

EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS COMMITTEE

MEETING TO BE HELD AT 2.00 PM ON THURSDAY, 19 OCTOBER
2023 IN MEETING ROOM 1, WELLINGTON HOUSE, WELLINGTON
STREET, LEEDS LS1 1DE

A G E N D A

Please note that this meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Combined Authority's internet site. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. Generally, the public seating areas will not be filmed; however, by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Governance Services on 0113 251 7220.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**
3. **EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**
 1. To highlight Appendix 1 to Agenda Item 6 which officers have identified as containing exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.
 2. To consider whether or not to accept the officers' recommendation in respect of the above information as set out in paragraph 7.1 of Agenda Item 6.
 2. If the recommendation is accepted, to formally pass the following resolution:-

RESOLVED – That in accordance with paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Appendix 1 to Agenda Item 6 on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of

the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

- 4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 13 JULY**
(Pages 1 - 6)
- 5. ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND DIGITAL BLUEPRINT**
(Pages 7 - 20)
- 6. DEVOLVED ADULT SKILLS**
(Pages 21 - 40)
- 7. ALL AGE CAREERS**
(Pages 41 - 162)
- 8. EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT**
(Pages 163 - 178)
- 9. SKILLS SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS**
(Pages 179 - 202)

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BAM', with a horizontal line underneath it.

**Chief Executive
West Yorkshire Combined Authority**



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 13 JULY 2023 AT MEETING ROOM 1,
WELLINGTON HOUSE, WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS LS1 1DE**

Present:

Councillor James Lewis (Chair)	Leeds City Council
Professor Shirley Congdon (Deputy Chair)	Private Sector (LEP Board)
Councillor Silvia Dacre	Calderdale Council
Councillor Eleanor Thomson	Leeds Council
Councillor Graham Turner	Kirklees Council
Tim Craven	Private Sector Representative
Colin Booth	Advisory Representative (Further Education)
Dr Peter O'Brien	Advisory Representative (Higher Education)
Jo Ledgard (Advisory Representative)	DWP
Tim Thornton	Advisory Representative (West Yorkshire Skills Partnership)
Martin Hathaway	Advisory Representative Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce

In attendance:

Michelle Burton	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Michelle Hunter	WYCA
Sonya Midgley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Phillipa Syers	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Philip Witcherley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

41. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from cllr Khan, Cllr Kilbane, Milton Brown, Orlagh Hunt, Clare Paxman, Nav Chohan, and Alex Miles

42. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of interest at the meeting.

43. Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no items that required which required the exemption of the press and public.

44. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 23 March 2023

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting be approved.

45. Chair's Update

The Chair started the meeting with an overview of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Pillar 3 – People and Skills.

The proposals for £14m of funding for people and skills had been aligned with the pipeline of programmes overseen by the Committee and had been tested at a sounding group on 28th June with over 200 stakeholders in attendance.

Members had the following questions and comments:

- That it was important to avoid duplication with the skills offer from local authorities and to address gaps. Work had been undertaken with partners to mitigate this risk and the focus would be on complimentary activity.
- Members welcomed the focus on practical help for individuals in the pipeline of projects.
- Members discussed the practicalities of match-funding and the how it could pose difficulties for those bidding the funding. Officers would bring a response back to a future meeting on the issue.

46. Governance Arrangements

Members considered a report that set out the governance arrangements approved at the Combined Authority annual meeting.

The TUC advised the Committee on changes to their advisory representative for the Committee.

Members suggested that the chairs of local skills boards should be invited to the Committee as advisory representatives.

Members questioned the cross working arrangements with other committees and whether there could be more comprehensive collaboration across the different agendas.

Resolved: That the governance arrangements approved by the Combined Authority at the Annual Meeting on 22 June 2023 be noted.

47. Influencing the System

Martin Hathaway provided a verbal update on the development of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) which had been submitted to the

Department for Education for approval by the Chambers of Commerce in West Yorkshire.

LSIPs aimed to increase the voice of the employer in the skills system as a key stakeholder to identify current and future skills needs and to date around 900 businesses had been consulted.

Members had the following questions and comments:

- Members asked for a full breakdown on the 900 employers consulted, including by the size of the business as well as the sector.
- The Committee asked at what point they would be able to see the LSIP in full. It was noted that the draft plan was being reviewed by the Department for Education before it could be shared more widely. It was agreed that the next stage of the plan would be presented to the Committee for comment.
- Members discussed some of the feedback given by the businesses consulted to date, particularly that several responses indicated that business did not value qualifications. Members stressed that public funding should be used to provide training for individuals to help them progress their careers.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

48. Devolved Adult Skills

Members considered a report that provided an update on the work underway on adult skills programmes.

On Multiply members noted that year one delivery met 82% of the DfE target in terms of engagement with individuals and providing numeracy support which equated to 57% of the financial profile.

An independent review had been carried out on AEB funded Community Learning. The review found considerable good practice amongst West Yorkshire providers and to improve the impact of the funding it was proposed to move towards a needs-based methodology in the allocation of community learning funding.

Members discussed the move towards a needs-based methodology and the possible reduction of the funding allocation to Calderdale Council and asked about the transitional arrangements. When moving towards a needs based methodology (such as UKSPF %s), WY grant provider allocations could be protected by allocating £125k top up of CL funds for WY. This will allow a 'top up' for Leeds, Bradford and Kirklees without reducing the financial allocation for Calderdale and Wakefield.

Members discussed methodology to address delivery of provision in significantly reduced guided learning hours (GLH). This included submission of planned hours, and a system to examining justification when planned hours are below 70% of GLH. 100% pure distance learning should be exempt to allow for further consideration. There was endorsement that we

should move towards a policy around guided learning hours with the intention of supporting quality training. This was strongly supported.

Resolved:

- (i) That the actions proposed following the Community Learning review be recommended.
- (ii) That the Multiply programme year 1 performance be noted.

49. Current and Future Employment Support activity at the West Yorkshire level

Members considered a report which provided an update on the development and performance of employment support services coordinated at a regional level.

Resolved:

- (i) That ongoing collaboration between DWP and West Yorkshire Combined Authority, and the opportunities this relationship presents with regards to better supporting service users accessing employment support provision across the region be noted.
- (ii) That the continued intention to use an allocation of UK Shared Prosperity Funding to fund the second year of delivery of Employment West Yorkshire, in order to allow the programme to continue in providing vital employment support across Local Authority areas be noted.
- (iii) That the approach to UKSPF commissioning be endorsed.
- (iv) That officers begin to develop an Employment Support Blueprint for West Yorkshire for discussion with this committee in the Autumn, which will allow residents to be better served through employment support services.
- (v) That key stakeholders be consulted during the development of the Employment Support Blueprint be considered and agreed. A draft Blueprint will come back to Employment and Skills Committee at a later date.

50. Development and Delivery of Regionally Coordinated Careers Activity

Members considered a report which provided an update on the development of careers support activity.

The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) had been awarded a £2.6 million contract from the Department for Education to deliver career-related learning programme.

The CEC had offered the combined Authority £32000 grant with a requirement for match funding. Members were critical of the amount of the grant offered by the CEC, which the committee felt was derisory and would have little impact on an important area.

Members noted the work underway to develop a West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint which would intend to influence government and help guide delivery.

Resolved:

- (i) That the update provided to the Committee on developments and performance of careers support services coordinated at the regional level be noted.
- (ii) That the Committee's view with regards to the Careers & Enterprise Company's award to deliver a career related learning programme aimed at primary schools be noted.
- (iii) That the of the development of a West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint be endorsed

51. Skills support for employers

Members considered a report that provided an update on the delivery of programmes to support employers to upskill and create a talent pipeline.

Members noted the update on the Skills for Growth programme as well as the development of the Workforce Development and Growth Skills package and Skills for Business interventions.

Resolved: That the approach set out in the report be endorsed.

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Report to:	Employment and Skills Committee
Date:	19 October 2023
Subject:	Economic Strategy and Digital Blueprint
Director:	Felix Kumi-Ampofo, Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture
Author:	Jo Barham, Policy Manager Marianne Hewitt, Programme Development Lead

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1. To provide the Employment and Skills Committee members with an overview, and update on the development of the West Yorkshire Economic Strategy, and an example – the Digital Blueprint - of how supporting policies will be developed within the framework of the Economic Strategy.
- 1.2. To engage and seek views from Employment and Skills Committee Members on the emerging structure of the West Yorkshire Economic Strategy and the Digital Blueprint.

2. Information

Background

- 2.1 In June, the Mayor and West Yorkshire political leaders launched the [West Yorkshire Plan](#). The West Yorkshire Plan sets out a vision and five ambitious missions to improve jobs, incomes, health, skills, transport, places, safety, and well-being across the region.

Progress will be demonstrated by monitoring regional indicators set out in annual [State of the Region](#) reporting.

- 2.2 Reflecting the missions of the West Yorkshire Plan, and new powers and flexibilities of devolution, work is now focusing on the development of a new Economic Strategy and supporting policies.
- 2.3 Partnership will be key to the development and delivery of the Economic Strategy which will reflect the Combined Authority's role to influence system change across the regional economy through convening, commissioning, and delivering impact.
- 2.4 The Blueprint will consider how 'digital' enables the economy to improve the lives of people in West Yorkshire. It will do so by exploring how the wider skills system, the business ecosystem, and the enveloping infrastructure can usefully convene, influence and be influenced by digital technologies.

Economic Strategy

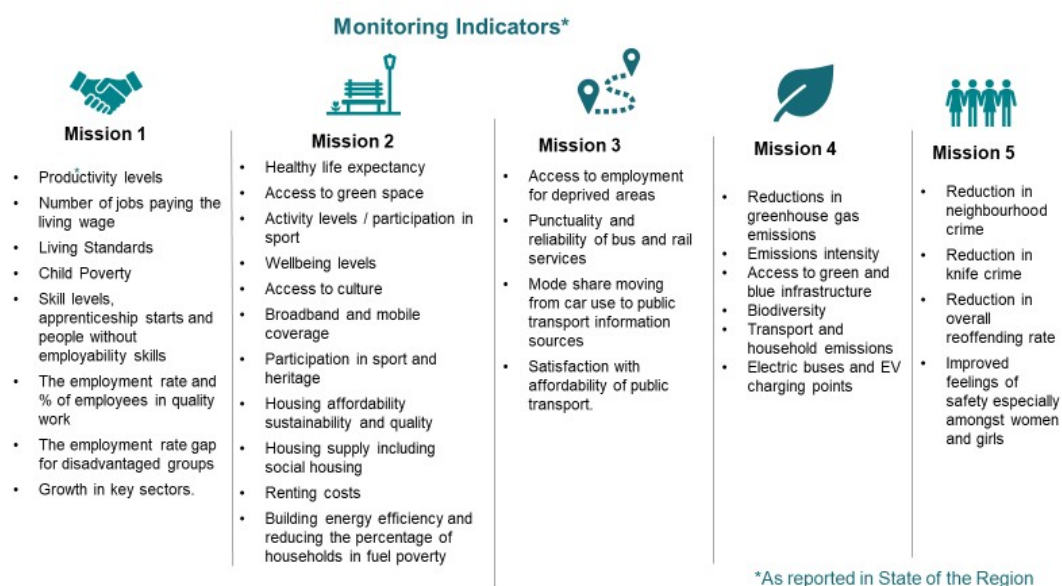
- 2.5 The Economic Strategy will contribute to all missions of the West Yorkshire Plan with a particular focus on Mission 1. This will require a whole systems approach to the economy considering the enablers of transport, infrastructure, planning and housing. The Economic Strategy will be key to the Combined Authority's ambition for West Yorkshire to be a net zero region by 2038.
- 2.6 There is no single intervention that will deliver the change needed; partnership will be key to supporting bold action on investment, skills, innovation, and finance, that delivers a thriving net zero carbon economy by 2038. This work will embed equity, diversity, and inclusion across the Strategy with a focus on an inclusive economy that tackles long standing issues of deprivation. The Economic Strategy will establish priorities for emerging policy work including a reflection on the role of health in the economy.
- 2.7 The Economic Strategy will draw on existing policies and strategies including those that are currently in development (see figure 1) and provide a framework for focused action plans and the design of investment programmes. Relevant to the second part of this paper is the 'Digital Blueprint' supporting policy of the Economic Strategy.

Figure 1: West Yorkshire Combined Authority policy framework by West Yorkshire Plan mission.



2.8 The indicators of the West Yorkshire Plan will be used to provide a high-level framework for monitoring progress with more detailed indicators sitting alongside performance data to track progress of key programmes and projects (see figure 2).

Figure 2: West Yorkshire Plan missions and monitoring indicators



Evidence Gathering

- 2.9 A range of activity is being undertaken to establish and update the economic evidence base; this will incorporate existing policies and strategies currently in delivery. Evidence gathering includes the following:
- Where new data is available, there will be updates to the 2019 West Yorkshire Economic Assessment which was undertaken as part of development of a Local Industrial Strategy and has informed a number of existing policies at the Combined Authority.
 - The Combined Authority has recently commissioned a new Regional Economic Model (REM) enabling scenario modelling to understand responsiveness of the West Yorkshire Economy
 - An external commission to look at sector growth opportunities for West Yorkshire, including from the green economy and net zero
 - Working with a specialist academic network (Y-PERN) on a call for evidence on topics impacting on an inclusive economy including childcare, the informal economy, and the future of work and the impact of AI.
- 2.10 In addition to the above, an advisory group of leading academics is being brought together to deepen our understanding of health and the impact of health on the broader economy, issues being considered for further analysis include healthy workplaces, and the impact of teenage mental health and the future workforce.

Consultation

- 2.11 Consultation is focused on diverse groups and communities. An online questionnaire can be accessed here: [Our Economic Strategy | Your Voice \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/our-economic-strategy-your-voice) with planned follow-up work to take place in different settings and with formats tailored to the audience with a particular focus on voluntary and community groups.

Timeframes

- 2.12 Once the evidence collection and consultation outlined above is complete, a process of prioritisation and translation will take place. This will involve wide ranging engagement with committee members and views are welcome on the best way to work with members of the committee on this approach. Indicative timings are set out below, but are subject to change:
- Evidence collection complete by end of 2023
 - Analysis of consultation responses end of 2023
 - Priority shaping workshops Jan-Feb 2024
 - Report drafting March 2024

- Consultation on draft and amending March – May 2024
- Final report summer 2024.

Digital Blueprint

The Combined Authority approved a Digital Framework in 2019, focusing on businesses, skills, the digital sector, digital infrastructure, and tech for good (the smart cities agenda). The West Yorkshire Combined Authority is proposing to refresh the Digital Framework into a new Digital Blueprint to take us to 2030.

- 2.13 A wide range of stakeholders have been engaged including LEP Board members, private and public sector digital experts, employers, academics and Local Authority partners, to build our approach to the Digital Blueprint¹. One of the ways in which the Combined Authority previously influenced the digital skills system was through the Local Digital Skills Partnerships, which was successful in convening and influencing agents of change within the digital landscape. The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology has ended this funding, therefore the Blueprint will consider how to fill this gap.
- 2.14 The Digital Blueprint will expand on a key area of the Economic Strategy, particularly missions 1 and 2. The Blueprint will consider how ‘digital’ enables the economy and transforms productivity to improve the lives of people in West Yorkshire. It will do so by exploring how the wider skills system, the business ecosystem, and the enveloping infrastructure can usefully convene, influence and be influenced by digital technologies.
- 2.15 For the purpose of this Blueprint, the definition of digital is as set out by Tom Loosemore, former Government Digital Service Deputy Director: *‘applying the culture, practises, processes, and technologies of the Internet-era to respond to people’s raised expectations.*
- 2.16 All private sector members of the Employment and Skills Committee (alongside Place Committee, Business, Innovation and Economy Committee, Culture, Heritage and Sport Committee, Climate, Energy and Environment Committee, and LEP Board) were invited to a workshop to help shape the themes of the Digital Blueprint as it is developed.

¹ Specific actions include: LEP Board Digital Deep Dive, a commissioned report into Digital Clusters across West Yorkshire, a ‘Mayoral Diversity in Digital’ roundtable, Investment Zone consultations, developments of digital skills programmes such as Digital Inclusion and Digital Skills in Schools, and multiple stakeholder conversations.

The Digital Blueprint's Approach

- 2.17 Workshop attendees shaped and then approved the approach. Please see the revised approach here ([appendix 1](#)).
- 2.18 The proposed approach of the Digital Blueprint is to focus on the 'horizontal' elements of 'Place', 'People and Education' and 'Business and Organisations.'
- 'Place' refers to smart city initiatives, infrastructure development, connectivity and connected places.
 - 'People and Education' refers to digital: skills; inclusion; workforce development; educational pathways.
 - 'Business and Organisations' refers to digital: transformation; investment; entrepreneurship; innovation and research; trade and export promotion.
- 2.19 Interwoven with the horizontals, will be 7 'vertical' themes, all of which affect/are affected by the 'horizontals'. The verticals are as follows, in the order prioritised by the private sector committee member consultation:
- Ensuring that we are benefitting from **advanced technologies**, such as emerging work in the fields of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR), and quantum computing.
 - **Showcasing** all the digital opportunities that West Yorkshire has to offer
 - Ensuring that digital technologies make **day-to-day life** easier for West Yorkshire residents and businesses
 - Tackling **digital exclusion**
 - **Collaborative working** of digital stakeholders in West Yorkshire.
 - Understanding and using **data** to make West Yorkshire a well-connected digital destination
 - Establishing digital as a method to help West Yorkshire work towards tackling the **climate emergency**
- 2.20 A public consultation will be released in mid-late October and publicised by Combined Authority social media channels. This will gauge the public response to elements that will be included in the Blueprint, such as views on AI, the ways in which digital technologies impact their lives (positively or negatively), areas in which they would like more

skills/awareness/access to digital, online safety confidence, awareness of Smart Cities/Connected Place, and – for business owners – what digital technologies they are looking to incorporate into their business. Crucially, this consultation will also include a question inviting residents to answer on behalf of those in their networks and communities who may be digitally excluded.

- 2.21 Pending the feedback and approval of the underlying structure of the Digital Blueprint at this committee, members will be sighted with a draft of the Digital Blueprint at the January meeting.
- 2.22 The first draft of the Digital Blueprint draft will be presented at a future Committee, aiming for a Summer 2024 Combined Authority approval and publication. The contribution and engagement of private sector members so far is greatly appreciated.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority has made a bold and ambitious target to reach Net Zero by 2038. This will be a key theme of the Economic Strategy setting out opportunities for net zero in West Yorkshire, alongside actions to support businesses and people to adapt.
- 3.2 This approach will also be part of supporting policies and strategies. The Digital Blueprint aims to tackle the climate emergency through inclusion of elements such as evolution of digital skills supporting sectors developing and innovating their sustainability, support of 'better jobs', skills training for retrofitters of fibre and copper (internet access) and smart homes. The Blueprint will also cover elements of adoption of digital tech by businesses and organisations which will facilitate efficiency and reduce waste, and refer to the opportunities for remote working (which has implications on reducing travel and paper). Digital and smart infrastructure will contribute to reduced energy use, such as smart street lamps, electric vehicles etc. Data capture from smart infrastructure – and local area energy plans and grids - will help with efficient and sustainable planning. Asset mapping allows delivery alignment and strategic sequencing to ensure we 'dig once', which saves on carbon.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 Mission one of the West Yorkshire Plan is for an inclusive economy which will be a guiding principle of the Economic Strategy. Skills recommendations outlined in Digital Blueprint will work directly with those disproportionately affected in the labour market.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded across each of the missions of the West Yorkshire Plan and will be a guiding principle of the strategy. This is reflected in the approach to consultation which is seeking to work with a diverse range of stakeholders.
- 5.2 Inclusion will underpin the Digital Blueprint, and is one of the 7 'verticals', and will be interwoven throughout other 'verticals'. The Blueprint will include and make recommendations regarding demographic information about those who are digitally excluded and reasons why e.g. skills, cost, or infrastructure. Stakeholders in community organisations and central government will be consulted on and included in recommendations around support those who are digitally excluded.
- 5.3 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqiA) has been developed for the Digital Blueprint. The Blueprint will consider EDI elements such as digital as an accessibility tool for those with disabilities, e.g. working remotely. Regarding Business and Organisations, the Blueprint will take into consideration in recommendations elements such as the lack of diversity that is prevalent in venture capital investments. The Blueprint will map out the rural and urban 'not-spots' (areas without any internet coverage) to ensure that geography is not a barrier to participating in an increasingly digital society.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1 As detailed above, Your Voice surveys are in development. The surveys includes open ended questions on the strengths and challenges of the West Yorkshire economy, and the digital ecosystems within that. The aim is to capture feedback from a range of voices, but targeted emails and follow-up activity being planned. In addition, a programme of consultation is being developed with stakeholders including local authorities, business groups and universities.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 That the Committee members note progress and framing of the Economic Strategy and provide feedback on the proposed approach and further opportunities for engagement.

10.2 That the Committee members provide feedback and endorse the direction of the Digital Blueprint, ahead of drafting, and consider whether the ‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical’ approach is clear, whether there are any gaps re digital skills, and whether the ‘verticals’ capture the most relevant areas of digital skills needs for West Yorkshire. Notably, do committee members approve officers to develop a first draft of the Digital Blueprint, in line with the proposed structure and subjects?

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – [Item 5 – Digital Blueprint](#)

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WEST YORKSHIRE DIGITAL BLUEPRINT

17



Agenda Item 5

Appendix 1



Aim: A productive, thriving, sustainable digital landscape in West Yorkshire



Place



People



Business

Verticals – Change Agents, Existing and New



19
Why West
Yorkshire
is a great
place for
digital



Dynamism in
Tech /
Capitalising
on Advanced
Technologies



Inclusion



Data



Hybrid
Digitisation
(day to day
use)

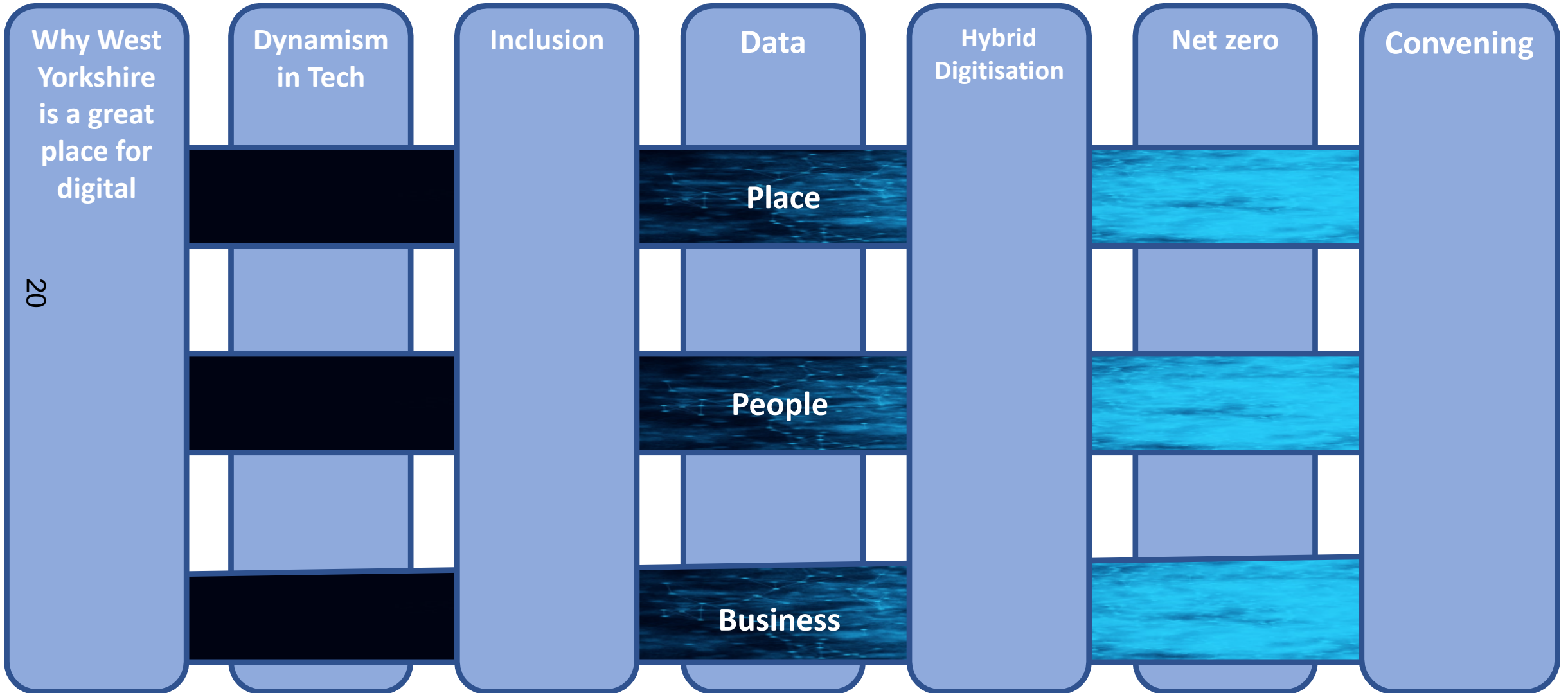


Net zero



Convening

Interweaving the Horizontal and Verticals



Report to:	Employment and Skills Committee
Date:	19 October 2023
Subject:	Devolved Adult Skills
Director:	Felix Kumi-Ampofo, Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills, and Culture
Author:	Pippa Syers, Interim Adult Skills Manager

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	3
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To provide updates on the Combined Authority's work on adult skills programmes and ask the Committee for a steer on work in this area going forward.
- 1.2 Specifically, the report:
 - Provides an update on the Combined Authority's application for additional Skills Bootcamps funding from the Department for Education
 - Requests the Committee to discuss possible approaches to national funding rule changes for AEB including options within appendix 2
 - To provide an update on AEB cross-border arrangements and suggested approach

2. Information

Evidence base

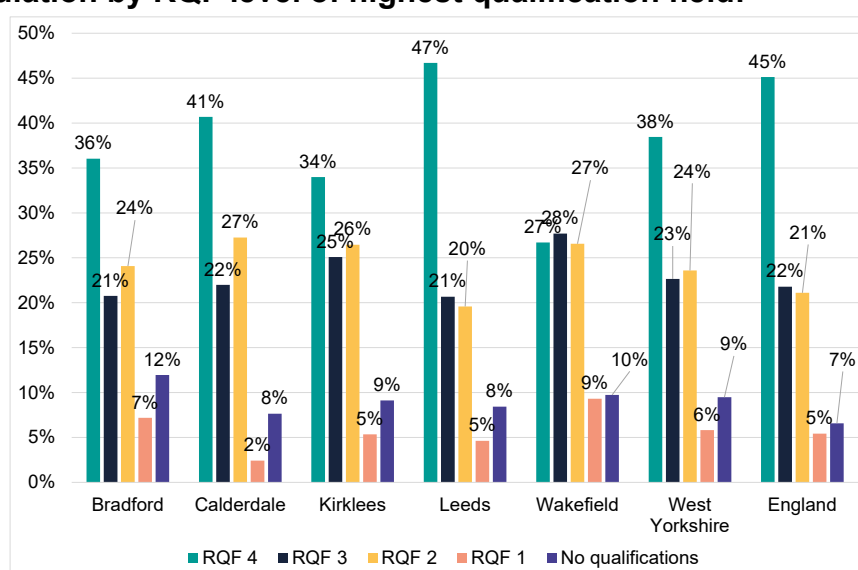
- 2.1 The adult skills papers submitted to the Committee at its previous meetings in March and July, provide an overview of the evidence base pertaining to adult skills, focusing on the

themes of basic skills, technical skills, workforce development, numeracy and community learning. Further intelligence is included in this section where new data is available, including updated information on the qualification profile of West Yorkshire’s working age population. In addition, there is a focus on the need for ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) provision in West Yorkshire, which supports the discussion around ESOL later in the paper.

Qualification profile of working age population

2.2 One of the objectives of adult skills provision is to provide individuals with the skills and qualifications needed to access employment and improve their career prospects and realise their full potential. A key objective of the Adult Education Budget is to enable people to achieve a qualification at Level 2. There is also a legal entitlement for young people aged 19 to 23 to access learning leading to a first full Level 3. There is further provision to enable access to Level 3 qualifications in subjects deemed to be economically valuable.

2.3 Updated figures relating to the level of highest qualification held by the working age population of West Yorkshire have recently been published¹. These show that 15% of the working age population of West Yorkshire has either no or low qualifications. In absolute terms, this equates to 132,000 adults (9% of the total) with no formal qualifications and 81,000 people (6%) whose highest qualification is below level 2. The proportion of people with no / low qualifications rises to nearly one fifth of the population of both- Bradford and of Wakefield. The equivalent proportion nationally is 12%. **Figure: Profile of working age population by RQF level of highest qualification held:**



Source:
Population

Annual

¹ There has been a break in the existing timeseries since, as of 2022, individuals’ qualifications are now mapped to the Regulated Qualification Framework rather than National Vocational Qualification equivalents.

Survey, Jan – Dec 2022

2.4 The proportion of people who have achieved a qualification at Level 3 only is similar to the national average in West Yorkshire at 23% and 22% respectively. However, the availability of people with **higher level qualifications at Level 4 and above** is a key area of under-performance for the region. With 38% of its population qualified to this level, West Yorkshire is seven points below the national average of 45%.

West Yorkshire Delivery

2.5 The table below shows WYCA's Employment and Skills KPIs which are set and measured each financial year and reviewed monthly. % cumulative target achieved shows progress to date against forecast.

Employment and Skills		23/24 Actual to date	Annual Target	% of Cumulative Target Achieved	Definition
Adults supported to upskill, re-train or access employment/self-employment	Individuals engaged	13,584	53,900	435%	Individuals engaged in the following programmes: AEB, Multiply, Enterprise West Yorkshire, Employment West Yorkshire, Skills Connect, Digital Bootcamps, Apprenticeship Levy.
	Ethnic Minority Learners (AEB Only)	48%	43%	112%	
	Learners with disabilities and/or learning difficulties (AEB Only)	19%	23%	83%	
	Unemployed Learners (AEB Only)	47%	43%	109%	
	Female Learners (AEB Only)	60%	67%	90%	Support adults to access employment, self-employment and training, and to progress in work, targeting support at the most disadvantaged and marginalised groups in the region, including prison-leavers
	Female Learners (Non AEB)	57%	50%	114%	
	Ethnic Minority Learners (Non AEB)	49%	20%	245%	
	Learners with disabilities and/or learning difficulties (Non AEB)	23%	23%	100%	

Multiply

2.6 Multiply is an adult numeracy programme, led by the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the £2.6bn UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). West Yorkshire Combined Authority was allocated £12.4m across 3 financial years. The funding is to engage more adults with numeracy levels below level 2 (GCSE C/4 pass) in informal learning to boost their maths skills for life and work.

- 2.7 Following consultation, the West Yorkshire Investment Plan was approved in June 2022 and has been accepted by the Department for Education. The Investment Plan outlines 3 key streams of activity:
- **Strand 1** - Individual engagement - £4.7 million
 - **Strand 2** - Business focussed activity - £3 million
 - **Strand 3** - Capacity building for the sector - £3.6 million
- 2.8 Please note that as the programme progresses and demand is measured by performance, the distribution of these funds will change. A recent change request (detailed in 2.16) now affects the funding distribution as shown below:
- **Strand 1** - Individual engagement - £4.9 million
 - **Strand 2** - Business focussed activity - £3 million
 - **Strand 3** - Capacity building for the sector - £3.4 million
- 2.9 Improving numeracy skills is key to tackling deprivation: 47% of learners in West Yorkshire who enrolled on numeracy courses via devolved AEB in 2021/22 live in the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally. There is a strong correlation between neighbourhoods that are “skills deprived” and those that face wider forms of deprivation.
- 2.10 Current Multiply data shows 58% of delivery has occurred in 20% most deprived areas of West Yorkshire. A larger proportion of female (79%) to male (21%) with the vast majority (65%) of learning being undertaken by age group 25-49. 32% are Pakistani ethnicity, 27% White British, the remainder a spread across other ethnicities.
- 2.11 Year 2 data from April to July shows learner engagement to date of 470 against an annual DfE target of 2456 (19% of annual profile) and 173 learners ahead of learner profile to date by 297 (163% against profile to date). Local areas have planned for year 2 with delivery expected to increase from September onwards in line with seasonal trends in engagement with education. All Local Authority areas and FE Colleges are reporting that they expect 100% delivery on all interventions.
- 2.12 Multiply business strand supports employers to up-skill staff in bespoke numeracy training to improve productivity. Delivery is yet to gain momentum therefore to increase engagement from businesses, partners are collecting feedback from employers on the barriers facing engagement, liaising with business engagement teams to promote the offer to employers, engaging with TUC and Union Learning Reps, and a business referral portal is available on the WYCA website. Marketing including social media, radio and bus advertising has taken place to promote this strand.

Skills Connect

2.13 Skills Connect is West Yorkshire Combined Authority's (WYCA) fully funded, non-accredited adult training programme. It offers flexible courses at an equivalent from Level 3 up to Level 5, and has been developed to address employer skills shortages within the region, allowing individuals to access higher level employment opportunities or progression within their current employment. Delivery is progressing well and has supported 1,000 learners to start courses in the technical and health and care sectors, with a digital sector-focussed offer due to launch in early 2024, driving progress towards the target of supporting 4,500 learners by March 2025.

Skills Bootcamps

2.14 Delivery is currently underway for Wave 4 (financial year April 2023-March 2024) with 16 courses available by mid-September 2023. The current provision is predominately in the Digital Sector, with content delivered at equivalent to Level 3 up to Level 5. Examples of these courses currently include Skills Bootcamp in Web Design and Development, and Skills Bootcamp in IT Support with Cyber Security. To date, 186 learners have enrolled on courses out of a target of 950, which is in line with our performance profile with further registrations taking place until March 2024. Courses that are available for registrations can be accessed [here](#) via the FutureGoals platform.

2.15 A proposal has now been submitted to the DfE to set out what the Combined Authority intend to commission under the next phase (Wave 5) of Skills Bootcamps (April 2024-March 2025). The high-level submission will focus on the core sector areas set out by the DfE, including Construction, Engineering and Digital, with additional flexibilities introduced including Childcare, Creative and Design and Project Management. The proposal has been submitted in collaboration with Local Authorities to scope out the specific skills needs in each local area. The Skills Bootcamps will be positioned under Wave 5 as a business facing offer, to continue to encourage co-investment in high demand skills by employers through the co-design of courses available and also through the recruitment of course graduates. A change request to extend the delivery of the programme into Wave 5 is currently going through the Combined Authority's assurance process, with the anticipated outcome due by December 2023.

AEB and Free Courses for Jobs

2.16 West Yorkshire has now entered its third year of devolved AEB funding. Through the devolution of funds, the Combined Authority aims to continuously improve the impact of the investment of funding. This includes focussing the funds on disadvantaged areas, and

individuals most in need of support, i.e., with low or no qualifications, unemployed, on low wages. The aim is to make transformational improvements to the impact that the fund has.

- 2.17 Exempt Appendix 1 – AEB Performance Data September 2023 (the Combined Authority is not permitted to release data publicly ahead of DfE) demonstrates the current reach of the Adult Education budget for Year 2. Over 47,000 West Yorkshire residents have been supported in upskilling across a range of sectors and in preparation for life and work in year 2.
- 2.18 Early indications show there has been a significant increase of Free Courses for Jobs utilisation from 20% in 21/22 to over 80% in 22/23. This has resulted in 593 learners achieving a level 3 qualification. For 87% of these learners this was their first level 3 qualification, enabling them to reskill or upskill.
- 2.19 Once the data collection has been completed in November, a full report on Year 2's performance will be provided to the January 2024 Employment and Skills Committee to consider the impact that has been made through funding devolution.
- 2.20 Year 3 performance data has not been appended, as returns are partial at this point in the year, with the majority of grant holders providing their first return in November (R03).

National Funding Changes

- 2.21 The Government has introduced changes to funding rates in 24/25 which are part of the further education (FE) funding and accountability reforms set out by Skills for Jobs white paper.
- 2.22 Appendix 2 outlines the implications of the national funding changes and the possible approaches to consider for West Yorkshire.
- 2.23 The Employment and Skills Committee is asked to consider the options and recommended approach as detailed in appendix 2.

Route 2 (Out of area) Grant Providers and cross border arrangements

- 2.24 The West Yorkshire AEB Strategy detailed the commitment to support Grant providers from the wider Leeds City Region that support travel to learn patterns and/or delivery directly into West Yorkshire communities.
- 2.25 Under Route 2 the Combined Authority contracts with four Colleges, one Local Authority and a Specialist Designated Institution from South and North Yorkshire, as well as the Workers Education Association (WEA) a national adult education charity who have a Leeds base and deliver across the region. Total allocation of these providers is £3,233,927 of AEB (5% of total allocation).

- 2.26 As outlined in the AEB strategy and as two years of AEB delivery performance is now available, it is time to review if the arrangement for all the out of area providers is still appropriate.
- 2.27 Coinciding with this review is the unique position that West Yorkshire is one of the first MCAs to soon be surrounded by devolved authorities. There is a risk of negative consequences to a learner who lives or works close to a border and those wishing to travel to learn for specialist provision. Engagement is underway with South Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and Lancashire authorities to consider cross border arrangements.
- 2.28 The DfE are running a workshop in October with all MCAs to discuss methods to address cross border arrangements. After this session Officers will undertake a consultation with out of area providers.

English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL)

- 2.29 According to Census 2021, there are 51,000 adults in West Yorkshire whose main language is not English and who either **cannot speak English or cannot speak English well**. Bradford has the sixth largest number of people with English language needs (21,000) of any local authority in England and the proportion of the adult population with these needs in the city is more than double the national average. Leeds also has a high absolute number of people with English language needs (14,000), whilst Kirklees has a prevalence of English language needs (2.7% of adults) that is well above the national average of 2.1%.
- 2.30 According to the Census, working-age people with English language needs in West Yorkshire are twice as likely to be economically inactive as the overall average for the region (58% versus 27%) and are barely half as likely to be in employment (37% versus 68%). Moreover, 68% of adults in West Yorkshire with English language needs hold no formal qualifications, more than three times the overall average of 21%, further limiting their employability.
- 2.31 There are continued reports of high demand for ESOL provision, with waiting lists. Early indications from 22/23 show a further increase in ESOL enrolments of year to date of 18%.
- 2.32 Discussions continue with the Department for Education, sharing intelligence on demand and uptake. While it is important to support this need, there are many calls on the budget.

- 2.33 The Combined Authority has taken an innovative approach to support ESOL learners using funding available under the Department for Education-funded Skills Bootcamps. A lack of ESOL tutors across West Yorkshire has amplified the need for provision and a lack of capacity within the sector to deliver much needed support to learners. Under a pilot programme, the Combined Authority is working with Shipley College to initially deliver training to 20 learners to provide a CELTA Level 5 qualification for teaching English as a foreign language, with scope to potentially increase this based on course performance and future demand. This will provide additional capacity within the sector and help to support ESOL learners.
- 2.34 A pilot programme, has been delivered to support the underemployment of Hong Kong migrants. Co-designed with Migration Yorkshire, Path Yorkshire will support training to a small number of skilled Hong Kong migrants with key workplace language skills and employability skills. The aim of this programme is to support learners into better roles with higher earnings, to fill vacancies and to reduce underemployment.

Adult Skills Procurement

- 2.35 An Adult Skills Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) has been developed and launched at the beginning of October 2023 ahead of procurement of Adult Skills providers to commence delivery in academic year 2024/25. The intention will be to bring adult skills opportunities together through a single DPS, ensuring that there is a streamlined offer with clear progression opportunities for the residents of West Yorkshire.
- 2.36 The Combined Authority is launching two significant tender opportunities under **Skills Connect**. Procurement exercises in both digital courses and supporting targeted groups and sectors across West Yorkshire will be valued at approx. £1mil, respectively.
- 2.37 A contract is due to be awarded in October 2023 under the **Skills Bootcamp** programme, to deliver various Skills Bootcamps supporting the creative and cultural sectors. These courses will look to upskill 175 participants to access new and / or improved employment opportunities in response to the future skills needs of the region and in preparation for events such as Bradford 2025.
- 2.38 Multiply Capacity Building for front line staff tender was published via open and competitive tender and is now closed. The Frontline Staff Numeracy Ambassadors programme provides training to support wider sector professionals and front-line staff to develop a positive culture of reference, and a framework for supporting customers to recognise and address their own numeracy skills needs. The programme will support individuals within

an organisation that has direct contact with members of the public, to become positive numeracy ambassadors, avoiding negative connotations with the subject of maths/numeracy when advising potential learners, and upskilling their ability to signpost to the correct programme and/or provide buddying/mentoring support at point of access. Numeracy Ambassadors are not direct beneficiaries of Multiply but act as intermediaries who engage with the target audience and signpost them to further learning and support with improving numeracy skills, breaking barriers, and building confidence.

Future AEB Procurement

2.39 In 2021, the Combined Authority procured AEB for Contract for Service providers on initially one-year contracts with the facility to issue subsequent contracts each year up to 3 years. 23/24 is the final year of this procurement round therefore a new process will be launched for academic year 24/25 onwards.

Responsiveness

2.40 It is anticipated that the responsiveness pot for the academic year 2023/24 will be around £2 million. It is intended to be utilised as per 2022/23, with the following activities: Commissioning responsive activity based on economic and sector intelligence.

This is likely to include (but not limited to):

- Targeting underrepresentation in local authority areas, e.g. 'cold spots' where participation is low in deprived areas
- Responding to the needs of the Digital Skills Plan
- Skilled sector ('good jobs') with vacancies
- Supporting ex-offenders
- Supporting care leavers
- Emerging economic needs

2.41 Utilising the AEB responsiveness pot, we are soon to procure bespoke training packages which include the licence to practice certificate that individuals require to gain employment in some key employment sectors, previously these were not available for AEB funding. This provision will be roll-on-roll-off and will include sector specific employability skills as well as the opportunity to achieve SIA badge (Security), CSCS card (Construction) or Forklift truck certificate (Warehousing) with guaranteed links to recruiting employers.

2.42 The specification has been co-designed with DWP due to significant demand for these competencies and large numbers of vacancies across West Yorkshire. Delivery will commence by late 2023.

Adult Skills Provider Engagement

- 2.43 A West Yorkshire AEB Conference was held on 6th July 2023, hosted by Kirklees College. The event incorporated a Q&A session with the Mayor, a West Yorkshire Skills update from the Chief Executive of the Combined Authority and a range of workshops to provide sector updates and support best practice across West Yorkshire.
- 2.44 Feedback from providers was positive, particularly hearing from the Mayor and valuing the opportunity to network and the workshops, many of which were delivered by WY delivery partners.
- 2.45 The 2024 conference will be widened to include all Adult Skills providers, removing the focus on specific funding streams and encouraging progression pathways between funding.
- 2.46 A Multiply conference took place on 5th October where delegates attended and share good practice. All providers who would like to upskill their workforce by improving their numeracy skills received an invitation. This was not limited to providers who are delivering Multiply therefore widening participation and access to CPD to practitioners across West Yorkshire. Further events of this nature are planned for the remainder of year 2 and into year 3. The first conference was delivered in partnership with Luminate Group (Leeds City College) and White Rose Maths.
- 2.47 Quarterly provider “round table” sessions have been taking place throughout the year with providers delivering under the Skills Bootcamp and Skills Connect programme, to share best practice and discuss programme updates. Providers have since been invited to team meetings across the service, including with business-facing staff to understand better the wider skills offer available across West Yorkshire.

Employer Focussed Skills

- 2.48 Multiply **Business Training** contracts have been issued to three successful providers with delivery due to commence in September 2023. Delivery included embedding a numeracy champion within each business to support the workforce on a continuing basis and to triage skills needs identified.
- 2.49 Businesses are referred to the **Skills Bootcamp** co-funded offer, where employers can upskill their staff for either 10% or 30% of the programme cost, in digital provision. To date the Combined Authority has created 42 co-funded places for West Yorkshire employers

addressing employers' digital skills needs in the region. The service is running a promotional campaign to promote further courses available under Wave 4.

- 2.50 Under the **Skills Connect** programme, the Combined Authority is directly supporting businesses across West Yorkshire through a "Train the Trainer" type approach, where an individual in an organisation receives increased responsibilities as a result of training and can then disseminate this information to colleagues, creating a legacy programme and increasing the benefit across the organisation. Examples of this include the Sustainability Champion programme to increase the number of Green ambassadors within organisations and also Train for Care – Elevating Training Skills in Health and Social care.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1. Skills development is a critical component in tackling the climate emergency implications. Each adult skills programme provided by the Combined Authority, and the majority commissioned nationally provide a level of support in increasing green skills. Locally, the Green Jobs Taskforce will inform programme development.
- 3.2 The decision and discussion topics of this paper do not pose any immediate change to climate change curriculum or programmes.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1. All adult skills programmes aim to support those residents who have a skills deficit and need to access learning opportunities to progress them towards further learning, employment or a better way of life. Through delegated and devolved funding, we specifically target investment of funds towards disadvantaged areas and underrepresented groups where the skills deficit is most pronounced.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1. All adult skills programmes aim to support those residents who have a skills deficit and/or tackle economic challenges. The range of programmes frequently support underrepresented groups through training provision.
- 5.2 All programmes have an Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment with relevant actions identified. Proportionate uptake amongst demographics is closely monitored, with targeted action taken to address any identified imbalance. Community Learning in particular, is aimed to outreach in communities who do not traditionally engage with learning and support their further progression in life, work and learning.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The Multiply year report outlines that £1.4 million funding that was allocated to West Yorkshire, but was unspent due to implementation challenges. The DfE have confirmed that there will be no opportunity to apply for growth in year 2 despite earlier communications at the beginning of year 2 that there would be opportunity for growth, therefore it is highly important that we look to flex the fund between intervention lines where possible to maximise impact on individuals trained.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. The information contained in Appendix 4 is exempt under paragraph 3 of Part 1 to Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the Combined Authority. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the content of Appendix 4 as exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, as publication could prejudice the financial or business affairs of the Authority.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1. No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1. That the Committee comment on and recommend the proposed approach to national funding rule changes for AEB
- 10.2 The committee is asked to consider and endorse the approach on next steps on moving towards a needs-based allocation methodology.

11. Background Documents

[West Yorkshire AEB Strategy \(September 2020\)](#)

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – [Exempt Appendix 1 – AEB Performance Data September 2023](#)
Appendix 2 – [National Funding Changes](#)

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National Funding Changes

WYCA position and next steps

September 2023

Context

West Yorkshire's AEB

The Government have introduced changes to funding rates in 2024/25 which are part of the further education (FE) funding and accountability reforms set out by the Skills for Jobs white paper.

The aim is to boost funding in areas of greatest skills need and/or with higher cost of delivery while looking to support learners into jobs which support better economic growth.

New rates apply to ESFA provision in non-devolved areas and MCAs are responsible and have flexibilities for our own rates, it would be logistically and systematically challenging for us to not use the new ESFA rates due to our reliance on the Individual Learner Record (ILR) database.

Courses under the new skills fund will be organised along five new hourly bands that range from £6 to £12 by their sector subject area.

New skills funding band	Base	Low	Medium	High	Specialist
New hourly skills funding rate	£6.00	£7.20	£8.40	£9.60	£12.00

This replaces the current “single activity matrix” which organises funding along fifteen possible funding bands.

Under the new system from 2024/25, courses in travel and tourism will attract the lowest base rate of £6 per hour and engineering the high rate of £9.60 per hour.

There is a higher “specialist” band of £12 per hour for certain land-based courses, however officials are still reviewing which subjects receive the “specialist” band and which receive the “high” funding band.

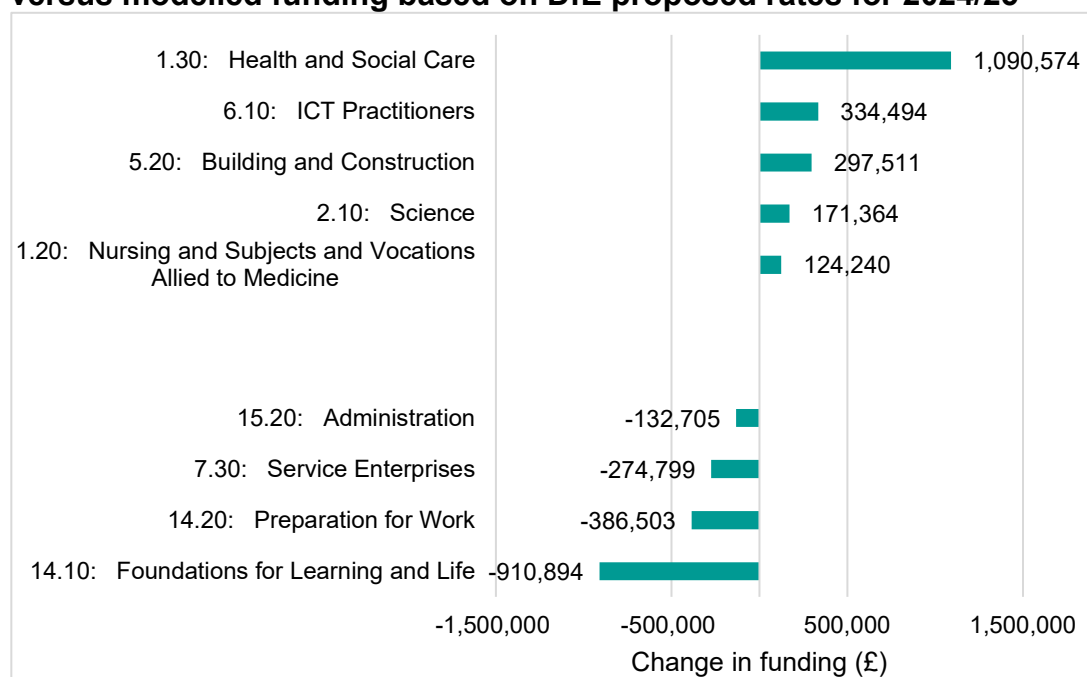
The hourly band is then multiplied by a qualification’s guided learning hours to give a funding rate. Adjustments for disadvantage and area costs will apply as they do now.

Impact of the new funding changes

In academic year 2022/2023 the Combined Authority approved a 10% uplift to learning aims to reflect the rising delivery costs and the static rate for 10 years. This was to be further reviewed alongside any national rate changes.

In order to understand the implications of the rate changes the Combined Authority has undertaken modelling which compares the actual funding profile for 2022/23 (including the current 10% uplift on all qualifications at level 2 and below) with a modelled picture which applies the 2024/25 funding rates to the pattern of provision for 2022/23.

Figure: Analysis of estimated changes in funding values by selected subject areas based on 2022/23 delivery: actual funding including existing 10% uplift versus modelled funding based on DfE proposed rates for 2024/25



Note: figures exclude learning support funding

This shows that some sector subject areas are clear winners under the new rates whilst others are clear losers. Sectors which will receive an increase in funding per qualification include Health and Social Care, ICT and Construction. Meanwhile, the modelling suggests that Foundations for Learning and Life would be the biggest loser, with a net reduction of over £900,000 in funding under the new rates for the same provision, which represents a 9% decline on current funding for this subject.

Although there are exceptions due to learning aim's assigned guided learning hours, on average those that will see a decrease include Functional Skills Maths and English, ESOL and employability, all of which fall within the Foundations for Learning and Life subject area. The table below show examples of how the new rate compares with the current rate for qualifications with substantial take-up in West Yorkshire. It is important to recognise even within the same subjects there are winners and losers.

Examples

Qualification	GLH	Current rate inc. 10%	24/25 Rate	Difference from current to 24/25	24/25 rate with 10% uplift
Functional Skills Qualification in English Entry level 3 (City & Guilds)	55	£796	£724	-£72	£796
Award in ESOL Skills for Life – Reading (Gateway Qualifications)	60	£330	£360	+£30	£396
Functional Skills Qualification in Mathematics at Entry Level 3 (City & Guilds)	55	£1,035	£941	-£94	£1,035

Certificate of Introduction to Construction	145	£1,035	£1,392	+£357	£1,531
Entry Level Award in ESOL Skills for Life (Speaking and Listening) Entry 3 (City & Guilds)	73	£660	£436	£480	-£224

Equality and Diversity Implications

As noted above, the national funding rate changes for 2024/25 are expected to have the biggest negative impact on the level of funding attracted by the Foundation for Learning and Life subject area. ESOL courses make up a key element of this subject area, with the vast majority of learners studying these courses being drawn from an ethnic minority group. This means that the funding rate changes would lead to a disproportionate negative impact on people from ethnic minority groups in the context of this subject area. This reduction is expected to be offset by the increased funding that people from ethnic minority groups would attract when studying qualifications in subject areas that will gain from the rate changes.

Options for discussion

Option 1

Adopt new national rates with no additional uplift

- English, maths and ESOL provision would see a loss in funding reducing the viability of delivery.
- It may encourage providers to focus on higher value aims leading to providers choosing to deliver for example, health and social care instead of maths/English

Option 2

Adopt new national rates and maintain the 10% uplift across all aims.

- Some sectors have had significant uplift already applied through the new funding rates. An additional 10% uplift would result in further significant increase in certain sectors
- This could result in fewer learners engaged as there would be an increased usage of allocation against specific sectors e.g., Health and Social Care and construction

Option 3

Adopt new rates with 10% uplift on Sector Subject Area 14.1 (Foundations for Learning and Life) which includes Functional Skills English, maths and ESOL. Qualifications with a general focus on personal development and preparation for employment also account for a small proportion of enrolments in this subject area.

- This is AEB strategy priority provision that would otherwise see a reduction.
- These are skills that support individuals to progress, leading to an increase of the number of individuals who have a maths and/or English qualification and the language skills to improve their opportunities.
- The uplift increases viability of delivery and may encourage providers to deliver increased numbers of these aims.

Recommended Approach

The recommendation is to implement **Option 3** to ensure and maintain adequate funding for priority provision such as maths, English and ESOL.

Next steps

- Employment and Skills Committee to discuss options and recommend.
- Decision to Combined Authority
- Provider webinar to communicate changes.

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Report to:	Employment and Skills Committee
Date:	19 October 2023
Subject:	All Age Careers
Director:	Felix Kumi-Ampofo, Director Inclusive Economy, Skills, and Culture
Author:	Anika Gilbert, Policy Officer Employment & Skills, Danielle Choma, Schools Partnership Manager

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1. To update the Committee and seek members' comments on the co-development of the West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint and present the evidence base captured in the interim report.
- 1.2. To update the Committee on current delivery of careers activity led by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

2. Information

Context

- 2.1. Effective careers education, information, advice and guidance [CEIAG] promotes engagement with learning and improves the functioning of the education and training system. It can contribute to increasing students' engagement and success by clarifying the relevance of subjects to future opportunities. To make the most of opportunities to better connect a range of services for local residents a radical shift in how services are designed and commissioned is required to ensure that all citizens for West Yorkshire can

thrive in the future world of work across the employment and skills landscape of which careers is a critical, but not isolated, component. A deep dive evidence review is provided in Appendix 3. Highlights are included below to demonstrate the rationale for the All-Age Careers Blueprint.

2.2 There are a range of socio-economic issues in West Yorkshire which could be addressed through a high-quality careers support offer, including:

- The proportion of people who have no or low qualifications.
- The increasing, and higher than nationally, prevalence of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Existing gender stereotyping and distinct patterns of occupational segregation by gender.
- Under-representation of some ethnic groups with regard to some learning pathways and in some occupational segments

In an ever increasingly dynamic labour market where careers are no longer linear, careers support can also contribute to more effective matching of skills demand and supply by ensuring that individuals have access to rich, meaningful and relevant information about available career opportunities and the skills and learning pathways that provide access to them. In this way, careers support can help to minimise skills mismatches, reduce skill shortage vacancies and offset under-utilisation of skills.

Finally, careers support facilitates social inclusion and social mobility; for example, by helping young people to develop the career management skills, social capital and networks for career success, by assisting unemployed people and labour market returners to re-engage with the world of work and by facilitating investment in skills and career development by people with low level qualifications or who are in low-paid work.

West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint

2.3 With West Yorkshire's Local Authority partners, the Combined Authority is currently in the process of co-producing an All-Age Careers Blueprint with partners and key stakeholders, building on and complimenting the principles of the [Work Local model](#). A previous update has been provided to [Committee on 13th July](#); setting out the three main drivers for the project, which are summarised below:

1. Based on the rationale summarised above, careers support raises the aspirations and career readiness of individuals with a direct link to productivity growth and increased employment participation. The All-Age Career Blueprint therefore has a direct link into the delivery of Mission 1 of the West Yorkshire Plan – 'A prosperous West Yorkshire, enabled by an inclusive economy with well-paid jobs' and the career element of the Employment and Skills Framework.

2. To co-design a place-based model of good quality careers provision that is delivered at the level closest to individuals, to allow flexibility to focus on improve career outcomes for disadvantaged groups which are distinct in each area.
 3. To support conversations with Government to unlock further skills and employment related powers and funding, based on the Greater Manchester and West Midland Combined Authority Trailblazer Deals setting a precedent for devolved career and wider employment and skills provision.
- 2.4 The Institute for Employment Studies (IES), working collaboratively with the International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS), has been commissioned to lead the development of the West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint.
 - 2.5 The first phase of the project was focussed on creating an evidence base across West Yorkshire to identify key opportunities and challenges and provide valuable context for wide stakeholder engagement.
 - 2.6 IES and iCeGS have synthesised the available evidence on best practice in careers guidance, who accesses services and who does not, and the current policy landscape, as well as analysis of regional labour market data. The Combined Authority and LA partners also undertook a light-touch mapping exercise to get a better understanding of the current, regional career provider landscape. 40 submissions were received from career providers in response to an online survey.
 - 2.7 IES also hosted and facilitated a Theory of Change workshop with lead skills officers from Local Authorities, business, education and career providers to develop an initial overview of the existing career landscape, articulate ambitions for future ambitions and think about possible mechanisms for change. A selection of comments from the discussion can be seen below:

Target Groups	<p><i>“All, regardless of employment status”</i></p> <p><i>“Variety of age and circumstance, proactively focussed on groups who could be classed as disadvantaged [...]”</i></p> <p><i>“Young people with SEND / EHCP”</i></p> <p><i>“Adults”</i></p> <p><i>“Work with schools to improve performance towards career benchmarks”</i></p> <p><i>“Support for businesses [to offer] future careers opportunities in their organisation”</i></p>
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Impact	<i>"Clearer understanding of routes into the career of choice"</i>
	<i>"Non-stereotyped decisions [...]"</i>
	<i>"It needs to be open for all at any point in their lives, not targeted for certain groups or at specific times"</i>
	<i>"Educational provision which has a link to the need of the economy to grow"</i>
	<i>"Employers recruit locally and can source their needs with confidence from local talent pool"</i>
	<i>"Normalising the use of career advice and guidance [...]"</i>
Outcomes	<i>"More people in good work"</i>
	<i>"Greater workforce diversity"</i>
	<i>"Improved retention in post16 & adult learning [...]"</i>
	<i>"Improved labour market status for most disadvantaged groups"</i>
	<i>"Job satisfaction and enjoying what you do [...]"</i>
	<i>"Less skills shortages reported as a barrier to economic growth"</i>
	<i>"Opportunities for people to move throughout their life and career"</i>
Input / Activities	<i>"Digital resources"</i>
	<i>"More engaging awareness activities (for all ages)"</i>
	<i>"Marketing of services [...]"</i>
	<i>"Capacity building – network of quality, independent careers advisers to deliver support"</i>
	<i>"Support for job seekers / career changers to be able to articulate skills and experience"</i>



<p>Change Mechanism</p>	<p><i>“Co-design with providers, employers and clients locally, based on data”</i></p> <p><i>“Greater sharing of information, opportunities and programmes, cross referrals and more working together”</i></p> <p><i>“Funding and good partnerships”</i></p> <p><i>“Build on existing infrastructure / best practice”</i></p> <p><i>“Employers”</i></p>
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2.8 Wider consultation co-designed with LA partners and with key stakeholders, including employers, is planned to take place over autumn. Specifically, the following activity is planned:

- 15, virtual, in-depth stakeholder interviews with representatives of the education, training and career support providers, national parties as well as an extended session with senior skills officers from each of the five Local Authorities, led by IES.
- Public Consultation via YourVoice, supported by IES, led by the CA.
- Employer consultation via an online survey, supported by IES, led by the CA.
- Virtual stakeholder workshop to refine recommendations, led by IES.
- Virtual expert panel discussion with CEIAG experts to challenge and validate findings, led by IES.
- Stakeholder engagement with wider public sector partners and employment, skill and career boards and providers.

A more in-depth presentation on the interim findings will be available at the meeting and Member feedback will be invaluable in shaping this blueprint.

Delivery Updates

2.9 Schools partnerships activity

The Combined Authority is part-funded by the Careers and Enterprise Company as part of a national network of Careers Hubs. The West Yorkshire Careers Hub aims to support all 180+ secondary schools and colleges in its network to make progress towards the

Gatsby benchmarks of good careers guidance, ultimately improving young people's destinations, particularly the most disadvantaged. So far in this financial year 59 schools have made measurable improvements.

Through the Careers Hub, the following targeted activity has taken place since the last Committee meeting:

- The 'Apprenticeship and Technical Education Pilot Project' aimed to support employers to mentor students to increase their knowledge about apprenticeship and technical education options. The project has now completed its final stage of delivery. The 42 students from year 10, 12 and 13 [from Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield Schools] involved increased their knowledge of apprenticeships and their confidence in applying. However, although the project increased awareness of technical education, students were not as confident in their deeper understanding of technical options (e.g. T Levels, HQTs). Employers involved have provided positive feedback and felt more confident in informing students about apprenticeships and technical education after receiving training. The provider, Amazing Apprenticeships, who are supporting the upscaling of this project, also received positive feedback. (ATEP Evaluation Report attached as Appendix 1)
- The Effective Transitions Fund recently enabled a group of girls in year 11 to engage with regional employers. "We Are IVE" was commissioned to deliver a series of tailored, in person workplace visits for the Education and Training Foundation students to West Yorkshire anchor businesses including Leeds Bradford Airport, KPMG and Burberry. Evaluation is currently underway. Additional funding has been offered to the Combined Authority by The Careers and Enterprise Company for a shorter-term intervention targeted at an additional 150 disadvantaged young people over the next 6 months.
- West Yorkshire's Enterprise Advisors (EAs - business volunteers recruited via the Careers Hub) continue to be key to supporting the region's schools and colleges. After identifying a shortage of volunteers to support SEND (Special educational needs and disabilities) and PRU (pupil referral unit) schools within the regional Careers Hub, a "SEND EA Recruitment Campaign" was developed and delivered to recruit additional advisors. The campaign targeted social media, internal organisation communications channels and in-person recruitment events and has been highly successful. With over 200 enquires received
- Working with Local Authority partners, the Careers Hub has been looking at destination data for year 11 and 12. Some areas have seen a significant increase in young people not in education, employment or training employment (NEETS) and where their destination is not known. The Careers and Enterprise company has launched a national

fund to support system wide development to help reduce NEET figures. The Combined Authority's application, covering and working with Leeds and Bradford Local Authorities, has been successful with an award of £100,000.

FutureGoals

- The Futuregoals site is an all-age careers platform intended to inspire and inform people of all ages about the career opportunities in the West Yorkshire region. It also provides a route to engagement with employment and skills provision. Since the last meeting, there has been a significant increase in the monthly reach achieved by the FutureGoals site. This has increased to 675,225 in August 2023, compared to 185,421 and 310,839 in June 2023 and July 2023 respectively. This increase is a reflection of an increase in social media campaigns including the employer side of the Skills Bootcamp Activity, Employment Support as well as Skills Connect campaigns all gaining traction and building on the gradual increase in reach in July 2023.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1. A career support system, rooted in local economic information is also responsive to changing economic needs, including emerging requirements around green skills and businesses transitioning towards a net-zero carbon economy.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1. The Future Ready Skills Commission found that, careers support is not just important because it contributes to individual motivation, career readiness and employability but that these improvements in individual capability lead to the improved operation of the labour market, and greater social mobility and inclusion. There is then a direct link to productivity growth, higher pay and increased employment participation.
- 4.2. In addition, career inspiration, starting at primary school age, has been shown to impact social mobility and counteract the early formation of stereotypes about occupations, careers and pathways. Children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds benefitting the most from support.
- 4.3. The West Yorkshire All Age Career Blueprint will also support inclusive economic growth by placing a particular focus on those groups that face disadvantage through envisaging a regional career system that supports social mobility.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1. A comprehensive, yet simple, quality support offer to start, progress and change a career, which is rooted in local economic information and provision, is particularly important for those people facing disadvantage and/or do not have other available

support in this area and those businesses that are experiencing difficulties recruiting or retaining skilled staff and those industries that face significant change due to economic change, e.g. through automation or a shift towards a net-zero carbon economy.

5.2 A priority for the West Yorkshire All Age Career Blueprint is to create a system that works for all ages, from primary school level to retirement age, with a particular focus on transition points.

5.3 The blueprint will also consider how careers education, information, advice and guidance can help address longstanding skills and employment gaps based on gender, ethnicity and ability as well as how to reach groups from disadvantaged backgrounds.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1. There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1. Comprehensive and robust consultation with stakeholders is planned to support the development of the West Yorkshire all Age Careers Blueprints, including: Local and Combined Authority colleagues, education and training providers, CEIAG and employment support providers, employers and members of the public.

10. Recommendations

10.1. To update the Committee and seek their comments on the development of the West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint & present the evidence base captured in the interim report.

10.2 To update the Committee on current delivery of careers activity led by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

11. Background Documents

Employment & Skills Committee, 13 July 2023: [Development and delivery of regionally coordinated careers activity](#)

12. Appendices

- Appendix 1 – [Evidence Deep Dive](#)
- Appendix 2 – [West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint – Draft Interim Report](#)
- Appendix 3 – [ATEP Programme Evaluation](#)

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Item 7 All Age Careers – Evidence Deep Dive

Report to:	Employment & Skills Committee
Date:	19 October 2023
Subject:	All Age Careers
Director:	Felix Kumi-Ampofo, Director Inclusive Economy, Skills & Culture
Author:	Anika Gilbert & Peter Glover

ALL AGE CAREERS EVIDENCE DEEP DIVE

The following section examines the role of careers support in relation to key labour market issues, viewed in the specific context of West Yorkshire and summarises the nature and scale of these issues in order to demonstrate the rationale for an All-Age Careers Blueprint.

Effective careers education, information, advice and guidance [CEIAG] promotes engagement with learning and improves the functioning of the education and training system. It can contribute to increasing students’ engagement and success by clarifying the relevance of subjects to future opportunities. There are a range of issues in West Yorkshire which could be addressed through a high-quality careers support offer as part of a wider strategy to confront socio-economic issues.

- **Relatively low qualification attainment among young people in West Yorkshire at various stages of development.** For example, only 77% of young people in West Yorkshire achieve a qualification at Level 2 equivalent by age 19 compared with a national average of 82%. The proportion falls to 72% for Bradford. The proportion achieving a qualification at Level 3 by age 19 is 55%, 6 points lower than the national average of 61%.
- **Significant prevalence of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).** Around 3,500 young people aged 16 and 17 in West Yorkshire were classed as NEET in 2022/23. This is 6.2% of the overall cohort, a higher prevalence than nationally (5.2%) and an increase on 2021/22 (5.5%).
- **Relatively low progression into higher education within some local authority areas in West Yorkshire.** For example, the proportion of pupils entering higher education by age 19 is 44% in Leeds and 40% in Wakefield, compared with a national average of 47%.

Research evidence suggests that when students have been exposed to substantial careers education from a young age, they are more likely to express broader career expectations and aspirations and are less likely to be constrained by societal and/or familial pressures. This is relevant to the following labour market issues:

- **Gender stereotyping and distinct patterns of occupational segregation by gender.**
 - For example, whereas females account for 52% of all apprenticeship starts in West Yorkshire and 83% of starts in the subject area of Health, public services and care, they make up only 7% of apprenticeship starts in Construction.
 - Similarly, only 2% of people working in Construction trades in West Yorkshire are female, whereas 92% of people working in Secretarial occupations are female.
- **Under-representation of some ethnic groups with regard to some learning pathways and in some occupational segments.**
 - For example, only 20% of apprenticeship starts among young people aged 16-24 relate to people from ethnic minorities (including white minorities) even though 36% of West Yorkshire's population aged 16-24 are from a minority group.
 - People from the Pakistani ethnic group account for 8% of residents in employment in West Yorkshire but only 2% of people working in Culture, media and sports occupations. Conversely, they contribute 22% of people employed in Transport and mobile machine driver roles.

A key purpose of the labour market is to match the skills required by employers with the capabilities of current and potential employees. Careers support can contribute to more effective matching by ensuring that individuals have access to rich, meaningful and relevant information about available career opportunities and the skills and learning pathways that provide access to them. In this way, careers support can help to minimise skills mismatches that impact on business performance and the ability of individuals to fulfil their potential. There are a number of dimensions to these mismatches.

- Employers in West Yorkshire indicate that they find it difficult to fill more than a third of their total vacancies due to a shortage of people with the required skills. These skill shortage vacancies are most acute for occupations that demand substantial technical skills combined with workplace experience, ranging from professional roles in health, engineering and digital to a variety of skills trades such as electricians.
- Under-utilisation of skills is a significant challenge in West Yorkshire and is typified by people with higher level qualifications working in administrative, caring, retail and elementary roles despite being (notionally) over-qualified for roles at this level. Close to a third (30%) of employers in West Yorkshire say that they

have workers whose skills / qualifications are in advance of those needed for the job. Labour Force Survey data for West Yorkshire indicate that 128,000 people working in non-graduate roles (as their main job) hold qualifications at Level 4 and above. This is equivalent to 22% of all people working in non-graduate roles.

- There are marked differences between the occupational profile of people in work and the occupational backgrounds of unemployed and inactive people who would like a job, which suggests a potential misalignment between the skills held by individuals and those needed in the current labour market. The occupational background of both the unemployed and inactive is weighted towards lower-skilled occupations, principally the lowest skilled elementary roles.

Careers support facilitates social inclusion and social mobility; for example, by helping young people to develop the career management skills, social capital and networks for career success, by assisting unemployed people and labour market returners to re-engage with the world of work and by facilitating investment in skills and career development by people with low level qualifications or who are in low-paid work.

- Young people facing disadvantage are much less likely to engage with a range of education and training opportunities. Pupils who were eligible for free school meals are less likely to go on to achieve a qualification at Level 2 or Level 3 by the age of 19; they are less likely to take up an apprenticeship; and they are less likely to progress into higher education.
- People who are qualified to a lower level are less likely to participate in job-related training. Only 14% of people qualified at Level 3 and below participate in job-related training in West Yorkshire, around half the prevalence of training among those who are qualified at Level 4 and above¹.

¹ Source: Annual Population Survey, January to December 2022. Indicator relates to participation in job-related training over a 13-week period.

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ies Report

Institute for Employment Studies

All Age Careers Blueprint for West Yorkshire

Draft Interim report

Cristiana Orlando (IES), Joy Williams (IES), Jane Aston (IES), Hannah Blake (iCeGS), Siobhan Neary (iCeGS), Peter Glover (WYCA)

Institute for Employment Studies

IES is an independent, apolitical, international centre of research and consultancy in public employment policy and HR management. It works closely with employers in all sectors, government departments, agencies, professional bodies and associations. IES is a focus of knowledge and practical experience in employment and training policy, the operation of labour markets, and HR planning and development. IES is a not-for-profit organisation.

International Centre for Guidance Studies

The Centre established in 1998 is the hub for careers research at the University of Derby, leading on research and consultancy to schools, education providers, the wider education sector, and Government. We have a lifelong focus and address education policy, practice, and research from early years to older workers. iCeGS core areas of focus include career education and guidance; career management skills; higher education; and SEND and inclusion.

Inclusive Terminology

The terminology used to define ethnicity continues to evolve, and greater awareness has arisen about gender, cognitive differences, and disability. IES seeks to be a learning organisation and we are adapting our practice in line with these shifts. Our preference is to refer to people's own choice of descriptor(s) rather than impose standard categories upon them, although this is not always possible. In these cases, we are aligned with Race Disparity Unit (RDU) which uses the term 'ethnic minorities' to refer to all ethnic groups except white British. We embrace government guidance and refer to disabled people and neurodiverse people as society imposes the restrictions and obstacles these groups face. In certain circumstances we may refer to individuals as gender nonconforming when describing those who do not follow society's stereotypes based on the gender they were assigned at birth. We use images and illustrations in our publications that are well considered for relevance to the output and that promote diversity and inclusion. We do this by representing diverse identities, ethnicities, gender, abilities, and body types and by ensuring equities in power relationships within images.

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Executive summary

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) has a bold vision to create a Blueprint for all age careers provision in the region. Working with the Institute for Employment Studies and the International centre for Guidance Studies, this interim report sets out initial findings of research which will form the basis of the Blueprint, a plan which will be well-evidenced, well-supported and which will set out how all residents and business in the region can prosper.

This research has set out some of the key principles for creating an All Age Careers Blueprint for West Yorkshire. It has drawn lessons from academic and research literature to understand the need for good careers guidance and what good practice looks like. To understand the local context, labour market information and demographic analysis describes the challenges for the region. This interim report has started to map the various provider of careers education, information, advice and guidance services in the region to understand coverage and gaps. Finally, stakeholders from across the region have collaborated to describe what an all age careers provision would aim to achieve which has resulted in a theory of change diagram and accompanying narrative.

Key findings

There are a number of key points that should be acknowledged when understanding considering how **careers guidance** is delivered to different audiences.

- Understanding locally relevant skills needs and labour market information (LMI) enables guidance to be delivered which is relevant to the jobs on offer and the needs of employers in the local area
- Starting guidance at a young age is key and, increasingly, evidence is suggesting that guidance should start at primary school age. Starting young can be more impactful in the longer term and this is particularly important when considering disadvantaged young people and those with additional needs
- There is a need for lifelong guidance particularly considering Covid-19, Brexit, and the current cost of living crisis. These have changed the landscape of employment and work and have impacted how work is undertaken, by who, and where
- Digital platforms are important and allow flexibility when giving guidance and when searching for it, however the issue of digital poverty must be acknowledged with an understanding of who and who does not have access to electronic devices and the internet

- It is harder to reach people in employment and those who are older. Extra effort should be put into targeting these cohorts of individuals as well as ensuring that those who are disadvantaged know how and where to access support
- Place based guidance is key to enabling people access guidance and support that is relevant to their local area and their contexts.

Additionally, there are a range of **labour market issues** in West Yorkshire that could be addressed through a high-quality careers support offer as part of a wider strategy to confront socio-economic issues.

- Relatively low qualification attainment among young people in WYCA at various stages of education, with young people in the region less likely to have achieved a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19 than their national counterparts
- Significant prevalence of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), with around 3,500 young people aged 16 and 17 classed as NEET in 2022/23. This is 6.2 per cent of the overall cohort, a higher prevalence than nationally (5.2 per cent)
- Relatively low progression into higher education within some local authority areas in West Yorkshire, indicated for example in the proportion of pupils entering higher education by age 19 in Leeds (44 per cent) and Wakefield (40 per cent), compared with the national average (47 per cent)
- Significant drop-out rates in some learning pathways, with pre-pandemic figures showing that less than two-thirds of apprentices (63 per cent) completed/achieved in WYCA in 2018/19
- Gender stereotyping and distinct patterns of occupational segregation by gender, as well as under-representation of some ethnic groups with regard to some learning pathways and in some occupational segments
- Acute skill shortages in some parts of the economy and under-utilisation of skills, with employers in WYCA indicating that they find it difficult to fill more than a third of their total vacancies due to a shortage of people with the required skills
- Under-utilisation of skills, typified by people with higher level qualifications working in administrative, caring, retail and elementary roles despite being (notionally) over-qualified for roles at this level
- Discrepancies between the occupational profile of people in work and the occupational backgrounds of unemployed and inactive people, which suggests a potential misalignment between the skills held by individuals and those needed in the current labour market.

When it comes to the landscape for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) provision in the WYCA region, the following findings emerged from a survey of 44 respondents which **maps careers provision** in the region.

- CEIAG providers tend to work for local organisations or national organisations with regional and local branches in WYCA. Most providers are concentrated in Leeds, with most working in Leeds alone and in no other area of the region

- There is a concentration of CEIAG providers in secondary and higher education, and further education and training. Most are part of CEIAG networks or are linked to other organisations focused on CEIAG
- Only a minority of providers in the survey classified their organisation as a primary provider of CEIAG, defined as organisations with CEIAG as their main function. Over half classified their organisation as a secondary provider of CEIAG, defined as organisations which have CEIAG as part of their function alongside other services
- Providers are most commonly publicly funded, with a minority funded both publicly and through other sources, and funded through other sources alone
- The majority of providers report that staff in their organisations hold a CEIAG specific qualification, and most have a mix of staff qualified at different levels (QCF Level 3, Level 4, Level 6, and Level 7). Only a third of providers offer CEIAG-specific training
- Around two fifths of providers work with young people up to 25 years alone. All other providers offer services for all ages. Providers generally have experience of working with disadvantaged groups (NEET, ethnic minorities, disabled people, distant from the labour market, over 50s, care experienced, etc.). Some providers work with specific industry sectors (construction, health and social care, the digital and green economy)
- All providers offer a number of services, with the most common including: advice on learning and training opportunities; CV and application support; labour market information; group activities; job search support; employability programmes; one to one career guidance; skills assessment
- The most common ways that clients learn about CEIAG providers is through education providers, online or through their own search, through word of mouth, from the Jobcentre, and from training providers
- Challenges identified by providers in terms of provision of CEIAG are limited funding and lack of trained staff. In terms of challenges related to access, these are clients' lack of awareness of provision, clients with limited digital access, transport and accessibility, and lack of interest or engagement.

Alongside mapping of the current CEIAG provision landscape, the research engaged with 11 stakeholders across the region (local authorities, education and training providers, third sector, employer bodies) to understand their **vision for an All Age Careers Blueprint**. Key elements for the realisation of the Blueprint identified by stakeholders include:

- Key target groups for which tailored provision should be developed through the Blueprint include disadvantaged or vulnerable young people; adults of diverse ages and employment status; and educational institutions and staff
- Principles which should guide the design of activities for the Blueprint, include accessibility of services, alignment with the WYCA Employment and Skills Framework, tailored and exploratory approaches, quality assurance, and universal access
- These principles can be adopted to develop a more coherent and coordinated CEIAG offer, streamlining access to continuous support, strengthening employer involvement,

raising awareness of CEIAG provision, including the voices of service users in the development of CEIAG, and promoting a more diverse CEIAG workforce

- The levers for change, which are conditions that will make the Blueprint work include enhancing connectivity between CEIAG providers; leveraging data and evidence to gain insights into needs and measure the impact of changes; ensuring consistent and stable funding; enhancing communication and collaboration between providers; encouraging cultural change among employers; focusing on inclusivity, expanding efforts to work with people with Level 2 qualifications; and normalising the use of CEIAG among individuals of all ages
- The primary outcome of creating the Blueprint will be an established and shared 'cradle to grave' West Yorkshire careers offer, with equitable access to free, local, all age, and demographic-inclusive careers support. Additional outcomes will be seen specifically for CEIAG providers, individuals, employers, and the education sector
- Impacts will include individuals from all ages and backgrounds having the knowledge and support to have rewarding careers across WYCA; employers contributing to the skills and career development of a diverse and inclusive local workforce; increased attendance and engagement in education leading to improved progression and retention in positive destinations; and more people in good work with improved labour market status and a reduction in skills shortages, leading to social and economic growth.

Interim recommendations

From this stage of research, draft, high-level recommendations have been included in this report. These will be used in the next phase of work and will be tested, debated and weighted through further stakeholder consultations, a public consultation and further work with the Combined Authority.

Recommendation 1: Enhancing Awareness and Access for All

Addressing awareness and access barriers for residents of all ages and groups is imperative. Residents should easily locate CEIAG support in their proximity, whether in person, via phone, or online. Initiatives should be aimed at making CEIAG services more visible and accessible to adult and disadvantaged populations.

Recommendation 2: Bridging the Digital Divide

Recognizing the challenges posed by digital poverty, it is essential to ensure that online CEIAG services do not exclude individuals lacking digital resources. A concerted effort is needed to provide inclusive access to digital resources, ensuring that digital barriers do not hinder individuals from benefiting from online CEIAG resources

Recommendation 3: Sustaining Stakeholder Collaboration

Ongoing collaboration and information sharing among educational institutions, employers, local authorities, and CEIAG service providers is crucial. The development of the Blueprint is just the initial step in a broader initiative. Commitment to collaboration should be sustained, as this will be pivotal in realizing the Blueprint's objectives and ensuring a cohesive approach to CEIAG.

Recommendation 4: Cultivating education to business relations

Foster robust and mutually beneficial partnerships among educational institutions, employers, and CEIAG providers to collaboratively design and implement customized training and work experience programmes. These initiatives should be strategically tailored to the unique skill gaps identified within West Yorkshire's dynamic labour market.

Recommendation 4: Establishing Rigorous Minimum Standards

Efforts should be made to establish and enforce minimum standards for the delivery of CEIAG services, incorporating recognized benchmarks such as the Gatsby Benchmarks for school-age individuals and the Quality in Careers Standard for adults. These standards should be rigorous, ensuring that quality is maintained and that all individuals, regardless of age, receive comprehensive and high-quality CEIAG.

Recommendation 5: Supporting Transitions and Skill Enhancement

CEIAG services should focus on supporting young people during educational transitions and offer diverse experiences and encounters that highlight the benefits of qualifications and their relevance to the world of work. Ongoing support should be provided to individuals as they enter the workforce, encouraging upskilling, reskilling, and reducing dropout rates.

Recommendation 6: Equitable Provision Across the Region

WYCA should conduct a thorough review of the mapping evidence in conjunction with funding and devolution information. The aim is to establish comprehensive CEIAG provision across the entire region. Specialized provisions should target skills gaps, mismatches, and underutilization, ensuring that the most disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals receive equitable support, thus promoting a more inclusive and balanced regional workforce.

Recommendation 7: Diversifying and Building Capacity Within the CEIAG Workforce

By investing in the professional development and capacity-building of CEIAG professionals, WYCA can create a more inclusive, responsive, and diverse careers support ecosystem, which can help address wider labour market disparities. This initiative aligns with the overarching vision of the All Age Careers Blueprint, which aims to empower individuals from all backgrounds to enter and thrive in the world of work.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the research

Commissioned by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) worked with the International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS) to map careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) provision in the WYCA region to understand the availability, quality and impact of CEIAG services for young people and adults, and support the development of an All Age Careers Blueprint.

As WYCA prepares for further devolution of careers funding alongside the adult education budget, it is a key time to look to bring together skills, knowledge and expertise alongside high quality data to create an All Age Careers Blueprint for West Yorkshire. This is a unique opportunity to develop the strategic direction of a local careers policy that will meet the needs of the residents of West Yorkshire. WYCA can ensure that the next steps for careers provision is tailored to the needs of local businesses and to strengthen economic development. The All Age Careers Blueprint can align education and training programmes with the needs of local businesses, ensuring that a skilled workforce can contribute to the regional economy. The Blueprint can take into account the unique characteristics, industries and opportunities within the West Yorkshire region and make it responsive to the local context rather than relying on centralised policies.

Through this commissioned work, the Combined Authority can identify skills gaps or shortages and take proactive steps to bridge the gaps by bringing together educational institutions, careers providers and employers to create a targeted programme of provision that addresses specific regional skills needs. This will support the regional aims within the Employment and Skills Framework. Effective regional careers provision can also promote social mobility and inclusion by ensuring that individuals from all backgrounds have access to high-quality careers guidance, regardless of socio-economic status.

The idea of a 'Blueprint' is about bringing together a plan for how a commitment for all age careers provision could be enacted. As such, the research will bring together research evidence for the best material or components to use, and ensure that this is a plan that works for the WYCA region. This interim report presents findings and recommendations from the first stage of the research. It will be used to inform and underpin the second stage of the research (involving consultations and roundtable discussions with stakeholders, as well as a series of public consultations led by WYCA) as well as future work and investments that WYCA and partners make in the CEIAG space to support devolution efforts.

1.2 Method

The research approach for the interim report comprised a two-stage methodology including desk research consisting of a literature review and data analysis, and consultations, including a mapping exercise and Theory of Change workshop

1.2.1 Desk research

The first stage focused on desk-based research, collating and synthesising the available evidence on best practice in careers guidance, the current policy landscape and access to this support, as well as analysis of regional labour market data. This information helped situate the current research within the unique context of the West Yorkshire region.

The **literature review** incorporated:

- Evidence of best and emerging practice in careers guidance at local, regional, national and international levels, exploring ‘what works’ for other local regions, as well as taking evidence at a national and international level.
- An exploration of who does and does not currently have access to careers support, particularly in West Yorkshire, and how other areas are tackling this.
- A review of careers education and support policy at local, national and regional levels, with a focus on their strategic alignment.

A range of sources were reviewed to surface relevant literature including both academic and policy literature. The review was guided by a structured protocol and coding framework.

The **data analysis** developed from a collaboration with the WYCA Research & Intelligence (R&I) team through consultancy support. It built on the existing detailed insight and expertise held by WYCA to integrate into the research the wealth of labour market data insight, relevant to the scope of the project. The analysis included a focus on skills supply and demand, employment rates and access to the labour market for different sections of the population, including disadvantaged groups.

1.2.2 Consultations

Following the desk-based research, the research undertook the first stage of consultations (the second stage will be presented in the final report) to map the careers landscape within West Yorkshire and identify the main priorities for a Careers Blueprint and refine the emergent recommendations.

The first stage of the consultations comprised of a **mapping exercise** to identify the range of providers of CEIAG across West Yorkshire. This encompassed

1. those with CEIAG as their primary function with trained staff who provide careers services (this group can also include individual careers specialists)

2. those with CEIAG as part of their function who may have access to trained staff and relevant accreditation (eg Matrix), and deliver careers services alongside other services and will include all education providers (schools, colleges and universities), and
3. organisations with an interest in CEIAG with staff who are largely untrained yet act in a critical role to signpost to appropriate services many of whom are charities and not-for-profit organisations.

The mapping exercise was conducted through a short online survey, capturing data on the type of provider, provider specialism, target groups, modes of delivery, and their links to wider employment and skills provision.

A virtual **Theory of Change workshop** was then carried out, involving 11 West Yorkshire stakeholders representing the combined authority, each of the five local authorities, the education and training sectors, and the third sector. The workshop supported stakeholders to develop an overview of the existing careers landscape in the region, identifying key actors and relationships, as well as target groups for provision, best practice approaches, and where current gaps exist and/or improvements are needed. The Theory of Change was developed to articulate the aims for the All Age Careers Blueprint and highlight where aspects of the existing system can be simplified or work better in future.

1.3 About this report

This report presents the interim findings for the research supporting the development of the All Age Careers Blueprint for West Yorkshire. The report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 – Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) in context. This section presents the findings from a literature review exploring evidence of best and emerging practice in CEIAG at local, regional, national and international levels
- Section 3 – The WYCA skills and labour market. This section presents findings from the analysis of Labour Market Information (LMI), exploring key labour market challenges and opportunities in each of the individual areas within West Yorkshire
- Section 4 – CEIAG provision in the region. This section presents the findings from a mapping exercise aimed at identifying the key providers of CEIAG across the West Yorkshire Combined Authority area
- Section 5 – A vision for an All Age Careers Blueprint. This section presents the findings from the Theory of Change workshop led with stakeholders across WYCA to develop a vision for the All Age Careers Blueprint
- Section 6 – Interim conclusions and recommendations. This section presents initial conclusions and recommendations for the development of the Blueprint, drawing on findings from all of the previous sections.

2 Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) in context

This section presents the findings from a literature review exploring evidence of best and emerging practice in CEIAG at local, regional, national and international levels.

2.1 What is CEIAG?

Career education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) and how it can be used to support individuals as a lifelong process can be a complex and challenging endeavour, particularly with a constantly changing society and economy. The OECD uses Watt's (2004, p.19) work which defines career guidance as

'services intended to assist people, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training, and occupational choices and to manage their careers. Career guidance helps people to reflect on their ambitions, interests, qualifications, and abilities'.

This definition has since been adopted by the Department for Education in its guidance on what statutory duty looks like. Over the last decade, significant government reform has been undertaken to shape best practice in careers guidance in England. Since 2013, local authority-maintained schools in England have been required to provide impartial career guidance to pupils from years 8 to 13. In 2017, the government's Careers Strategy outlined the need for accessible career guidance for all individuals living in England and stated that by providing high-quality career guidance the aim is that people across the country are provided the opportunity to thrive in their careers, contributing to 'build[ing] a country that works for everyone' (DfE, 2017, p. 5). In 2022, the requirement for schools to provide career guidance was extended to pupils in year 7 and students in all academies.

2.2 What good career guidance looks like

Over the last few years in England with the growing acknowledgement of the importance of career guidance, there has been a push in the need to discuss career guidance in a more concise and informative manner. To date, much of the work surrounding careers guidance has focused on young people, however, more recently the concept of career guidance for adults in England has become a widely discussed topic.

2.2.1 Local career strategies

Since the establishment of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPS), Career Hubs and more recently Combined Authorities, there has been a focus on assessing and providing career

guidance opportunities at local levels, which can be adapted to the needs of the local area and the local labour markets. With the acknowledgement of the need for lifelong guidance, and not just that which is concentrated at school and college level, over the last few years there has been increasing support being provided for adults with a focus on the needs and availability of jobs regionally.

An example of this transformation in practice is the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). In 2020, GMCA, with funding from the European Social Fund, launched its Skills for Growth programme and, as of 2023 the programme has helped more than 20,000 residents in Greater Manchester gain new skills and progress their careers, and 3,800 SMEs have also been supported. Similarly, The Greater London Combined Authority has developed its own Skills Roadmap, which emphasises the need to make skills provision more locally relevant and highlights the need for accessibility of adult education and skills provision, particularly for those who need it most.

2.2.2 Careers in education

The 2017 Careers Strategy emphasised the need for schools and colleges in England to use the Gatsby Benchmarks to improve and structure careers provision. The Gatsby Good Career Guidance report (2014) highlights the need for every young person to have access to high-quality career guidance to enable them to make informed decisions about their future. The Gatsby report identifies eight benchmarks by which careers guidance in schools and colleges should be measured. In the years since the report was published the Gatsby Benchmarks for good career guidance have been adopted into statutory guidance for schools and guidance for colleges in England, with 84 per cent of schools and colleges now engaging with the Benchmarks, gaining increased attention from researchers, educators, and policymakers (Education Committee, 2023).

Primary education

Over the last few years, there has been an acknowledgement of the need to engage children from a young age in discussions around careers, and particularly the need to provide career support to children of all ages and not just during the transitional period from education to employment. The Careers & Enterprise Company have developed resources and a website specifically tailored for career guidance at primary school level. The aim of the work is to introduce primary aged children to career-related learning, broadening horizons, challenging stereotypes, and helping them to develop skills that will enable them to reach their full potential. The resources include a toolkit providing lesson activities, guidance for governors, a quiz for teachers and case studies to illustrate how the resources can be used in practice. Added to this, there is increasing evidence and research to support the need for career guidance to be provided as soon as children start school in order to have the maximum effect on young people. Additionally, Gottfredson (1981) argues that career choice development can start at a young age, with children aged three being able to develop an understanding of careers.

Careers guidance for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Research into providing careers guidance to individuals with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) has typically focused on young people who have recently left compulsory education. Hanson et al. (2017) have argued that transitioning young people into the workplace is complex, however, it has proved more challenging for young people with SEND. To address these challenges, there is a growing evidence base about young people with SEND and their experiences of careers guidance, and what best practice looks like to support them. Also, Aston et al. (2005, p. 102) longitudinal research, recorded and tracked the progress of SEN young people from education into early adulthood, identifying two models that young people experienced: the 'developmental model' and 'booster model' (p. 102). These two models suggest that there is not a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to guide young people with SEN or SEND in their careers journey, due to the variety of specific needs that each individual requires, when it comes to careers support. Jenkin (2021) reiterates the importance of tailoring careers guidance to the individual needs of young people with SEND, arguing that should not assume how capable those with SEND are in their careers but instead communicate and collaborate with these individuals, as well as their parents/carers, on what their capacity levels are.

Careers guidance in universities

As well as careers education, information, advice and guidance being conducted in schools and colleges, universities are important providers of career guidance and employability support for students and graduates. Within West Yorkshire Combined Authority, there are six universities: University of Bradford, University of Huddersfield, University of Leeds, Leeds Art University, Leeds Beckett University, Leeds Trinity University and York University. These institutions provide students with personal guidance (similar to schools and colleges) regarding career options during and post-university, completing application forms, writing CVs and establishing what students can do with their degrees. Students have access to online services where they can search for job and volunteering opportunities, as well as resources and guides on how to write cover letters and prepare for interviews. Therefore, the wide range of services universities within the West Yorkshire Combined Authority are evidence of best practice when it comes to providing good career guidance to young adults who are entering the workplace post-graduation.

2.2.3 Careers advice and guidance for adults

The concept of career describes an individual's pathway through life, learning and work. Career guidance, therefore, can support individuals towards better vocational opportunities and help develop a prosperous and well-functioning society. Through good quality career guidance, individuals can discover more about themselves, work, leisure and learning which in turn enables them to develop their futures, whether they are at the start of their career journey, or they are embarking on a mid-life career change. IES research for BIS (BIS 2013) identified five distinct approaches to career decision-making, which include: strategic; exploratory; opportunistic; impulsive; and passive. The career

decision-making process that individuals use can be seen to be affected by the extent to which they explore wider options for work and learning, and the extent to which they look ahead and reflect on and understand their own interests and preferences (BIS, 2013).

Consequently, the need for adults to have access to lifelong career guidance and support has been championed extensively in recent years (Career Development Policy Group, 2022; Policy Connect, 2021; Blustein, 2019). As a result of evolving economic challenges including Brexit, the post-pandemic realignment of the workforce and the current cost of living crisis the working landscape in which both adults and young people are trying to navigate a future has become increasingly opaque. The challenge for many adults is that not only is there a lack of access to career guidance, but where it does exist there is a lack of knowledge and understanding of when, where and how to access it (Policy Connect, 2021). This is specifically exacerbated in England, which does not have an all age service resulting in the fragmentation of careers guidance provision, both in terms of the locus of policy (DfE and DWP), competition between public and private sector suppliers and potential differential impacts depending on the delivery agent.

It is of particular importance that those individuals who face disadvantage have greater access to careers support. Ensuring that young, disadvantaged people entering the job market are supported in their transition is particularly important as it is an age-old issue that disadvantaged young people face more barriers during their education and route to employment than individuals who do not experience disadvantage (Pennacchia et al., 2018; Demie and Lewis, 2010; MacLeod et al., 2015).

2.2.4 International perspectives on careers guidance

Career guidance is provided to some extent across the globe, and what guidance and support looks like varies significantly, but most countries have programmes, charities, or organisations that can be accessed by individuals. In 2014 the government in Ontario, Canada, developed the policy *Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools*. The policy highlights curriculum expectations to provide opportunities to relate classroom learning to education and life planning for children in kindergarten to Grade 12. As well as this, the Dutch approach towards career guidance has focused increasingly on the self-reliance and responsibility of all job seekers in the Netherlands. The Dutch system has adopted a bottom-up approach which relies on schools developing their own CIAG initiatives while following national guidance. This approach means that CIAG is monitored by the Educational Inspectorate but gives ownership to schools to address regional issues such as labour market needs and allows schools to adapt learning to the needs of the individual school and student population (Cedefop, 2020).

2.2.5 Web-based careers guidance

The emergence of web-based career guidance emphasises how the ways and means that individuals, regardless of age, access careers guidance is more flexible and varied than ever. Being able to access web-based career guidance increases the likelihood of increased volumes of individuals accessing support and guidance. Hooley, Hutchinson

and Watts (2010) identified the following eight trends which highlighted the potential of web-based career platforms: being communal, collectivising knowledge, individualisation, recognising time and place, located in the cloud, free or almost free, diverse and integrated, and finally Knight et al. (2021) added games. As technology has developed, these trends have integrated into career platforms and utilised to best effect both regionally and nationally. Whilst web-based careers guidance is increasing, there is a need to acknowledge the issues relating to digital poverty. For many individuals, digital technology has been increasingly integrated into modern life, however with the development of technology comes an increasing divide between individuals who can afford to buy and access it and those who cannot. Digital Poverty Alliance states that 53 per cent of people offline cannot afford an average monthly broadband bill and 26 per cent of young people do not have access to a laptop or similar device. When considering career guidance and those who need to access it, the concept of digital poverty and digital exclusion must be acknowledged and taken into consideration.

2.3 Factors that inform people's decisions around CEIAG

IES research for BIS (2013) on adult career decision-making found that it is a complex process which is not always rational. The career decision-making process that individuals used was affected by their decision-making style and as referred to earlier in this section, five distinct approaches to career decision-making were identified. The extent to which they explored wider options for work and learning, and the extent to which they looked ahead and reflected on and understood their own interests and preferences were also determined by these decision-making styles (BIS, 2013). Additionally, career decisions tend to be made in the context of the familiar; family and friends are important sources of support for work and learning decisions (BIS, 2013). The value of careers information and inspiration is often overlooked by individuals as well as by institutions with statutory responsibilities for providing advice (WYCA, 2020c).

Furthermore, employment status, age and gender call also influence how people access CEIG services.

- **By employment status: People in employment are harder to reach than unemployed people in receipt of benefits.** It is harder to reach adults in the workplace with messages about careers and re-training as they are not accessing careers provision available at places of learning or job centres. (WYCA, 2020c).
- **By age: Young people are easier to reach and have more access than older people to careers support.** Analysis of Careers and Enterprise Company's (CEC) national data on student career readiness from the Future Skills Questionnaire (FSQ) suggests that age is a significant factor in how 'career ready' young people are, with students possessing more careers knowledge and skills as they get older (CEC, 2022b). In West Yorkshire, regional data from the Spring 2023 Future Skills Questionnaire (FSQ) suggests that young people are generally 'career ready' (CEC, 2023).

Older people are hard to reach unless they are unemployed and/or engaged with services. IES research for BIS found that older people accessing formal careers services usually did so via social workers, learning providers or Jobcentre Plus (BIS, 2013). There is a great need for careers advice for older people in employment, and re-training is required especially in sectors going through significant structural change such as manufacturing. (WYCA, 2020c).

- **By gender: The self-referral nature of the current careers system adversely affects women compared to men, and in particular, lower attainers, working class and minority ethnic women** where relevant personal and professional networks are often weaker. (WYCA, 2020c). The first annual State of the Region Report for West Yorkshire on regional performance (WYCA, 2021b) highlighted some key labour market differences by gender and regarding travel autonomy. Women are more highly qualified than men but are less likely to be employed in comparison to men. Their economic inactivity rate is higher as many inactive women look after the family/home. However, the employment rate gap has fallen in recent years. (WYCA, 2021b). As elsewhere, a gender pay gap exists within the region, a reflection on the high proportion of part-time jobs taken by women, which are generally of lower hourly pay (WYCA, 2021b). There are also notable differences in transport habits between men and women e.g., they are less likely to have a driving licence or access to a car (WYCA, 2021b).

2.4 Place-based careers guidance

Place matters and is an important factor when it comes to accessing careers guidance with unfairness in the provision available in coastal communities, urban and rural areas, and even down to postcode levels. The concept of place plays an important role in not only young people's exposure and access to a range of services and opportunities that support positive transitions but also adults' exposure and opportunities (Bright, 2020). The interplay between economic and social deprivation and place contributes to unemployment and NEET rates, and this can often be attributed to a lack of access to opportunities for people depending on where they live, therefore place-based approaches need to be adopted to recognise and challenge these disadvantages (Youth Employment UK, 2023). The adoption of place-based approaches to careers guidance is not simple, it is reliant on a number of factors which include availability of funding and provision at local and national levels, access to good quality and up to date data, improvements in transport and digital communication and a bigger focus on local labour market needs.

A report by Career Connect demonstrates the importance of having locally focused solutions in addressing youth unemployment. The Mapping the Future (2023) report based on Manchester, found that there are huge disparities in the numbers of NEETs across the city wards, highlighting the need for a localised understanding of the needs of young people and how the provision can be adapted to meet these needs. Evidence in the report shows that young people in areas with high levels of unemployment are no less likely to see opportunities than young people in other areas, which suggests that it is the type of provision and its accessibility that is the problem.

2.4.1 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority

West Yorkshire is an essential component of the Northern Powerhouse. But it has been underinvested in as a region, meaning that the post-pandemic recovery began from a more challenging position than many other parts of the UK. West Yorkshire has a highly diverse population, with 18 per cent of people coming from ethnic minority backgrounds (compared to 14.5 per cent nationally). Careers provision already exists within the region, including The Employment Hub Programme and The Enterprise Adviser Network (WYCA, 2021a). WYCA et al's. (no date 2) report also sets out The West Yorkshire Plan and its five constituent Local Authorities¹ missions for 2040.

This current research builds on work that has gone to already to understand how employment and skills can work together in the region, making use of current devolution powers. In addition, much preparation has been going on readying the region for further devolution in the near future.

Adult Education Budget priorities in West Yorkshire

The purpose of the adult education budget (AEB) is to encourage and provide adults with the opportunity to learn new skills that are needed for the workplace. The priorities for the AEB in West Yorkshire are to: support the unemployed to gain and sustain employment; unlock progression opportunities and career adaptability through skills, particularly for those on low wages and with insecure work; make learning more inclusive to support disadvantaged residents; to increase the supply of skills to support key sectors in West Yorkshire and; improve West Yorkshire's resilience by identifying and delivering the skills needed for the future. (WYCA, 2020a)

Devolution

A number of reports from WYCA (2020b, 2020c, no date 1) argue that the adult skills system should be devolved to enable funding to be organised and used differently. WYCA (2020b) describes the current adult skills system as 'complex and fragmented'. Workforce statistics indicate that two-thirds of the 2020 workforce have left full-time education and are in employment. They will need ways to access and learn new skills to remain suited to the rapidly changing labour market. WYCA also believes that adult skills and careers funding should be devolved to enable WYCA to meet both local residents' needs and local labour market requirements. (WYCA, 2020b). WYCA Skills System Blueprint and Framework

In September 2020, WYCA published its Blueprint for a Future-Ready Skills System (WYCA, 2020d). It set out how greater devolution would create a skills system for the 21st century – that individuals can access, and employers can use to recruit the employees that they need.

¹ Calderdale, Bradford, Kirkless, Leeds and Wakefield.

In June 2021, WYCA published its Employment and Skills Framework, the aim of which was to 'create a diverse, inclusive, and highly skilled workforce' (WYCA, 2021a). The Framework consists of 1) Quality technical education; 2) Great education connected to the business – including locally-rooted careers information and learning, informed by employers, which inspires and enables informed choices to support personal ambitions and progression in work; 3) Accessing and progressing in good work; 4) Creating a culture of investment in workforce skills; 5) Driving innovation and productivity through high-level skills (WYCA, 2021a).

2.4.2 Access to careers support in West Yorkshire

WYCA's (2020c) considers what CEIAG is currently given across all years, and finds it problematic; confusing, unequal, and unresponsive. The careers landscape is 'crowded, complex and fragmented' with many key players, including, National Careers Service, Jobcentre Plus, Office for Students and national retraining scheme. New interventions are frequently introduced by different government departments, with little regional oversight or accountability. This results in a lack of integration with local services like employment, housing, and education. There also is an overreliance on employers to fill the gaps.

Access issues

Currently, access to careers support is unequal (WYCA, 2020c). The current system operates through self-referral, adversely affecting certain groups including females, lower attainers, working class and minority ethnic groups where personal networks are often weaker. Provision is mainly aimed at those out of work to find a job. The current system doesn't encourage employed people to consider career options including retraining. For those who are eligible, support isn't always clearly signposted, or responsive enough to adapt to rapid changes in the local economic climate. (WYCA, 2020c). In order to provide high-quality careers support that meets the needs of all local residents WYCA (2020c) recommends that funding should be devolved in order to successfully support people into stable jobs and long-lasting careers.

3 The WYCA skills and labour market

This section presents findings from the analysis of Labour Market Information (LMI), examining the role of careers support in relation to key labour market issues in WYCA. It summarises the nature and scale of these issues in order to demonstrate the rationale for an All Age Careers Blueprint². A full discussion, and list of figures, of key labour market issues outlined in this section is included in Appendix 1.

Effective careers education, information, advice and guidance promotes engagement with learning and improves the functioning of the education and training system. It can contribute to increasing students' engagement and success by clarifying the relevance of subjects to future opportunities. There are a range of issues in West Yorkshire could be addressed through a high-quality careers support offer as part of a wider strategy to confront socio-economic issues:

- **Relatively low qualification attainment among young people in West Yorkshire at various stages of development.** For example, only 77 per cent of young people in West Yorkshire achieve a qualification at Level 2 equivalent by age 19 compared with a national average of 82 per cent. The proportion falls to 72 per cent for Bradford. The proportion achieving a qualification at Level 3 by age 19 is 55 per cent, 6 points lower than the national average of 61 per cent.
- **Significant prevalence of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).** Around 3,500 young people aged 16 and 17 in West Yorkshire were classed as NEET in 2022/23. This is 6.2 per cent of the overall cohort, a higher prevalence than nationally (5.2 per cent) and an increase on 2021/22 (5.5 per cent).
- **Relatively low progression into higher education within some local authority areas in West Yorkshire.** For example, the proportion of pupils entering higher education by age 19 is 44 per cent in Leeds and 40 per cent in Wakefield, compared with a national average of 47 per cent.
- **Significant drop-out rates in some learning pathways.** For example, pre-pandemic figures show that less than two-thirds of apprentices (63 per cent) completed / achieved in West Yorkshire in 2018/19. (This is similar to the national average).

Research evidence suggests that when students have been exposed to substantial careers education from a young age, they are more likely to express broader career

² NB: This section of the report was produced by the WYCA Research and Intelligence Team, with consultancy support from the Institute for employment Studies

expectations and aspirations and are less likely to be constrained by societal and/or familial pressures. This is relevant to a number of labour market issues:

- **Gender stereotyping and distinct patterns of occupational segregation by gender.** For example, whereas females account for 52 per cent of all apprenticeship starts in West Yorkshire and 83 per cent of starts in the subject area of Health, public services and care, they make up only 7 per cent of apprenticeship starts in Construction. Similarly, only 2 per cent of people working in Construction trades in West Yorkshire are female, whereas 92 per cent of people working in Secretarial occupations are female.
- **Under-representation of some ethnic groups with regard to some learning pathways and in some occupational segments.** For example, only 20 per cent of apprenticeship starts among young people aged 16-24 relate to people from ethnic minorities (including white minorities) even though 36 per cent of West Yorkshire's population aged 16-24 are from a minority group. People from the Pakistani ethnic group account for 8 per cent of residents in employment in West Yorkshire but only 2 per cent of people working in Culture, media and sports occupations. Conversely, they contribute 22 per cent of people employed in Transport and mobile machine drivers' roles.

A key purpose of the labour market is to match the skills required by employers with the capabilities of current and potential employees. Careers support can contribute to more effective matching by ensuring that individuals have access to rich, meaningful and relevant information about available career opportunities and the skills and learning pathways that provide access to these. In this way, careers support can help to minimise skills mismatches that impact on business performance and the ability of individuals to fulfil their potential. There are a number of dimensions to these mismatches:

- **There are acute skill shortages in some parts of the economy.** Employers in West Yorkshire indicate that they find it difficult to fill more than a third of their total vacancies due to a shortage of people with the required skills. These skill shortage vacancies are most acute for occupations that demand substantial technical skills combined with workplace experience, ranging from professional roles in health, engineering and digital to a variety of skills trades such as electricians.
- **Under-utilisation of skills is a significant challenge in West Yorkshire** and is typified by people with higher level qualifications working in administrative, caring, retail and elementary roles despite being (notionally) over-qualified for roles at this level. Close to a third (30 per cent) of employers in West Yorkshire say that they have workers whose skills/qualifications are in advance of those needed for the job. Census data for West Yorkshire indicate that 120,000 people working in non-graduate roles (as their main job) hold qualifications at Level 4 and above. This is equivalent to 20 per cent of all people working in non-graduate roles.
- **There are marked differences between the occupational profile of people in work and the occupational backgrounds of unemployed and inactive people** who would like a job, which suggests a potential misalignment between the skills held by

individuals and those needed in the current labour market. The occupational background of both the unemployed and inactive is weighted towards lower-skilled occupations, principally the lowest skilled elementary roles.

Careers support facilitates social inclusion and social mobility. It does so, for example, by helping young people to develop the career management skills, social capital and networks for career success, by assisting unemployed people and labour market returners to re-engage with the world of work and by facilitating investment in skills and career development by people with low level qualifications or who are in low-paid work.

However, young people facing disadvantage are much less likely to engage with a range of education and training opportunities. Pupils who were eligible for free school meals are less likely to go on to achieve a qualification at Level 2 or Level 3 by the age of 19; they are less likely to take up an apprenticeship; and they are less likely to progress into higher education. In addition, people who are qualified to a lower level are less likely to participate in job-related training. Only 14 per cent of people qualified at Level 3 and below participate in job-related training in West Yorkshire, around half the prevalence of training among those who are qualified at Level 4 and above.³

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³ Source: Annual Population Survey, January to December 2022. Indicator relates to participation in job-related training over a 13-week period.

4 CEIAG provision in the region

This section outlines the findings from a mapping exercise aimed at identifying the key providers of CEIAG across the West Yorkshire Combined Authority area. A comprehensive mapping of CEIAG provision is outside of the scope of this research, which instead focuses on understanding the range of provision across areas and across primary, secondary, and other CEIAG providers.

The mapping exercise, led as an online survey, aimed to understand the profile of providers in the region, the type of support they provide and to whom, and challenges they encounter in the provision and access of CEIAG. It was shared with stakeholders in local government, secondary and higher education, further education and training, specialist CEIAG services, and the third sector. The majority of respondents held managerial or directorial roles within their organisations. For some organisations, there were two responses from people holding different roles. The survey collected 44 responses, from a range of organisations across the region. A full list of the organisations is included in Appendix 2.

4.1 Profile of CEIAG providers

4.1.1 CEIAG organisations

Table 1 provides a summary of characteristics of CEIAG organisations that responded to the survey. Overall, the survey received 44 responses, and most survey questions offered respondents to select multiple options (eg one respondent could select multiple locations for where their organisation worked). Each row in the table outlines the number of times the response was selected.

Table 1: Characteristics of CEIAG organisations

Location	n =	Scope	n =
Leeds	27	Local	20
Wakefield	7	Local, regional and national	13
Calderdale	7	Local and regional	6
Bradford	6	Regional	2
Kirklees	4	National and regional	3
Beyond West Yorkshire	7		
Type of organisation	n =	Type of CEIAG provider	n =
Secondary or higher education	12	Primary provider	10
Further education	11	Secondary provider	21
Specialised CEIAG provider	5	Other provider	13
Employment support provider	4		

Local authority	3	Network affiliation	<i>n</i> =
Other provider	8	Part of a CEIAG network	35
		Not part of a CEIAG network	9
Size of the organisation	<i>n</i> =	Funding	<i>n</i> =
Micro (0-9 employees)	5	Publicly funded	27
Small (10-49)	6	Other funds	6
Medium (50-250)	10	Both	11
Large (over 250)	23		

Source: IES and WYCA CEIAG mapping survey, 2023

Respondents were most likely to work for local organisations, national organisations with regional and local branches, and regional organisations with local offices. Remaining respondents worked for regional, and national organisations. In terms of the geographical spread of providers, there was a high concentration in Leeds, with most of these working in Leeds alone and in no other area of the region. This was followed by Wakefield, Calderdale, Bradford, and Kirklees. However, many providers operating in the other local authorities, often had a presence across two or more areas within West Yorkshire, with only respondents in Wakefield reporting they worked in Wakefield alone.

In terms of the sector in which providers worked, the majority of respondents were spread between secondary and higher education and further education and training. This was followed by respondents from specialised CEIAG services, employment support, the third sector, and local authorities. There was then one respondent from the Youth Justice Service, one from a primary school, and one from a specialised post-16 institution. Most respondents worked in large organisations, with a minority in medium, small, and micro organisations. The vast majority of respondents were part of CEIAG networks or were linked to other organisations focused on CEIAG.

Only around a fifth of survey respondents classified their organisation as a primary provider of CEIAG, defined as organisations with CEIAG as their main function, with trained staff in careers guidance who provide careers services. These were specialised CEIAG providers, secondary or higher education, one local authority, and one employment support provider. Over half of respondents classified their organisation as a secondary provider of CEIAG, defined as organisations which have CEIAG as part of their function alongside other services and which have some trained staff. Over a quarter classified their organisation as an 'other' provider, defined as an organisation with CEIAG as a minor part of their function alongside other services, with largely untrained staff who signpost clients to specialised CEIAG services.

The majority of providers were publicly funded, followed by those which were funded both publicly and through other sources, and those funded through other sources alone. The Department for Education (DfE), the Adult Education Budget (AEB), the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), and local and combined authority funding were the most common sources of public funding. In terms of other funding, this came mostly from student/tuition fees, school funding, and grants. The majority of respondents classified their funding as either part of their organisation's core

funding, project specific funding, or provided as part of their annual funding cycle. Remaining respondents said funding was a mix of two or more of those or that they did not receive any specific funding.

4.1.2 CEIAG staff

Table 2 provides a summary of characteristics of CEIAG staff for the organisations that responded to the survey.

Table 2: Characteristics of CEIAG organisations

CEIAG qualification	n =	Level of qualification	n=
Staff have a CEIAG qualification	32	QCF Level 3	10
Staff do not have CEIAG qualification	10	QCF Level 4	17
Unsure	2	QCF Level 6	18
		QCF Level 7	14
		Don't know/unsure	3
Staff roles in relation to CEIAG	n =	Access to formal learning/ training	n =
CEIAG is the main part of the job	17	No	28
Offer CEIAG as part of wider role	12	Yes	16
Do it as part of leadership	5		
Multiple roles	9		

Source: IES and WYCA CEIAG mapping survey, 2023

The majority of respondents reported that either they or their colleagues in the organisations held a CEIAG specific qualification. Two respondents were unsure. Ten said no staff held CEIAG specific qualifications, and of these most identified as other providers (n = 6), followed by secondary providers (n = 2), and two primary providers. In terms of the qualification held by staff, most providers had a mix of staff qualified at different levels. This included QCF Level 3, Level 4, Level 6, and Level 7. Providers who had more highly qualified staff (QCF Level 6 and 7) were most often specialist CEIAG providers and secondary or higher education.

Around two fifths of respondents reported that CEIAG was the main part of either their or their colleagues' roles, followed by those who said it was part of a wider role, and those who said it was part of leadership responsibilities. Remaining respondents selected a combination of each, perhaps looking to reflect the diversity of the remit for CEIAG in their organisations.

When it came to accessing formal CEIAG training, the majority of respondents said neither they nor colleagues accessed this, with over a third saying that they did access training opportunities. Those who accessed training were primary or secondary providers in secondary and higher education (n = 6), further education and training (n = 4), specialised CEIAG services (n = 5), and employment support services (n = 2). Training and qualifications from the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS), Careers Development Institute (CDI), Institute of Student Employers (ISE) were the most common forms of development opportunities.

4.2 Provision of CEIAG support

Table 3 provides a summary of characteristics of clients that respondents worked with, as well as the mode and type of CEIAG support provided, and barriers to support.

Table 3: Characteristics of CEIAG clients and support

Age	n=	Mode of support	n =
Under 16	16	Face to face	43
16-18	21	Online/web based	29
19-25	21	Over the phone	24
Over 25	15		
All ages	12		
		Type of support	n =
		CV and application support	41
Specific client groups	n =	Advice on learning/training opps	39
NEET	26	Access to labour market information	39
Ethnic Minority	22	Job search support	37
Disabled	19	Group Activities	36
Distant from labour market	19	One to one career guidance	35
Industry-specific	14	Employability programmes	35
Graduates	11	Skills assessment	27
Over 50's	9	Careers education programmes	26
Other	30	Interest guides	17
		Organisational career development	15
Barriers to provision/ access	n =	Psychometric assessments	10
Limited funding	21		
Client lack of awareness support available	20	Referral and signposting	n =
Clients with limited or no access to IT	17	Education providers	26
Limited transport/local accessibility	10	Online/ own search	23
Lack of (trained) staff	9	Word of mouth	22
Clients in remote location(s)	2	From Jobcentre	13
		From training providers	10

Source: IES and WYCA CEIAG mapping survey, 2023

4.2.1 Target groups of CEIAG support

Around two in five respondents worked with young people up to 25 years alone (n = 18), with a forth working with those aged under 16 or 16-18 alone (n = 11). Remaining respondents worked in services for all ages, with the exception of an adult learning provider which worked only with adults aged over 25. Overall the target groups that providers worked with in terms of ages were 16-18, 19-25, over 25, and under 16.

Providers generally had experience of working with disadvantaged groups including those who are not in education employment or training (NEET), ethnic minorities, disabled people, those distant from the labour market, over 50s. Many respondents also worked

with other disadvantaged groups (incl. care experienced, ex-offender, low socio-economic background, refugees).

A number of providers worked with specific industry sectors, including construction, health and social care, the digital and green economy, creative industries, and Priority and Growth Sectors for WYCA.

4.2.2 Types of CEIAG support

All respondents reported that their organisations provided in-person support. Alongside in-person support, some organisations also provided online support and telephone support. In terms of the type of CEIAG support provided. All providers offered a number of services, with the most common including: advice on learning and training opportunities; CV and application support; to labour market information; group activities; job search support; employability programmes; one to one career guidance; skills assessment; careers education programmes; interest guides; organisational career development; and psychometric assessments. The most common ways that clients learned about providers and the support they offered was through education providers, online or through their own search, through word of mouth, from the Jobcentre, and from training providers.

4.2.3 Challenges in CEIAG provision and access

Challenges identified by respondents in terms of provision of CEIAG were limited funding and lack of trained staff. In terms of challenges related to access, these were clients' lack of awareness of provision, clients with limited digital access, transport and accessibility, and lack of interest or engagement.

5 A vision for an All Age Careers Blueprint

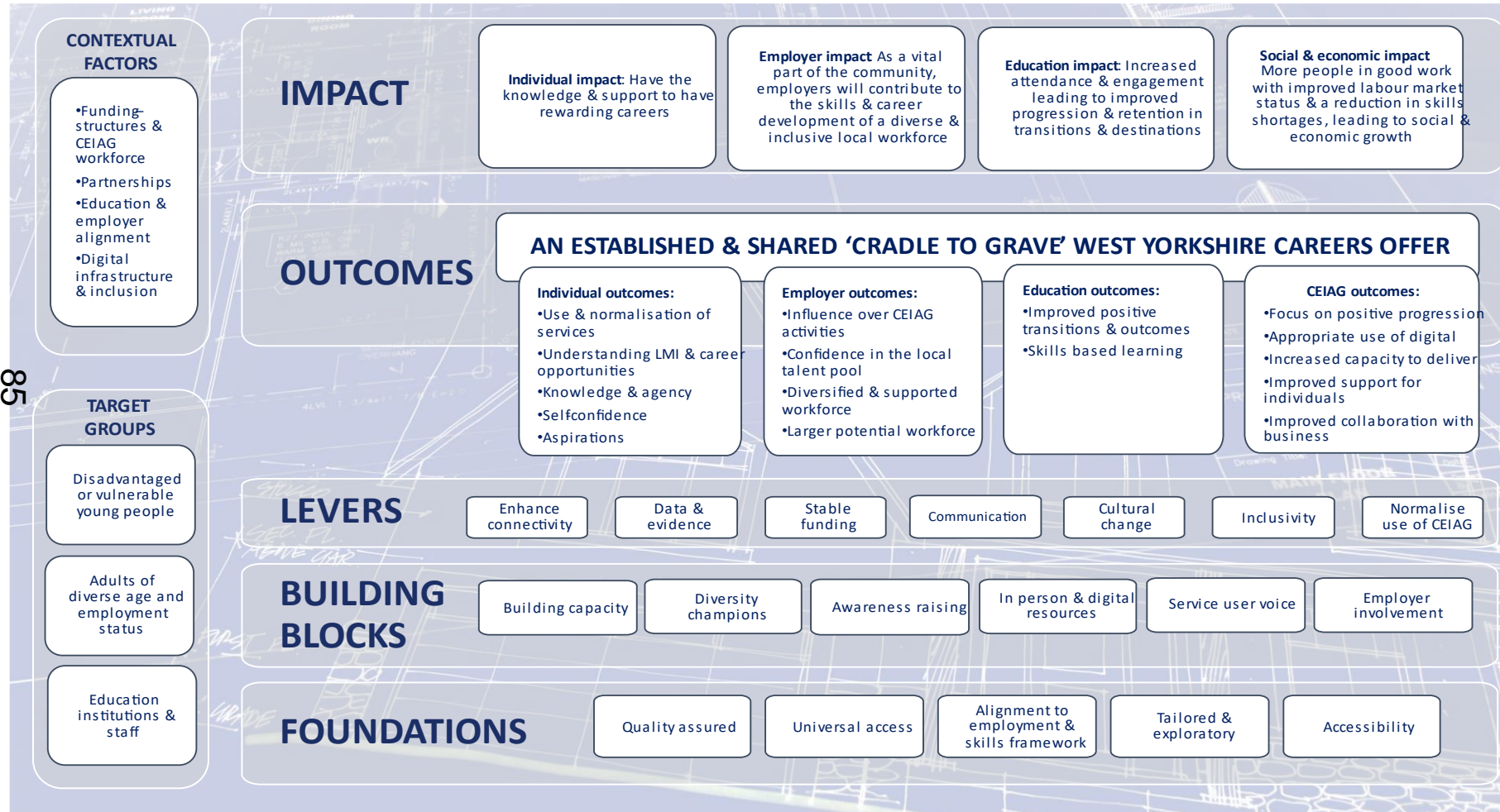
This section presents the findings from the Theory of Change (ToC) workshop led with stakeholders across WYCA to develop a vision for the All Age Careers Blueprint. It includes the ToC diagram developed following the workshop, followed by a narrative addendum which provides further detail to the diagram.

5.1 All Age Careers Blueprint ToC

The diagram itself shows five levels of the step-by-step framework for how the All Age Careers Blueprint pathway can be understood. The ToC illustrated in figure 5.1 shows the outcomes for the Blueprint in relationship to the activities and the flow.

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Figure 5.1 All Age Careers Blueprint Theory of Change



Source: IES workshop of WYCA stakeholders, 2023

5.2 Target groups

At the bottom left corner, the ToC starts by describing the relevant target groups. It is important to make explicit the groups/types of users that can potentially access support once an All Age Careers Blueprint is put into place. A number of key target groups emerged for which tailored provision should be developed, including:

- **Disadvantaged or vulnerable young people**, particularly those aged 14-16, those for whom the standard school experience has not been effective, and those requiring school liaison activity and pre-entry guidance. This includes young people who are, or are at risk of becoming, NEET or 'not known'; with English as a Second Language (ESL); who are care-experienced; with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and/or with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) plan; who have been in contact with the criminal justice system; and young people from low socio-economic backgrounds (eg Free School Meals, first-generation, etc.)
- **Adults of diverse ages and employment status**, in particular those who require or currently access employment support and are considered disadvantaged in the labour market, such as those with few or no qualifications, not in work, in insecure work, or in low-quality and low-progression work, including those from deprived communities and ethnically diverse groups. It also includes adults with learning disabilities and older workers who might encounter added barriers to entering or re-entering work.
- **Educational institutions and staff**, particularly those working to improve performance towards Gatsby Careers Benchmarks. This includes a focus on teachers and professionals to improve their guidance skills, and further embedding careers in the curriculum.

5.3 Foundations and building blocks

Stakeholders emphasised that high quality CEIAG support should avoid a scattergun approach and align with existing quality standards such as Gatsby Benchmarks, the Quality in Careers Standard, or the Matrix Standard, using clear criteria for high-quality career support, emphasising depth and quality over lip service. As a result, stakeholders identified a number of principles (foundations) which should guide the design of activities (building blocks) for the Blueprint, including:

- **Accessibility**, prioritising delivery of provision 'close to home', especially for the most disadvantaged individuals
- **Alignment with the ESF**, ensuring that careers support and activities align with the WYCA Employment and Skills Framework, to fulfil its ambitious goals for social and economic development
- **Tailored and exploratory approaches**, ensuring that career guidance is easy to access and offers tailored support, which can help individuals understand their skills, preferences, and potential career pathways, and articulate their skills and experiences effectively
- **Quality assurance**, implementing quality assurance across strategies

and activities, such as the Quality in Careers standard, to assess the effectiveness of career guidance, and maintain oversight of the quality of career guidance offered by providers

- **Universal access**, ensuring universality at the point of access, and providing consistent support across West Yorkshire. This includes removing eligibility criteria for access to career guidance, making it fully funded and accessible to all.

These principles can be adopted to develop a more coherent and coordinated CEIAG offer, providing impartial and comprehensive support which is accessible and easy to use. This involves addressing the current complexity in the system, characterised by different organisations and funding regimes, by identifying what works well and streamlining access to support. It also involves implementing a unified approach to CEIAG access, such as through providing a one-stop-shop model (eg with a single local number and website). Alongside this, there should be a focus on providing continuous support, establishing a comprehensive approach that goes beyond initial triage, ensuring individuals are referred to experts who can guide them effectively, with a focus on follow-up and next steps. This is particularly important at transition points, ensuring a strong focus on preventing individuals from falling through the gaps during critical transitions.

Alongside these foundations, areas of existing provision should receive enhanced focus. This includes strengthening employer involvement, engaging employers in discussions to determine inputs and align career guidance with industry needs, and

awareness raising efforts, through all age activities providing insights into different career pathways and qualifications at each stage of a person's career. Emphasis is also placed on the importance of including the voices of service users in the development of CEIAG, to ensure relevance and usability. Involving local providers and wider stakeholders is also key to designing support that meets local needs effectively. Digital resources and AI tools can support maximise the reach of career guidance and information. This should sit alongside considerations around digital accessibility and inclusivity.

A further area of focus involves working with employers to break down barriers, for more inclusive employment opportunities, open to a wide range of people, and supporting employers to understand the diverse range of skills different people bring. Promoting a more diverse workforce, is also important in the CEIAG sector. This includes challenging existing recruitment practices to foster a more inclusive CEIAG workforce. It could also include introducing champions, identifying individuals who have directly benefited from good advice and can serve as advocates for change, lending a real voice to the transformation process. This can also support efforts to build capacity and develop a stronger regional network of quality, independent careers advice to deliver support in both educational and adult settings.

5.4 Levers of change

Directly above the building blocks and leading on from them are the levers of change. These are of central importance

to a ToC as these are the conditions that are in place that make the model work. The levers of change identify the processes that enable activities to lead to outcomes and longer term impacts that the All Age Careers Blueprint aims to achieve. The levers identified in the ToC include:

- **Enhancing connectivity**, improving connectivity between organisations offering CEIAG and those delivering Level 3 and above educational qualifications. More generally, it involves increasing efforts to improve understanding of educational and career provision among individuals at all levels of education.
- **Leveraging data and evidence**, to gain insights into needs and measure the impact of changes. This includes establishing data-driven approaches to decision-making, to target provision effectively, and mapping progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- **Ensuring consistent and stable funding** to support career guidance and education initiatives. This includes ensuring that funding for adults is not restricted and is accessible to a broad range of individuals.
- **Enhancing communication** and shared messages/language across organisations to foster collaboration, alongside promoting greater sharing of information and opportunities, among organisations, leading to cross-referrals. Also includes using different methods of communication and distributing resources to potential service users including in person and digital such as chatbots and text messaging.

- **Encouraging cultural change**, supporting employers to adopt more diverse workforce recruitment practices, fostering a cultural change in recruitment processes.
- **Focusing on inclusivity**, expanding efforts to work with people with Level 2 qualifications, shifting the focus from Level 3 and above, to ensure support for all.
- **Normalising the use of CEIAG** among all individuals, empowering people of all ages to make informed decisions about their next steps. This includes supporting people to be ambitious through the CEIAG activities.

5.5 Outcomes

The outcomes for the Blueprint follow on from the activities and mechanisms, and need to be in place ahead of any impact being achieved.

The primary outcome of creating this Blueprint will be **an established and shared ‘cradle to grave’ West Yorkshire careers offer, with equitable access to free, local, all age, and demographic-inclusive careers support.**

Furthermore, there are additional outcomes for different stakeholders in the careers Blueprint: CEIAG organisations and services, individual, employers and education institutions.

5.5.1 CEIAG organisations and services

Key outcomes for **CEIAG services** include:

- Increased focus on positive and sustained progression, whether through further education, higher education, or work
- Increased focus on digital skills and the digitisation of work in the delivery of CEIAG
- Increased resources and capacity among CEIAG advisors and staff to deliver high quality support
- Improved support for individuals who have been in the workforce for an extended period to adapt to changing industries and opportunities
- Improved collaboration with businesses to align career paths with the local economic landscape.

5.5.2 Individual

Key outcomes for **individuals** include:

- Increased and normalised use of CEIAG, particularly among those most in need
- Clearer and wide-ranging understanding of career pathways, aligning aspirations with sustainable opportunities
- Improved knowledge for informed decision-making, and improved skills and agency over career management and development
- Enhanced self-confidence and the ability to articulate skills and experiences
- Increased aspirations around jobs, careers, and educational pursuits.

5.5.3 Employers

Key outcomes for **employers** include:

- Increased involvement in experiential careers activities, informing the design and providing opportunities around these activities
- Improved attitudes and confidence to recruit from the local talent pool
- Improved practices around inclusive recruitment, that diversify the workforce and support individuals with different needs.
- Increased number of people with the skills and knowledge needed to enter and thrive in the labour market.

5.5.4 Education

Key outcomes for **education** include:

- Improved transition support, between school, further education, higher education, and work to maintain guidance connections
- A shift in focus from qualifications to a skills-based approach in the delivery of the curriculum

5.6 Impact

The impacts are also described across four fields: individual, employer, education, and social and economic.

5.6.1 Individual

Individuals, including young people and adults will have improved career awareness and self-belief, and broadened horizons. They will be equipped for high-skilled and higher-quality jobs, and have increased confidence and positivity about local opportunities. They will be able to achieve sustainable destinations, with consistency and variation in the career opportunities they choose, across

different geographical areas. Those with Level 2 qualifications will still be supported into accessible pathways towards rewarding careers, through recognition that not all careers need graduate-level education and that individual aspirations should guide career choices. Through access to lifelong career mobility opportunities, individuals will experience enhanced job security and have access to upskilling initiatives, leading to higher earnings and job satisfaction.

5.6.2 Employer

Employers will engage more in careers education programmes, offering work-based activities, such as work experiences and internships. As a result of increased awareness of the importance of investing in training, employers will make more use of the Apprenticeship Levy rather than viewing it as a tax. They will also place greater emphasis on social responsibility, particularly Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). This will result from the enhanced perception of businesses being part of the community and taking responsibility for preparing the future workforce. As part of this, employers will recognise the benefits of a diverse workforce and inclusive recruitment practices. This will also promote a shift in mindset from a qualification-based approach to recruitment to a capability-based approach.

5.6.3 Education

Successful implementation of the Blueprint will lead to every educational institution in the region meeting its statutory duty and delivering universal CEIAG. It will also enable the recognition

of individual client needs across CEIAG provision, and positive impact of quality CEIAG support on student engagement, including attendance rates. This will lead to improved retention rates in post-16 and adult learning programmes and fewer individuals with qualifications below Level 2. Further expected impact, as a result of a more coherent CEIAG infrastructure, will be educational provision which is aligned with the needs of the economy for growth.

5.6.4 Social and economic

Wider social and economic outcomes resulting from improvements produced by the Blueprint, will include more people in good work, with improved labour market status, especially for disadvantaged groups. Better education to work pathways, as well as improved support for older workers and vulnerable groups, will encourage local people to stay in the area while also attracting others to the region. This will also enable greater workforce diversity, reflecting a more inclusive job market, and lead to more people in stable employment with jobs that align with their skills. Reduced skills shortages and hard-to-fill vacancies will foster social and economic growth.

5.7 Contextual factors

There are contextual factors, including internal and external factors that might come into play and influence the causal pathway for the effective realisation of the Blueprint. This is important to acknowledge as it can impact upon the delivery of the Blueprint and the potential to achieve outcomes and impact.

Within the workshops a range of enablers were highlighted by participants

as facilitating the successful realisation of the Blueprint strategy if put in place:

- Ongoing funding for the existing CEIAG infrastructure across the region, supporting efforts to build on existing models of good practice in the region
- Investment in workforce development, including paying the CEIAG workforce well and investing in their development
- Strengthened local and regional partnerships, and supporting the development of networks and relationships, coming together around a shared ambition
- Further alignment of education curricula to business needs
- Wider investment in digital infrastructure and digital inclusion

Workshop participants also identified a number of wider factors which may hinder the realisation of the Blueprint. These were generally themed around people-related challenges and systems change challenges.

The creation of a commitment to provide good quality careers provision to all residents within West Yorkshire no matter their age, will require new and deeper partnerships. All key stakeholders will need to commit to supporting the Blueprint move from a plan to delivery. The delivery of quality assured CEIAG will require a trained workforce to deliver this vision.

Organisations and individuals need to be involved in the process so as to see the greater benefits of working together than in a siloed way. This will also require employers to commit to the plans, which may involve additional activities under corporate social responsibility banners,

changing recruitment and training practices, supporting evidence and data collection by being key partners in data collection. A challenge will be how to shift the mindset among some stakeholders towards an alignment of priorities and goals for the realisation of a shared vision.

The stakeholders taking part in the theory of change workshop are committed to change, this needs to be matched with centralised support from the Combined Authority. This could include consideration of how funding streams and eligibility criteria need to work better in conjunction with each other.

6 Interim conclusions and recommendations

The aim for this work, of which this interim report is the first output, is to have robust, practical recommendations and road map for the devolution of future funding powers that makes best use of the evidence gathered and the expertise of local stakeholders and the researchers. At this stage, the desk research and initial stakeholder consultations through the theory of change workshop, enable a set of initial, high-level recommendations to be drafted.

These will be used in the next phase of work and will be tested for feasibility, acceptance, cost, impact, and the security of the evidence justifying them. They will be debated and weighted through further stakeholder consultations, a public consultation and further work with the Combined Authority. Here, the evidence is summarized in themes and recommendations are linked to each theme.

6.1 Evidence and draft recommendations

CEIAG available where everyone can access it

The importance of accessible and comprehensive careers guidance is underscored by both academic research and our findings. Accessible CEIAG should cater to individuals of all ages and backgrounds, emphasizing awareness, locality, and multiple engagement avenues, including physical and digital platforms. This accessibility aligns with the concept of "locally rooted careers information and learning" (WYCA Employment and Skills Plan)

Recommendation 1: Enhancing Awareness and Access for All

Addressing awareness and access barriers for residents of all ages and groups is imperative. Residents should easily locate CEIAG support in their proximity, whether in person, via phone, or online. Initiatives should be aimed at making CEIAG services more visible and accessible to adult and disadvantaged populations.

Recommendation 2: Bridging the Digital Divide

Recognizing the challenges posed by digital poverty, it is essential to ensure that online CEIAG services do not exclude individuals lacking digital resources. A concerted effort is needed to provide inclusive access to digital resources, ensuring that digital barriers do not hinder individuals from benefiting from online CEIAG resources

Align strategic employment, education, skills and CEIG policy

The analysis of the labour market and supporting materials underscores the need to strategically align employment and skills policies with education strategies. CEIAG serves as a pivotal mechanism for achieving this alignment. WYCA has made significant progress in bringing relevant stakeholders together, which should be continued to realize the Blueprint's objectives. Furthermore aligning CEIAG with the needs of local businesses can lead to a more skilled workforce and contribute to regional economic development.

Recommendation 3: Sustaining Stakeholder Collaboration

Ongoing collaboration and information sharing among educational institutions, employers, local authorities, and CEIAG service providers is crucial. The development of the Blueprint is just the initial step in a broader initiative. Commitment to collaboration should be sustained, as this will be pivotal in realizing the Blueprint's objectives and ensuring a cohesive approach to CEIAG.

Recommendation 4: Cultivating education to business relations

Foster robust and mutually beneficial partnerships among educational institutions, employers, and CEIAG providers to collaboratively design and implement customized training and work experience programmes. These initiatives should be strategically tailored to the unique skill gaps identified within West Yorkshire's dynamic labour market.

Create ambitious minimum expectations for all ages

CEIAG delivered within educational settings should adhere to rigorous quality standards (ie Gatsby benchmarks as a minimum). Furthermore, the focus on CEIAG should commence at the primary school level, encompass tailored support for learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and draw from best practices found in university-level CEIAG. While standards for adult CEIAG exist (e.g., Quality in Careers Standard or Matrix Standard), they are not uniformly met across the region – there are currently no expectations for how many sessions an adult may be entitled to (as set out in the Gatsby Benchmarks).

Recommendation 4: Establishing Rigorous Minimum Standards

Efforts should be made to establish and enforce minimum standards for the delivery of CEIAG services, incorporating recognized benchmarks such as the Gatsby Benchmarks for school-age individuals and the Quality in Careers Standard for adults. These standards should be rigorous, ensuring that quality is maintained and that all individuals, regardless of age, receive comprehensive and high-quality CEIAG.

Ensure clear links between education achievements and work, through CEIAG

The demographic and labour market analysis shows that there is a need to raise attainment levels and rates, increase progression to higher education for those that are able, ensure that completion and achievement rates of apprenticeship improve for those that

want a vocational route. Good quality CEIG can promote engagement with learning and in turn improve the functioning of the education and training system. CEIG professionals and members of the public need access to good quality LMI that shows the link between skills and employment in occupations and sectors in the region.

Recommendation 5: Supporting Transitions and Skill Enhancement

CEIAG services should focus on supporting young people during educational transitions and offer diverse experiences and encounters that highlight the benefits of qualifications and their relevance to the world of work. Ongoing support should be provided to individuals as they enter the workforce, encouraging upskilling, reskilling, and reducing dropout rates.

Ensure equal access to CEIAG across the region

Disparities in access to CEIAG services exist, with Leeds displaying a higher concentration of provision compared to other areas. To address this imbalance, WYCA should consider a comprehensive review of the mapping evidence, taking into account funding and devolved powers. This will help ensure that CEIAG provision is available consistently across the entire region. While striving for a universal offer, particular attention should be given to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable populations to ensure they do not miss out or fall through the gaps.

Recommendation 6: Equitable Provision Across the Region

WYCA should conduct a thorough review of the mapping evidence in conjunction

with funding and devolution information. The aim is to establish comprehensive CEIAG provision across the entire region. Specialized provisions should target skills gaps, mismatches, and underutilization, ensuring that the most disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals receive equitable support, thus promoting a more inclusive and balanced regional workforce.

Increase capacity and diversity in the CEIAG workforce

The research has highlighted disparities in the distribution of the workforce across WYCA, particularly across gender and ethnicity lines, as well as the training opportunities they access, alongside limited capacity within the specific CEIAG workforce for diversity as well as for training and development.

Recommendation 7: Diversifying and Building Capacity Within the CEIAG Workforce

By investing in the professional development and capacity-building of CEIAG professionals, WYCA can create a more inclusive, responsive, and diverse careers support ecosystem, which can help address wider labour market disparities. This initiative aligns with the overarching vision of the All Age Careers Blueprint, which aims to empower individuals from all backgrounds to enter and thrive in the world of work.

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Appendix

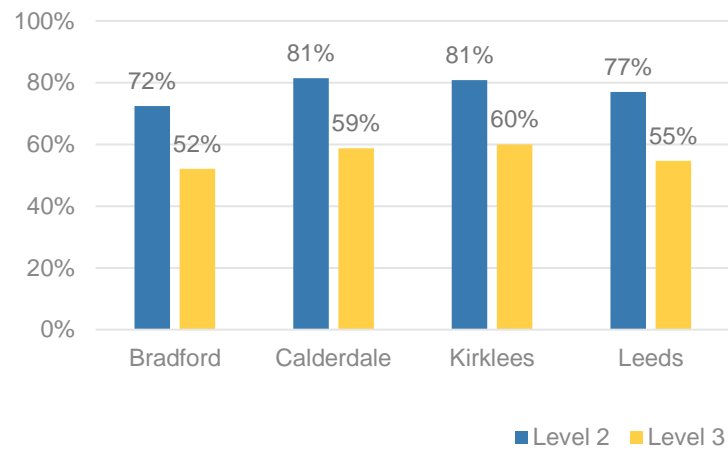
Appendix 1 – Labour market insight

One of the drivers of WYCA’s poor qualification performance is the fact that young people are entering the labour market without achieving a Level 2 qualification, as shown in Figure 1. Young people in West Yorkshire are less likely to have achieved a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19 than their national counterparts. The proportion is 77%, five points lower than the England average.

Two districts (Calderdale and Kirklees) are close to the national average but in Bradford only 72% achieve level 2 by the age of 19, seven points behind the national average, whilst Leeds and Wakefield are both around five points behind. This feeds through into a wider gap at level 3 – 55% have achieved level 3 by the age of 19, six points below the national average of 61%. Again, Calderdale and Kirklees perform close to the national average, but Bradford is nine points behind the average at 52%.

Figure 1: Proportion of young people achieving qualifications at level 2 and

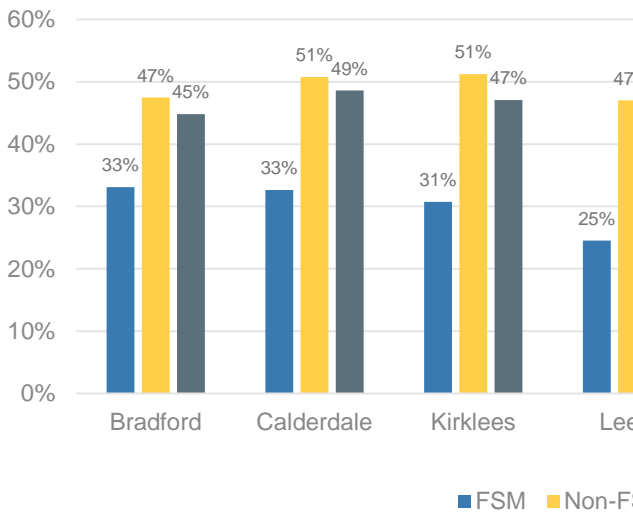
level 3 equivalent by age 19 in 2021/22 (State sector)



Source: Department for Education

Focusing on attainment at level 2 and on the performance of young people who were eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) while at school, the impact of disadvantage on attainment is highlighted in Figure 2. WYCA displays lower attainment for both categories, with a gap of three points in each case. There is a similar gap in WYCA and England between FSM and non non-FSM of 22 points, while Leeds displays a 28 point gap.

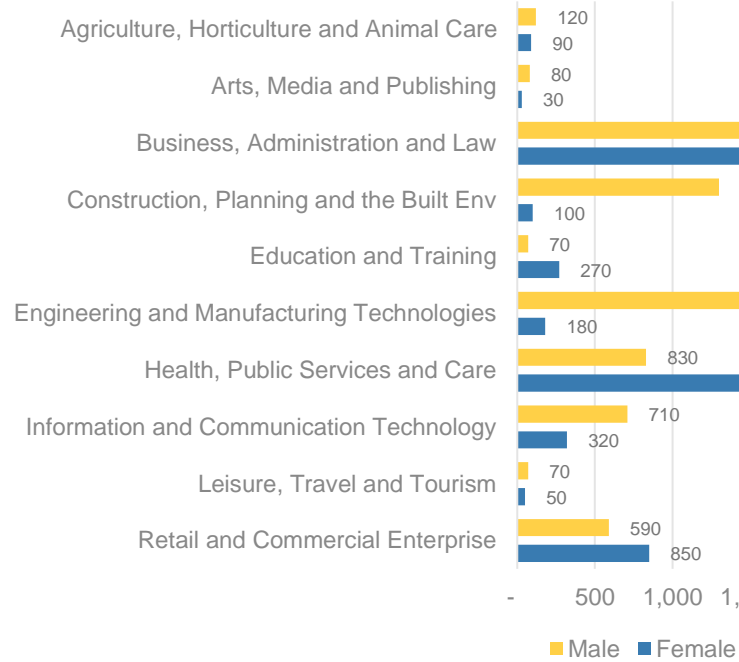
Figure 2: Progression rates to higher education by age 19 for state-funded pupils, 2021/22 by free school meal status



Source: Department for Education

When turning to further education, a trend evidenced in the data is that apprenticeships are highly segregated by sex and subject. There are marked differences in the subject profile of starts by sex. The largest areas in terms of volume of female starts are *Health, Public Services and Care, Business, Administration and Law* and *Retail and Commercial Enterprise*. Females accounted for 83% of total starts in *Health, public services and care* but females starts were in a small minority for *Construction* (7%), *Engineering and Manufacturing* (9%), whilst in *Information Technology* they accounted for just under one-third (31% up from 24% in 2019/20).

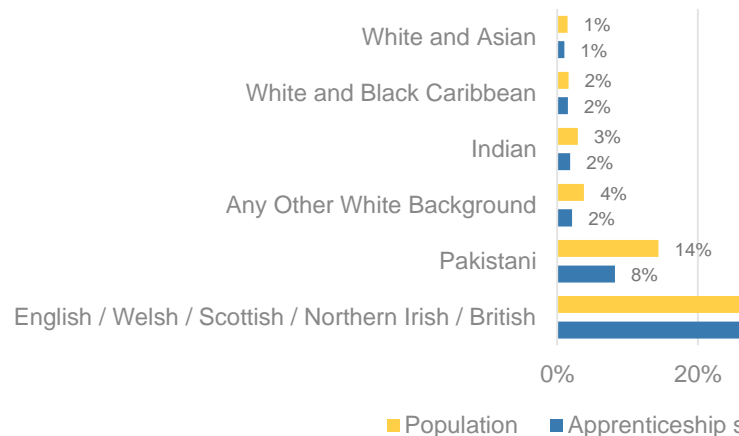
Figure 3: Apprenticeship starts by sex and subject, 2021/22, West Yorkshire



Source: Department for Education

There is also a high degree of segregation by ethnicity, with ethnic minority groups typically under-represented in West Yorkshire apprenticeships for young people, as shown in Figure 4.

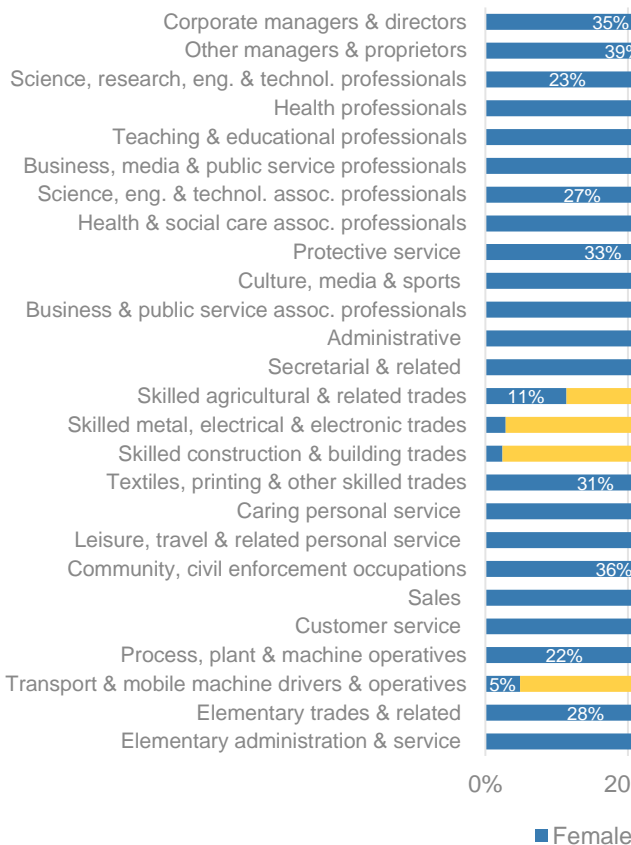
Figure 4: Comparison of ethnic profile of apprenticeships and population for 16-24 year old, West Yorkshire



Source: Department for Education

When it comes to professional roles, there is also a high segregation in terms of sex, with females making up the large majority of health and social care workforce, and the administrative and secretarial roles. Males are instead almost the totality of the workforce in construction, metal and electronic trades, transport, and agriculture. Generally, there is an under-representation of females in highly skilled professions, as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Residents in employment by sex and occupation

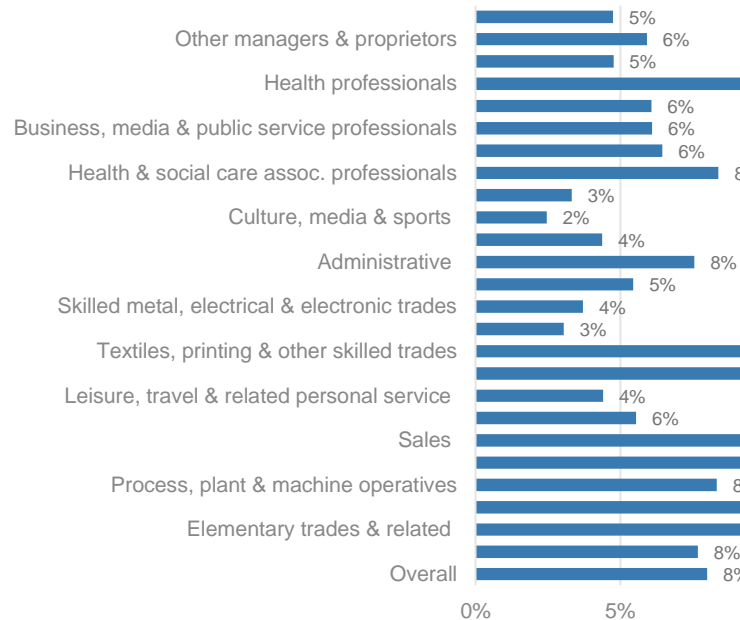


Source: Census 2021

Occupational segregation also impacts ethnic minority groups, with residents from Pakistani ethnic groups making up over a fifth of the transport workforce in the region, and only two per cent of

those in culture, media and sports, as shown in Figure 6.

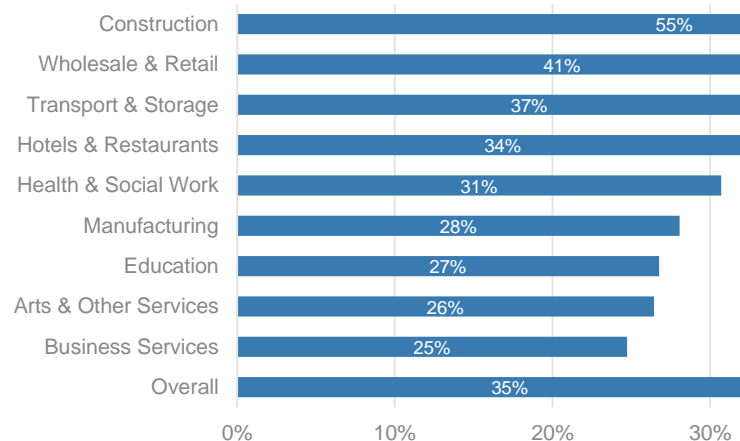
Figure 6: Residents in employment who are from a Pakistani ethnic group by occupation



Source: Census 2021

When turning to skills, shortages are highest in the construction and wholesale and retail sectors, as illustrated in Figure 7.

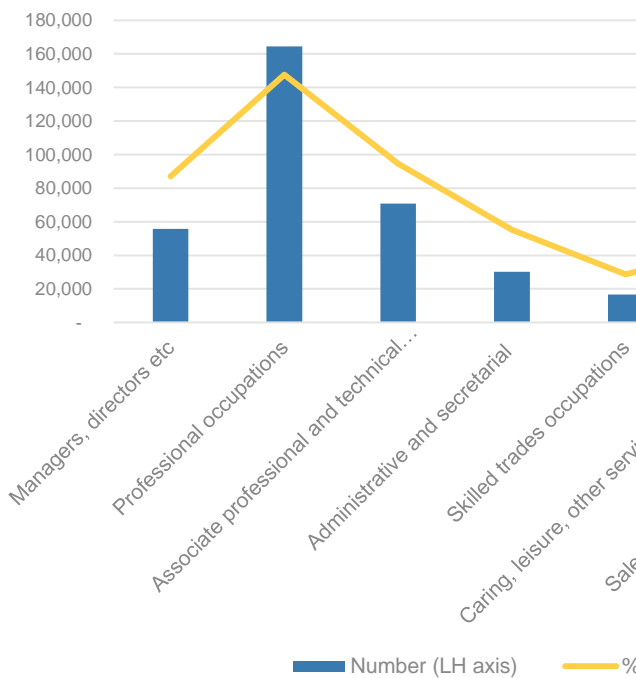
Figure 7: Skill shortage vacancies as % of total vacancies, West Yorkshire, 2022



Source: Employment Skills Survey 2022

On the other hand, significant numbers of people with higher qualifications are employed in roles that do not require them, as illustrated in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Skill shortage vacancies as % of total vacancies, West Yorkshire, 2022



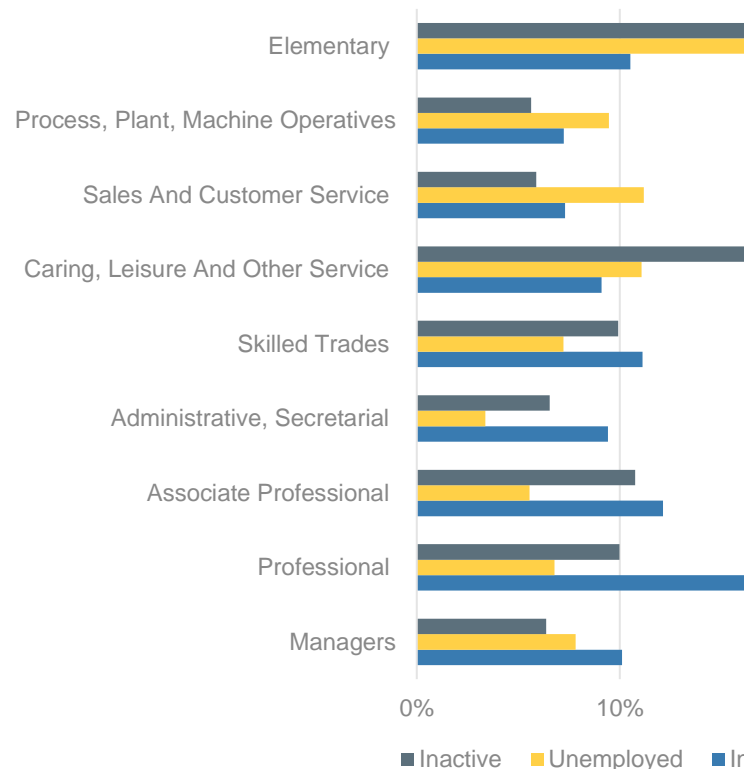
Source: Census 2021

There are also marked differences between the occupational profile of people in work and of unemployed and inactive people, as shown in Figure 9. This is even more marked when considering the profile of jobs growth in the labour market, which is largely concentrated in higher skilled occupations. Figure 9 looks at the employment profile of people who are in work versus occupational background of people who are unemployed and inactive (but want / are seeking a job)

The occupational background of both the unemployed and inactive is weighted

towards lower-skilled occupations, principally elementary but also sales and customer service in the case of the unemployed, plus caring roles (in the case of the inactive) and operative roles in the case of the unemployed. The proportion of unemployed and inactive people with a background in higher skilled management, professional and associate professional is in each case around half that of people in employment. This implies a mismatch between the skills and experience of the unemployed and the profile of demand in the labour market.

Figure 9: Occupational profile of the unemployed and inactive (based on last job), Yorkshire and the Humber

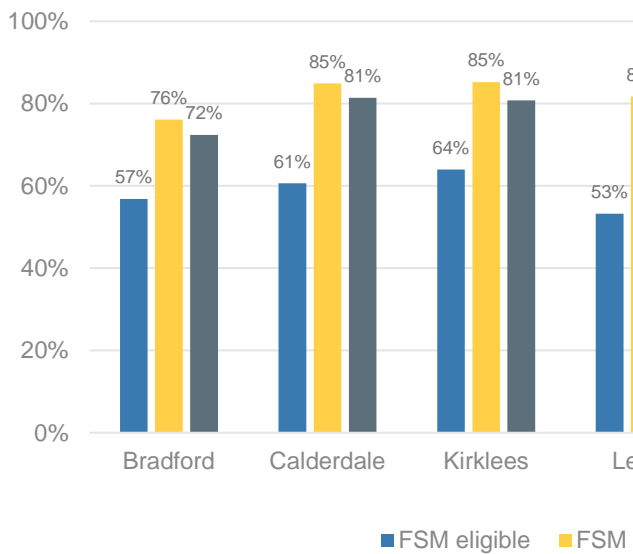


Source: Annual Population Survey

When focusing on attainment at level 2 and performance of young people who are eligible for FSM, the impact of disadvantage on attainment emerges, as shown in Figure 10. WYCA has lower

attainment for both categories compared with the national average and a 24 point gap between FSM and non-FSM. This data highlights the intersection between low attainment and deprivation.

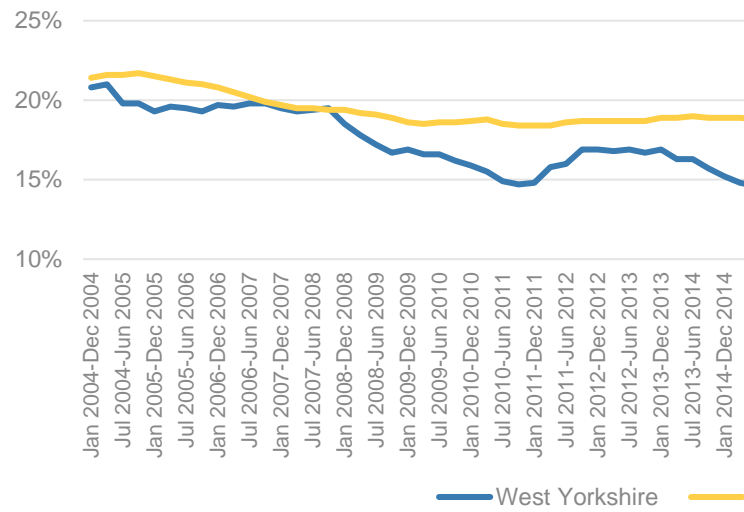
Figure 10: Proportion of young people achieving qualifications at level 2 equivalent by age 19 in 2021/22 (State sector) by free school meal eligibility



Source: Department for Education

Turning to job-related training, the incidence of job-related training is relatively low in WYCA as shown in Figure 11.

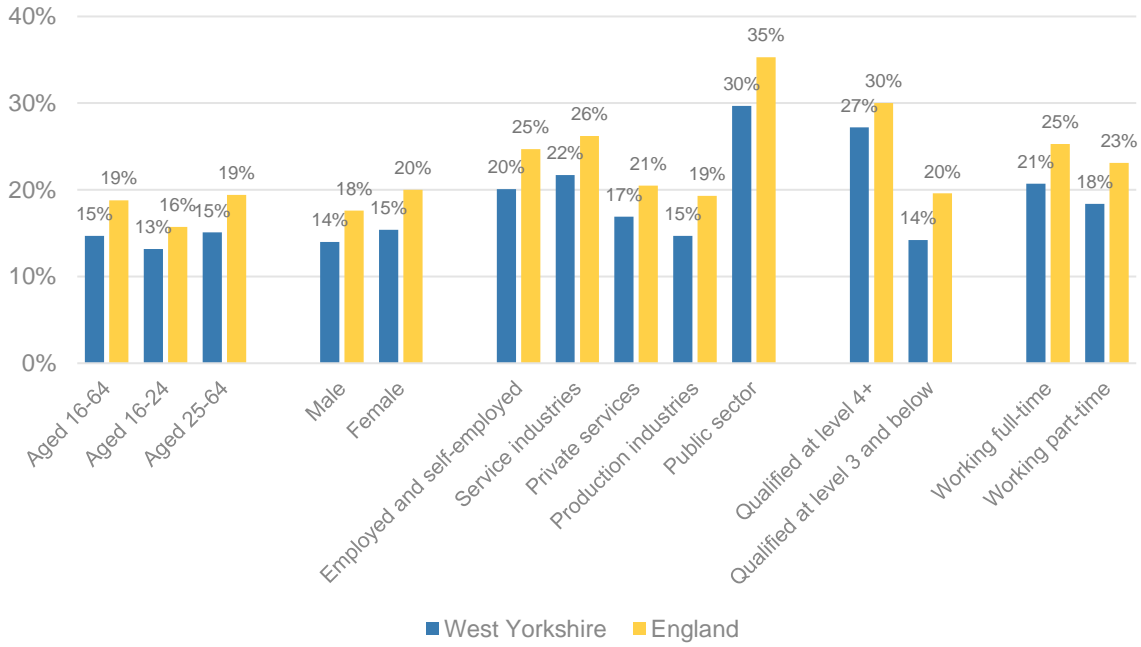
Figure 11: Proportion of people of working age (16-64) receiving job-related training in previous 13 weeks



Source: Annual Population Survey

Alongside a low incidence of job-related training, groups traditionally facing disadvantage in the labour market are less likely to receive job-related training, and this is particularly the case for lower-qualified people (<Level 3), as shown in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Proportion of people of working age (16-64) receiving job-related training in previous 13 weeks



Source: Annual Population Survey

DRAFT

ATEP Programme

Evaluation Report

February – July 2024

Contents

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Executive Summary

Executive summary

Overview of the project

West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) identified a lack of uptake within West Yorkshire in ATE routes amongst young people, in particular apprenticeships. The ATEP project aimed to support employers to mentor small groups of students and increase their knowledge on ATE options, give experience of apprenticeship opportunities and increase confidence in application processes.

Key deliverables

- WYCA to engage 3 x schools/colleges to participate in the project with 2 x groups of 7 students
- Recruitment of 6 employers (3 from WYCA and 3 from Amazing Apprenticeships)
- Delivery of training workshop to group of 6 employers
- Employers to mentor groups of 7 students each to learn more about ATE opportunities
- Creation of 3 x A4 guides to ATE for Students, Careers Leaders & Parents/Carers
- Evaluation of stakeholders to understand progress made

Executive summary

Key findings

- ❑ All stakeholders scored their participation in the programme as Good or Excellent
- ❑ Student knowledge of apprenticeships increased by 26% and their confidence in applying by 52%
- ❑ Although the project increased awareness of technical education, students were not as confident in their deeper understanding of other technical options (such as T Levels and HTQs)
- ❑ Where students already knew an apprentice, their existing knowledge of apprenticeships was higher than those who did not know an apprentice
- ❑ Students gained confidence around initial applications stages (applications/CVs), but need further support in preparing for later recruitment assessments (online tests/assessment centres)
- ❑ Teachers felt the strength of the programme was the employer interaction and guidance, although that more information around non-participating employers could have been included
- ❑ The timing of the project could, at times, be challenging having started a bit later in the academic year (schools sometimes struggled to reserve time for the project) and other events taking place
- ❑ Employers felt 40% more confident in informing students about apprenticeships and technical education post training

Executive summary

Recommendations:

1. **Start the programme earlier in the academic year**
2. **Include greater LMI / other employer information in delivery materials for employers**
3. **If the programme delivery time is extended, supporting employers to deliver more guidance/sessions around interviews, assessment centres and tasks in the application process**
4. **Reduce the number of questionnaires for students (no session evaluations) – try and capture the pre and post evaluations in sessions**
5. **Developing a system to monitor and capture the progress of applications made through the project**
6. **Greater involvement of the employer's apprentices in the sessions**

Key findings

Positive engagement & impact

- ❑ The project overall was scored really highly for employer and Careers Leader engagement:
 - **100% of employers** scored the project overall and the training as **Good (4/5) or Excellent (5/5)**
 - **100% of Careers Leaders** scored the project overall as **Good (4/5)**
- ❑ The number of students considering an apprenticeship increased by the end of the project
 - **80% of students** were considering an apprenticeship prior to the project, which increased to **94%**

“The project was great.
The support from Helen
has been brilliant.”
Careers Leader

“Thank you for giving our
students this opportunity
– it’s been great! 😊”
Careers Leader

Increased awareness

111

- ❑ **Student understanding of ATE and application processes increased across each area, with the below % of students scoring 4 or 5 (out of 5) in their knowledge levels of:**
 - Understanding apprenticeships: **45% pre-project > 71% post-project**
 - How to apply for apprenticeships: **19% pre-project > 71% post-project**
 - Understanding T Levels: **5% pre-project > 26% post-project**
 - How to apply for T Levels: **5% pre-project > 29% post-project**
 - Awareness of local opportunities: **30% pre-project > 52% post-project**
 - Awareness of other routes into work: **30% pre-project > 62% post-project**
 - Awareness of local employers offering apprenticeships: **18% pre-project > 55% post-project**

- ❑ **Student awareness of apprenticeship topics increased if they knew an apprentice**
 - Students who already knew an apprentice felt between **15% - 30% more knowledgeable** on apprenticeship topics than students who did not know an apprentice

Confidence in applications

- Student confidence in applying for apprenticeships increased in 3 areas, stayed the same in 1 and decreased in 3, with the below % of students scoring 4 or 5 (out of 5) in their confidence in:
 - Writing a CV: 60% pre-project > 80% post-project
 - Writing a cover letter: 30% pre-project > 54% post-project
 - Telephone interviews: 59% pre-project > 63% post-project
 - Face to face interviews: 57% pre-project > 51% post-project
 - Online tests/quizzes: 75% pre-project > 66% post-project
 - Assessment centres: 66% pre-project > 51% post-project
 - Presenting/completing a task: 57% pre-project > 57% post-project

Employer confidence in delivery

- Employers felt more confident to deliver the programme after the training, with the below % of employers scoring 'Very Confident' or 'Confident' in the below areas:
 - Informing students about apprenticeships: 40% 'Very Confident' pre-project > 80% 'Very Confident' post-project
 - Informing students about technical education: 20% pre-project > 60% post-project
 - Giving students guidance on applying: 60% pre-project > 100% post-project
 - Mentoring students: 100% pre-project > 80% post-project
 - Hosting a business visit: 100% 'Confident' pre-project > 40% 'Confident', 40% 'Very Confident' post-project

Employer engagement

Overview

- 6 local employers were invited to participate in the ATEP project, including:
 - Lloyds Banking Group (3 x colleagues)
 - Howdens (2 x colleagues)
 - FDM
 - Morgan Sindall
 - Covea
 - Yorkshire Housing
- Due to personal circumstances, unfortunately Yorkshire Housing and Covea were no longer able to participate in the project, despite Yorkshire Housing having attended the online employer training.
- With a few volunteers joining the project from Lloyds Banking Group, they were able to divide and support the cohorts in place of Yorkshire Housing and Covea.
- The individuals who volunteered all had varying levels of confidence, subject knowledge and previous experience, which was identified through the employer training. A couple of the volunteers therefore worked with colleagues to co-deliver sessions, which they noted was a great support and also benefitted the project in terms of reach and buy-in from the organisations.
- All of the employers who participated this year have confirmed they would like to continue working with WYCA going forward on careers projects.

Employer evaluation

Employer project feedback

- **2 employers** have completed the project evaluation – both from Lloyds Banking Group
- The employers scored the project as below:

Score	Employer 1	Employer 2
Project overall	5	4
Support in session preparation	5	3
Support in working with the school/college	5	4
Session content	5	3
Delivering the sessions / working with the students	5	3

Employer 1
“Excellent experience, from training through to delivery”

Employer 2
“Talks went well at the school but could be more structured. Students may want to provide us with what they are looking to get out of it before we attend so we can tailor our talks. Site visit went really well”

- Both employers would like **to participate again in future** and **sign up to become an Enterprise Adviser**.

Employer training

Overview

- The face to face training went really well, with **4 out of 5** attendees scoring the session as **Excellent** and **1** attendee scoring the session as **Good**
- Comments and **feedback were really positive** during and following the session (please see slide 8)
- 3 employers were represented at the face to face training and completed the post-training survey – **Lloyds Banking Group, Howdens and FDM**
- The pre-training survey, however, was completed by **Lloyds Banking Group, FDM and Yorkshire Housing Group** – and so distanced travelled is not always demonstrated where Howdens were newer to apprenticeships and school engagement and Yorkshire Housing Group have more experience
- 3 attendees noted prior to the training that they had experience of working with students & schools, whilst 2 attendees had not

The following slides provide an insight into the impact of the training on confidence around different elements of delivery of the programme. This will be updated when the virtual employers complete the survey.

Informing students about apprenticeships

Following the training, 2 employers increased in confidence around informing students about apprenticeships.

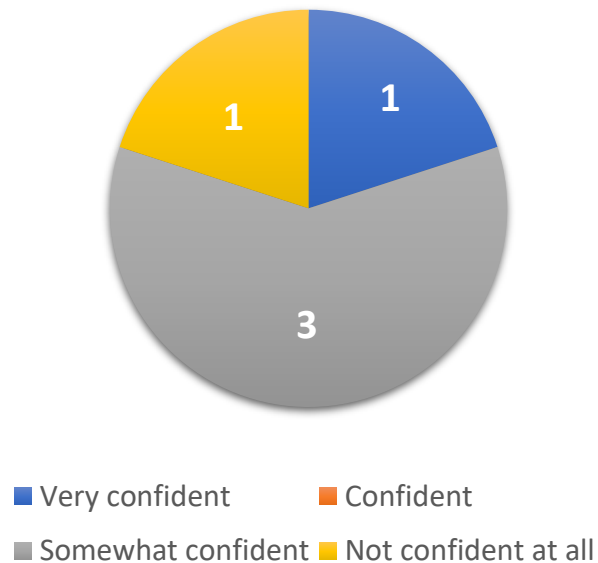


Informing students about Technical Education

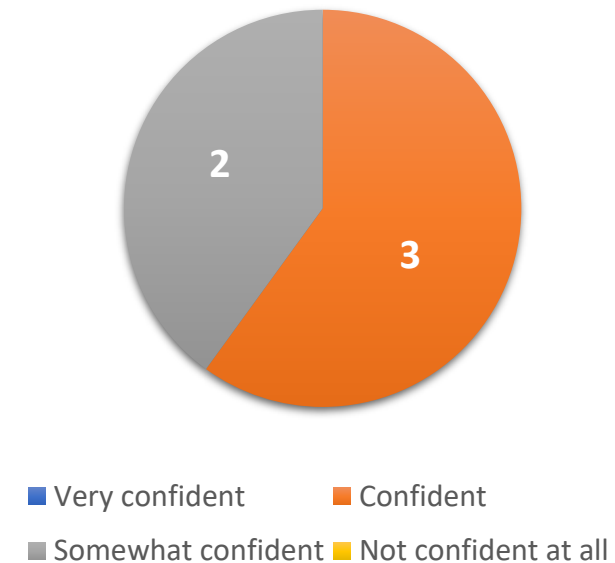
Employers increased in confidence around their knowledge of technical education. During the session, the employer who marked a higher confidence pre-training noted that they had not been fully aware of the different options across technical education and therefore reviewed their scoring.

121

Confidence pre-training



Confidence post-training

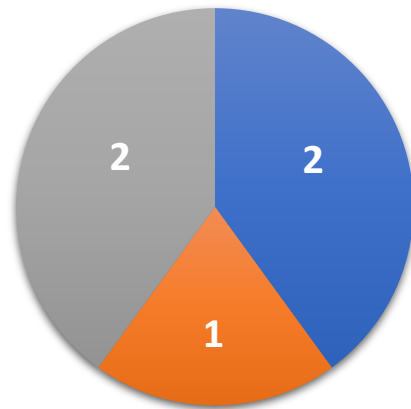


Giving students guidance on applying

The training supported 2 employers to increase their confidence from somewhat confident to confident with regards to giving students guidance on applying for apprenticeships.

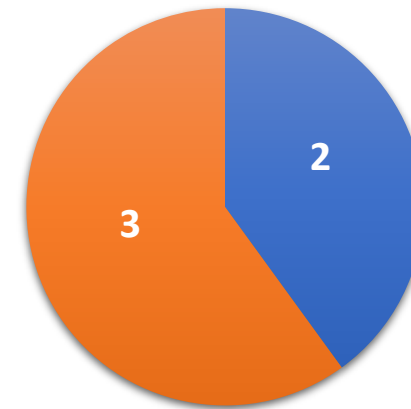
122

Confidence pre-training



■ Very confident ■ Confident
■ Somewhat confident ■ Not confident at all

Confidence post-training



■ Very confident ■ Confident
■ Somewhat confident ■ Not confident at all

Mentoring students

The feedback regarding mentoring does not completely match where Yorkshire Housing completed the pre-survey and Howdens completed the post-survey.

123



Hosting a business visit

An attendee at the training explained that he felt less confident about who he needs to speak to internally and how he should be going about arranging a visit, but a colleague offered to support with this.

124



Post-training survey

What worked well ...

125
Good interactive session with lots of ideas”

“Interactive session with listened to input and feedback”

“A great session”

“The support on offer and friendly approach”

What was most useful ...

“The presentation slides put together and all other available resources”

“Information about the different programs T Levels etc”

“Understanding different options and meeting other people”

“Meeting others with knowledge of apprenticeship/ further education backgrounds”

Post-training survey

Even better if ...

- Feedback was given following the face to face session explaining that more in-depth insights into who is involved (e.g. organisations) and how would have been useful.
- This was then applied for the virtual training where more time was given to this.

126

“Would like to have seen an heir-achy/ introduction of the different organisations involved at the beginning as I’m not from a recruitment/apprenticeship background I had to get up to speed quickly on unknown territory”

Other ways employers offered to support

127

- Candidate(s) can apply to apprenticeship programme and they could support closely through the process
- Signposting to apprenticeship network
- Linking with current/past apprentices
- Open to other ideas from WYCA and happy to help

School engagement & feedback

School overview

Overview

- It was decided that small groups of students at different transition stages from across our Hub Schools/ Colleges in Leeds, Wakefield and Bradford would be the initial beneficiaries of this programme.
- Across all council areas of West Yorkshire disadvantaged pupils are less likely to enter an apprenticeship than other pupils on the completion of Key Stage 4. Only 3% of pupils eligible for free school meals enter an apprenticeship. A similar situation prevails following Key Stage 5. The overall apprenticeship entry rate is above the national average across all local authority areas in West Yorkshire, but disadvantaged young people are less likely to enter a sustained apprenticeship destination than their non-disadvantaged peers. The gap is particularly wide for pupils in Leeds and Wakefield.
- In considering the supply of skills within West Yorkshire, we took account of the inclusiveness of the skills pipeline, as well as the extent to which it is sufficient to meet needs. Apprenticeships should provide an important mechanism for social mobility, therefore the intent for this project is to work with pupils from schools particularly in Lower Layer Super Output Areas where the rate of poverty related to unemployment, low salaries and general health are low. In West Yorkshire there is a high percentage of these postcode areas in Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield.
- 2 schools and 1 college were selected to participate by the Schools Partnership Team. The establishments and cohorts were as follows:
 - Ossett Academy (Year 10)
 - Bingley Grammar School (Year 12)
 - Leeds City College (Year 13)

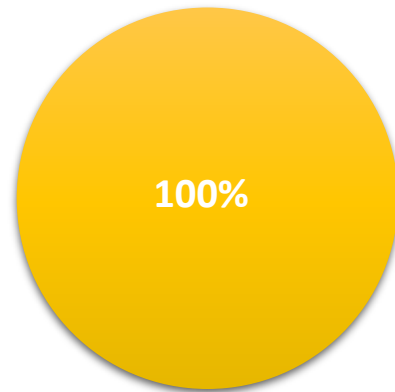
Careers Leader feedback

Careers Leader feedback

132

Careers Leaders (3)

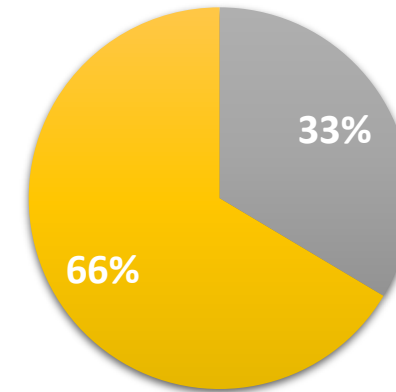
How would you score the project overall?



■ 1 (Poor) ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 (Excellent)

Careers Leaders (3)

How would you score the session content?



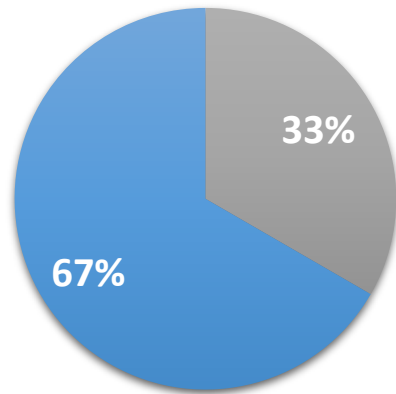
■ 1 (Poor) ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 (Excellent)

Careers Leader feedback

133

Careers Leaders (3)

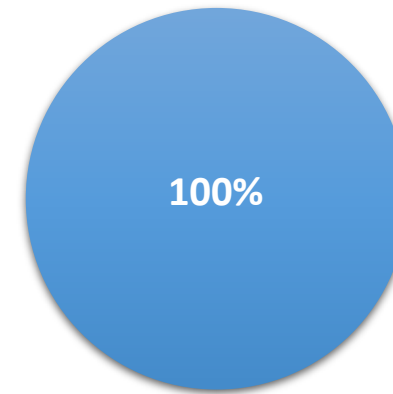
How would you score the employer engagement?



■ 1 (Poor) ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 (Excellent)

Careers Leaders (3)

How would you score the school/college support?



■ 1 (Poor) ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 (Excellent)

Careers Leader feedback

School / college	What have you found most useful about the project?	Was there anything else you may have found helpful or would have liked from the project?
Bingley Grammar	“Making a connection to a good local company , bringing in external employer. Providing support on apprenticeships. ”	“ More information about other companies and where to find apprenticeships. Would have been good to hear more about other providers and offerings locally. ”
134 Leeds City College	“The opportunity for our students to learn from current apprentices , also for our students to learn directly from employers what they are looking for on applications/in interviews and what kind of apprenticeships are available. The students also seemed to enjoy visiting employers premises and experiencing a workplace.”	“The project was really useful but I think that it would have been easier if it was after Christmas as the project was during exam season so it was hard to find available students and dates. I also don't think the information on T-levels was necessary as our learners are 18+ so have already picked their post 16 options.”
Ossett Academy	“ Insight from the two employers. Students got to here first hand from employers about their experiences and understand the recruitment process for apprenticeships.”	“ Better understanding of Technical Education from the providers on T Levels and the realities e.g. they are an academic route and colleges only recruit students with Grade 5's and above. More time to deliver the project over a long period of time.”

Careers Leader feedback

135

“The project was great. The support from Helen has been brilliant.”

“Thank you for giving our students this opportunity – it’s been great! 😊”

Student survey analysis

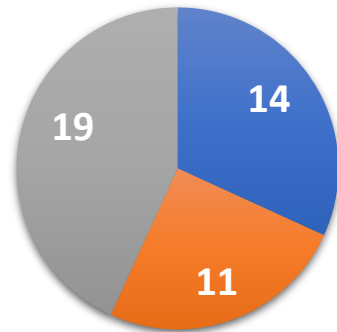
Respondent demographics

Survey completions

138

Pre-project survey

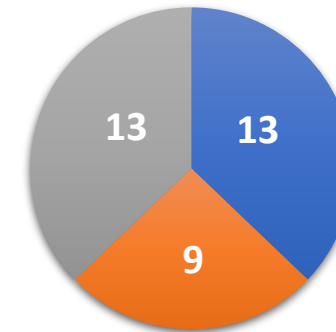
No. of respondents (44)



- Bingley Grammar School
- Leeds City College
- Ossett Academy

Post-project survey

No. of respondents (35)



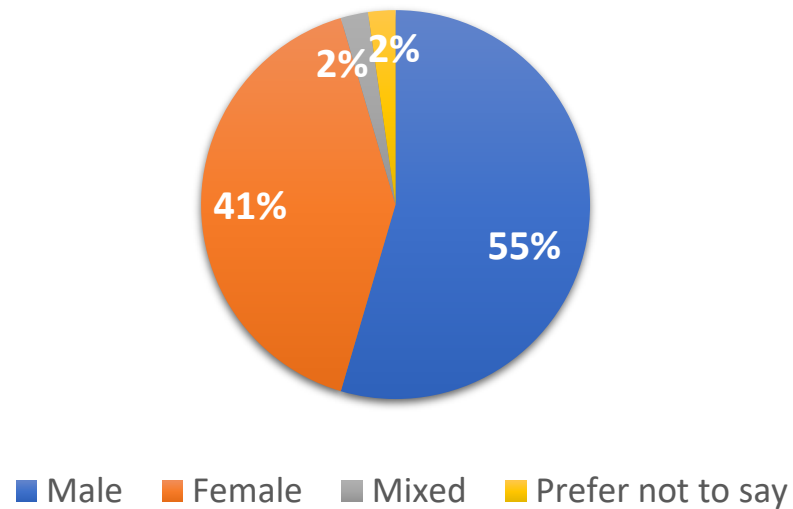
- Bingley Grammar School
- Leeds City College
- Ossett Academy

Gender breakdown

139

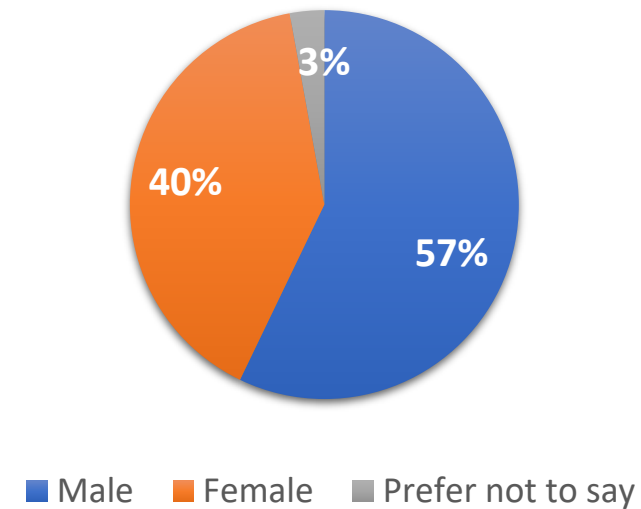
Pre-project survey

How would you describe your gender? (44 responses)



Post-project survey

How would you describe your gender? (35 responses)



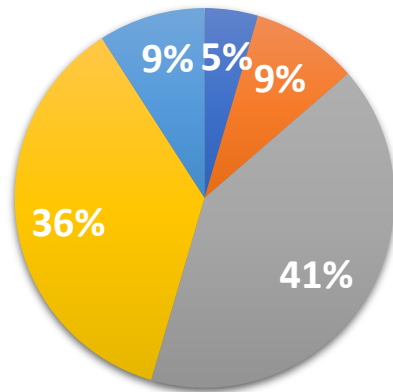
Knowledge & awareness

Understanding of apprenticeships

141

Pre-project

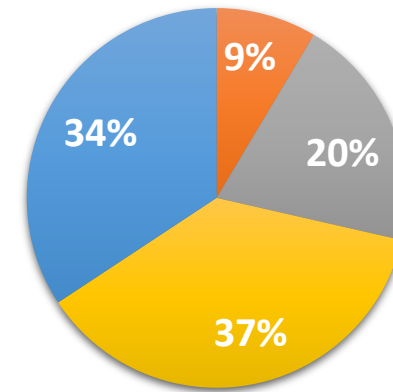
Understanding of apprenticeships



■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Post-project

Understanding of apprenticeships



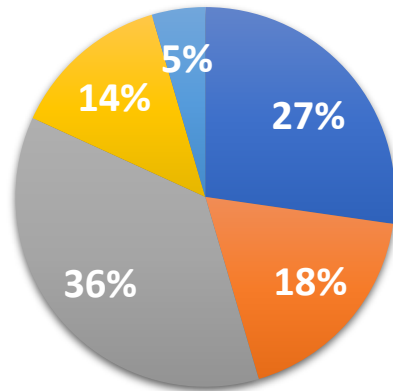
■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Applying for apprenticeships

142

Pre-project

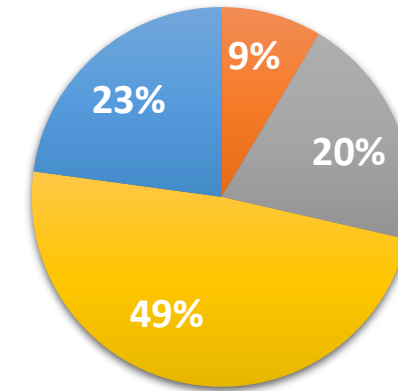
How to apply for apprenticeships



■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Post-project

How to apply for apprenticeships



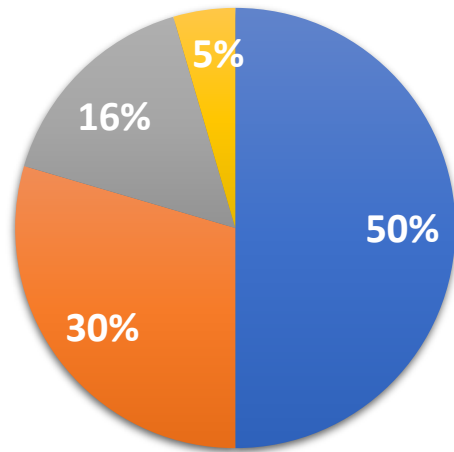
■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Understanding of T Levels

143

Pre-project

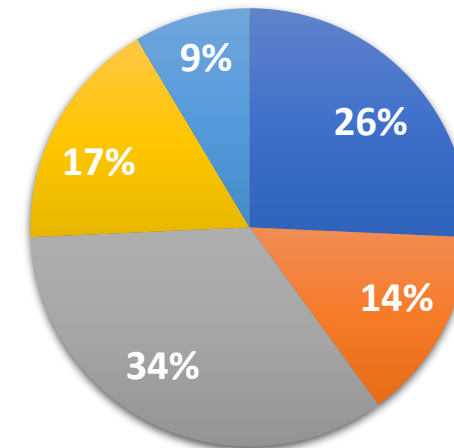
T Levels and what they are



■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Post-project

T Levels and what they are

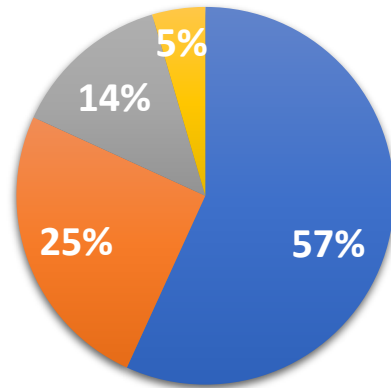


■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Searching and applying for T Levels

Pre-project

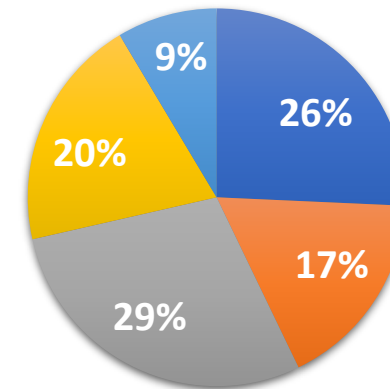
How to find an apply for T Levels



■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Post-project

How to find an apply for T Levels



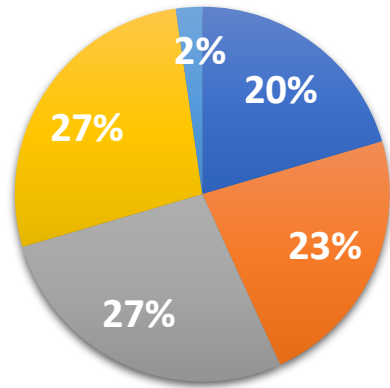
■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Awareness of local opportunities

145

Pre-project

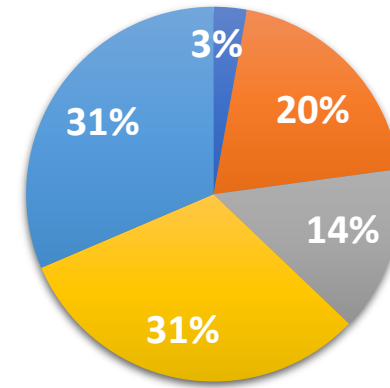
What kind of opportunities are available locally to you



■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Post-project

What kind of opportunities are available locally to you



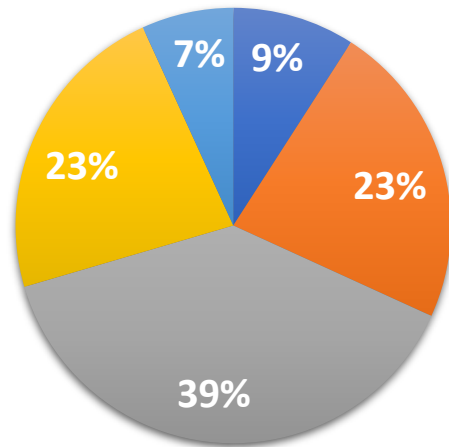
■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Awareness of other options

146

Pre-project

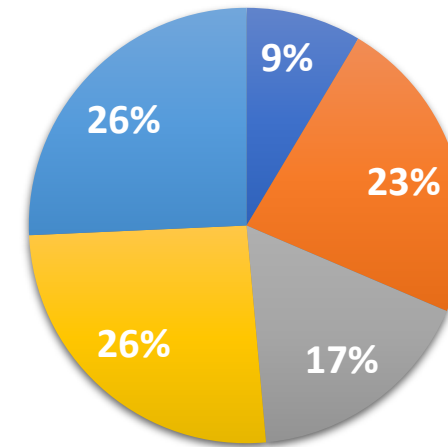
Other routes into work



■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Post-project

Other routes into work



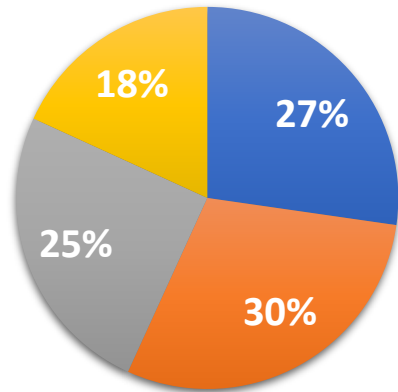
■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Awareness of local employers

147

Pre-project

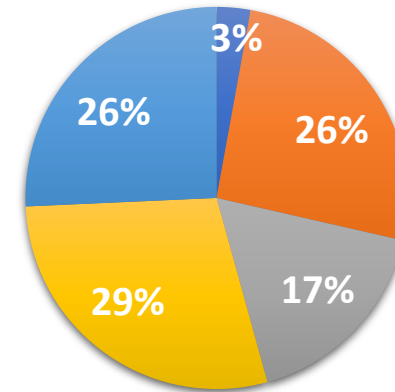
What employers offer apprenticeships in my local area



■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Post-project

What employers offer apprenticeships in my local area

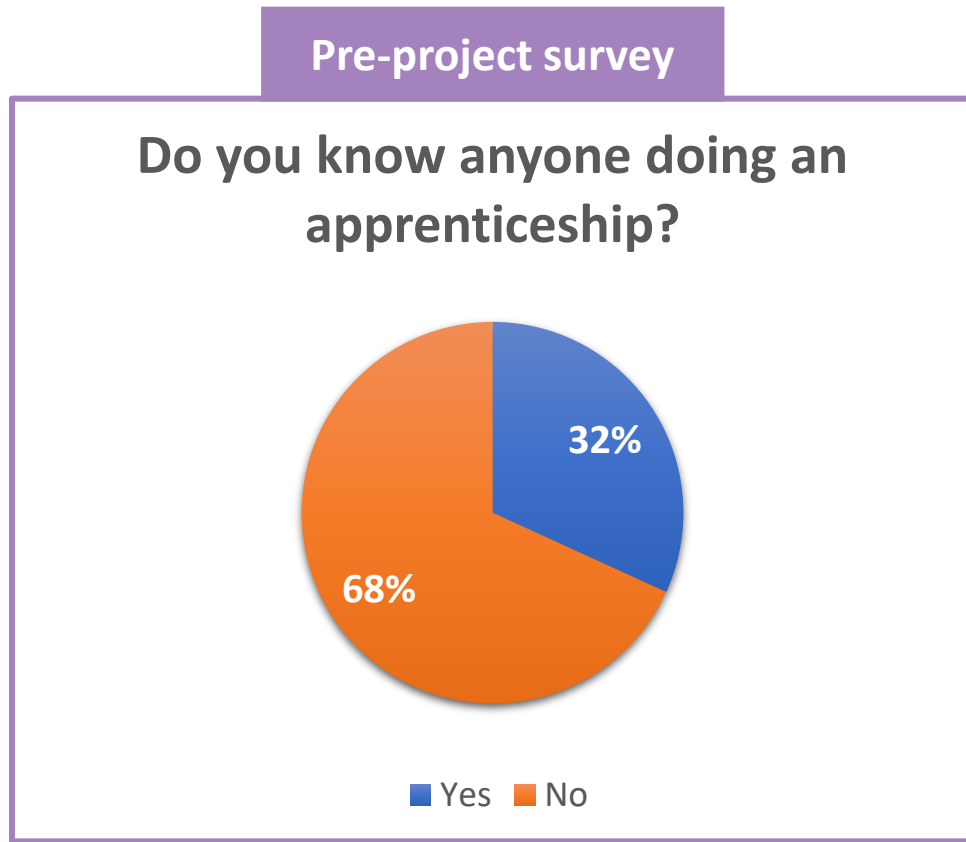


■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Apprentice connections: Impact on awareness

Apprentice connections

149



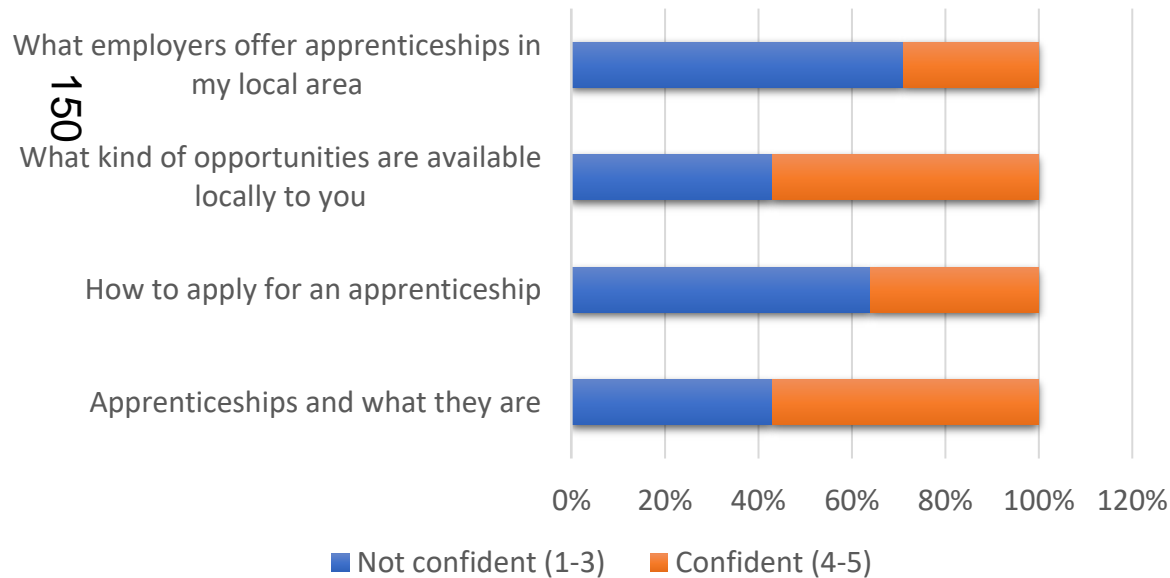
Increased understanding

- Just over 1/3 of students already had a personal connection to an apprentice, whether through family or a friend.
- A few students had siblings on an apprenticeship with the same employer (McDonalds)
- When looking at the correlation of knowing an apprentice to understanding of them, we found that students who already knew an apprentice felt more confident in their knowledge of apprenticeship

Apprentice connection impact on awareness

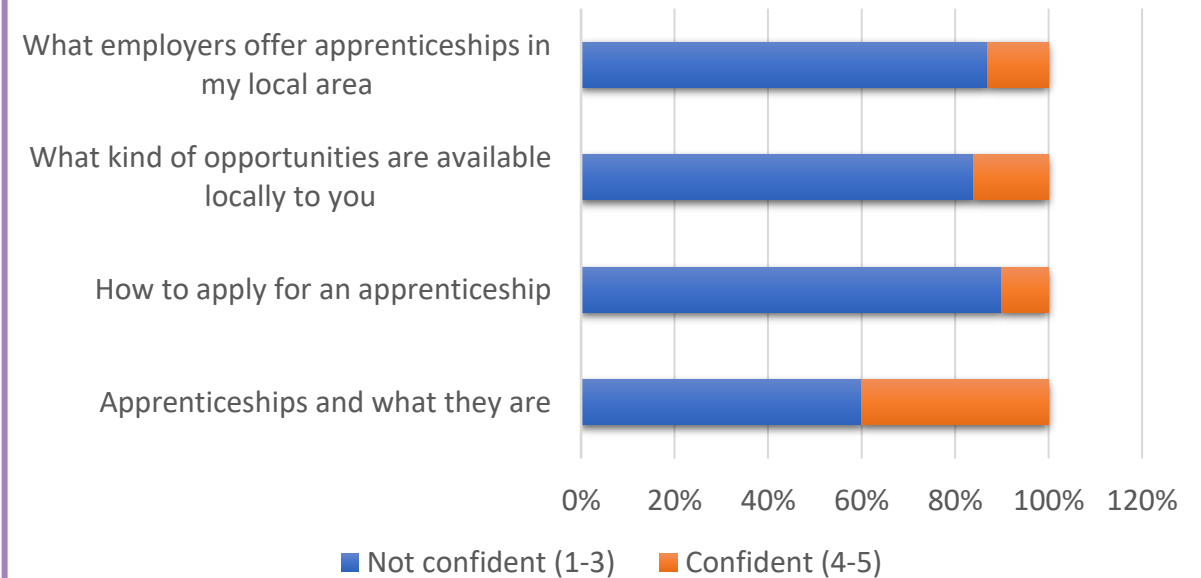
Do know an apprentice

Do know an apprentice



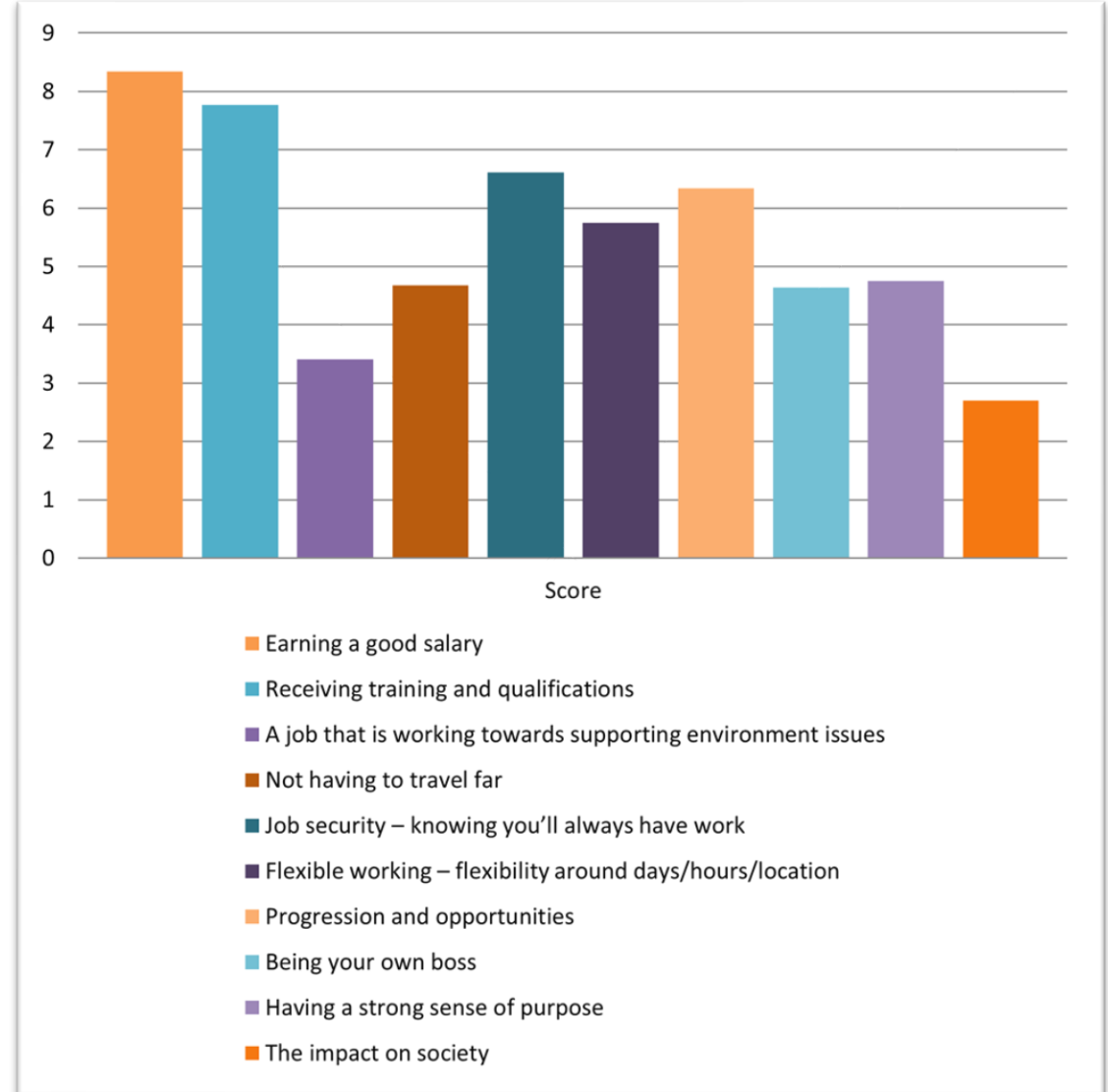
Do not know an apprentice

Do NOT know an apprentice



Priorities for career consideration

- Students were asked to score their priorities when considering a career from 1-10.
- The majority of students selected:
 1. Earning a good salary
 2. Receiving training and qualifications
 3. Job security
- Fewer students selected 'Impact on society' or 'A job supporting environment issues' as main priorities



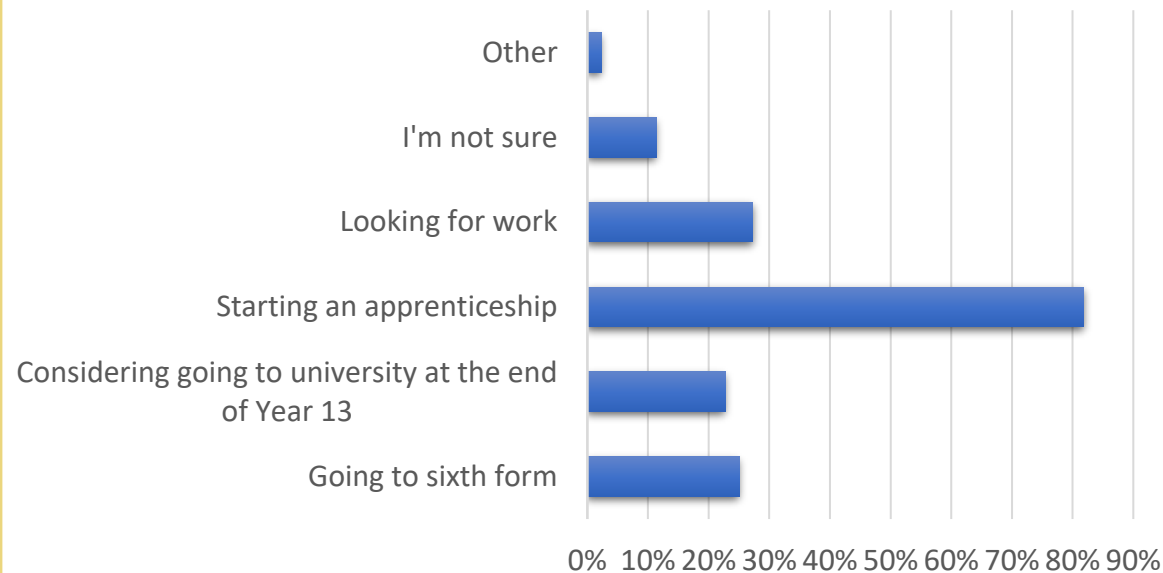
Impact of the project

Considering an apprenticeship

153

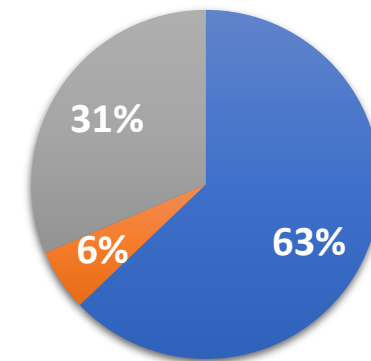
Pre-project survey

When you finish school, do you have any plans or ideas on your next steps? (Tick all that apply)



Post-project survey

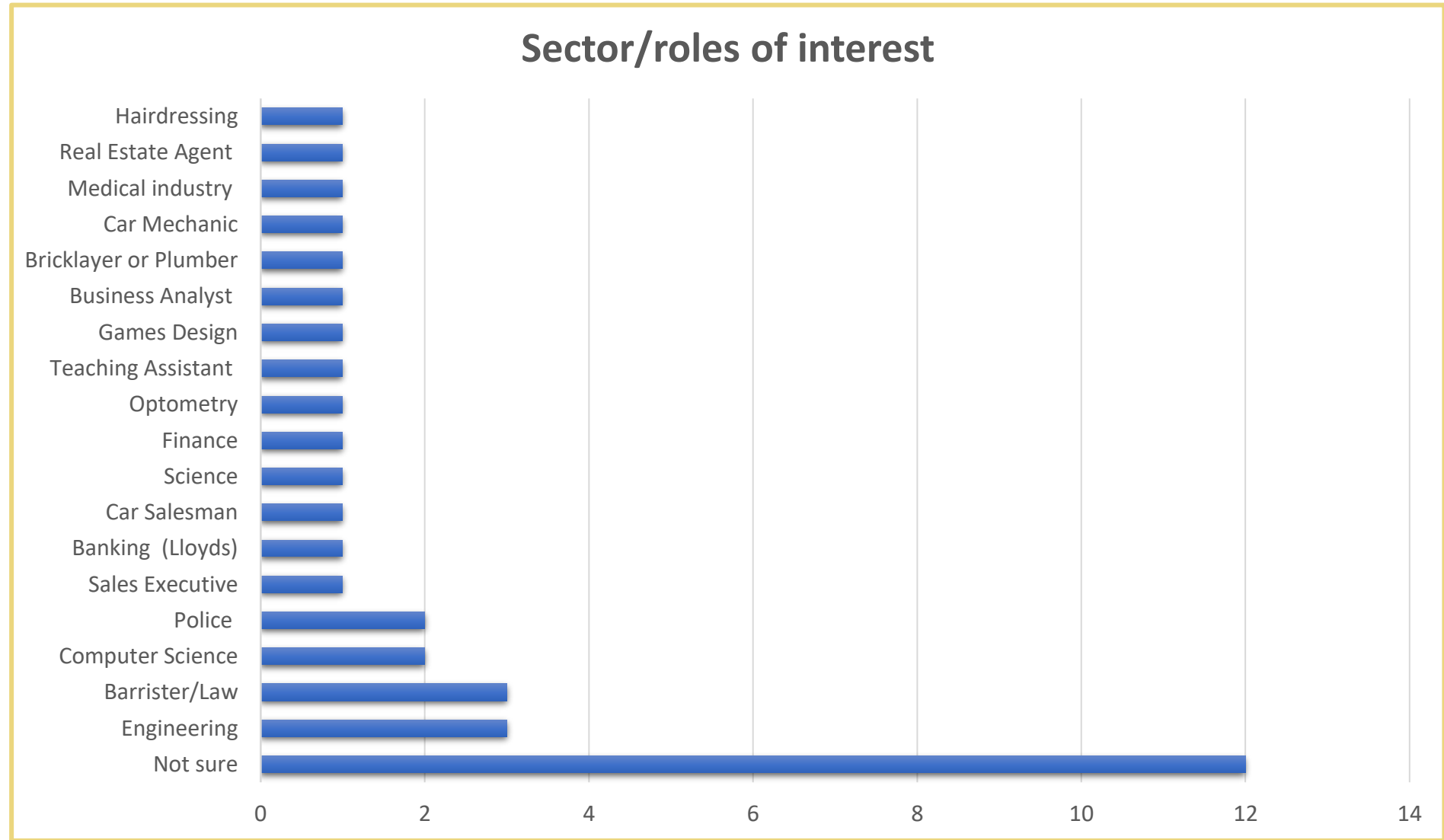
Would you consider doing an apprenticeship following the project?



■ Yes ■ No ■ Maybe

Areas of interest

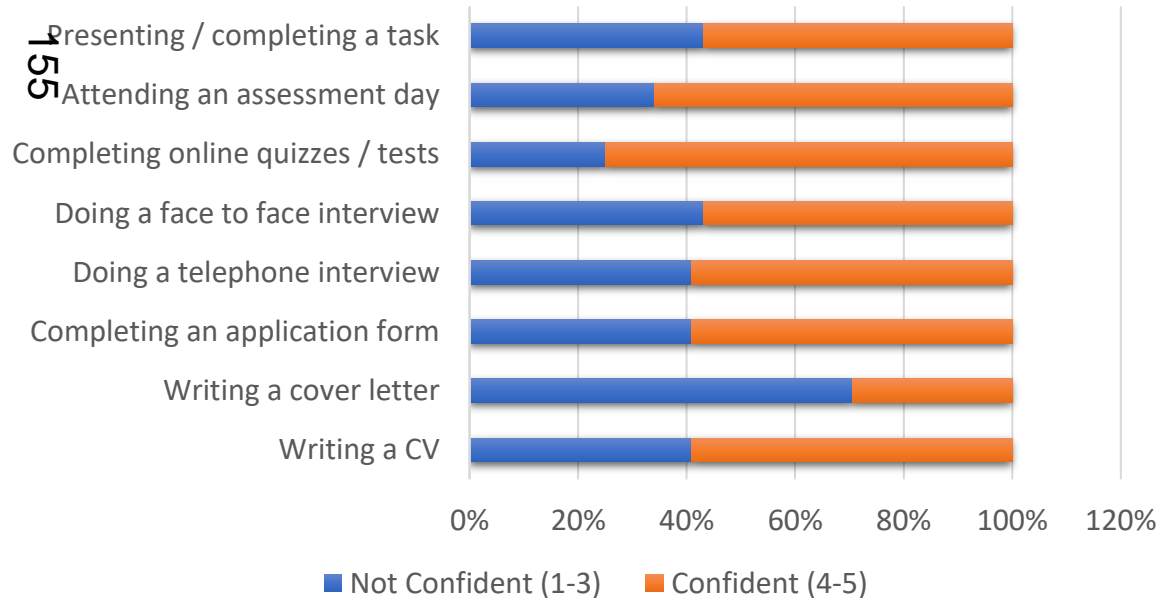
154



Confidence in apprenticeship applications

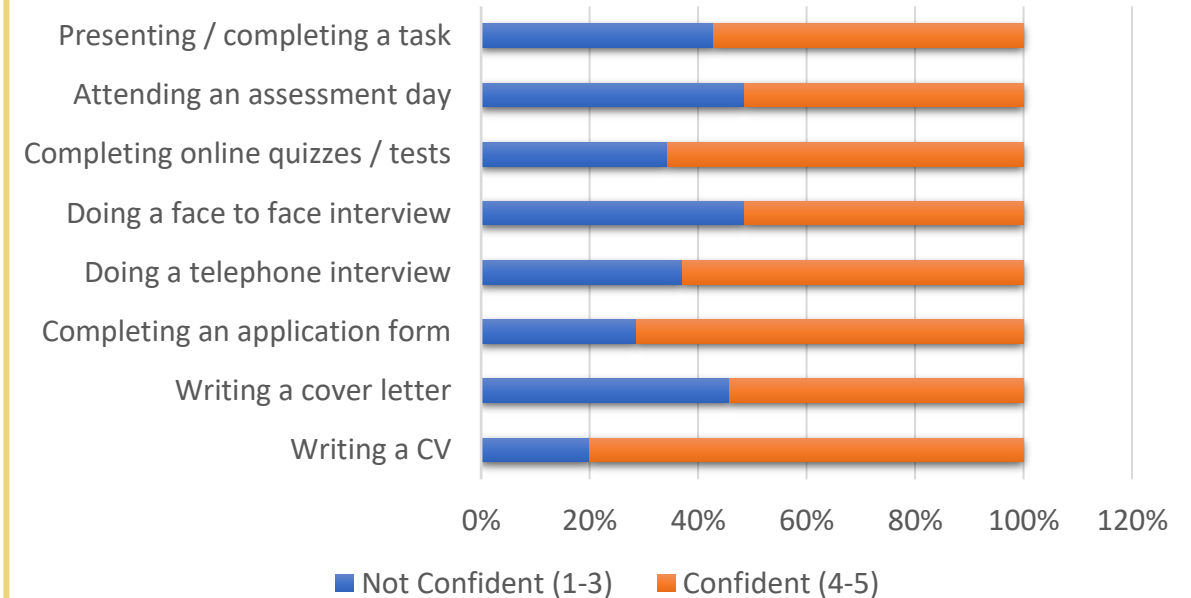
Pre-project survey

Confidence in application stages



Post-project survey

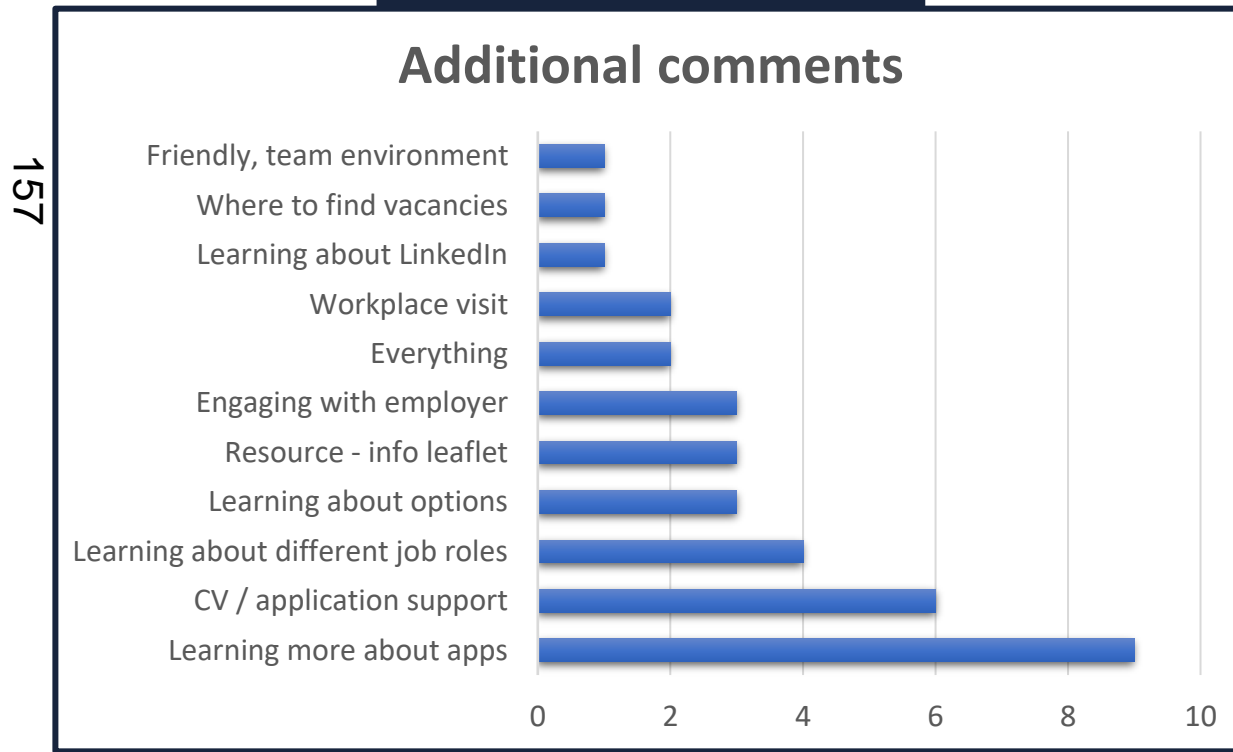
Confidence in application stages



Student feedback

Student feedback

Best parts of the project



Even better if

Bingley Grammar

2 x students from Bingley commented on the first session being **too heavily focussed on kitchens** and thus, was less engaging. The second session was preferred where it supported students to prepare for applications and interviews.

"I would have liked to hear about some other companies as well."

"I would have liked to find out more about where to find apprenticeships and applying."

Student feedback

“Thank you, it was very helpful”
Bingley Grammar student

“The sessions had helpful information and the lady was very nice”
Bingley Grammar student

“I enjoyed this project”
Leeds City College student

“I would like an offer from you guys to do apprenticeship in your program if you are by any chance looking for an apprentice”
Leeds City College student

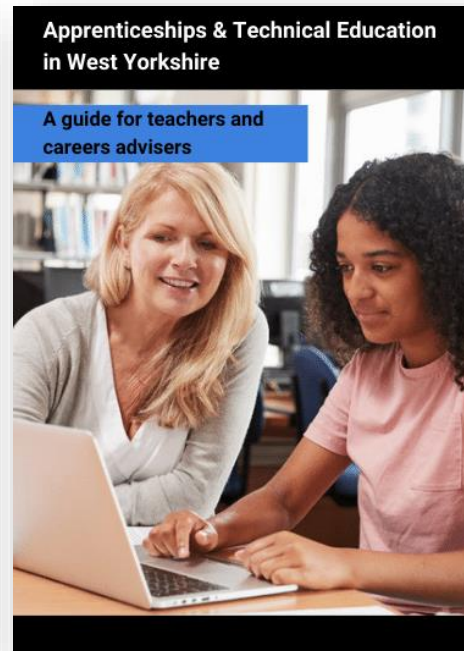
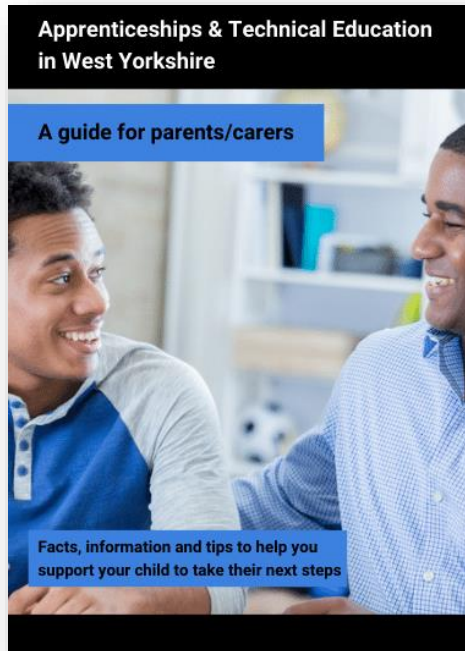
“I really enjoyed doing this apprenticeships, it was very factual to my information”
Ossett Academy student

158

Project assets

ATEP Guides

160



The guides will be available on [FutureGoals.co.uk](https://www.futuregoals.co.uk) and will be regularly updated.

Project films

161



Employer film

View here:

<https://vimeo.com/user/94832320/folder/16974505>

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Report to:	Employment and Skills Committee
Date:	19 October 2023
Subject:	Employment Support
Director:	Felix Kumi-Ampofo, Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills, and Culture
Author:	Josh Rickayzen, Policy Officer Anna Myers, Employment Support Manager

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1. To update members on the ongoing work related to the co-development of the Employment Support Blueprint.
- 1.2. To update members on the progress of partnership work being undertaken to agree a set of design principles for 'Youth Hub' delivery across West Yorkshire as a template for best practice for Employment Support for young people searching for work, building on national, regional and local partner offers and ensuring that there is flexibility to respond to local need.
- 1.3. To inform members of the change request related to the local delivery of Employment West Yorkshire.

2. Information

Evidence Base (see appendix 1 for further detail)

- 2.1 Labour market conditions in West Yorkshire are showing signs of softening, reflecting the national position and the impact of interest rate rises and slow growth in the economy. There are some distinct patterns in local authority areas.
- Employment growth has levelled-off in recent months, whilst the average level of pay is starting to decline.
 - The claimant count has been growing since late 2022, albeit at a modest rate, with young people worst-affected.
 - The employment rate for young people is currently falling and inactivity is rising for the group, partly due to ill-health
 - However, recruitment demand reflected in online job postings currently remains robust.
- 2.2 The region also faces structural challenges arising out of high levels of economic inactivity, particularly for groups who are disadvantaged in the labour market. These issues were examined in the employment support paper prepared for the July meeting of the Committee.
- Specific groups of young people face significant levels of disadvantage when attempting to access the labour market, including care leavers, young offenders and disabled young people.
 - Targeted and bespoke provision is required to meet the needs of groups that face disadvantage within the labour market, through an enhanced, place-based employment support system.

Employment Support Blueprint

- 2.3 As previously reported to the Committee, an employment support blueprint is being co-developed by the Combined and Local Authorities to set out how the system could work better at a regional and local level for local residents and the regional economy, building on the principles of the [LGA's Work Local model](#). The work is being overseen by a Project Board made up of multi-disciplinary teams from the Combined and Local Authorities with the aim to prepare for future devolution opportunities and respond to government policy, programme interventions in the meantime. Inclusion of local Employment and Skills Boards in the co-development of the Blueprint and to embed Work Local principles, inviting Chairs of local Employment and Skills Boards to West Yorkshire's Employment and Skills Committee could be considered.
- 2.4 Work continues to be undertaken in co-developing the West Yorkshire Employment Support Blueprint and members of the Committee will be invited to indicate their preference for a date to join a private workshop to support its design and development.

2.5 Alongside this, a number of further opportunities to have been identified to raise the profile of the work of the work taking place in West Yorkshire on the Employment Support Blueprint. These include:

- Working with the *Institute of Employment Studies* to host an evidence session for their *Commission on the Future of Employment Support*. This session will focus on discussing what a better system for Employment Support would look like.
- Hosting an evidence session in November in West Yorkshire with Policy Connect, as part of their *Skills 2030* inquiry, focussed on the theme of *Devolution & Skills Policy*, which will provide further opportunity to explore the intersection of skills, employment and devolution with gathered experts.
- Facilitating a visit to a local Youth Hub by the Mayor of West Yorkshire, in order to understand how national, regional and local multi-agency partner provision works at its best.
- Building relationships with the Employment Related Services Association and exploring how their Youth Employment Forum can provide opportunity to showcase the approach to Youth Hub delivery in West Yorkshire.

Youth Hubs – Current Delivery

2.6 ‘Youth Hubs’ as a model have been in existence for some time. During the pandemic, DWP provided funding to areas where there was an absence of provision at the national level. The model is not ‘owned’ or driven by any government department or agency.

The DWP’s Youth Offer is often routed through and located in ‘Youth Hubs’. The Youth Offer seeks to provide targeted and bespoke employment support to those aged 16-24, who are currently in receipt of Universal Credit (UC). A recent expansion of eligibility for this service from 25th September means that those considered economically inactive (and not in receipt of UC) can now receive support through the Youth Offer.

2.7 Each strand of the Youth Offer is distinct in that the service is designed around level of need of the claimant and an assessment of the individual’s distance from the labour market. There are 3 key strands to the Youth Offer:

Youth Employment Programme

13 weeks of support and provision, delivered through work coaches at a Jobcentre. The aim is to help individuals prepare for work, and can include SWAPs, work experience and mentoring circles.

Youth Hub Offer

DWP policy intent is that, in partnership with key stakeholders, a holistic service is delivered to claimants aged up to 24. DWP Youth Hub attendees receive up to 6 months support from a Work Coach, based at an offsite location that is distinct from a Jobcentre. Support from Work Coaches includes CV development and interview preparation, alongside promoting and supporting claimants to access other services that remove barriers into work. Youth Hubs operate on a pure partnership model. Partners are invited to co-locate to offer services (e.g. mental health support, social housing/welfare advice) that address wellbeing needs that may present barriers to employment. Youth Hubs are delivered within each Local Authority area in West Yorkshire but models differ.

Youth Employability Coaches

Intensive support for claimants with extensive barriers to work, who are assessed as being up to 12 months away from work. Youth Employability Coaches may be based in job centres, outreach locations or youth hubs. Suitable locations are determined according to customer need.

- 2.8 Currently the delivery of Youth Hubs differs across West Yorkshire, with regards to the physical location of the hubs, the additional services provided for customers alongside employment support provision, and the partners co-located within the Hubs. Some Youth Hubs in West Yorkshire have been led by DWP's Youth Offer and follow the model described above, whilst others vary.
- 2.9 Evaluation of Youth Hubs has identified potential to have improved outcomes for young people and their labour market status. The Committee has previously identified youth employment as an area of priority and in partnership with DWP, Police and Crime, Local Authorities and others, an exercise to map the current offer in West Yorkshire been undertaken to inform a set of co-developed design principles for Youth Hub commissioning, and local delivery across West Yorkshire. The principles are based on existing good practice from Youth Hubs both within the region and from further afield and are predicated on LGA Work Local principles to allow for adaptability of the delivery model in Local Authority areas in order to meet place-based need whilst improving regional coordination of commissioning and wider agency services and partnerships.

Youth Hubs – UKSPF

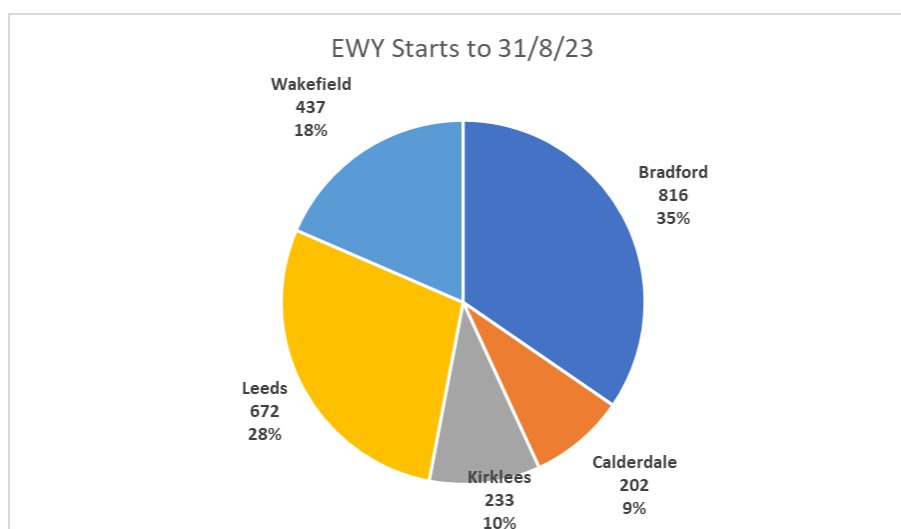
- 2.10 As discussed at July's committee, £2m has been allocated to an open call developed with Local Authorities through UKSPF, to appoint an organisation to provide coordination of youth hub services complementary to targeted youth unemployment activity and identifies best practice to inform future youth employment activity.

Work & Health

- 2.11 As discussed previously, long-term health conditions and disability – across all age groups – are a key contributor to economic activity in the region. There are a number of programmes designed to support those experiencing long-term sickness with employability related activity. These include:
- **Universal Support** – a package of support through DWP/JCP provision, designed to support claimants to overcome complex barriers to work through matching them with employers and providing wraparound in-work support.
 - **Local Supported Employment** – grant funding provided by DWP for local councils, to help adults with learning disabilities to move into competitive employment.
 - **Work & Health** – tailored support to meet individual needs of those with long-term health conditions/disabilities. Funding for this programme is due to end in 2024.
- 2.12 To ensure that West Yorkshire is well placed to maximise any future opportunities for its residents through national funding rounds and pilots, a Work and Health Partnership working group has been established, bringing together Local Authority public health leads, Local Authority skills officers, and Combined Authority officers across employment, skills and health. The aims of the group are to:
- define current challenges facing West Yorkshire re health and work inc key drivers and any insight we collectively hold from communities
 - key areas for intervention across the spectrum of whole population and efforts to target intervention
 - describe learning from best practice
 - map the existing work across the West Yorkshire partnership (WYCA/LAs/ICB/DWP)
 - set out next steps and areas of further development
- 2.13 An open call to the maximum value of £4m will be available through UKSPF Pillar 3 to fund interventions to support individuals or households with multiple health related challenges to address inequalities and remove barriers to employment.
- 2.14 A further open call for a community grants programme will also be available through UKSPF to support activities delivered by appropriate third sector organisations, and provide a balanced regional portfolio and specialist community based provision for individuals and communities with multiple and complex barriers to engage with work and other activities.

Current Delivery; Employment West Yorkshire – Delivery and Change Request

- 2.15 Employment West Yorkshire is a universal regionally co-ordinated employment support programme delivered by the five West Yorkshire local authorities. Between April 2023 and March 2025, the programme will support 7,700 people of all ages. Employment West Yorkshire provides support, advice and guidance to move customers closer to the labour market/into new employment, and supports the acquisition of skills to allow for progression (both towards work and in work).
- 2.16 In the first five months of delivery Employment West Yorkshire (EWY) has engaged 2,360 individuals across the region. Overall engagement performance is above expected delivery target to date and demonstrates the programme’s ability to reach a diverse range of individuals from the region’s local communities. Below is a breakdown of the number of starts in each Local Authority area:



- 2.17 Of programme starts so far:
- 49% of participants are female (vs 50% target)
 - 23% identify as disabled (vs 23% target)
 - 55% are from an ethnic minority background (vs 22% target)
 - 61% of participants live in the two most deprived neighbourhoods within West Yorkshire, IMD 1 and 2 (vs 40% target)
 - 38% of all participants are aged 15-24; 45% are aged 25-49 and 17% are aged 50 and over.

- 55% of participants are defined as socially excluded or disadvantaged
- 2.18 As an illustrative example of the work being undertaken: the Wakefield EWY programme recently supported an individual – who had been unemployed for 15 years – to successfully gain employment. The individual came from a household where other family members were unable to work due to ill health and had accrued large household debts. Through an initial meeting with an Employment Adviser, the individual was helped to access debt support from Money Smart, alongside employment support and advice. The Employment Adviser supported the individual to create a CV, search and apply for vacancies, and supported the individual with interview practice and confidence building activities. As a result of the support, the individual successfully secured employment. The positive experience of the individual has now also led another family member to seek support through EWY provision.
- 2.19 The £12 million programme is currently fully funded through devolved gainshare. For the 2024-25 financial year (year two of delivery), the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Local Investment Plan - approved by government - sets out the intention to use Pillar 3 UKSPF to part-fund delivery of Employment West Yorkshire.
- 2.20 An allocation of £4m from UKSPF Pillar 3; People and Skills has been agreed, in principle, to part-fund Employment West Yorkshire delivery for 2024-25. A change request regarding this allocation has been submitted via the Combined Authority's Assurance Framework to change the funding source for the programme from Gainshare only to a split of Gainshare and UKSPF. It is expected to go to Combined Authority Board for approval on 7th December 2023. This change of funding source will allow £4m gainshare funding to be allocated to other regional priorities.
- 2.21 Delivery funded by UKSPF will adopt interventions, outputs and outcomes outlined by Government in the UKSPF guidance. Funding and compliance requirements, reporting and claims processes will also follow these guidelines. Grant funding agreements will be varied accordingly with local authority delivery partners. The Gainshare allocation will ensure the EWY programme can continue to support a diverse range of individuals and is not limited to UKSPF interventions/outputs/outcomes. UKSPF Pillar 3 funding must be spent in the 2024-25 financial year.
- 2.22 To complement the Combined Authorities programmes, a regional digital inclusion initiative will commence in the new year. The programme will be coordinated centrally by the CA and delivered in partnership with the Local Authorities who will appoint a Digital Inclusion Officer in each area. The programme is based on an existing successful model (100% Digital Leeds) with flexibility for local delivery. It aims to increase the numbers of digitally enabled residents in West Yorkshire, improve community organisations' resilience and ability to deliver digital inclusion, ensure that poverty is no longer a barrier preventing individuals from accessing the internet, and raise awareness of the importance and benefits of digital inclusion in an increasingly digital society.

2.23 The programme will focus on boosting the capacity of community organisations to deliver digital inclusion, equitably and within a flexible model appropriate to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion needs of each area. Therefore, staff and volunteers within organisations across West Yorkshire will be enabled to support digitally excluded residents to, for example, help manage their money, health, housing, leisure and mental wellbeing.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1. There are no climate emergency implications directly arising from this report.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1. There are no inclusive growth implications directly arising from this report.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1. This report outlines policy development work to ensure that those most disadvantaged in the labour market are supported towards and into work, including young people.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1. There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1. No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

10.1. That members note the current figures on Youth Employment in the region and recognise the proposals to increase support for young people to find sustained and meaningful employment.

10.2. That members note the work of the partnership between LA, CA & DWP colleagues in establishing a set of design principles for Youth Hub provision across West Yorkshire, which in turn will help for better support of young people into employment within the region.

10.3 That committee members note the submission of a change request to use an allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to fund the second year of delivery of Employment West Yorkshire, to allow the programme to continue in providing vital employment support across Local Authority areas.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 summarises the latest economic data related to this report.

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Item 8 Employment Support – Evidence Deep Dive

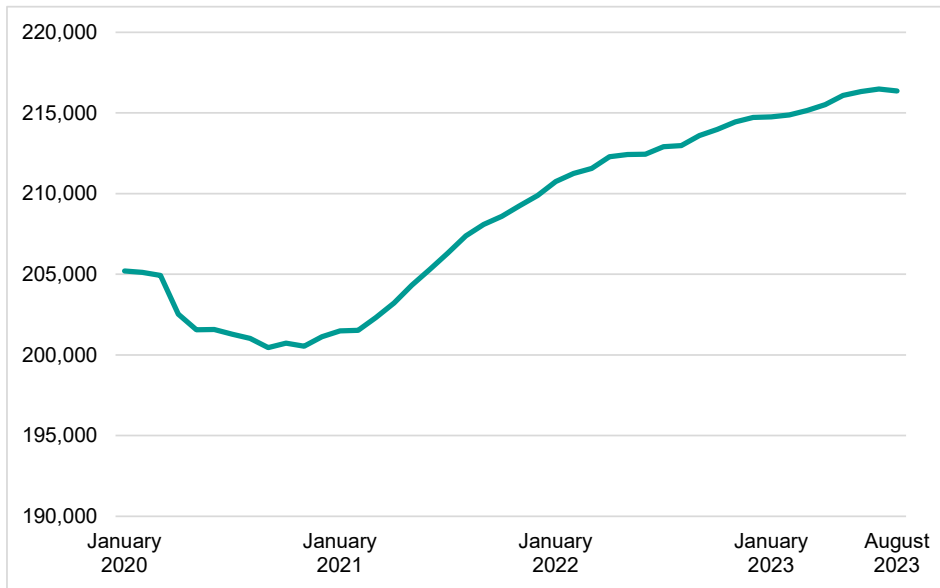
Report to:	Employment & Skills Committee
Date:	19 October 2023
Subject:	Employment Support
Director:	Felix Kumi-Ampofo, Director Inclusive Economy, Skills & Culture
Author:	Josh Rickayzen & Peter Glover

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT EVIDENCE DEEP DIVE

Labour market conditions in West Yorkshire are showing signs of softening, reflecting the national position and the impact of interest rate rises and slow growth in the economy. Employment growth has levelled-off in recent months, whilst the average level of pay is starting to decline. The claimant count has been growing since late 2022, albeit at a modest rate. The region also faces structural challenges arising out of high levels of economic inactivity, particularly for groups who are disadvantaged in the labour market. These issues were examined in the employment support [paper](#) prepared for the July meeting of the Committee

Real-time information on the count of payrolled employees in West Yorkshire shows that the level of employment in the region has remained largely unchanged between April and August 2023, following a period of sustained growth from early 2021 onwards.

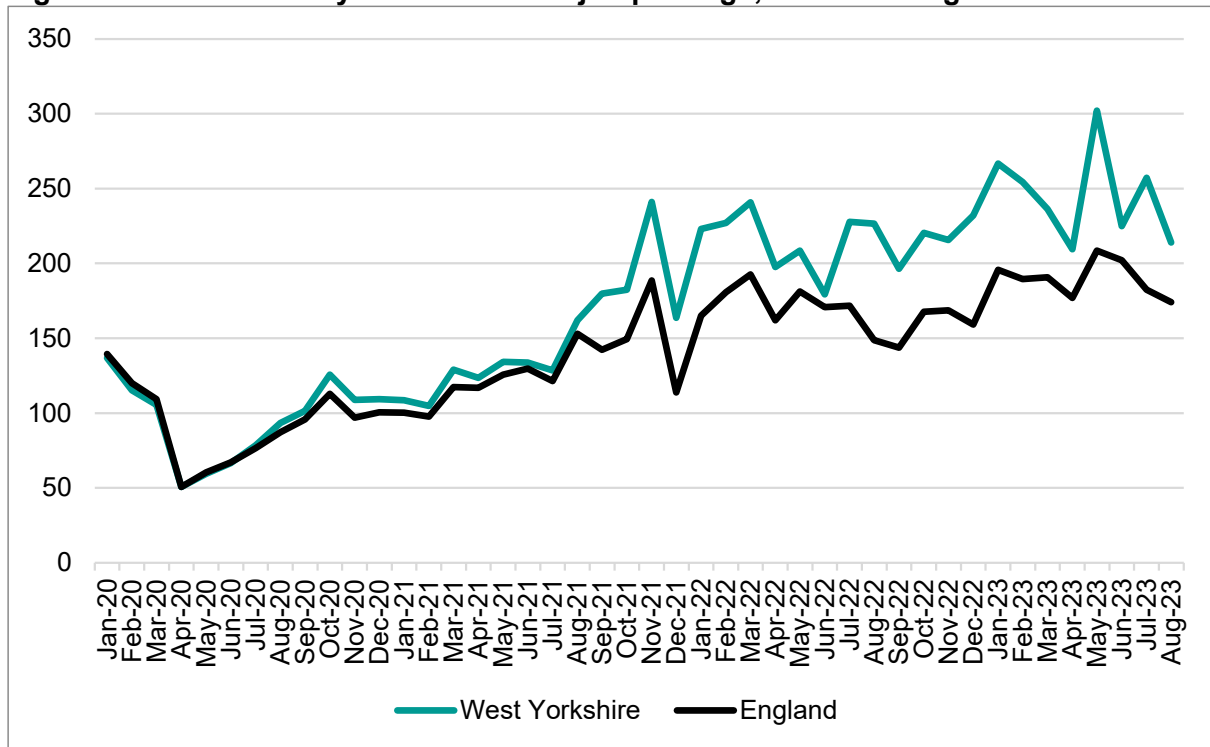
Figure: Count of payroll employees from PAYE Real-time information (seasonally adjusted)



Source: HMRC

Recruitment demand in West Yorkshire has been stronger than nationally since the pandemic. The monthly volume of online job postings in West Yorkshire in August 2023 was 114% higher than the average for 2019, whereas the equivalent national growth figure was only 74%. The monthly count of postings, although volatile, has remained at elevated levels throughout 2023. There is no clear evidence of decline at this stage – the average monthly count of postings in the 3 months to August 2023 was 10% higher than the same period in 2022.

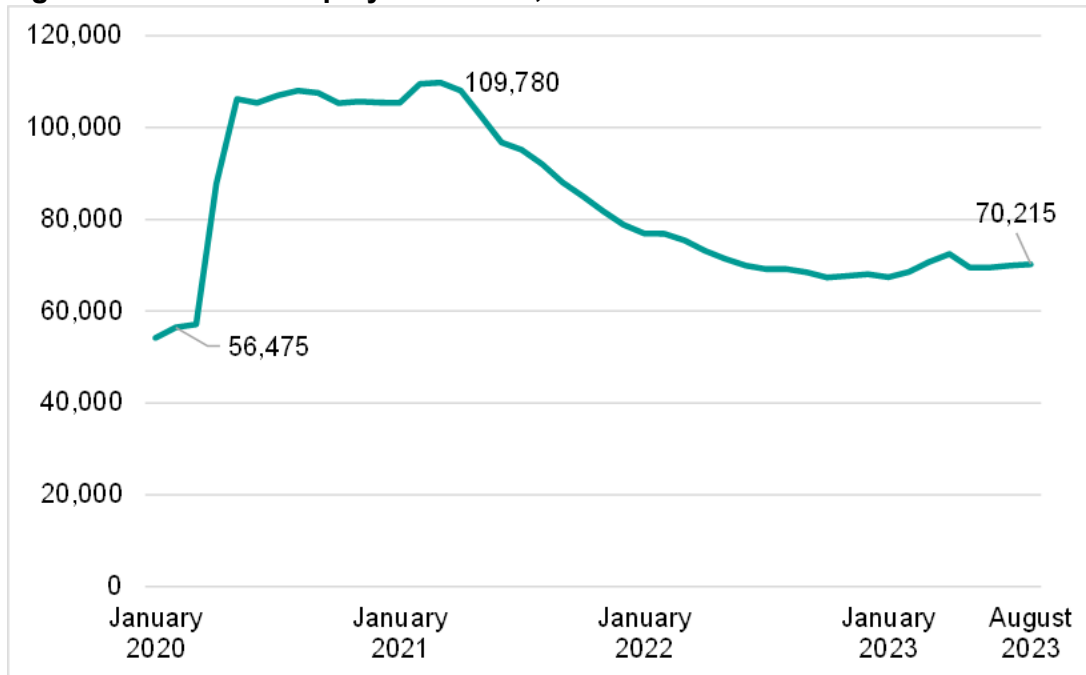
Figure: Trend in monthly count of online job postings; Index: average of 2019=100



Source: Lightcast

The claimant count – the official count of people who are claiming benefits primarily because they are unemployed - has been on an upward trend in West Yorkshire and nationally since October 2022. This growth has been modest: West Yorkshire’s count has grown by 4% or around 2,900 during the period from October 2022 to August 2023. This follows a long period of steady decline starting in early 2021 coinciding with the lifting of lockdown restrictions. The level of claimant unemployment in West Yorkshire is now (as of August 2023) 70,215, 24% higher than pre-pandemic level (February 2020). The claimant rate (claimant count as a percentage of the working age population) is higher in West Yorkshire than nationally, at 4.7% versus 3.8%. At local authority level the rate ranges from 3.5% in Wakefield to 6.5% in Bradford.

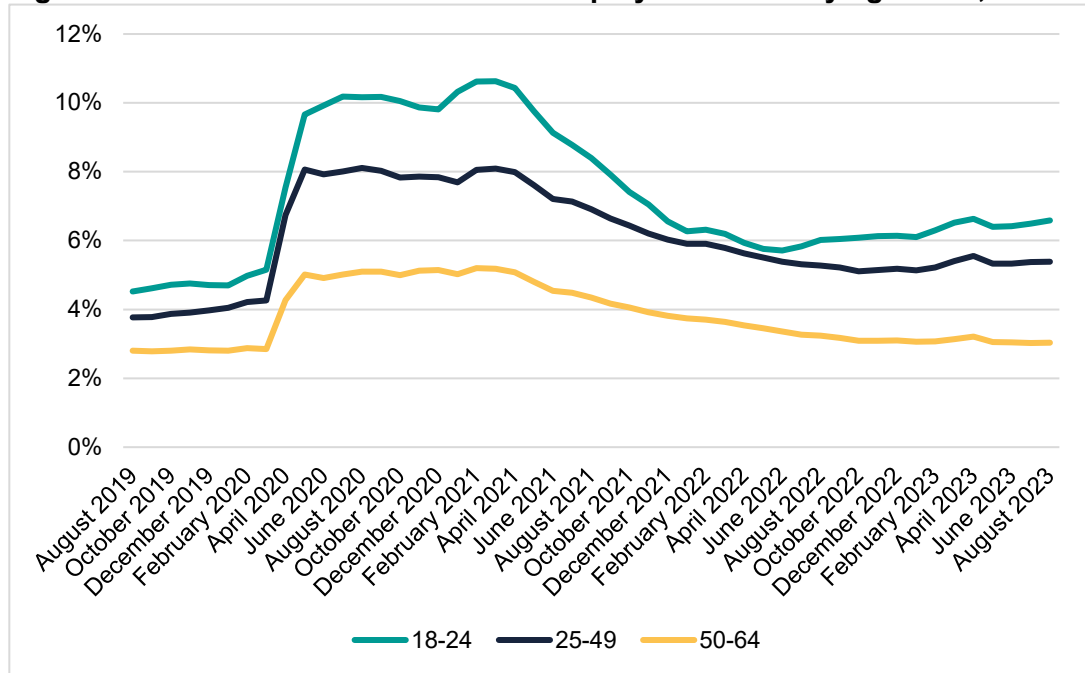
Figure: Claimant unemployment trend, West Yorkshire



Source: NOMIS

According to the latest figures for West Yorkshire, young people aged 16-24 account for 14,300 claimants, around 20% of the total, with 60% being people aged 25-49 and 19% people aged 50-64. Official claimant rates by age are not published but the following chart shows claimants expressed as a proportion of the population in each age band. It indicates that the claimant rate for young people aged 18-24 (16-17 year olds are excluded from the rate calculations because they are typically not eligible for the relevant benefits) started to grow in the summer of 2022, in advance of the 25-49 age group. The estimated rate for 18-24 year olds is the highest of the broad age groups at 6.6%, compared with an overall rate for people aged 16+ of 3.8%.

Figure: Trend in estimated claimant unemployment rates by age band, West Yorkshire



Source: NOMIS

Recent labour market statistics indicate that employment rates amongst young people continue to fall. Economic activity also continues to rise amongst younger age groups. This may, in part, be attributable to instances of ill-health, with long-term sickness rising across all age groups.

[Analysis](#) by the Resolution Foundation finds that economic inactivity due to ill health among 18-24 year-olds has nearly doubled nationally over the past decade, and is heavily concentrated among those with low levels of skills, with four-in-five young people who are too ill to work having only qualifications at GCSE-level or below. Young people in areas dominated by small towns and villages are more likely to be workless due to ill health than those living in large cities. Around 2.5% of young people in West Yorkshire are not working due to ill health, slightly below the national average of 2.9%.

Specific groups of young people face significant levels of disadvantage when attempting to access the labour market. 41% of care leavers nationally aged between 19-21 are not in education, employment or training, and are likely to experience barriers related to supported accommodation costs that may disincentivise regular work. 31.2% of Youth Offenders reoffended within one year of caution, conviction or release. The national employment rate gap for disabled people aged 18-24 sits at almost 20%. Sustained and well-paid employment plays a key role in encouraging social mobility, but barriers to accessing the labour market are significant and often leave individuals requiring additional support in conjunction with employment-related provision.

Almost all Jobcentre Plus districts across West Yorkshire have experienced an increase in Intensive Work Search (IWS) caseloads amongst the 18-24 age bracket, contributing to an overall rise in claimant count. Those designated as being within the IWS are expected to find and move into work as soon as possible.

Figures show that there are around 3,500 young people in West Yorkshire that are not in education, employment or training (NEET), or whose labour market status would be considered 'unknown'. There is a higher prevalence of NEETs in West Yorkshire (6.2% of total 16-17 year old cohort) than nationally (5.2%). 2022/23 saw an increase (for the second successive year) in the number and proportion of young NEETs/not-knowns in West Yorkshire, with an increase of 14%.

Targeted and bespoke provision is required to meet the needs of groups that face disadvantage within the labour market. An enhanced employment support system can provide tailored solutions that take a place-based approach to removing barriers that individuals may face to accessing and retaining employment. The West Yorkshire Employment Support Blueprint will outline how further devolved powers and funding can allow for an employment support ecosystem that best supports our residents and businesses.

Report to:	Employment and Skills Committee
Date:	19 October 2023
Subject:	Skills Support for Business
Director:	Felix Kumi-Ampofo, Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills, and Culture
Author:	Michelle Hunter, Programme Development Lead for Employment and Skills

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1. To share the Mayor's Green Jobs Taskforce final report and seek the Committee's endorsement for the report and its recommendations for action
- 1.2. To provide an update and share final reporting to the Committee on the Skills for Growth programme
- 1.3. To update the Committee and seek members' views on new and developing skills support for businesses, and opportunities for co-development
- 1.4. The report also provides an update on Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and Fair Work Charter.

2. Information

Context

- 2.1 The latest available data from Employer Skills Survey 2022 shows that although the value of employer investment in training is substantial, the incidence of training among West Yorkshire employers has fallen since 2019 and is below the national average. At the same time employers face an increased prevalence of skill shortage vacancies

(characterised by a lack of job applicants with the required skills) particularly in sectors like Construction. The proportion of employers affected by skills gaps, where existing staff lack full proficiency, has also grown, as has the number of staff affected by gaps. Further detail of this analysis is provided in the appendix to this paper.

Green Jobs Taskforce

- 2.2 The Combined Authority has declared a climate emergency and has set an ambitious target for the region to be net-zero carbon by 2038, with significant progress by 2030. There is recognition that achieving the target will unlock significant economic benefits such as good, green jobs (71,000 potential jobs across West Yorkshire according to the LGA).
- 2.3 In August 2021, Mayor Tracy Brabin announced early action to drive the structural changes required to transition to a net zero carbon economy and deliver inclusive, sustainable growth with the creation of a Green Jobs Taskforce. Key partners from business, education and training and the third and public sectors worked together to position the region as a leader and set out recommendations, underpinned by evidence and actions, to deliver the skills and jobs needed to address the climate emergency and achieve the mayoral pledge to create 1,000 well-paid (real living wage), green jobs for young people (aged 18-30).
- 2.4 In [January](#), the Employment and Skills Committee endorsed and adopted the recommendations of the Green Jobs Taskforce. At the [March meeting](#), the Committee received a wider progress report from the Green Jobs Taskforce, including considering findings of the commissioned research and endorsing the seven recommendations revolving around individuals, education and training providers and businesses. This was followed by task and finish group meetings with committee members and a wide range of stakeholders to develop a corresponding action plan. A summary timeline of Taskforce activity can be seen below:



2.5 In line with the Combined Authority’s Employment & Skills Framework, which identified net-zero carbon as a cross cutting theme and the West Yorkshire Investment Plan, delivering on the recommendations and actions outlined in the Green Jobs Taskforce Report will build expertise, capacity and capability across the region’s current and future workforce to ensure it is able to service the transition to a sustainable, net-zero carbon and climate resilient economy.

2.6 The work of the Taskforce identified the following key challenges for individuals, education and training providers and businesses:

- Businesses face challenges to decarbonise, including a lack of skills and knowledge within their existing workforce. WPI Economics’ research uncovered that West Yorkshire has 98,275 jobs in carbon intensive sectors (9.2% of the region’s employment) that will fall substantially due to the transition, so there needs to be a particular focus on those that stand to lose most as a result of the shifting economy. Conversely, there are currently just over 73,000 jobs in the region estimated to be green. Projections show that doubling of employment is expected in the next decade

under central scenarios, which assumes that necessary progress is made towards the achievement of net zero.

- Further and higher education and private training providers face challenges around capital investment in facilities and equipment needed to deliver green skills training and the attraction and retention of teaching talent to fundamentally change their curricula and course offer.
- Barriers to the update of green skills on an individual level include a lack of awareness and understanding about green skills, career options and pathways.

- 2.7 The Green Jobs Taskforce report created a set of ambitious recommendations and identifies policy interventions for action to support businesses, individuals, educators and to maximise opportunities and minimise identified challenges of our future green economy.
- 2.8 Key to achieving the Taskforce's recommendations will be a package of Digital Skills, Green Skills and Skills Support for Businesses interventions approved by the Combined Authority in June 2023 to support:
- Individuals – to access green careers advice and training options and job information, opportunities, and pathways.
 - Educators - support for the Further Education sector to build capacity and respond to the green skills demand.
 - Businesses - support for businesses to decarbonise via upskilling and reskilling.
- 2.9 The final report of the Green Jobs Taskforce can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.10 To celebrate the success of the Taskforce, Baroness Blake and the Mayor, Tracy Brabin, hosted a Green Skills Revolution Dinner (sponsored by SSE) at the House of Lords on Thursday 14th September. Attendees included people from the third sector, education, and private sector and an Apprentice who is training to become a Transport Planner through Leeds College of Building and is employed by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- 2.11 A local celebratory event is being planned to launch the report and showcase the work of the Taskforce. West Yorkshire is the first region in the UK to create a Taskforce prioritising green jobs, skills, and training, enabling stakeholders to identify their role and to work in partnership and collaboration to achieve our ambitions for a net-zero economy.
- 2.12 The Combined Authority is committed to continuing the strong relationships that have been built through the Taskforce to work in partnership to co-design, implement and deliver new offers to support business co-investment in skills.

Skills for Growth

- 2.13 The part ESF supported Skills for Growth programme delivery period ended on 31 August 2023. The programme has been highly successful and achieved all targets despite underspending on marketing.

An outline of the targets can be found below:

KPI	Target	Actual (September 2023)
Businesses Supported CO23	351	533
Projects Completed R9	281	284
Participants 01	1550	3296

The achievements of the programme show the level of demand from businesses for a skills advisory service. Final projects are being audited and signatures collected, the final figures will be available shortly. The team are currently working with an external evaluator 'Thrive Economics' to evaluate the success of the programme. This will be presented to the committee in the new year.

Digital and green skills and Skills Support for Businesses

- 2.14 In June, the Combined Authority approved a £6.6m programme of interventions to support green and digital skills and skills support for businesses. This resource will be crucial to realise the ambitions of the Green Jobs Taskforce.
- 2.15 Interventions will be delivered between September 2023 and March 2026. This programme enhances core activity where funding was due to come to an end and allows the Combined Authority to commence delivery of new outcomes and pilot new approaches in line with its strategic priorities. In summary the support package includes:

Advisory Service – The team (made up of 8 advisers and a project lead) that delivered the Skills for Growth programme will be deployed to deliver the new programme. Fully integrated with wider business support and LA teams, they will provide impartial advice to businesses to support them to create a pipeline of talent through referrals to employment and skills interventions and engagement with education. This new service will build on the successes of the previous programme, and discussions are underway with local authorities and other key partners to ensure complimentary with local structures and ways of working. The new interventions have an overall target to reach 1,000 businesses between September 2023 and 2026.

Employer Skills co-investment – £1.5m has been allocated to support green jobs and the skills required for digital transformation and carbon reduction. This project will be co-designed and developed over the coming months in collaboration with businesses and other key partners.

Mayoral Graduate Pilot – extensive consultation was undertaken with stakeholders as part of the business case. The programme will be commissioned over the coming months with a view to recruiting in May and Oct 2024.

Consultation and Next Steps

- 2.16 The Mayor of West Yorkshire is keen to hear from businesses and intermediaries about their skills challenges, and how to encourage co-investment in skills. The Mayor will convene key partners over the coming months to shape the future offer and route to market.

Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs)

- 2.17 Local Skills Improvement Plans are a process that brings together the employer voice to address the significant economic changes anticipated over the next years so that where possible the skills system can adapt and align with employers' needs.
- 2.18 It is widely recognised that coordinating an impartial employer voice is paramount to develop a robust and growing labour market with a good support of fair work, the levers and funding models that bind the skills system do not always allow a fully regional and responsive approach. In spite of this, there have been some good examples through devolved funding where this has happened through adult skills commissioning.
- 2.19 The West Yorkshire LSIP has been led by West and North Yorkshire Chambers and has now been published and is available [LSIP West Yorkshire 2023.pdf \(wnychamber.co.uk\)](https://www.wnychamber.co.uk/LSIP_West_Yorkshire_2023.pdf)
- 2.20 West Yorkshire Combined Authority and its partners are well placed to take forward many of the recommendations in the action plan and through the work of this Committee has developed a pipeline of projects that will ensure the effective delivery of the ambitions in the plan for example the new Skills Support for Employers programme will provide impartial skills advice to businesses.

Fair Work Charter

- 2.21 A key shared regional ambition is to ensure a fair and just economy. This includes the Mayor's electoral pledge to develop a Fair Work Charter that enables collaboration with - and celebration of - our region's employers to help ensure West Yorkshire's workers receive the greatest possible security, best working conditions, as well as promoting greater employee wellbeing, workforce diversity, social mobility, and so accelerate Inclusive Growth
- 2.22 Over the last two years, extensive development including identifying different options for development of the charter which the Committee were consulted on, a steering group made up from business representative organisations, Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE), NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), Yorkshire Universities and key

national stakeholders, employee / union representation (TUC and GMB) and chaired by the LEP Board's former Diversity Champion, Kate Hainsworth oversaw the development, consultation analysis of responses, and final Charter.

- 2.23 The Fair Work Charter is distinctive to West Yorkshire and is a trust-based rather than compliance checking approach which will be quality assured through spot-checking, accessible whistle-blowing protocol and light touch 1:1 annual review.
- 2.24 New programmes such as Skills Support for Employers will be aligned to the Fair Work Charter and address the challenges raised by businesses.
- 2.25 A website hosting best practices will be built over the next few months, and a launch event supported by a marketing campaign will live in Autumn 2023. An early impact assessment of the Charter will be undertaken in 2024.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1. The Green Jobs Taskforce report outlines proposed interventions that will develop the skills and employment needs of individuals and businesses in West Yorkshire to tackle the climate emergency. Recommendations will also support the mayoral pledge to create 1,000 well paid, green jobs in West Yorkshire that will support the ambition to achieve net zero by 2030.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1. The work of the Green Jobs Taskforce and the recommendations are directly linked to inclusive growth in that they contribute to readying West Yorkshire's business base and workforce for a transition towards a net zero economy and delivering on the Mayor's pledge to create 1,000 good, green jobs. Prioritising future ready skills and supporting businesses to decarbonise and benefit from the opportunities the green economy brings are vital to achieving a fair and just transition for the region. The Taskforce engaged with over 300 young people to develop the recommendations.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1. The final report by the Green Jobs Task Force has a specific recommendation and actions addressing specific challenges around EDI. An EqIA Stage I and II have been prepared as part of the project.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1. There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1. Small, medium and large business organisations, Local Authority senior officers, independent training providers, colleges and universities and young people were involved in the development of the Green Jobs Taskforce report.

10. Recommendations

10.1. Members of the Committee are asked to endorse and adopt the final report of the Green Jobs Taskforce.

10.2. Members are asked to note the final report from Skills for Growth programme, development of the Fair Work Charter and published West Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan

11. Background Documents

Employment & Skills Committee 23 January 2023:

- [Item 9 - Employment and Skills Development and Future Delivery.pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

Employment & Skills Committee 23 March 2023:

- [Item 6 - Green Jobs Taskforce.pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

12. Appendices

[Appendix 1 – Green Jobs Taskforce Report](#)

[Appendix 2 – Evidence Base](#)



Green Jobs Taskforce

Recommendations Report



September 2023



Foreword

Here in West Yorkshire, we have a bold ambition to create a brighter region that works for everyone.

Crucial to realising this vision is ensuring everyone has access to the skills they need to get on, live a healthy, happy and fulfilled life with a good, well-paid job.

We're not afraid to take on challenges – and arguably, the climate emergency is the biggest threat we face today. And this is on top of the worst cost-of-living crisis most of us have ever lived through.

In West Yorkshire, we are working towards creating a net zero carbon region by 2038 at the latest, with significant progress by 2030. This presents us with a unique, once in a generation opportunity to transform our economy and reap the benefits this will bring.

This will require a massive shift in the structure and activity of our economy, and we must ensure we make these changes in a fair way which means everyone in our region benefits.

Prioritising good, green jobs, and investing in skills and training for young people to do them have been some of my key pledges as Mayor for our region. Both will be vital to achieve our commitment to a fairer, more productive and prosperous West Yorkshire.

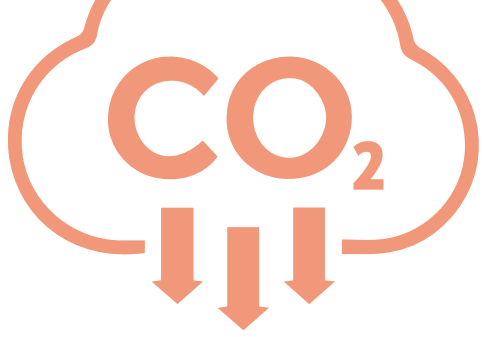
This is why, I created the West Yorkshire Green Jobs Taskforce, bringing together experts from business, education and training, the third and public sector and young people, to identify what actions we can take as a region to deliver the skills and jobs needed to transition to a net zero carbon economy and create 1000, well-paid, green skilled jobs for young people.

This report provides the leadership we need to make the right changes now, backed up by a wealth of evidence to bring together a plan for a brighter future for all.



Mayor Tracy Brabin
Mayor of West Yorkshire
Chair of the Green Jobs Taskforce





Executive summary

Over the coming years and decades, West Yorkshire has the potential to create thousands of good jobs in the zero-carbon economy.

To be able to seize this opportunity, we need to create a future-ready workforce of people with the right skill sets and our education and training provision must quickly pivot to the needs of a zero-carbon economy.

The region has an important role to play in driving the structural changes needed to transition to a net zero carbon economy and deliver inclusive, sustainable growth. It is vital that we support businesses and people in our region to be resilient and innovative while securing the investment needed to deliver long-lasting change.

The Green Jobs Taskforce was created to set out recommendations, supported by research, to deliver the skills and jobs needed to address the climate emergency and deliver the mayoral pledge to create 1,000 well-paid, green jobs for young people.

Our underpinning strategy for this work is the Employment and Skills Framework, focusing on bridging the gap between education and employment, creating a culture of investment in the workforce, driving innovation and productivity through high level skills.

The Taskforce has brought together a diverse range of stakeholders from across the region who have collectively shared their expertise to create solutions and recommendations.

Whilst skills are integral to the delivery of this strategic aim, there are a wide range of forecasts predicting the current and future demand for green skills and jobs. Although varied, each forecast shares the view that there will be tens of thousands of opportunities in West Yorkshire in the next decade with the right policy interventions and support in place.

The recommendations in this report identify the key areas for policy intervention to maximise opportunities and address skills needs now so that young people have the pathways to secure skilled green jobs in the future and so that the existing workforce, in those sectors most at risk from the transition towards a net zero economy, have the ability to upskill or retrain.

Recommendation summary

Inspire and engage individuals

Easy access to green career advice, training options, upskilling, reskilling and jobs.



Support educators

Support the education sector to build capacity in response to green skills demand.



Future-ready businesses

Support businesses to decarbonise, transition their workforce and attract and retain talent.



Who is the Green Jobs Taskforce

Chaired by Mayor Tracy Brabin, the Green Jobs Taskforce brought together experts from business, educators, including further and higher education and private training providers, the third and public sector and young people.

Bringing
061
experts
together

Impact and progress

The Taskforce was convened by Mayor Tracy Brabin in January 2022 and met four times over a period of 12 months.

Members used their time to develop recommendations around key themes:

-  Reviewing relevant labour market intelligence.
-  Commissioning and reviewing research on the employment and skills needs for the green economy.
-  Consulting with additional businesses and stakeholders on the recommendations and their delivery.
-  Discussing how activity can be aligned to existing initiatives across the region.
-  Developing partnerships that would make progress against the ambitions.
-  Supporting the mayoral pledge to create 1,000 well paid green jobs.

The result

The result is an ambitious set of evidence-led recommendations with an emerging delivery plan positioning West Yorkshire as a leader to deliver the skills and jobs needed to address the climate emergency and achieve the mayoral pledge to create 1,000, well-paid, green jobs for young people.



Why green skills are important for West Yorkshire

With radical future changes to the economy come opportunities and new high skilled jobs but also uncertainty and risk, in particular for those carbon-intensive jobs most exposed by decarbonisation.

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West Yorkshire's position

- Meeting the UK Government's net zero target by 2050 could result in over **71,000** jobs in the low carbon and renewable energy economy in West Yorkshire by 2050 (Local Government Association).
- Across West Yorkshire, estimates show up to **235,000** jobs could be affected by the transition to a net zero carbon economy. Around **119,000** workers may be in high demand because of their skills and experience, while **116,000** workers may require upskilling and support.
- Modelling estimates that **680,000** homes will need retrofitting in order to achieve our net zero targets, domestic buildings are responsible for **26%** of West Yorkshire's carbon emissions.



Putting the right policy interventions and support in place now will allow our regional organisations and programmes and in particular our education and training providers, to establish the right training provision to meet future demand and provide confidence to our business base to upskill and re-train staff as part of the transition to a net zero economy.



Green employment

In line with the national UK Green Jobs Taskforce, West Yorkshire Combined Authority uses the government's definition of green employment:



‘Employment in an activity that directly contributes to – or indirectly supports – the achievement of West Yorkshire’s net zero emissions target and other environmental goals, such as nature restoration and mitigation against climate risks.’



Headline findings

Research was commissioned by the Taskforce to gain a clear picture of West Yorkshire's green economy, including its jobs and skills requirements with a forward look to future needs.

73,400 green jobs

There were an estimated **73,400** green jobs in West Yorkshire in 2021. Currently, the sectors with the largest number of green jobs are power, homes and buildings and green professional and research services. This accounts for **7%** of all jobs, higher than the UK average of 6%.

98,275 carbon intensive jobs

West Yorkshire has **98,275** jobs in carbon intensive sectors – (**9.2%** of the region's employment verses 10.5% nationally) – that will need to change substantially due to the transition.

13% of people non-white

More male employees than female

13% of people in employment in West Yorkshire in the relevant roles are non-White versus **11%** nationally. Both Nationally and at a regional level there are more male employees than female in relevant sectors - **23%** in West Yorkshire.

Green employment expected to double

Total employment in the green economy needs to **double** between 2020 and 2030 in order to put West Yorkshire on the path to net zero.

Headline findings

Our Green Skills Youth Programme consulted with young people to gain insight into their perceptions and views on green skills and careers.

Engaged with 214 people

West Yorkshire **Green Skills Youth Programme engaged** with **214** young people from across Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield, aged 4–17 years old.

Increased and advanced understanding

The number of students that rated their understanding of the range of green jobs available across the region as excellent increased more than **ten times** between the start and end of the programme.

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82% increase in interest

82% of the **214** engaged students showed an interest in pursuing a green job after the programme.

Lack of knowledge a barrier

The students involved in this programme perceived green jobs as low paying, hard jobs. The young people participating also acknowledged that a lack of knowledge about the range of green jobs available would be a barrier to applying to one.

Environmental and social impact a focus

According to the participating students, the positive environmental and social impact they could have in these roles would be key aspects to focus on to inspire and attract young people to green jobs, other than monetary incentives alone.

Research themes

Based on the evidence, learnings, and findings from the research as well as wider conversations with stakeholders, the Taskforce has developed a series of practical recommendations and an action plan based on key themes, **individuals, educators and businesses.**

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Key points

Recommendations focus on individuals, education and training providers and businesses. Creating a high skilled, future ready workforce requires policy interaction between all of them.

Businesses face challenges to decarbonise, including a lack of skills and knowledge in their existing workforce to meet these challenges. There are also a number of sectors which are particularly exposed, such as energy intensive manufacturing businesses, retrofit, through the sheer scale of action required, and green finance, because of its potential to leverage investment into the transition.

Further and higher education and private training providers require support to pivot their curricula and course offer so people can develop the right skills to fill current and future green jobs. Key challenges identified included capital investment in facilities and equipment needed to deliver green skills training and the attraction and retention of teaching talent.

Key challenges identified for individuals were the creation of a talent pipeline, equipping young people with the right skills for the future labour market and the need to upskill and reskill the existing workforce who will need to adapt with their employers to a transforming economy. Barriers to the uptake of green skills are a lack of awareness and understanding about green skills, career options and pathways.

Research themes



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This infographic visualizes the relationship between the research findings, emerging priorities and recommendations.

Recommendations

Inspire

Inspire and inform young people, from key stages 1 and 2 (age 4-19) onwards, about opportunities and career pathways within the green economy.



Facilitate

Facilitate easy access to green skills and job information, career pathways and job opportunities for young people and adults to make informed decisions.



Embed

Embed engagement of the target group when designing initiatives e.g. young people for the development of careers, education, information advice and guidance (CEIAG); workforce for reskilling/upskilling initiatives to support decarbonisation.



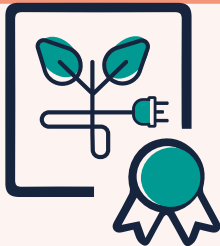
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Any interventions put forward must have ambitious targets addressing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI); particularly around attracting more women and people from Black, Asian ethnic minority (BAME) backgrounds towards careers within the green economy and the workforce most exposed by a transition to net-zero.



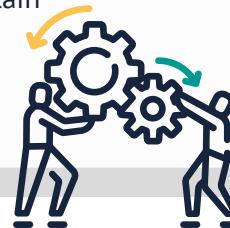
Support

Support education and training providers to build a curriculum that responds effectively to the needs of businesses transitioning to a net-zero carbon economy; including building capacity to attract, develop and retain expert staff.



Enable

Enable businesses to access support to decarbonise and innovate as well as to attract, develop and retain talent to enable a just transition.



Strengthen

Strengthen current and potential West Yorkshire specialisms to stimulate demand and create green jobs, exploring opportunities in manufacturing, green finance and retrofit in the first instance.



Action Plan

Individuals

Give every young person access to green skills careers information advice and guidance through the Combined Authority's Go Green resources.

Provide free training for adults to meet demand for green skills and jobs.

Support the development of a sustainable regional transport network that helps to break down social mobility barriers, improve access to employment and training opportunities.

Deliver a pilot scheme with 130 West Yorkshire primary schools that engages and inspires young people to understand green careers.

Educators

Establish a regional centre of excellence in environmental and sustainability training that upskills individuals and supports business leaders and their employees.

Work with Leeds College of Building to create a regional retrofit advisory board that will engage experts, housing partners and the further education sector to work towards increasing the energy efficiency of housing and commercial buildings.

Develop technical education qualifications with the Department for Education and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education that address skills gaps.

Strengthen the Green Jobs Taskforce partnership to develop a strategic response to the supply and demand issues.

Businesses

Support high carbon sector businesses, such as transport and housing, to give them access to skills support, training and funding.

Create a pilot scheme to assist businesses to recruit graduates into green job vacancies.

Work with the Government to build a stronger further education sector that delivers the green skills needed for our transitioning economy.

Put creating new green jobs and developing skills at the heart of all new West Yorkshire Combined Authority infrastructure projects.

Conclusions

The recommendations set out in this report by the Green Jobs Taskforce will create a future-ready workforce, ready to reap the benefits of a brighter, more aspirational net zero future.

We have galvanized experts from across West Yorkshire to develop our plan which will place green skills at the centre of our ambition to create a net zero carbon region.

Through our work we are leading the way, lowering barriers and pushing for change in a complex landscape.

And this also provides an evidence base for our region and others to call for more devolved powers across skills and employment and net zero and the environment as well as, housing, transport, culture, policing and crime.

We need a greater role in planning and preparing for our future economy, supporting our residents to upskill and reskill, our businesses to decarbonise and ready their workforce, and enable our education and training providers to invest in buildings, equipment, facilities and human capital so their offer aligns with the local labour market's current and future green skills demands.

Partners and stakeholders in the region are crucial contributors in delivering our ambitions and it is only through collaboration that we will be able to deliver on our recommendations.

Although the work of the Green Jobs Taskforce has concluded, our work here is not finished.

We have a bold ambition to transform our economy and capitalise on the benefits of the transition to a net zero West Yorkshire; improving opportunities for everyone in our region is what drives us forward.

Let's be the change we want to see. With our shared purpose we can make a lasting impact and pave the way for green skills and employment by providing our workforce, businesses and educators with the right skills and means to thrive within a net zero carbon economy.



Find out more

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 [westyorks-ca.gov.uk](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk)

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All information correct at time of writing.

**West
Yorkshire**
Combined
Authority

 **Tracy Brabin
Mayor**
of West Yorkshire

Appendix 1

Evidence base on training and workplace skills mismatches

Employer investment in workforce development is crucial to developing the skills that the West Yorkshire economy needs. It is estimated, based on recently published figures from the Employer Skills Survey 2022, that employers in the region invest around £1.9bn per annum in training their staff when wage costs are included.

The Employer Skills Survey 2022 shows that 57% of employers in West Yorkshire provided training to their staff over the previous 12 months. This is three points lower than the national average of 60% and also a reduction on the 62% of West Yorkshire employers who reported that they had provided training in response to the 2019 Employer Skills Survey. There was also a fall in the incidence of training among employers at national level over the same period, from 61% to 60%. The 2022 survey found that 60% of staff in West Yorkshire received training during the previous 12 months, the same proportion as the national average and one percentage point lower than in 2019.

Employers face continued labour shortages, which means that development of existing staff is all the more important in meeting skill requirements. According to the Employer Skills Survey, more than a third (35%) of all vacancies in West Yorkshire are estimated to be skill shortage vacancies, meaning that employers face a lack of candidates with the required skills to do the job. This is similar to the national average of 36% and a substantial increase on the previous estimate (for 2019) which was only 24% and reflects the tightening of the labour market in the aftermath of the pandemic. The prevalence of skill shortage vacancies is much higher for some occupations and sectors – for example it increases to 55% for the Construction sector in West Yorkshire.

Moreover, 19% of employers in West Yorkshire report that they have one or more skills gaps - instances of existing staff lacking full proficiency to do their jobs, an increase on the 15% reported in 2019. There are approximately 90,000 gaps, equivalent to 9% of total employment in the region. The equivalent figures in 2019 were 51,000 and 5% respectively, so there have been substantial increases. Many skills gaps are due to a deficit of practical skills among workers, including job-specific skills and operational skills, such as knowledge of the organisation's products and services. Complex analytical skills, such as problem solving, plus digital skills at a variety of levels, as well as basic skills (functional literacy and numeracy) are also in deficit for many staff. A lack of the required "soft" skills is common across the workforce, including "self-management" skills such as time management and managing own feelings, plus team working and persuading / influencing others. Skills gaps affecting managers are widespread and have important implications for business performance. The skills that typically need improving include core management skills, complex problem-solving skills, as well as operational skills.

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