

## CCSA Briefing Note - Assessment of priority skills to 2030

Thursday, 2 October 2025

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### Summary

On Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> August, Skills England released research and analysis on [Assessment of priority skills to 2030](#). **The report examines the future direct employment demand across 10 key sectors – including Advanced Manufacturing and Clean Energy Industries – critical to the Government’s [Industrial Strategy](#) and [Plan for Change](#). It also identifies the education pathways associated with priority occupations in these sectors.**

Skills England suggests that this report is an initial assessment that offers valuable insight to help target training where it can best support employment in jobs delivering on Government and industry priorities. **It aims to bring together sector-specific estimates in a consistent way to inform Department for Education (DfE) policymaking and shape the wider skills system.**

Whilst Skills England has estimated future employment demand by sector and key priority occupations, they note these figures are not precise forecasts and should be viewed as indicative. Acknowledging these uncertainties, the analysis presents several key findings:

- Employment demand:
  - Employment demand in priority occupations across the 10 sectors is expected to increase by 0.9 million by 2030.
  - For Clean Energy Industries, most additional employment in priority occupations requires workers with level 2 or 3 qualifications, whereas for Advanced Manufacturing the majority will require Level 4 or above.
  - **In Clean Energy Industries, priority occupations represent a small share of whole-sector demand – additional employment in this sector is expected to grow by 77% between 2025 and 2030.**
  - **Additional employment in Advanced Manufacturing is not expected to grow between 2025 and 2030.**
  - Occupations in Construction and Engineering are expected to see some of the greatest additional employment between 2025 and 2030.
- Current education supply:
  - 285,000 people enter priority occupations from the skills system each year.
  - **Apprenticeships in engineering and manufacturing technologies, and construction, have some of the highest shares of employed learners in priority occupations.**
  - **In a number of sectors, including engineering, over two thirds of employed recent higher education graduates are working in priority occupations.**
  - **Among further education courses, those in engineering and construction have the highest proportion of recent leavers employed in priority occupations.**

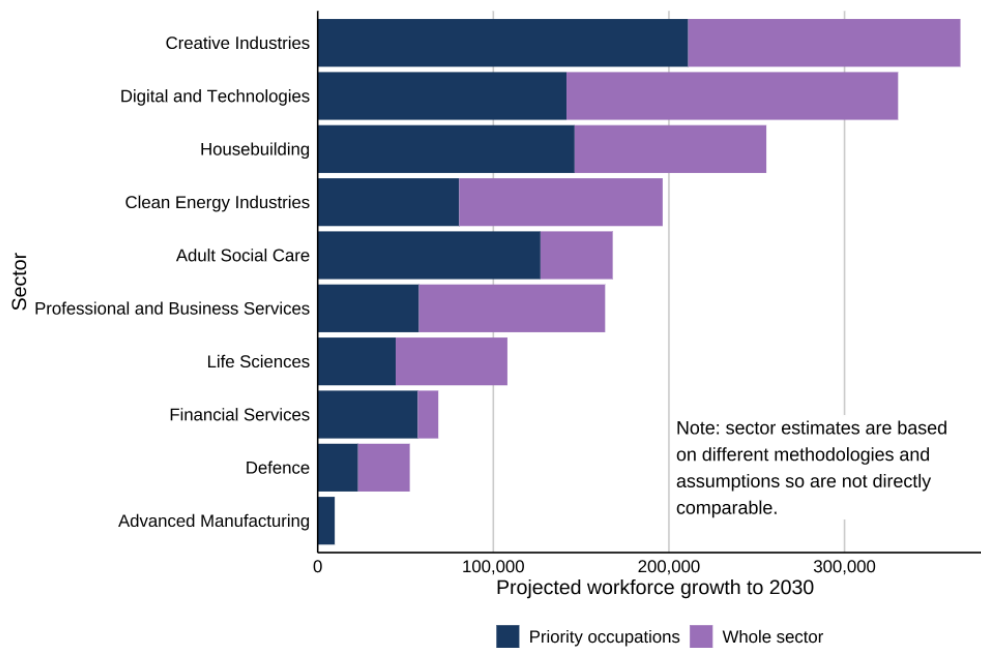
**Further Details: Employment demand to 2030**

In 2025 there are expected to be an estimated 14.8 million people in employment across the 10 priority sectors, just under half (45%) of the total UK workforce in 2024 – **with employment demand in priority occupations in these sectors expected to increase by almost 0.9 million from 2025 to 2030** (as demonstrated in Figure 1).

Skills England’s analysis includes projected additional employment by sector between 2025 and 2030. **Clean Energy Industries show one of the largest increases, with employment expected to grow by 77%, the fastest of all sectors.** Growth in the priority occupations makes up a relatively small proportion of the total growth in Clean Energy Industries (41% of all additional employment).

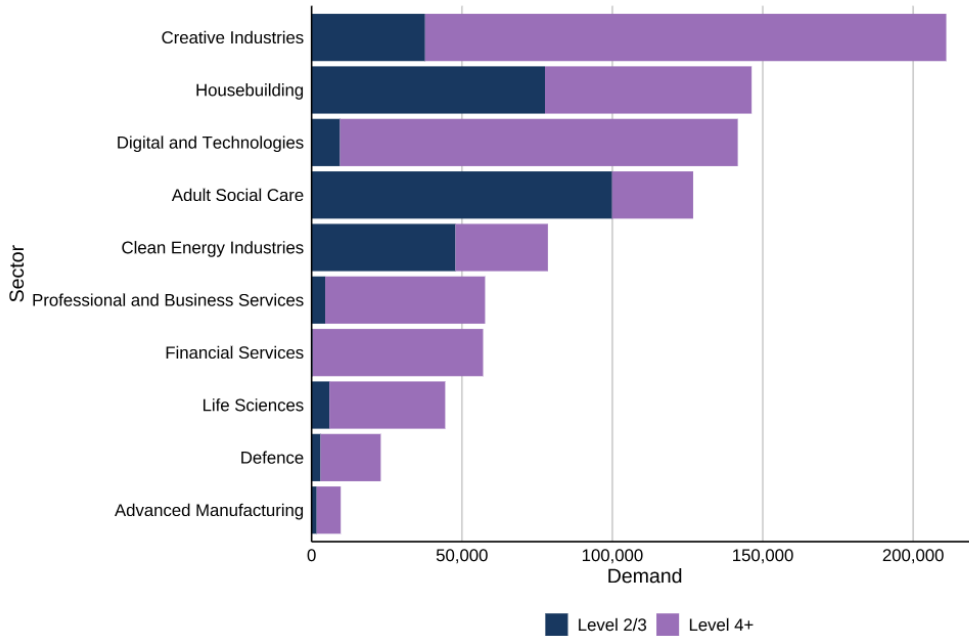
**In contrast, Advanced Manufacturing is expected to see no growth in whole sector employment;** however, output is expected to rise through productivity improvements driven by upskilling, increased business investment, and technological advances.

Figure 1: Contribution of each sector to overall additional employment demand between 2025 and 2030



As shown in the Figure 2, most projected additional employment in priority occupations within **Clean Energy Industries** will require **Level 2 or 3 qualifications (61%)**, while in **Advanced Manufacturing**, the majority will require **Level 4 or above**.

Figure 2: Additional employment in priority occupations between 2025 and 2030 by expected education level



Across all priority sectors, the 20 occupations predicted to see the most growth over the next five years include engineering, construction and trades roles – as highlighted in Figure 3:

Figure 3: Additional employment between 2025 and 2030 across all sectors – top 20 occupations (excludes health occupations)



### **Further Detail: Education supply for priority occupations**

Skills England estimate that **285,000** recent education leavers enter priority occupations from the skills system in England each year, including:

- 31% through an apprenticeship pathway
  - **57% of recent apprenticeship starts aligned to a priority occupation. Among those who complete these apprenticeships and enter employment, an estimated 80% will work in a priority occupation – this is highest in sectors including ‘Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies’, and ‘Construction, Planning, and the Built Environment’.**
- 17% from further education
  - **‘Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies’ and ‘Construction, Planning and the Built Environment’ have the highest shares of further education learners entering priority occupations, at 64% and 46% respectively.**
- 51% through a higher education pathway
  - **Among higher education subjects, 68% of ‘Engineering’ graduates enter priority occupations, ranking it within the top 10 first-degree (level 6) subjects for priority occupation employment.**

Around two thirds (65%) of all these learners enter priority occupations with qualifications at level 4 and above, aligning with the expected education requirements for these roles.

### **Next steps**

Skills England highlight the following next steps in their conclusion of the report:

- The DfE is developing a Post-16 Education and Skills Strategy, outlining a long-term vision for the skills system and its role in delivering the Government’s ‘Plan for Change’. **It will set out how data supplied by Skills England will inform future skill system decisions.**
- The report notes that it captures only part of future skills needs, with further work planned by Skills England to explore **further skills required beyond priority occupations; specialised and emerging roles; and evolving skills needs within different occupations.**
- Due to uncertainties in employment estimates, **Skills England will refine its methodology and expand analysis of skills needs to cover national, sectoral, and regional levels.**