

## Item 8A Appendix A All Age Careers – Evidence Deep Dive

### ALL AGE CAREERS EVIDENCE DEEP DIVE

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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 above<sup>1</sup>.

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