Peter Kyle MP
Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology
Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
100 Parliament Street
London, SW1A 2BQ

10 July 2024

Dear Secretary of State,

Congratulations on being appointed to lead the government's Science, Innovation, and Technology department. *BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT* represents a professional membership community, from academia to the public sector, dedicated to promoting accountability and ethical practice in computing and digital technology.

We are ready to support you in your mission to transform public services and build trust in the power of AI and emerging technologies such as quantum. By setting the highest standards for those who direct and develop IT in public sector areas like health and the across the civil service, the UK can be an example to the world.

That's why I ask you to support Chartered status for technology professionals, setting the same expectations of competence and ethics as regulated fields like accountancy and medicine. As well as individuals, organisations themselves should publish their ethical policies for AI use, supported by independent audits, safe sandboxes and transparent governance.

BCS has long supported the digital government agenda that you have made a policy priority and we are proud to have BCS Fellows leading digital transformation across departments from DWP to HMRC.

To strengthen Critical National Infrastructure, we ask you to support a mandatory Cybersecurity Code of Practice and to require company boards to include a member accountable for cybersecurity.

Then to secure the future, we need to prioritise digital literacy in schools and make tech careers appeal to a far broader group of people. I know, like me you will be aghast that over 500,000 women are 'missing' from the UK's technology sector, who should be there, if representation was equal to other professions (ONS data).

If people who make decisions about technology are focused on ethics, education, and equity, it can be the key to closing the aspiration gap and realising dreams. I look forward to meeting you to discuss these issues which are critical to the UK's role as a leader on the world stage.

Yours sincerely,

Rashik Parmar MBE FBCS
Group CEO
BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT

About BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT

BCS is the professional body for information technology. Our purpose, as defined by Royal Charter, is to promote and advance the education and practice of computing for the benefit of the public. With around 70,000 members, BCS brings together academics, practitioners, industry and government to share knowledge, promote new thinking, inform the design of new curricula, and shape policy.