

# JGreat JOBS

Recognising the essential jobs  
that keep the UK working



**50% /  
16 million**

jobs in the UK  
are essential

**3.1 million**

essential job openings  
expected over the  
next five years

**364,000**

new essential jobs  
are expected to be  
created in the next  
five years

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# Foreword

As we find ourselves in another winter where the jobs market is severely disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic, there has never been a better time to shine a light on the incredibly important jobs that continue to keep our country running.

**2.1 million**

postings for essential  
job vacancies in  
December 2021 – Emsi  
Burning Glass



Kirstie Donnelly MBE  
CEO, City & Guilds

From refuse collectors to retail assistants, care workers to construction workers, these people who were all deemed essential or key workers during the pandemic, make up the very fabric of our nation, providing the critical services and infrastructure that communities and people rely on, day in day out.

It's hard for any of us to predict the future in the long or short term but while we start to look over the horizon and consider how we can rebuild our economy, what's clear is that these essential roles must sit at the heart of our post-pandemic recovery.

But we also find ourselves in the midst of a labour crisis, with the number of postings for essential job vacancies standing at a record 2.1 million by the end of 2021.<sup>1</sup> Triggered by the unique influences of Brexit and coronavirus, we are facing employment challenges on a scale not seen for decades. Access to overseas workers has become increasingly complex and restricted. And while the economy has recovered more quickly than expected, with the unemployment rate now at just 4.2%, which is only 0.2% higher than pre-pandemic, we need to utilise other pools of untapped talent, such as the 20% of the working age population who are currently economically inactive<sup>2/3</sup> in the UK. Ultimately, there is now a lack of available skills and labour which, coupled with negative perceptions of certain jobs and outdated working practices that lock certain people out of the labour market, has resulted in employers in some industries struggling to find the staff they so desperately need.

Our research, carried out in partnership with labour market economists Emsi Burning Glass, found that many of those businesses operating in essential sectors are particularly badly impacted.

We surveyed 10,000 working age people to understand their attitudes towards essential jobs. Some of the findings were surprising, while some served to reaffirm well-known and longstanding biases against these incredibly important jobs. Overall, we've found that whilst people

value these jobs in principle, they tend not to consider essential roles as a desirable career for themselves or their children. These roles are often seen as unattractive due to their lack of flexible working practices, poor working conditions, highly-specialised skillsets and low pay.

It is clear we have work to do here. As the driving force behind the safe and effective running of our country, and also our economic recovery, we need to change the perception of essential roles. We need to make them not only more attractive but also more accessible. We need to, finally, raise our collective respect for these jobs and we need to find ways to help people gain the skills that are currently lacking. Only then will we be able to match up people to jobs and provide supply to meet the growing demand.

Our report goes some way to unpacking these challenges. It shines a light on what motivates the people of Britain when it comes to work, and it helps us to understand how – and why – essential roles are perceived in the way they are. But this is only the first step.

Identifying the challenges and issues at play only takes us so far. We at City & Guilds are more committed than ever before to working with government, employers and industry bodies to tackle these challenges. We need to champion essential workers and drive a widespread attitudinal change, empowering these people with a restored sense of pride. And we need to unlock employment opportunities to drive a new generation of talent into the industries that play a pivotal role in keeping every single one of us healthy and safe, and in the running of our country, in the years ahead.



**Kirstie Donnelly MBE**  
CEO  
City & Guilds

1. Data provided by economic modellers Emsi Burning Glass

2. i.e. the proportion of working age people currently in active employment

3. <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/work-pay-and-benefits/unemployment-and-economic-inactivity/economic-inactivity/4.1>

# The Economist's View

The term “essential jobs” helps us to define those roles which are vital to some of the most basic needs in every community. But thinking of “essential jobs” in totality may be misleading if we don't take care to understand the numerous sectors and variety of roles included in this term.



Andy Durman



As this report shows, essential jobs are found in sectors as diverse as Social Care, Retail, Construction and Education, and within each of these sectors there are a wide range of jobs, often requiring very different levels of education, paying very different salaries, and with very different demographics.

When we talk about a skills shortage in essential jobs, we therefore need to be able to understand the underlying labour market dynamics if we are to implement solutions that don't end up falling wide of the mark. As we see in this report, the highest number of job openings over the next five years is in IT, Communications and Finance with almost 480,000 openings, whereas Social Care is expecting just over 226,000. So, although we hear much about the acute shortage of workers in Social Care – which is clearly critical – we mustn't forget that IT Communications and Finance jobs are also critical for the operation of organisations involved in providing foundational needs for our modern economy, and that demand for these jobs is set to be extremely high over the coming years. The “essential jobs” sector with the highest potential for the automation of tasks is Construction, whereas the sector with the least is Education. This suggests that whilst skills shortages in Construction could potentially be filled by more investment in the automation of certain tasks, skills shortages in Education can only be filled by people, since the human touch is indispensable.

All this is to say that we need to think more intentionally about the skills shortages in these sectors which are essential to our lives. We need to do this by using the available data to understand demand for these jobs, their demographics, the wages they pay, and their potential for automation. We need to do it by understanding the views of workers as to how they perceive these jobs, what makes them attractive, what makes them unattractive, and what can be done to make them more appealing. And then we need to put these elements together, so that policy makers, employers, and education providers can work together to implement solutions that really address the nuances of each sector and the various jobs within. And so that potential workers can better understand how working in an essential sector can offer them good career prospects, as well as giving them a real sense of pride in their work. This report provides a great starting point for achieving these goals.



**Andy Durman**  
Executive Vice President  
Emsi Burning Glass

# 1

## Understanding the importance of essential jobs

The pandemic highlighted to us all that certain roles, critical to the running of our country, are often overlooked and undervalued.





From the HGV drivers who deliver our food, and waste disposal workers who collect our rubbish, to teachers, carers and shelf fillers, there are millions of jobs that we depend on every day to keep the UK working.

Making up half of the workforce, these essential jobs are also the lifeblood of Britain's economy. And over the next five years, we're only expecting the number of roles in these critical sectors to grow. But employers are already reporting that they are struggling to fill vacancies, leaving us with a labour market crisis that is set to worsen in the years ahead without intervention.

If employers are going to tackle some of the recruitment challenges they face, it's critical we understand what it is that's holding people back from filling those roles. Does the workforce simply not exist? Or are people put off by negative perceptions and outdated stereotypes? What is broken that we need to fix or reconfigure?

### Britain's essential jobs

While many jobs are valuable, not all are deemed essential. In fact, half (50%) of jobs in the UK are categorised as essential by a government assessment<sup>5</sup>. That equates to over 16 million people working hard to keep the lights on and our country running. It is projected that 384,000 additional essential jobs will be created over the next five years. With expected natural churn and retirement in these five years, this means we expect to see 3.1 million job openings during this period.

The essential workforce also has a slightly older age profile on average, with nearly two thirds (65%) of workers aged over 35, compared to 61% of the non-essential workforce.

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### These essential jobs can be categorised into 10 key job sectors:

- Education
  - Construction
  - Energy and utilities
  - Government and public services jobs
  - IT, Communications & Finance
  - Transport & logistics
  - Healthcare
  - Social care
  - Food production, agriculture and animal care
  - Retail
- 

Whilst these essential jobs span a wide range of sectors, they have a number of common factors which set them apart from non-essential jobs.

Although a greater number of essential workers have completed higher education (level 4 or higher), their median earnings are around £500 lower – coming in at £27,844, compared to £28,371 for non-essential workers.

While we anticipate that many jobs could be automated in the coming years<sup>6</sup>, which could in fact help solve some skills shortages, essential jobs are also found to be less exposed to this. While 70% of tasks are highly automatable in 16% of non-essential jobs, this is only the case in half as many (7%) essential jobs.

5. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/essential-workers-prioritised-for-covid-19-testing>

6. According to the World Economic Forum's Future of the Jobs 2020 report, the workforce is automating faster than expected, and could displace 85 million jobs in next five years <https://www.weforum.org/press/2020/10/recession-and-automation-changes-our-future-of-work-but-there-are-jobs-coming-report-says-52c5162fce/>

## Sector trends

When we look at the 10 essential jobs sectors it's clear that they are very varied in terms of the industries and skills required, and that there is as much that divides this group as unites them. That being said, there are some distinct trends that emerge which we have noted below.



### Highest growth in jobs openings expected by 2026 in:

IT, communications and finance	<b>477,267</b>
Education	<b>467,256</b>
Healthcare	<b>466,534</b>
Transport and logistics	<b>399,646</b>

### Industries requiring the highest level of education...

- Education
- Healthcare
- IT, Communications and Finance



### More males work in...

- Construction
- Energy and utilities
- Food, agriculture and animal care
- IT, Communications & Finance
- Transport and Logistics



### Whilst more females work in...

- Education
- Healthcare
- Retail
- Social Care



### The jobs that have the highest earnings are in:

- Construction
- Energy and utilities
- Healthcare
- IT, Communications and Finance



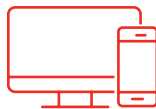
### Whilst the jobs with the lowest earnings are:

- Retail
- Social Care
- Food, agriculture and animal care



### The jobs with most risk of automation are in:

- Construction
- Food, agriculture and animal care
- Transport and logistics



### Whilst the jobs with least risk of automation are in:

- Education
- Retail
- Social Care
- IT, Communications and Finance





# Essential jobs trends

“The essential worker group shows some interesting headline differences from the rest of the workforce when it comes to education, age profile, earnings and automation potential. However, with such a large portion of the workforce in this group, the really interesting trends come when looking within specific subsectors that might hint towards the challenges ahead.

“Take the education sector for example. This is made up by a well-educated workforce but receives a median pay below the national average. This sector has a relatively older workforce profile and low automation potential and is currently heavily reliant on female workers. The social care sector has a very similar profile. Whereas, the construction sector, for example, does not typically require such high levels of worker education, pays relatively well, has a younger workforce profile and will likely benefit from the efficiencies that automation can bring”.

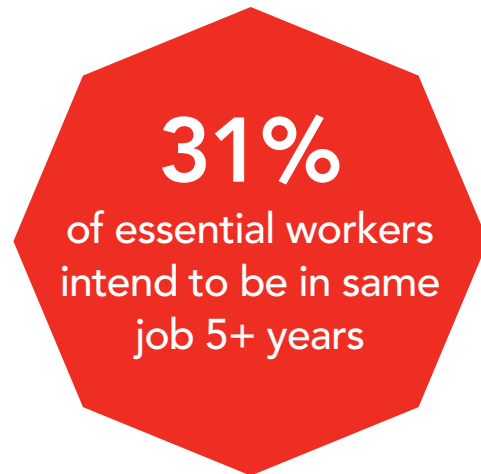
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Economic analysis from Andy Durman,  
Executive Vice President,  
Emsi Burning Glass



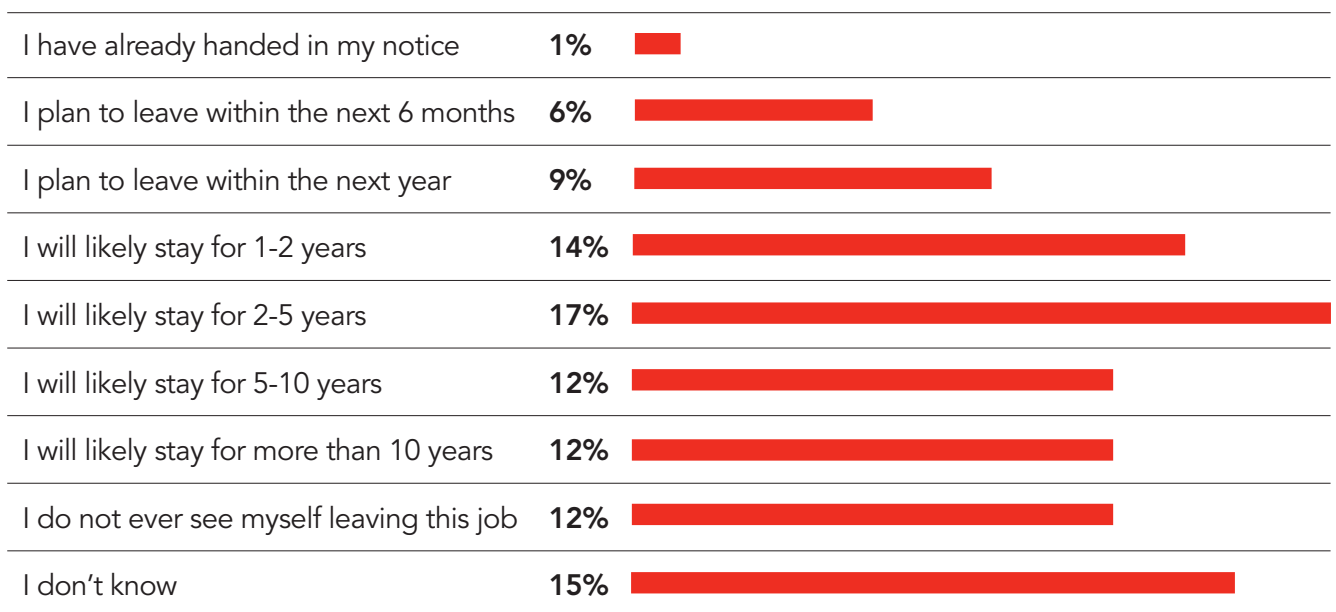
## Will current essential workers stay the course?

With skills shortages currently a real issue for essential jobs and the number of job openings only set to grow, it's a concern to find that so few current workers are loyal to their employer. Just a third (36%) of those who currently work in essential roles say they plan to be in their job for five or more years, and 12% say they don't ever see themselves leaving.



With 16% planning to leave within the next year – equating to 2.5 million workers – and a further 14% only planning to stay for one-two years, there is clear reason for employers to worry about talent turnover exacerbating skills shortages.

## How long do essential workers plan to stay in their roles?

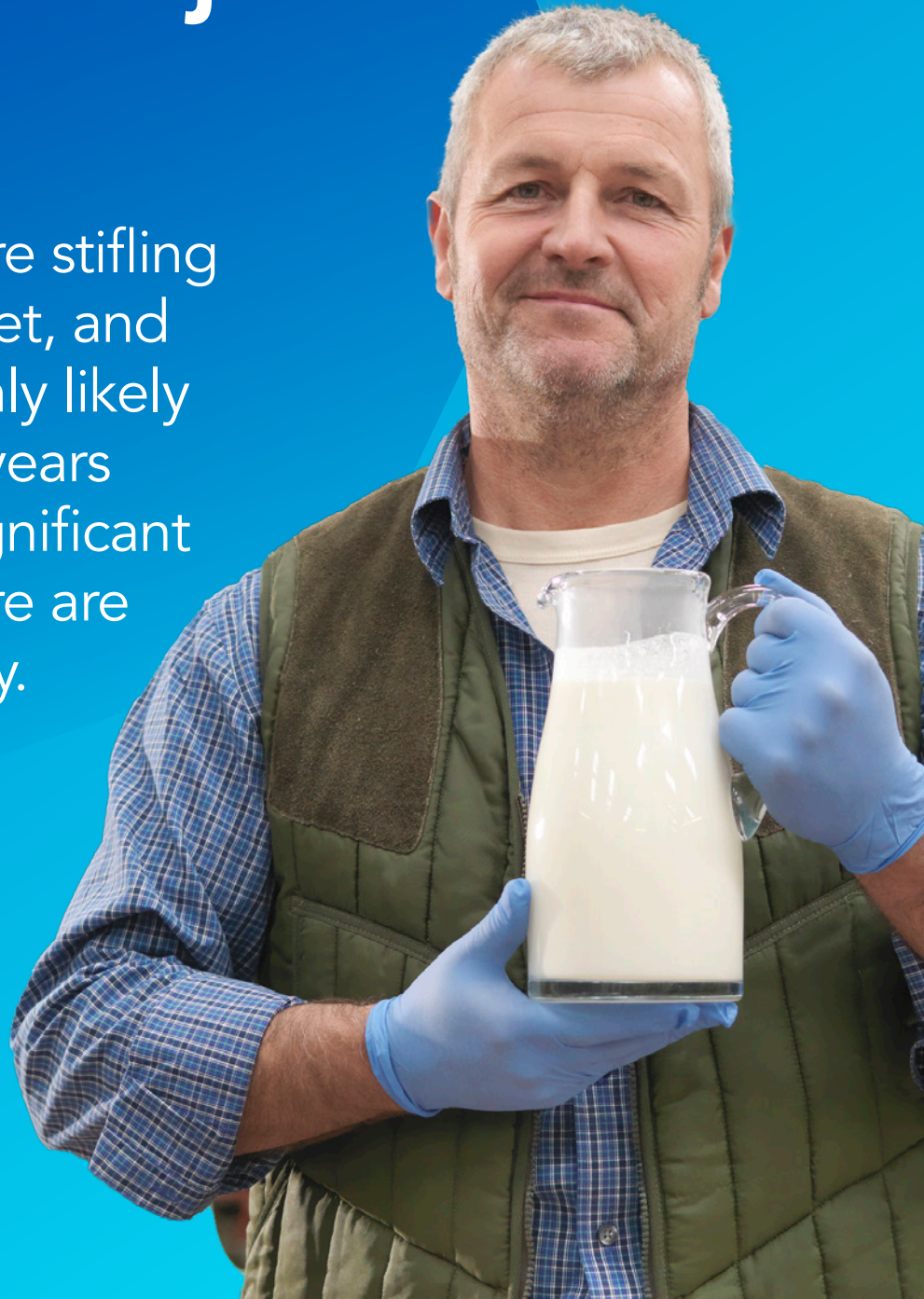


The food production, agriculture and animal care sector – which literally feeds the nation – could suffer the greatest number of resignations, with a quarter (24%) of employees in this sector saying they plan to leave within the next year. This is followed by 20% of social care workers and 20% of healthcare workers.

# 2

## The desirability of essential jobs

Skills shortages are stifling the UK jobs market, and this situation is only likely to worsen in the years ahead without significant intervention. There are many reasons why.



Over the past few years, we have seen a perfect storm, with Brexit reducing the labour pool, long term issues around the attractiveness of certain industries to UK workers – such as low salaries and poor working conditions – and now the impact of the pandemic, reducing then increasing demand for certain jobs.

But essential roles make up a large proportion of the jobs that remain vacant – with 2.1 million live essential job postings open in December 2021. What is it that's putting people off applying for those roles? And what perceptions do people have of these jobs that might be hindering employers' recruitment efforts?

### The image problem of essential work

To inform this report, we spoke to 10,000 working age adults across the UK about their perceptions of work, with a particular focus on the essential jobs identified. We asked all of these respondents – those working in essential jobs and those not – whether they would consider a job in one of the ten essential industries.

Despite often believing that these jobs were highly important to society, overall, respondents clearly told us that they don't consider these roles to be desirable careers, with only a quarter (25%) of respondents expressing interest in working in any one of these roles, on average.

**17%**  
would consider  
working in  
construction now  
or in the future

## 2.1 million essential job postings open in December 2021



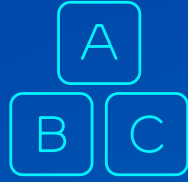
Among the 10 essential job sectors, roles in retail, education and government and public services are the most appealing. Of those respondents not currently working in the sector, 39% would consider working in retail now or in the future and nearly a third would consider working in each of government and public services or education (both 30%).

Jobs in construction are seen to be the least attractive with only 17% of respondents not already in this sector – and 9% females – saying they would consider working in this sector, followed by energy and utilities and transport and logistics. Of those not working in the sector, 71% would not consider working in construction. Given that these sectors are set to play a critical role in the running of our country in the years to come – especially with major infrastructure projects on the table and the growth of ecommerce – diversifying the workforce will be critical in enabling employers in these sectors to fill vacant job roles.

## The number of people who would consider working in the 10 essential sectors\*:



Retail  
**39%**



Education  
**30%**



Government  
**30%**



IT, Communications  
and Finance  
**29%**



Healthcare  
**26%**



Social care  
**25%**



Transport and  
logistics  
**23%**



Food production,  
agriculture and  
animal care  
**22%**



Energy and utilities  
**21%**



Construction  
**17%**



\*of those that don't already work in each sector



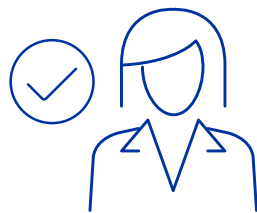
## The gender gap

It's already well understood that the world of work can be highly gendered, with men or women traditionally dominating the workforce in certain sectors. Not only is this true in the demographic of the essential jobs workforce, it is also reflected in the aspirations of people that don't currently work in these roles.

While women are more likely to state that they want to work in education, healthcare, retail and social care, men are much more likely than women to want to work in jobs in energy and

utilities, IT, communications and finance, transport and logistics, and construction – which also happen to offer more highly paid careers.

With essential employers in desperate need of new talent now and in the next few years, it's evident that they need to be able to recruit from a wider talent pool. To do this, we will need to make jobs traditionally occupied by men or women more appealing, open and accessible to the other gender.



**Women are more likely than men to find these jobs appealing:**

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<b>Education</b>	37% female	→	male 23%
<b>Healthcare</b>	31% female	→	male 20%
<b>Retail</b>	43% female	→	male 35%
<b>Social Care</b>	31% female	→	male 20%

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**Men are more likely than women to find these jobs appealing:**

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<b>Energy and utilities</b>	28% male	→	female 14%
<b>IT, Communications &amp; Finance</b>	37% male	→	female 23%
<b>Transport &amp; logistics jobs</b>	33% male	→	female 14%
<b>Construction jobs</b>	25% male	→	female 9%

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## How interest in jobs matches with demand

When we compare the essential jobs that people are most attracted to with the number of actual available job postings, we can see a stark gap between aspirations and opportunity.

Our research found that interest in retail roles is high, which tallies up with a high demand from the sector. However, when we look at job roles with a large number of openings – from nurses to farmers; large goods vehicle drivers to teaching professionals – these are deemed much less attractive to the workforce.



This mismatch between desire and demand is a critical problem. Low levels of interest coupled with high growth in job openings could result in severe talent shortfalls across the very industries that keep our country running. To remedy this and divert labour into these areas, we need to focus on boosting the attractiveness of those jobs where openings are set to boom and informing people about these opportunities via robust careers advice and guidance from Government and employers too.



## Top 20 essential jobs by desirability

Job description	% desired
1 Sales and retail assistant	<b>22%</b>
2 Retail cashier and check-out operator	<b>19%</b>
3 Shelf filler	<b>17%</b>
4 National or local government administrative operations	<b>16%</b>
5 Manager and director in retail and wholesale	<b>14%</b>
6 Shopkeeper or proprietor	<b>13%</b>
7 Teaching assistant or educational support assistant	<b>13%</b>
8 Postal worker, mail sorter or courier	<b>12%</b>
9 Social worker	<b>12%</b>
10 Care worker or home carer	<b>12%</b>
11 Post or bank office clerk	<b>9%</b>
12 Counsellor	<b>9%</b>
13 IT specialist manager or project manager	<b>9%</b>
14 Community worker, early years officer or housing officer	<b>8%</b>
15 Large goods vehicle or van driver	<b>8%</b>
16 Higher or further education teaching professional	<b>8%</b>
17 School secretary	<b>8%</b>
18 Programmer, software developer or web design professional	<b>8%</b>
19 Manager or directors in transportation, distribution, storage or warehousing	<b>8%</b>
20 Food, drink and tobacco process operative	<b>7%</b>

## Top 20 essential jobs by number of new openings 2021-2026

Description	% Change	Openings
1 Sales and Retail Assistants	1%	200,526
2 Care Workers and Home Carers	2%	166,169
3 Nurses	2%	152,944
4 Large Goods Vehicle Drivers	3%	80,304
5 Primary and Nursery Education Teaching Professionals	1%	80,090
6 Nursing Auxiliaries and Assistants	2%	75,733
7 Managers and Directors in Retail and Wholesale	3%	75,070
8 Secondary Education Teaching Professionals	0%	64,985
9 Teaching Assistants	1%	63,372
10 Medical Practitioners	3%	61,166
11 Van Drivers	3%	56,378
12 Farmers	5%	53,398
13 Programmers and Software Development Professionals	4%	52,964
14 Nursery Nurses and Assistants	3%	39,548
15 Electricians and Electrical Fitters	4%	38,690
16 IT Specialist Managers	3%	35,080
17 Finance and Investment Analysts and Advisers	3%	34,369
18 Financial Accounts Managers	3%	34,337
19 Higher Education Teaching Professionals	2%	32,562
20 Information Technology and Telecommunications Professionals n.e.c.	3%	31,555

(Emsi Burning Glass)

“We’re seeing significant demand pressure in the coming years for a number of different essential worker roles. Some of these roles are fuelled by a need for a higher stock of workers – such as more programmers to support our growing tech sector, and more farmers to help us to meet demand in a post-Brexit Britain.

“Whilst other growth pressures come from roles with a high replacement need. Sales and retail roles are dominated by younger workers and are often ‘stepping stone’ careers that lead workers to other roles in due course. Care Workers roles tend also to see high worker attrition and a more transient workforce compared to other sectors. The concern comes from the fact that whilst demand for these roles is high, in a post-Brexit Britain, we will need to look even more to our own population to meet this need and there seems to be a significant mismatch between these demands and career interest.”

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Economic analysis from Andy Durman,  
Executive Vice President,  
Emsi Burning Glass



## Growing skills gaps

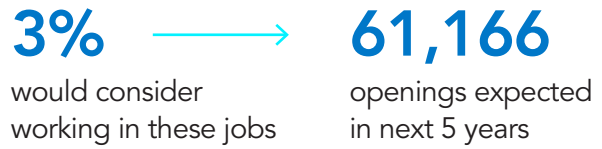
If we look at the other end of the spectrum, at those essential jobs that are least attractive, it's evident that some roles are suffering from stark differences: between low desire, and high demand in the coming years. Without intervention this is likely to result in skills shortages which may, in turn, have a huge impact on society.

For instance, in today's technological age, electricians are vital to keeping our lives, businesses and services running. However, Electricians and Electrical fitters are one of the essential jobs that is set to see the most openings in the next five years, with 38,690 openings expected. And, with only 4% respondents stating they would consider working in this role, businesses could struggle to recruit for this trade that keeps our lights, and technology on.

Butchers are also facing skills shortages, along with other critical roles that prepare food to go on our plates including: fishmongers, poultry dressers and bakers. While 14,952 openings are expected in these roles in the next five years, it's concerning that only 4% of respondents would consider working in these roles.



### Medical practitioners (e.g. doctors, surgeons, etc.)



### Butchers, fishmongers, poultry dressers or bakers



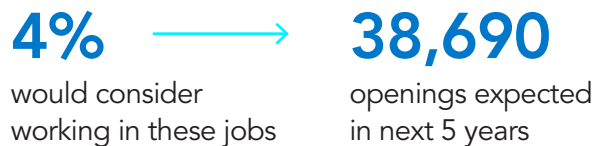
### Refuse collectors



### Healthcare technician (medical, dental or pharmaceutical)



### Electrician or electrical fitter





# Growing skills gaps

## What makes essential jobs unattractive

We've identified a worrying gap between desire and demand, but what's behind this mismatch between the jobs people want and the jobs that are on offer?

When looking at those who said they would not consider working in essential jobs, people cite a lack of the right skills and qualifications as a key reason, along with a more general "lack of interest". This suggests that a lack of knowledge about the many great career opportunities available in these sectors. Also as our 2020 Skills Index report found, a lack of interest in upskilling and participating in further education after leaving full time education is a barrier holding many people back from moving into these essential job roles.

It's important to note that the reasons for people being discouraged from working in essential jobs varies from job to job and industry to industry. For example, low pay is a key detractor for jobs in several sectors, demonstrating that, despite advances in minimum wage and living wage, pay is still a significant barrier to recruiting for the jobs we depend on every day of our lives. A third of people (31%) cite this to be a reason why they wouldn't consider working in retail sector jobs. Meanwhile almost a quarter cited low pay as deterrent when it comes to working in social care (23%) and almost a fifth when considering food production, agriculture and animal care jobs (18%).

Unsociable hours are considered a key turn-off for healthcare jobs (17%) and social care roles (18%), where overnight and weekend shifts are the norm.

**17%**

said that unsociable hours was the turn-off working in healthcare

The top reasons why people find essential jobs undesirable:

- 1 Not of interest
- 2 Doesn't fit skill set
- 3 Don't have the relevant skills, experience or qualifications
- 4 Low Pay
- 5 Don't know enough / anything about the available careers



### Confidence Gap

Women are more likely than men to say that they wouldn't consider a job because they 'don't have the relevant skills or experience or qualifications' – highlighting the well-known gender confidence gap when it comes to job applications.

If employers want to recruit from a wider, more diverse talent pool, they should consider how they can demonstrate which roles are more accessible – and offer upskilling opportunities for applicants who might not have exactly the right experience or credentials.



## What makes essential jobs attractive

On the other hand, we also asked respondents why they would consider working in essential roles. Again, we found that the reasons cited vary depending on the sector.

For education (35%), healthcare (43%) and social care (34%) jobs, people are positively influenced by the fact that these are highly respected roles, whilst many would consider jobs in retail due to the sociable hours (27%).

People recognise good pay as a key factor across most of the sectors, most notably in IT, communications and finance (52%) and construction roles (43%).

Across the board, good pay, a respected status, and sociable hours are the top three reasons that people are most likely to give for why they find certain essential jobs attractive. Other important factors included having the relevant skills, experience or qualifications and good opportunities for career progression – demonstrating once again that training and upskilling opportunities could be crucial to encouraging more people to apply for roles.

### Top reasons why people find essential jobs attractive:

- 1 Good pay
- 2 Highly respected role
- 3 Sociable hours
- 4 Having the relevant skills or experience or qualifications
- 5 There are good opportunities for training and career progression

# 52%

said that 'good pay' was a key factor in the IT, communications and finance sector

### Generations apart

Younger generations (those aged between 18-34 years) are more likely to be attracted to jobs due to good pay, sociable hours and roles being highly respected.

However, those aged 55 and over have different priorities. They are more likely to be attracted to jobs due to scope for flexible working, good opportunities for training and career progression, and doing meaningful work.



## Sector spotlight: Social care

There were nearly 170,000 live job postings in the social care sector in December 2021. And it's expected that by 2026, 226,441 job openings will be created in the UK's social care sector, with 166,169 of these openings expected to be created for care worker and home carer jobs alone – the role that's set to see the greatest growth.

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

<b>166,169</b>	Care workers and home carers
<b>15,720</b>	Senior care workers
<b>14,961</b>	Social workers

But with only 25% of respondents saying that they would even consider working in the social care sector – and only half of those (49%) stating they would consider working as a care worker – it's clear that work needs to be done to help the sector recruit the number of great people it needs to care for our ageing population.

Looking at the barriers to recruitment, respondents cited low pay (23%), lack of relevant skills or experience or qualifications (24%) and unsociable hours (18%) as three of the key reasons why they wouldn't consider a job in social care. And indeed, with an average salary of £18,602 across all social care jobs – the second lowest out of the 10 essential job sectors – and 67% of current workers in the sector saying that better pay would make them feel happier or prouder to do their jobs, this is a credible concern for job seekers that needs to be addressed.

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

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

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



## The employee's perspective: Wendy Griffin & Dinah Ball, Caregivers at Home Instead

“The main reason I went into nursing was to care for people but unfortunately nursing has become more task orientated and more technical. As you progress in nursing you move further away from patient care and that part of my interests is now completely fulfilled by being a caregiver. I've absolutely fallen in love with what I do.”

Wendy and Dinah both joined Home Instead as caregivers during the pandemic. Wendy had a varied career before entering care. She tried her hand at IT, PR, Marketing, and Office Management, but decided care would give her a greater sense of purpose. Wendy said, “I can honestly say I'm the happiest I've ever been in what I'm doing now. There's a reason why the other jobs were never quite right for me and I'm now doing more of what I wanted to do which is helping people.”

Dinah was a district nurse previously and came to work for Home Instead in February 2021, following a career break while raising her family. As well as caregiving two days a week, Dinah has also trained to be a Home Instead trainer in Parkinson's, end of life and frailty care.

Both Wendy and Dinah are extremely pleased with their decision to become caregivers during a particularly difficult time for this sector. Despite the obvious pressures of providing care during the pandemic, both Wendy and Dinah feel proud to have come into a role where they are leaving lasting impressions, creating connections, and building relationships with people every day.

The pandemic has also seen a shift in the type of care people require for their loved ones. With waiting lists for homecare increasing and recruitment and retention remaining an issue in the care sector, Wendy and Dinah both find it frustrating when delivery of care can't match that of the demand. They also believe that the perception of care particularly within the media is still to this day misconstrued and a lot needs to change for people to understand the true nature of caregiving instead of feeding off negative situations reported on in the news. Both state that there needs to be greater awareness of the training and career opportunities available within care to challenge the current perceptions that it is a low skilled profession for lower skilled workers.

However, the role of a caregiver doesn't just impact the lives of individuals they care for but also their families, their friends, and the wider society. Dinah said, “Every day you are making a difference to someone's life. Clients will often start by saying how they didn't want to have carers come in but then will go on to say how they couldn't have managed without you. Once you start working with a family, it changes their world. A lot of that isn't always there for the outside world to see but the impact is phenomenal. We both feel extremely privileged to be doing what we're doing.”

## How do essential workers feel about their jobs?

We've explored how working age people in general perceive essential jobs, but with 43% of respondents themselves working in essential roles, we also wanted to find out how they feel about their jobs. It's clear that there is a great deal on offer from the jobs that keep the nation going.

### Three quarters of essential workers are proud of their jobs

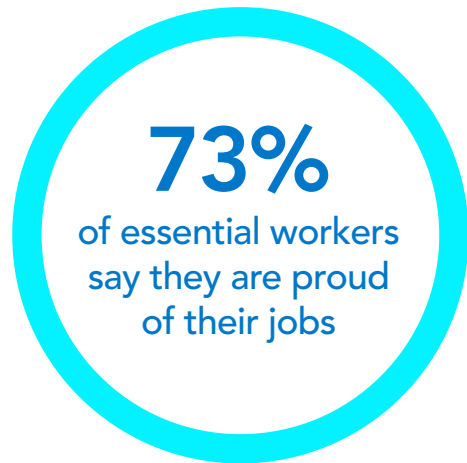
People who work in essential roles are much more likely to feel proud of their jobs, compared to those that work in non-essential jobs.

The majority of essential workers (73%) say they are proud of their jobs, and the same proportion say their job gives them a sense of purpose (74%). Meanwhile 76% say they feel as though their job makes a positive contribution towards society.

Those working in healthcare are the proudest, with 85% saying they are proud of their jobs, followed by 82% of workers in education and 80% of those in each of social care and construction. Workers in these sectors are also the most likely to say that their job gives them a sense of purpose and makes them happy.

Recognising the importance of looking after the welfare of people in the UK, workers in healthcare (91%) and social care (89%) are some of the most likely to say they feel their job contributes to society.

However, it's not all a positive story for essential workers. Despite these strong levels of pride, a fifth (18%) say they are embarrassed when they tell people what they do for a living.



Those working in construction (27%), retail (23%) and food production, agriculture and animal care (22%) are most likely to feel shame when talking about their job.

This cuts right to the heart of this issue: even if people are rightly proud of the work they do, what other people think of them also impacts their happiness and pride in their role.

It's evident that there's work to be done to raise the perceptions of both the workers themselves, as well as wider society, when it comes to these essential jobs that are critical to the fabric of our society and economy. As we saw during the pandemic, simply clapping for carers only went so far.

Questions	Essential employees	Non-essential employees
I am proud of my job	73%	66%
I feel my job contributes to society	76%	60%
My job gives me a sense of purpose	74%	66%
My job makes me happy	65%	62%
I am embarrassed when I have to tell people what I do for a living	18%	20%

## Essential workers enjoy their work-life balance

Those currently working in essential roles say the things they most enjoy about their job are having friendly colleagues (45%), a good work-life balance and a job that is close to their home (both 41%). Salary comes fifth overall (31%), behind flexibility (34%).

While this suggests that again, salary may be something that many essential workers are unsatisfied with, this also demonstrates how important it is for employers to not only ensure employees have a good work-life balance, but also hire locally where possible and foster a welcoming company culture with opportunities to socialise with others. Where the right skills may not exist, upskilling opportunities such as apprenticeships and mentoring programmes such as Volunteer it Yourself (ViY) in the construction sector could be key to attracting local talent.

**45%**

Friendly colleagues

**41%**

I have a good work-life balance

**41%**

It's close to my home / easy to commute to

**34%**

Flexibility (working hours / working location)

**31%**

Salary



**85%**  
of workers in the healthcare sector are proud of their jobs



# 3

## What we want from work

It's predicted that within the next five years 384,000 entirely new essential job openings will be created. But, as we've seen, employers are already facing severe recruitment concerns. There are simply not enough workers willing to fill all of the job postings available today, without even taking into account the surge we are expecting as our economy gets back to growth.

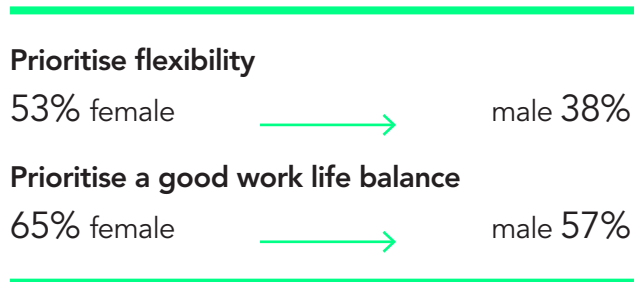


## What people prioritise when looking for a job

In this tight labour market, employers really need to understand more than ever what it is that makes the workforce tick. What makes certain roles more attractive? What drives people to select certain jobs or industries? And, in particular, how can employers looking to recruit for essential roles use these learnings to improve the desirability of their jobs?

### Women want flexibility and balance

The pandemic demonstrated that many working women are still taking on the lion’s share of unpaid care and housework responsibilities<sup>7</sup>, so it’s not surprising that they are also more likely to prioritise flexibility and a good work life balance.



### The impact of the coronavirus pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic had a widespread impact on the world of work over the last two years. While some people were classified as “key workers” and had to turn up to work in person during difficult, dangerous times, others saw their world turned upside down as they suddenly lost their jobs, were furloughed for long periods of time, or forced to work from home.

Our research found that the pandemic has had a huge impact on people’s attitudes to work, forcing them to re-evaluate their priorities and perceptions.



### Expectations of work are higher than ever – thanks to Covid-19

Nearly two thirds (63%) of people state that their priorities have changed as a result of the pandemic. 27% now want a better salary, whilst others increasingly prioritise convenience, with 25% stating they want more flexibility and 21% wanting an easier commute.

### How have your priorities for work changed following the Covid-19 pandemic?

- 27%** I now want a better salary
- 25%** I now want more flexibility
- 21%** I want to work closer to my home
- 14%** I now want more opportunities for career progression and training
- 14%** I now want a job that’s more meaningful or rewarding

Interestingly, women are more likely (66%) than men (60%) to say their priorities have changed and younger people’s expectations for work have also been impacted. Nearly a quarter (23%) of students state they now want a job that’s more meaningful or rewarding compared to just 14% of those currently employed.

7. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0950017019862153>

# 4

## Restoring pride in essential jobs

### Perceptions of pride

Following a period of reliance on cheaper overseas labour, we have seen some essential roles become badly paid and garner a reputation for negative working conditions. As a result, people lost respect for a whole range of incredibly valuable jobs, critical to the running of our country.





We've looked at the essential jobs people would or wouldn't consider working in and the factors lying behind this decision. But we need to understand people's deeper perceptions of these jobs – do they have respect for these essential roles? Would they feel proud to take on an essential role themselves?

### What essential roles would people feel proud to work in?

We asked respondents whether they would feel proud to work in a role across one of the 10 sectors classified as essential. On the whole people would, in theory, be proud to work in an essential role. This is a promising sign although attitudes vary greatly, depending on the sector.

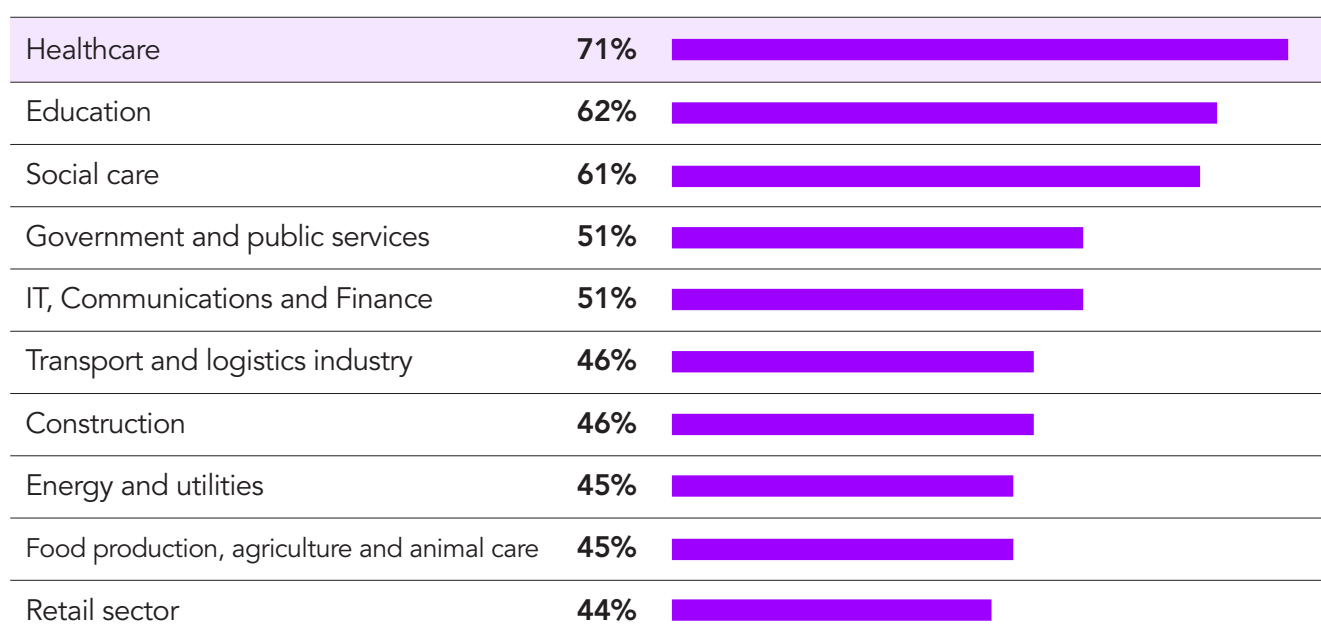
The roles people would feel most proud to work in are healthcare (71%), education (62%) and social care (61%). Not only are these roles typically people-focussed, traditionally public sector, and female dominated – they also played vital and visible roles during the pandemic.

Half (51%) of respondents say they would feel proud to work in jobs in either government and public services or IT, communications & finance.

Despite retail being one of the top sectors when considering a new role, it's also the sector that least people say they would feel proud in (44%). This could be attributed to perceptions that these roles are 'transactional', short-term, and low paid – even if accessible.

Other essential industries suffering from a low sense of perceived pride include food production, agriculture and animal care jobs (45%) and energy and utilities (45%).

### "I would feel proud to work in this role"



## How deep does this sense of pride run?

Encouragingly, people are more open minded when it comes to their children’s or grandchildren’s careers, with more respondents happy for their offspring to work in essential jobs than would feel personally proud to work in that role.

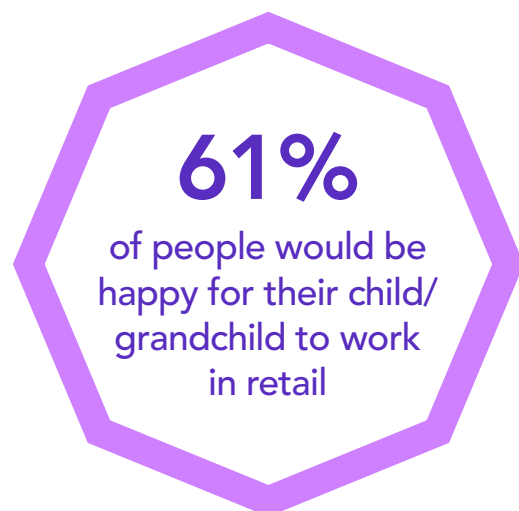
However, this openness extends more towards professional ‘white collar’ jobs, with education and healthcare still coming top, along with IT, communications and finance (all 78%).

Social care falls to one of the least popular at 68%, coming in behind government and public services (73%) and energy and utilities (72%). . This demonstrates that whilst people may have respect for social care workers, they are reluctant to consider this as a career for themselves or members of their family.

Retail jobs are again those that least people would be happy for their child or grandchild to work in, on par with those in the food production, agriculture and animal care industry (both 61%).

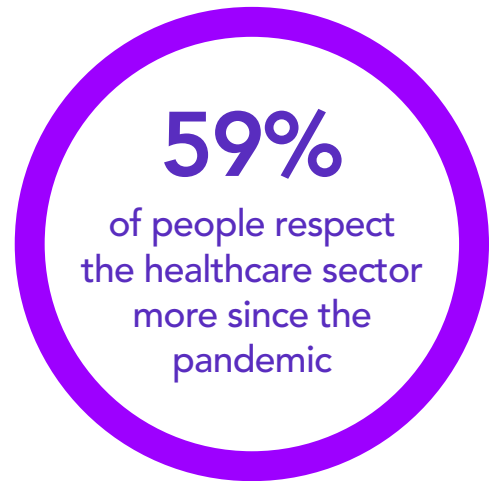
## “I would be happy for my child / grandchild to work in this sector”

Education	78%	<div style="width: 78%;"></div>
Healthcare	78%	<div style="width: 78%;"></div>
IT, Communications and Finance	78%	<div style="width: 78%;"></div>
Government and public services	73%	<div style="width: 73%;"></div>
Energy and utilities	72%	<div style="width: 72%;"></div>
Construction	68%	<div style="width: 68%;"></div>
Social care	68%	<div style="width: 68%;"></div>
Transport and logistics	65%	<div style="width: 65%;"></div>
Food production, agriculture and animal care	61%	<div style="width: 61%;"></div>
Retail	61%	<div style="width: 61%;"></div>



## Respect for essential roles has risen during the pandemic

It's encouraging to see that as a result of essential roles being thrown into the spotlight during the pandemic, people's levels of respect towards them has increased. A particular rise has been witnessed in the healthcare (59%) and social care sectors (54%) which were at the frontline of the battle against the pandemic and enjoyed massive recognition from the public as a result.



## Which roles do people have more respect for as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic?

Healthcare	59%	<div style="width: 59%;"></div>
Social care	54%	<div style="width: 54%;"></div>
Education	47%	<div style="width: 47%;"></div>
Food production, agriculture and animal care	42%	<div style="width: 42%;"></div>
Retail	42%	<div style="width: 42%;"></div>
Transport & logistics	41%	<div style="width: 41%;"></div>
Construction	31%	<div style="width: 31%;"></div>
Energy and utilities	31%	<div style="width: 31%;"></div>
Government and public services	31%	<div style="width: 31%;"></div>
IT, Communications & Finance	30%	<div style="width: 30%;"></div>



## Improving the attractiveness of essential jobs

The essential worker skills shortage is an issue that's going nowhere fast – and it's one we need to solve.

With a large number of working age people economically inactive (21% of the working age population – rising up to as many as 39%<sup>8</sup> in some communities), and many of those who are employed in part time work, we need to encourage job seekers to pursue roles that are not only available, but are valuable and important to society.

“Talent Shortages are at a 15-year-high as hard and soft skills have become more difficult to find than ever before. Combine that with the finding from our ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey Q1 2022, that UK hiring intentions hit a thirty-year high as employers struggle to fill vacancies, and we have a perfect storm. If employers are going to be able to bridge their hiring gaps for roles at all levels, they have to accept that they may not find candidates to fulfill all their requirements so upskilling opportunities are essential to develop them to the right level. To deliver challenge and opportunities so people succeed and stay in their role, managers need to understand skills, potential, and desires. With assessment, insight, and a culture of learnability they can coach individuals, so they thrive in a supportive environment.”

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Chris Gray, UK Director,  
ManpowerGroup UK



As you might expect, women are more likely than men to be economically inactive (26% vs 17%) and more likely to work part time (38% vs 13% men<sup>9</sup>) so there is clearly an opportunity to attract more women to fulfil roles.

The question is, with many essential employers struggling to recruit and retain talent, while suffering from the stigmas associated with a poor reputation, how can we encourage people to seriously consider these essential roles?



### What should happen to improve attractiveness of essential jobs

With 90% of people working in essential roles saying that there are factors that would make them feel happier or prouder to do their job, and 87% stating that the reputation of their sector needs to be improved, it's clear that there's work to do to improve the perception and reputation of these roles – even amongst current employees.

First and foremost is remuneration. Over half of essential workers cite better pay (56%) as a factor that would make them feel happier or prouder to do their job, and with 53% saying this would improve the reputation of their job or sector.

Meanwhile, 38% cite a better work-life balance and 29% cite flexible hours as key improvements that would make them feel prouder or happier in their job. This is followed by more opportunities for training and career progression, more meaningful work, and better recognition – whether from managers or from society (all 21%).



Aligned with this, over a fifth of essential workers say that other recognition beyond salary (23%) would improve the reputation of their job, followed by flexible hours and more awareness and support from government (both 21%) and more scope for career progression (19%).

An area which could also boost the attractiveness of essential jobs and support the retention of the current workforce is investing in improving the skills of managers and leaders. 80% of essential workers told us that having a good manager had an impact on how much they enjoyed their job whilst in contrast only 60% stated that they felt well supported by their company's leaders or felt their own manager did a good job of supporting their development at work.

This again demonstrates that there are a variety of factors at play when it comes to improving the attractiveness of essential jobs. While it may not be possible to implement all of these changes in every workplace, just a small amount of change could play a significant role in improving the reputation of these jobs amongst the outside world and attracting a wider talent pool, thereby solving skills shortages. And Government could have an important part to play in helping to change those reputations by increasing budgets for salaries in Government funded sectors and encouraging employers to adopt more flexible working patterns.

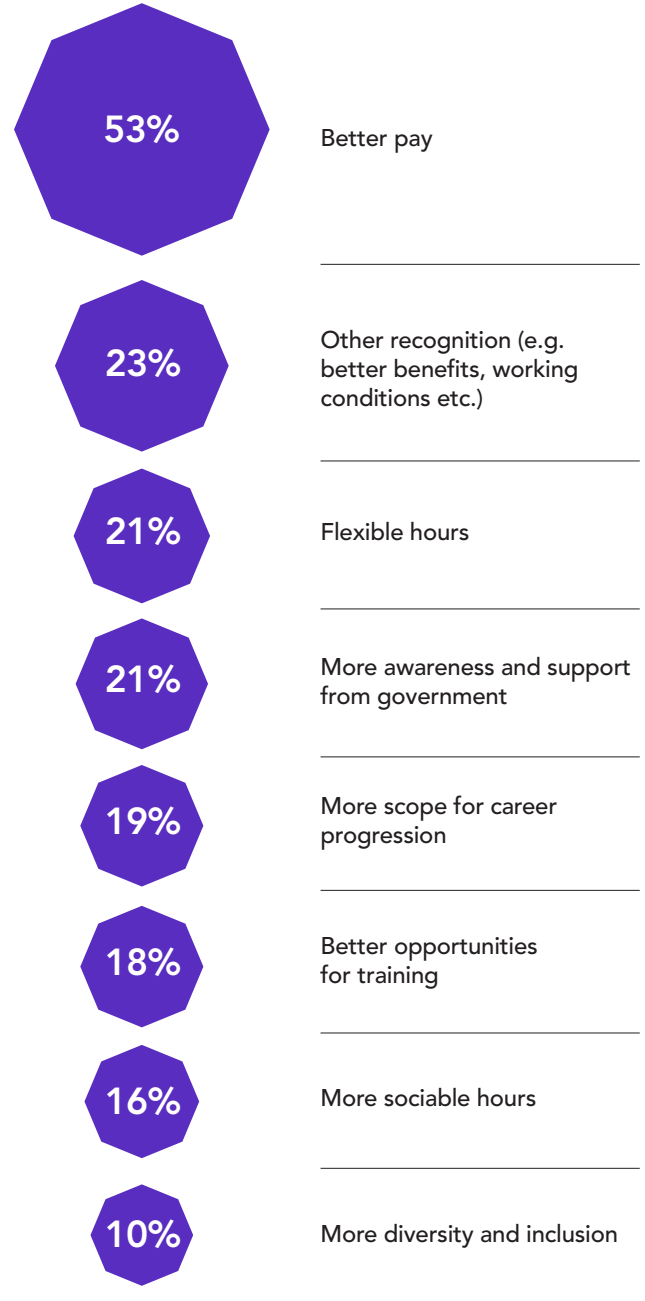
8. Economic inactivity - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures (ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk)

9. Women and the Economy (parliament.uk)

## What would make essential workers feel happier, or prouder, to do their job?



## What do essential workers think should happen to improve the reputation of their job / sector?



## Injecting a reputational boost

While many of the issues around lack of pride and low perceived reputation are prevalent across all essential jobs, some sectors are in greater need of reputational change than others.

### Pride

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



### Respect

When it comes to improving the reputation of their jobs, workers in IT, communications and finance, and transport and logistics are the most positive – with 19% of workers in each saying that they don't think the reputation needs to be improved.



On the other end of the scale, once again, social care emerges as one of the industries where employees think they are most in need of a better reputation – along with healthcare and education.

## Sector spotlight: Food production, agriculture and animal care

The food production, agriculture and animal care sector is critical to feeding Britain. But, the sector is currently facing skills shortages – due to a myriad of factors, including Brexit and the pandemic, as well as negative perceptions around poor working conditions and pay. Our data suggests that this trend is expected to continue in the years to come without significant intervention from Government and employers.

A quarter (24%) of employees in this sector say they plan to leave within the next year and, by 2026, it's predicted that 207,646 jobs openings will be created.

### Top 3 jobs in food production, agriculture and animal care by number of job openings by 2026:



**Farmers**



**Packers, bottlers, canners and fillers**



**Food, drink and tobacco process operatives**

However, this sector is not perceived to be highly desirable to work in. Only a fifth (22%) of respondents said that they would consider working in the sector – with low pay (18%) and believing that it doesn't fit their skillset (27%) cited as two key reasons why.



Certainly, pay is perceived to be an issue by workers too. Half (51%) of current workers in the sector told us that better salaries would make them feel happier or prouder to do their jobs. According to labour market data, the average salary in the sector is £22,381.

With only 45% of the wider working age population saying they would feel proud to work in this sector, and 22% of current employees stating that they feel embarrassed when they have to tell people what they do for a living, it's apparent that this sector needs a real reputation boost. Especially as, according to employers, many of the perceptions and associations are outdated. For this, employer campaigns and Government interventions will be crucial to raising awareness and changing perceptions. There is also a significant opportunity for employers to invest in automation in this sector, which would reduce the need for some roles and increase opportunities for a smaller number of more high-tech skilled roles.

Currently 66% of workers in this industry are male offering a significant opportunity to boost staff numbers by increasing the number of female employees. It's promising then to see very little difference in the aspirations of female and male respondents to our survey. 23% male and 21% female respondents said they would consider working in the food production, agriculture and animal care industries.



**The employer's perspective: Nicky Taylor,  
Head of Talent and Employee Experience, Moy Park**

**“Our team members are key workers, who do the vital work of feeding the nation, as has been so clearly highlighted throughout the pandemic in particular. We want to get the message out there that working as part of this team is incredibly rewarding, and I would urge anyone looking for new career opportunities to consider joining us.”**

“Moy Park is one of the UK's top food manufacturers of organic, free-range and higher welfare chicken and employs over 12,000 people in a variety of roles such as processing, engineering, agricultural and transport. We are recruiting for roles across the business, with hundreds of opportunities available currently.

“Over the past two years, businesses across the food industry have faced the challenge of a tightening labour market, brought about by a range of factors including Brexit and the pandemic. This has put the supply chain under pressure in some areas, and in some cases forcing product ranges to be temporarily changed.

“At Moy Park, we have launched a number of initiatives aimed at encouraging new talent to consider a career within the food industry. We want to challenge some of the misconceptions people have about working within the sector and highlight the many fantastic career development opportunities the industry, and Moy Park in particular, can offer. We have introduced generous reward programmes and bonus incentives, and strengthened our apprenticeship programme. We are also proactively reaching out to the local community, offering school and college students on-site visits to see what it really is like to work for a dynamic company like Moy Park.

“Government too has a role to play in addressing this challenge. Bringing awareness to the severity of the labour shortage situation will hopefully influence decision makers to put a spotlight on the industry and encourage people to consider working with us. Interventions such as modernising the skilled worker scheme visas and making sure temporary working visas for overseas workers are available during peak seasons will allow for easier access to these roles.”



# 5

## Conclusion: Keeping the lights on – How can we encourage people to take up “essential jobs”?

Back at the start of this report, we summarised the essential roles that are critical to keeping our country – and our economy – functioning. From refuse collectors to school-teachers, pickers, packers and shelf-stackers to doctors, nurses and care workers, these essential workers make up half of the labour market across the UK.



And yet in too many cases, they are tarnished by a poor reputation. Outdated stereotypes cloud people’s judgement and a worrying lack of pride and respect – even sometimes echoed by those working in these roles – is dampening the attractiveness of some of these essential sectors.

There is an argument that says people will always take up work if the jobs are there. But the current labour market data doesn’t back this up. We now have record numbers of unfilled vacancies and our research shows that there is much work to be done to encourage people to take up these roles that are incredibly valuable to society. We must, as a society, rethink the way we regard the roles that keep us all healthy, fed and safe.

Government, undoubtedly, has an important role in this with the power to set an agenda that seeks to place a higher value on these essential roles rather than continuing to prioritise roles that generate mass wealth. We must reposition these roles as the foundation for our whole economy. Doing so will encourage the people we need into the most valuable roles we have.

As we strive to recover from the coronavirus pandemic and the continued impact of Brexit negotiations, the nation needs to be looking ahead to the future skills requirement of the country. The essential roles uncovered and explored within this report are pivotal to meeting that need. Indeed, we know they are some of the industries expecting the steepest increases in terms of real job numbers – and this means the drive for talent to move into, and fill, these job roles has never been more important.

We are calling not only on employers, industries, educators and government, but on the general public to take action. Yes, we need to create an attractive work environment but we also need to change perceptions of these essential roles and truly recognise and respect those who work so hard to keep the UK running.

We have identified within this report a number of commonalities when it comes to what motivates today’s workforce. While better pay was resoundingly cited by the workforce that we spoke to, it is not the only factor at play. Across essential and non-essential roles, people of working age are calling for:

1

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A better work life balance, with flexibility of hours or work location in-built, more sociable working hours where possible and an easy commute.

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2

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Access to relevant skills development, training and qualifications to help them access harder to reach jobs and progress within their career.

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3

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Respect and recognition, both in monetary terms and from their teams, managers and wider society.

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Based on the insights gleaned from this report, we have put together a list of key recommendations and actions, to ultimately boost the reputations of the UK’s valuable essential jobs, and help employers recruit the talent they so dearly need.

# 6

## Our recommendations:

### 1. Creating more flexible working practices and a better work / life balance for all UK citizens

#### Employers and Industries

- Look at benefits beyond salary. Working closely with employees to understand their individual interests and drivers will help businesses shape benefits programmes around their staff, increasing recruitment and retention rates. i.e.
  - Look for opportunities to implement flexible working practices that will unlock the labour market for groups such as working parents and carers.
  - Look for opportunities to allow people to work from home where possible (if they want to do this).
  - Consider ways that you could make your workplace accessible for people who face barriers and are locked out of the labour market i.e. parents, people with physical and mental health issues, ex-offenders.
  - Look for opportunities to make jobs part-time / job share roles to allow people the opportunity to work whilst raising families / caring for loved ones or later in life.

### 2. Better access to relevant skills development, training and qualifications throughout people's working lives

#### Government

- Government to make sure that when investments are made in support of economic growth (e.g. the levelling up white paper) there is also consideration for how to get the skilled workforce needed to power these jobs, particularly those that we have highlighted are currently considered least attractive.
- Undertake robust analysis of where skills gaps are in the jobs market and ensure future skills and education policy is developed that leads towards tackling the areas facing the most significant skills gaps.
- Reset strategies away from short term 'back to work' initiatives that were put in place at the start of the pandemic, to focus on the creation of sustainable employment pathways and opportunities that we need to power our economy today and tomorrow.
- Simplify the current adult education / lifelong learning model to reduce overlaps of initiatives and constraints around eligibility.
- The recent Skills for Life campaign is a positive step forwards in pulling all of the reskilling and retraining offers into one place, but past skills and qualifications should never be a barrier to gaining new ones.

## Educators and Government

- Invest in technology and technological solutions that allow educators and businesses to deliver learning in a way that suits how people want to consume information and fits around people's lives i.e. digitally-enabled and flexibly delivered (possibly using an 'on demand' structure)
- Create and fund more bite-sized courses that allow people to dip in and out of education as they need to 'top up their skills' throughout their lives. Build out the offers such as Skills Bootcamps to cover more growth industries and with greater geographical reach.

## 3. Drive up levels of respect and recognition for essential / key worker roles, both in monetary terms and from their teams, managers and wider society

### Government

- Work with employers to ensure fair wages across both public and private sector roles. At a time of steeply rising inflation, wages must align with the cost of living as a bare minimum if they are to become attractive options for the indigenous workforce.
- Continue to focus on improving careers advice and guidance. Supporting and strongly encouraging schools to embed careers content from primary age that shows the breadth of opportunity across all sectors and places a higher value on essential roles.
- We need greater Government support in positive campaigning to reinforce the pride in essential jobs. This must start with a recognition within Government departments such as the Treasury and Department for Education as to the importance of these often-overlooked roles. We also need to change our country's metrics of success, so they include other measures, such as the contribution to the health and wellbeing our citizens and the protection of the planet that we live on, rather than just fiscal contribution to the economy.

## Employers and Industries

- Be clear about transferable skills and pathways that can help people move from one industry to another and provide access to training and development opportunities, to help employees build career paths and progress from one role onto the next.
- Work with education providers to support careers advice and guidance and provide opportunities for people to experience what it's like to work in essential industries from a young age. And highlight the breadth of roles available within their industries to raise awareness among the general population.
- Work with Government and other employers within industry to ensure fair wages and attractive working conditions across both public and private sector roles. At a time of steeply rising inflation, wages must align with the cost of living as a bare minimum if they are to become attractive options for the indigenous workforce.
- Invest in the skills of managers and leaders in essential industries to drive up levels of staff satisfaction and happiness and drive down levels of attrition, whilst also boosting the reputation of these organisations as employers of choice amongst the wider UK workforce.

### Educators

- Use local labour market data to improve all age careers advice and guidance. This should be driven by data and the actual availability and growth of jobs on a local and national level. Educators and local employers should collaborate on this area via the work on Local Skills Improvement Plans.<sup>10</sup>
- Focus on developing horizontal skills threads that cut across all industries and can help people to transition from one industry sector to another. This should include digital, numeracy, literacy, sustainability/green, leadership/management.

10. DfE Outcome Delivery Plan: 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

# 7

## Our commitments

We are committed to providing industries with the skilled workforces they need and to upskill those who need support into jobs that are critical for the labour market to power our economic recovery. We do this by:

### **Working with industries and Government to upskill people with the in demand cutting edge skills they need to succeed**

For the last 143 years City & Guilds has worked with Governments and industries to create the skilled workforces needed to meet the demands of businesses and economies across the world. Each year we support over 4 million people to develop skills that help them into a job, develop on that job and to prepare for their next job.

#### **In the last five years we have:**

- Worked as part of many of the apprenticeship trailblazer groups, reinventing the apprenticeship system to better meet the needs of employers.
- Worked with industry to define occupational standards and developed new qualifications and licence to practice that support employers in essential industries to reskill, upskill, retain staff and support future skills needs.
- Become the End Point Assessment (EPA) provider of choice for 60 apprenticeship standards. Developing assessments that validate the competence of apprentices at the end of their studies.
- Invested in the creation of T Levels that will eventually upskill hundreds of thousands of young people into key worker roles in industries such as Construction and Engineering, Management and admin and Land Based Services (agriculture and animal care).
- Created 'Step into' and 'Ready for' bitesized online courses to support people wanting or needing to change careers in sectors such as adult social care and construction.
- Acquired training providers Gen2 and Intertrain in recent years as part of our own investment in delivering the essential workers the country needs in the years ahead.

## Building and advocating for a high-quality skills education system that works for people at all ages and stages of their careers, whilst meeting the needs of industry

As a charity, we reinvest our profits back into the skills education system to drive up standards for the future.

- We act as a convener bringing together partners from across Government and the business and education worlds to develop a world class skills education system.
- We develop research pieces that identify issues and blockers in the labour market and skills education system and campaign for holistic whole system solutions.

## Removing barriers to getting a job:

- **Supporting prisoners back into work**  
We established the Future Skills Commission for Prisons, to help offenders develop the practical skills they need for lasting employment and, in the process, are helping employers fill skills gaps in industries such as construction and agriculture.
- **Our bursaries**  
Our bursary funding now directly responds to the huge skills shortages in sectors that are essential to the future of the UK and the growing number of jobs available that employers are finding difficult to fill. Focussing on sectors such as construction, building services, hospitality and manufacturing.

For the last 143 years City & Guilds has worked with Governments and industries to create the skilled workforces needed to meet the needs of businesses and economies across the world.

- **Supporting young people in apprenticeships**  
Our Apprentice Connect digital module exists to improve the information, advice and guidance offered to young people on apprenticeships.
- **Building confidence and resilience in our learners**  
Our Social Impact work shows that confidence and wellbeing improve alongside skills developed, and especially on gaining employment. That's why this is a key metric we track to hold ourselves accountable for meaningful change; are our learners building confidence, resilience and wellbeing as they complete our qualifications?

## Celebrating best practice on the job

- **Rewards and recognitions**  
One of the ways we can improve respect for people doing essential jobs is by recognising and rewarding best practice and excellence in training.
- We recognise the efforts of employers via our Princess Royal Training Awards and we celebrate the high standards of our Gen2 and Intertrain students as well as recognise those who have travelled the City & Guilds path through The Palace Awards and City & Guilds Fellowships.



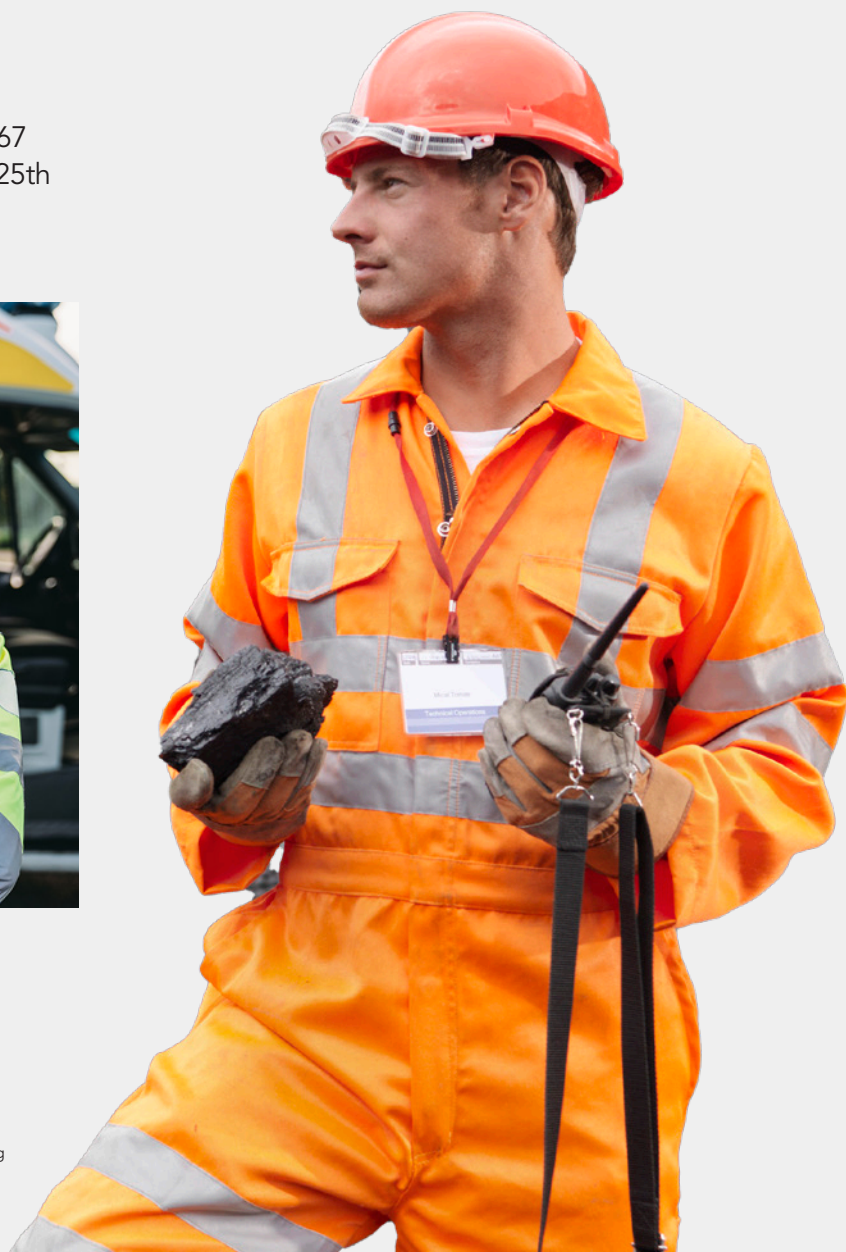
# Methodology

## Employers and Industries:

City & Guilds and Emsi Burning Glass created the Essential Worker list based on the Government's list of 'Essential Worker' roles for Covid-19 testing, published 25 February 2021<sup>11</sup>. Construction roles were added to this list in recognition of the current housing crisis and major infrastructure projects currently in the works.

Emsi Burning Glass translated these roles into the closest matching 4-digit SOC codes. This resulted in 181 SOC codes being classified as an Essential Worker – taking the total to 49% of all SOC codes.

For the consumer research, City & Guilds commissioned Opinium to survey 10,001 working age adults across the UK (aged 18-67 and not retired). Fieldwork took place from 25th November to 6th December 2021.



11. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/essential-workers-prioritised-for-covid-19-testing>



# About

## City & Guilds

For over 140 years we have worked with people, organisations and economies to help them identify and develop the skills they need to thrive. We understand the life changing link between skills development, social mobility, prosperity and success so everything we do is focused on developing and delivering high-quality training, qualifications and credentials that lead to jobs and meet the changing needs of industry.

We partner with our customers to deliver work-based learning programmes that build competency to support better prospects for people, organisations and wider society. We create flexible learning pathways that support lifelong employability, because we believe that people deserve the opportunity to (re)train and (re)learn again and again – gaining new skills at every stage of life, regardless of where they start.

Our City & Guilds Foundation activities amplify our purpose by helping to remove barriers to getting into a job, celebrating best practice on the job, and advocating for jobs of the future.

The City & Guilds community of brands includes Gen2, ILM, Intertrain, Kineo and The Oxford Group.



Believe you can

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City & Guilds In-House Design Team

## Emsi Burning Glass

Emsi Burning Glass is the world's leading authority on job skills, workforce talent, and labour market dynamics.

With engineers and data specialists collecting and analysing data from thousands of job boards, company websites, online resumes, employee profiles, and traditional government sources, the company produces the most comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the labour market available.

Organisations across the globe use Emsi Burning Glass market research, analytical software, and data expertise to better understand their own workforce and identify skilled and diverse talent for future growth.

Headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, and Moscow, Idaho, Emsi Burning Glass is active in more than 30 countries and has offices in the United Kingdom, Italy, New Zealand, and India.





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