

Step into your future: Careers & Opportunities in the Black Country

Parent & Student Guide



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Your future starts here:

What you need to know about jobs, skills and opportunities in the Black Country

Deciding what to do after school can feel overwhelming - with so many options, how do you know what's right for you?

That's where Labour Market Information (LMI) comes in. It's like a career compass, showing you where the jobs are, what skills you'll need, and what kind of future you can expect - right here in the Black Country.

This guide will help you discover:

- What jobs are in demand right now
- What skills employers are looking for
- How much different jobs pay
- What's happening in your local area
- And where the biggest opportunities will be when you enter the world of work

In this booklet, we break down the latest job trends in the Black Country, so you can make smart choices about your future. Whether you're thinking about college, sixth form, an apprenticeship, or jumping straight into work, this guide will help you connect your interests with real opportunities.

Whether you want to work with people, fix things, solve problems, start your own business or make a difference in your community, the Black Country has more opportunities than you might think.

This guide gives you the facts, not guesses, so you can make informed choices about your next steps, with confidence!

RQF Levels Explained: The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) categorises qualifications in England by level of difficulty and skill, from Entry Level to Level 8. Each level reflects the knowledge and abilities expected in education and the workplace. For example, Entry Level suits beginners, Level 2 equates to GCSEs (grades 4-9), Level 3 aligns with A-levels, Level 4-6 corresponds to higher education like degrees, and Level 7-8 represents advanced qualifications like master's or doctoral degrees. Employers use RQF levels to gauge a candidate's skills and readiness for specific roles.

Digital, Tech & Creative



The digital, tech and creative industries are rapidly expanding, driven by growth in AI, gaming, software development, cyber security, and media production. The West Midlands is one of the UK's fastest-growing hubs for digital innovation, with strong demand for programmers, designers, and digital marketing specialists. Creative talent is also vital for film, TV, advertising, and design, making this sector both technical and artistic.



Entry-Level Jobs

- Junior IT Support Technician
- Social Media Assistant
- Web Content Creator
- Graphic Design Assistant
- Trainee Games Tester

Typical Salary: £20,000 to £25,000

Skills: digital literacy, creativity, problem-solving, teamwork, communication

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Web Developer
- Digital Marketing Executive
- UX/UI Designer
- Cyber Security Technician
- Broadcast Technician

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £35,000

Skills: coding, design software, data handling, client engagement, analytical thinking

Advanced-Level Jobs

- Software Engineer
- Cyber Security Analyst
- Creative Director
- Data Scientist/AI Specialist
- Film/TV Producer

Typical Salary: £40,000 to £70,000+

Skills: advanced coding, leadership, digital strategy, innovation, project management

What to consider at school:



Computer Science



Maths



Media Studies



Art & Design

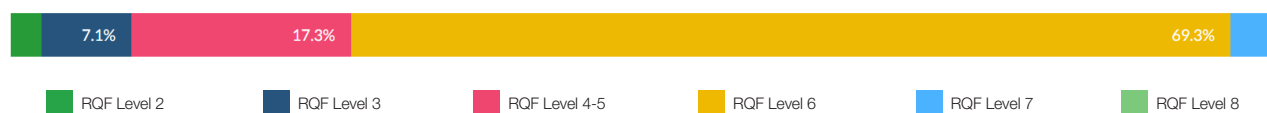


English

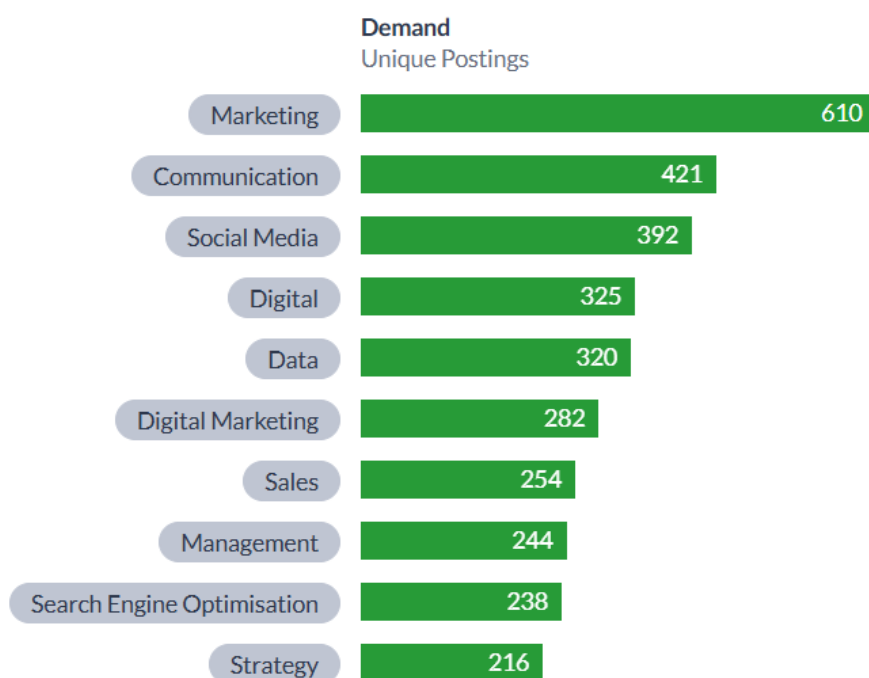


Business Studies

Minimum Requested Education by Employers in the Black Country



Current Top Skills Requested by Employers in the Black Country



Top 10 Employers hiring in the Black Country



Health & Medical Devices



The health and medical devices sector combines healthcare innovation with advanced technology. From developing life-saving equipment to supporting patient care through diagnostics and wearable tech, this sector is central to the West Midlands' growing life sciences cluster. It offers pathways into both clinical support and high-tech engineering roles.



Entry-Level Jobs

- Medical Devices Technician Trainee
- Laboratory Assistant
- Healthcare Support Worker
- Production Operative (medical equipment)
- Pharmacy/Dispensary Assistant

Typical Salary: £21,000 to £26,000

Skills: attention to detail, safety, teamwork, basic lab/IT skills

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Biomedical Technician
- Quality Control Analyst
- Clinical Trials Assistant
- Regulatory Affairs Technician
- Manufacturing Technician (medical devices)

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £36,000

Skills: technical knowledge, data recording, regulatory awareness, diagnostics

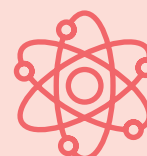
Advanced-Level Jobs

- Biomedical Scientist/Engineer
- Clinical Engineer
- Research Scientist (Medical Devices)
- Regulatory Affairs Manager
- Product Development Lead

Typical Salary: £40,000 to £65,000+

Skills: scientific analysis, innovation, research, compliance, leadership

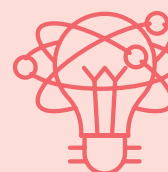
What to consider at school:



Biology



Chemistry



Physics

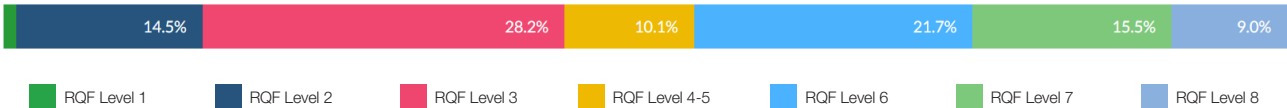


Maths



Design & Technology

Minimum Requested Education by Employers in the Black Country



Current Top Skills Requested by Employers in the Black Country



Top 10 Employers hiring in the Black Country



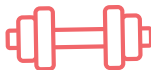
Ramsay
Healthcare



Barchester
Healthcare



Outcomes
First Group



Nuffield
Health



The Gym
Group



HC One



City & County
Healthcare Group



Salutem Care
& Education



Cygnet Group

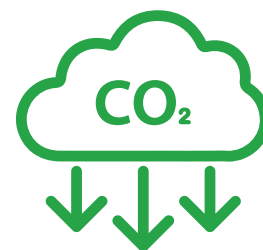


Maximus

Clean Tech & Smart Energy



This sector is growing rapidly as the UK transitions to net zero. Opportunities are expanding in renewable energy, battery storage, energy efficiency, and smart grid technology. The West Midlands is a centre for clean transport innovation and energy solutions, with strong demand for green skills across all levels. Careers in this sector allow you to play a direct role in tackling climate change while shaping a more sustainable future.



Entry-Level Jobs

- Solar Panel Installer Assistant
- Wind Turbine Maintenance Trainee
- Smart Meter Installer
- Recycling/Waste Technician
- Energy Efficiency Operative

Typical Salary: £21,000 to £26,000

Skills: practical skills, safety awareness, problem-solving, teamwork

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Energy Systems Technician
- Environmental Compliance Officer
- Building Energy Assessor
- Smart Energy Network Technician
- Sustainability Coordinator

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £38,000

Skills: environmental knowledge, diagnostics, project coordination, technical reporting

Advanced-Level Jobs

- Renewable Energy Engineer
- Battery Technology Specialist
- Energy Systems Analyst
- Environmental Consultant
- Sustainability Project Manager

Typical Salary: £42,000 to £65,000+

Skills: engineering, data analysis, leadership, innovation, regulatory compliance

What to consider at school:



Physics



Chemistry



Maths



Geography



Design & Technology

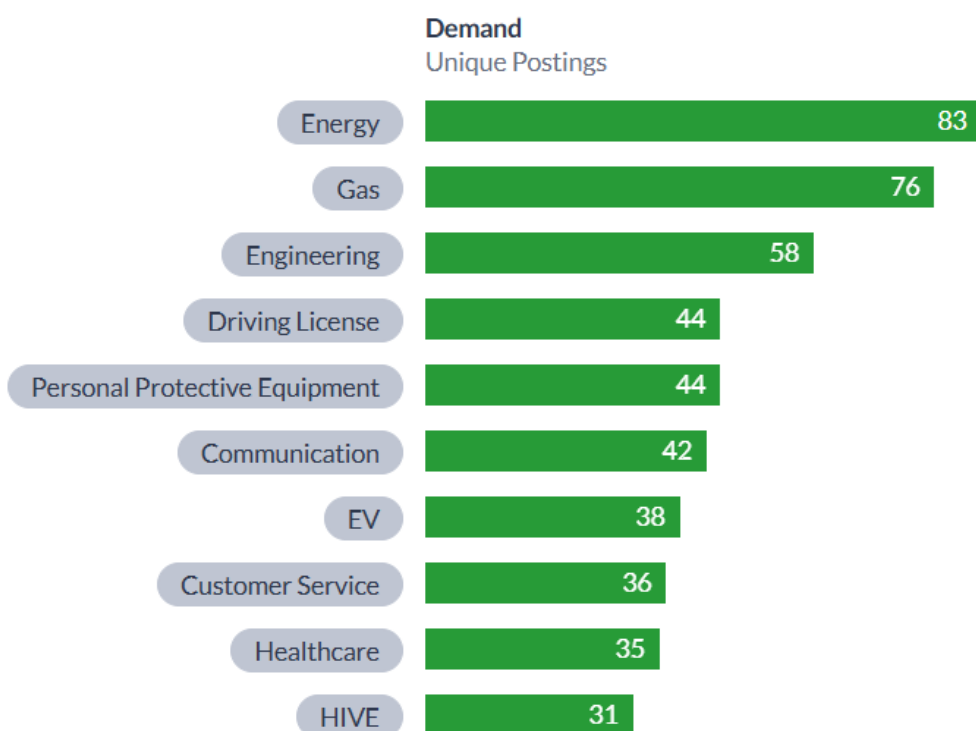


Computer Science

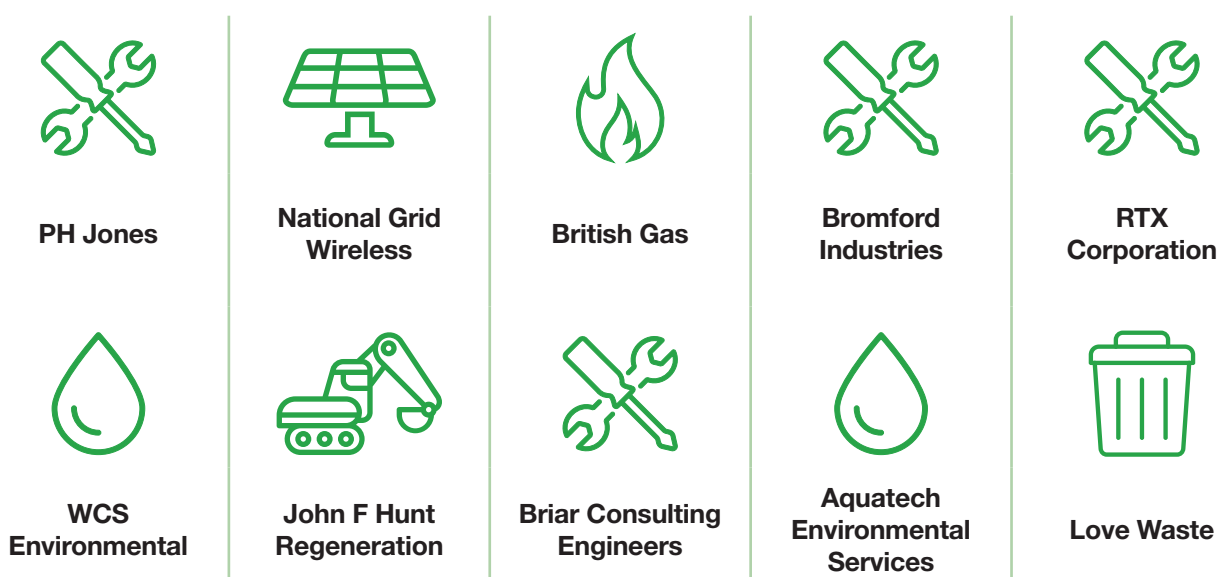
Minimum Requested Education by Employers in the Black Country



Current Top Skills Requested by Employers in the Black Country



Top 10 Employers hiring in the Black Country

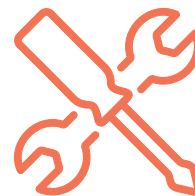


Advanced Engineering

(including Light Vehicles
& Battery Technology)



Advanced engineering in the West Midlands is entering a new era, shaped by the global shift towards electrification, automation, and sustainable production. The region's industrial heritage, combined with cutting-edge innovation in light vehicles, robotics, and battery technology, is creating exciting opportunities for skilled workers. From designing electric vehicles and improving battery performance to developing new manufacturing methods, this sector needs both traditional engineering talent and expertise in future-facing technologies.



Entry-Level Jobs

- Engineering Apprentice (Mechanical, Electrical, Automotive)
- Machine/Production Operator
- Battery Assembly Technician
- CAD Trainee
- Vehicle Technician Trainee

Typical Salary: £20,000 to £25,000

Skills: technical precision, safety awareness, teamwork, hands-on problem solving

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Maintenance Engineer
- Design/CAD Technician
- Battery Test Technician
- Toolmaker or Machinist
- Automotive Diagnostic Technician

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £36,000

Skills: diagnostics, CAD, mechanical systems, fault-finding, planning

Advanced-Level Jobs

- Automotive/EV Engineer
- Robotics Engineer
- Battery Systems Engineer
- Advanced Manufacturing Engineer
- Project Manager (Engineering)

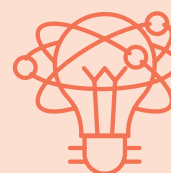
Typical Salary: £42,000 to £70,000+

Skills: advanced maths, systems design, innovation, leadership, project delivery

What to consider at school:



Maths



Physics



Design & Technology

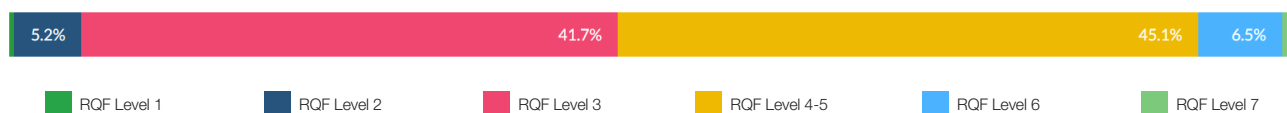


Engineering

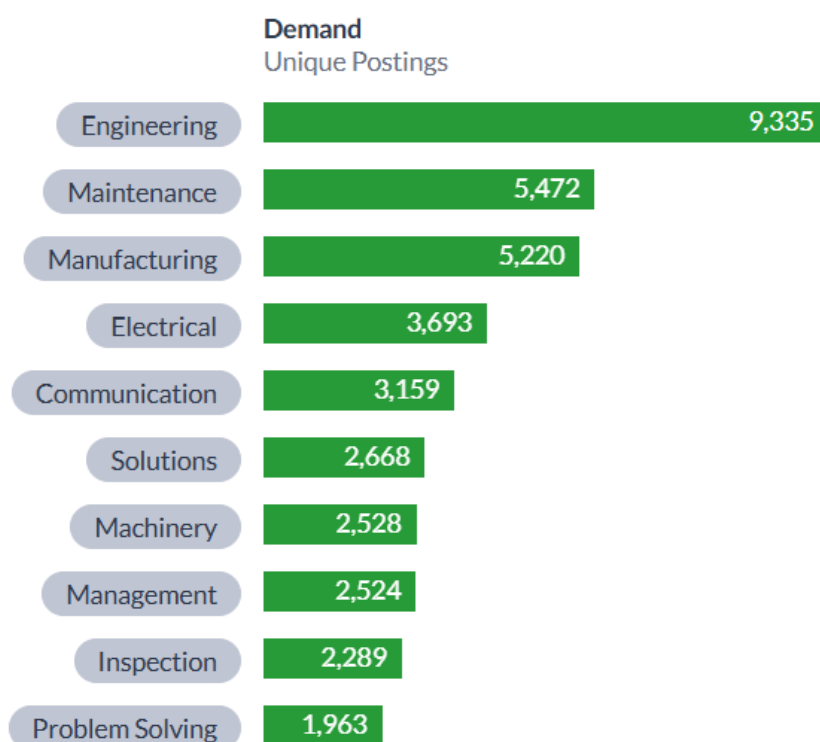


Computer Science

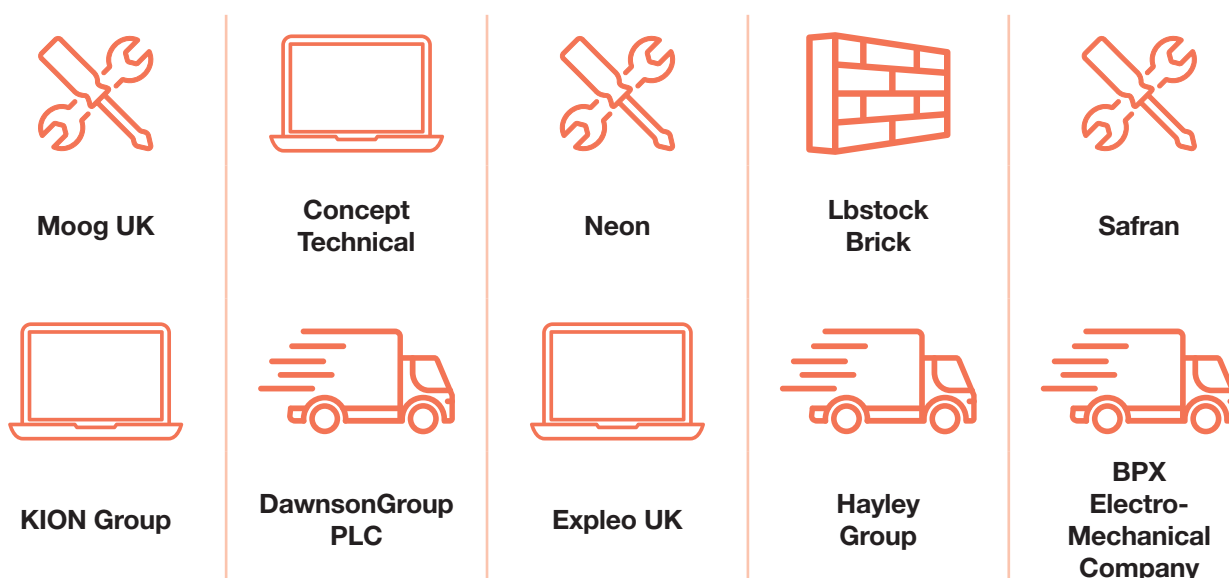
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Current Top Skills Requested by Employers in the Black Country



Top 10 Employers hiring in the Black Country



Construction



The construction sector is growing fast, driven by major infrastructure projects, ongoing housing demand, and the need to retrofit existing buildings to meet net zero targets. There's a strong focus on green construction, sustainability, and digital tools like Building Information Modelling (BIM) and off-site manufacturing. In the West Midlands, construction remains a vital sector offering well-paid, in-demand careers across practical and professional pathways.



Entry-Level Jobs

- General Construction Operative/Labourer
- Apprentice Bricklayer/Carpenter/Electrician
- Groundworker or Plant Operator Trainee
- Trainee Site Assistant
- Scaffolder

Typical Salary: £21,000 to £25,000

Skills: manual work, teamwork, attention to detail, safety awareness

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Skilled Tradesperson (e.g. Electrician, Plumber, Plasterer)
- Site Supervisor or Foreperson
- Quantity Surveyor Assistant
- CAD Technician or BIM Coordinator
- Construction Plant Operator

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £38,000

Skills: precision, planning, problem-solving, site coordination

Advanced-Level Jobs

- Construction Site Manager
- Quantity Surveyor/Estimator
- Civil/Structural Engineer
- Architectural Technologist
- Project Manager

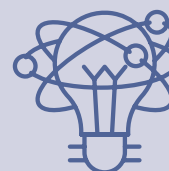
Typical Salary: £40,000 to £60,000+

Skills: leadership, technical knowledge, planning, digital tools (e.g. AutoCAD, BIM)

What to consider at school:



Maths



Physics



Design & Technology

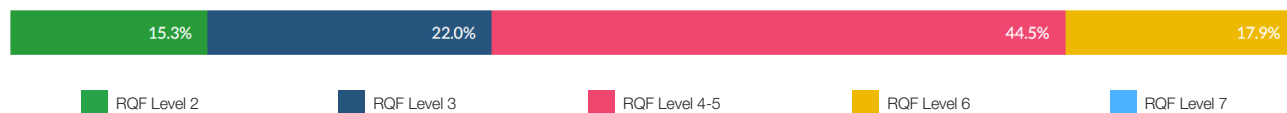


Engineering

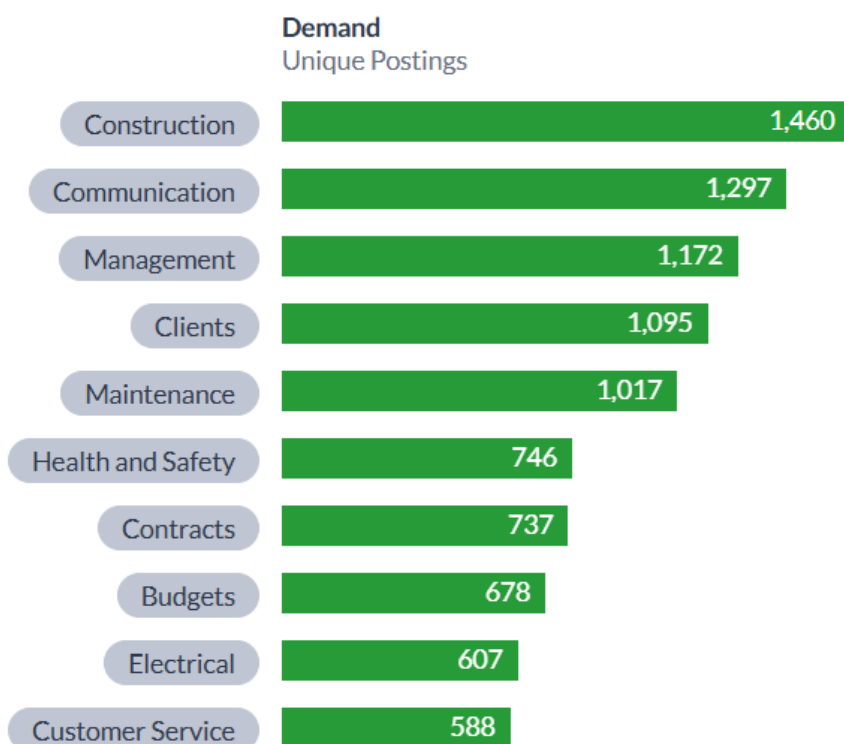


Computer Science

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Top 10 Employers hiring in the Black Country



Homeserve



Anglian Home Improvements



Solus Accident Repair Centres



Sytner Group



Bromford Industries



Wates



Taylor Wimpey



Selwood



John Sisk & Son



Axis Europe

Green Tech



Green tech focuses on developing new technologies and solutions to tackle climate change and reduce carbon emissions. This includes sustainable materials, low-carbon construction methods, energy-efficient products, waste reduction, and circular economy innovations. The West Midlands is positioning itself as a leader in green innovation, with careers spanning design, science, and engineering.



Entry-Level Jobs

- Recycling and Resource Operative
- Environmental Technician Trainee
- Junior Sustainability Assistant
- Insulation Fitter/Retrofit Installer
- Waste Management Apprentice

Typical Salary: £20,000 to £25,000

Skills: environmental awareness, problem-solving, safety, teamwork

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Sustainability Coordinator
- Retrofit Assessor
- Environmental Compliance Technician
- Green Product Design Technician
- Energy/Carbon Analyst (junior)

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £36,000

Skills: research, environmental knowledge, regulatory compliance, digital reporting

Advanced-Level Jobs

- Environmental Engineer
- Sustainability Consultant
- Circular Economy Specialist
- Climate Change Analyst
- Green Technology Project Manager

Typical Salary: £42,000 to £65,000+

Skills: innovation, system design, leadership, advanced research, regulatory knowledge

What to consider at school:



Geography



Environmental Science



Physics



Chemistry

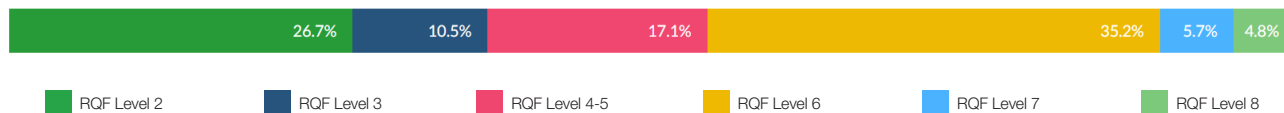


Maths

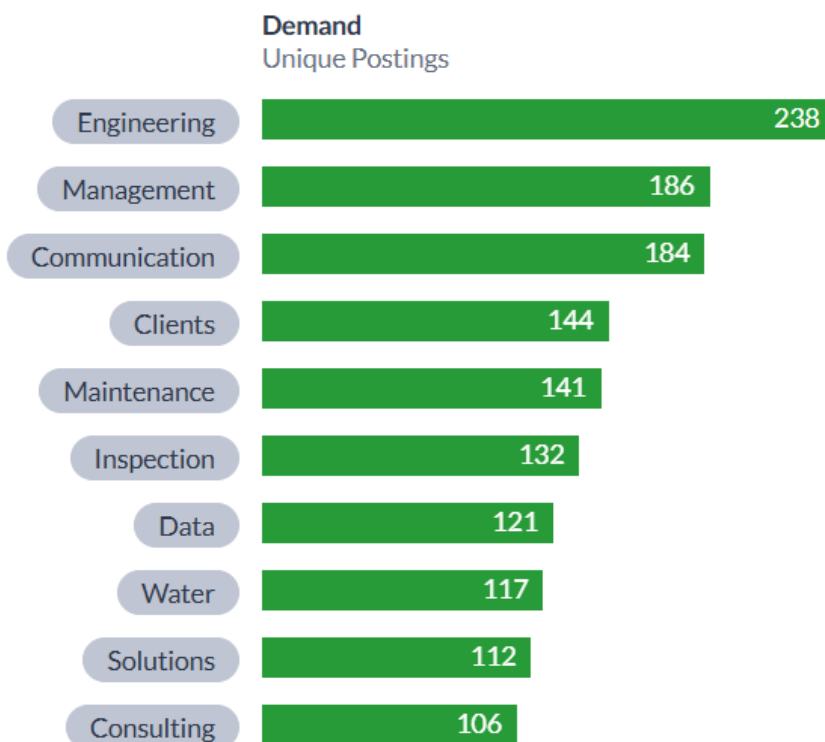


Design & Technology

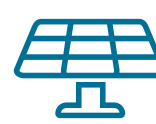
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What's Your Next Step?

As you explore your next steps after school, it's important to have the right information, experiences, and support to help you make decisions with confidence. This guide gives you access to up-to-date Labour Market Information (LMI) for the Black Country - showing you what skills are in demand, which sectors are growing, and how you can prepare for a positive career destination.

1. Reflect on your strengths and interests

- What subjects or activities do you enjoy most?
- What are your key strengths or skills?
- Are you interested in working with people, technology, your hands - or solving real-world problems?

Knowing yourself is the first step in making informed choices about your future.

2. Explore careers linked to growth sectors

Use what you've learned to identify:

- Local opportunities in key sectors (e.g. health, digital, engineering, construction)
- Roles aligned to your interests and abilities
- Skills that employers in your area need now - and in the future

3. Use trusted career tools and resources:

www.prospects.ac.uk - A career website aimed at recent graduates.

www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-careers - Shows a variety of career profiles, under each there is information about salaries, working hours and typical duties.

www.lmiforall.org.uk - A comprehensive portal which collates LMI.

www.icould.com - A website aimed at young people, using personal stories to inform career choices with each video is linked to relevant LMI.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-labour-market-projections-2014-to-2024
UK Labour market predictions.

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk - Not Going To Uni was founded in 2008 to showcase the alternatives to the standard university route to school and college leavers.

www.amazingapprenticeships.com - Amazing Apprenticeships is a leading organisation in the education sector, working with schools, colleges and employers, tackling misconceptions and promoting the benefits of apprenticeships and technical education.

www.careersliveuk.com/partner/west-midlands-combined-authority - Provides careers advice and recruitment opportunities through live broadcasts.

4. Plan and take action

- Choose subjects that support a range of progression routes (A-levels, T Levels, apprenticeships, technical routes)
- Attend open days, employer insight events, or work experience
- Book a 1:1 appointment with your school careers adviser

Black Country LMI

Making informed decisions. Developing future skills. Taking control of your career journey.