

## LABOUR MARKET & CAREERS NEWS

We hope that you find this issue of Labour Market & Careers News useful and informative. As always, we would like to receive articles, information or your suggestions for improving C+K Labour Market & Careers News - see our contact details at the end of the newsletter.

In this edition of Labour Market & Careers News, find the latest information about:

**C+K**

**Schools, colleges and education**

**Employment and training**

**C+K**

**New and updated resources**



**C+K has published a directory of job and apprenticeship vacancies for 2025 level 3 course leavers.** The directory, available as a PDF, contains information about, and live links to, higher and degree apprenticeship vacancies in 17 different sectors across West Yorkshire, other parts of Yorkshire and the North West. Ask your C+K careers adviser if you would like a copy. Alternatively, copies can be purchased at [www.ckcareers.co.uk/c-k-shop/vacancy-directory-2025](http://www.ckcareers.co.uk/c-k-shop/vacancy-directory-2025)

**MyDirections**

**The latest BRES data has been used to update the labour market articles for Calderdale and Kirklees on MyDirections.** The articles show that the wholesale and retail sector remains the biggest sector, in terms of employee jobs, in both Calderdale and Kirklees, as well as in West Yorkshire as a whole. Manufacturing is the second biggest sector in both Calderdale and Kirklees, representing 13.2% of employee jobs in Calderdale and 15.8% in Kirklees. In Great Britain, manufacturing makes up 7.5% of employee jobs. The articles also contain information about local employers and numbers of online job postings.

A username and password are needed to access the updated LMI articles on MyDirections. To find out more about how to obtain a login, please email [mydirections@ckcareers.org.uk](mailto:mydirections@ckcareers.org.uk)

## Schools, colleges and education

### School and education news

#### Qualifications

**The government has published its review into the defunding of a range of level 3 qualifications from August 2025.** As a result of the review, funding has been retained for 157 qualifications (alongside T levels and A levels). Qualifications that will continue to be funded include extended diplomas in health and social care, computing, IT, digital media, applied science, engineering, agriculture and animal management, as well as smaller-sized qualifications in these subject areas. A summary of what is happening in each subject area can be found at

<https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/20323058751634-The-outcomes-of-the-Review-of-Qualifications-Reform-at-Level-3-in-England>

**A new report by the Education Policy Institute looks at student access and outcomes for T levels and the T level transition programme (TLTP).** Some findings include:

- T level students have a lower likelihood of completing a full level 3 qualification by the age of 18, compared to those taking other qualifications. However, they are more likely to progress on to advanced apprenticeships or higher technical qualifications.
- Retention is lowest in legal, finance and accounting, with a third of students withdrawing in the first year. Health and science has the next highest withdrawal rate with 31% of students leaving during the first year.
- There has been a decline in the progression rate from the TLTP to T levels. In the 2020/21 cohort, 15% of TLTP students moved on to T levels, this dropped to 8% for the 2021/22 cohort.

Recommendations in the report include extending the current pause in defunding overlapping qualifications, introducing a one A level sized T level and discontinuing the T level transition programme.

<https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/a-quantitative-analysis-of-t-level-access-and-progression>

**Reforms have been made to the industry placement element of T levels.** In line with industry trends and real-life hybrid working practices, most students will now be able to complete up to 20% of their placement hours remotely, rather than having to do them from a physical workplace, with the allowance increased to 50% for digital T levels.

[www.gov.uk/government/news/t-level-placements-reformed-to-open-up-new-qualification](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/t-level-placements-reformed-to-open-up-new-qualification)

## Open days and careers events

See <https://ck.mydirections.co.uk/events> for the latest information about open days at local schools and colleges and the apprenticeship events in **Huddersfield** in February and **Halifax** in March 2025.

## Higher education news

**The government has announced details of higher education fees and student support for the academic year 2025/26.**

- Maximum fees for full-time and part-time undergraduate courses will increase by 3.1% in 2025/26. For standard full-time courses this is £9,535. For full-time accelerated degree courses this is £11,440.
- Maximum loans for living costs for new full-time students and eligible continuing full-time students will also be increased by 3.1% in 2025/26.
  - The maximum loan for living costs will be £10,544 for students living away from home and studying outside London.
  - The equivalent loan rate for students living away from home and studying in London will be £13,762.
  - For those living in the parental home during their studies, it will be £8,877.
  - And for those studying overseas as part of their UK course, £12,076.

[www.gov.uk/government/news/higher-education-reform-to-back-opportunity-and-protect-students](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/higher-education-reform-to-back-opportunity-and-protect-students)

**UCAS has announced a change to its January application deadline for the 2026 cycle.** The January equal consideration deadline, which is currently the last Wednesday in January, will move to Wednesday 14 January 2026.

[www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7272630886553063425](https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7272630886553063425)

**UCAS end of cycle data for 2024, shows the number of UK 18-year-olds accepted to university or college is up 2.9% on 2023's figures.** 279,550 accepted in 2024, compared to 271,735 in 2023. The figure entering HE equates to 36.4% of UK 18-year-olds. There was also an increase in the number of students aged 21+ who accepted a place, as well as an increase in the number of students who used Clearing.

[www.ucas.com/corporate/news-and-key-documents/news/ucas-releases-undergraduate-end-cycle-data-2024](https://www.ucas.com/corporate/news-and-key-documents/news/ucas-releases-undergraduate-end-cycle-data-2024)

**Updated financial modelling from the Office for Students (OfS) suggests that 72 per cent of higher education providers could be in deficit by 2025-26, and 40 per cent would have fewer than 30 days' liquidity.** A reduction in the number of students entering higher education, including those from abroad, is cited as being the cause.

[www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/bold-and-transformative-action-needed-to-address-financial-sustainability-ofs](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/bold-and-transformative-action-needed-to-address-financial-sustainability-ofs)

**The introduction of the lifelong learning entitlement has been delayed.** Initially, applications were due to open in February 2025 for courses starting in September 2025. In April this year, the application window was changed to September 2025 and course start dates to January 2026. A further change means that students can

now not apply for LLE funding until September 2026 for courses starting in January 2027.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/lifelong-learning-entitlement-lle-overview/lifelong-learning-entitlement-overview](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lifelong-learning-entitlement-lle-overview/lifelong-learning-entitlement-overview)

## Employment and training

### Apprenticeships and training

#### **Apprenticeship statistics have been published for the full year 2023/24.**

- Apprenticeship starts were up by 0.7% to 339,580 compared to 337,140 in the previous year.
- Under 19s accounted for 23.2% of starts (78,930).
- Advanced apprenticeships accounted for 43.1% of starts (146,520) whilst higher apprenticeships accounted for 36% of starts (122,230).
- Starts at levels 6 and 7 increased by 7.1% to 50,110 in 2023/24.
- In Calderdale, 1,510 people started an apprenticeship, in Kirklees the figure was 3,030.

#### **The top five sectors for apprenticeship starts in England were:**

Business, administration and law	94,880
Health, public services and care	94,600
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	45,800
Retail and commercial enterprise	30,720
Information and communication technology	27,090

#### **In West Yorkshire, the five standards with the most starts were:**

Early years educator	650
Team leader	640
Operations manager	530
Business administrator	520
Electrician	440

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/apprenticeships>

**5,000 more construction apprenticeship places will be made available through 32 'Homebuilding Skills Hubs' which will deliver fast-track training to local areas that need more housing.** The purpose-built hubs will provide a realistic working environment for training in construction trades, including bricklayers, roofers, plasterers, scaffolders, electricians, carpenters and more. The government is working with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and the National House-Building Council (NHBC) to launch the hubs.

[www.gov.uk/government/news/new-skills-hubs-launched-to-get-britain-building](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-skills-hubs-launched-to-get-britain-building)

**A new website and toolkit has been launched for National Apprenticeship Week 2025, which will take place 10-16 February 2025.** The new website and toolkit contain support and guidance on how to get involved and includes social media graphics, key apprenticeship messages, facts and figures, and advice so that individuals and businesses can find out more about apprenticeships.

[www.gov.uk/government/news/national-apprenticeship-week-2025-website-and-toolkit-launched](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-apprenticeship-week-2025-website-and-toolkit-launched)

## Employment initiatives

**The Prince's Trust has changed its name to the King's Trust.** The King's Trust offers resources, courses and mentoring to young people aged 11 to 30, to boost their confidence and enhance their skills to enable them to get a job or start their own business.

[www.kingstrust.org.uk](http://www.kingstrust.org.uk)

**The Department for Work and Pensions has published its Get Britain Working white paper, with a long-term aim of achieving an employment rate of 80%.**

The white paper:

- Creates a new national jobs and careers service, focused on people's skills and careers instead of the monitoring of benefit claims. The plans, backed by £55 million of additional funding, include trialling an improved digital offer and developing work coach and careers adviser professions.
- Establishes a new Youth Guarantee to ensure all 18-21 year olds can access education, training or employment support. Eight regional trailblazers will test this approach, working with major organisations to prevent youth unemployment. These plans, backed by £45 million of additional funding, also include the reform of the apprenticeship levy into a 'Growth and Skills' levy.
- Addresses the growing problem of people being out of work due to poor health by joining up health, skills and employment support. One of the eight trailblazer areas for this is West Yorkshire, backed by a total of £125m additional funding.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-britain-working-white-paper/get-britain-working-white-paper](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-britain-working-white-paper/get-britain-working-white-paper)

## Voluntary work

**The National Citizen Service (NCS) will be wound down from March 2025.** And, instead, a new National Youth Strategy will be created.

[www.gov.uk/government/news/new-national-youth-strategy-to-break-down-barriers-to-opportunity-for-young-people](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-national-youth-strategy-to-break-down-barriers-to-opportunity-for-young-people)

## Work trends national

**November's data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) about vacancy numbers in the UK show the following trends.**

- The estimated number of vacancies in the UK in August to October 2024 was 831,000, a decrease of 35,000 from May to July 2024.
- Vacancy numbers fell for the 28<sup>th</sup> consecutive period.
- When comparing August to October 2024 with the same time last year, total vacancies decreased by 130,000. The industries that decreased the most were human health and social work activities, wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, and accommodation and food service activities which fell by a combined total of 88,000 vacancies.

[Office for National Statistics \(ONS\), released 12 November 2024, ONS website, statistical bulletin, Vacancies and jobs in the UK: November 2024](https://www.ons.gov.uk/news-releases/2024/11/12)

**The government has announced National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) rates from 1 April 2025.**

		<b>Increase</b>	<b>% increase</b>
National Living Wage (aged 21+)	£12.21	£0.77	6.7%
18-20 year old rate	£10.00	£1.40	16.3%
16-17 year old rate	£7.55	£1.15	18%
Apprentice rate	£7.55	£1.15	18%

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/minimum-wage-rates-for-2025](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/minimum-wage-rates-for-2025)

**The number of people starting hairdressing apprenticeships in England has declined by 70% over the last decade.** And the closures of hair salons has also become a problem. While the number of barbers, nail bars and beauty salons is increasing, the overall number of hair salons fell by 319 in Great Britain in the year to 1 July 2024.

[www.theguardian.com/business/2024/oct/12/england-hairdressers-salons-recruitment-crisis-gen-z-shuns-profession](http://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/oct/12/england-hairdressers-salons-recruitment-crisis-gen-z-shuns-profession)

**The government has launched the 2024-25 Women's Sport Investment Accelerator scheme, to help attract more private investment in women's sport and drive growth into the sector.** Over 20 leagues, teams and competitions across nine different sports are set to benefit, including England Women's Cricket and Barclays Women's Super League. The women's sport industry, is expected to be worth over £1 billion by the end of the year according to Deloitte, marking a 300 percent increase since 2021.

[www.gov.uk/government/news/government-pledges-to-make-uk-top-destination-for-womens-sport-investment-following-record-breaking-summit](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-pledges-to-make-uk-top-destination-for-womens-sport-investment-following-record-breaking-summit)

**Engineering UK has produced an update on the UK's engineering workforce.** Their key findings include:

- There are approximately 6.3 million people working in engineering and technology occupations in the UK, representing 19.2% of the workforce.
- The number of women working in engineering and tech has dropped from 16.5% of the 2022 workforce to 15.7% of the 2023 workforce.
- 12.9% of the UK workforce were working in engineering and technology roles in the engineering industry (either employed or self-employed) while a further 6.2% were working in these jobs in other industries.

[www.engineeringuk.com/research-and-insights/our-research-reports/the-engineering-and-technology-workforce](http://www.engineeringuk.com/research-and-insights/our-research-reports/the-engineering-and-technology-workforce)

**The value of the UK music industry has hit a record £7.6bn according to UK Music.** Their 'This is Music 2024' report also found that total UK music industry employment in 2023 hit a record 216,000 (full-time equivalent posts) – up 3% from 210,000 in 2022.

[www.ukmusic.org/news/this-is-music-report-reveals-sector-contributes-record-7-6-billion-to-uk-economy](http://www.ukmusic.org/news/this-is-music-report-reveals-sector-contributes-record-7-6-billion-to-uk-economy)

**A report into the size and scale of the UK's AI sector has recently been published.** Some of the key findings include, that compared to 2022:

- Total AI company numbers increased by 17% (+543).
- Total AI-related revenues increased by 34% (+£3.6 billion).
- Total AI-related employment increased by 29% (+14,500).

The regional profile of AI companies remains largely unchanged, centred on London, the South East and the East of England.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/artificial-intelligence-sector-study-2023/artificial-intelligence-sector-study-2023](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/artificial-intelligence-sector-study-2023/artificial-intelligence-sector-study-2023)

**In the recent budget, the government committed to continue to broaden and diversify the talent pipeline in the creative industries** by providing £3 million to expand the Creative Careers Programme, giving school children the opportunity to learn more about career routes and directly engage with the workplace.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/672232d010b0d582ee8c4905/Autumn\\_Budget\\_2024\\_\\_web\\_accessible\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/672232d010b0d582ee8c4905/Autumn_Budget_2024__web_accessible_.pdf)

## Work trends regional

**The list of Kirklees' top 100 companies for 2024-25 has been published.** The list is a joint venture between the University of Huddersfield, Kirklees Council and the 3M Buckley Innovation Centre (3M BIC) and is designed to celebrate and measure business growth across the region. Firms in the top 10 this year are:

- **UK Greetings Ltd** - greeting cards publisher and supplier
- **Oxalis Logistics UK Ltd** - logistics company
- **Thornton & Ross Ltd** - healthcare products manufacturer
- **Mabey Hire** - construction equipment hire company
- **Dr Reddy's Laboratories (EU) Ltd** - pharmaceutical manufacturing company
- **Alfred Bagnall and Sons Ltd** - painting and decorating contractor
- **Aflex Hose Ltd** - hose manufacturer
- **Mac's Transport (Northern) Ltd** - commercial vehicle dealer and truck body builder
- **CoGri Group Ltd** - floor solution specialists
- **Crossroads Group Ltd** - truck supplier and vehicle servicing and maintenance company

<https://kirklees100.org>

**West Yorkshire Mayor Tracy Brabin has unveiled a ten year, £7 billion growth plan, which could support the creation of 33,000 jobs and unlock £26 billion of economic growth.** The five priorities of the Local Growth Plan are:

- Boosting the region's fastest growing business sectors, including financial and professional services, advanced manufacturing and engineering, life sciences and health technologies, and the creative industries.
- Supporting small and medium-sized businesses to grow, with greater access to finance, skills, workspace, innovation, markets and promotion.
- Building a region of learning where people can access the qualifications, skills and employment support they need to secure well-paid work. Those who are economically inactive or with low or no qualifications will receive extra support

into training and work, with a focus on soft skills, alongside support with Maths, English and essential digital skills.

- Creating a better-connected and integrated transport network.
- Developing thriving places, which includes the delivery of 38,000 new homes and energy efficiency finance and advice to homeowners and renters.

[www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/all-news-and-blogs/tracy-brabin-unveils-multibillion-pound-growth-plan-to-create-thousands-of-jobs-and-build-a-brighter-region-for-all](http://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/all-news-and-blogs/tracy-brabin-unveils-multibillion-pound-growth-plan-to-create-thousands-of-jobs-and-build-a-brighter-region-for-all)

**FeTu, based in Elland, has been awarded the Institute of Physics (IOP) Business Innovation Award.** The FeTu technology enables firms to recover their waste heat and convert it into electricity, reducing both energy costs and carbon emissions. In October, the firm established a manufacturing arm in Huddersfield to enable the commercial roll-out of its clean-energy technology. A group of food production firms, data centres and industrial manufacturers are trialling the product this winter.

[www.halifaxcourier.co.uk/business/yorkshire-firm-wins-innovation-award-for-revolutionary-clean-energy-tech-4901836](http://www.halifaxcourier.co.uk/business/yorkshire-firm-wins-innovation-award-for-revolutionary-clean-energy-tech-4901836)

**Huddersfield engineering firm David Brown Defence is creating 100 new jobs following major investment from its parent company.** The multi-million pound investment will enhance the firm's overall capability and capacity and lead to the creation of the new jobs at the company's design and manufacturing facility at Park Works, Lockwood.

<https://dbsantasalo.com/news/db-defence-secures-significant-investment>

**Kirklees-based specialist engineering company, Reliance Precision Ltd has unveiled proposals to redevelop its sites on Penistone Road near Lepton.** The plans extend and improve facilities at the firm's Rowley Mills site. Around 80 new specialised and technical jobs would be created over the longer term, bringing Reliance's total employees to approximately 300 in Kirklees.

[www.reliance.co.uk/project/reliance-precision-to-improve-facilities-at-its-lepton-based-site](http://www.reliance.co.uk/project/reliance-precision-to-improve-facilities-at-its-lepton-based-site)

**A report by Global Tourism Solutions, commissioned by Calderdale Council, found that visits to the borough totalled more than 7.6 million in 2023, up nearly 5% from 2022.** They were worth more than £600 million to the local economy, a 16% increase on the previous year, and supported over 5,500 full-time jobs – almost 10% more than in 2022.

<https://news.calderdale.gov.uk/tourism-on-the-up-in-calderdale-3>

We hope you enjoyed this edition of **C+K Labour Market & Careers News** and found it informative. Comments and articles are welcome; please contact:

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