



Skills for Success in the UK Screen Industries

**A report by Work Advance for
WorldSkills UK, supported by the BBC**

Heather Carey, Lesley Giles, Dan Wilks and Ben Hickman
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WorldSkills UK is a four-nations partnership between education, industry and UK governments. It is a world-class skills network acting as a catalyst for:

- raising standards, through international benchmarking and professional development
- championing future skills, through analysis of rapidly changing economic demand
- empowering young people, from all backgrounds, through competitions-based training and careers advocacy.

We are working to help the UK become a skills economy, boosting the prestige of technical and professional education by embedding world-class training standards across the UK to help drive investment, jobs and economic growth.



Work Advance undertakes research, analysis and evaluation to advance our understanding of developments in the world of work. We drive practical improvements in policies, programmes and practices that support inclusive and sustainable growth, productive businesses and better management practices, a skilled, agile and healthy workforce, and stronger, more vibrant and cohesive local communities.

Through our strong networks, we provide research, policy and consultancy services to a range of partners, including businesses large and small, trade unions, professional bodies, policy makers and wider practitioners.

Work Advance adopts an approach that is client centred. We aim to secure practical solutions, through blended research and consultancy services and strong stakeholder engagement and partnership working, which bring value through evidence-based and expert insights into what works. We design and support the delivery of tailored programmes and initiatives to test and trial innovations, including help with monitoring and evaluation to track results and impact.



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We create distinctive, world-class programmes and content which inform, educate and entertain millions of people in the UK and around the world.



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Forewords



With a greater understanding of the challenges this sector is facing and the career opportunities available for young people, I'm really excited about the role WorldSkills UK can play

The UK's screen industries are a global success story, providing glamour and growth in equal measure. Yet employers in these sectors – film and TV, animation and visual effects, and video games – need to overcome critical skills gaps in a wide range of disciplines from digital and engineering through to carpentry to meet their projected growth over the next decade.

Against this backdrop WorldSkills UK commissioned Work Advance to help us better understand how young people feel about entering the screen industries, how the screen industries and skills providers are collaborating, and how WorldSkills UK's skills development and career programmes can best help this vital sector to thrive.

Our poll of 2000 young people provides some clear messages. The good news is that young people are enthusiastic about what careers in the screen industries can offer. The more challenging messages are that too many young people don't know how to access a career in these sectors, don't appreciate the range of careers on offer and see a number of barriers in their way.

Importantly, the report also shines a light on the organisations which are making concerted efforts to close the industries' skills gaps and make their careers more accessible to all young people. Skills providers such as Coleg y Cymoedd, screen industry employers such as the BBC, and organisations such as Screen Alliance North, are featured as case studies in this report, providing fantastic examples of how to reach out to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and promote technical qualifications and apprenticeships as a route into these sectors.

For the UK to develop a truly diverse and thriving economy we need to show the breadth of opportunities on offer. Research like this is essential in recognising the importance of high-quality technical skills to the screen industries, and the potential for technical education and apprenticeship providers to play a bigger role in delivering much needed skills and helping attract a more diverse pool of talent.

With a greater understanding of the challenges this sector is facing and the career opportunities available for young people, I'm really excited about the role WorldSkills UK can play, with our partners, in showing that technical education and apprenticeships in a range of skills areas can lead to exciting careers in the screen industries.

I would like to thank Work Advance for all their work on this report and extend my gratitude to the BBC for their support and all the other partners that contributed. I look forward to working with everyone involved to help all young people access the fantastic careers on offer, put technical education and apprenticeships at the heart of skills delivery and help make sure the screen industries can continue to be a driving force of the UK's economic growth.

Ben Blackledge
CEO, WorldSkills UK



It is clear the screen industries are thriving and growing, but in order to stay relevant and competitive on a global scale, inclusivity is key

The BBC welcomes this report. As the world's leading public service broadcaster, we are committed to developing new talent for both the BBC and the wider creative sector. Creating a workforce that represents the audience we are serving is essential to our future. We want everyone to consider the BBC, and indeed the screen industries, as a career destination.

In the BBC's recent plans, the Director General, Tim Davie stressed that success for the BBC includes attracting the best talent in the industry to do their best work. This will enable the BBC to be the foundation for thriving UK cultural and creative industries. Apprenticeships are a key part of this, and through them, we continue to help discover and nurture talent in every part of the country.

The BBC is the leading provider of apprenticeships in the screen industries. We deliver over 40 different schemes to new entrants and to BBC staff to support professional growth and development. These cover all the key areas: business, data, digital, engineering, journalism, production and technology. We currently have 700 apprentices. By 2025, we aim to support 1,000.

The BBC also delivers outreach and pre-employment interventions designed to remove the barriers that prevent young people, especially from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds, from applying to our schemes. As the first media organisation to set a target of 30% socio-economic diversity for early careers apprentices alongside our diversity goals of 50% female, 20% ethnic minorities and 12% people with a disability, much of our work is focussed on creating social mobility opportunities for school leavers, graduates and career changers. This includes a UK-wide programme of in-person work experience taster sessions as well as offering digital T Level placements.

However, we must do more.

This report has indicated the next steps the screen industries should take to become an inclusive career destination that is open to everyone. It is clear the screen industries are thriving and growing, but in order to stay relevant and competitive on a global scale, inclusivity is key. We must continue to raise awareness of the opportunities available. This means making sure the key influencers in people's lives are sufficiently knowledgeable about the wide-ranging jobs and roles on offer and, crucially, the variety of routes into these careers. We must continue to work hard to break down perceived barriers associated with getting into our industry and ensure that technical and vocational skills are valued. Only by working collectively with industry partners, organisations, educators and government can we ensure that this ambition is delivered.

For the screen industries to remain competitive in the future landscape, it is incumbent on us all to play our part in growing skills and talent pipelines and to nurture new talent across the UK, wherever we may find it.

Sarah Moors

Head of Early Careers and Staff Apprenticeships, BBC Academy



Executive summary

This report explores the skills challenges facing the screen industries (film & TV, animation & visual effects, and video games) from three key perspectives: young people considering their career options, skills providers (further education colleges, higher education institutions, and independent training providers) and employers.

The aim of the report is to provide valuable insights to the UK skills sector, employers, and policy makers on how to deliver the wide range of skills these sectors need so that they can continue to thrive. It seeks to identify how WorldSkills UK's programmes can support the screen Industries through the delivery of world-class skills and empowerment of young people. The research is based on polling of 2079 young people, interviews and roundtables with employers, training providers and sector organisations, as well as a review of existing data and publications.

More young people polled pointed to the importance of knowing someone who works in the screen industries than completing an apprenticeship

The UK screen industries are a success story

Data and publications reviewed for this report confirm that the screen industries are a truly remarkable home-grown success story. These sectors experienced four times the rate of growth in employment compared to the UK economy as a whole between 2011 and 2022, adding 100,000 jobs. Output from film & TV alone increased 51% over roughly the same period. With backing from governments in all four UK nations and big ambitions for jobs and growth, the future for these sectors looks bright. However, to maximise the opportunities on offer, the screen industries need to overcome some quite significant challenges.

Skills shortages threaten growth and job creation

Employers in the screen industries have extremely wide-ranging skills needs and these skills are also often in demand in other parts of the economy, including digital technology, construction, engineering and other tertiary sectors. The qualitative evidence gathered for this report also found that employers have a strong need for both technical skills and transversal skills. However, as in many other sectors of the economy, the screen industries are facing significant challenges accessing these skills from the labour market and skills system, with concerns over a shortfall of entry- and mid-level talent across a range of key technical roles. ScreenSkills recently reported that 87% of employers in these industries consider skills shortages to be a problem.

Young people are eager to work in the screen industries but face multiple barriers

Polling for this report found the majority of young people are interested in working in the screen industries, believing they can offer good pay, opportunities for progression and work-life balance. 72% would be enthusiastic about a career in film and TV. However, most don't recognise the range of jobs on offer, particularly those requiring technical skills. For example, only 13% of young people identified that carpentry and joinery are skills needed in film & TV. This is related to the vast majority of young people not receiving information, advice or guidance about a career in the screen industries, but also to perceptions about how to get on the ladder in these sectors. More young people polled pointed to the importance of knowing someone who works in the screen industries than completing an apprenticeship or gaining a relevant technical or vocational qualification.

Personal characteristics and place also influence the barriers young people face, with a higher number of young people aware of careers in areas where these sectors have greater profile, such as London and Northern Ireland. The screen industries also face challenges in recruiting a diverse workforce, with 22% of young people from Black / Black British and Asian / British Asian backgrounds believing that these sectors 'don't hire people like me'.



Technical and vocational education and training has a bigger role to play

Views collated from roundtables and research interviews suggest employers in the screen industries increasingly recognise the importance of technical pathways to fill vital skills gaps and increase the diversity of their workforce. This presents a huge opportunity for providers of technical and vocational education and training, with many already delivering skills that are in demand for ‘below the line’ roles in film & TV, such as carpentry, electrical, and hair & makeup. The research found that innovative skills providers are already partnering with screen industry employers – in areas such as curriculum design, professional development and industry placements – delivering great outcomes for young people and firms across the UK.

However, extending this practice is challenging. Skills providers reported that they are struggling to retain up-to-date knowledge within their workforce at a time of industry shortages, whilst the preponderance of SMEs within the screen industries presents some difficulties with apprenticeship delivery and industry placements. Overcoming these challenges and maximising the quality of courses and training on offer is key to reaching parity of esteem between academic and technical routes into these sectors and ensuring screen industry employers tackle the shortage of mid-level managers needed to onboard, support, and progress diverse entry-level talent, including apprentices.

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Conclusion

This report brings fresh perspectives on the skills challenges facing the UK screen industries. All stakeholders have an important role to play in ensuring young people from all backgrounds can gain the world-class skills they need to pursue exciting careers in these sectors. This is vital to ensure the screen industries have the diverse and highly skilled workforce to remain a success story, continue thriving and compete internationally. WorldSkills UK is also well-placed to support this effort and is responding to the findings of this report by raising standards in the technical education offer for these sectors, showcasing the range of careers on offer and helping to mainstream successful training approaches that meet the needs of industry and young people alike.

In response to the findings of this report, WorldSkills UK has committed to:

- launch a new skills competition programme in makeup and special effects for film & TV to help deliver the pipeline of high-quality technical and employability skills needed
- showcase the range of skills required by UK screen industries at WorldSkills UK national competition finals, as well as the training routes that can equip young people with these skills
- empower young people of all backgrounds to seek an exciting future in the screen industries through inspiring careers programmes and events
- work with Screen Alliance North to help Local Skills Clusters strengthen their pipeline of skills and talent via continuing professional development for educators, and skills competition programmes for young people
- promote good practice developed by innovative further education (FE) colleges and help to mainstream their successes within the wider skills system.

The report also identifies the following priorities for action for wider stakeholders:

- strengthening careers information, advice and guidance for the screen industries to allow more young people of all backgrounds to pursue careers in this part of the UK economy
- encouraging deeper partnerships and more strategic coordination across skills providers, employers and sector bodies within regions to develop a more coherent and responsive technical education offer
- improving interdisciplinary working and collaboration between different departments in technical education providers to help young people on a range of courses understand the importance of their skills for the screen industries
- upscaling the transfer of knowledge and skills between industry and the FE workforce, making successful examples of industry masterclasses and dual professionalism the norm
- continuing to flex the application of policies that support technical skills development for the UK screen industries.



Research aims and method

In partnership with the BBC, WorldSkills UK commissioned Work Advance to undertake a review of technical and transversal skills for the UK screen industries and examine how young people can acquire the skills needed for successful careers in these sectors.

The research also sought to identify how WorldSkills UK's programmes can support the global competitiveness and growth of the UK screen industries. This comprises part of a suite of reports commissioned by WorldSkills UK related to the UK Government's priority sectors to deliver growth, including assessments completed in [digital technology](#), [green industries](#), and [advanced manufacturing](#).

The research explores the following areas:

- the technical and employability skills needs of the screen industries – both now and in the future
- the extent to which the skills system is meeting the needs of industry and challenges and opportunities for technical education providers
- the barriers faced by young people of all backgrounds in pursuing, accessing and progressing through careers in the screen industries.

In doing so, the research draws conclusions about how WorldSkills UK, skills providers, industry and governments can work together to

strengthen technical education pathways into these sectors, equip more young people with the skills they need and improve access to successful careers in the UK screen industries.

The research team deployed a mixed-method approach to addressing the research questions, comprised of:

- a rapid evidence assessment and secondary data analysis to bring together existing evidence on skills needs, shortages and gaps in the screen industries, the alignment between the skills being delivered through the skills system and industry needs, and the actions taken by UK and devolved government, industry stakeholders and education providers to enhance alignment and responsiveness
- a poll of 2,079 young people aged 16-24, exploring their perceptions and awareness of opportunities in the screen industries and wider factors that impact their ability to develop relevant technical skills and to access and progress in work in the sector
- 21 deep-dive research interviews and two roundtables with policy makers, industry stakeholders and providers to explore the skills vital to the future success of the screen industries, the extent to which the skills system is ready and able to meet their needs, and the barriers faced by young people.

This report draws together the various research strands, structuring the evidence around key themes:

- **Chapter 1** examines the contribution of the screen industries to the UK economy, growth performance and potential
- **Chapter 2** explores the diversity of jobs and skills needed by employers in the screen industries and identifies shortages and gaps
- **Chapter 3** presents the perspectives of young people on careers in the screen industries and the challenges they face in accessing and progressing in work in these sectors
- **Chapter 4** discusses the role that technical and vocational education and training providers can play in delivering the skills the screen industries need and the challenges and opportunities in doing so
- **Chapter 5** draws conclusions, identifies priorities for action and explores the role of WorldSkills UK's programmes in supporting the global competitiveness and sustained growth of the UK's screen industries.

This report defines transversal skills as employability, soft, socio-emotional and transferable skills. This report defines the screen industries as film & TV, animation & visual effects, and video games. Further information on the research methodology, definitions and data sources used and stakeholders engaged throughout the work can be found in Annexes 1 and 2.



The screen industries are a UK success story

This chapter explores the contribution of the screen industries to the UK economy and the policy measures being advanced across all four nations to support their future success.

1.1 The UK screen industries have enormous economic, cultural and social value

The UK is recognised as one of the best places in the world to make films, high-end TV, animation, visual effects (VFX) and video games. The screen industries are one of our greatest success stories – a key source of competitive advantage and soft power,¹ positively contributing to the UK's trade balance,² driving innovation³ and providing thousands of highly skilled jobs in cities and regions across the UK.⁴ As part of the UK creative industries, they are recognised as playing a vital role in driving economic growth,⁵ levelling up the United Kingdom⁶ and promoting community cohesion.⁷

The UK screen industries are a significant and rapidly expanding part of the UK economy. They contributed £23bn to the UK economy in 2022 – equivalent to 20% of the economic output of the creative industries

1 HM Treasury (2021) [Build Back Better: our plan for growth](#).

2 DCMS (2023) [DCMS Sectors Economic Estimates: Trade, 2021](#)

3 DCMS/CIC (2023) [Creative Industries Sector Vision: A joint plan to drive growth, build talent and develop skills](#).

4 DCMS (2023) [DCMS Sectors Economic Estimates: Employment](#)

5 HM Treasury (2024) [Spring Budget 2024](#).

6 DLUHC (2022) [Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper](#)

7 DCMS/CIC (2023) [Creative Industries Sector Vision: A joint plan to drive growth, build talent and develop skills](#).

and just over 1% of UK Gross Value Added (GVA).⁸ Output from film & TV increased from £15.4bn in 2010 to 20.8bn in 2022 (an uplift of 51%). Over the same period, video games underwent a surge in economic activity, rising from £400m to £2.2bn (+459%), with growth particularly pronounced over the past five years.⁹

Jobs growth has followed suit. Between 2011 and 2022, the screen industries have experienced four times the rate of employment growth than the UK economy as a whole, with over 100,000 additional employment opportunities created.¹⁰ In 2022, the film, TV and games industries collectively supported 325,000 jobs across the UK.¹¹

Inward investment in films and high-end TV accounts for around 70-75% of UK production spend,¹² which rose from £3.4bn in 2017 to £5.64bn in 2021.¹³

The screen industries are also an important source of soft power, informing positive perceptions of the UK and attracting global viewers to visit our world-famous landmarks and locations.¹⁴ They provide a medium for storytelling, helping to bring understanding of diversity and difference.¹⁵ They are an important part of our culture and often our daily lives, playing an important role in revitalising and sustaining communities, towns and high streets.¹⁶

1.2 The screen industries can offer highly skilled, well-paid work

Whilst 38% of the current workforce is concentrated in London, compared to 16% of those employed across the economy, the UK possesses many vibrant screen clusters outside of the capital. This includes concentrations of film and TV activity around Manchester, Bristol, Glasgow, Belfast, Cardiff, Nottingham and Leeds.¹⁷ There are also sizeable video game business clusters around Liverpool, Manchester, Brighton, Guilford, Slough, Cambridge, Bristol, Sheffield, Leamington Spa, Edinburgh, Nottingham and Leeds.¹⁸

Work in the film, TV and games industries is highly skilled and well paid. On average, those working in the screen industries earn around £10,000 more per annum than the average annual salary in the UK.¹⁹ Work in the screen industries can also be rewarding in other ways, offering an outlet for creativity and the opportunity to pursue a passion or sense of purpose.²⁰

8 DCMS (2024) [DCMS Economic Estimates: Gross Value Added for DCMS sectors and subsectors 2022 \(provisional\)](#).

9 Current prices. DCMS (2024) [DCMS Economic Estimates: Gross Value Added for DCMS sectors and subsectors 2022 \(provisional\)](#).

10 DCMS (2023) [Economic Estimates: Employment in the DCMS Sectors, January to December, 2011-2022](#).

11 DCMS (2023) [DCMS Sectors Economic Estimates: Employment](#)

12 BFI (2024) [Film and high-end television programme production in the UK: full year 2023](#).

13 BFI (2022) [Skills review](#)

14 BFI (2021) [International Audience Perceptions](#).

15 BFI (2023) [Screen Culture 2033: Ten Year Strategy](#).

16 Ipsos / Nordicity / Bennett Institute for Public Policy (2023) [Measuring the economic value of cinema venues](#).

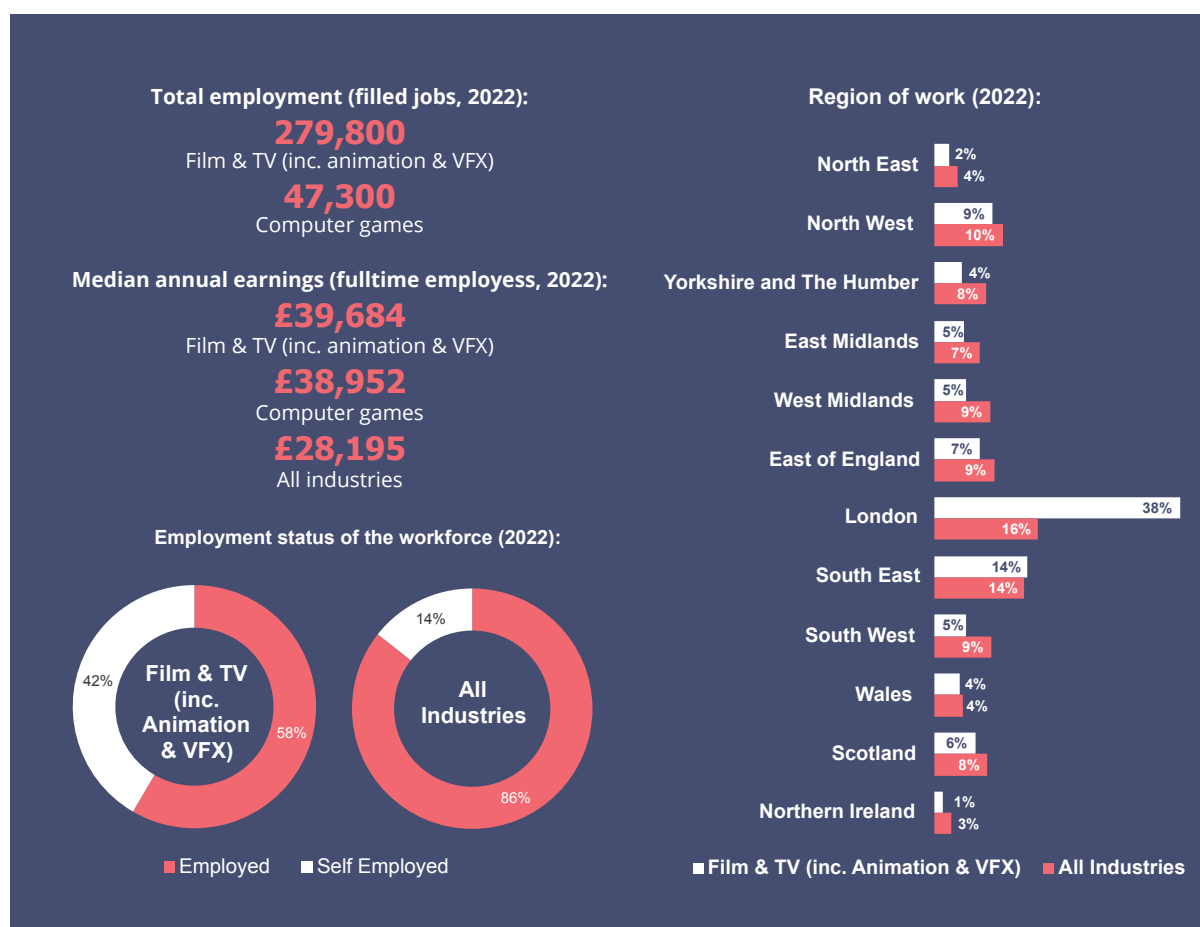
17 Siepel, J., Ramirez-Guerra, A., and Rathi, S. (2023) [Geographies of Creativity](#). Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre

18 Ukie (2023) [UK Games Map](#).

19 DCMS (2023) [Economic Estimates: Earnings in the DCMS Sectors, Annual Gross Pay, 2016 to 2022](#).

20 Carey, H. Giles, L. and O'Brien, D. (2023) [Job quality in the Creative Industries](#). Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre

Figure 1.1: High-skilled, high-paid jobs in the UK screen industries



Source: DCMS (2023) [Economic Estimates: Employment in the DCMS Sectors, January to December, 2011-2022.](#),
 DCMS (2023) [Economic Estimates: Earnings in the DCMS Sectors, Annual Gross Pay, 2016 to 2022](#)

1.3 The screen industries are a priority for all four UK governments

The screen industries look set to create thousands of additional employment opportunities for young people in the years ahead. This will drive expansion across the value chain, including in post-production and visual effects and digital production more widely – including animation, video games and immersive content.²¹ It is no surprise then that governments in each of the four UK nations have identified the screen industries as critical to future economic growth.

The creative industries are one of the UK Government's five priority high-growth sectors.²² In June 2023, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Creative Industries Council (CIC) published the Creative Industries Sector Vision, with the ambition to add one million more jobs to these industries and increase GVA by £50bn by 2030.²³ Building a highly skilled, productive and inclusive workforce is one of three goals, with UK Government and industry committed to publishing

21 Olsberg SPI (2023) [Skills Scoping Study for the UK's Digital Content Production Sectors.](#)

22 HM Treasury (2023) [Spring Budget 2023](#)

23 DCMS/CIC (2023) [Creative Industries Sector Vision: A joint plan to drive growth, build talent and develop skills.](#)

a new Cultural Education Plan and embedding creative industries in existing careers initiatives. Industry also has a key role in shaping new post-16 level 3 and higher technical qualifications and informing the delivery of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs). Further support for the sector was offered through the Treasury's Spring Budget 2024, which included an extension to tax relief for visual effects, a new Independent Film Tax Credit and additional fiscal measures to support an increase in studio space.²⁴

Since 2020, Creative Wales has been operating as part of Welsh Government with the aim of harnessing potential, driving growth and delivering prosperity for the nation. The priorities of Creative Wales include building on existing strengths and developing a world-class skills base, thereby positioning Wales as the best location for creative businesses to invest and locate in. They also recognise the significant contribution that film and TV production makes to the Welsh economy and the potential for it to drive expansion in other parts of the creative sector. The Creative Skills Action Plan identifies ten priority areas, including improving diverse and inclusive recruitment, entry-level placements and opportunities, education and new curriculum, careers awareness, and bridging the gap between the FE/HE workforce and industry, supported by a Creative Skills Fund for projects that move the dial in these areas.^{25,26}

In Scotland, the creative industries are one of seven growth sectors, with clusters such as film and TV in Glasgow or the video games sector in Dundee making an important contribution to the economy. The Scottish Government's National Strategy for Economic Transformation and associated delivery plans commit support for the sector through Creative Scotland and Screen Scotland with its specialist focus on the development of Scotland's film and TV industry.²⁷ The recently published Technology Sector Export Plan also aims to support and expand the export of Scotland's technology sector, including creative media, games and software development.²⁸

In Northern Ireland, the digital, ICT and creative industries comprise one of five key strategic clusters, with plans in place for a sector-specific skills development plan.²⁹ In addition, Northern Ireland Screen's new strategy Stories, Skills and Sustainability details ambitious plans for growing production spend by 40% to £403m over the next four years, supported by an increase in funding of £4.8million.³⁰

Together, these strategies encompass a wide range of policy measures to fuel growth, with skills featuring heavily. As the next chapter shows, there are significant skills gaps and shortages to overcome.

24 HM Treasury (2024) [Spring Budget 2024](#).

25 Welsh Government (2024) [Priorities for the Creative Industries Sector in Wales](#)

26 Welsh Government (2022) [Creative Skills Action Plan and Creative Skills Fund](#)

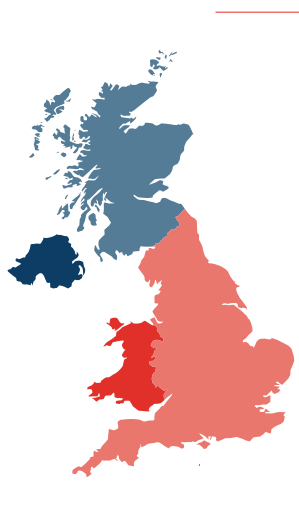
27 Scottish Government (2022) [Delivery Economic Prosperity: Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation](#).

28 Scottish Government (2022) [A Trading Nation – An Export Plan for Scotland's Technology Sector](#).

29 Department for the Economy (2021) [10X Economy – Northern Ireland's decade of innovation](#) and Department for the Economy (2022) [Skills for a 10x economy – Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland](#)

30 Northern Ireland Screen (2023) [Stories, Skills & Sustainability](#)

Figure 1.2: Policy measures to support the screen industries in the four UK nations



UK-WIDE

- Audio Visual Tax Reliefs – estimated to be worth a total of £5bn over the next five years, including extending tax relief for visual effects and a new Independent Film Tax Credit introduced for the UK's independent film sector.
- Extension to the Creative Clusters Programme – with £50m to support research and development (R&D) in at least six new clusters.
- Convergent Screen Technologies and Performance in Realtime programme, with £75.6m funding to establish four new R&D labs and an Insight Foresight Unit.
- UK Games Fund – totalling £13.4m to invest in early-stage games studios.
- Embed the creative industries into careers education, such as the National Careers Service, Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge Programme and Careers and Enterprise Company.
- Discover! Programme – £1m additional funding for the second phase of the programme which aims to improve awareness about creative careers amongst young people, their parents and teachers.



ENGLAND

- Reduction in business rates for film studios and capital investment in new studio space and to support the extension to the National Film and Television School.
- Expansion of the Create Growth Programme by £10.9m to support creative businesses.
- Cultural Education Plan – setting out a long-term approach to support cultural education and creativity in schools.
- Enhancing Creative Apprenticeships, by strengthening engagement with SMEs, improving training provision, the relevance of standards and the effectiveness and sustainability of the flexi-job model.
- Launch the Lifelong Loan Entitlement in 2025 to provide individuals with access to a loan for the equivalent of four years of post-18 education, at any stage of their life.
- Skills Bootcamps, ensuring that the creative industries can take advantage of future procurement opportunities.
- Post-16 level 3 qualifications review – to ensure that technical and academic qualifications needed by the sector, alongside T Levels and A Levels, are high quality, employer led and support good progression outcomes.
- Local Skills Improvement Plans – helping FE colleges and other skills providers respond to the priorities identified in LSIPs, including delivering the skills needed by the creative industries.
- Roll out two creative T Levels in 2024, ensuring these are high quality and responsive to employer demand.
- Develop a labour market framework for understanding and tracking changing skills across the creative industries.



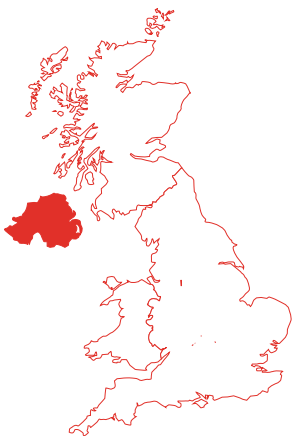
SCOTLAND

- Creative Futures Programme – partnership between XpoNorth and the University of the Highlands and Islands to inform course development and offer placements and mentoring
- Freelancers Guide – practical resources for freelancers.
- Technology Sector Export Plan (TSEP) – support to expand exports of Scotland’s technology sector, including creative media, games and software development.
- National Strategy for Economic Transformation – continued support for the sector and further investment in education and skills to make it more responsive to employer needs.
- Foundation Apprenticeships – introduced by the Scottish Qualifications Authority for older secondary pupils providing technical routes into creative roles.



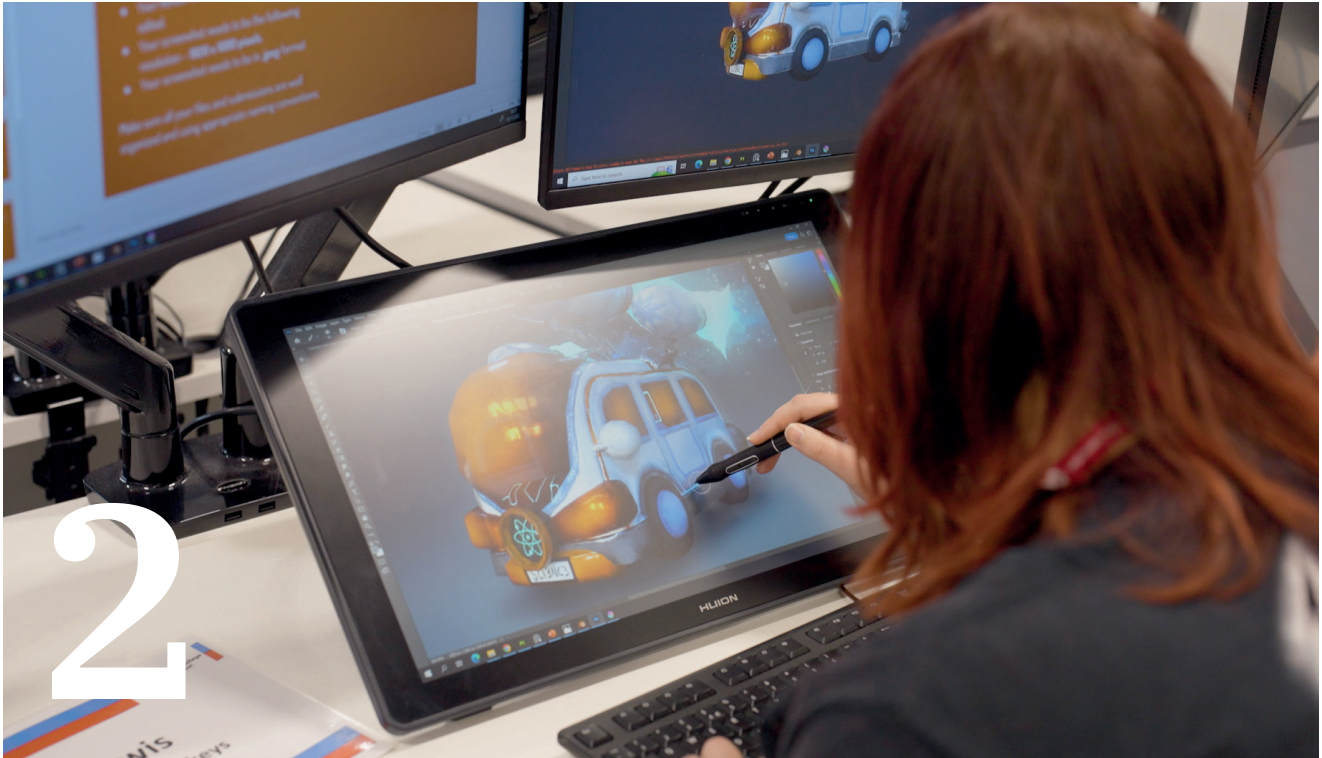
WALES

- Creative Wales – specialist agency within Welsh Government which provides various funding and support to expand the creative industries in Wales.
- Creative Wales Production Fund – to support Wales-based production and games development companies who are looking to develop productions intended for international audiences.
- Media.cymru – £50 million programme led by Cardiff University with specific goals to raise £236 million in GVA in Cardiff capital region’s media sector.
- Creative Skills Action Plan – identifies ten priority areas for creative skills, including entry-level placements and opportunities, upskilling placements and opportunities, education and new curriculum and careers awareness.
- Creative Skills Fund – supporting training providers to nurture new and existing talent, providing opportunities for creatives to train, upskill and diversify, specifically within 10 priority areas where skills gaps are evident.



NORTHERN IRELAND

- Studio Ulster – £72m large-scale virtual production studio complex, to support rapid expansion and develop the talent pipeline across the convergent film, TV, animation, VFX and games sectors.
- Creative Learning Centres – delivering skills development programmes for teachers and young people in digital literacy and creative technologies.
- NI Screen / BFI Skills Cluster – designed to identify skills shortages and coordinate skills and training opportunities for crew in Northern Ireland.
- NI Screen’s Skills Budget doubled to c£4m per annum, supporting a range of training and new entrant programmes.



Skills shortages threaten growth and job creation

This chapter explores the sheer diversity of jobs in the UK screen industries and the skills required to fulfil them, and identifies major gaps and shortages.

Key findings:

- Careers offered by the screen industries are incredibly wide ranging and require a mix of technical and transversal skills
- Skills needed by screen industry employers are also sought after by those in other sectors, such as construction, digital technology, engineering and manufacturing, and other tertiary sectors
- Technological change is driving the convergence of skills needed across the screen industries, such as in visual effects and video games
- Technical skills shortages are already impacting employers and could threaten commercial performance and jobs growth
- Mid-level management skills are key to the onboarding, training and progression of diverse entry-level talent.

2.1 The screen industries offer a huge range of different jobs and careers

Whilst jobs in the screen industries conjure images of actors, writers, directors or computer programmers, the reality is that these sectors offer a very diverse range of careers operating across different departments and business functions. A recent study of the UK's digital content production sectors (including animation, visual effects and video games) identified 214 occupational roles of relevance in these screen sectors alone.³¹

You only have to look at the credits to see the vast crew required to bring film or television to our screens. The film & TV production process not only requires a whole host of craft roles, including costume making and design or hair and makeup, but also a substantial technical team in charge of cameras, lighting, set building and maintenance and sound. Production accountants are also needed to manage finances and financial records. The project is then often passed to the post-production team, including editors, artists, sound editors, graphic designers and subtitlers, to cut footage, mix music, sound and commentary and add visual effects. Virtual production is increasingly upending the linearity of this process, combining the digital and physical worlds and using real-time technology. Distribution executives, programmers and marketers then sell the rights to cinemas, broadcasters and digital platforms and build awareness and appetite amongst audiences.³²

Whilst the process is a little different for animation or video games, the overarching message is the same: the screen industries can offer a rich diversity of jobs and careers.

2.2 Employers increasingly require a mix of technical and transversal skills – often in demand in other areas of the economy

The sheer diversity of job roles is mirrored in the technical skills needs within these occupations. Findings from 20 in-depth research interviews, as well as recent reports³³, show employers' skills needs ranging from more traditional artistic skills to advanced digital skills (e.g. specialist software, coding, programming), craft skills (e.g. hair & wardrobe), construction skills (e.g. set building, electrical installation), and engineering & manufacturing skills (e.g. CAD/CNC/3D printing for model making and animatronics).

Transversal skills needs cited by employers and industry bodies were also wide ranging, including communication, time management, collaboration, networking, team working, critical thinking, planning, problem-solving, financial management, self-marketing, reliability, resilience, positive attitude and willingness to learn. For those working

31 Olsberg SPI (2023) [Skills Scoping Study for the UK's Digital Content Production Sectors](#).

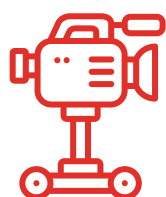
32 Authors' elaboration based on [ScreenSkills Careers Maps](#)

33 ScreenSkills. (2021). [ScreenSkills Assessment 2021](#).

as freelancers, there were additional skills needs associated with running a business, tax, finance, marketing and so on.

Research interviews found that skills needs in animation, VFX and video games are increasingly converging, largely owing to the effects of virtual production. Those entering the VFX industry need to be up to date with game engines and software used across these sectors and combine an understanding of engineering, animation, and mechanics. Meanwhile, photography roles are now key to the video games industry, with people needed to control light in the digital universe, whilst the use of real-time rendering also results in the need for people skilled in 3D modelling.

Figure 2.1: Key technical and transversal skills needs reported in different parts of the screen industries



Film & TV

- Carpentry; joinery; electrical installation; hair & makeup; costume; grips; scaffolding; engineering; prop making; set building; 3D printing; CAD/CNC; accountancy; sound tech; camera operation



Animation & visual effects

- Modelling, sculpting, texturing and shading; 2D/3D digital animation; rigging and skinning; lighting and rendering; games engines; AI; software engineering; graphics; coding; story boarding



Video games

- Programming; coding; software engineering; computing; finance; web design; data analytics; UX design; 3D modelling, texturing and animation; mechanics; games engines; AI



Transversal skills

- Communication; time management; collaboration; networking; team working; critical thinking; planning; problem-solving; financial management; self-marketing; reliability; resilience; people management

Source: Findings from the research interviews and roundtables

Participants in interviews suggested that this convergence of skills needs in parts of the screen industries created a need for improved sector-wide, strategic workforce planning. Whilst jobs in the Screen Industries are expected to be resilient to automation and the increased use of artificial intelligence, technological advances will continue to drive changes in the demand for skills in this part of the economy. One employer identified that, in visual effects, future emerging technologies would not only impact entry-level roles through increased automation, but also mid-level technician roles, with staff requiring upskilling to harness and apply new tech.

A wide range of technical and craft-based skills required by the UK screen industries are also needed by other parts of the economy. For example, carpenters, joiners and electricians are urgently required in UK film & TV productions, and there are similarities in the digital skills needed for digital production and the tech sector. This was thought by screen industry employers to provide both the opportunity to attract and retrain workers from other industries and training pathways, but also the challenge of fierce competition for labour when other sectors with similar skills needs are also expanding or experiencing skills shortages.

Mid-level management skills were also seen as vital by the sector, particularly given the need to support the learning and development of more diverse entry-level talent, including apprentices.

2.3 The screen industries face major skills gaps and shortages

87% of employers in the screen industries consider skills shortage vacancies to be a problem

The screen industries are struggling to access this distinct mix of skills from the labour market and education and skills system. Employers and industry bodies interviewed identified technical and craft skills as chief amongst these, pointing to an ageing workforce in many of these technical roles. A shortage of mid-level managers was also seen to be affecting the retention and progression of entry-level talent across a variety of roles, thereby contributing to wider skills shortages. Stakeholders in film & TV also continually referenced shortages of production accountants. Young people seeking to enter the workforce are also often lacking essential transversal skills, according to employers. This includes communication skills and resilience.

ScreenSkills reports that 87% of employers in the screen industries consider skills shortage vacancies a problem, suggesting that recruitment difficulties often limited their business activities.³⁴ The BFI Skills Review for film and high-end TV highlighted recruitment difficulties in props, set decorating, supervising art directors, graphics, electricians, construction, costume supervisors, on-set VFX, grips, and focus pullers, whilst a recent skills scoping study for BFI found skills gaps and shortages are prevalent across the UK's digital content production sectors.^{35,36}

34 ScreenSkills. (2021). [ScreenSkills Assessment 2021](#).

35 BFI (2022) [BFI Skills Review 2022](#).

36 BFI (2023) [Skills Scoping Study for the UK's Digital Content Production Sectors](#).

A survey of the UK high-end TV workforce in 2022/2023 found acute shortages of post-production supervisors, production accountants, line producers, location managers, production coordinators, 1st ADs, production managers/supervisors, producers, editors and grips.³⁷ An earlier survey in the animation industry also found a high proportion of skills shortages (66% of businesses reported having hard-to-recruit roles), with storyboard artists, 2D and 3D animators, business development / commercial roles and producers being particularly problematic.³⁸

Research by TIGA revealed that 68% of the games studios surveyed have found it difficult, or very difficult, to fill vacancies in their workforce. The disciplines most affected are programming, with 24% of respondents reporting difficulties in filling vacancies in this area, art (22%) and design (22%).³⁹ The situation is having serious implications for those games studios that report having experienced skills shortages over the past 12 months with 59% saying it had hindered the growth of their organisation.

Industry research also identifies a range of skills deficiencies in the digital production workforce. These related to technical skills required in the industry and various software skills amongst the animation workforce, including real-time engines, 3D modelling and virtual reality in VFX, or using Avid and ProTools in post-production.⁴⁰

With the screen industries facing a large range of acute shortages, it is clear that changes are required in the way employers in these sectors access technical and transversal skills from the education and skills system and wider labour market. To create an expanded pipeline of talent to meet existing demand and aspirations for future job growth, we also need to identify the barriers young people face to careers in these sectors. The following two chapters deal with these two challenges.

WorldSkills UK skills competitions give young people of all backgrounds the leading-edge technical skills, increased employability and critical thinking they need to succeed in their careers. Over 6500 young people were enrolled in 46 competitions in the 2024 cycle, including in a variety of areas needed by the UK screen industries such as 3D digital game art, accountancy, and additive manufacturing. Independent research has shown that young people involved in competition programmes can earn 60% more than their peers on average. By allowing young people to build the behaviours, self-belief and high-quality technical skills to realise their ambitions, competition-based training can play an important role in meeting the needs of employers in the UK screen industries across a range of skills.

37 ScreenSkills (2023) [High-end Television in the UK: 2022/23 workforce research](#)

38 Animation UK (2018) [We need to talk about skills: A skills analysis of the UK Animation industry.](#)

39 TIGA (2023) [Skills Report 2023](#)

40 BFI (2023) [Skills Scoping Study for the UK's Digital Content Production Sectors.](#)



Young people are eager to work in the screen industries but face multiple barriers

This chapter explores the barriers that young people face in accessing and progressing careers in the screen industries, drawing on evidence from the WorldSkills UK / Work Advance Youth Poll of 2,079 16-24 year olds.

Key findings:

- 72% of young people would be enthusiastic about a career in film & TV, with jobs in animation & visual effects (52%) and video games (63%) also highly attractive
- Young people have limited awareness of the wide range of careers on offer in the screen industries – only 13% of young people think the film and TV sector needs people skilled in carpentry and joinery, and 17% for engineering

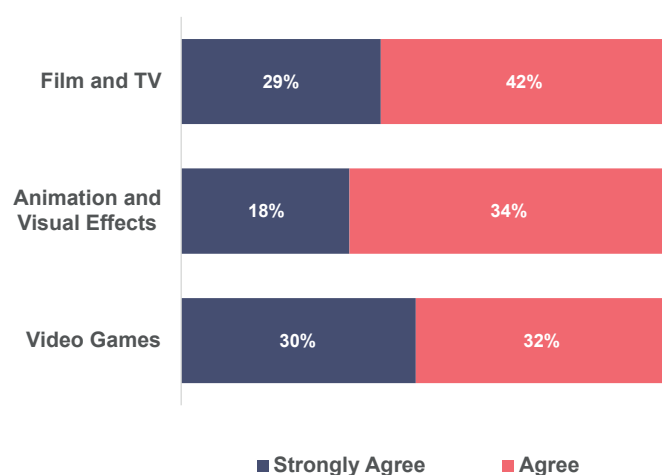
- Knowing someone who works in the screen industries is seen as the best way of gaining a job in the sector by a significant portion of young people – animation & VFX (26%), video games (23%) and film & TV (18%) – a higher proportion than those who pointed to a relevant technical/vocational qualification or apprenticeship
- Only 31% of young people have received information, advice or guidance about a career in animation & VFX, 39% about film & TV and 40% about video games
- Young people are as likely to have received relevant careers information, advice and guidance via social media or YouTube as via a teacher or lecturer (both 27%)
- Young men are twice as likely to report feeling confident about securing a job in video games than young women (62% and 31%)
- 22% of young people from Black / Black British and Asian / British Asian backgrounds think that the screen industries ‘don’t hire people like me’.

3.1 The majority of young people would be enthusiastic about working in the UK screen industries

Findings from the Work Advance / WorldSkills UK Youth Poll suggest that careers in the screen industries are highly desirable to a significant majority of young people. Of those surveyed, nearly three-quarters (72%) would be enthusiastic about a career in film & TV, with jobs in animation & visual effects and computer games also seen as highly attractive (52% and 63% respectively) (see figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Attractiveness of careers in the screen industries

Q: ‘To what extent do you agree with the following statement? I would be interested in / enthusiastic about a job in:’ (n= 2,079)



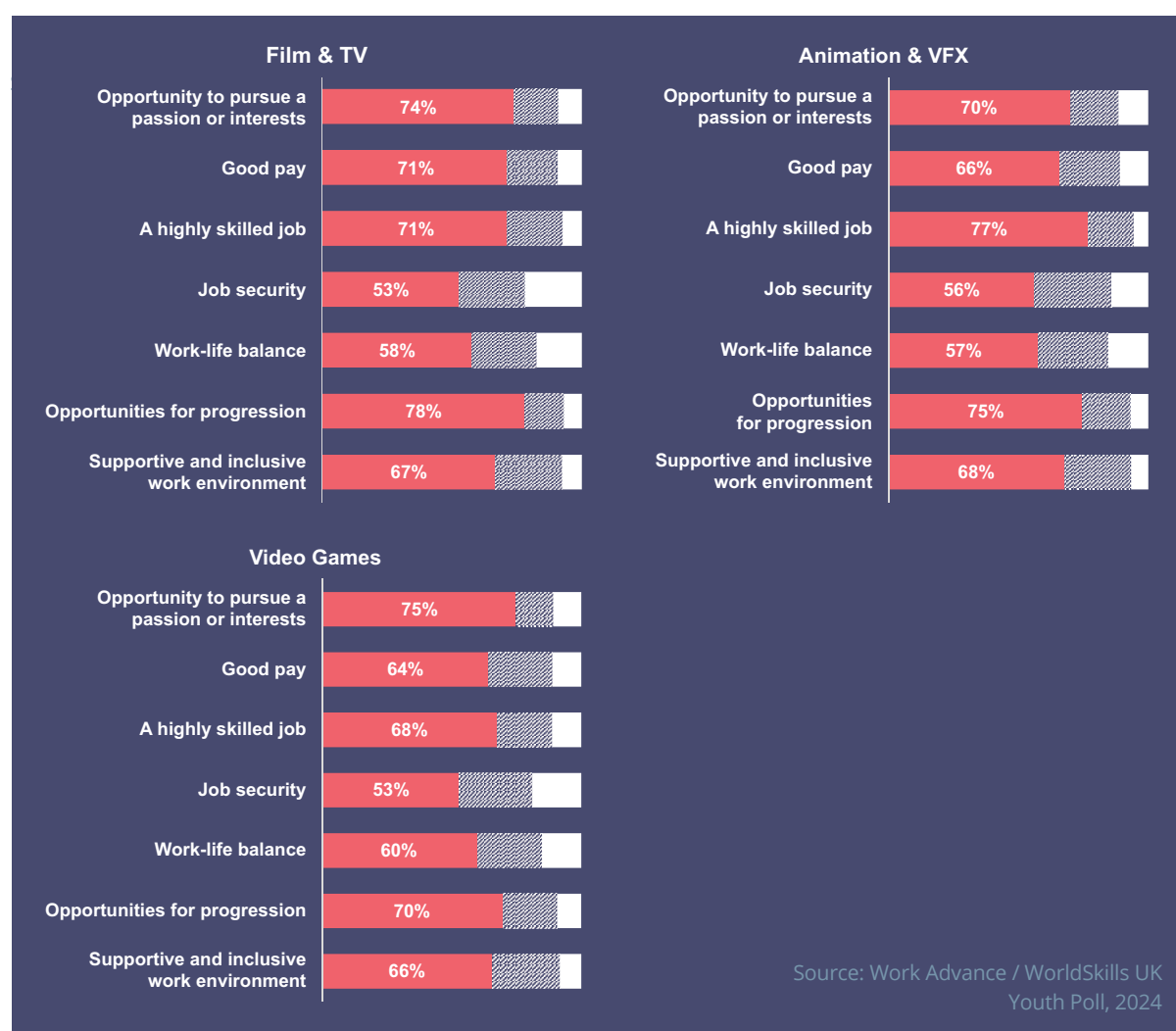
Source: Work Advance / WorldSkills UK Youth Poll, 2024

Across all three sectors, nearly three-quarters of young people polled thought that a career in the screen industries can offer an opportunity to pursue a passion or interest, whilst the opportunity for good pay was also recognised (55% film & TV, 66% animation & visual effects, 64% video games) (see figure 3.2).

However, polling also suggests that many young people do not recognise the sometimes precarious nature of work in film & TV in particular, where workers are often only under contract for the duration of a production. 53% of young people polled identified film & TV as a sector that can offer job security, compared to 22% who disagreed with this statement. In reality, over four in ten (42%) of those working in film and TV are self-employed – three times the average across the wider economy (14%).⁴¹ For many, the considerable autonomy and flexibility offered by work in these sectors may be one of those positive aspects. However, as later chapters in this report will show, this has also contributed to challenges around a lack of formal training, mentoring and support for entry-level talent.

Figure 3.2: Young people's perspectives on screen industry careers

Q: 'To what extent would you agree with the following statement? A career in the film & TV / Animation & VFX / Video games would offer me:'(n= 2,079)



41 DCMS (2023) [DCMS Sectors Economic Estimates: Employment](#)

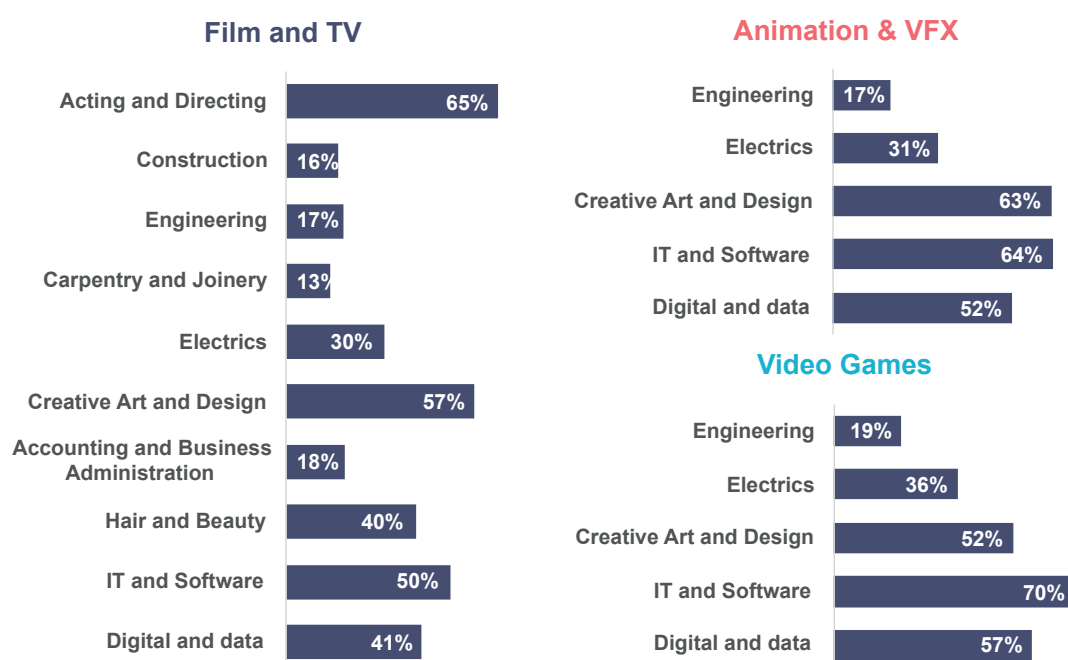
3.2 But they have limited awareness of the breadth of careers on offer

Despite the attractiveness of screen careers to young people, evidence from our polling shows that they have a limited understanding of the variety of roles available in the screen industries.

For example, when asked of the need for people with different skill sets in film & TV (figure 3.3), young people were quick to identify acting and directing (65%), creative art and design (57%), and IT and software (50%). However, the proportion who recognised the need for in-demand technical skills such as carpentry and joinery (13%), construction (16%), and engineering (17%) was considerably lower. Similarly, despite the importance of engineering skills in areas like 3D printing, modelling, animatronics and real-time modelling, only 17% and 19% of young people identified the importance of these skills to animation & VFX and video games respectively. These findings were corroborated by employers who participated in research interviews and roundtables.

Figure 3.3: Awareness of careers in screen industries

Q: 'The Screen Industries need people skilled in:' (n= 2,079)



Source: Work Advance / WorldSkills UK Youth Poll, 2024

3.3 They also lack the confidence to gain a job and select the right training pathway

When asked about barriers to accessing careers in the screen industries (figure 3.4), young people were most likely to cite being *'unsure of the skills needed'*, *'unsure of jobs and career pathways'*, and *'unsure of the right qualifications and training'*.

Figure 3.4: Barriers to accessing careers in the Screen Industries

Q: 'What factors do you think might prevent you from securing a job in the screen industries? (Please select up to three)' (n= 2,079)



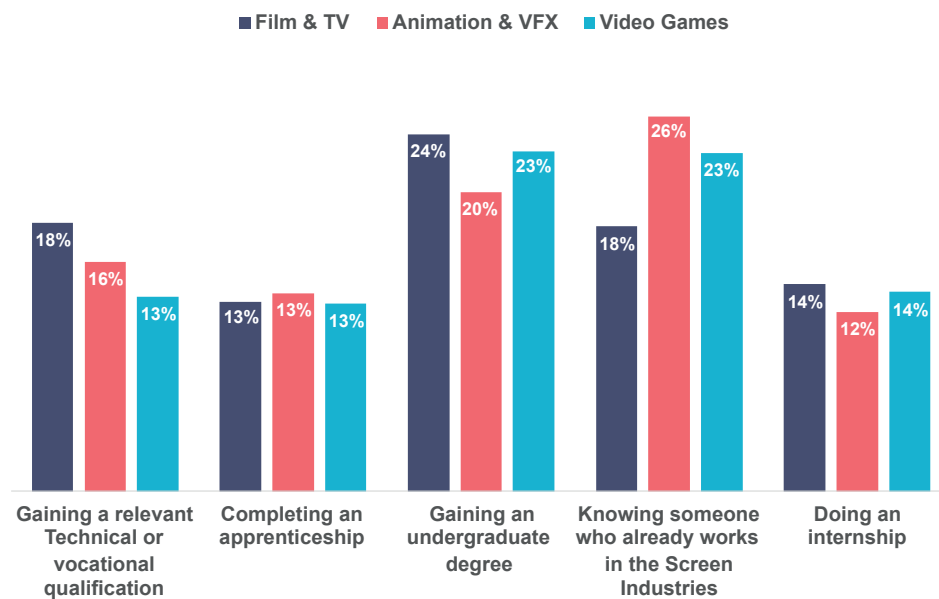
Source: Work Advance / WorldSkills UK Youth Poll, 2024

In an environment of pressing technical skills shortages and the need to expand the entry-level talent pipeline, it is concerning that the next most commonly cited barrier was 'don't know anyone working in the sector'. Young people surveyed were more likely to believe that 'knowing someone working in the industry' was a better way of gaining a job than 'a relevant technical or vocational qualification' or 'completing an apprenticeship' in all screen industry sectors (figure 3.5). Whilst a lack of awareness of the diversity of careers on offer is likely to be shaping this impression, these findings may also reflect the tendency towards informal recruitment practices in the screen industries. This was a consistent theme in our research interviews and roundtables, with concerns raised that the hiring practices in these industries undermines their ability to access a diverse talent pipeline and the skills needed for ongoing success.

In this environment, it is clear that many young people lack the confidence to gain a career in these sectors (figure 3.6). Young people were more likely to be 'not very confident' or 'not at all confident' than 'confident' or 'very confident' in their ability to secure a job in the screen industries. This is true for all industry sectors included in the polling, but most notably for animation & visual effects, where just 12% young people indicated they were 'very confident'.

Figure 3.5: Perceived routes into the Screen Industries

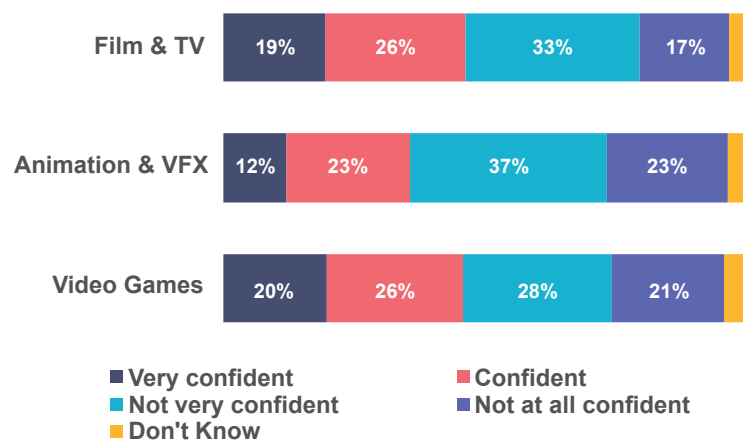
Q: 'To what extent would you agree with the following statement? The best way to start a career in the screen industries is:' (n= 2,079)



Source: Work Advance / WorldSkills UK Youth Poll, 2024

Figure 3.6: Confidence in accessing careers in Screen Industries

Q: 'How confident or not would you be in securing a job in the screen industries?' (n= 2,079)



Source: Work Advance / WorldSkills UK Youth Poll, 2024

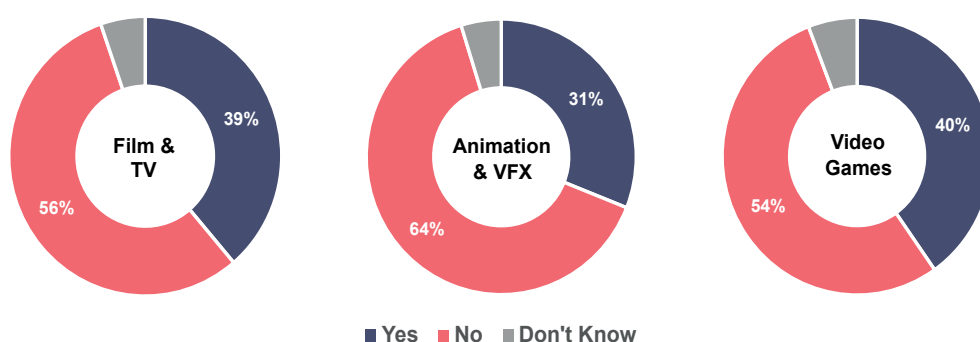
WorldSkills UK careers resources inspire more than 150,000 young people every year, showcasing how technical education and apprenticeships lead to rewarding careers. A network of former apprentices and technical education students, known as skills champions, provide peer-to-peer advice and support to nearly 50,000 11-16 year olds a year, demonstrating that these pathways are for everyone. WorldSkills UK has worked with the likes of BFI, Screen Skills, and Resource Productions to empower young people of all backgrounds to consider exciting careers in the UK screen industries and can play an important role in strengthening the information, advice and guidance on offer.

3.4 The careers information, advice and guidance needed to change this is currently lacking

In this context, the adequate provision of careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) is a key concern. Our polling found that a significant majority of young people have never received information about careers in the screen industries (figure 3.7). Only 31% have received information about a career in animation & VFX, 39% for film & TV and 40% for video games.

Figure 3.7: Information on careers in the screen industries

Q: 'Have you ever received information about a career in the following sectors:' (n= 2,079)



Source: Work Advance / WorldSkills UK Youth Poll, 2024

For those that have received CIAG in these areas, one third (34%) had done so via a careers advisor in school, college or university. This was followed by 30% receiving this information by a friend or family member, again highlighting the importance of informal networks in these industries. Interestingly, young people were as likely to have received CIAG via social media or YouTube as via a teacher or lecturer in an education setting (both 27%). This highlights the importance of utilising these channels to reach more young people, but also of ensuring the information delivered via these platforms is accurate and reliable.

Research by the BFI found careers teams were under resourced, having no time to research new or changing industries, and not being adequately equipped to highlight screen career opportunities to young people. Only 19% of careers advisors reported feeling well informed about the screen industries and 41% reported wanting to know more about them.⁴²

42 BFI and ERIC (2022) [What's stopping young people from pursuing careers in the Screen Industries?](#)

Across all sources of information and support, it will be important to reflect on what young people say they need in order to pursue a career in these industries. According to our polling (figure 3.8), 'information on the right qualifications and training', 'support to get relevant work experience', 'information on skills I need', and 'information on what jobs are available locally' would be most helpful.

Figure 3.8: Information and support needs of young people

Q: 'What information or support would be helpful to pursue a career in these industries? (Please select up to three)' (n= 2,079)



Source: Work Advance / WorldSkills UK Youth Poll, 2024

3.5 Young people face different barriers and need different support according to their background

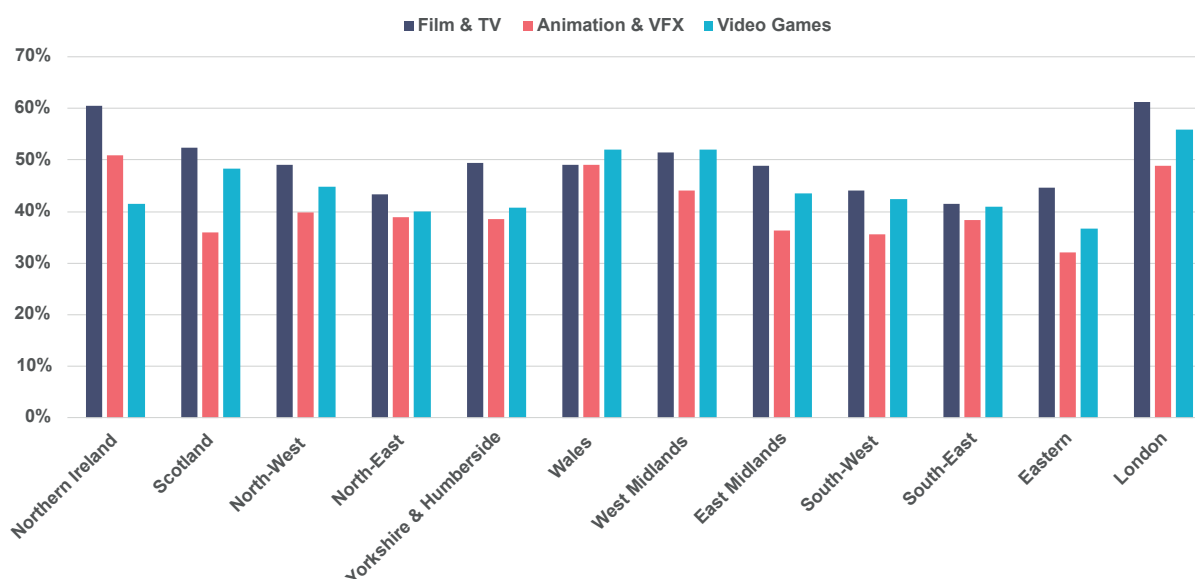
The barriers faced by young people and the support they require in accessing careers in the screen industries varies depending on their personal characteristics and which part of the UK they live in. For example, those living in London are much more likely to report being aware of job opportunities in the screen industries than in other English regions, likely reflecting the spatial concentration of the screen industries in and around the capital.⁴³ Correlation between industry clusters and young people's awareness of job opportunities in these industries is also suggested by polling for this report. 49% of young people reported being aware of film & TV job opportunities in their region, compared to 46% for video games, and 41% for animation & visual effects. However, this varied significantly across the UK. Young people in Northern Ireland showed high levels of awareness about opportunities in film & TV, perhaps reflecting high profile-productions in recent years and a strong regional cluster (figure 3.9). In contrast, those living in the East of England and North East are far less likely to report being aware of regional job opportunities in these sectors.

43 Work Foundation / ScreenSkills (2019) [Annual Skills Assessment 2019](#)

Figure 3.9: Awareness of job opportunities by region

Q: 'To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

I am aware about job opportunities in:' (n= 2,079)



Source: Work Advance / WorldSkills UK Youth Poll, 2024

It is noteworthy that there is more limited awareness of opportunities in animation & visual effects, generally, across all nations and regions, echoing earlier findings that young people are generally less confident in securing a career in this part of the screen industries.

Figure 3.10 (page 32) also examines how confidence, barriers and support needs vary between individuals.

Young people with a disability are more likely to report difficulties gaining relevant work experience and state a desire for support in doing so

The polling revealed significant gender differences, with young women far less confident in securing a job in the screen industries than young men, particularly in animation & VFX (43% and 29% respectively) and video games (62% and 31%). This is in part likely to reflect the gender balance in these sectors.^{44,45} Young women are also more likely to want further information on career paths and the skills and qualifications they need to access them and seek support in gaining relevant work experience.

Young people with a disability are more likely to report difficulties gaining relevant work experience and to state a desire for support in doing so. Nearly a quarter of young people from Black / Black British or Asian / British Asian backgrounds think that the screen industries 'don't hire people like me' (22% for both). Those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds are less confident in their ability to access careers in the screen industries.

Taken together, these findings indicate that the screen industries' difficulties in accessing, recruiting and progressing diverse talent are now impacting the impressions young people have about these sectors. Without action, and with limits to formal CIAG on offer, this

44 UK Screen Alliance / Access VFX / Animation UK (2019) [Inclusion and Diversity in the UK VFX, Animation & Post Production](#)

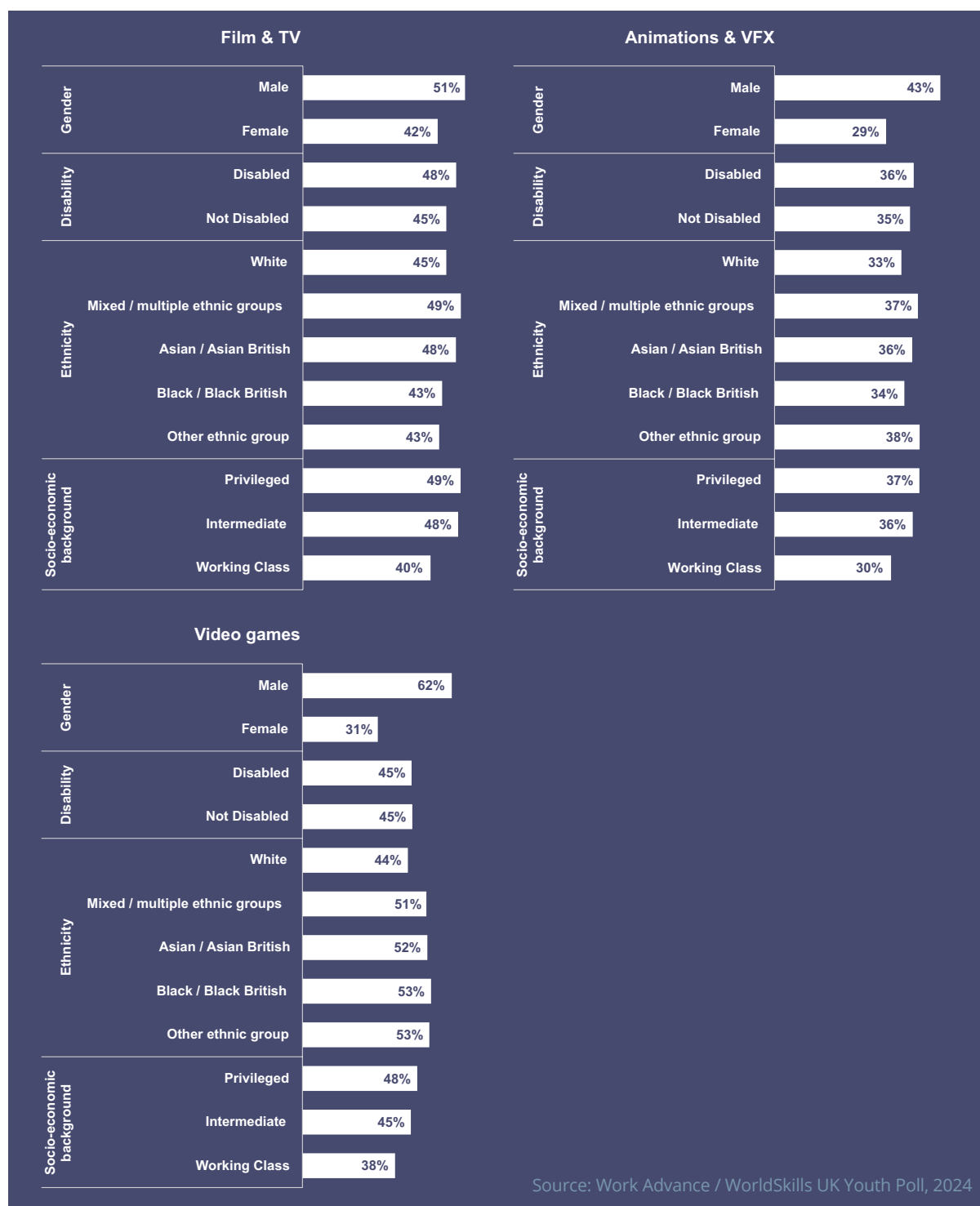
45 Ukie (2022) [UK Games Industry Census 2022](#)

risks perpetuating challenges around workforce diversity and thwarting efforts by government to expand the entry-level talent pipeline to these sectors to increase jobs and economic output in the UK screen industries. It also risks continued exclusion of young people from underrepresented backgrounds from these sectors. These findings were also borne out by our research interviews and roundtables.

Figure 3.10: How personal characteristics influence the barriers faced by young people and their need for information and support.

Confidence in accessing careers in the screen industries

Q: 'How confident or not would you be in securing a job in the screen industries?'



Barriers to accessing careers in the screen industries

Q: 'What information or support would be helpful to pursue a career in these industries?'

| | Gender | | Disability | | Ethnicity | | | | | Socio-economic background | | |
|--|--------|--------|------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| | Male | Female | Disabled | Not Disabled | White | Mixed / multiple ethnic groups | Asian / Asian British | Black / Black British | Other ethnic group | Privileged | Intermediate | Working class |
| Unsure of skills needed | 38% | 38% | 35% | 39% | 38% | 38% | 38% | 41% | 43% | 39% | 44% | 35% |
| Unsure of jobs and career pathways | 34% | 36% | 35% | 36% | 37% | 31% | 32% | 35% | 38% | 38% | 36% | 36% |
| Unsure of the right qualifications or training | 33% | 36% | 35% | 36% | 36% | 36% | 38% | 39% | 30% | 38% | 35% | 36% |
| Don't know anyone working in the sector | 27% | 30% | 30% | 28% | 28% | 25% | 25% | 24% | 25% | 30% | 32% | 29% |
| Difficulty gaining relevant work experience | 19% | 23% | 26% | 19% | 21% | 22% | 23% | 25% | 28% | 24% | 21% | 22% |
| Lack of jobs locally | 16% | 18% | 18% | 17% | 17% | 13% | 14% | 13% | 18% | 17% | 16% | 20% |
| Don't feel the sector hires people like me | 16% | 18% | 19% | 16% | 16% | 20% | 22% | 22% | 25% | 19% | 17% | 17% |
| Difficulty finding entry-level jobs | 14% | 16% | 17% | 14% | 15% | 17% | 17% | 21% | 25% | 16% | 15% | 17% |
| Financial costs (e.g. for travel, accommodation) | 5% | 9% | 8% | 6% | 7% | 9% | 9% | 8% | 8% | 7% | 6% | 9% |

Source: Work Advance / WorldSkills UK Youth Poll, 2024

Information and support needs of young people

Q: 'What information or support would be helpful to pursue a career in these industries?'

| | Gender | | Disability | | Ethnicity | | | | | Socio-economic background | | |
|--|--------|--------|------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| | Male | Female | Disabled | Not Disabled | White | Mixed / multiple ethnic groups | Asian / Asian British | Black / Black British | Other ethnic group | Privileged | Intermediate | Working class |
| Information on right qualifications or training | 32% | 42% | 37% | 37% | 20% | 20% | 20% | 21% | 24% | 21% | 21% | 21% |
| Support to get relevant work experience | 31% | 41% | 40% | 35% | 20% | 20% | 19% | 20% | 24% | 20% | 20% | 21% |
| Information on skills I need | 35% | 38% | 37% | 37% | 20% | 21% | 20% | 21% | 16% | 21% | 21% | 19% |
| Information on what jobs are available locally | 33% | 38% | 36% | 37% | 21% | 21% | 21% | 19% | 15% | 20% | 19% | 21% |
| Information on career paths | 31% | 35% | 33% | 34% | 18% | 18% | 19% | 20% | 20% | 19% | 19% | 17% |
| Opportunity to speak to an employer | 29% | 30% | 32% | 29% | 16% | 16% | 16% | 16% | 14% | 16% | 16% | 16% |
| Information on salary and pay progression | 25% | 28% | 26% | 27% | 14% | 16% | 17% | 17% | 23% | 16% | 15% | 14% |
| Opportunity to speak to a current employee | 23% | 27% | 27% | 24% | 13% | 13% | 14% | 14% | 16% | 15% | 13% | 12% |
| Financial costs (e.g. for travel, accommodation) | 7% | 7% | 7% | 6% | 4% | 2% | 3% | 3% | 7% | 3% | 4% | 2% |

Source: Work Advance / WorldSkills UK Youth Poll, 2024



4. Technical and vocational education and training has a bigger role to play

This chapter summarises evidence from the research interviews and roundtables concerning the potential role for technical and vocational education and training. Crucially, it brings the perspectives of FE and HE providers to the fore alongside feedback from industry.

Key findings:

- Screen industry employers increasingly recognise the importance of both academic and technical education in accessing skills and diverse talent
- FE colleges are already partnering with screen industry employers in areas such as curriculum design, professional development, industry placements and capital investment

- Technical education providers struggle to retain up-to-date knowledge and skills within their workforce, a situation exacerbated by skills shortages within industry
- Providers would welcome a long-term partnership with employers in the screen industries to support a more coherent technical education offer for these sectors
- A range of practical challenges are hampering employers' ability to make full use of technical routes to meet skill needs.

4.1 Innovative higher education courses can play a critical role in meeting the needs of the UK screen industries

Where lecturers and screen industry employers are not well connected, courses were cited as being too broad and lacking clear transition pathways from graduation to employment

Universities are currently the lifeblood of the UK screen industries. Two-thirds of the workforce hold a degree or equivalent qualification, compared to four in ten in the UK workforce more broadly.⁴⁶ From our polling, a significant proportion of young people recognise this, with 'gaining an undergraduate degree' seen as the best way to start a career in the screen industries by 24% of respondents for film & TV, 20% for animation & VFX and 23% for video games. Indeed, throughout this research, we encountered universities who were innovating to meet the changing needs of industry and ensure young people on degree programmes have the technical and transversal skills needed to start their career in the screen industries.

For example, Ulster University has developed a strategy to deliver the skills needed by a rapidly expanding virtual production sector, coupled with programmes to ensure that those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds benefit from the opportunities created (see below). Elsewhere, Middlesex University has been convening a business-academia network to inform curricula for several years, meaning that what's taught remains in lockstep with industry need. Middlesex University's Creative Campus Network⁴⁷ has also taken novel approaches to place undergraduates on industry placements paying the London Minimum Wage, whilst giving independent film production companies access to equipment, space and staff at the university in exchange. This is guaranteeing those graduating vital employment experience to complement well-rounded education and training. It's also minimising the exclusion of disadvantaged young people by ensuring that placements are paid.

46 DCMS (2023) [DCMS Sectors Economic Estimates: Employment](#)

47 Middlesex University / JGA / West London Business (2023) [West London Film & Screen Skills Training Review](#)

CASE STUDY: Future Screens NI / Ulster University – Responding to the future skills needs of the screen industries and widening access to opportunities

The Studio Ulster project in Northern Ireland has underlined the immediate need for highly skilled crew to work in virtual production as well as a continual stream of skilled workers in this space. The Ulster Screen Academy at Ulster University has developed a strategy which centres on virtual production training facilities funded by the Department for Economy NI through levelling up funding.



In collaboration with NI Screen, Ulster University is developing a rolling programme of training for tutors and educators, students, existing crew and small independent companies, helping them develop cutting edge skills for virtual production. This is cementing the region's competitive differentiation in this area and boosting its attractiveness for inward investment.

Looking ahead, the University is also developing social-facing and future-focused programmes concentrated on opportunities for young people to gain high-level skills.

One of these is the Skills for Urban and Rural Futures programme targeted at combating educational disenfranchisement and high levels of social deprivation. The project will allow young people to access training in Epic's Unreal Engine, a software which has become the key structural element in the creation of games, animation and virtual production. Proficiency in this software will create the possibility of employment in companies involved in both national and international productions. This is supported by the Department for Communities NI.

"Support at a policy level has been seminal in facilitating the development of skills initiatives that address issues of class and deprivation. The creative industries sector, through programmes such as these, is making a real change to what have been seen as endemic problems."

Prof Paul Moore, Director of Future Screens NI, Professor of Creative Technologies, Ulster University

However, industry bodies participating in our research interviews and roundtables also identified challenges related to engagement with some universities. For example, where lecturers and screen industry employers are not well connected, courses were cited as being too broad and lacking clear transition pathways from graduation to employment. Others pointed to financial pressures on universities to broaden courses in order to attract more students. On the other hand, industry figures also recognised the need to move away from viewing a university degree as the predominant qualification needed to secure entry into the screen industries, and the importance of greater recognition of technical and vocational qualifications and apprenticeships. This was seen as particularly important in an environment of technical skills shortages and a lack of diversity within these sectors.

CASE STUDY: Screen Alliance North – Connected Campus – A new partnership approach to regional skills development

Created by Screen Yorkshire and being adopted across the wider region through Screen Alliance North, the Connected Campus initiative is forging strategic partnerships between educational institutions and the film and television industry, giving students practical experience whilst bolstering innovation and collaboration. In this model, colleges, universities and industry have the shared objective of aligning educational programmes with industry needs and creating pathways for local talent to thrive in the regional workforce.

The partnership includes a range of activities:

- One-off sessions delivered by industry professionals for young people, including careers advice and CV surgeries
- Practical projects and experiential learning alongside information on work placements and studio visits
- Enhanced industry connection with universities and colleges at a local level
- Student engagement and practical guidance for getting in and getting on in the sector
- Delivering joint research bids, seminars and networking events.

This not only benefits students by providing them with relevant experiences and career pathways but also integrates industry insights into further and higher education programmes. Industry insights are informed by joint research in turn. Overall, all partners share the drive for inclusive growth and addressing skills gaps in the region by working collaboratively. Screen Alliance North is also bringing WorldSkills UK into this approach, providing further and higher education providers in their region access to world-class continuing professional development, and young people with opportunities to maximise their potential via competition-based training.

‘Connected Campus is not just a concept; it’s a movement which supports education and industry alike. I’m delighted that WorldSkills UK has joined this movement. Through this mutually beneficial partnership and collaboration, Connected Campus is poised to make a lasting impact on the future of education and film and TV across the North of England.’

Caroline Cooper Charles, CEO Screen Yorkshire



4.2 There are major opportunities for technical and vocational education and training

Technical and vocational education and training are seen to hold significant potential for the screen industries. This is in both confronting technical skills shortages, but also diversifying the talent pipeline, with 29% of college students from a minority ethnic background and 16% eligible for free school meals, compared to 8% in schools.⁴⁸

CASE STUDY: West College Scotland – Meta-skills mastery through collaborative and project-based learning

Filmmaking is not just about learning technical skills on equipment and software. It is also crucial to have the skills to work within a crew of professionals and collaborate to create a finished product. West College Scotland is therefore ensuring the learning experience reflects industry practice in a way that successfully engages a wider variety of students across distinct departments, from joinery and electrical installation to video games.

By moving away from a traditional segmented timetable across different courses and embracing a more holistic project-based delivery model, the college is helping young people acquire knowledge and skills by completing tasks associated with each phase of film production, with the attendant real demands and challenges that come with a real environment. The short turnaround provides students with opportunities to apply learning from one project to the next thus building on each experience. They also have the opportunity to experience a number of different roles and working relationships.

This change in approach has also helped students understand the theory. By embedding it into the practical work as far as possible, students have numerous opportunities to apply the theory in a real-world context, which consolidates their understanding and appreciation of the relationship between theory and practice.

‘Students have more opportunities to develop their time management, communication, planning, designing, team skills, resilience and problem solving. They are able to reflect and track their meta-skill performance, to monitor their skill developments. This approach provides students with more chances to demonstrate skills and knowledge, and successfully complete course requirements. As a result of changing our approach, retention and performance indicators have improved. Our students feel that they have a better understanding of their own skills and the skills required for their course, with a more holistic view of their work and assessments.’

Ray Caniffi, Curriculum Enhancement Leader, West College Scotland

Many interviewees and roundtable participants pointed to the existing strengths of further education providers in meeting the needs of the screen industries. For example, Chichester College Group has invested heavily in building relationships with industry and adopting new technologies to help confront high-end digital skills gaps in film & TV production and visual effects. This has involved local companies

48 [Association of Colleges](#)

Colleges
workforce
development
strategies can sit
alongside capital
investment
approaches by
ensuring all tutors
have industry-
level knowledge
and skills to apply
new technologies
within the
curriculum

delivering masterclasses to students and educators alike, helping to ensure the curriculum and tutors' knowledge and skills remain up to date with industry practice. A similar approach has been taken by West College Scotland (see below) which has developed a workforce development strategy to sit alongside its capital investment approach, ensuring that all tutors have the industry-level knowledge and skills to apply new technologies within the curriculum and respond dynamically to the needs of the screen industries.

Many interviewees also highlighted that these providers are already equipping other sectors with skills desperately needed by the screen industries – most notably in below the line roles in film & TV. Be it in hair and makeup, electrical installation, joinery and carpentry, engineering and manufacturing, or a range of digital skills – participants felt that the screen industries had a huge opportunity to deepen partnerships with the FE colleges in these course areas. Encouragingly, several interviewees were confident that existing provision in these areas could be adapted to the needs of the screen industries through project-based training or bolt-on learning.

Our conversations with FE providers also suggested that they are increasingly beginning to break down silos between college departments, improving interdisciplinary working, and opening the eyes of young people on different technical courses to the range of careers the screen industries have to offer. Coleg Cymoedd (see below) is a notable example of this, supporting novel solutions on 3D printing, digital fabrication, and rapid prototyping for SFX/VFX model making as well as opportunities for experimentation between learners and staff on different programmes.

CASE STUDY: Coleg y Cymoedd – Innovation, industry masterclasses and interdisciplinary working

Coleg Y Cymoedd has worked with the likes of Screen Alliance Wales and Bad Wolf Studios to overcome specific shortages in SFX, VFX, and technical model-making roles, whilst aligning wider FE and HE provision with the needs of different sub-sectors in the Welsh screen industries.

Tutors benefit from work placements with leading industry professionals who also deliver technical masterclasses to students, embracing their role in building a future pipeline of skills and talent. As well as ensuring college staff remain in lockstep with the needs of industry, this approach has enabled the institution to be confident in making capital investments and to innovate in the way new facilities or technologies are applied in the curriculum.

This includes interdisciplinary working between different college departments. This ethos is supporting novel solutions on 3D printing, digital fabrication, and rapid prototyping for SFX / VFX / model making as well as opportunities for



knowledge exchange and experimentation between learners, staff, employers and partner organisations.

The college's success has provided young people with opportunities to work on exciting projects for His Dark Materials and Dr Who and made the region more attractive for investment in creative technology. This success has also allowed the college to work with partners to galvanise the interest of young people from all backgrounds, creating exhibitions and workshops for students, local schools, parents and community groups to understand the possible career opportunities available to them.

'Our film industry needs more industry ready workers; this is something that both HE and FE providers can support through the delivery of industry relevant courses, pathways and opportunities, here in Wales. With our Industry-in-Education ethos at Coleg y Cymoedd, we are continually looking at ways we can use our innovative resources, expertise and specialist facilities to give our students the best chances of securing employment once they leave college.'

Alistair Aston, Partnership Development and Innovation Coordinator,
Coleg Y Cymoedd

On apprenticeships specifically, the recent report from the Screen Sectors Skills Taskforce identifies the opportunity to create 1,000 additional apprenticeships annually, enabling sectoral growth and more highly skilled jobs, and enhancing access for under-represented groups.⁴⁹ Research by IntoGames also found enthusiasm for apprenticeships was high in the games industry, with 95% of games studios agreeing that apprenticeships should be as valid a route into the sector as university and 50% suggesting they would take on an apprentice in the next 12 months if the conditions were right.⁵⁰

This enthusiasm was also evident amongst employers who engaged in our research interviews and roundtables. We heard several examples of screen businesses investing significant time and effort in strengthening the apprenticeship offer and approach in the screen industries. Framestore, for example, has worked extensively with organisations like ScreenSkills and the NextGen Skills Academy to develop apprenticeship standards for the VFX industry, and industry stakeholders are working to enhance the standards for animation. There have also been efforts to develop degree apprenticeships to meet the highly skilled nature of work in production (e.g. Creative Industries Production Manager, L7), animation (e.g. Storyboard Artist, L7), visual effects (e.g. VFX Technical Director, L6), TV broadcasting (e.g., Broadcasting Engineer, L6 and L7) and gaming (e.g. Game Programmer, L7).

The major TV broadcasters were early adopters of apprenticeships, given their long-standing role as a training ground for entry-level talent in the film & TV industry. The BBC has been providing apprenticeships for over a decade and reports significant benefits, not least a diverse, skilled and work-ready pool for talent for the business and wider industry (see page 40).

49 Screen Sectors Skills Task Force (2023) [A Sustainable Future for Skills](#)

50 IntoGames (2021) [Apprenticeships in Games](#)

CASE STUDY: The BBC – Discovering new talent, unlocking potential and developing skills

The BBC has a longstanding reputation in delivering high-quality training for the broadcasting industry and offering skills development schemes. For over a decade, the BBC has also played a major role in developing apprenticeship opportunities for the organisation and wider creative sectors, helping attract new talent, nurture potential and grow an inclusive and diverse workforce that is reflective of the audience it is serving.



BBC apprenticeship opportunities are available across the whole of the UK, from Belfast to Norwich, and Jersey to Orkney. The BBC currently offers over 35 different apprentice schemes for both new entrants and for existing staff, from level 3 to level 7, in a range of different disciplines including journalism, business, production and technology. To design and deliver their schemes, the BBC works with over 30 different carefully procured training providers.

To enhance the BBC apprentice experience, the BBC Academy delivers supplementary training for a number of apprenticeships alongside an extensive induction programme, employability training and sustainability awareness events. BBC apprentices are also in receipt of market-competitive salaries that are above the Real Living Wage to further ensure opportunities are available to all. This ensures BBC apprentices are well-prepared for key occupations in the sector and able to thrive. 95% of BBC early careers apprentices complete their scheme. The majority of BBC apprentices acquire a permanent role in the BBC on completion.

To ensure the BBC makes apprentice opportunities available to all and is attracting a diverse pool of talent for its apprenticeship schemes, the BBC works hard to deliver a wide range of outreach activities and pre-employment initiatives including school visits, workshops, webinars, Get In taster days for 16-18 year olds, and T-Level placements. This work focuses on targeting those groups that have historically been hard to reach, to help the BBC meet its diversity targets of 50% female, 20% BAME, 12% people with disabilities and 25% from socio-economically diverse backgrounds. The BBC's recruitment team further supports those from diverse backgrounds with a number of inclusive measures including webinars with step-by-step guidance on the application process. The result is that BBC apprentices regularly exceed the BBC's diversity targets.

'Through our apprenticeship schemes, the BBC is giving opportunity to everyone, across the UK, no matter what their background, demographic or age. We recognise potential and support those from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups, helping them overcome the barriers they may face in entering the creative sector. The result is a new generation of diverse talent entering the creative industry workforce which is helping us deliver content that better reflects our audience.'

Sarah Moors, Head of Early Careers and Staff Apprenticeships, BBC



4.3 But there are also significant challenges for technical education providers and employers

From in-depth research interviews with FE colleges, employers and industry bodies within these sectors, it is clear that there are significant challenges in securing an enhanced role for technical education providers in an improved talent and skills pipeline.

For those working in technical and vocational education and training, as with many sectors, there is a constant challenge of keeping in touch with industry to ensure relevance of the curriculum, professional development of educators and work placements for young people. This is particularly difficult given the predominance of SMEs within the screen industries.

Several colleges reported difficulties accessing, retaining and upskilling tutors with the industry skills needed to deliver existing qualifications and apprenticeship standards to a high level. Skills shortages within the FE workforce were also cited as a barrier to technology adoption and capital investment, as new software and equipment can't be applied into the curriculum unless the tutors are trained to use it. Many reported that relatively lower salaries in technical education had resulted in tutors leaving education for jobs in industry where they could command higher wages, and that skills shortages within the screen industries had exacerbated this situation. However, this had left employers, as one respondent put it, at risk of 'cannibalising their own pipeline'.

*The **WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence programme**, in partnership with NCFE, has so far given almost 6,000 educators access to international standards of skills excellence via continuing professional development training, raising the level of skills teaching across further and higher technical education and apprenticeship providers. By helping educators keep their knowledge and skills first rate and up to date, WorldSkills UK can play an important role in ensuring training meets the needs of screen industry employers and delivers the highly skilled workforce these sectors need to thrive.*

Colleges reported difficulties accessing, retaining, and upskilling tutors with the skills needed to deliver existing qualifications and apprenticeship standards to a high level

As reported in the previous section, novel solutions that support the transfer of knowledge and skills between FE and industry are emerging, and participants in our roundtables insisted these need to be the rule rather than the exception within the UK skills systems and cited the need for increased continuing professional development for the technical education workforce. TIGA (a major trade body for the video games sector) has advocated for an industrial secondments programme to enable lecturers to spend time in games development businesses to update their practical knowledge.⁵¹

Skills providers also highlighted that the demand for skills, qualifications and courses is often too short notice to effectively respond to, upholding that both parties needed to commit to nurturing relationships over the long term. By providing a more strategic steer to local areas and regional skills clusters, it was felt that employers could benefit from a more coherent, agile and clearly promoted technical education offer, within which different providers can develop distinct specialisms, avoid harmful competition and command the student numbers to ensure courses are financially sustainable.

On the demand side, industry bodies engaged in this research pointed to the vast range of technical skills options, making it difficult for SMEs to understand how to best fill their skills needs. They also attested to the difficulties individual employers face in both forecasting skills need and committing to industry placements for young people without a long-term view of the production pipeline. Whilst these factors make the minimum 315-hour work placement for T Levels a real challenge, there was strong support amongst employers and providers for additional flexibilities in the structure and delivery of T-Level placements, including those now granted concerning the sequencing of assessment windows and placements, the ability to offer placements as a block and the opportunity to split placements across multiple employers.

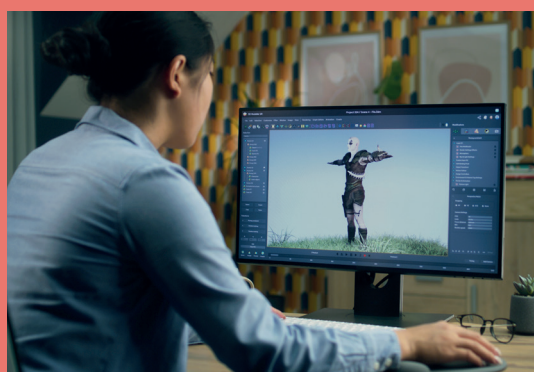
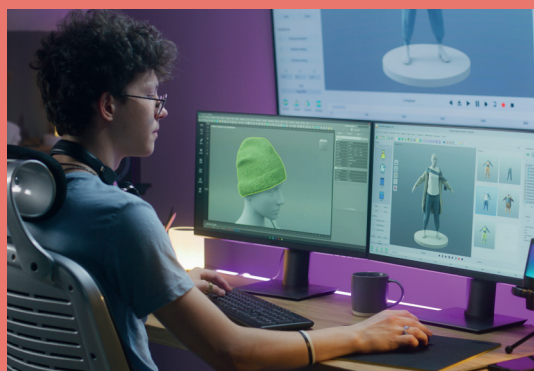
Industry stakeholders also recognised challenges in attracting young people from skilled trades and related technical and vocational courses to consider a career in the screen industries, particularly when demand for those skills is high in other sectors such as construction. For example, demand for electrical installation skills in new and existing homes was considered to be more stable and well paid than in the commissioning of film & TV productions. Nevertheless, stakeholders acknowledged the potential for freelancers and sole traders to operate in both industries as part of their portfolio, as well as the ability of local clusters to offer people a more consistent stream of work. This is already happening, with Create Central in the West Midlands giving domestic electricians wrap-around guidance and support to deploy their skills on film & TV and live events.

⁵¹ tiga.org/news/tiga-launches-proposal-for-an-industrial-secondment-programme

CASE STUDY: Resource Productions – A pioneering place-based approach

Resource Productions are the lead for one of six newly created BFI Skills Clusters, supported by National Lottery funds, and developed in parallel with the Berkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan.

The overall objective of the cluster is to bring together a range of skills programmes and pathways to establish and make accessible a below-the-line skills development and talent supply to local productions. Launched in October 2023, this partnership has already enabled a diverse range of industry and education stakeholders to work collaboratively in a neutral space to review the curriculum, align employers needs to curriculum development and establish new partnerships.



A great example of this is the work currently taking place between Cube Studios and Windsor Forest Colleges Group, facilitated by Local Skills Improvement Fund investment. Here we have a local supplier of virtual production facilities working directly with a local college to establish industry-standard facilities and courses, whilst Resource Productions works with the college's apprenticeship team to pilot a production-based apprenticeship programme for local supply chain businesses.

Alongside this, the Reading Economic and Destination Agency have utilised the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to enable Resource Productions to identify and connect sector specialists across carpentry, electrical, makeup and costume with course leaders at Activate's Reading College. Working with input from active screen industry professionals, faculty staff are developing short courses as well as reviewing longer vocational courses through the lens of film and tv employers.

As a very disparate and freelancer-led sector, it has previously been a massive challenge to bring everyone together to avoid duplication and identify gaps. This new localised approach – with support from various government departments, local councils, education and, most importantly, industry – is already helping us establish much more accessible and sustainable ways to train, re-train and transition learners of all ages with the practical skills they need to enter the screen industries.

'The interest and engagement we have seen from colleges has been amazing. Both management and those shaping and delivering the curriculum are excited by the opportunities our sector brings, whilst employers and heads of department are keen to support them in developing ways to build a sustainable pipeline of future crew. We are already seeing the ways into work open up to a broader potential workforce, resulting in more diverse, better trained crew for our productions going forward.'

Dominique Unsworth, CEO, Resource Productions

Additional flexibility in the apprenticeship model was seen as key to easing implementation challenges

Sub-contracting should not mean the buck gets passed when it comes to formal training and development

Our interview and roundtable findings also echo wider research on the challenges screen industries face in fully exploiting the apprenticeship offer. These include concerns around a perceived high level of bureaucracy, limited choice of providers, relevancy of apprenticeship standards, quality of teaching during the off-the-job training, a lack of time and management capability to support apprentices (particularly in micro employers), and difficulties committing to the full apprenticeship duration given the propensity for short-term contracts and project-based work (particularly in film & TV).

Additional flexibility in the apprenticeship model was also seen as key to easing implementation challenges, in particular removing fixed minimum-length requirements for apprenticeships to enable screen employers to better align with the duration of projects or fixed term employment opportunities.^{52 53 54} To confront this challenge, ScreenSkills, BBC, BFI and other bodies in the screen industries have pioneered and supported the flexi-job apprenticeship model, piloted between 2020 and 2023. Evaluation of the pilots showed success in allowing employers to use unspent apprenticeship levy on training, giving apprentices significant skills and experience in production roles, particularly from their on-the-job training. However, challenges were also highlighted related to the costs of the apprenticeship agency model, the standard of off-the-job training and the need for continuous placements for on-the-job training at scale.⁵⁵

In addition to these very practical challenges, research interviews also identified the need for a shift in mindset amongst some in industry. For example, by minimising informal recruitment practices and investing in diverse mid-level managers, it was felt that these sectors could more effectively utilise technical education and apprenticeships to recruit and progress highly skilled young people, whilst providing those from currently underrepresented backgrounds with visible role models. In film & TV, it was stressed that the model of sub-contracting should not mean the buck gets passed when it comes to formal training and development, with respondents pointing to the greater role commissioners can play by ensuring apprenticeships are built into productions from the offset. There is plenty of good practice to point to. Sky has a partnership with NBC Universal to employ cohorts of apprentices who they train and place on production within and beyond their group, as well as transferring £1m of unspent apprenticeship levy to small businesses.⁵⁶

52 ScreenSkills (2023) [Apprenticeships in the Screen Industries](#).

53 Screen Sectors Skills Task Force (2023) [A Sustainable Future for Skills](#).

54 IntoGames (2021) [Apprenticeships in Games](#).

55 ScreenSkills (2023) [ScreenSkills' Apprenticeship Pilots Summary Findings](#)

56 corporate.comcast.com/press/releases/sky-pledges-apprenticeship-funding-small-businesses



Conclusion

The future for the screen industries looks bright, but the fundamentals must be in place to support the continued expansion and international competitiveness of the sector in the years to come. Skills is one of those fundamentals.

Most young people would love to work in the UK screen industries, but giving them the opportunity to pursue a career will require the removal of the barriers they currently face. Despite positive impressions around pay, progression and work-life balance, too many young people think that the screen industries are a closed shop, where who you know is more important than the skills you possess. Young people also lack awareness of the range of skills needed by screen industry employers, and the sheer breadth of careers that these industries can offer. In the ongoing development of information, advice and guidance, it will be important for these sectors to meet young people where they are, be that on social media or in schools and colleges, with inspirational role models providing valuable support on the right qualifications, training and skills.

...opportunities come with challenges

There is huge potential for technical education and apprenticeships to help screen industry employers access and develop the distinct mix of technical, transversal and creative skills needed. Innovative providers are already partnering with employers and sector bodies on curriculum design, professional development and industry placements, with FE colleges improving interdisciplinary working across different departments to align delivery with industry demand in a range of skill areas.

Nevertheless, these opportunities come with challenges. Maximising the flexibility, standard, clarity and responsiveness of the technical education and training offer within regions and local areas requires collaboration across education, industry and government. Making this work can help underpin greater adoption of technical education and apprenticeships by screen industry employers and reinforce the role they play in the skills system. By progressing diverse mid-level managers, employers will have a better chance of successfully onboarding diverse entry level talent, including apprentices, and ensuring that young people of all backgrounds see, believe and experience that these sectors value their skills.

Given these findings, it is clear that WorldSkills UK can help colleges, universities and independent training providers deliver the skills needed by the UK screen industries, and assist in removing barriers to careers in these industries faced by young people from all backgrounds. In response to the findings of this report, the organisation has committed to the following actions.



The role of WorldSkills UK

Launching a new skills competition programme in SFX/makeup in film & TV

WorldSkills UK's existing portfolio of makeup skills competitions will encompass film & TV by 2025, helping to deliver the pipeline of high-quality technical and employability skills these sectors need to succeed. This will be supported by a range of leading employers and skills providers to ensure the competition remains aligned to industry need.

Showcasing the range of skills required by UK screen industries at the WorldSkills UK National Finals

WorldSkills UK's National Finals are the ultimate showcase of UK skills and talent across nearly 50 different competitions. This year's finals in Greater Manchester will help promote the range of technical education and training routes that deliver in-demand skills for the UK screen industries. For example, the WorldSkills UK additive manufacturing competition will be using a test project for prop design and building for film & TV.

Empowering young people of all backgrounds towards an exciting future in the screen industries

WorldSkills UK will use careers content and Spotlight Talks developed with BBC, BFI, ScreenSkills and Resource Productions to showcase jobs and training in the UK screen industries and sustain engagement with young people through a social media campaign. By working with a diverse skills champions network, WorldSkills UK will also give young people role models and peer-to-peer support at exciting in-person careers events, such as the West London Film & TV Skills & Jobs Fest and UCAS Create Your Future, demonstrating that careers in the screen industries are for everyone.

Working with Screen Alliance North to help Local Skills Clusters strengthen their pipeline of skills and talent

Screen Alliance North is helping their regional networks of further and higher technical education providers gain greater access to WorldSkills UK's Centre of Excellence programme, in partnership with NCFE, and skills competitions. This will enable these colleges, universities and training providers to benefit from world-class professional development and equip more young people from all backgrounds with high-quality in-demand technical and transversal skills for their local screen industries. This model holds potential for WorldSkills UK to work with other skills agencies and bodies throughout the UK.

Promoting good practice developed by innovative FE Colleges and helping to mainstream their success within the wider skills system

WorldSkills UK's Network for Innovation will give college and curriculum leaders information and insights on how to improve teaching and learning for the UK screen industries, as well as the opportunity to benefit from peer-to-peer networking and support.

Wider priorities for action

- **Strengthening careers information, advice and guidance for the screen industries**, including via the next phase of the Discover Creative Careers programme. This can help allow young people from all backgrounds to pursue rewarding careers in this rapidly growing part of the UK economy.
- **Encouraging deeper partnerships and more strategic coordination across skills providers, employers and sector bodies within regions**, including via Local Skills Improvement Plans and BFI Skills Clusters. This can help employers develop a stronger narrative and steer on current and future skills needs, supporting a more coherent and responsive technical education offer that allows individual providers to specialise. By developing and marketing areas of relative strength and the skills on offer, regions can also increase their competitiveness for inward investment.
- **Improving interdisciplinary working and collaboration between different departments in technical education providers**. This can help young people on a wide range of courses recognise the importance of their skills to the screen industries and consider them as a viable route for future careers. It can also help tutors, educators and training practitioners to innovate and experiment in their pedagogical approaches to better respond to different skills needs within industry.
- **Upscaling the transfer of knowledge and skills between industry and the FE workforce**. By making successful examples of industry masterclasses or dual professionalism the norm, technical education providers can remain in lockstep with the needs of the screen industries and apply new technologies into the curriculum. This can also help underpin the continuing professional development of the teaching workforce.
- **Continuing to flex the application of policies that support technical skills development for the UK screen industries**, building on flexibilities to T-Level placements and progress made within the flexi-job apprenticeship model. As well as meeting the skills needs of the screen industries, this can also help ensure employers in these sectors become full participants and advocates for the skills system and develop a parity of esteem towards both academic and technical education.

Annex 1: Methodology

Work Advance deployed a mixed-method approach to the research comprised of:

Evidence review – bringing together existing data and literature on: technical skills needs in the screen industries now and in the future; skills shortages and gaps; the alignment between the skills being delivered through the skills system and industry needs; and the actions taken by UK and devolved government, industry stakeholders and education providers to enhance alignment and responsiveness.

Young people poll – conducted by Savanta Ltd, who interviewed 2,079 young people aged 16-24 across the UK. The survey was designed by Work Advance and WorldSkills UK and sought to explore young people's perceptions and awareness of opportunities in the screen industries and wider factors that impact their ability to develop relevant technical skills, access and progress in work in the sector. Quotas were applied to ensure the sample was representative of the UK population and enable researchers to explore how results varied by socio-demographic characteristics and region where respondents lived. Figure A1 overleaf provides a breakdown of the sample achieved.

Research interviews and virtual roundtables – bringing together education providers, industry stakeholders and policy makers from all four UK nations to explore industry skills needs and the challenges and opportunities to meeting these in the skills system. A list of those engaged through the research is provided in Annex 2.

Figure A1: Breakdown of the youth poll sample

| Respondent characteristics | | | n | | n | |
|----------------------------|---|----|-------|---------------------------|--|-----|
| Total | | | 2,079 | | | |
| Age | 16-18 | | 678 | Northern Ireland | 53 | |
| | 19-21 | | 700 | Scotland | 145 | |
| | 22-24 | | 701 | North-West | 241 | |
| Gender | Male | | 975 | North-East | 90 | |
| | Female | | 1,060 | Yorkshire & Humberside | 174 | |
| Ethnicity | White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British | | 1,514 | Wales | 100 | |
| | White Irish | | 57 | West Midlands | 202 | |
| | Gypsy or Irish Traveller | | 20 | East Midlands | 168 | |
| | Any other White background | | 110 | South-West | 177 | |
| | Mixed White and Black Caribbean | | 10 | South-East | 318 | |
| | Mixed White and Black African | | 9 | Eastern | 112 | |
| | Mixed White and Asian | | 14 | London | 299 | |
| | Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background | | 7 | Socio-economic background | Modern professional & traditional professional occupations | 422 |
| | Indian | | 52 | | Senior, middle or junior managers or administrators | 489 |
| | Pakistani | | 52 | | Clerical and intermediate occupations | 194 |
| | Bangladeshi | | 22 | | Technical and craft occupations | 172 |
| | Chinese | | 16 | | Routine, semi-routine manual and service occupations | 283 |
| | Any other Asian background | | 28 | | Long-term unemployed | 70 |
| | Black African | | 81 | | Small business owners | 145 |
| | Black Caribbean | | 11 | | Other (e.g. retired, Does not apply, don't know) | 124 |
| | Black British or any other Black background | | 26 | | Prefer not to say | 180 |
| Arab | | 16 | | | | |
| Disability | Yes | | 726 | | | |
| | No | | 1,280 | | | |
| | Prefer not to say | | 73 | | | |

Annex 2: Acknowledgements

| | |
|---|--|
| Access VFX | Into Games |
| Activate Learning | JGA-Group |
| Amazon | Kirklees College |
| Animation UK | Liverpool Film Office |
| Arts Council NI | Middlesex University |
| Arts University Bournemouth | National Film and Television School |
| BBC | Netflix |
| BFI | New Yonder |
| Blue Zoo | NextGen Skills Academy |
| BOA Group | North Warwickshire & South Leicestershire College |
| Bradford College | North West Regional College |
| Brooklands College Group | Northern Ireland Screen |
| Capital City College Group | Northern Regional College |
| Chicester College Group | Pearson |
| CITB | Resource Productions |
| Coleg y Cymoedd | Screen Alliance North |
| Create Central | Screen Alliance Wales |
| Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre | Screen Manchester |
| Creative Wales (Welsh Government) | Screen Manchester |
| Department for Culture, Media and Sport | Screen Scotland |
| Department for Education | Screen Scotland |
| Department for the Economy NI | Screen Yorkshire |
| Department of Communities NI | ScreenSkills |
| Design Council | Sgil Cymru |
| Edinburgh College | Sky Studios |
| Engineering UK | Sony Playstation |
| Ffilm Cymru Wales | Sumo Digital Group |
| Film London | UK Screen Alliance |
| Fold 7 | UKIE |
| Framestore | Ulster University |
| Future Screens NI | West London Business |
| Gatsby Foundation | Windsor Forest Colleges Group |
| Hereford College of Arts | Work Advance |
| IfATE | WorldSkills UK |

If you have any questions about this research, please contact:

Heather Carey
Director, Work Advance
T: +44 (0) 7703 735 614
E: hcarey@workadvance.co.uk



WorldSkills UK is registered at
332 Third Floor
25 Wilton Road
London SW1V 1LW

T: 0800 612 0742
E: getintouch@worldskillsuk.org
W: worldskillsuk.org



Charity number 1001586, Company number 02535199
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