

Skills Bill becomes law

New laws have been passed today (28 April) through the Skills and Post-16 Education Act that will help transform the skills and training landscape and level up opportunities across the country.

Skills to support the growing green economy will be prioritised to create a workforce for jobs now and in the future, and schools will be required to make sure all children get to meet people that provide technical education routes such as apprenticeships, T Levels or traineeships – opening their eyes to a wide range of careers.

The legislation will help economic recovery and growth by making it easier for people to get the skills they need to secure well-paid jobs in industries with skills gaps, such as health and social care, engineering, digital, clean energy and manufacturing. It will also give more people the opportunity to get jobs in their local areas, by requiring employers and colleges to work together to identify the skills needed within communities.

The unethical practice of essay mills will also be criminalised to tackle companies that actively facilitate cheating and dishonest behaviour by providing students with essays for money.

The Act underpins the government's transformation of post-16 education and skills as set out in the [Skills for Jobs White Paper](#) and will help level up and drive growth across the whole country.

Minister for Skills Alex Burghart said:

The Skills and Post-16 Education Act will transform the skills, training and post-16 education landscape and level up opportunities across the country.

This legislation will make sure everyone can gain the skills they need to progress into a rewarding job, and businesses have access to a pipeline of talented, qualified employees for their workforces – boosting productivity.

Key measures introduced by the Act include:

- embedding employers in the heart of the skills system by placing a legal requirement on colleges and other providers to work with employers to develop skills plans, so that the training on offer meets the needs of local areas, and people no longer have to leave their hometowns to find great jobs;
- making sure all pupils meet providers of technical education so that they understand the wide range of career routes and training available to them, such as apprenticeships, T Levels or traineeships, not just the traditional academic options;

- prioritising green skills so the training on offer across the country meets the needs of the growing green economy and helps gets more people into jobs;
- supporting the transformation of the current student loans system so from 2025 learners can access a flexible loan for higher-level education and training at university or college, useable at any point in their lives;
- introducing new powers to intervene when colleges are failing to deliver good outcomes for the communities they serve;
- making it a criminal offence to provide, arrange or advertise essay mill services for financial gain to students taking a post-16 qualification at institutions in England including colleges, universities and sixth forms; and
- creating a unified skills system that builds from quality gains achieved with apprenticeships and T Levels by ensuring all technical qualifications match up to employers' high standards.

[Employers in eight trailblazer areas](#) across the country have already been working with local training providers to create skills plans that align to what local communities need. These plans are now being rolled out across the country, opening up more opportunities for people to gain the skills they and businesses need to succeed.

The new measures build on the work already under way to boost skills and get more people into better jobs, including working with employers to create more apprenticeship opportunities, establishing a network of Institutes of Technology and rolling out new T Levels.

Jennifer Coupland, chief executive of the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE), which leads with implementing the government's employer-led technical education reforms, said:

Following passage of this landmark legislation, we can look forward to creating a unified skills system which is simpler to understand and employers and learners can really trust.

IfATE has empowered employers to drive up the quality of apprenticeships and roll out exciting new T Levels. The time is now right to extend the employer-led reforms across technical education.