

# UK Impact Report



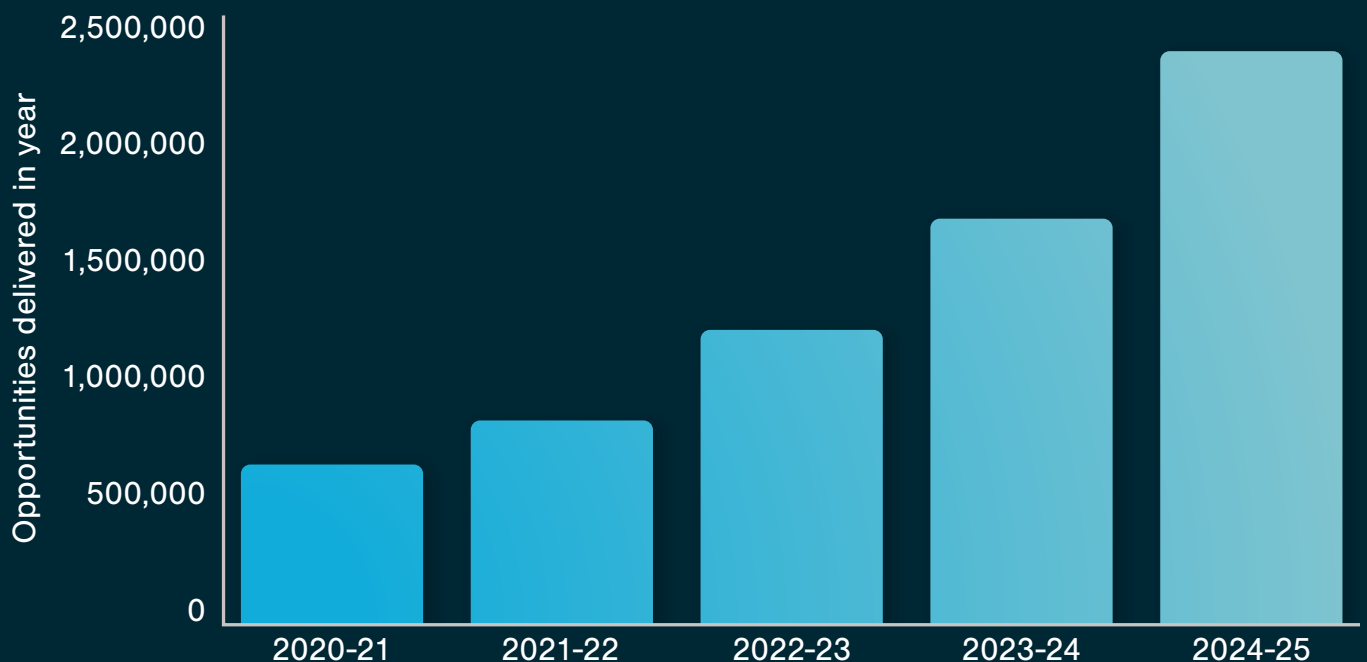
# 2025



# One day, everyone will build the essential skills to succeed

In the UK, **898** Skills Builder partners delivered more than **2,370,000** high quality opportunities to build essential skills in the past year.

Since 2020, this has totalled more than **6,760,000** high quality opportunities.





## Tom Ravenscroft

Founder & Global CEO  
Skills Builder Partnership

For seventeen years, Skills Builder has been driven by the mission to ensure that one day, everyone builds the essential skills to succeed.

The world around us is changing at an unprecedented pace, particularly with the acceleration of technological change. Our research shows that essential skills are critical for confident and effective use of new tools like AI. These are the human skills that enable us to adapt, collaborate, and innovate.

This UK Impact Report captures that in the last year, more than **2,370,000 individuals** have had the opportunity to boost their essential skills through Skills Builder approved programmes from our **898 UK partners**.

These partners span education institutions, employers and impact organisations - a crucial aspect of our commitment to collective impact as the only way to really achieve our mission.

More than **6,760,000 opportunities** to build essential skills using the original Universal Framework have been delivered in the UK since its launch in 2020.

This year saw the launch of the second iteration of our Universal Framework. It represents a deeper, more refined understanding of how essential skills are built and measured, ensuring our work remains at the cutting edge.

This year has also seen a key strategic development for us: the decision to separate our UK and global work. After 17 years, we've grown to a point where dedicating distinct divisions to these two areas will allow us to accelerate our impact in both.

In the UK we are seeing real, systemic shifts. It is encouraging to see Skills Builder included in new statutory guidance for England, to witness growing attention on speaking and listening skills, and to see the Fair Education Alliance making the closing of essential skill gaps a core focus. These are not isolated events; they are clear signs that the conversation is changing at a national level.

Looking back to the launch of the Universal Framework in 2020, I am filled with pride at what we have achieved together. The momentum across our work is stronger than ever. The health of Skills Builder UK is testament to the dedication of our partners and our team. As we look ahead to 2030, I am more excited than ever about the potential we have to truly embed essential skills as a core part of everyone's life journey.

Thank you for being part of this remarkable movement. I am excited to see what we can achieve in the year ahead.

# Essential skills and why they matter

For seventeen years, Skills Builder has been at the forefront of a movement to define and champion the essential skills that are critical for success in education, employment, and life. These are the highly transferable skills that everyone needs to do almost any job, supporting the use of technical skills and knowledge.

The eight skills in the Universal Framework are:



Building these skills has a transformative impact. Our research has shown that higher levels of essential skills can **boost annual earnings by up to £4,600** and **reduce the likelihood of being out of work or training by 25-50%**. Beyond economic gains, these skills are also as strong a predictor of job and life satisfaction as income. For young people, the value is clear: **91% see them as key to being successfully recruited**. Overall, addressing the gap in essential skills could unlock a potential value of **£22.2 billion per year for the UK economy**.

Despite these profound benefits, opportunities to build essential skills are not distributed fairly, leading to a persistent **'skills trap'**. This is a cycle where individuals from less advantaged backgrounds often have fewer opportunities to develop these skills, resulting in lower skill levels. This, in turn, can lead to lower-paid jobs with fewer opportunities for further skill development, ultimately impacting their career and life satisfaction. Our mission is to break this cycle and ensure that everyone, everywhere, has the chance to build the essential skills they need to succeed.



# Skills Builder and the Universal Framework



## A Step-by-step model

Underpinning our mission is the **Skills Builder Universal Framework**, a powerful, shared language for building essential skills. The Framework is designed to be a clear, practical guide for everyone, from the youngest learner to the most experienced professional. Its true strength lies in how it breaks down each of the eight essential skills into 16 teachable and measurable steps. By defining what it looks like to progress in each skill, from a foundational level all the way to mastery, the Framework provides a roadmap for skills development.

## Easy assessment and application

For educators and trainers, we go a step further. We provide granular detail on how to teach and assess each of these individual skill steps. Our tools and resources offer a rich bank of guidance, examples, and activities, ensuring that educators can confidently embed essential skills into any curriculum or programme, whether it's through a classroom lesson, a workplace training session, or a community project. This detailed approach ensures that skills building is not an add-on but an integrated, measurable part of a person's learning journey.

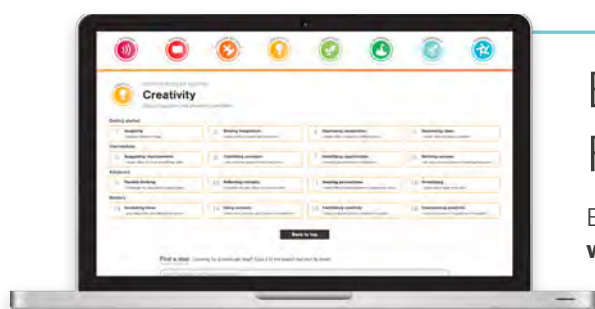


## Training and learning content

To make this a reality for our partners, we offer a complete suite of training, tools, and resources. Our platforms are designed to make it simple to plan, deliver, and track progress, while our dedicated support and training sessions empower our partners to become experts in building essential skills. This comprehensive approach is what enables our partners to create high-quality, impactful opportunities at scale.

## A partnership working together

We are a Partnership, a collective of thousands of educators, impact organisations, and employers across the UK, all committed to this shared mission. We believe that by working together, we can ensure every individual builds the essential skills to succeed. In the following pages, we will explore the incredible work being done by each of these partner groups and the impact we are creating together.



## Explore the Universal Framework

Explore the Universal Framework for yourself online at [www.skillsbuilder.uk/framework](https://www.skillsbuilder.uk/framework)



# EDUCATORS

## Overview

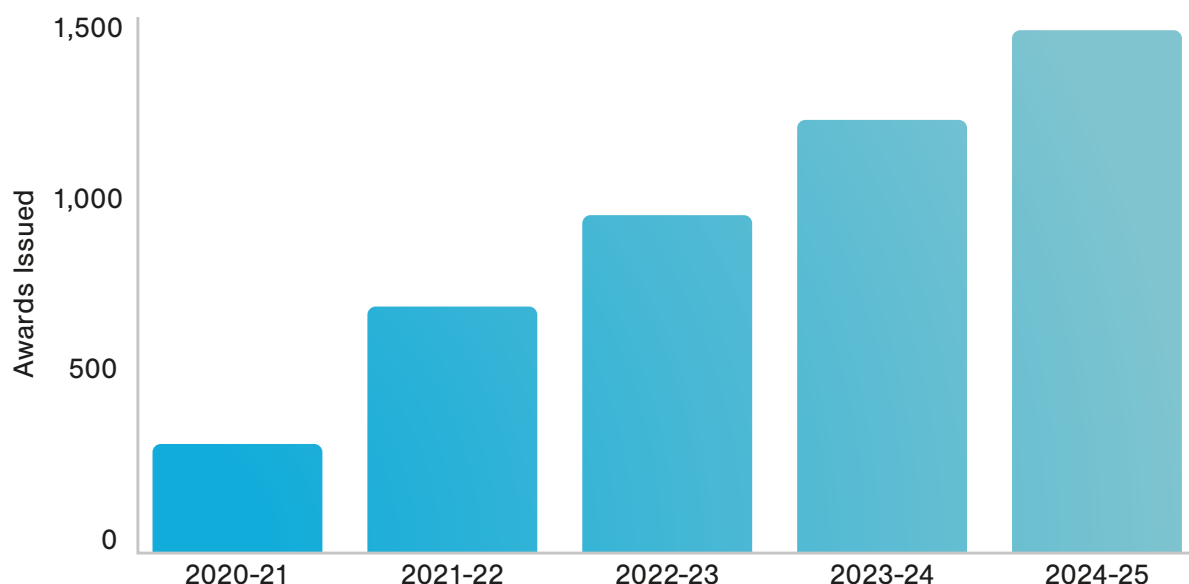
In the UK during 2020-25:



1,469

UK education Institutions issued with Skills Builder Awards for best practice 2020-25

UK Education Institutions issued with Skills Builder Awards



In 2024-25:



Number of learners reached:

218,895



Number of educators trained and supported:

18,535



80%+







Proportion of UK secondary schools and colleges reached by Skills Builder partners.



# Our approach

At the heart of our work with educators in the UK is a set of six principles, refined over a decade of research and practical experience, that define what excellent essential skills education looks like. These principles provide a clear, actionable guide for schools and colleges seeking to embed our approach.

The six principles are:

- |   |                                   |  |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|
|    | <b>1. Keep it simple</b>          | Using a consistent language and approach to essential skills across the entire institution.    |
|    | <b>2. Start early, keep going</b> | Ensuring skills building is a continuous process from the earliest years through to adulthood. |
|    | <b>3. Measure it</b>              | Bringing rigour to skills development through consistent measurement and assessment.           |
|   | <b>4. Focus tightly</b>           | Deliberately teaching and practicing skills in a focused manner to ensure real progress.       |
|  | <b>5. Teach directly</b>          | Providing regular opportunities for learners to apply their skills in different contexts.      |
|  | <b>6. Bring it to life</b>        | Making skills relevant by connecting them to the real world and real-life challenges.          |

We recognise and celebrate the schools and colleges that are successfully applying these principles through the **Skills Builder Awards**. Institutions can achieve a Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award, demonstrating their commitment and success in embedding essential skills education across their curriculum. These awards are a public acknowledgement of the high-quality practice that is transforming outcomes for their learners.



**Skills Builder**  
*Bronze Award*



**Skills Builder**  
*Silver Award*



**Skills Builder**  
*Gold Award*

To help schools and colleges achieve these awards, we offer the **Skills Builder Accelerator programme**. This is our flagship education programme, providing dedicated, structured support to help institutions implement a complete strategy for building essential skills. Partnering with a dedicated Skills Builder Education Associate—a qualified teacher—schools and colleges develop a long-term plan, upskill their staff, and use our tools and resources to achieve demonstrable student progress. The Accelerator is a proven path to achieving a Skills Builder Award, ensuring that our partners have all the support they need to create sustainable, impactful change for their learners.

# Impact on learners

## How we measure impact

We use educator assessments of learner progress as our primary means of understanding the impact of the Skills Builder Accelerator programme over the course of the year.

Educators complete these assessments through Skills Builder Hub, identifying the extent to which learners in their classes are able to demonstrate each step of the essential skills. This gives an overall skill score (0-16) which can be tracked over time.

## How programmes accelerate impact

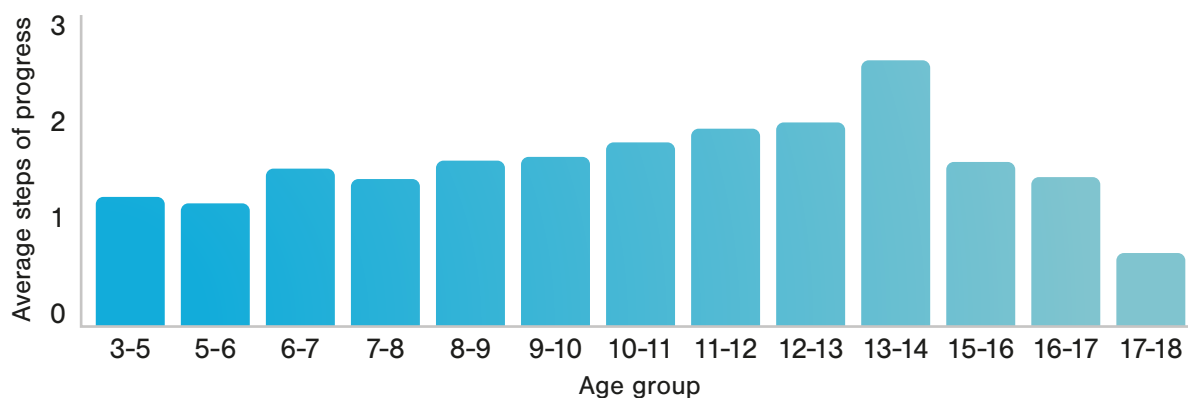
This year, we were able to demonstrate that learners made accelerated progress in their essential skills, as measured by educators, compared to individuals who had not taken part in a Skills Builder programme:



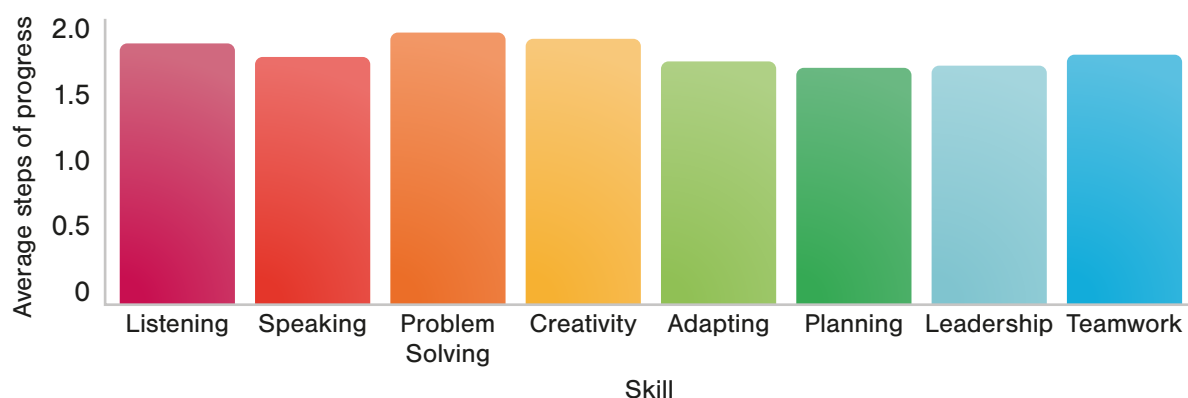
We have been tracking our impact in this way since 2020, and have seen notable consistency in the levels of progress that are made by learners who are not in Skills Builder programmes over that time. It has been good to see continued progress year-on-year in the additional progress made through Skills Builder programmes as a result of refining our training and learning resources.

We have been able to demonstrate accelerated progress across all year groups and each of the eight skills.

### Progress by age - Accelerator



### Progress by skill - Accelerator





# Impact on educators and institutions

## Our impact on educators

The impact that our education programmes have on individual learners is all due to the dedication and commitment of the educators we train and support with learning materials. In the last year, we trained and supported **10,035 educators** through our Accelerator programme.

We particularly work with a Skills Leader in each school or college who becomes the champion and driving force behind Skills Builder in their institution. The Skills Leader benefits from training from Skills Builder, peer learning with their cohort of other Skills Leaders, and regular planning meetings to support them to embed the best practice principles across the institution for the benefit of all the learners.

In 2024-25:

**95%**

of educators said their confidence teaching essential skills had grown

**94%**

of educators had seen their learners progress in essential skills

## Our impact on institutions

We were pleased to announce **256 new Skills Builder Awards in 2024-25**, representing schools and colleges who had demonstrated great progress in embedding best practice principles across their institutions.



**107**

Bronze Awards



**94**

Silver Awards



**49**

Gold Awards



**16**

Flagship Awards

## Our impact on the education system

We are glad to continue to support strengthening how essential skills are built across the education system, with a particular focus on England:

- **Statutory Guidance for Careers Education:** The latest guidance advocates building essential skills using the Universal Framework.
- **Careers & Enterprise Company:** The CEC continues to strengthen the case for essential skills through its work, particularly the Future Skills Questionnaire which this year tracked 300,000 learners' performance against age-related expectations in essential skills, defined using the Universal Framework.
- **Curriculum & Assessment Review:** We were pleased to contribute to the Review with many partners and to see its commitment to 'develop a cutting-edge curriculum, equipping children and young people with the essential knowledge and skills which will enable them to adapt and thrive in the world and workplace of the future'.
- **Ofsted Guidance:** The new inspection framework incorporates developing essential skills including speaking and listening as an expectation of education.

# Horizon Care & Education



**Skills Builder**  
*Silver Award*

## Introduction

Horizon Care & Education Group is a growing provider of specialist education for young people aged 5-19 with special educational needs (SEN). The Group has an integrated team of therapists who work alongside experienced teachers and SENCOs to deliver personalised and inclusive learning experiences. Over the past two years, Horizon has embedded the Universal Framework across its education division enabling schools to progress from a Bronze to a Silver Skills Builder Award.

## Challenge

The ambition was for every learner to leave with essential skills for life, learning, and work. Leaders recognised that to achieve this, skill development needed to be simple, consistent, and visible in every setting. Horizon wanted staff confident in teaching essential skills, and learners to see why Listening, Problem Solving, and Teamwork matters for their future.

## Approach

To bring this vision to life, Horizon incorporated the Universal Framework into the fabric of school life. Essential skills became part of the common language, reinforced through visuals and feedback stamps in learners' books.

Staff development was central. Every educator received initial training, followed by regular continuing professional development to keep skills at the heart of teaching. A Group wide training day brought together skills leaders from all 12 schools. The day provided a chance to reflect on impact, share best practice, and create tailored action plans. Leaders left feeling inspired, more confident, and equipped with strategies to embed skills even further.

Teachers used the Skills Builder Hub to track progress each term. Curriculum plans now embed essential skills, giving learners regular opportunities to practise them. Beyond the classroom, projects like the trust-wide Trash to Treasure week let students showcase creativity through recycled designs judged by industry professionals.

## Impact and Outcomes

Across the Group, the progress has been tangible. Staff report clearer planning and stronger links to skills and careers education. Learners now engage with essential skills daily, building confidence to apply them in and beyond school.

Looking ahead, Horizon is committed to building on this momentum to ensure every young person develops the skills they need to excel in further education, training, or employment. Plans include more challenge days, continued training, and deeper partnerships with employers. These steps will ensure learners continue to have meaningful opportunities to build the skills they need in preparation for adulthood.

“

Leading the Skills Builder programme across our organisation has been a defining highlight in the development of our careers provision. Skills Builder is now embedded as an integral part of all our school life, providing the thread that unites academic achievement, personal development and aspirational futures. We have received positive feedback in inspections and are excited to share the progress of the programme.



”

CHLOE O'MALLEY

HEAD OF CAREERS, HORIZON



“

Skills Builder has played an important role in supporting our learners with SEN at Brewood by breaking down essential skills into manageable steps. This clear framework has helped students build confidence, improve communication, and develop teamwork at a pace that meets their needs, preparing them for future learning and independence.

”

MICHELLE BRAYFORD

CAREER LEADER, BREWOOD SCHOOL





# IMPACT ORGANISATIONS

## Overview

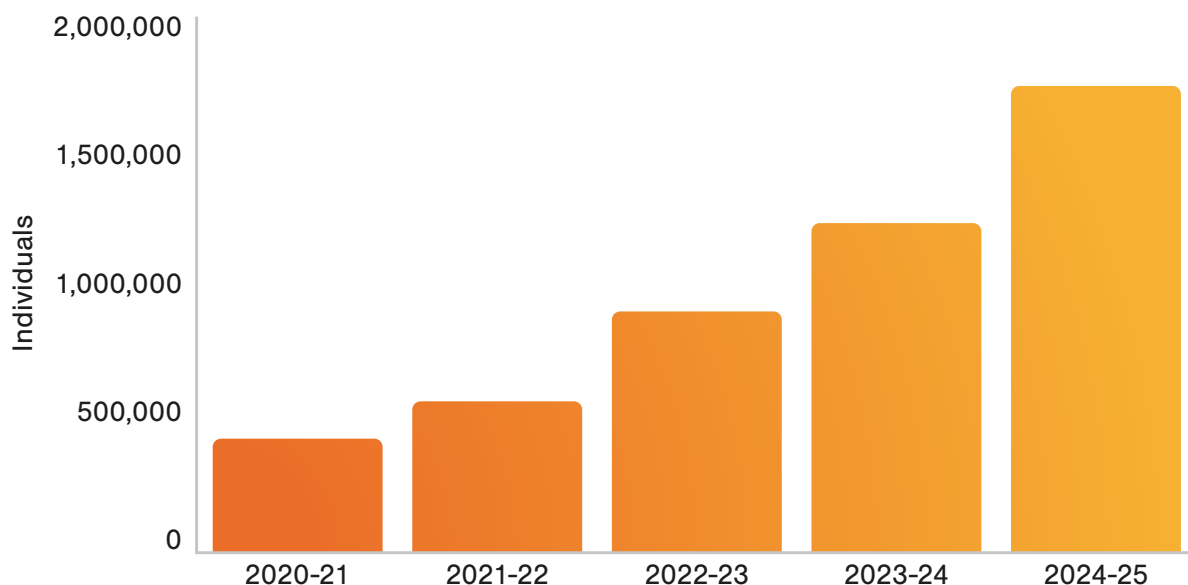
In the UK during 2020-25:



1,749,500

Individuals participated in Skills Builder Level 2-4 UK Programmes in 2024-25

Number of individuals on Skills Builder approved UK programmes (Levels 2-4)



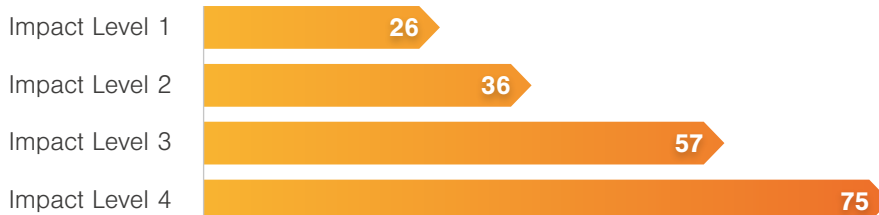
In 2024-25:



Number of UK Impact  
Organisation partners:

241

Number of UK approved programmes



# Our approach

At Skills Builder, we've long held the belief that our mission is only achievable through **collective impact**. For this reason, our approach with impact organisations is rooted in collaboration, bringing together a diverse network of charities and providers across the UK.

These organisations work in a wide range of areas, including employability, sport, arts, and youth provision. By aligning their efforts using the Universal Framework, our partners ensure that the individuals they support can build and apply their essential skills in different contexts, multiplying our collective impact.

To recognise these high-quality programmes, we have established four **Impact Levels**. These levels provide a clear, evidence-based scale for an organisation's work in building essential skills:



**Impact Level 1: Raising awareness:** Programmes at this level help individuals recognise and become more aware of the eight essential skills.



**Impact Level 2: Reflecting on skills:** These programmes enable individuals to reflect on their own skill levels and identify areas for development.



**Impact Level 3: Practising skills:** This level is for programmes that give individuals opportunities to apply and practice their skills in a tangible way.



**Impact Level 4: Progressing in skills:** Our highest level, this is for programmes that combine formative assessment with targeted instruction, leading to measurable progress.

We support our partners in achieving these levels through our **Impact Programme** and **Impact Academy**. These programmes help organisations to embed the Skills Builder approach into their programme design, refine their impact measurement, and train their staff and volunteers. Programmes that achieve an Impact Level are then recognised in our **Impact Directory**, showcasing high-quality opportunities and making it easier for educators and employers to find and collaborate with our partners.



## Explore: Impact Directory

Explore brilliant approved programmes from partners incorporating employability, volunteering, sports, arts and much more at **[www.skillsbuilder.uk/impact-directory](http://www.skillsbuilder.uk/impact-directory)**

# Impact

The last year has continued to build momentum from the journey we began five years ago with the launch of the Skills Builder Universal Framework in 2020. That initial step established a common language for essential skills; today, our focus with Impact Organisations is translating that language into deep, measurable outcomes at scale.

## Depth of Impact

We have been working to significantly increase the number of participants benefiting from programmes with proven deeper impact, specifically targeting **Impact Levels 2, 3, and 4**.

This collective effort ensures that tens of thousands more individuals are not just more aware of essential skills, but are systematically understanding their own essential skills, putting them into practice, and making measurable progress as a result. It is this progress that will unlock the benefits of higher levels of essential skills: a reduction in the likelihood of being out of education, employment or training; significantly increased earnings across a lifetime; and higher job and life satisfaction.

We're pleased to report high levels of partner satisfaction and feedback:

**82%**

State their programme's impact has increased as a result of being in Skills Builder Partnership

**88%**

State they value being part of Skills Builder Partnership

**77%**

State that their confidence in building essential skills of others has increased

## Breadth of reach

As well as deepening the impact of our work with impact organisations, the past year has also seen us achieve greater breadth than ever before in the individuals we have reached.

This year, we have been piloting work in the criminal justice sector, deepening our work with partners in secure settings and broadening this work to include partners within the adult and children's estates. This focus on essential skills supporting positive pathways to change and being a contributory factor to reducing reoffending has also been developed with a greater number of impact organisation partners delivering programmes in custody-based environments and within the community.

Greater breadth has also been achieved through adopting place-based approaches on a local and regional level. Working with key convening partners within a region - including local authority teams and regional partnerships - has been a driving force for connectivity and ensures the development of essential skills is aligned to local needs. This informed approach means programmes and interventions are accessed by a greater number of local residents, underpinned by a shared language.

Working with a broader range of impact organisation partners to achieve greater reach and deeper impact ensures essential skills are enriching outcomes for all individuals, in all contexts and at every age and stage.



# Partners

Over the last year, we have been pleased to work with 240 impact organisation partners in the UK to support them to use the Skills Builder Universal Framework to build essential skills:



# Blackpool Connected Futures



## Introduction

Connected Futures is a place-based grants programme launched by Youth Futures Foundation in 2022 to tackle youth employment challenges. In Blackpool, the programme is led by a partnership that brings together local knowledge and national expertise from across education and youth employability. The partnership is spearheaded by Right to Succeed, a charity bringing together young people, residents, and decision-makers, alongside Business in the Community, Blackpool and The Fylde College, Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT), Blackpool FC Community Trust, and Blackpool Council.

## Challenge

Once a thriving seaside resort, Blackpool now faces significant social and economic challenges. The town has some of the highest deprivation in England, the lowest life expectancy, and double the national unemployment rate. Business in the Community's Blackpool Town Prospectus: 2030 Agenda for Action highlighted that "aspirations in the town are frequently low". The Blackpool Connected Futures partnership came together to change this picture for young people, creating new opportunities and raising expectations.

## Approach

The Connected Curriculum, funded by Youth Futures Foundation, gives young people in Blackpool opportunities to build essential skills, with schools embedding the Universal Framework through the Accelerator to support reflection and progress.

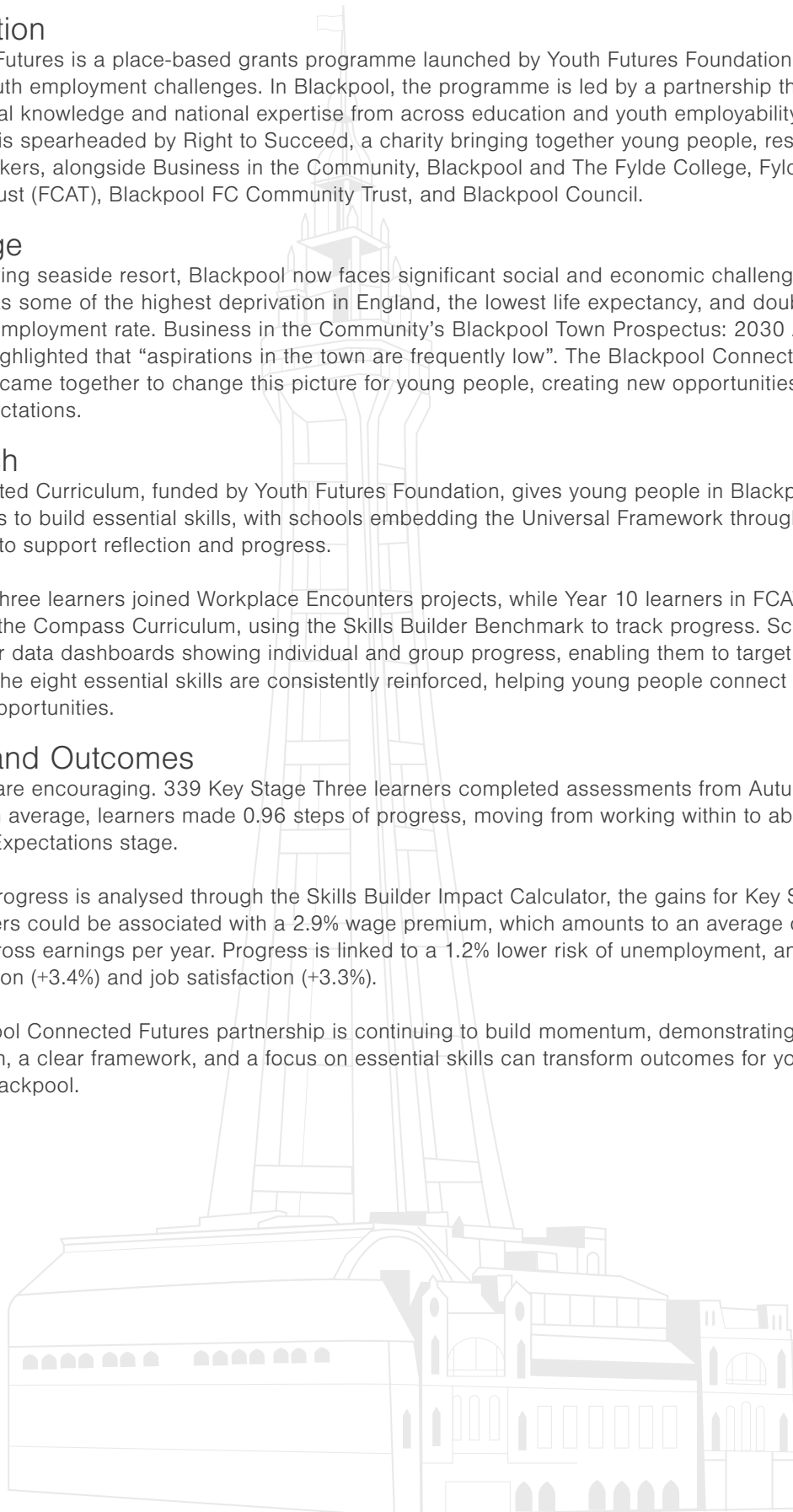
Key Stage Three learners joined Workplace Encounters projects, while Year 10 learners in FCAT schools engaged in the Compass Curriculum, using the Skills Builder Benchmark to track progress. Schools receive clear data dashboards showing individual and group progress, enabling them to target support effectively. The eight essential skills are consistently reinforced, helping young people connect learning to real-world opportunities.

## Impact and Outcomes

The results are encouraging. 339 Key Stage Three learners completed assessments from Autumn to Summer. On average, learners made 0.96 steps of progress, moving from working within to above the Exceeding Expectations stage.

When this progress is analysed through the Skills Builder Impact Calculator, the gains for Key Stage Three learners could be associated with a 2.9% wage premium, which amounts to an average of £955 in additional gross earnings per year. Progress is linked to a 1.2% lower risk of unemployment, and higher life satisfaction (+3.4%) and job satisfaction (+3.3%).

The Blackpool Connected Futures partnership is continuing to build momentum, demonstrating how collaboration, a clear framework, and a focus on essential skills can transform outcomes for young people in Blackpool.



“

Our school is developing a sharper focus on life skills and employability skills through our curriculum offer. Skills Builder is a way to look at those eight key essential skills. We are excited to work alongside Skills Builder to look at how we can roll this out to Key Stage 4 including how to promote, train staff, use resources on the platform, improve recording systems and allow students to become more self aware of their skills and how to develop them.

VIVIEN COUNSELL-THOMAS

CAREERS LEAD, EDUCATIONAL DIVERSITY

”



“

One of our aims through the Blackpool Connected Futures programme is to develop a consistent shared language around essential employability skills. We're proud of how partner schools and businesses have embraced the Skills Builder Framework.

JOANNA WALKER

PROGRAMME MANAGER BLACKPOOL,  
RIGHT TO SUCCEED

”





# EMPLOYERS

## Overview

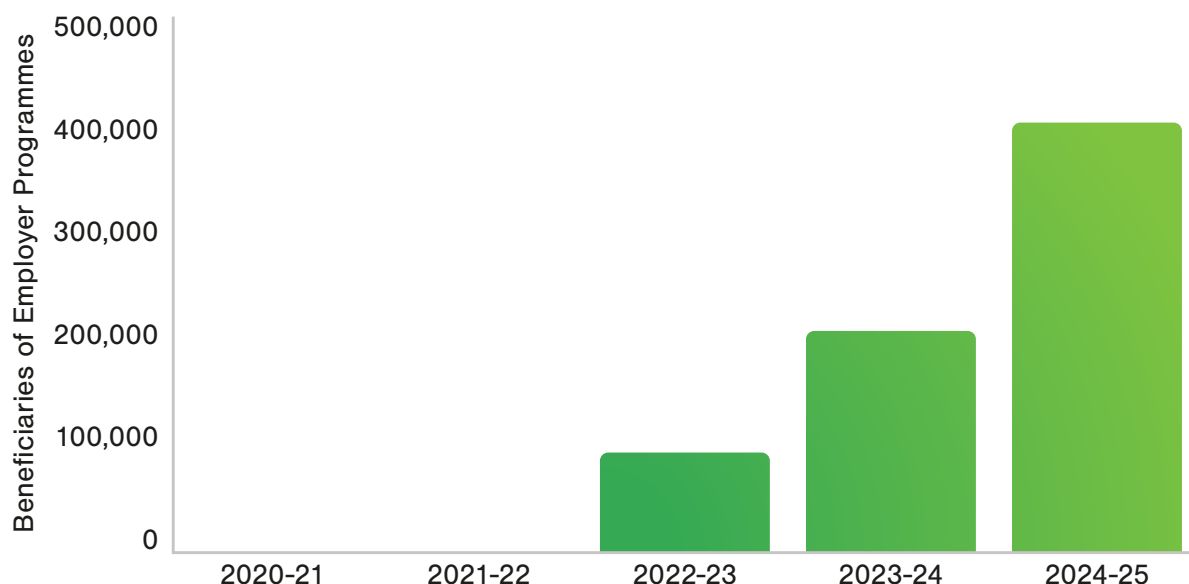
In the UK during 2020-25:



403,070

Individuals participated in Skills Builder approved UK Employer Programmes in 2024-25

### Reach of Employer Programmes



In 2024-25:



Total number of UK employer partners:

112



Number of UK employer partners working towards Excellence Marks:

61



Number of UK employer partners holding Excellence Marks:

18



# Our approach

We believe that building essential skills is a lifelong journey, and our work with employers is crucial to ensuring this journey continues beyond formal education. The Partnership has seen a growing number of businesses championing this cause, using the Skills Builder Universal Framework to join up the journey from the classroom into the workplace and throughout an individual's career. This approach helps employers to close skills gaps, attract and retain talent, and foster a more engaged workforce.

Our work with employers is focused on three key areas: **outreach, recruitment, plus learning and development.**



**Outreach:** Employers provide meaningful opportunities for young people and adults to build essential skills through volunteering and community programmes. This creates a virtuous circle of skills development, and embedding the framework into these activities has led to a 17% increase in CSR professionals reporting that their programmes effectively build essential skills.



**Recruitment:** Employers use the Universal Framework to ensure their hiring process is objective and transparent. By making this change, employers have seen a 23% improvement in their ability to recruit candidates with the skills they need.



**Learning and Development:** Employers use the framework to identify skill strengths and gaps within their workforce and provide opportunities for all employees to build these skills at every stage of their career. Research shows that 89% of employees who benefit from learning that uses the framework believe it has improved their performance, and 75% feel more engaged in their work.

To maximise the potential of emerging talent, employers are increasingly investing in ensuring apprentices, and other early career roles, are workplace ready. In recent years, we've seen employers invest in essential skills by leveraging our Essential Skills Academy. As a complete, practical training solution, the Essential Skills Academy provides employers with a focused, measurable and flexible approach to closing the workplace skills gap. It's designed to equip apprentices to understand, articulate, and apply the essential skills required for in-role success whilst ensuring a strong start to their long-term careers.

To recognise and celebrate employers who are demonstrating best practice in these areas, we award **Excellence Marks**. These marks serve as a benchmark for high standards and provide a clear framework for businesses to follow. By achieving these standards, employers are not only building a more skilled and inclusive workforce but are also becoming powerful advocates for the importance of essential skills across the entire UK economy.



To find out more about our early careers offer, visit:  
[www.skillsbuilder.uk/early-careers-training-programmes](http://www.skillsbuilder.uk/early-careers-training-programmes)

# Impact

Our work with employers has grown quickly over the last year with a continued focus on deepening our work with employers whose programmes have significant reach in the UK.

Technological transformation, driven by Artificial Intelligence, means employers must urgently prioritise developing their workforce's essential skills. The Essential Skills Tracker 2025 clearly shows these highly transferable abilities are crucial for successful AI adoption. Workers with higher essential skills are 30% more likely to be frequent AI users, particularly excelling in Creativity and Planning, which drives immediate productivity gains.

By investing in essential skills, employers can help staff successfully navigate this transition. Building skills like Adapting and Teamwork helps counterbalance the high anxiety associated with mandatory AI use. Furthermore, with 80% of workers influenced by upskilling opportunities when changing jobs, developing essential skills is a top three factor for talent retention and attraction, ensuring businesses can realise the full productivity benefits of the AI revolution.

We are pleased by the positive feedback that our UK employer partners have shared this year, demonstrating the impact of the Skills Builder Universal Framework in their settings. This is reflected in the long-term partnerships that we have been proud to build with so many employers.

## 90%

Agree that the Universal Framework is supporting essential skills development in their business

## 95%

Agree that training and support from the Skills Builder Team has been valuable

## 97%

Agree that they value being part of Skills Builder Partnership UK



## Explore: Essential Skills in Business

Explore how businesses as diverse as Heathrow, SSE, Oliver Bonas and PwC are putting the Skills Builder approach to work at:

[www.skillsbuilder.uk/essential-skills-in-business](http://www.skillsbuilder.uk/essential-skills-in-business)



# Partners

Over the last year, we have been pleased to work with 61 employer partners towards building the essential skills of their employees and the wider community through their outreach activities:

<b>A&amp;O Shearman</b>	<b>Institute of Chartered Accountants in England &amp; Wales (ICAEW)</b>	<b>Oxford Professional Education</b>
<b>Adecco</b>		<b>PA Consulting</b>
<b>Alstom</b>	<b>Jacobs</b>	<b>PwC BCI</b>
<b>Amazon EU SARL</b>	<b>KAEFER UK&amp;I</b>	<b>PwC</b>
<b>Amey</b>	<b>KFC</b>	<b>Rail Delivery Group</b>
<b>Association for Project Management</b>	<b>Kingston Council</b>	<b>Rail Safety &amp; Standards Board (RSSB)</b>
<b>AXA UK</b>	<b>KX Recruit</b>	<b>Rural Payments Agency</b>
<b>Bank of England</b>	<b>Kyndryl</b>	<b>Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts (SFCT)</b>
<b>Birmingham Airport</b>	<b>Linklaters</b>	<b>Sellafield Ltd</b>
<b>BP</b>	<b>Lloyds Banking Group</b>	<b>Sheffield City Council</b>
<b>Breedon Cement Ltd</b>	<b>London Luton Airport Operations Limited</b>	<b>Skillsoft</b>
<b>Clarion Housing Group</b>	<b>Manchester Metropolitan University</b>	<b>Sky</b>
<b>David Miller Architects</b>	<b>McDonald's</b>	<b>SSE (Scottish and Southern Energy)</b>
<b>Education Development Trust</b>	<b>MissionCX</b>	<b>Thales</b>
<b>Envision</b>	<b>Morgan Sindall Infrastructure</b>	<b>The Carbon Trust</b>
<b>Green Alliance</b>	<b>Network Rail</b>	<b>UBS</b>
<b>Heart of the City</b>	<b>Newcastle Airport</b>	<b>Weil, Gotshal &amp; Manges (London) LLP</b>
<b>Heathrow</b>	<b>NHS Business Services Authority</b>	<b>Wembley Park</b>
<b>Herbert Smith Freehills LLP</b>	<b>Northern Trains</b>	<b>West London Alliance</b>
<b>Higgins Partnerships</b>	<b>Oliver Bonas</b>	
<b>HS2</b>	<b>Opencast</b>	
<b>Huduma Limited</b>		

# London Luton Airport



## Introduction

London Luton Airport is one of the UK's busiest airports. Alongside its role as a major transport hub, the airport is committed to supporting its local community in Bedfordshire. The area faces significant challenges, with 46% of children in Luton living in poverty. Through its outreach programme, London Luton Airport has embedded the Universal Framework into its work with schools, earning the Bronze Skills Builder Excellence Mark in June 2025.

## Challenge

The airport wanted to create a clear “classroom to careers” pathway, raising awareness of the wide range of roles in aviation while making sure that young people understood the essential skills needed to thrive in those roles. The team were keen to strengthen careers education in local schools, providing opportunities that felt consistent and relevant to the world of work.

## Approach

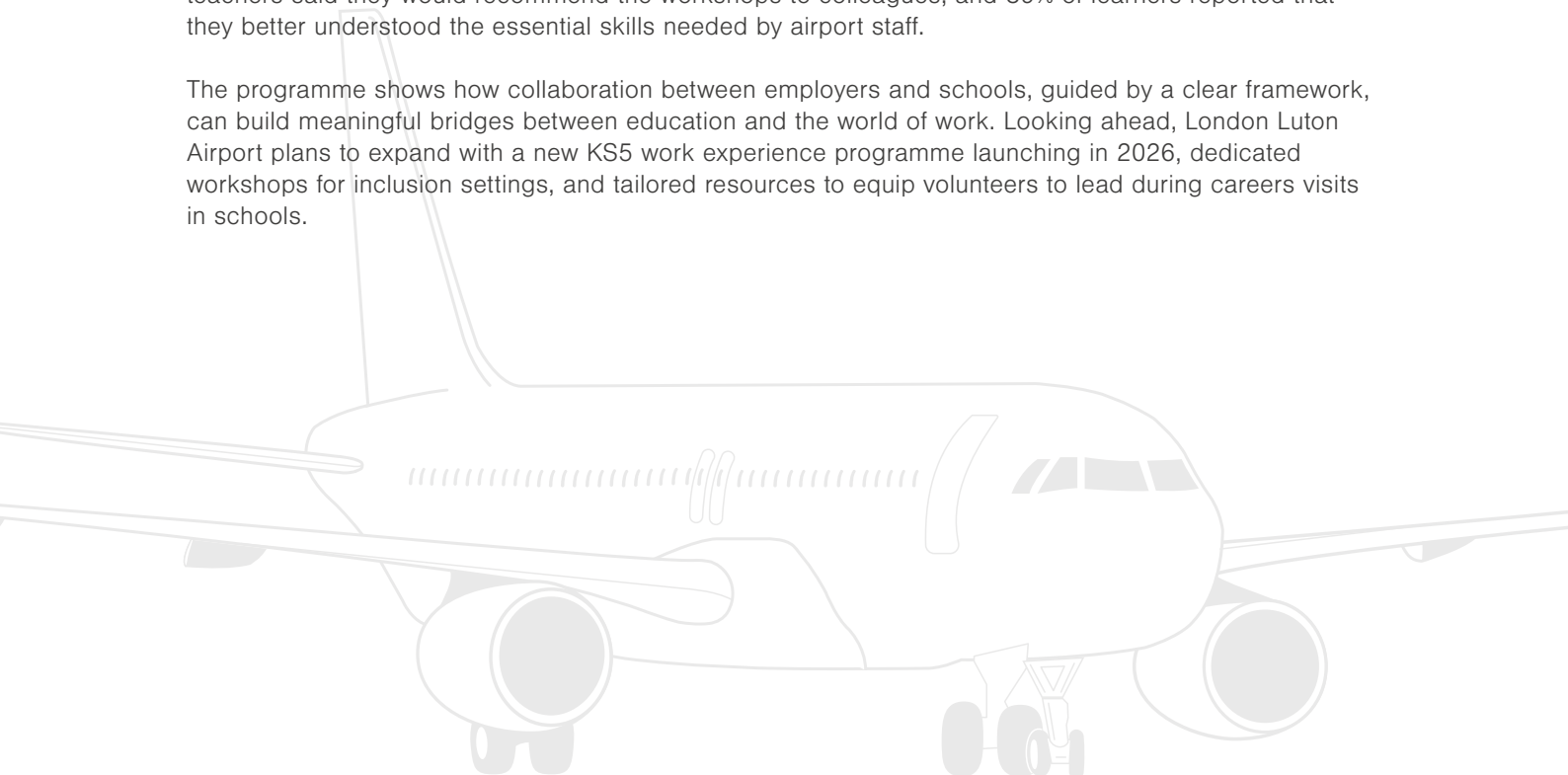
With support from the Partnership, London Luton Airport developed a set of outreach resources for secondary schools. For Key Stage 3, teacher-led sessions were designed to give learners structured opportunities to build essential skills such as Problem Solving, Creativity and Teamwork. Volunteers from the airport shared their own career journeys through filmed interviews, making the skills relatable. Teachers were equipped with guidance, showing how each resource aligned with careers learning expectations.

At Key Stage 4, the airport delivered a series of five insight workshops, bringing groups of 30 learners together to explore careers in aviation. Activities were designed to let learners practise and apply essential skills in a practical setting. Airport staff were trained to confidently use the language of the Universal Framework with learners.

## Impact and Outcomes

The programme is delivering positive results. Between April and May 2025, 106 learners and 27 volunteers participated in the workshops. With additional Key Stage 4 workshops running in November and December 2025, a further 100 learners from 7 local schools are set to benefit this year. All attending teachers said they would recommend the workshops to colleagues, and 89% of learners reported that they better understood the essential skills needed by airport staff.

The programme shows how collaboration between employers and schools, guided by a clear framework, can build meaningful bridges between education and the world of work. Looking ahead, London Luton Airport plans to expand with a new KS5 work experience programme launching in 2026, dedicated workshops for inclusion settings, and tailored resources to equip volunteers to lead during careers visits in schools.



“

Using the Universal Framework in our outreach with schools has enabled us to focus on the lasting impact we want to create for students. By aligning careers education with essential skills development, we've seen a significant increase in the depth and relevance of our workshops. The simplicity and clarity of the Framework makes it easy to integrate into our existing programmes, ensuring both consistency and measurable outcomes.



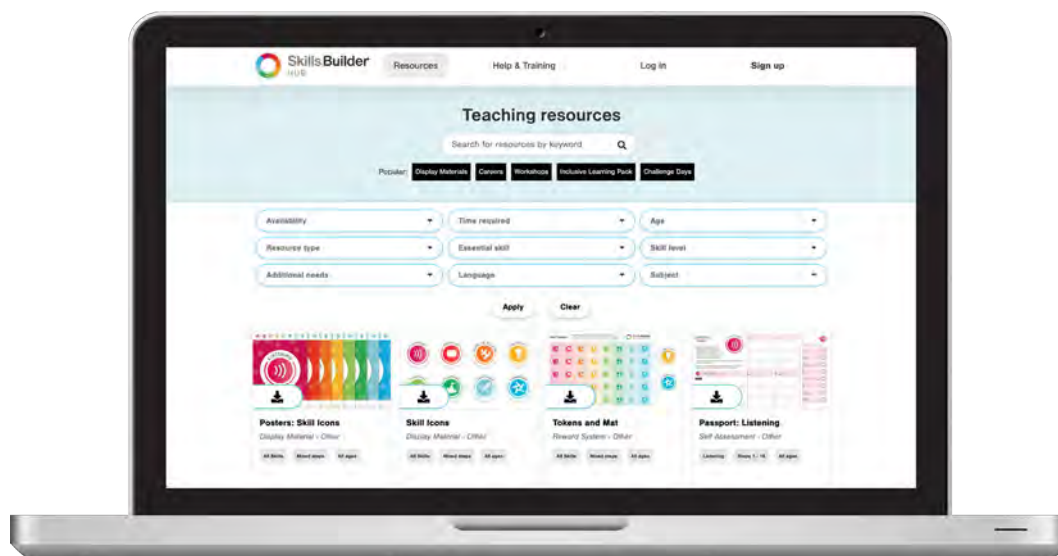
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## JOSHUA KEATING

COMMUNITY AND CSR EXECUTIVE AT  
LONDON LUTON AIRPORT



# Hub



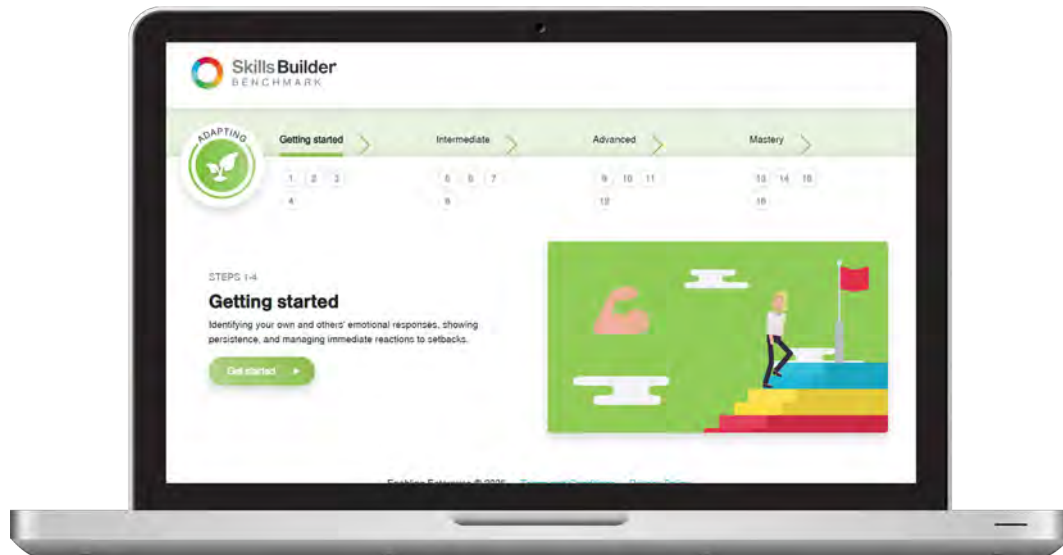
**Skills Builder Hub** is the ultimate online destination for building essential skills, accessible to anyone, anywhere in the world. The Hub is packed with invaluable resources, from assessment tools that give teachers a clear picture of their classes' progress, to over 300 engaging lessons designed to teach specific skill steps. It's also home to inspiring extended projects and challenge days that bring skills to life. The Hub is a core part of the Accelerator programme, but its reach is truly global.

In 2024-25, **8,500 educators** from the UK accessed the Hub, empowering over **59,000 learners** to build the essential skills they need to succeed.

[www.skillsbuilder.uk/hub](https://www.skillsbuilder.uk/hub)



# Benchmark



**Skills Builder Benchmark** is our powerful tool for personal and professional growth. It enables individuals to understand their essential skill levels through a process of insightful self-reflection. The Benchmark's feedback reports highlight strengths and pinpoint opportunities for development. It is a key resource for employers who want to understand their teams' capabilities and improve professional development and is also used in Further Education and other training settings.

In 2024-25, **25,000 individuals** completed **147,000 self-reflections**, demonstrating a strong commitment to building skills.

[www.skillsbuilder.uk/benchmark](http://www.skillsbuilder.uk/benchmark)





# Thanks to funders in 2024-25

As a not-for-profit social enterprise, the success of Skills Builder UK is powered by the incredible generosity and commitment of our partners and funders. Their support in 2024-25 has been absolutely vital in helping us to scale our work and drive forward our mission.

We are particularly grateful for their crucial role in supporting our key programmes: delivering the Accelerator programme to schools across the UK, enabling tens of thousands of learners to build essential skills in a structured and effective way; and helping impact organisations to embed the Skills Builder approach for their beneficiaries.

This year, funder support has been instrumental in underpinning our active research programme, which continues to provide the evidence base for our work. Furthermore, your direct involvement in the review and development of the Universal Framework 2.0 and its accompanying curriculum resources has ensured that our tools remain relevant and impactful. Thank you for your partnership. Your belief in our collective mission is what makes it all possible.

<b>A&amp;O Shearman</b>	<b>Kyndryl</b>	<b>Severn Trent Community Fund</b>
<b>Accenture</b>	<b>LGT Wealth Management</b>	<b>Sheffield Church Burgesses Trust</b>
<b>Anglian Group</b>	<b>Linklaters</b>	<b>Shell Skills Transition Fund</b>
<b>AXA UK</b>	<b>Lloyds Banking Group</b>	<b>Sir James Knott Trust</b>
<b>Bedgebury Foundation</b>	<b>LSEG Foundation</b>	<b>Sizewell C</b>
<b>BP</b>	<b>M&amp;G Prudential</b>	<b>The Guinness Partnership</b>
<b>Breedon Cement Ltd</b>	<b>NCS Trust</b>	<b>The Hyde Group</b>
<b>Comino Foundation</b>	<b>Neville Abraham Foundation</b>	<b>Toyota GB Plc</b>
<b>Commercial Education Trust</b>	<b>North Yorkshire Community Police Fund</b>	<b>UBS</b>
<b>East Midlands Railway</b>	<b>Oliver Bonas</b>	<b>UK Atomic Energy Authority</b>
<b>Gatsby Foundation</b>	<b>Opencast</b>	<b>Wembley Park</b>
<b>Higgins Partnerships</b>	<b>Pretium Frameworks</b>	<b>Worshipful Company of World Traders</b>
<b>Institute of Chartered Accountants in England &amp; Wales (ICAEW)</b>	<b>Rigby Foundation</b>	<b>Yunex Traffic</b>
<b>KPMG Foundation</b>	<b>Rural Payments Agency</b>	<b>Wembley Park</b>
<b>KPMG UK</b>	<b>Savannah Wisdom Foundation</b>	



# Where next



## Michael England

CEO

Skills Builder Partnership UK

This report captures the incredible collective impact which Skills Builder has achieved in the UK since 2020. Providing 6.6 million opportunities for individuals to build their essential skills is a powerful signal that our shared mission - for everyone to build the essential skills to succeed - is gaining real traction. We've established a robust and respected model for skills development in the Universal Framework, built momentum across the country, and are now moving towards systemic change.

Our outstanding partners are taking the Universal Framework into a diverse range of settings up and down the country. Teachers are using a Skills Builder approach to support their learners; impact organisations are using it in community-based programmes; employers are using it to upskill apprentices and their staff. Such a wide variety of usage demonstrates the adaptability of essential skills and the value of establishing a unifying language across the country.

I'm excited to be joining the Partnership at this moment. Our research shows that, as AI reshapes the future of work, essential skills like Creativity, Adapting, and Teamwork are going to become more vital than ever. Essential skills are not only durable, they're also accessible to all. For me, the joy of building skills is that they can provide a visible and valuable currency which everyone can benefit from. Skills development impacts individuals but it also provides value for families, communities and the economy as a whole.

I'm driven by the opportunity to accelerate our impact. We've collectively accomplished so much already. Our newly revised Universal Framework is integrated into statutory guidance, a significant percentage of schools and colleges across the country have a touchpoint with Skills Builder partners, and we've helped drive measurable progress for millions of learners. The team's energy is high, our foundations are strong, and we're looking forward to opening the next chapter with our partners.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M England'.

