

Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock Area Local Skills Improvement Plan Emerging Priorities (March 2023)

Introduction

This document contains the emerging skills priorities from the Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock Area Local Skills Improvement Plan.

These priorities have been derived from information gathered from employers and stakeholders from across the county of Essex, coupled with detailed analysis of labour market information. They are an interim step in the development of the Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan and are designed to be used by providers to inform their Accountability Agreements with the DfE.

The document is split into 3 sections:

- Essex Skills Priorities
- Essex Skills System Priorities
- Essex Sectors and Technical Skills

These findings will be further reviewed and refined and will help form the fuller LSIP report and recommendations.

Note

• All references to 'Essex' within this plan include the areas of Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock.



Section 1 - Essex Skills Priorities:

	Priority	Summary Description	
1	Soft-skills and Behaviours	New entrants, existing and returning employees often lack appropriate soft-skills and behaviours for work and often do not understand what is expected of them. Employers have identified that individuals either lack or have poorly developed skills and behaviours in a range of areas including listening, speaking and presenting, problem solving, creativity, staying positive, aiming high, and teamwork. Leadership is also mentioned here, but it is treated as a theme in its own right in Theme 5, due to its complexity.	
2	Basic English, Maths and ESOL	Businesses have identified that new entrants, existing and returning employees often lack basic English and Maths skills that they need in the work place. Often, this is linked directly to how these skills are applied day to day in work and the issue can be exacerbated where English is not an individual's first language.	
3	Digital Skills and "Digitech"	Baseline digital skills have become a near-universal requirement for employment and are insufficiently developed across the workforce. Generic digital skills such as Microsoft Office and other productivity software tools are commonly required in jobs across all skills levels and are often fundamental to entering the labour market. The curriculum does not often cover these skills in detail, instead focussing on equally valuable, but more specialist digital skills like coding and cyber security. There needs to be a provision for generic digital skills also. Furthermore, with the advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) workplace digital skills are likely to become much more advanced. There is a difference between the everyday digital skills needed to order food etc, compared to more advanced workplace skills like the use of apps, technical support etc. Specific digital skills are key to enabling career progression and the move from low to high skilled jobs. Furthermore, in the future, more advanced digital skills, including the ability to use AI, will become part of everyday work. Therefore, it is important that employees at all levels have effective digital skills.	
4	Green Skills	The transition to a low carbon economy will require the re-skilling and upskilling for existing members of the workforce with training in green skills. New entrants and returners will also need an educational understanding of green skills. Green skills can be categorised as knowledge, experience, values, attitudes and abilities that support carbon reduction and resource efficiency to increase climate resilience and enhance natural assets. Green skills are relevant to all sectors in the economy.	
5	Leadership and Management skills	Many Essex businesses identified a lack of leadership and management skills in their organisations at all levels. With an aging workforce and higher than normal staff turnover there is a need to train, support and develop all aspects of leadership and management. Most identified a specific gap for new entrants and existing employees who are making their first step into supervisory roles.	



Section 2 - Essex Skills System Priorities:

	Priority	Summary Description	
1	Lack of flexibility in the system	Employers and providers have fed-back that there is a lack of flexibility in an over-bureaucratic education system, which blocks it from meeting industry's changing needs. Within many new and emerging skills areas, there is a desire to use qualifications and funding in a more adaptable way. The ability to break larger qualifications into smaller pieces is popular with many employers, such as completing individual units of qualifications at a time (unitisation), bite-size qualifications, online and hybrid delivery models. This issue permeates through all layers of the current system including new entrants and reskilling of the existing workforce, with most feedback targeted towards the adult education system and Apprenticeship Levy.	
2	Careers Advice and Guidance Careers Advice and Guidance Complete the system still doesn't appear to value vocational pathways (including apprenticeships) as a credible alternative to university. With new employers and skills there is a general lack of awareness of specific roles and career paths. Employers frequently describe the challenges of trying to influence people to enter specific occupational sectors at a local level, with limited or no support from overarching national sector bodies. Additionally, many employers there is a need to fully engage prime influencers, teachers, parents and care-givers, in new and emerging vocational sectors so they are ables support young people make fully-informed career decisions.		
3	Tutor shortages and capacity of providers to respond	Colleges and Training Providers all feedback that they struggle to employ and retain high quality staff. This issue is more pronounced in skills shortage areas / emerging sectors where there are extreme tutor and assessor shortages. Additionally, with the fast pace of change in industry, it is becoming increasingly difficult for providers to ensure that tutors and assessors are up-to-date with existing practices and emerging technologies. When dealing with new and emerging skills priorities, many providers cite a lack of capacity to respond as a fundamental barrier. Such issues are varied, but most providers describe a lack of staff capacity to develop and teach new provision, general space constraints, a lack of capital investment in new technology and the ability to support very small group sizes in new subject areas. There are also issues with take-up, as learners are less likely to take up evening and weekend training due to childcare and other commitments, which limits the courses providers can put on.	
4			
5	Barriers to engagement	Many new entrants, existing and returning employees face significant barriers when accessing work or training. These barriers include low levels of aspiration, availability of childcare, complexities in the application and onboarding process, technical language, lack of equipment and the cost and availability of transport.	
6	Skills planning system for Essex	There is no formal process for skills planning across the county of Essex. This results in a lack of co-ordination, fragmentation, and poor ownership of county wide skills planning and delivery. The development of a local skills planning system across the whole county (including Essex County Council, Thurrock Council and Southend Councils) is key to driving and enabling change. Furthermore, effective and regular labour market information letting employers and providers know about future skills needs and the support available to provide them, will be invaluable. This will ensure that the skills system is fit for purpose and meets the needs of all stakeholders.	



Section 3 - Essex Sectors and Technical Skills:

Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering & Aviation

Data source: Lightcast Job Posting Analytics Feb 22 - Feb 23 (March 23 KK)

Subskills employers say they need for the sector (from LSIP research)
IT skills
Cyber security
Carbon literacy
Management skills
Drivers
Freight forwarders
Mechanics
Electric vehicle specialists
Welders and Steel fabricators
Hospitality in the aviation sector
Female engineers

Top Posted Occupations for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Production Worker	1881
Maintenance Technician	1648
Utilities Technician	1142
Mechanical Engineering	1131
Civil Engineering	1095
Quality Inspector/Engineering	824
Construction Helper/Worker	417
Industrial Engineer	409
Scheduler/Operations Coordinator	363
Electronic/Electrical Assembler	322

Top Posted Job Titles for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Production Operatives	812
Field Service Engineers	606
Maintenance Engineers	514
Telehandlers	253
Factory Operatives	238
Site Engineers	228
Service Engineers	221
Mechanical Fitters	207
Multi Skilled Maint. Eng.	179
Maintenance Operations	165

Top Specialised Skills for the sector		
	Frequency in Adverts	
Marketing	23%	
Maintenance Engineering	9%	
Machinery	8%	
Mechanical Engineering	7%	
Field Service Management	6%	
Systems Engineering	5%	
Production Engineering	5%	
Technical Management	5%	
Construction	5%	
Risk Analysis	4%	

Top Common Skills for the sector		
	Frequency in Adverts	
Communication	22%	
Management	12%	
Customer Services	11%	
Planning	10%	
Detail Orientated	9%	
Problem Solving	7%	
Operations	7%	
Self Motivation	6%	
Sales	3%	
Computer Literacy	3%	



AgriTech and FoodTech

Data source: Lightcast Job Posting Analytics Feb 22 - Feb 23 (March 23 KK)

Subskills employers say they need for the sector (from LSIP research)

Data analysis IT & Coding Veterinarian

Top Posted Occupations for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Landscaping/Groundskeeping Worker	596
Packager	372
Veterinarian	265
Veterinary Nurses and Assistants	163
Pet Care Manager	128
Farm/Nursery/Greeenhouse Worker	118
Pest Control Technician	40
Arborist/Tree Surgeon	27
Landscaping/Grounds Supervisor	24
Veterinary Technician/Technologist	22

Top Posted Job Titles for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Pickers/Packers	272
Veterinary Surgeons	208
Grounds Maintenance	196
Operatives	
Gardeners	126
Registered Veterinary Technician	97
Veterinary Nurses	57
Landscapers	45
Pickers	41
Landscape Gardeners	38
Grounds Maintenance Workers	34

Top Specialised Skills for the sector		
	Frequency in Adverts	
Warehousing	17%	
Mowing	16%	
Marketing	16%	
Weed control	11%	
Landscaping	10%	
Machinery	9%	
Pruning	7%	
Small Animal Care	5%	
Construction	5%	
Surgery	5%	

Top Common Skills for the sector		
	Frequency in Adverts	
Communication	16%	
Customer Services	8%	
Management	7%	
Detail Oriented	7%	
Self Motivation	6%	
Operations	4%	
Lifting Ability	4%	
Loading and Unloading	4%	
Packaging and Labelling	4%	
Strong work ethic	4%	



Community and Voluntary

Data source: Lightcast Job Posting Analytics Feb 22 - Feb 23 (March 23 KK)

Subskills employers say they need for the sector (from LSIP research)

New volunteer training Existing volunteer upskilling Neurodiversity training

Top Posted Occupations for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Assistant Care Worker	603
Housing Officer	166
Mental Health Counsellor	128
Youth & Community Workers	125
Fundraising/Development Specialist	96
Family Therapist	70
Psychologist	44
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist	12
Project Manager	4
Addiction Counsellor/Addict Therapist	4

Top Posted Job Titles for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Community Support Worker	190
Care Workers	101
Fundraisers	96
Support Workers	88
Domestic Assistants	58
Housing Officers	57
Youth Workers	50
Residential Workers	45
Chief Solutions Officers	28
Community Care workers	25

Top Specialised Skills for the sector	
	Frequency in Adverts
Mental Health	14%
Personal Care	12%
Marketing	8%
Psychology	7%
Fundraising	7%
Risk Analysis	5%
Performance Management	5%
Nursing	5%
Learning Disabilities	5%
Numeracy	5%

Top Common Skills for the sector	
	Frequency in Adverts
Communication	25%
Management	21%
Planning	12%
Customer Services	9%
Leadership	6%
Sales	6%
Mathematics	5%
Interpersonal Communication	5%
Teaching	5%
Literacy	4%



Construction and the Built Environment

Data source: Lightcast Job Posting Analytics Feb 22 - Feb 23 (March 23 KK)

Subskills employers say they need for the sector (from LSIP research)		
Green Energy	Electrical, general plus new	
Net Carbon Zero	areas i.e. solar PV, EV	
Multi trade	charge-points, battery	
Asbestos removal	storage, doorstep assessors	
Tunnelling	etc	
Groundwork	Health and Safety	
Scaffolding	CSCS Card	
Archaeologists	Digital cabling (isn't up to	
Surveyors	date with industry sector)	
Planners	Refrigeration engineers	
Retrofit	Gas safe engineers	
Cladding	Female and ethnically	
Steel fabricators	diverse construction	
	workers	

Top Posted Occupations for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Construction Helper/Worker	1975
Labourer/Material Handler	1656
Quantity surveyors	1565
Forklift/Pallet Jack Operator	906
Carpenter	761
Validation Engineer	575
Land Surveyors	526
HVAC Mechanic Installer	496
Repair/Service Technician	496
Manufacturing Machine Operator	451

Top Posted Job Titles for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Labourer	1401
Quantity Surveyors	1111
Groundworkers	619
Forklift Drivers	559
Carpenters	450
CSCS Labourers	391
Handymen	321
Surveyors	304
Building Surveyors	271
Telehandlers	253

Top Specialised Skills for the sector	
	Frequency in Adverts
Marketing	28%
Construction	12%
Forklift Truck	7%
Carpentry	7%
Project Controls	6%
Project Planning	5%
Warehousing	5%
Plumbing	4%
Painting	4%
Procurement	4%

Top Common Skills for the sector	
	Frequency in Adverts
Communications	14%
Management	10%
Customer Service	6%
Planning	6%
Detail Orientated	5%
Loading and Unloading	4%
Self Motivation	4%
Problem Solving	4%
Operations	3%
Strong Work Ethic	3%



Creative and Cultural

Data source: Lightcast Job Posting Analytics Feb 22 - Feb 23 (March 23 KK)

Subskills employers say they need for the sector (from LSIP research)

Technical theatre – light / sound / costume design
Event management
Marketing in the creative sector
Small business operation
Finance in the creative sector
Network event management
Coding and creative computing
Sound technicians.

Top Posted Occupations for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Web Developer	521
Marketing Representative	446
Graphic Designer/Desktop Publisher	331
Marketing Coordinator/Assistant	283
Merchandising Specialist	270
Public Relations Specialist	258
Market Research Analyst	250
Coating/Painting Worker	209
Social Media Strategist/Specialist	192
Manufacturing Machine Operator	184

Top Posted Job Titles for the sector	Number of vacancies
300101	(Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Marketing Executives	288
Spray Painters	211
Business Development Execs	165
Marketing Assistants	138
Digital Marketing Executives	111
Graphic Designers	95
Advisors	83
Merchandisers	77
PHP Developers	73
Web Developers	69

Top Specialised Skills for the sector	
	Frequency in Adverts
Marketing	33%
Social Media	11%
Adobe Photoshop	8%
Finance	7%
Digital Marketing	7%
JavaScript (Program Language)	6%
Search Engine Optimization	6%
Adobe inDesign	6%
Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)	6%
Adobe Illustrator	5%

Top Common Skills for the sector	
	Frequency in Adverts
Communications	34%
Sales	20%
Detail Oriented	17%
Management	17%
Customer Service	14%
Planning	11%
Self-Motivation	9%
Writing	8%
Research	8%
Microsoft Excel	6%



DigiTech

Data source: Lightcast Job Posting Analytics Feb 22 - Feb 23 (March 23 KK)

Subskills employers say they need for the sector (from LSIP research)

Augmented reality
Virtual reality
Robotics and automation
Coding
Data / cyber security
Amalgamation of creative and digital skills

Top Posted Occupations for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Computer Support Specialist	1744
IT Project Manager	607
Database Administrator	336
Software QA Engineer/Tester	282
Information Security Engineer/Analyst	261
Network/Systems Administrator	250
Network/Systems Support Specialist	239
Data Engineer	148
Hardware Engineer	144
Project Manager	73

Top Posted Job Titles for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
IT Support Engineers	189
IT Support Technicians	121
Line Support Engineers	120
Technical Managers	101
IT Technicians	100
Service Desk Analysts	98
Data Engineers	90
Hardware Engineers	72
Security Engineers	70
Help Desk Analysts	70

Top Specialised Skills for the sector	
	Frequency in Adverts
Marketing	17%
Technical Support	15%
Help Desk Support	12%
Microsoft Office 365	10%
Active Directory	9%
Microsoft Azure	8%
SQL (Programming Language)	8%
Agile Methodology	7%
Operating System	6%
Window Servers	6%

Top Common Skills for the sector	
	Frequency in Adverts
Communications	35%
Management	25%
Customer Service	23%
Problem Solving	14%
Trouble shooting	12%
Detail Oriented	10%
Planning	10%
Operations	9%
Microsoft Office	8%
Leadership	8%



Education (newly added)

Data source: Lightcast Job Posting Analytics Feb 22 - Feb 23 (March 23 KK)

Subskills employers say they need for the sector (from LSIP research)

Newly added sector

Top Posted Occupations for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Teaching Assistant	2728
Tutor	2533
Primary School Teacher	1612
University Lecturer	1155
Secondary School Teacher	694
SEN Teacher	533
Science Teacher	508
Supply Teacher	471
Vocational Education Tutor	460
English/Language/Arts Teacher	389

Top Posted Job Titles for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Teaching Assistants	795
SEN Teaching Assistant	620
Mathematics Teacher	482
Primary Teacher	480
Supply Teacher	423
Cover Supervisor	420
English Teacher	347
Science Teacher	300
Peer Tutors	275
Early Years Teachers	265

Top Specialised Skills for the sector		
	Frequency in Adverts	
Marketing	17%	
Working with Children	9%	
Autism Spectrum Disorders	9%	
Special Education	8%	
Learning Support	6%	
Lesson Planning	6%	
National Curriculum	5%	
Classroom Management	4%	
Mental Health	4%	
Mathematics Education	4%	

Top Common Skills for the sector	
	Frequency in Adverts
Teaching	67%
Communications	22%
Management	15%
Mathematics	14%
Planning	11%
Enthusiasm	9%
Leadership	7%
Innovation	6%
Training and Development	4%
Positivity	4%

Health, Social Care & Med Tech

Data source: Lightcast Job Posting Analytics Feb 22 - Feb 23 (March 23 KK)

Subskills employers say they need for the sector (from LSIP research)

Digital skills (to use modern equipment and analyse data)
Lab technicians

Top Posted Occupations for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Caregiver/Personal Care Aide	6064
Registered General Nurse (RGN)	5912
Care Assistant	4938
Nursing Assistant/Healthcare Assist ant	1937
Physician	1395
Nursery Nurses/assistant and playworker	1194
Healthcare Manager	1149
Family/School/General Social Worker	1042
Nurse Practitioner	879
Physiotherapist	655

Top Posted Job Titles for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Support Workers	3670
Care Assistants	2560
Health Care Assistants	1537
Registered Nurse	713
Staff Nurse	666
Physiotherapists	575
Night Assistants	531
Occupational Therapist	524
Registered General Nurses	441
Practitioners	367

Top Specialised Skills for the sector		
	Frequency in Adverts	
Nursing	16%	
Personal Care	15%	
Mental Health	10%	
Midwifery	8%	
Marketing	7%	
Auditing	6%	
Companionship	5%	
Clinical Governance	4%	
Risk Analysis	4%	
Social Work	4%	

Top Common Skills for the sector	
	Frequency in Adverts
Communications	25%
Management	16%
Planning	8%
Leadership	8%
Research	7%
Teaching	6%
Innovation	5%
Customer Service	5%
Compassion	5%
Enthusiasm	5%

Professional Services

Data source: Lightcast Job Posting Analytics Feb 22 - Feb 23 (March 23 KK)

Subskills employers say they need for the sector (from LSIP research)

People management training at all levels
Senior management training
Project Management
Insolvency training
L2 Administration

Top Posted Occupations for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Office/Administrative Assistant	7211
Bookkeeper/Accounting Clerk	3476
Accountant	2112
Receptionist	1992
Recruiter	1758
Quantity Surveyors	1565
HR/Labour Relations Specialist	1513
Project Manager	1257
Sales Assistant	1224
Lawyer	1222

Top Posted Job Titles for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Quantity Surveyors	1111
Account Assistants	1050
Administrators	1046
Recruitment Consultants	831
Receptionists	746
Credit Controllers	721
Management Accountants	648
Project Managers	547
Sales Administrators	535
Assistant Managers	480

Top Specialised Skills for the sector		
	Frequency in Adverts	
Marketing	18%	
Finance	14%	
Invoicing	11%	
Accounting	11%	
Procurement	8%	
Auditing	7%	
Purchasing	5%	
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	5%	
Credit Control	4%	
Booking (Sales)	4%	

Top Common Skills for the sector		
	Frequency in Adverts	
Communications	34%	
Management	25%	
Customer Service	21%	
Sales	18%	
Detail Oriented	17%	
Microsoft Excel	10%	
Planning	9%	
Microsoft Office	7%	
Self-Motivation	7%	
Operations	7%	

Transport and Logistics

Data source: Lightcast Job Posting Analytics Feb 22 - Feb 23 (March 23 KK)

Subskills employers say they need for the sector (from LSIP research)

Warehousing
Freight forwarders
Drivers
EVs
IT and automation

Top Posted Occupations for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Delivery Driver	2965
Automotive Service	2367
Technician/Mechanic	
Warehouse/Inventory Associate	210
Labourer/Material Handler	2035
HGV/LGV Class 2 Driver	1817
HGV/LGV Class 1 Driver	1041
Storage/Distribution Manager	489
Van/Taxi/Shuttle Driver	467
Driving Instructions	454
Auto Body Technician	285

Top Posted Job Titles for the sector	Number of vacancies (Feb 22 - Feb 23)
Warehousing	37%
Marketing	17%
Forklift truck	8%
Palletizing	6%
Vehicle Maintenance	5%
Manual Handling	4%
Housekeeping	4%
Stock Control	3%
Order Picking	3%
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	2%

Top Specialised Skills for the sector	
	Frequency in Adverts
Warehousing	37%
Marketing	17%
Forklift truck	8%
Palletizing	6%
Vehicle Maintenance	5%
Manual Handling	4%
Housekeeping	4%
Stock Control	3%
Order Picking	3%
Key Performance Indicators	2%

Top Common Skills for the sector		
	Frequency in Adverts	
Customer Service	18%	
Communications	16%	
Loading and Unloading	13%	
Detail Orientated	8%	
Lifting Ability	8%	
Management	7%	
Strong Work Ethic	5%	
Operations	4%	
Self Motivation	4%	
Sales	3%	