



Science and Technology Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA
Tel 020 7219 7126
<http://www.parliament.uk/science>

From Stephen Metcalfe MP, Chair

Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP
Minister for digital and culture policy
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
100 Parliament Street
London
SW1A 2BQ

13 January 2017

Dear Matt,

Digital skills

We are today publishing the Government Response to our *Digital skills crisis* report, which you sent us last week. This comes some six months after our report was published on 13 June last year. Our disappointment over such a long delay is compounded by the continued absence of the Government's long-promised 'Digital Strategy' because much of the focus for our report was that Digital Strategy — seven of our 27 recommendations explicitly addressed it.

In March 2016 Ed Vaizey, the then digital economy minister, told us that the Strategy was then already written and awaiting a publication slot in the Downing Street 'grid'. We have maintained a hope that this indicated that the Government was taking our recommendations on board in the Strategy — redrafting it as necessary. But the recently provided Government Response to our report provides no information on how recommendations about the Strategy will be addressed. Indeed, without the Strategy being published alongside the Response it is difficult to see why the Response could not have been produced within the usual two-month period.

I would be grateful for your assessment of the reasons why the Response has taken so long to finalise and why the Strategy continues to be a work-in-progress nearly a year after your predecessor considered it already largely completed. It would be helpful also to have any indication you could give us of when the Strategy is likely to be published.

I am copying this to Nick Gibb in the Department for Education.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Metcalfe MP
Chair, Science and Technology Committee