

Skills shortages in the UK economy

May 2022

Key Highlights from the Bulletin

- While youth unemployment has fallen from its pandemic peak, it remains higher than in several comparable global economies because there is a significant mismatch between the skills young people develop while in education and those the future economy will need. Indeed, many young people in *UCL's* research reported the pandemic had worsened their learning of job skills, but a lack of skills training has been a more longstanding issue. *Lord Shipley* reflects on the work of the *House of Lords Committee on Youth Unemployment* which highlights the narrow scope of the academic school curriculum in allowing space for skills development. Case studies from the *South Yorkshire Region Education and Careers* and *TechCentre Training* present the work they are doing to support young people into careers.
- Vital industries and sectors across the UK (food production, construction, hospitality, health and social care) continue to be threatened by growing skills shortages and high staff turnover. *City & Guilds* report concerns among potential recruits around low pay, inflexible working conditions and a lack of opportunity to progress, as deterring factors. Moreover, the *Resolution Foundation* notes that many roles in vital industries, such as transport and storage, manufacturing and domestic services, which have disproportionately relied on EU workers, are mostly ineligible for a skilled worker visa under the new system.
- Apprenticeships are proving to be a viable solution to help bridge the skills gap and recruitment concerns among businesses as reported in the *Open University's 2021 Business Barometer*. However, as the *CBI's Education and Skills Survey* suggests, many employers are still struggling to invest in training because of the Apprenticeship Levy. They recommend that Government policy needs to deliver a post-16 education plan that can instil confidence among employers that they are able to meet their long-term skills needs.
- Research from the *Learning and Work Institute* shows that not only do increased basic skills improve employment prospects and productivity, but also lead to positive social outcomes in health and wellbeing among adults. However, England faces a significant skills deficit with more than 5 million adults lacking basic skills at Level 1 and 2 in numeracy, literacy and digital skills, while only one in five adults are currently participating in programmes to boost such skills.

Contents

House of Lords Committee on Youth Unemployment (Lord Shipley)	4
How has the pandemic affected young people's job skills? (IOE, UCL)	6
Leaving Lockdown – Young people's employment in 2021 (Resolution Foundation)	8
ReWAGE group (University of Warwick and Leeds University Business School)	10
Great Jobs (City & Guilds)	11
Getting the Basics Right (Learning and Work Institute)	14
Migration, skills and the UK economy (Resolution Foundation)	17
2021 Business Barometer (The Open University)	19
Education and Skills Survey 2021: Skills for an inclusive economy (CBI)	21
The Skills Imperative 2035: Essential skills for tomorrow's workforce (NFER)	23
Greening Construction: A complex challenge for jobs, skills and training (Edge Foundation, University of Oxford)	25
Case Study: Health & Social Care - South Yorkshire Region Education and Careers	30
Case Study: Preventing Youth Unemployment – Techcentre Training	32

House of Lords Committee on Youth Unemployment

Lord Shipley

Skills are the bedrock of a thriving labour market. Skills gaps and shortages are a major driver of youth unemployment and poor labour market productivity. Figures released in February show that vacancies are at their highest level since records began in 2001, and skills mismatches are a fundamental factor in this.



Lord Shipley. © Roger Harris Photography

The Lords Committee on Youth Unemployment was set up in November 2020, following youth unemployment rates of almost 15%. COVID-19 had a huge impact on young people's employment prospects given the closure of many sectors where they often find their first job, such as hospitality.

While youth unemployment has fallen from its pandemic peak, it remains higher than in several comparable global economies. As our inquiry progressed, we became more concerned about problems facing us further down the line. We asked

school and academy leaders, employers, charities, academics and young people what they were most worried about for young people leaving school both now and in future.

What we heard is that there is a significant mismatch between the skills young people develop in school and college today, and those the future economy will need. This is down to two key issues.

Firstly, the developing economy is opening up new sectors and jobs. In the green sector there are new roles in electricity generation and electric vehicles, and in the digital sector we are seeing new positions in cyber and artificial intelligence. At the same time, existing sectors like social care are struggling to fill posts. This mismatch between the supply and demand for skills in existing and emerging sectors is damaging productivity, however there is no official body reporting on skills needs.

To tackle this, we recommended that **the Government must develop a long-term national plan for identifying, anticipating, measuring and addressing skills mismatches**. This plan must focus on anticipating and meeting the needs of the future economy and it should be updated annually to reflect how quickly needs change. And, as I reiterated in the House recently, the Government must reconsider its decision to move too quickly to defund tried and tested BTECs that so many of our young people rely on to give them the skills they need to get ahead.

Secondly, we found that when students leave school, they do not have the skills they need to find work. The school system is characterised by a national curriculum

focussed on academic subjects and written exams. This is not helping young people to develop or showcase skills we need, like teamwork, communication, creativity or problem-solving. Equally, while careers guidance has improved, it is still not being taught uniformly and is not being supported by quality work experience provision. This means young people aren't aware of the skills required to get into in-demand sectors.

To ensure young people are equipped with the knowledge and technical, cultural and creative skills the economy demands, we recommended that **the Government must recalibrate the compulsory components of the national curriculum and performance measures, putting skills at its heart.** We are glad to see that The Times Education Commission came to some of the same conclusions in its interim report.

Yet we were disappointed by the Government's response to our report, in which it argued that it does not recognise the need for curriculum reform. We believe further action is needed to bring education truly up to date with a modern skills system.

We were pleased to hear that the Government will produce better, more accessible information on skills. The publication of data from the Skills and Productivity Board and the creation of a new Unit for Future Skills is welcome and should support a more responsive skills system and labour market. We hope that the publication of the Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy will pave the way for a green skills transformation.

We also look forward to the Independent Strategic Careers Adviser on Careers Guidance's forthcoming recommendations and, despite the Government's views to the contrary, we still believe more should be done to facilitate careers guidance in primary schools.

The House of Lords has worked hard to bring some of these issues to the fore. We have scrutinised the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill, which will ensure students understand the technical education options available and will set up Local Skills Improvement Plans in collaboration with employers and colleges. We hope the Government considers our amendments carefully.

We still have work to do. We welcome the Education (Careers Guidance in Schools) Bill, which will extend careers support to all pupils in state-funded secondary education and to academy schools and alternative provision academies. And, we will carefully examine the schools white paper.

Skills mismatches are undoubtedly one of the greatest threats to UK productivity. The measures we set out in our report were intended to address this and pave the way for a skills-first education system that leads young people to good jobs. The Government's response echoes these sentiments, but we still have some way to go to turn rhetoric into reality.

Lord Shipley chaired the House of Lords Youth Unemployment Committee, which [reported](#) in November 2021.



How has the pandemic affected young people's job skills?

Francis Green, Golo Henseke and Ingrid Schoon,
IOE Faculty of Education and Society, UCL

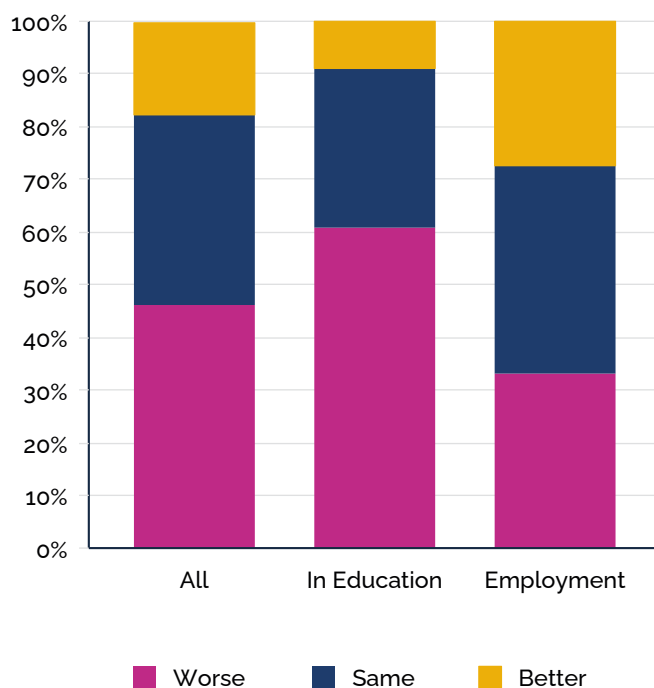
With skill shortages widely reported, you may be wondering what's been happening to the learning of job skills among young people during Covid. It is already obvious that, following Brexit, Britain cannot rely as much on the skills of migrants – and this doesn't just mean for picking apples or driving lorries. Across the board it is widely accepted that **we are going to need to step up the training of Britain's young people, our future workers for decades to come, if standards of living are to be sustained** while the economy adjusts to post-Brexit realities and to climate change.

But hasn't the pandemic put a large damper on hopes of an upturn in our skills? How could Britain's youth get on with their education when so many schools were closed, and how could they train for careers when they could not even get to their workplace or training site?

We have been looking at the skills, employment status and health of Britain's youth in this time of pandemic. It's not easy to measure the loss of skills from Covid objectively, but the next best thing is to ask young people themselves. We surveyed 3,000 young adults aged 16 to 25 in three stages between February and July 2021.* They told us, among other things, whether their job skills learning had worsened – or increased – a lot or a little, or not been affected by Covid at all – a five point scale of responses. Here are just some of the findings:

1. Some 47 percent of the sample reported that Covid had worsened their learning of job skills – see diagram 1. This includes 16 percent who said that their skills had worsened 'a lot'. On the other hand, a perhaps surprising 17 percent told us that their learning of job skills had improved because of Covid.

Diagram 1: Covid's Perceived Effect on Progress in Learning Job Skills



*The survey was administered online for us by IPSOS and partners, using a grant to UCL by UK Research and Innovation.

2. The verdict that skills had worsened was much stronger among those in education – 61 percent – while only 8 percent reported improvement. By contrast, among those in employment, the response was more evenly balanced: 34 percent thought they had worsened versus 27 percent reporting improvement. In short, those young people still in education have had a much tougher time, whether at school, Further Education College or university.
3. Among those in education, a mitigating factor was if the young person had been doing some kind of work, whether an internship or part-time job. This factor made only a moderate difference: we calculated that, other things being equal, someone with work experience had a 0.2 better score on the 1-5 scale compared with a similar person who had not done any work.
4. Among those in employment, there were some who feared, quite reasonably, that training might suffer as a result of the pandemic. Although some young workers could switch to or expand their online training, others would be prevented from doing so by the practical need to be on site for training. We investigated by analysing the Government's [Quarterly Labour Force Survey](#).

What happened was nothing as drastic as envisaged. In the first lockdown the rate of participation in job-related education or training by those in work dipped sharply by 2.5 percentage points – as compared to its normal rate of about 20 percent. However, by the third quarter of 2020 it had recovered to what it would normally have been. Much **more worrying, perhaps, is the long-term slow downward trend in young people's exposure to training**. But that has little to do with the Covid pandemic in itself.

Using our own survey, we investigated how training made a difference to whether Covid had led to a loss of learning of job skills. We found that training which was leading to a qualification led to an improvement of 0.3 on the same 1 to 5 scale of learning loss. Not a huge mitigation, but nevertheless significant. It certainly helped lessen the blow of Covid, from the skills point of view. Furlough made no difference to perceptions of learning loss.

However, **one group did suffer somewhat greater learning losses than others, namely those who were working in one of the 'lockdown industries'** – the Hospitality, Food & Beverage and Retail sectors. We also looked at whether Covid's effects on job skills learning varied between the UK's four nations. We found that England and Northern Ireland were the same, but the effects in Wales were 0.3 worse than in England on the 1 to 5 scale, and in Scotland 0.4 worse than in England. It is not clear why these differences occurred though.

Just over one in four of our sample of young people had been directly affected by Covid, in that a close family member or friend had become seriously ill or died. You might expect this to have an independent effect on their ability to learn job skills, interrupting their studies and perhaps lessening their motivation. If so, you would be right, as the effect was about 0.2 worse on the 1 to 5 scale.

We believe these findings should form part of the background when policy-makers are devising learning catch-up opportunities for young people. In July 2021 we asked young people themselves what they thought was the best way to claw back some of the lost learning. Top of their list? **More one-on-one or small group tutoring, and more laptops or tablets for those who cannot afford a personal computer.** [Other options](#) which we know the majority of the general public favour – such as extending the school day and allowing pupils to repeat whole years – came some way down the young people's rollcall of what they think would work best. Some food for thought.

Even though it has problems, **we would recommend our method of directly asking learners about their perceptions** in situations when no other means of measurement are available. The evidenced-based advice of academic research is that **recovery plans from educational emergencies are often best left to local educational leaders on the ground**, rather than dictated centrally in a one-size-fits-all strategy.

The full paper, "Perceived Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Educational Progress and the Learning of Job Skills: New Evidence on Young Adults in the United Kingdom" is currently under peer review.

Leaving Lockdown – Young people's employment in 2021: improvements and challenges in the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic

Resolution Foundation

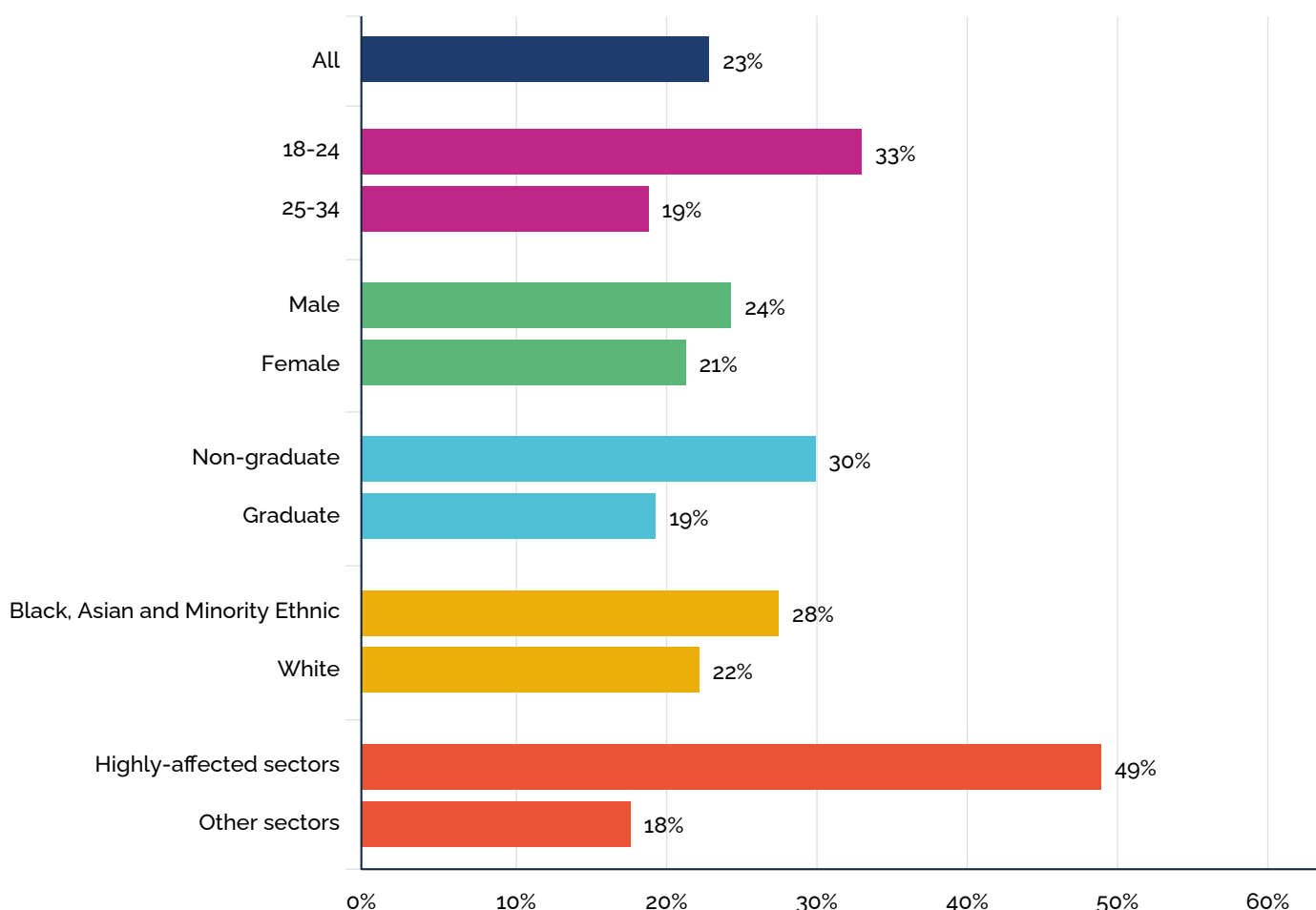
We should celebrate the fact that young people returned to work at quick rates as Covid-19 restrictions eased, and that predictions of record-high youth unemployment have not materialised. Despite this, we should not rule out lasting effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on young people.

There are at least three challenges that have beset the youth labour market over recent months that have implications for the future:

- 1) that those who experienced worklessness during the pandemic may be at risk of employment scarring over the longer term;
- 2) relatedly, that those who have returned to work after a spell of worklessness are more likely to be on an atypical contract and;
- 3) that the share of young people who aren't participating at all (i.e. the proportion who are inactive and not in full-time study) has worsened over recent months.



Figure 2: Half of younger people from highly-affected sectors who were in work before the pandemic experienced three or more months of worklessness. Proportion of 18-34-year-olds who were in work in February 2020 but subsequently went on to experience three months or more of unemployment, full furlough or being self-employed without work, by age, gender, graduate status, ethnicity and the sector they worked in during February 2020: UK



Notes: Base = all UK adults aged 18-34 who were in work in February 2020 (n=1,476). Base by categories: 18-24 = 248; 25-34 = 1,228; Male = 634; Female = 842; Non-graduate = 402; Graduate = 1,074; Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic = 153; White = 1,268; Highly-affected sectors = 207; Other sectors = 1,269. Due to low sample size we are unable to further disaggregate ethnicities categorised under 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic'. These figures have been analysed independently and are not the views of YouGov.
Source: Analysis of YouGov, Adults aged 18-65 and the Coronavirus (Covid-19), October 2021 wave.

© Resolution Foundation 2021
resolutionfoundation.org

These employment changes are likely to have **negative consequences on young people's mental health**. Some of these consequences are already being seen. All of this means that as we recover from Covid-19, policy makers and employers face challenges on two fronts to encourage young people back to the labour market: first by supporting them with the confidence and knowledge

to find and apply for work. And second by ensuring that **good-quality jobs, offering sufficient hours and room for progression, are available to both new entrants and those young people looking to move jobs.**

The Resolution Foundation's full report can be accessed [here](#)

ReWAGE – New think-tank sets the scene for jobs and training recovery after Covid

Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick and Centre for Employment Relations, Innovation and Change, Leeds University Business School

A new independent body co-chaired by Warwick and Leeds Universities is advising the Government on the recovery and renewal of work and employment as the UK emerges from the Covid-19 pandemic.



Modelled on SAGE and co-chaired by Warwick and Leeds Universities, ReWAGE brings together an expert group of over 30 senior experts from universities and research organisations from across the UK. It also has an advisory group drawn from businesses, trade unions and civil society organisations.

Co-Chair, Chris Warhurst of Warwick University explains why ReWAGE was set up:

"My Co-Chair Irena Grugulis and myself realised that there was no independent, single and collected point of expertise available to advise the Government on tackling the impact of the pandemic on work and employment. Our scoping research concluded that it was needed, and we brought together a group of experts to provide high-quality, evidence-based insights from existing research for policymakers to help them better understand how they can most effectively shape the UK's recovery from the pandemic."

ReWAGE's scope is wide – its first [policy brief](#) set out why the Government's levelling up agenda needs to address employment inequalities between and within

regions if it is to be effective. Future reports focus on such topics as: *Addressing Intermediate-level Skills Shortages* and *Engaging Adults in Career Guidance*.

An upcoming paper entitled *Beyond the National Living Wage – further proposals for addressing low pay*, puts forward six recommendations for changes in public policy to help the low-paid, pointing out that the UK has an enduring low pay problem and a growing problem of in-work poverty, which will only be made worse by the current rise in inflation and cost of living. The paper includes a proposal for the apprenticeship levy to be recast as a 'training levy' to fund the broader training needs of low-paid workers that fall outside the apprenticeship system and encourage employers to participate in the process of building formal structures of pay progression for low-paid workers.

By examining these complex issues, ReWAGE, through its experts, offers a huge amount of insight on a wide range of subjects that could help to make government policy a success and positively influence the behaviour of employers.

ReWAGE is funded by the [ESRC](#), with further funding provided by other organisations, including the Gatsby Foundation, the Financial Fairness Trust, the NHS Confederation and the University of Warwick Support Fund.

Great Jobs

City & Guilds

In February 2022 City & Guilds published our [Great Jobs](#) research which found that many of the jobs that employers were finding it most difficult to fill were the jobs that Government had deemed essential (or key) workers during the pandemic. Many of the UK's most vital industries, such as food production and health and social care, continue to be threatened by growing skills shortages, as concerns about low pay, inflexible working conditions and lack of opportunity to progress turn off potential new recruits.

Informed by an Opinium survey of 10,000 working age people in the UK and economic analysis from labour market economists Emsi Burning Glass UK, our research found that **on average, only a quarter of the UK's talent pool are interested in key worker jobs in any one of the essential industries that power our nation.** This is despite essential roles accounting for half of all UK employment opportunities, demonstrating the yawning gap between the jobs we need people to do, and their desire to do them.

Our research found that some sectors are more likely to be at risk than others. Construction could be most badly impacted with less than a fifth (17%) stating that they would consider working in the sector. Just over a fifth (22%) would consider working in food production, agriculture and animal care jobs or transport and logistics (23%). And a quarter say they would work in health (26%) and social care (25%).

Sector spotlight on social care

As part of our research, we took an in-depth look at several sectors which have found themselves particularly in the spotlight over the course of the pandemic, many of which however already had challenges pre-pandemic.

At the time of carrying out our research in December 2021, there were already 170,000 live job postings in the social care sector, demonstrating the **huge issues the sector has in being able to recruit the skilled workforce it requires.** And this problem is only expected to grow by 2026 when a further 226,441 job openings will

be created in the UK's social care sector – begging the question 'how on earth are we going to fill all of these roles?'.

Top 3 jobs in social care by number of job openings by 2026:

166,169	Care workers and home carers
15,720	Senior care workers
14,961	Social workers

Our research found that only 25% of respondents would consider working in the social care sector. Given this, it's clear that work needs to be done to help the sector recruit the number of great people it needs to care for our ageing population.

So what is stopping people from considering careers in care? **The number one reason was that they believed they had a lack of relevant skills, experience or qualifications** (24%), this is therefore an area that could clearly be addressed if we were to offer people the opportunity to upgrade their skills in key areas.

Perhaps unsurprisingly another top reason that respondents cited they would not consider a career in care was **low pay** (23%) and this was followed by unsociable hours (18%).

With an average salary of £18,602 across all social care jobs – the second lowest out of the 10 essential job sectors – and 67% of current workers in the sector saying that better pay would make them feel happier or prouder to do their jobs, this is a credible concern for job seekers that needs to be addressed.

It's also worth noting the well-known gender imbalance in the social care sector: currently, 83% of the workforce is female, and just 17% male. This imbalance is reflected in the aspirations of our respondents – only 20% of male respondents stated that they would consider working in social care, versus 31% of female respondents – and this could effectively be limiting the available talent pool unless the sector is able to turn the tables and attract more male applicants.

What is evident, is that there's plenty to celebrate and value about working in social care. 61% of all respondents said that they would feel proud to work in social care, whilst the social care sector workers surveyed were some of the proudest of their jobs: 80% said they are proud of their job and 83% say their job gives them a sense of purpose.

For employers to be able to recruit the skilled workforce they need in the years to come, **work will need to be done to improve recognition of these social care roles by Government, and wider society.** Whether that's through salary and working conditions or highlighting the valuable and transferable skills that applicants from all backgrounds can bring to the table.



Pride

Employees in social care and food production, agriculture and animal care are the most likely to feel that change needs to happen in order for them to feel prouder or happier to do their job. Social care workers cite better pay (67%) as a key factor that would improve their feelings towards their job



While the pandemic may have shone a light on the many jobs that are critical to the running of our country, our research demonstrates the undeniable fact that low salaries, unattractive or inflexible working conditions and a general lack of respect for these critical jobs is having a catastrophic impact on the ability of employers to fill these roles.

In the face of a growing labour crisis that is impacting these vital industries and wider society, we need to collectively take a long, hard look at how we can make these jobs more attractive. In the future, we need to do more than simply clap for carers, we desperately need to re-evaluate the way we recognise these roles as a nation. To do this, we must improve careers advice to make people aware of the range of roles available within their own skillsets, and the training available, as well as the opportunities to progress in these sectors.

Low pay, and a lack of relevant skills, experience or qualifications are two key reasons putting people off working in these jobs. Unsociable hours are also considered a major turn-off for healthcare (17%) and social care (18%) roles.

We need to address the poor image that is discouraging people from considering these roles by giving jobs the respect and remuneration they deserve in the future. With such fierce competition for talent, private companies are often offering much larger starting salaries, meaning that these essential industries, often in the public sector, just cannot compete. To fight back in the war on talent, government and employers need to work together to consider other ways to make essential jobs more attractive, including offering opportunities for skills development and more flexible working patterns.

Kirstie Donnelly
CEO City & Guilds

Getting the Basics Right

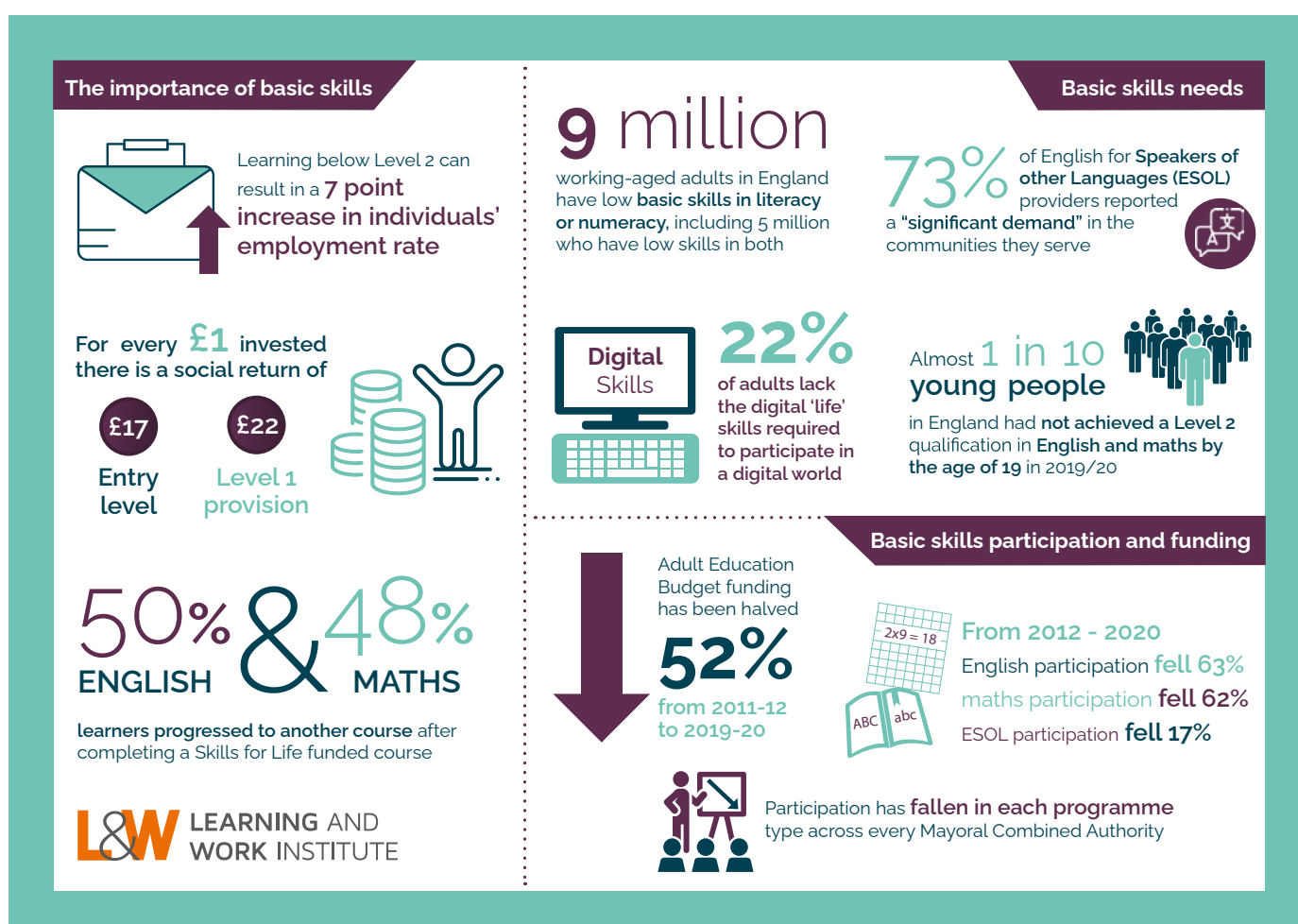
Learning and Work Institute

Twenty years on from the then Government's Skills for Life Strategy (the national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills between 2001-2011), there are still one in five adults with low literacy and/or numeracy skills, and the number of adults participating in English and maths learning in England has dropped by over 60% since 2012.

Getting the Basics Right: The Case for Action on Adult Basic Skills (published October 2021) produced by Learning and Work Institute for the Skills for Life Alliance, brings together evidence on the importance of good

essential skills, current trends in essential skills needs, participation and funding, and 'what works' to boost participation in learning.

Figure 3. Getting the Basics Right Summary



Why are adult essential skills important?

There are clear employment, economic and social benefits of adult participation in basic skills learning. For example:

- Research shows that participation in learning below Level 2 results in increased rates of employment and supports learners to access better paid, more rewarding jobs with progression opportunities.
- Participation in literacy, numeracy and other essential skills learning supports progression to further learning, including at higher levels. Good levels of essential skills are therefore a key enabler for the Government's ambitions to boost adult upskilling and retraining, including technical education at Level 3 and above.
- Studies have linked good essential skills with positive social outcomes, including better health, wellbeing and confidence. For example, in one study, 43% of adults aged 18 – 65 did not have adequate literacy skills to routinely follow health information, rising to 61% when an element of numeracy was involved.

As [employers increasingly require skills](#) such as cognitive and problem-solving skills (for example critical and creative thinking), good essential skills underpinning these will continue to be in high demand.

What are the current trends in adult essential skills needs and participation?

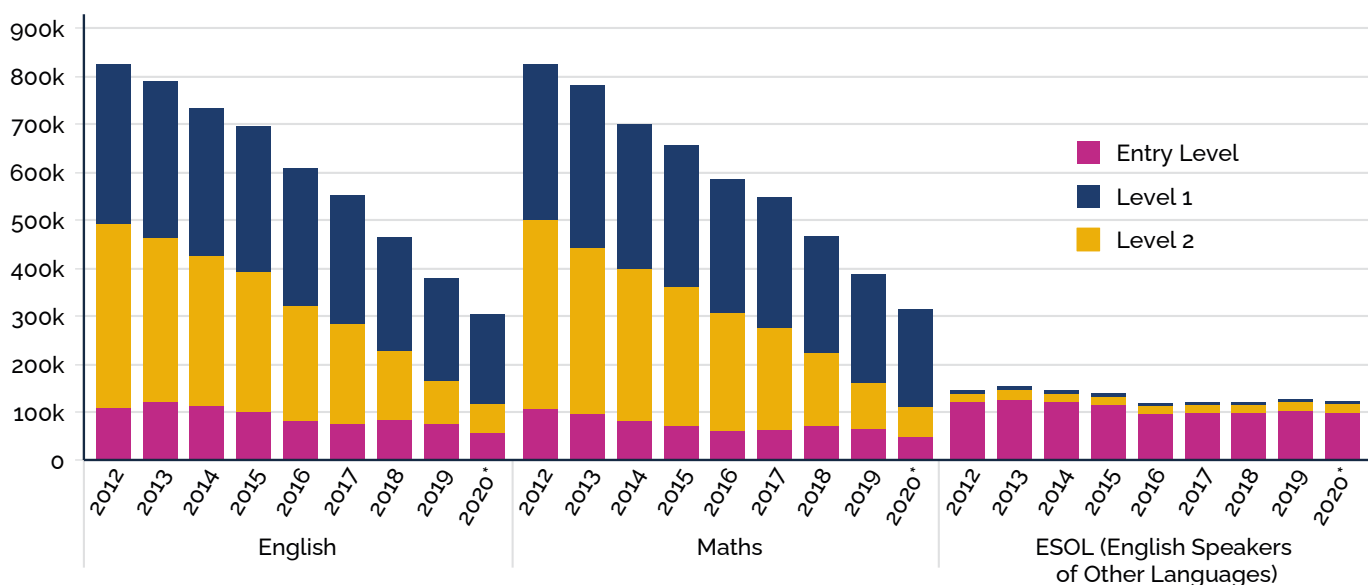
England has a basic skills deficit across literacy, numeracy, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and digital skills in England:

- An estimated 9 million working-aged adults in England have low basic skills in literacy or numeracy, including 5 million who have low skills in both.
- In 2019/20, almost three in ten young people in England had not achieved a Level 2 qualification in English and maths by the age of 19.
- Three-quarters of ESOL providers (73% reported a "significant demand" for English language learning provision in the communities they serve.
- An estimated 11.7 million people (22% of adults) lack the digital 'life' skills required to participate in a digital world.

Adult participation in English, maths and ESOL has plummeted since 2012:

- English participation fell 63 per cent, maths participation fell 62 per cent and ESOL participation fell 17 per cent from 2012 to 2020.
- Participation has fallen in each programme type across every Mayoral Combined Authority, although local initiatives following devolution of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) may be starting to address this.

Figure 4. Adult (19+) Participation in English, Maths and ESOL in England, 2012-2022



Despite high levels of need, AEB funding has halved from 2011-12 to 2019-20: funding allocations fell from £2.8 billion in 2011-12 to £1.5 billion in 2019-20, a 52% fall in real terms.

What works to support adult participation in essential skills learning?

Learning and Work Institute's report, [Getting the Basics Right](#), highlights key recommendations for supporting adult participation in essential skills learning, drawn from the most robust 'what works' studies available for adult essential skills. **The high level of social stigma associated with poor literacy and numeracy skills means that it is essential to proactively reach out and identify adults who may benefit from support.**

- Tailored recruitment and engagement are effective approaches to driving up basic skills participation: this means using specific motivations that are relevant to each learner group as hooks, addressing learners' barriers. Using 'learner champions' and taster courses have been shown to work well to engage learners.
- Provision must be tailored to learners' interests and needs: this means tailoring course content, promoting flexibility and adapting learning settings to meet different groups' needs.
- Working with employers to offer basic skills provision is vital to support the high number of adults with essential skills needs who are in employment. This means marketing provision in ways that respond to employers' needs and identifying a model that works for employers and employees. Including literacy, numeracy, ESOL and essential digital skills as part of organisations' training and development plans is central.



Every adult should have the literacy, numeracy and other essential skills they need for life and work, or we risk a declining economy and worsening public health. This demands urgently reversing the concerning decline in participation in adult basic skills learning. We need a clear strategy to improve adult basic skills across England, backed by investment, policy and practice to raise awareness, engage adults and deliver high quality learning that makes a difference.

Alex Stevenson

Head of Essential and Life Skills at Learning and Work Institute

Migration, Skills and the UK's Economic Strategy

Resolution Foundation

In January 2021 'freedom of movement' for European Union (EU) citizens to live and work in the UK drew to a close. The Prime Minister, alongside many others, championed this change, arguing that the UK's "old broken model with low wages, low growth, low skills and low productivity" was "assisted and enabled by uncontrolled immigration." In practice, the impact of migration, and specifically freedom of movement, on the UK economy was more nuanced. Looking to the future, the UK's new migration regime won't drive economic change. But it will cause labour shortages in a number of specific sectors, and force some firms to rethink their business model.

But to understand the future, we need to look at the past. And over recent **decades migration has indeed had a big impact on the UK economy**: non-UK born workers formed 7 per cent of the 16-64-year-old workforce in 1995, growing to 12 per cent in 2007, and over 18 per cent in 2019. Although migrant workers are a very diverse group, **they are more likely than their UK-born counterparts to live in London, to be employed, and to work in occupations that tend to be lower paid and/or require lower levels of education to access.**

For example, in 2019 the proportion of EU-born workers in what the Office for National Statistics (ONS) calls an 'elementary occupation' was 9 percentage points higher than their UK-born counterparts.

These patterns didn't change very much in the wake of the UK's 2016 vote to leave the EU, but the number of EU citizens moving to the UK in order to work did begin to fall shortly after it. By December 2017, more people from EU-8 countries (countries that joined the EU in 2004,



including Poland, Hungary and Latvia) were leaving the UK than moving to it. The Covid-19 pandemic has further limited immigration levels (and could have boosted the number of migrants leaving the UK). And crucially, **the new work-related migration system** – which came in at the start of last year – has indeed begun to reshape not just the number, but the type of migrants, moving to the UK for work.



Now, EU workers wanting to move to the UK either have to be eligible for a family-related visa or have a UK employer to sponsor them for a skilled worker visa (SWV, an employer sponsored route). **This new work visa has less stringent restrictions than previous versions** (for example in the past, all eligible occupations had to be deemed to require a degree, whereas now they are meant to require a Level 3-equivalent qualification), and the cap on the number of skilled work visas that can be issued in a given year has been abolished. **For non-EU citizens, this is a liberalisation, but EU citizens, it is a significant tightening.** We can get a sense of the impact of the new rules by looking at the share of EU workers currently in the UK who wouldn't have been eligible had the new rules been in place when they arrived: 47 per cent of EU-born workers already in the UK during 2017-2019 worked in occupation that would not be eligible for the new SWV, equivalent to 4 per cent of the labour force.

And of course, **some sectors will – and already are – feeling a pinch in their labour supply as a result of the new rules.** These are mainly industries that **tend to have higher rates of staff turnover and rely disproportionately on EU workers in roles that wouldn't be eligible for a skilled worker visa:** transport and storage, food and accommodation, manufacturing and domestic services. Where shortages in these sectors are down to a decline in number of workers *willing to work these roles* (rather than a fall in the number with the *specific skills to do these jobs*), firms have a long-term challenge: they will either need to pay workers more in order to attract them (which could mean they have to raise prices) and they may ultimately produce less.



Moving the UK towards a high-wage, high-productivity economy as the Prime Minister is (rightly) keen to do, depends on a whole host of factors, from industrial policy, to trade policy and education and training. In the end, migration policy can complement a country's economic aims, but it can't drive them.

Kathleen Henehan

Senior Research and Policy Analyst at the Resolution Foundation

2021 Business Barometer

Open University



The Open University's annual Business Barometer published in partnership with the Institute of Directors offers a temperature check on the UK's business landscape across a multitude of different nations, regions and sectors.

The 2021 report sheds light on the huge impact that both the pandemic and Britain's decision to leave the European Union have had on recruitment at all levels and highlights that UK employers are facing a skills shortage, especially when it comes to hiring specialist, entry level talent.

It was found that **63% of business leaders are struggling with recruitment because candidates did not have the skills or necessary experience** for the required role. Those struggling to recruit pointed to certain areas in particular as being problematic. Business leaders felt candidates lacked industry specific skills the most at 37%, followed by technical / operations skills at 33%, IT skills were third-most lacking at 32%, followed by managerial skills at 28%.

According to the 2021 survey, 40% of business leaders in 2021 are struggling to recruit specialist talent and over a quarter recognised the difficulty in hiring entry level staff.

A third (33%) say they have left a position vacant due to not being able to find an appropriate candidate, while 32% have introduced new training to existing employees.

Although skills shortages has remained a challenge within the UK business landscape for some years now, almost a quarter of respondents (24%) maintain this concern and believe that finding staff with the right skillsets will remain the single biggest challenge facing organisations for at least five more years to come.

As a result, organisations are investing more time, resources and funds into recruitment. Indeed, out of the employers taking part in this survey, 29% state they have spent more money on recruitment than in the past, with average spend per employer now at about £25,200.

Struggles in recruitment are also having a knock-on effect on organisations' existing workforces due to struggles in balancing workload. This report found that

56% of employers believe unfilled vacancies overextend their workforce and that the skills shortage stifles their growth potential and may impact staff wellbeing.

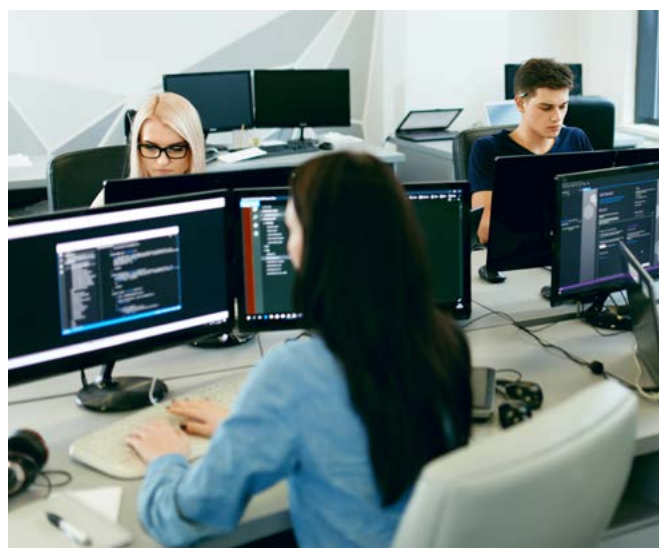
Despite the challenges associated with hiring entry level talent, **it appears apprenticeships are proving to be a viable solution to help bridge the skills gap and recruitment concerns** looming over UK businesses. This report found that more than half (56%) of businesses believe that apprenticeships and work-based learning are critical to their long term success, an 8% increase from last year and 96% of employers currently working with apprentices plan to maintain or increase the number of apprentices in their organisation in the future.

As the UK looks towards the future of business recovery and bridging the skills gap, the pandemic has made a lasting impact on the workplace skills that employers find desirable in candidates. When asking employers which skills are likely to become more important over the next 12 months, IT skills (such as Zoom proficiency) ranked highest at 37%, this was followed by technical / operational skills at 34%, managerial skills such as decision making came in at 33% and lastly, industry specific skills scored 32%.

The latest [Business Barometer report](#) demonstrates how recruitment has been impacted by major societal events and reveals the continued skills gap trend in the UK workforce as a result, with over six in ten employers

stating they have a skills shortage. While this has caused challenges for employers, there have been some positive outcomes that have been brought by these events which should also be recognised, such as the potential for remote and flexible working.

Nonetheless, the ability to find specialist talent is proving a challenge in the current business landscape and the report findings emphasise the skills gap will remain a long-term problem unless addressed. **As first steps, business leaders should prioritise upskilling, lifelong learning and focus on a 'grow-your-own' approach to ease their skills gap challenges.**



The ability to find specialist talent is proving a real headache for business leaders today. Our survey findings highlight the skills gap is here for the long haul and it hasn't improved in the last twelve months.

The skills and labour shortage is being felt across multiple sectors of the UK economy and many employers see this as a long term challenge. Almost two thirds of organisation leaders admit they have struggled to find the right people with the right experience, demonstrating the need for enhanced training to nurture employee skills, knowledge and workplace learning. We want all organisations from all sectors to think ahead and invest to fuel future talent and success.

Viren Patel

Director of the Business Development Unit at The Open University

Education and Skills Survey 2021: skills for an inclusive economy

Confederation of British Industry

The coronavirus pandemic has sped up structural changes already underway in the economy and placed an even greater imperative on reskilling. The CBI's annual [education and skills survey](#) with Birkbeck University of London, **provides an insight into business intentions for education and skills for the economy.** The latest survey conducted in April 2021, with a total of 252 respondents, notes some of the challenges companies are facing in meeting skill needs.

In 2021, before shortages began to bite, nearly four in five survey respondents were confident in their ability to meet entry level skill needs over the next three to five years through recruitment or training, but around one in five were not. In general, many companies expect to have greater need for people with skills at entry level (balance of +31%), intermediate level (+38%) and higher level (+39%) over the next three to five years. **Employers most expect the need for other workplace skills unattached to qualifications – such as communication and teamwork – to increase (+41%)** in the next three to five years. But compared with other skills, respondents

are the least confident about meeting these skills needs (+34%). And looking ahead, developing workforce industry-specific technical knowledge (60%), leadership & management (58%) and advanced digital skills (44%) are top priorities for firms.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic however, the survey details the increasing levels of investment and plans being made by businesses to overcome barriers in relation to skills shortages and the coronavirus pandemic. **Businesses are scaling-up online learning and looking to support young people in light of**



the pandemic, with 41% of employers planning to increase investment in training over the next 12 months compared with pre-COVID-19 levels.

Employers are preparing to play a bigger role in the education system as the economy comes out of crisis mode

Although employers have experienced challenges engaging in the education system in the past year, many are preparing to play a bigger part as the economy comes out of the pandemic. Businesses were most likely to have links with universities (84%), followed by colleges (77%) and schools (74%). Of respondents who are engaged with the education system, eight in ten (79%) provide work experience placements and seven in ten (72%) provide careers advice and motivational talks.

The most common forms of engagement with education institutions were the provision of work placements (79%) and of careers advice or motivational talks (72%). The popularity of work placements bodes well for the ongoing rollout of T Levels, which require a 45-day industry placement. However, only three in ten (28%) respondent businesses are currently offering T Level placements, although a further half (50%) intend to do so in future.

Yet, while over half of respondents (52%) reported having faced no barriers to engaging with education institutions in the last 12 months, a third (34%) of businesses struggle to find the time to meaningfully engage with the education system.

Apprenticeships are valued by businesses but barriers remain

Apprenticeships are highly valued by businesses, but the Apprenticeship Levy remains a barrier to increasing investment in training. Two in three businesses responding (67%) offer apprenticeship programmes, down from 85% in 2019. Looking ahead, 43% of firms expect to expand their apprenticeship provision in the next 12 months relative to the last year, while just 1% plan to reduce them.

Businesses have several priorities for improving the functioning of the apprenticeships system, with introducing a quicker process for reviewing and updating apprenticeship standards (36%), ensuring funding caps are set at the right levels (31%) and ensuring a greater supply of local provision (29%) the top priorities.

Considering the impact on those firms that pay the Apprenticeship Levy, four in ten respondent firms (39%) have increased the number of apprenticeships they offer, but half (50%) have not increased their overall investment in training.

Recommendations

Business and Government need to collaborate to support young people leaving education. Throughout the pandemic, businesses have embraced online learning to deliver workplace training and have continued to provide opportunities for young people. Firms are also confident in their ability to support young people to mitigate the impacts of significant disruption to their education. Yet Government and business must continue to work together to ensure that young people entering the workplace – particularly those beyond the scope of catch-up funding – have access to the right support and guidance. Whether through youth employment schemes like Kickstart or structured support during recruitment and on-boarding processes, businesses are ready to step-up for young people.

Although companies have reported struggling to fill vacancies, there is growing confidence among employers that skills needs can be met over the next three to five years. 81% of employers are confident they will be able to support young people over the next year, for example, through training and engagement with education. Apprenticeships are highly valued by employers, but the Levy remains a barrier to increasing investment in training. There are further concerns in relation to the pace and scale of training that is required in many circumstances. The Skills & Post-16 Education Bill is an opportunity for the government to deliver on the confidence of most firms that they can meet their long-term skills needs.

The Skills Imperative 2035: Essential Skills for Tomorrow's Workforce

The National Foundation of Educational Research

The world of work is anticipated to undergo a significant transformation over the next decade and beyond. New technologies, coupled together with demographic and environmental change, are expected to fundamentally reshape the labour market in terms of the nature of jobs workers do and the types of skills that they need.



Understanding the types of skills needed most for work in the future, and how this demand will be met is essential. However, the transformation and its implications for education, employers and the workforce is not well understood.

Without evidence-based long-term planning for an education that supports young people to develop the right skills, there is a real risk the current skills mismatch will be further exacerbated. This, in turn, could result in underemployment and unemployment and enduring social and economic problems in the future.

New research and insights

To address this evidence gap, the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) is leading a five-year strategic research programme, funded by the Nuffield Foundation. NFER is leading a multi-disciplinary team, including co-investigators from the universities of Sheffield, Warwick and Roehampton, as well as with Cambridge Econometrics, Kantar, and the Learning and Work Institute.

This research aims to provide new insights into the demand for and supply of employment skills most

needed in future, when new technologies and other effects are expected to become more embedded in the labour market. From this, we will **aim to identify which employment skills will be most needed in future – which we refer to as essential employment skills**. We will also seek to identify where the skills gaps are, which groups are most at risk of not having the skills needed, and what we can do to best support those affected to identify key areas where they need to re-skill. **We will also investigate how the education system can support the development of the essential employment skills needed in future**. We will work with Government, employers, educators and others to develop strategies to help workers and young people to develop the right skills needed in the future labour market.

Identifying essential employment skills

As a first stage of our research programme, we have undertaken a [review](#) of the most relevant recent literature to explore what this suggests what the world of work will look like in 2035; which essential employment skills will be in demand in the future; and how do we prepare to meet this demand? **The review highlights that a number of areas will see growth – including natural and applied sciences, digital, information and communication, education and health and social care**. Declining sectors include manufacturing, production, retail and administrative/secretarial.

The review of the literature identified a range of skills which will become more important in the face of technology. These include analytical/creative skills (such as problem solving, decision making, critical thinking,

analysis and innovation/creativity), interpersonal skills, self-management skills and emotional intelligence skills. Both the education system and the workplace play important roles in fostering these skills but more focus is needed on developing these essential employment skills.

Understanding the challenge and planning for the future

Armed with the evidence generated by our programme of research – the nature of the challenge will be better understood and used to inform the planning and delivery of a future skills strategy designed to meet employment needs in the coming decades. With the right strategy implemented at the right time, people will work and flourish in their jobs, helping to secure a prosperous future for our economy and society.

For more information on the research programme visit the NFER website page [here](#).



Evidence-based insights are essential to develop a long-term skills strategy that supports the development of the right kind of skills base for the future workforce and to ensure that people can work and flourish in their jobs. This strategy must be cross-sector and cross-discipline as a joined up, properly resourced and informed approach is crucial to address this complex challenge

Lisa Morrison Coulthard

Research Director (Optimal Pathways Development) at NFER

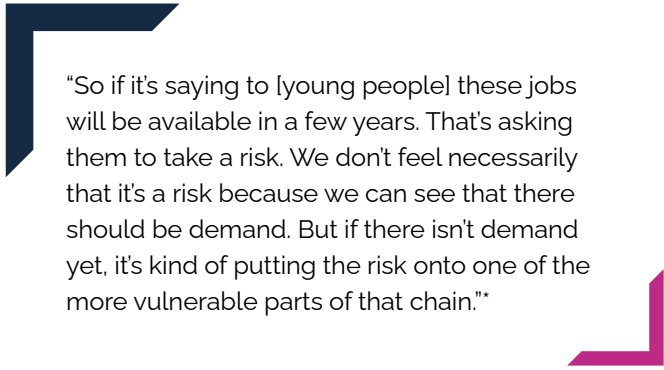
Greening Construction: A complex challenge for jobs, skills, and training

Edge Foundation, Centre for Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance (SKOPE) & The Environmental Change Institute (ECI) at the University of Oxford

Governments, communities and individuals are moving consciously, albeit in some instances hesitantly, towards sustainable practices. Media interest in COP26 only heightened scrutiny of policy and practice around issues to do with greening the economy, providing green skills and creating green jobs. Moreover, in a post-Covid world, skills that can support swift economic recovery and respond to future skills demand matter more than ever. **Policy attention in the UK is turning to the concept of a Green New Deal as a means of driving economic recovery.**

At the heart of this kind of Green New Deal lies localised job creation through investment in sustainable, low energy buildings and high-quality homes; renewable and affordable energy; and low-carbon transport infrastructure. The [International Energy Agency](#) (2021) identifies four strategic priorities for climate mitigation, of which two are directly relevant to buildings and the construction sector: a massive push for electrification of energy services, including heating; and a relentless focus on energy efficiency. Therefore, the construction sector is crucial to the drive towards net zero, a greener economy and a greener future.

In England, the construction sector (building) is often a focus, and is one of the key industries highlighted in the 2021 [Green Jobs Taskforce report](#). This focus is understandable given buildings are responsible for a substantial proportion of global carbon emissions during their construction, but more importantly throughout their lifetime via their energy consumption. Moreover, this sector is a key focal point for many climate and energy policies: on the one hand it is an intuitive and widespread emitter that can be targeted by policymakers; and on the other it intersects with the behaviours of individuals and their role in curbing consumption and therefore emissions.



"So if it's saying to [young people] these jobs will be available in a few years. That's asking them to take a risk. We don't feel necessarily that it's a risk because we can see that there should be demand. But if there isn't demand yet, it's kind of putting the risk onto one of the more vulnerable parts of that chain."

Emerging technologies related to energy, heat, and building materials are frequently positioned as a key part of the greening process within construction.

The need for green technology deployment leads to a focus on skills in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects or technical skills linked with specific emerging technologies. However, STEM skills are not the only ones that are needed; good communication, leadership skills, professional integrity, general business and administrative skills are also required. These 'employability' skills are just as important as specialist technical skills. At the same time, key skills that support continuing professional development (CPD) are critical to ensuring construction

workers deal flexibly with uncertain futures and ongoing technological enhancements and continue to develop their competencies as technologies, economic and ecological landscapes, and legal frameworks change. This kind of adaptability through engagement in ongoing education and training (E&T) sits at the heart of a green future in the construction sector.

“What we need to do is make people aware they will need to be able to wield green hammers in the future so they need to be ready to have a mindset that says, I’m going out into industry now I am aware that my skill set will need to shift in response to changes in the workplace so I have to be receptive and ready for my need to upskill or as I call it add skill.”

Understanding the skills required, demanded, supplied, and deployed for a greener economy is essential. Yet, we know little about the dynamic relationship between these emerging skills demands needed to meet net zero carbon targets. This includes insight into the structures of and pathways through the skills formation system to supply these skills, at the both the initial point of training and through CPD. **Although an under-researched area, evidence suggests that education and training in the construction sector is unsystematic and fragmented.** Even before the pandemic, skills at intermediate levels (i.e. levels 3-4) were already in low supply and engagement with greener building practices was patchy and often confined to a small range of innovative providers. The complexity of the system is heightened by the minimally regulated nature of the sector, which is dominated by SMEs, micro businesses, and self-employed contractors, all adopting different approaches to initial and ongoing E&T.





"The reality is that... students coming through FE, they're not likely to be overseeing the installation of an air source heat pump for quite a long way into their career. So it does then come back to how the employers are either required to, incentivized to or out of the goodness of their heart decide to, you know, enhance the skills of those young people."

In response to this context, **this research maps out the relationship between the skills required for a greener future in construction and the E&T landscape.** It is the result of a literature review, document analysis, and a stakeholder workshop with 40 participants providing insight into the issues surrounding the supply of employees with both the technical skills to engage with relevant green technologies and the broader employability, interpersonal and flexible skills to work in a transforming industry such as the construction sector.

A necessary challenge is to align the E&T system much more closely with a coherent industrial strategy whereby the Government takes a prominent role in shaping and supporting the development of new markets in a clear and systematic way that will ensure long-term skills supply and gives assurances to firms that these skills are

needed, valued, and will continue to be developed as technologies and new practices emerge. However, the reality is very far from this: high-profile policy failures in recent years (Green Deal and Green Homes Grant) have served to reduce confidence in Government actions among employers, employees and consumers.

A joined-up policy approach is needed between E&T and industrial strategy if the construction sector is to be part of a future green economy. Ultimately, there is a tension between policy visions for the future: a narrow techno-economic view that available technologies will be installed at scale and work well with only small-scale investment to prime markets; and a broader view in which skills formation, industry practice and culture are key elements of successful technology deployment.

"I hadn't heard the term retrofit coordinator before today. And I bet there are lots of other people including school students and school careers advisors who don't know those terms either. So, I think part of what needs to happen is that we perhaps need to explain to school students, there are these options, there are these career paths and to promote those to schools as well."

The key findings of this research are:

- A broader conceptualisation of the skills required for a greener future: our research has highlighted that a simple focus on only technical skills fails to capture the demands of complex building sites and the need for greener construction and business practices. Therefore, in relation to both initial training and CPD, education and training programmes should aim to work with the following framework:





- An emphasis on CPD: this analysis has highlighted the critical importance of ongoing professional development for everyone involved in the construction sector, particularly training undertaken in a meaningful and sustained manner that goes beyond simple 'bacon buttty briefs'.
- Training structures and incentives for SMEs, micro businesses, and self-employed contractors: CPD means time away from site, which is challenging and costly and often hits smaller organisations hardest. There is therefore a need to provide meaningful incentives for CPD, potentially compensation, and to structure ongoing education and training at times that will fit around standard working days.
- CPD for those involved in delivering training: given the changing nature of the sector, it is essential that those involved in delivering training received adequate professional development to stay up to date in relation to technical developments, but are also able to support the development of broader employability skills and sustainability-oriented and CPD-oriented dispositions.
- Stronger strategic partnership arrangements: there is a clear need for greater strategic co-ordination between skills providers and industry with more effective working relationship between FE colleges and employers so that emerging skills needs can be responded to within the skills formation system in an agile manner and the pathways through initial training and CPD can be drastically simplified.
- Greater regulation: the construction industry in the UK and associated education and training pathways are relatively unregulated compared to other international skills systems. Closer regulation would both ensure skills demands are being appropriately met while also contributing to driving the changes in culture and practice required for a more sustainable future.

The full research report can be accessed via the Edge website

*Quotes in this article are taken from research workshop participants



Health and Social Care Careers

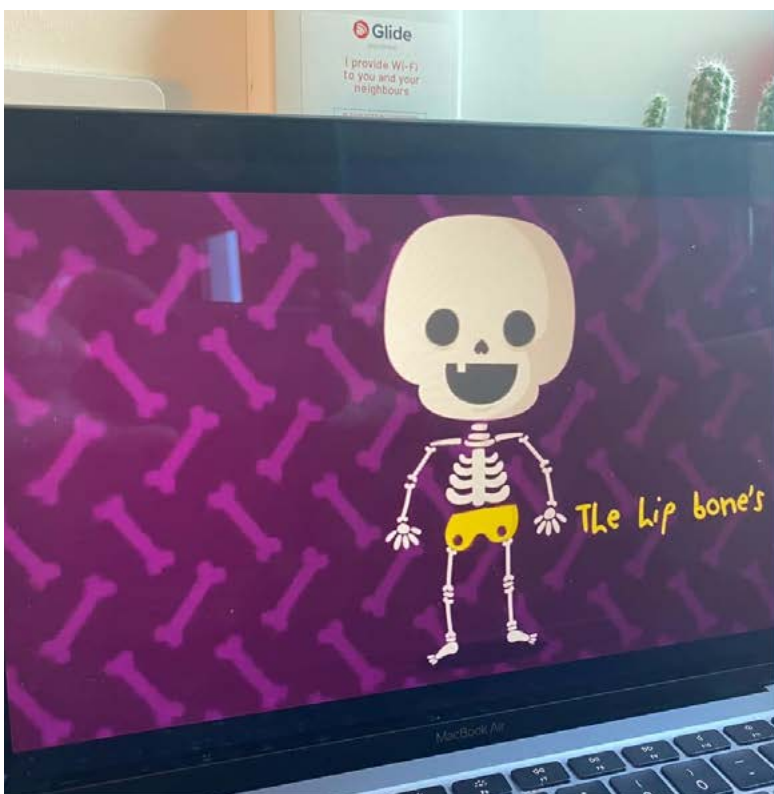
South Yorkshire Region Education and Careers

A recent report by the NHS Confederation highlights current and future workforce needs, including recruitment, as key challenges facing NHS leaders. South Yorkshire Region Education and Careers (SYREC) is leading the charge, inspiring a new generation of young people into Health and Social Care (H&SC) careers. Core to SYREC's mission is the belief that young people cannot aspire to jobs they cannot name. As such, their Schools Engagement Team uses targeted outreach – workshops, teaching resources, social media engagement and employer-led projects – to bridge young people's knowledge gaps about H&SC roles.

SYREC has a broad remit, working with primary to post-16 provision and beyond. Their aim is always to provide tailored support appropriate to each learner's age, interests, curriculum, and subject choices. With relevant information available, young people are able to access roles that match their career aspirations.

Virtual discovery sessions

The perfect storm of Covid-19 restrictions and staff shortages means NHS work experience is broadly unavailable. In its place, SYREC offers interactive virtual discovery sessions. These punchy, one-hour workshops include animations, live polls and virtual Q&A with



H&SC role holders. Using pre-recorded video content, learners can experience off-limits spaces, such as operating theatres and ambulances. Furthermore, sessions are tailorable to individual needs. Chemistry students, for example, might learn about pharmacy or laboratory roles. The sessions provide a broad taster, allowing students to access more granular information when required.

Teacher resources and CPD

Acknowledging the vital role teachers play in helping young people access careers opportunities, SYREC also provides teacher training and resources. Their online careers hub includes a live calendar of upcoming events and a members' area containing lesson plans and homework assignments. Meanwhile, their careers by curriculum subject tool links different topics to HS&C roles, highlighting the relevance of various subjects to the world of work. This helps teachers mitigate any student concerns that their learning lacks real-world relevance. Art, for instance, can potentially lead to careers in clinical photography or creative therapy – something teachers and students may not know. The tool signposts to detailed information about what each role involves, the required qualifications, pay scales, and more.



'Jobs for Everyone' for primary school pupils

SYREC's most recent innovation is the 'Jobs for Everyone' initiative. Aimed specifically at Early Years, the programme introduces 20 different H&SC roles. It includes age-appropriate play kits (stethoscopes, uniforms, etc.), diversity sessions, parental engagement activities and job-holder interactions, e.g. meeting a radiographer to learn about their work. The children also learn a song that they can take into local care homes, thereby promoting intergenerational mixing. So far, the initiative has been highly successful at engaging Early Years. In the first six months, expected reach is over 1,300 children in 23 schools. Teachers have praised it as helpful, intuitive to teach and popular with the children.

Shaped directly by the pandemic, SYREC's multipronged approach leverages the cultural shift to online working to increase equality of access to opportunity for all young people.

Learn more about their work at:
syrechealthandsocialcarecareers.co.uk



CASE STUDY

Preventing Youth Unemployment

Techcentre Training

Since becoming a social entrepreneur in 2005, David Barker has focussed on innovating new solutions for tackling youth unemployment. His focus became even more urgent after discovering a troubling [news headline](#) in 2009 – that one in six young people who are NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training) died within ten years of dropping out of the system.

As one of the UK's first Internet entrepreneurs in the early 1990s, David focussed his understanding of the 4th industrial revolution to the problem of youth unemployment and spent nine months researching what is holding young people back in the digital age. He quickly discovered young people were not being equipped with the right skills during education, therefore struggling to make the leap into successful careers.

"In the fourth industrial revolution, everyone needs the right blend of cognitive skills and intelligence quotient (IQ), soft skills, emotional intelligence (EQ), and digital intelligence (DQ). I discovered young people particularly lacking in EQ and DQ. Unfortunately, I also discovered many welfare-to-work programmes were not focussed on developing these skills, with many just helping young people to create a CV, or teaching them to ace interviews."

David got to work as an innovator and came up with a working prototype of what he called "popup academies", the ability to open into any community in the UK, taking groups of long-term unemployed youth and

train them with the skills they lacked. He was able to pilot the popup model with funding from government, successfully training 126 long-term unemployed people out of unemployment into work.

Although the results were good, the operational model opening new facilities, hiring trainers and life coaches, and delivering courses was too expensive to scale. After going back to the drawing board for a few years, David came back in 2019 with an innovative new model – work with charities and housing associations, who already have infrastructure in local communities and provide wrap around care, and then enhance their services by delivering CPD-accredited online training in business skills and employability (developing EQ) and digital skills for business (developing DQ) to the individuals they support.

All our online courses are tutor-led, one-one-one interactive courses that adjust themselves to the pace that works best for each learner, and designed to deliver the message clearly, effectively and memorably in the minimum amount of time, with the maximum amount of learner satisfaction. The courses have been written alongside expert trainers with many years of experience in the relevant fields and approved by industry leading bodies.



Example quotes from successful learners include:

"In this stress management course, I have learnt that stress can cause a lot of stress on the body whether it's physical, emotional or behavioural. I've also learnt that stress can be caused by a lot of things such as work, marriage and children. What I would take from this is that whenever I'm stressed out, I should make sure that I take control and find out why I'm stressed and then ask for help when needed."

"In this conflict resolution course, I've learnt that there are different types of conflict, such as covert conflict where there is conflict between two people but has not been spoken about. A new thing I've learnt is that assertiveness and cooperation does contribute to whether conflict can be resolved or not."

After successfully launching Techcentre Training to deliver this service, he quickly realised he could also move upstream to partner with schools and colleges and deliver this critical training before young people leave education. Today, T-Level students are taking these courses before starting work placements, 6th form students are developing these important skills before they leave, and even 14-year-old students who are struggling with GCSEs are successfully completing CPD-accredited courses with his company.



Partnering with schools and colleges we focus on preventing youth unemployment. Partnering with charities and housing association, we can also get to work helping unemployed young people who have already left education and struggling to make the leap into worthwhile work.

David Barker
Founder of Techcentre Training

David Barker is an Internet and Social Entrepreneur and founder of [Techcentre Training](#). He was voted one of the UK's top 30 social entrepreneurs in 2020 by the [Social Entrepreneur Index](#).



The world is changing fast and education needs to keep up. Edge is an independent, politically impartial education foundation. We want education to be relevant to the twenty-first century. We gather evidence through research and real world projects and partnerships and use this to lead the debate and influence policy and practice.

Edge believes all young people need to be equipped with the skills that today's global, digital economy demands, through a broad and balanced curriculum, high quality training, engaging real world learning and rich relationships between education and employers.

Visit www.edge.co.uk to find out more.



The Edge Foundation
44 Whitfield Street
London, W1T 2RH

T +44 (0)20 7960 1540
E enquiry@edge.co.uk

www.edge.co.uk