the date of your appointment.
- This is a **full-time role**, but all flexible working arrangements are welcomed and will be considered (including existing job share arrangements). You can be based at any DESNZ location, and we welcome applications from people who would be based in our locations of Aberdeen, Birmingham, Cardiff, Darlington, Edinburgh, London or Salford. Please note, some travel to London will be required.

Please note that:

- **Civil Service pension** arrangements will apply and you will have the option of joining the Civil Service Alpha Pension Scheme, a defined benefit (DB) pension scheme. The current employer contribution rate for this salary level is in excess of 30% of salary as explained at [Civil Service Pension Scheme](#)
- The role includes **25 days annual leave**, increasing on a sliding scale to 30 days after 5 years' service. (This is in addition to 8 public holidays and one privilege day).

- If successful you must hold, or be willing to obtain, security clearance up to DV level. More information about the vetting process can be found [here](#).
- Unfortunately we will not be able to reimburse you for any **expenses** incurred as part of this recruitment process.

To ensure the integrity of the judgments and decisions they make every day, all civil servants must make sure that no conflict arises - or could be perceived to arise - between their public duties and their private interests when joining, or leaving, the civil service. This is a requirement of our Civil Service Code and is designed to protect both individual civil servants and their employing departments.

If you believe you have any interests that might be relevant (or be perceived as relevant) to your ability to undertake this role, please let Saxton Bampfylde know early in the process. Such interests may be financial or may be related to the relationships you have with specific individuals, organisations, or employers. Saxton Bampfylde will be able to discuss those interests with you and help work through potential next steps.

How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to DESNZ on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **OBTWA**.

You will need to complete and/or attach the following information:

- **Your CV**, with educational and professional qualifications and full employment history, including an explanation of any gaps in your employment history, and details where possible of budgets and numbers of people
- A short covering statement of **no more than two A4 sized pages (1000 words)** explaining why this appointment interests you and how you can evidence your suitability for the role, with particular reference to the criteria in the 'relevant experience' section on page 8.
- A **diversity monitoring form**. All applicants are invited to complete this information to assist the Civil Service with monitoring its recruitment process. All data is reported in an anonymous and aggregate format and will not be seen by anyone assessing your application.
- A **declaration of interest form**.

The closing date for applications is **23:55 on Thursday 29 May 2025**.

This vacancy is part of the **A Great Place to Work for Veterans** initiative. For further information on whether you are eligible to apply under this scheme please follow the link.

In addition to this, DESNZ is an accredited 'Disability Confident Employer' under the government's **Disability Confident Scheme** which denotes organisations that have a positive commitment towards disabled people. We guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the role, as outlined on page 8 of this pack. If you wish to claim a guaranteed interview, you should declare so at the point you submit your application.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

The law requires that selection for appointment to the Civil Service is on merit on the basis of fair and open competition as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles. If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the Recruitment Principles, and you wish to make a complaint, you should contact Craig Nannestad in the Senior Talent and Resourcing Team, Government People Group [craig.nannestad@cabinetoffice.gov.uk] in the first instance.



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Saxton Bampfylde