

West of England Employment & Skills Programmes & Services

This guide provides an overview of the employment and skills programmes, support and services available across the West of England through the Combined Authority. Information is grouped around the following themes:

1. [Strategic Support](#)
 - [Skills Connect – Employment & Skills](#)
 - [Growth Hub – Business Support for SMEs](#)
 - [Invest Bristol & Bath – Inward Investment Service](#)
 - [Good Employment Charter](#)
2. [Workforce Development and Careers](#)
 - [Workforce for the Future](#)
 - [Thrive at Work](#)
 - [Careers Hub](#)
3. [Skills, Training & Support for Individuals](#)
 - [Future Bright](#)
 - [Adult Education Budget](#)
4. [Green Skills & Business Grants](#)
 - [Green Skills](#)
5. [Digital Skills & Training](#)
 - [Made Smarter](#)
 - [Digital Engineering, Innovation and Technology \(DETI\)](#)
6. [Sectoral Skills](#)
 - [Wave 3 Skills Bootcamps](#)
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 - [Jobs Connect](#)

West of England Combined Authority – who are we?



The West of England Combined Authority (CA) was set up in 2017 through a devolution deal with Government. This deal transferred significant power, decision making and funding from Government to the region (i.e. devolution).

The CA comprises a group of local authorities (Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire) working together to deliver economic growth and address some of the challenges such as skills, housing and transport.

In addition to the CA, the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership area includes North Somerset.

[Who we are - West of England Combined Authority \(westofengland-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk)

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Strategic Support



Apprenticeships or
work related
training



Careers guidance



Finding and getting
into work



Furthering my
career

Skills Connect

Skills Connect provides a 'shop window' for employment and skills support across the West of England. Bringing together in one place information, provision, signposting and advice, and servicing the provision across the region.

Staff are available to provide advice and support and will directly signpost individuals to the best provision for them.

Skills Connect incorporates the **Employability & Skills Portal** which lists the plethora of support services and training available, helping individuals and businesses to find the right support - whether they're joining the workforce for the first time, looking for a new job opportunity or planning how to progress at work.

The following guides bring together the local, regional and national skills, training and employment services available to residents and businesses in the West of England.

- Careers Information, Guidance, Coaching and Support (Aged 11-18), (Aged 18+), Careers Platforms and Skills Information Portals;
- Employability, Job Search, CV and Interview Preparation and Support with Gaining Employment;
- Traineeship, Kickstart, T-Level and Apprenticeships;
- Upskilling, Reskilling and Progression Within Work;
- Redundancy Support (Individuals);
- Business support (workforce development and skills); and
- Wellbeing Support SEND and Individualised Support.

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	<p>To view the above lists visit: www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/skills/employment-skills-portal</p> <p>Email: Charlotte.Hopley@WestofEngland-ca.gov.uk</p> <p>Eligibility: Use of Skills Connect and Employment & Skills portal is open to all, and covers the whole of the West of England ((B&NES, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire). Note eligibility of specific provision will vary.</p>
 <p>West of England GROWTH HUB </p>	<p>Growth Hub</p> <p>The growth hub provides tailored support, expert guidance and access to finance and support programmes to small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs).</p> <p>A free and impartial service open to all businesses, from all sectors. We offer help to businesses throughout Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.</p> <p>Staff are available to provide 1to1 advice and support and will directly signpost individuals to the most appropriate business support for them.</p> <p>For more information about the growth hub visit: Growth Hub - Growth Hub (westofengland-ca.gov.uk)</p> <p>Email: wearegrowth@westofengland-ca.gov.uk</p> <p>Tel: 0117 456 6955</p>

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Invest Bristol & Bath

For businesses looking to expend, relocate or set up a Business Hub in the Bristol and Bath Region Invest Bristol & Bath offer a confidential, free service which provides extensive, tailored support. We'll connect you with the right people, organisations and resources to set you up for success.

The support available to businesses working with Invest Bristol & Bath includes:

- **The West of England Combined Authority:** The Combined Authority will give you access to wide-ranging support. This includes simplified access to local councils; skills and talent; infrastructure; business support; and school engagement.
- **Expertise from experienced sector specialists and stakeholders:** Connect with experts from a range of fields including Aerospace and Advanced Engineering, Clean Tech & Energy, Creative and Media, Digital & Tech, Financial & Professional Services, Fintech, Food & Drink Innovation, Life Sciences, Logistic & Distribution.
- **Regional visits:** We can design and host visits to our region to help you make investment decisions.
- **Industry connections:** We'll introduce you to business support and recruitment providers so you can conduct research, meet the right people and get off to a smooth start.
- **Talent pool:** We can provide detailed talent skills analysis and introduce you to academic partners and regional talent programmes.
- **Networks:** We'll link you to industry networks, trade associations, membership organisations and research and development (R&D) assets.
- **Property solutions:** We'll help you find the right location plan for your business. Whether you're relocating a large team, setting up a new centre, or looking at sites for offices, manufacturing or development, we offer confidential support.

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	<p>For more information on the Invest Bristol & Bath Service visit: Invest Bristol & Bath - Home (bristolandbath.co.uk)</p> <p>Email: invest@bristolandbath.co.uk</p> <p>Tel: +44 (0) 117 428 6211</p>
 <p>Good Employment Charter West of England</p>	<h3>Good Employment Charter</h3> <p>The West of England Good Employment Charter sets the standard for working practices in the region. Supporting businesses to improve investment in their staff, enabling more inclusive, equitable and sustainable working practices, positively benefitting people, society, and the wider economy.</p> <p>Good employment isn't just the 'right' thing to do, it also helps employers achieve more and contributes to a thriving economy. These are just some of the ways <u>joining the Charter</u> and being an employer of choice could benefit you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher staff retention rates• Better productivity• Healthier workplace culture• Top talent chooses you <p>Eligibility: Open to businesses of any size or sector within the West of England CA (B&NES, Bristol, South Gloucestershire.)</p> <p>To find out more or to apply to join the charter visit: The West of England Good Employment Charter Home</p> <p>Email: charter@westofengland-ca.gov.uk</p>

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Workforce Development & Careers



Workforce for the Future




WFTF provides tailored, in-depth support to help businesses' plan and adapt for the future. The programme can support with identifying current and future skills needs, implementing development plans to upskill or retrain employees and supporting SME's to bring in apprenticeships or work placements to help drive their business forward. Key strands of the support available through the WFTF core service are:

- Workforce planning, diagnostic service and general support;
- Digital support and upskilling;
- Apprenticeship advice and levy transfer support;
- Improving skills across the region; and
- Staff retention / pre redundancy support.
- Connect and recruit diverse future talent through local schools and colleges.

Eligibility: Participation is free and available to SMEs (less than 250 employees) in the West of England (B&NES, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire).

Register at: <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/employment-skills/workforce-for-the-future/>

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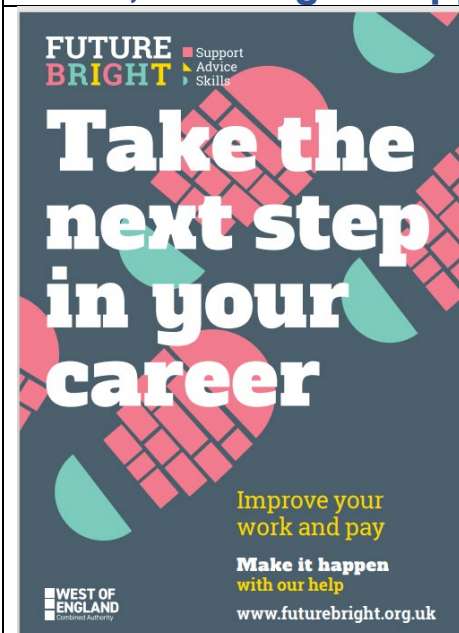
<p>PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYEES</p> <p>THRIVE AT WORK</p>  <p>WEST OF ENGLAND Combined Authority</p>	<h3>Thrive at Work</h3> <p>Encouraging and supporting businesses to improve their employees' mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The West of England Combined Authority has developed the Thrive at Work programme in collaboration with employers and strategic partners, giving small to medium enterprises (SMEs) the interactive tools and training resources needed to help embed good mental health practice in their business to support employees.</p> <p>Tools and resources available include: e-learning modules for managers, Mental Health at Work Commitment webinars, 'How to' guides, toolkits, Peer support, webinars, resources and research library, Wellness Action Plans, Covid—19 Psychological First Aid Training and information on commitment statements and standards.</p> <p>To find out more visit: https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/growth-hub/workforce-development/thrive/</p>
<p>BUSINESS LEADERS –</p> <p>help the next generation fulfil their potential by becoming an Enterprise Adviser</p>   <p>"It's a chance to make a difference at a strategic level..."</p> <p>Paul Anslow, owner of Triangle Networks</p>	<h3>Careers Hub</h3> <p>Our Careers Hub works with all 95 schools from across Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset, supporting them to improve careers opportunities and work experiences for young people, allowing them to make more informed choices about their careers.</p> <p>The Careers Hub works to ensure that young people have more opportunities to connect with the world of work and potential future employers. It builds on the success of the Enterprise Adviser Network, working in partnership with schools,</p>

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	<p>colleges, and businesses to ensure young people get timely and relevant careers advice and meaningful work experience.</p> <p>The world of work is changing fast. We therefore need to build a skilled and informed workforce to ensure that our young people are ready to cope with the fast pace of technological change.</p> <p>The Careers Hub connects businesses, schools and colleges through the Enterprise Adviser Network, Workforce for the Future and Cornerstone Employer Network. By building partnerships with education through the Careers Hub, employers can access a diverse and skilled talent pipeline addressing skills gaps and recruitment needs.</p> <p>To find out more about connecting with local schools and colleges visit: Employers and volunteers - Combined Authority (westofengland-ca.gov.uk)</p>
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Skills, Training & Support for Individuals



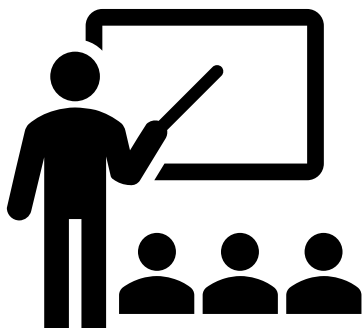
Future Bright

Future Bright offers free career coaching, training and support to help individuals to develop the skills and confidence needed to take their next career step. When joining the programme, you'll be matched with a career coach who'll support you to create a personalised action plan.

Eligibility: Future Bright can support people who are:

- Aged 18 and over;
- Living in the West of England CA– that's Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire;
- In paid work (including zero hours and self-employed)

Register at: www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/future-bright/



Adult Education Budget

The West of England Combined Authority is responsible for adult education funding in Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. That means we fund education providers to deliver tailored courses that meet the needs of our region.

As part of our education strategy, we focus on five categories of adult education:

1. **Engagement:** Supporting disadvantaged residents to re-engage with education
2. **Employability:** Supporting unemployed residents to progress into work

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3. **Foundation Skills for Work:** Improving employed residents' skills to boost their career prospects (skills up to and including Level 2)
4. **Intermediate Skills for Work:** Improving employed residents' skills to boost their career prospects (skills up to and including Level 3)
5. **Learning for Personal Development:** Helping residents progress into higher education

We target funding at the residents who need it most, whilst also supporting those in work to gain better-paid, more secure employment. We prioritise the following residents when choosing which provision to fund:

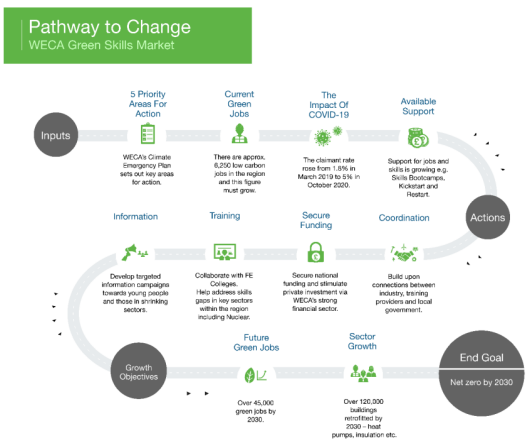
- People who have been unemployed for six months or more
- Unemployed people with prior education attainment falling below Level 2
- People who are employed in low-paid jobs, or at risk of redundancy, with prior education attainment falling below Level 2

To find out more about the Adult Education Budget: [Adult education - West of England Combined Authority \(westofengland-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/adult-education)

Email: adulthoodeducation@westofengland-ca.gov.uk

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Green Skills & Business Grants



Green Skills

In order to drive action towards meeting the region's 2030 target, we're implementing a Climate Emergency Action Plan across the local economy. However, those targets cannot be achieved without a skilled workforce. That's why we need to provide our workers with skills in emerging technologies. Through upskilling the current workforce and engaging the next generation of workers, we can help tackle climate change.

Meeting net zero will require fundamental shifts across all areas of the economy including transport, power, industry and the natural environment.

Analysis by Ecuity found that for the region to meet net zero by 2030, more than 50,000 new jobs would be required.



The report by Ecuity can be viewed here: [Green skills - West of England Combined Authority \(westofengland-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/green-skills-west-of-england-combined-authority)

A number of initiatives are available which help to achieve the regions green ambitions these include:

- Driving forward investment in skills including the Adult Education Budget.
- Helping businesses to upskill their workforces and support residents into work through programmes like Workforce for the Future and Future Bright.
- The Green Futures Fund will test innovative approaches to delivery of school careers activity and curriculum that align with the regional 'green' skills agenda.

Email: skills@westofengland-ca.gov.uk

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Digital Skills & Training	
	<p>Made Smarter</p> <p>Made smarter can help SMEs increase profits, maximise efficiency, improve capacity and reduce lead times by supporting them to explore the opportunities presented through the adoption of new technology and digitalisation. Through made smarter SME's can access a 121 assessment provided by the National Composites Centre, enabling the SME to see the benefits industrial digitalisation can offer their businesses.</p> <p>Eligible businesses will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• access 50% match funded grants for the purchase and integration of new digital technologies.• Access digital leadership training and student internships delivered by UWE to prepare your businesses for a digital future. <p>For more information please view our website: Made Smarter - West of England Combined Authority (westofengland-ca.gov.uk)</p>
	<p>Digital Engineering Technology & Innovation (DETI)</p> <p>The Digital Engineering Technology and Innovation (DETI) programme is investing in the future of digital engineering for our region.</p> <p>DETI is a strategic programme of the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), delivered by the National Composites Centre, in partnership with;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Centre for Modelling and Simulation• Digital Catapult• UWE Bristol• University of Bristol

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- [University of Bath](#).

Industry partners include Airbus, GKN Aerospace, Rolls-Royce, and CFMS, with contributions from UWE Bristol, Digital Catapult and Siemens. DETI is funded by £5m from WECA, with co-investment from the High Value Manufacturing Catapult and industry.

UWE Bristol's [Engineering, Design and Mathematics Department](#) (EDM) are leading the Skills Development branch of DETI, establishing an engineering engagement hub for the West of England, based out of their new [School of Engineering building](#). Working in collaboration with key DETI partners and industry supporters they are delivering three programmes.

Inspire - Encouraging diversity and inclusivity, DETI Inspire engages children in primary and secondary education across the West of England, with a focus on disadvantaged areas. Using curriculum-linked engineering outreach and careers support, we are connecting children with real-life, diverse engineering role models to widen participation and aspirations for STEM careers.

Transform - Inspiring future generations, the DETI Transform programme plans to engage with further and higher education institutions to map and upgrade current taught provision and demonstrate how digital engineering can contribute to the sustainability goals for the West of England, leading into the next phase of clean and sustainable growth.

Innovate - To ensure the current and future workforce is digital ready, the DETI Innovate programme will examine the tools, technologies, and processes needed to rapidly accelerate engineering capabilities and identify the skills needed to embed a digital culture throughout organisations in the West of England. By undertaking a Skills Gap Analysis, DETI Innovate will map current roles within the design and manufacturing fields to digital skills, both current and future, to understand the gaps and help focus solutions.

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Sectoral Skills

Wave 3 Skills Bootcamps

Skills Bootcamps offer bespoke training solutions to bridge existing skills gaps within high demand sectors. Funded through the Department of Education and forming part of the National Skills Fund Skills Bootcamps place the employer at the centre of training and development.

The West of England Combined Authority has identified unique projects to support organisations, sector representative groups, employers and/or delivery partners in the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area to address skills shortages. Areas covered include:


- Logistics
- Construction
- Technical Skills
- Green Skills
- Digital Skills

The programme will deliver flexible training programmes for adults (19+), lasting up to 16 weeks and a minimum of 60 guided learning hours. The flexible approach allows adults to train around existing commitments.

Participants will have access to in-demand skills training and a guaranteed interview with a local employer, with the aim of enabling the learner to secure a more sustainable job and higher wages over time.

For the most up-to-date information on the bootcamps currently running please view our website: [Wave 3 Skills Bootcamps - West of England](#)

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	<p>Combined Authority (westofengland-ca.gov.uk)</p>
	<p>Wave 4 Skills Bootcamps Coming soon</p> <p>For the most up-to-date information on the bootcamps currently running please view our website: https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/employment-skills/</p>
	<p>Jobs Connect</p> <p>West of England Jobs Connect is a career and recruitment tool brought to you by the West of England Combined Authority and built by partners Cognisess for businesses and residents in the West of England. With a current focus on linking job seekers with opportunities in the hospitality sector.</p> <p>As a resident, you have access to our bespoke Yondur system where you can create a digital CV that can be shared with recruiters, search and apply for positions through our jobs board, and measure your skills, attributes and abilities using games and reporting.</p> <p>As a business, you can post jobs and manage your end-to-end recruitment process or create teams and review internal development opportunities.</p> <p>If you are a business based in the West of England (Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, or South Gloucestershire) and would like to request an account please use <u>this enquiry form</u></p>