

Liverpool City Region Skills for Growth

Generic skills priorities for 2015/16 for Liverpool City Region

Liverpool City Region Skills for Growth: Priorities 2015/16 uses feedback and insight from a wide range of growth sector employers to identify a number of consistent themes regarding current and future skills needs in the City Region.

- **Customer service for staff working in front line roles: this is critical for the City Region, particularly with the International Festival for Business in 2016;**
- **Science, technology and mathematics at all levels: there is a need for residents to have a sound basis in mathematics and an increasing need for higher level science and specific technology skills;**
- **Practical logistics: with developments linked to the Liverpool 2 container terminal, there is an increasing need for entry level warehouse skills (e.g. pickers and packers) and drivers of heavy goods vehicles;**
- **Digital skills, to ensure that residents can use technology and to build upon the higher level expertise in the City Region;**
- **Project management which underpins good business practice and particularly construction sectors;**
- **Leadership and management across all levels and particularly for small and medium enterprises; and**
- **Underpinning employability skills that enable residents to contribute in the workplace (e.g. team working, literacy).**



Growth sector skills needs in the Liverpool City Region

The Skills for Growth Agreements set out the collective aspirations of key employers in specific sectors, and provide a mechanism for employers and providers to review and design training that contributes to the competitiveness of the City Region economy.

Visitor Economy

Visitor Economy employers identified a need to improve communication, destination awareness and interpersonal skills of (current and future) staff and a requirement to increase levels of in-work training.

Employers highlight demand for skills provision to expand the availability of:

- High standards of culinary skills to develop the City Region's future chefs;
- Industry-standard customer service skills (i.e. World Host);
- Language skills that reflect the City Region's visitor markets;
- Management skills including financial and people management; and
- Interpersonal and broader employability skills (i.e. teamworking).

SuperPORT

There is an ongoing need to ensure NVQ Level 2 skills are expanded amongst the sector's current workforce and that, in particular, existing employees have the correct, sector-focussed information technology skills needed to succeed in a changing industry.

Employers in the sector identify a need to improve leadership and management skills at all levels within their workforce and, as a result, have recommended that skills provision in the Liverpool City Region responds to this need by offering higher level technical and management skills to learners of all ages. In addition, businesses highlight the need for colleges and training providers to offer sector-specific provision that will respond to industry demand for:

- Workboat operatives;
- Sub-surface engineering;
- Business and process control managers; and
- Drivers and logistics operative staff.

Advanced Manufacturing

Employers highlight an ongoing demand for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) skills at all levels within the industry and the importance for colleges and training providers to ensure learners can apply these skills in a workplace environment. In addition to technical skills in Engineering and Manufacturing subjects at NVQ Level 3, Advanced Manufacturing employers highlight the importance of project and process management techniques, problem-solving skills and attention to detail.

In order for current and future employees to be able to succeed within the sector, there is a need for colleges and training providers to ensure that provision allows learners to develop an understanding of industry-standard technologies and techniques (i.e. Lean principles). In addition to these in-demand skills, employers emphasise the importance of broader, employability attributes and the need for provision at all levels to encourage team working, pro-activeness and effective communication skills.

Low Carbon

In addition to broader STEM skills, employers in Low Carbon sector identify a need for schools, colleges, training providers and universities to provide learners with the various skills to address gaps in specific job roles relating to low carbon processes and products. These gaps include:

- Operational skills relating to marine staff, machine and waste operatives, waste plant staff; and
- Technical skills for maintenance technicians, welding and electrical trades.

There are also a number of higher level skills relating to mechanical, electrical and manufacturing production processes. If successfully embedded into local training provision and effectively marketed to learners, this would allow residents to compete within more specialist, competitive and lucrative low carbon career roles such as heat-pump installation and wind farm maintenance.

Digital and Creative

Digital and Creative businesses are clear that they value interdisciplinary team working skills across technology platforms, strong creative and design skills and the ability to explain ideas to clients. These 'fusion' skills can often involve technical computing and creative skills to create new digital products and services and are identified as essential drivers of the Digital and Creative industry. Other, key market drivers of demand that the Agreement recommends training providers should embed in their offer include:

- Coding;
- Design (i.e. visual effects, animation, marketing);
- Business management and analytical skills; and
- Computer security, data protection, cloud computing.

Financial and Professional Services

Broader employability skills and attributes (including problem-solving techniques, effective communication, business ethics and enthusiasm) are key to succeeding within the sector and training provision in the City Region should encourage and develop these skills amongst learners. Employers emphasise continuing importance of entrepreneurial and enterprise skills (such as commercial awareness, presentational skills and flexibility) in a sector with increasing opportunities in consultancy and other non-traditional employment formats.

Employers in the Financial and Professional Services sector identify analytical and research skills, experience in project management techniques and an ability to adapt to and make best use of specialist software as essential to ensuring learners can succeed in the industry and should therefore be a key part of training providers' offers in the City Region. Colleges and training providers need to develop their strategic relationships with the sector to ensure that their offer is based on relevant, competency-based frameworks and offers learners work experience opportunities (identified as a specific challenge in the sector).

Life Sciences

The variety of sub-sectors within the industry all require a versatile workforce that is highly skilled with the right mix of technical skills, academic knowledge and vocational understanding able to respond to company needs. Employers also emphasise the importance of higher level technical cross sector roles such as bioinformatics and health economics, as well as a wider scientific skill set. These wider skill sets include the need for:

- A common scientific understanding;
- Appropriate statistical and mathematical knowledge and ability;
- Strong interdisciplinary collaboration; and
- Adaptability, technical prowess and commercial awareness.

Life Sciences employers highlight recruitment demand for a number of specific roles including engineers of any kind, formulation chemists, process technicians and clean room operatives. Effective interpersonal, management skills and proven industry experience are identified as key for new recruits. Employers have identified their preference for a competency based approach and, in particular, the concept of bundling desired competencies together when designing and developing skills provision. This in keeping with wider feedback from the industry that emphasises a clear need for new vocational entry routes into Life Sciences, with a focus on expanding Apprenticeships and Higher Level Apprenticeships to tackle significant replacement issues.