

Ministry of Defence

2 September 2026

Unpaid appointment with the Nuclear Institute: Application under the Business Appointment Rules from Dr Rebecca Weston, FREng, FInstP, FNucl, MBA, former Director General, Warhead Group at the Ministry of Defence.

The Civil Service Commission (the Commission) has considered an application for advice under the Business Appointment Rules (the Rules) from **Dr Rebecca Weston, FREng, FInstP, FNucl, MBA**, formerly Director General, Warhead Group at the Ministry of Defence. The application is for an unpaid, part-time role as **President** of the **Nuclear Institute**. Further detail on the content of the application is in the Annex. The Commission's advice is required as Dr Weston is a former civil servant at SCS Pay Band 3. Her last day of service was 24 October 2025.

The purpose of the Rules is to protect the integrity of the government. They aim to avoid any reasonable concerns that: a civil servant may be influenced in their official duties by the risk of reward; a civil servant may improperly exploit access to information; and an organisation may gain an improper influence through the employment of a civil servant.

The Commission's advice¹ is that the appointment should be made subject to the following conditions:

1. Privileged information – Dr Weston should not draw on (disclose or use for the benefit of herself or the persons or organisations to which this advice refers) any privileged information available to her from her time in the Civil Service.
2. Lobbying – For two years from her last day in the Civil Service, until 24 October 2027, Dr Weston should not become personally involved in lobbying the UK government or its arm's length bodies on behalf of the Nuclear Institute (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients). She should also not use, directly or indirectly, her contacts in the government and/or Civil Service to influence policy, secure business/funding or otherwise unfairly advantage the Nuclear Institute (including parent companies, subsidiaries, partners and clients).
3. Bids and contracts – For two years from her last day in the Civil Service, until 24 October 2027, Dr Weston should not provide advice to the Nuclear

¹ See [Advice under the Business Appointment Rules](#) for details applying to all advice issued by the Civil Service Commission.

Institute on a bid or contract relating to the UK government or its arm's length bodies.

The Rules set out that civil servants must abide by the Commission's advice. It is Dr Weston's personal responsibility to manage the propriety of any appointment and to understand any other rules and regulations she may be subject to in parallel with the Commission's advice.

Dr Weston must seek advice if she proposes to extend or otherwise change her role with the organisation. Once this appointment has been publicly announced or taken up, the letter will be published on the Civil Service Commission's website.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. K. Owen." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Kate Owen
Chief Executive

Annex A: The application

1. According to its website, the Nuclear Institute is a professional membership body that represents over 5,000 professionals with careers in nuclear, including energy, defence, medicine and space. The organisation also works to drive the professional standards for the nuclear community and enhance public trust and understanding in nuclear.

Applicant assessment

2. Dr Weston will act as President-elect from 25 September 2026 to 31 December 2027 and as President from 1 January 2028 to 31 December 2029. In these roles, Dr Weston stated she will provide independent advice to the Nuclear Institute's Board and leadership team, helping to deliver its strategy. Her duties would include participating in board and relevant volunteer meetings, contributing to governance and strategic discussions, and supporting the Nuclear Institute's work on professional standards, skills, education and member development. Dr Weston may also represent the Nuclear Institute at appropriate sector meetings and events.
3. Dr Weston confirmed her role will involve occasional contact with ministers, parliamentarians, civil servants and representatives of government departments and arms-length bodies. This would include the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and the Ministry of Defence (MoD). This may involve attending stakeholder meetings, parliamentary events and consultations, and contributing professional evidence on nuclear skills, professionalism, safety, security and workforce capability. She stated that her role would not involve commercial lobbying, bidding for government contracts, seeking funding, or the use of government contacts to secure an unfair advantage.
4. As Director General, Warhead Group at the MoD, Dr Weston was accountable for the lifecycle production, safety and performance of the UK's nuclear weapons, overseeing a complex portfolio of major projects and programmes valued at approximately £40 billion over 30 years. In this role, she defined the strategy for the Atomic Weapons Establishment to deliver current and future nuclear warhead systems. Additionally, she led the Warhead Group - comprising approximately 350 civil servants, including those in Nuclear Transport Operations within the Defence Nuclear Organisation - and served as a member of the Defence Nuclear Enterprise Leadership Team.
5. Dr Weston stated she has not been responsible for regulatory, funding or any other decisions affecting the Nuclear Institute at any time in her last two years in the Civil Service.

The Commission's analysis

6. *Application level.* As a Level 1 application for an unpaid role, the Commission's analysis applies the principle that this category of appointment poses a lower risk to government integrity.
7. *Risk of reward.* The role of President is unpaid. Dr Weston stated she had no involvement in policy development or contractual or commercial decisions affecting the Nuclear Institute while at the MoD. Therefore, the risk that the offer was made as a reward for decisions made during her time in office is low.
8. *Access to information.* Dr Weston would have had access to a wide range of information from her former role. This risk is limited by the fact that the MoD has recently published its Defence Investment Plan², which highlights its strategic priorities, including nuclear. Furthermore, more than nine months have passed since she left the Civil Service, which reduces the currency of any information she may still hold. The standard condition regarding privileged information covers any remaining risk.
9. *Improper influence.* As a former senior official, Dr Weston would retain a network of contacts and influence at the highest levels of UK government and the MoD, which could provide an unfair advantage to the Nuclear Institute. Dr Weston has stated there will be contact with government in her proposed role, which creates a perceived risk of improper lobbying or influence. The Rules allow for communication as a routine part of the role where such activity would not be improper. The lobbying ban serves to remind Dr Weston that while she may engage in routine communications required in the normal course of business, she must not use her privileged access or senior contacts to influence policy, secure funding, or obtain an improper advantage for the Nuclear Institute. Further, the nature of the Nuclear Institute as a non-lobbying membership organisation significantly limits the risk of improper influence. The Commission agreed that the risk around the perception of lobbying the government is therefore mitigated by the standard conditions.

² The Ministry of Defence, 'Defence Investment Plan'
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a44e989167a99cf0018da38/The_Defence_Investment_Plan.pdf