

Construction

Sector demand landscape

- There are 2 million jobs in the construction industry (6% of the UK workforce).
- The sector faces persistent challenges in recruitment, with over 47,000 extra workers needed each year, and a projected need of 240,000 workers over the next five years.
- The barriers to filling vacancies include lack of essential employment skills amidst increasing needs for digital competencies, leading to an increasing average age of the workforce.
- Construction is the sector most affected by skill shortages.

The business case for Construction engagement in careers education

- **Standard 5:** Prepare young people for application processes (+19%pts vs other sectors)
- **Standard 6:** Raise awareness of pathways into work (+15%pts vs other sectors)
- **Standard 4:** Build essential skills and explain their relevance (+9%pts vs other sectors)

Engagement in these Standards is crucial to address the workforce challenges faced by employers in this sector. There is an opportunity to focus more on Standard 3: Evaluate and improve (-5%pts) to increase the effectiveness of the activities they deliver.

Amidst the workforce crisis, skills shortages and the adoption of new technologies, engagement in careers education with schools and colleges helped most employers in the sector to:

- **encourage young people to apply** for jobs in the sector (92% reported this benefit)
- **bring apprentices into the organisation** (85% reported this benefit)
- **close the skills gap** (79% reported this benefit)

These outcomes mirror strong engagement in Standards 4, 5 and 6

Fig 1: Employers in the Construction sector were most likely to achieve Standards 4, 5 and 6

% of Employers achieving or exceeding each Standard in the Construction sector compared to employers in other sectors

1. Provide meaningful opportunities

67% 73%

2. Be Inclusive

69% 80%

3. Evaluate and improve

46% 52%

4. Build essential skills and explain their relevance

68% 77%

5. Prepare young people for application processes

36%

55%

6. Raise awareness of pathways into work

70%

84%

7. Engage over the long term

64%

65%

8. Partner with others

64%

68%

9. Value their engagement

0%

20%

40%

60%

80%

100%

Other sectors (N=675)

Construction (N=108)

Source: Employer Standards data, end of September 2025 (N=783; Construction sector, N=108)

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

We see the strong engagement from the Construction sector reflected in the interest from young people, with **11% of Year 11 students expressing a desire to work in the sector**.

The most popular roles are:

- builder/electrician/plumber (55%)
- engineer (47%)
- design (21%)

Notably, there is a marked gender disparity: boys are significantly more likely to be interested in this sector (19%, vs 3% for girls).

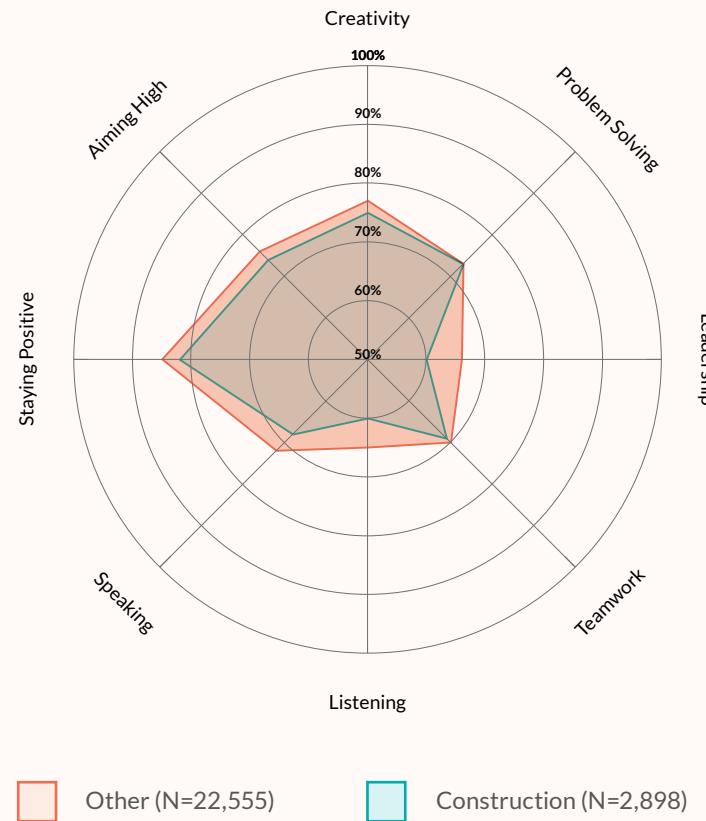
Overall, employers who help young people practise and progress essential skills in workplace experiences are 72% more likely to say that that young people's employability skills are improving as a result of their engagement.

According to Future Skills Questionnaire data, young people in year 11 who are interested in Construction sector are less often confident in their Essential Skills, in particular, Leadership (-7%pts) and Listening (-7%pts), except Problem Solving, which is on par with the general population. These figures may be prompting the strong engagement of employers in Standard 4, with a larger proportion of sector employers focusing on building Leadership (71%, +21%pts compared to other employers).

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

Fig 2: Young people interested in the sector are as likely as their peers to be confident in Problem Solving, but less likely in other Essential Skills

% 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)