

Digital and Technologies

Sector demand landscape

- [2.18m workers in the Digital sector](#) (6.4% of the UK workforce), its [projected growth is of 380,000 workers by 2035](#).
- Only 16% of programmers, and just 22% of AI professionals in UK government are women, with 40,000–60,000 women leaving tech and digital roles annually.
- [Digital skills are increasingly important in the modern economy](#), with basic digital skills being important to the majority (92%) of employers. [Basic digital skills are set to become the UK's largest skills gap by 2030 and there is a particular opportunity gap in this sector for recruits from under-represented groups](#).
- Structural barriers to uptake include complex pathways (certifications, portfolios, apprenticeships), uneven entry routes, and regional access disparities.

The business case for Digital and Technologies engagement in careers education

Employers in the Digital and Technologies sector showed, on average, a higher level of achievement in all Standards with particular strengths in:

- **Standard 4:** Build Essential Skills (+10%pts vs other sectors) with particular focus on Problem Solving (95%, +13%pts vs other sectors)
- **Standard 9:** Value the engagement (+18%pts vs other sectors): employers in this sector tend to be clear on the business case for engagement in helping address the workforce challenges.

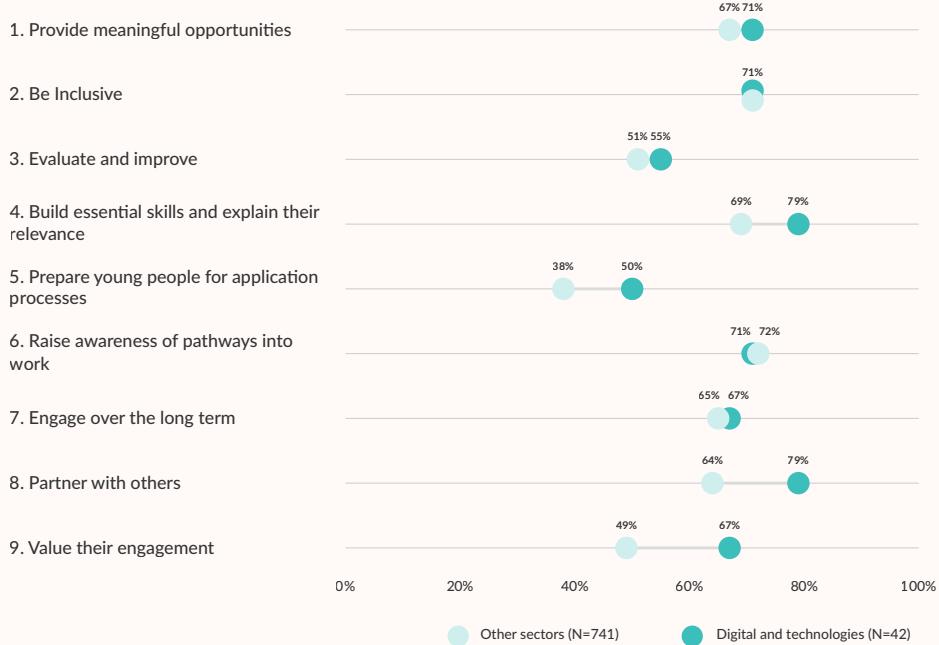
Amidst the skills shortages and capacity challenges, having a strategy in careers education with schools and colleges helped most employers in the sector to:

- **encourage young people to apply for jobs in the sector** (93% reported this benefit)
- **develop new talent pipelines** (76% reported this benefit)

The majority of Digital and Technologies employers agree that **young people are becoming more career ready** (83%) and that **their skills have been improving** (76%) as a result of their careers outreach.

Fig 1: Employers in the Digital and Technologies sector were more likely to achieve Standards 4 and 9

% of Employers achieving or exceeding each standard in the Digital and Technologies compared to employers in other sectors



Source: Employer Standards data, end of September 2025 (N=783; Digital and Technologies, N=42);

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

This strong engagement from the Digital and Technologies sector is also reflected in the significant interest from young people: **9% of Year 11 students express a desire to work in the sector.**

The most popular sectors for aspiring Digital and Technologies professionals are:

- Research/science (22%)
- Finance/banking (19%)
- Media/broadcasting (18%)

Notably, there is a marked gender disparity: boys are far more likely to be interested in this sector (12% vs 2% for girls).

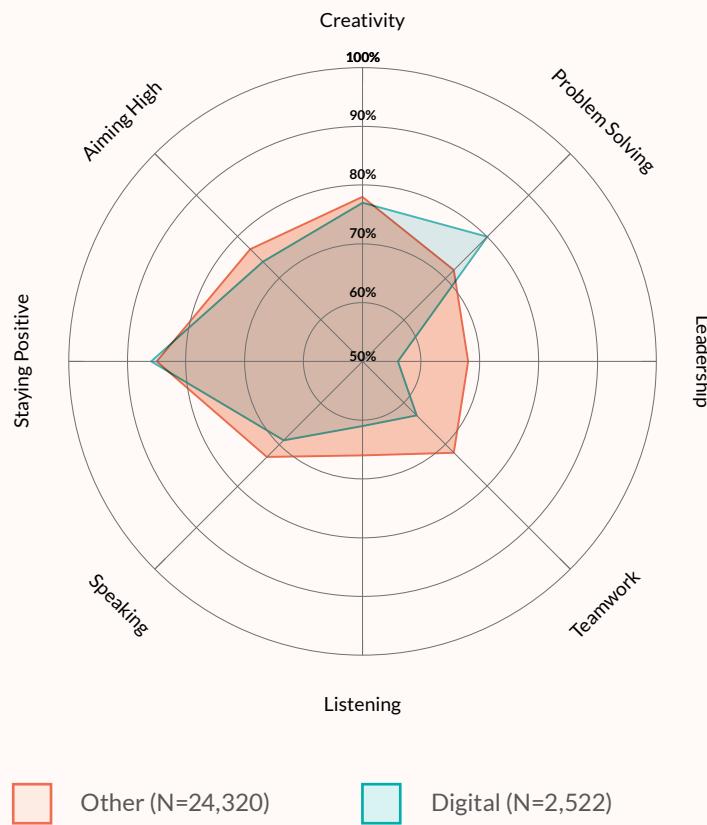
Overall, employers who help young people practise and progress essential skills in workplace experiences are 72% more likely to say that that young people's employability skills are improving as a result of their engagement.

According to Future Skills Questionnaire data, young people in year 11 interested in Digital and Technologies are more often confident than their peers in **Problem Solving** (+8%pts), but less often in **Leadership** (-12%pts) and **Teamwork** (-10%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 Problem Solving

% 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)