

Hospitality

Sector demand landscape

- Hospitality services employs about [2.6 million people \(7% of the UK workforce\)](#) and [contributes ~£62.6 billion of GVA](#) (~2.8% of the economy).
- As of November 2025 there were [about 77,000 vacancies in hospitality services, implying ~£2.2 billion of lost output](#) if those roles remain unfilled.
- [Skills shortages are a persistent constraint](#) reported by UK employers, with hospitality among the sectors most affected; this coincides with rising automation of routine service roles, intensifying the need for upskilling.
- [Productivity in hospitality services is among the lowest in the economy](#) and has seen weak growth, leaving firms exposed to cost and margin pressures.

The business case for Hospitality engagement in careers education

Employers in the Hospitality sector were less likely to achieve eight out of the nine Standards compared to other employers. The only Standard they outperformed on was:

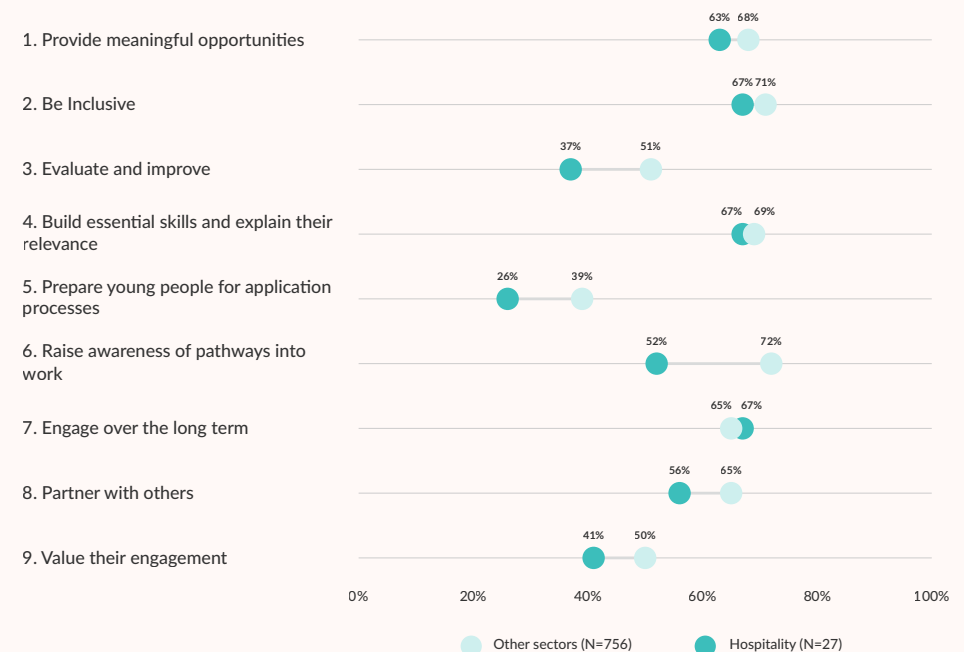
- **Standard 7:** Engage over the long term (+2%pts vs other sectors).

Areas that would particularly benefit from attention include:

- **Standard 6:** Raise awareness of pathways into work (-21%pts vs other sectors)
- **Standard 5:** Prepare young people for the application processes (-13%pts vs other sectors)
- **Standard 9:** Value the engagement (-10%pts vs other sectors). As shown in Insight 3 of our main report, a connection with strategy delivers better outcomes.

Fig 1: Employers in the Hospitality sector were most likely to achieve Standards 5, 6, 7, and 9

% of Employers achieving or exceeding each standard in the Hospitality sector compared to employers in other sectors



Source: Employer Standards data, end of September 2025 (N=783; Hospitality, N=27).

Despite persistent skills shortages and capacity challenges, most employers in this sector agreed that engaging in careers education with schools and colleges helped them to:

- **encourage young people to apply for jobs in the sector** (85% reported this benefit)
- **apply for roles in the business** (85% reported this benefit)
- **develop new talent pipelines** (85% reported this benefit)

Most employers in the hospitality sector also agree that **young people's essential employability skills are improving** because of their careers outreach (67% reported this benefit)

Young people's interest in the industry and confidence in their Essential Skills

Moderate engagement from the Hospitality sector is reflected in the interest from young people: **4% of Year 11 students express a desire to work in the sector.**

Among the most popular roles for aspiring hospitality professionals are:

- hospitality/food preparation (44%)
- sales & marketing roles (29%)
- customer service (21%)

There is a slight gender disparity: girls are more likely to be interested in this sector (5%, vs 3% for boys).

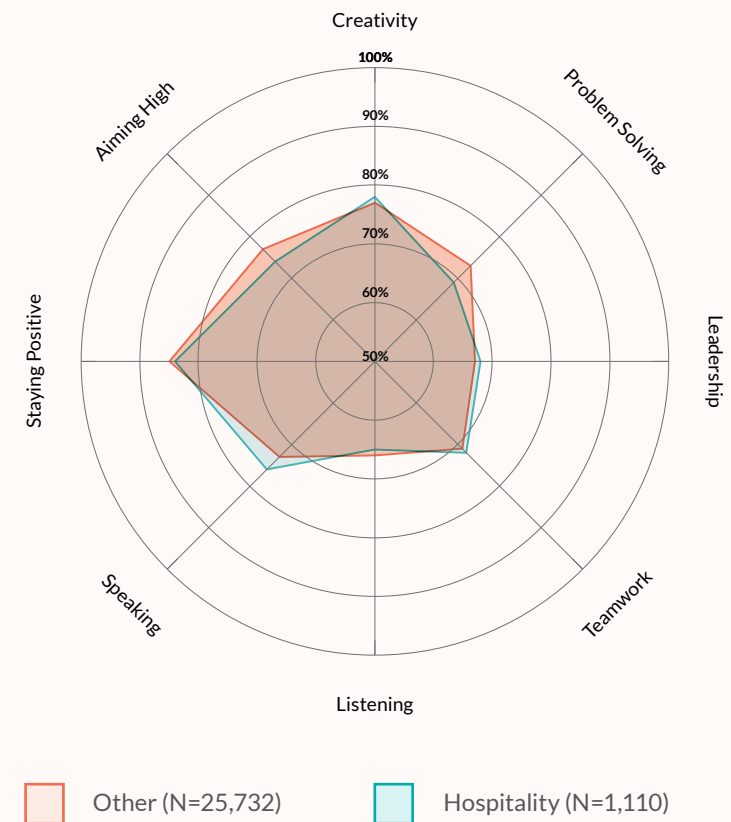
Overall, employers who help young people practise and progress essential skills in workplace experiences are 72% more likely to say that that young people's employability skills are improving as a result of their engagement.

According to Future Skills Questionnaire data, young people in year 11 interested in Hospitality are more often confident than their peers in **Speaking** (+3%pts) and **Leadership** (+1%pt). However, they are less likely to feel confident in other skills, in particular **Problem Solving** (-4%pts) and **Aiming High** (-3%pts).

[To see the full insights, including other industry snapshots, click here](#)

Fig 2: Young people interested in the sector are more likely than their peers to be confident in Speaking and Leadership

% of Year 11 young people saying they are confident in each Essential Skill



Source: Future Skills Questionnaire data, end of July 2025 (Year 11 responding to the industry/career question, N=26,842)