

IfATE route panels: member recruitment

Route panel role description

Context

Route panel members provide strategic oversight for the sectors in which they operate, drawing on their knowledge and experience of the day-to-day realities of different occupations to help shape skills development. They understand existing and future skills needs, enabling them to advise, challenge and make recommendations on the relevance, quality and credibility of apprenticeships, technical qualifications and other technical education products.

As well as contributing formally to route panel meetings, many panel members are also passionate and active advocates for technical education, promoting the benefits of this across their networks and representing IfATE and its work on public platforms.

Members may also, from time to time, be asked for their views on issues related to their sectors or to business more widely, providing a trusted source of employer views for IfATE and other government departments.

The route panel role

Sector insights

- Identify current and future skills needs and challenges for their sector and the implications of these for IfATE's products and policies
- Provide insights into the realities of working in the sector
- Advise on the education and training that will be most effective in developing the skills needed to do this work
- Make informed judgements about the most appropriate way(s) to assess learning outcomes
- Provide insights into how IfATE products are meeting the needs of employers and learners, notably in their sector

Sector oversight

- Set strategic priorities for addressing the skills needs of the sector as a whole (the route strategy), including:

- identifying occupations connected by similarities in skills requirements (reducing duplication and proliferation of products)
- determining the occupational map that sets out all occupations in a sector that can be developed by means of an apprenticeship or technical qualification
- ensuring products exist to support continued progression within and beyond the sector
- advising on what isn't working within the sector
- Feed into and maintain oversight of route-wide projects, such as the development of industry best-practice frameworks (for example on diversity and the green agenda)
- Advise on the focus of IfATE route reviews and route strategies – identifying those technical education products that may need to be refreshed or phased out to ensure continued fit with employer needs
- Review, approve and oversee implementation of route review recommendations
- Advise on the composition of employer trailblazer groups
- Provide advice and assistance with other initiatives related to their sector, subject to route panel capacity

Product approval

- Use their sector knowledge and awareness to:
 - review (and challenge or agree) proposals for new occupations that are appropriate for skills development
 - provide expert advice on the technical and occupational content of technical education products – ensuring proposed content serves the reality of working in the sector
 - make credible recommendations to IfATE on the approval of technical education products, including apprenticeships, T levels and HTQs, as well as associated products, such as assessment plans and funding band recommendations

All route panel members are expected to uphold the standards of conduct as defined by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#).

Route panel member person specification

Route panel members help drive economic growth and social mobility nationally and make an important investment in building the capability of their own sectors, ensuring that employers have the workforce they need for future success.

To be successful in the role, applicants are likely to have senior operational or management-level experience and/or experience of working with senior-level leaders across their sector.

Applicants do not need to be an expert in apprenticeships or technical education, but they do need to be able to demonstrate the following:

Employment status

Must be:

- an employer or an employee currently working in the relevant sector – that is, the owner or senior leader of a business¹ that employs its own workforce in occupations relevant to the route panel to which they are applying. Size of business, number of employees and profile of business do not matter.

Knowledge, skills and experience

Able to demonstrate:

Essential

- professional credibility within the sector, ideally in a hands-on, operational role
- a basic understanding of technical education or willingness to invest time in learning
- up-to-date applied expertise in a relevant occupation
- insight into current and emerging skills needs across the route from an operational perspective

Desirable:

- experience of working in or for a business that invests in building skills
- understanding of the labour market realities and skills requirements of different occupations across relevant sectors
- experience of working as part of a board or committee

Behaviours

Able and willing to:

¹ Where an individual finishes employment in a sector during their tenure as a route panel member, it is anticipated that they will continue to serve their tenure as a route panel member for the duration of their contract.

Essential:

- set aside personal and business interests to act on behalf of the whole sector
- work collaboratively with officials and other panel members to reach consensus on recommendations and decisions that benefit the sector as a whole
- act as a critical friend to IfATE, offering constructive challenge where appropriate, drawing on evidence of current sector practice and needs (from personal knowledge or the knowledge of colleagues in their networks)
- demonstrate commitment to the panel through preparation for, and regular attendance at, meetings and engagement in other relevant panel activity
- contribute positively to meeting discussions, engaging with all agenda items – including those outside of their immediate area of sector experience and expertise

Conflicts of interest

Applicants:

- may not be a member of a trailblazer group or T Level panel in the same route, IfATE peer reviewer or member of IfATE's employer directory
- will be required to formally resign their trailblazer group/T Level panel membership, peer reviewer role or employer directory membership if offered a place as a route panel member
- *Note: IfATE may consider former members of such groups or applicants who are current members in routes that are different to the route for which they are applying*