



# Annual Review 2024-25



Funded by  
UK Government



# “We are WorldSkills UK”



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## Foreword

Welcome to WorldSkills UK's Annual Review 2024-25 and what an incredible year it has been, supporting more people than ever raise standards in technical education and apprenticeships all over the UK.

Looking through this report the key message is clear: we have more and more ways to support institutions, educators and learners to develop excellence in skills. Our national competition cycle, our Centre of Excellence programme, our online resources via the Learning Lab and our new local skills competitions endorsement framework provide a year-round offer that brings real impact to your teaching, learning and assessment.

I have thoroughly enjoyed being part of another fantastic year with WorldSkills UK, from speaking at our International

Skills Summit at University College Birmingham in May, to cheering on Team UK in Lyon in September, having the honour of showing Skills Minister Baroness Jacqui Smith round our National Finals in Greater Manchester in November and supporting our new equity, diversity and inclusion strategy, which aims to increase representation across our programmes.

I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in WorldSkills UK's programmes this year, helping us to make a difference to young people's lives. I'd like to thank my fellow trustees, all the staff at WorldSkills UK, our fantastic network of skills experts, our government partners in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and our corporate partners whose investment

and confidence in what we do is integral to our success.

This fantastic year gives us a strong platform to deliver even more reach and impact in 2025-26, preparing a pipeline of employment-ready technicians that will support the Governments Modern Industrial Strategy, so please get involved and be part of our ambition to deliver skills excellence for as many young learners as possible.



**Marion Plant OBE, FCGI**  
Chair,  
WorldSkills UK

As we close off a successful 2024-25 we are more committed than ever to focus our efforts on the activities that make the biggest impact for learners, educators and employers in 2025-26.

While tight public funds have put a few limits on the breadth of our engagement we remain ambitious for our core objective; to deliver skills excellence all across the UK.

So over the coming year you will see an increased focus on our world-class teacher training offer, available to institutions as a member of our growing Centre of Excellence programme. We will be endorsing even more local skills competitions helping more learners prepare for the world of work as well as our national competition cycle (please help us fill the gaps on our map on page

17). And we are delighted to be working with institutions across South Wales to deliver the biggest National Finals in recent years in November. Looking beyond UK borders we also have EuroSkills Herning 2025 to look forward to in September and Squad UK will continue their preparation for the WorldSkills Shanghai in 2026.

As all UK governments look to their skills systems to enable our economies to grow it has never been more important to focus on quality and excellence in technical education and apprenticeship delivery. All our programmes are focused on skills excellence and it's the difference between competence and excellence that can help companies be more productive, more innovative and to grow faster.

Thank you to everyone who supports WorldSkills UK. I look forward to growing our work together in 2025-26.



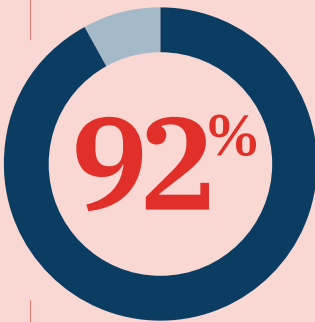
**Ben Blackledge**  
Chief Executive,  
WorldSkills UK



Our Centre of Excellence and Learning Lab help raise standards in technical education and apprenticeships



**Nine of the top ten colleges** in the 2024 National Finals medal table used WorldSkills UK online benchmarking resources to prepare their learners for competition success



of the educators taking part in our CPD activities say it has enhanced their teaching, understanding or delivery

**>8,400**



educators participated across all WorldSkills UK's CPD activities (face to face and online)

**>165,000**

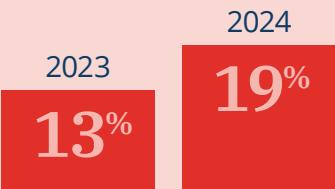
learners benefitted from their educators taking part in WorldSkills UK's CPD activities

National competition programmes

In 2024

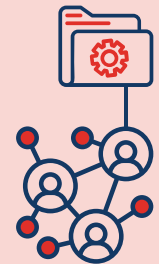
**3,600**

young people took part in our National Competition Cycle

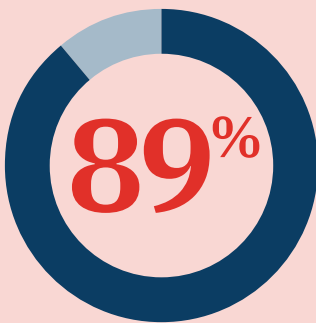


Registrations of young people from ethnically diverse backgrounds rose from 2023 to 2024

**91%**



agreed they had been able to apply skills they had learnt or improved through skills competitions to their education, work or other parts of their life



of respondents agreed that competitions had resulted in improved technical skills

National Finals

**402**

young people

**128**

organisations

**46**

competitions

**2**

demonstration competitions

International competitions

**Team UK: 31 competitors 27 skills**

achieving **3 silver medals** in joinery, plumbing & heating and refrigeration & air conditioning, **1 bronze medal** in autobody repair, plus **12 Medallions for Excellence** in various other skills



The UK came tenth in the medal table at WorldSkills Lyon for average points scored



**707.44**

average points scored at WorldSkills Lyon, well above the international standard of excellence



**32% of Squad UK were female**

Promoting technical education and apprenticeships

We worked with

**187**

GFECs

**118**

ITPs

**49**

HEIs

**15**

Institutes of Technology

**>48,000**

young people took part in our activities actively promoting apprenticeships and technical routes as prestigious pathways

**642,163,612**

media circulation including **24 pieces** of national coverage

**83%**

of young people who engaged with WorldSkills UK believe it improved their knowledge of technical and vocational training beyond secondary school

**128 Skills Champions volunteered 67 hours**

# Year at a glance

2024



April 2024

3,592

learners and apprentices complete the first entry stage of competition

1,333

then took part in the National Qualifiers stage, held across the UK



May 2024

Our fifth International Skills Summit, supported by the University Vocational Awards Council at University College Birmingham.



August 2024

Final preparations for Team UK including a gold-medal winning pressure test

in Australia for 3D digital game art competitor Yasmin.



July 2024

Announced 12 innovation projects

led by partners in the skills sector as part of our Centre of Excellence programme.



September 2024

Team UK secure top ten place at WorldSkills Lyon 2024.



October 2024

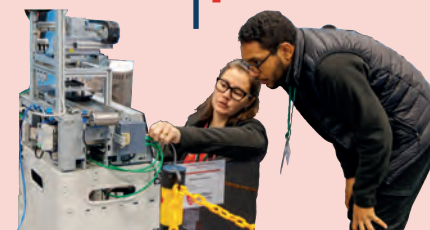


Team UK's achievements celebrated in Westminster with Skills Minister Baroness Smith and Cardiff with Economy Secretary Rebecca Evans MS.



December 2024

Education Secretary Jenny Gilruth MSP celebrates Scottish competitor achievements and Economy Minister Conor Murphy MLA congratulates medal winners in Belfast.



November 2024

Over 400 learners and apprentices

competed at venues across Greater Manchester in the WorldSkills UK National Finals.

2025

## Centre of Excellence

January 2025

As part of the Centre of Excellence Programme, we delivered four information sessions for cohort 2 of the Endorsed Trainer Programme.



14 educators from 14 institutions,

took part in our Endorsed Trainer Programme, part of our Centre of Excellence in partnership with NCFE.



March 2025

Celebrated the winners of our Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Heroes Awards 2025, supported by University Vocational Awards Council and Skills and Education Group.



Squad UK announced for WorldSkills Shanghai 2026.

The very best students and apprentices are setting out on the road to Shanghai in an intrepid bid to do the UK proud on the international stage at the next WorldSkills Competition in China in 2026.



February 2025

Local Skills Competition endorsement for colleges all over the the UK, including New College Swindon who brought together competitors from all over the South West.





# WorldSkills Lyon 2024

## A standout performance from Team UK

In 2024, we were proud to announce Pearson as the official partner of Team UK. Throughout the year, our collaboration with Pearson aimed to boost the prestige of technical and professional education, empowering young people and employers to succeed.

Team UK achieved a top ten finish at WorldSkills Lyon 2024, competing against 69 countries. More than 1,500 young apprentices and students from around the world took part, testing their abilities across 62 disciplines, including mechatronics, graphic design, plumbing and digital construction.

Team UK came home with three silver and one bronze medals and many

more earned medals and Medallions for Excellence across a wide range of disciplines, demonstrating the depth and breadth of talent being developed.

Two consecutive top ten finishes at WorldSkills Lyon and EuroSkills Gdańsk on the global stage show that WorldSkills UK's approach to training and skills development is internationally competitive. Team UK's

success also reflects the unique collaboration between WorldSkills UK, employers, education providers and governments across all four nations, working together to develop the high-quality skills needed by the economy.

WorldSkills UK ambition is to embed this approach across the country helping young people gain the real-world skills required to succeed in sectors that are critical to the UK's future, such as construction, advanced manufacturing and digital.

While Team UK were rightly in the limelight, over 40 employers and stakeholders joined WorldSkills UK in Lyon, including Permanent

WorldSkills Lyon  
2024

69

countries

>1,500

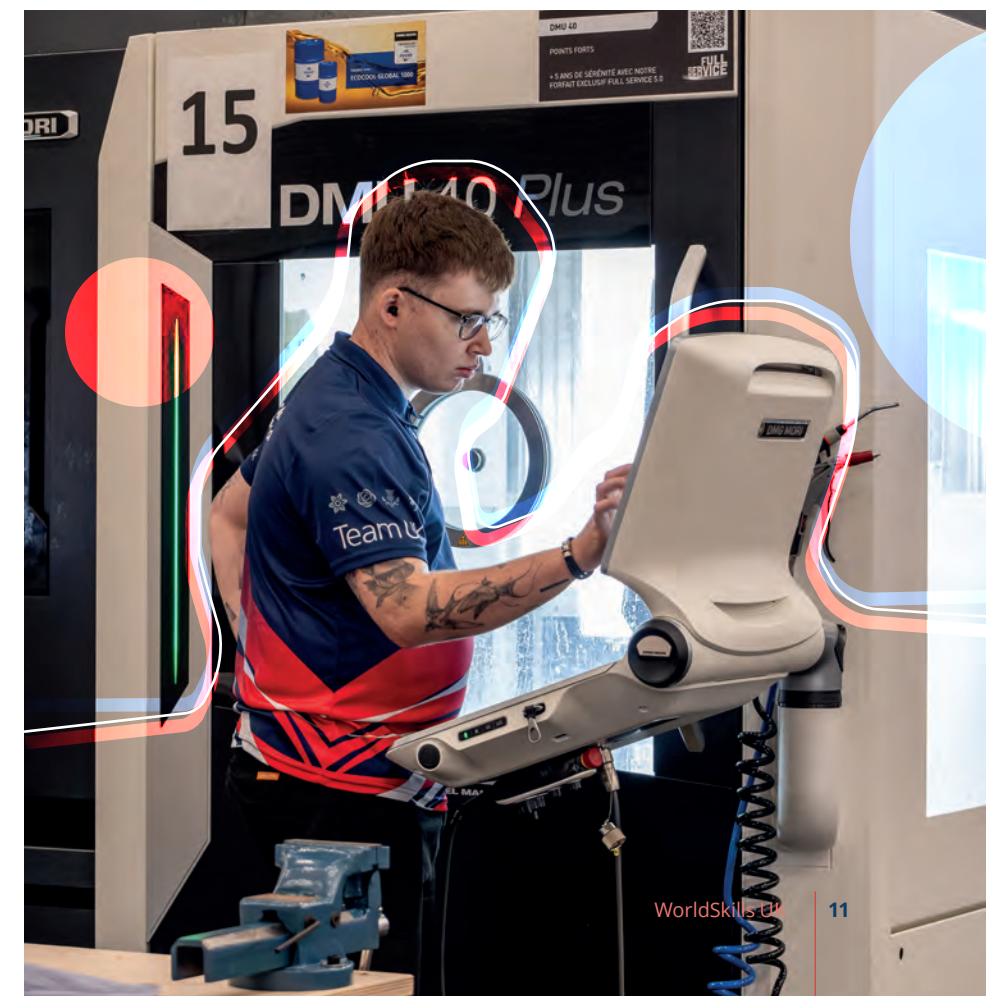
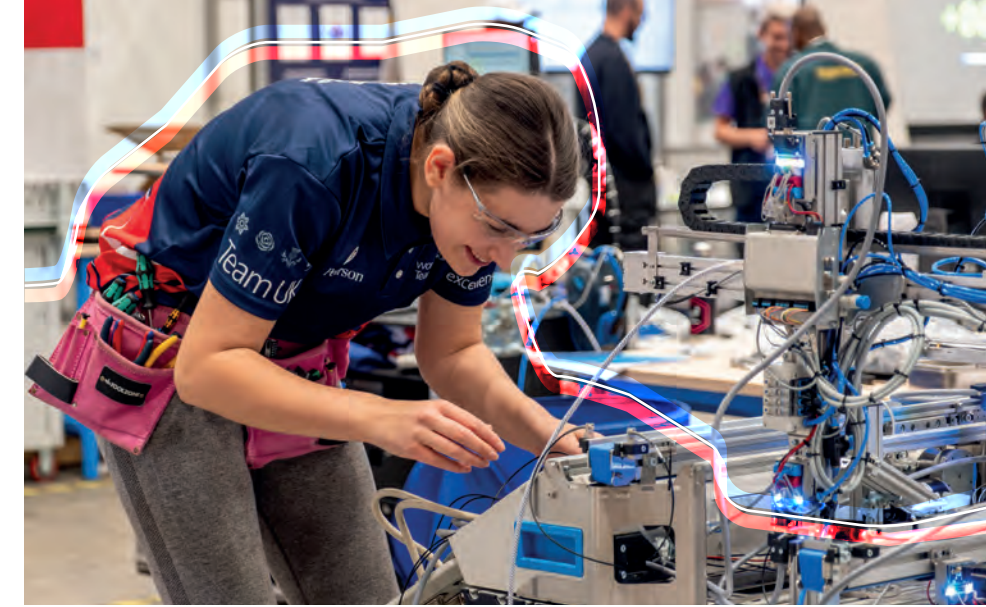
competitors

62

disciplines

Secretary to the Department for Education Susan Acland-Hood, to see world-class skills in action, learn how competitions can provide a robust assessment methodology for technical education and to network with colleagues from other countries.

Once home, WorldSkills UK's international skills experts catalogued all their learnings from the WorldSkills Lyon cycle to share with the UK skills sector to help raise standards in teaching, learning and assessment. These insights are available on the WorldSkills UK [website](#).







# National Finals 2024

## A celebration of prestige in technical skills

The 2024 WorldSkills UK National Competition Finals saw over 400 young people from all corners of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland converging on Greater Manchester for one week in November to compete in over 40 different skills vying to be named the 'best in the UK'.

Trainees from industries ranging from digital, advanced manufacturing and engineering through to creative, professional services and hospitality were put to the test, with the competitions assessing key employability attributes including working under pressure, critical thinking and communication, as well as first-class technical and practical skills.

Building on the success of

the previous year, providers across Greater Manchester supported WorldSkills UK through their hosting of the competitions and wrap-around activities, inspiring their own learners and educators who witnessed the excitement of the National Finals at close quarters.

Visitors to the National Finals included Skills Minister Baroness Jacqui Smith representing the UK Government,

Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership Jack Sargeant, representing the Welsh Government and hosts of the 2025 National Finals, Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham representing the 2024 National Finals hosts, leading employers such as Amazon, BAE Systems and Autodesk, and an international delegation from France, Austria, Romania, Netherlands and Hungary. All learned how WorldSkills UK is making a difference to the lives of young people, delivering the skills employers need and raising the bar for the standard of technical education and apprenticeships in the UK.

The week culminated in a ceremony celebrating the



*"The students have been really inspiring. It's been great to see their employers full of pride, the range of skills they are engaged in, and the quality of what they're doing under enormous pressure."*

*Baroness Jacqui Smith, Minister for Skills (pictured above, centre)*

**>400**  
young people  
competing  
**>40**  
different skills

*"I am absolutely delighted that we'll be hosting the UK National Finals in 2025... These competitions showcase the extraordinary skills of young people and highlight the value of technical education and apprenticeships."*

*Jack Sargeant, Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership (pictured below, right)*

achievements of all the young people who made it through to the finals and awarding medals to the top performers, with Greater Manchester handing the baton of hosting the next National Finals to South Wales. All finalists left with their personal and professional skills enhanced, and having had the exhilarating experience of competing which will last a lifetime.







# Unlocking potential

## The power of world-class teacher training

Five years on from its groundbreaking launch, the WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence is transforming the landscape of technical education and apprenticeships.

Working with founding partner NCFE, WorldSkills UK is empowering educators and leaders in further and higher education institutions and independent training providers to use international best practice to drive excellence in skills.

Developing world-class technical and professional standards, with a focus on skills excellence, is crucial to unlocking learners' full potential. Clear, robust assessment frameworks not only support

progression but also empower individuals to understand how to continuously improve. Together, these elements are fundamental in creating a workforce that will boost productivity, strengthening the UK's competitive advantage. World-class teacher training and interactive networks provide members of the Centre of Excellence with access to innovative, evidence-based learning and assessment methodologies. With 5,500 educators benefiting from the programme in 2024-25 and

over 250,000 learners and 14,000 educators since 2020, WorldSkills UK and NCFE are bringing international learnings to even more institutions to increase the social and economic impact of world-class teaching.

Members of the Centre of Excellence are seeing a direct impact on learner outcomes with The Bedford College Group confirming that there was a 68% reduction in non-submissions and a 56% reduction in re-submissions compared to the previous year (2022-23) from BTEC Level 3 learners in Computing who were given additional support, derived from the Centre of Excellence programme. The WorldSkills UK

**5,500**  
educators benefitted  
from the programme  
in 2024-25

Since 2020  
**250,000**  
learners benefitted  
from the programme

Centre of Excellence is supported by the Department for Education; Autodesk and the Manufacturing Technology Centre provide additional support as industry partners.

### In 2024-25:

- Launched the [Endorsed Trainer Programme](#)
- Expanded use of pressure tests and competition-based activity in more curriculum areas to develop students' skills and support them in identifying their strengths and weaknesses
- Further engagement with the WorldSkills UK online Learning Lab to support development of student's knowledge and skills
- Focus on engaging all relevant curriculum areas in WorldSkills UK national competitions, embedding skills development into the scheme of learning.

### World-class learning, local impact: Newcastle College Group (NCG) embeds WorldSkills Centre of Excellence

NCG, a member of the Centre of Excellence since 2022, says the workforce development programme has reinvigorated teaching practices, boosting educators' confidence and propelling them towards delivering excellence within their teaching practices. This is resulting in a focus on high standards to challenge and accelerate students throughout their learning journey, ensuring an exceptional, meaningful student experience within the NCG group.





# Igniting talent at the roots

## Worldskills UK local skills competitions

In 2024, WorldSkills UK took an exciting step forward with the launch of the Local Skills Competition Endorsement Framework.

This new initiative is a cornerstone of WorldSkills UK's competition-based learning programme, which is widely recognised by educators as one of the most powerful tools for driving quality improvement and assessing technical skills.

In just six months, we have endorsed 52 institutions to run the activity, with 137 local competitions taking place across the UK. Through this work, 5,242 learners have had their skills benchmarked against international and national standards.



**52**  
endorsed institutions  
**137**  
local competitions



Location of colleges that were involved in a WorldSkills UK endorsed local skills competition in 2024/25.



## London's largest inter-college skills competition tackles skills gaps

Colleges across the London and south-east partnered with WorldSkills UK to run the largest inter-college skills competition that had been held in the capital for over a decade.

Hundreds of students competed in ten industry-based competitions held at Barking & Dagenham College, United College Group, Waltham Forest College, Capital City College and South Essex College.

WorldSkills UK endorsed all of the competition activity including advising on the marking criteria.

This ground-breaking event demonstrated the role of WorldSkills UK competitions in supporting colleges in providing the critical training and skills that businesses need in their workforce.

Howard Dawber, Deputy Mayor of London for Business and Growth joined local employers in visiting the competitions to learn more about the work of WorldSkills UK...

"Events like this will help deliver on ambitious targets in our new London Growth Plan to build the capital's skilled workforce and ensure all Londoners can access not just good jobs but exciting career paths. I'm proud to support this initiative, which brings together employers, educators, and students to help build a better, fairer and more prosperous London for everyone."



# Partners and supporters

Everyone at WorldSkills UK would like to thank the following organisations for their ongoing partnership and support in WorldSkills UK programmes.

ACTAN	Fanuc	REFCOM
AIM Qualifications and Assessment	Festo	Rochdale Training
Air Products	Gateway Qualifications	Royal Air Force
Amazon	Gatsby Foundation	Royal Navy
ARKANCE	Glasgow Caledonian University	Salford College
Association of Apprentices	Glasgow Clyde College	Salford University
Association of Colleges	Glasgow Kelvin	Scottish Funding Council
Association of Employment and Learning Providers	Gower College Swansea	Screen Alliance North
Association of Professional Landscapers	Greater Manchester Colleges Group	Shining 3D
Autodesk	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Skills and Education Group
BAE Systems	Green Bottle Consulting	Skills for Security
Barking and Dagenham College	Hopwood Hall College	Solihull College
Bath College	Guildhall Ignite	South Essex College
BBC	IN4 group	South Staffs
BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT	Inspiring Skills Excellence in Wales	Southern Regional College
BESA	Institute for the Motor Industry	Sparshot
Bishop Auckland College	Into Film	Steer Automotive Group
Birmingham Metropolitan College	Kaplan	Stockport College
Bolton College	Lancashire and Cumbria IOT	Stockton Riverside College
BPEC	Lincoln Electric	Symetri
Bridgewater and Taunton	L'Oréal	Talent Included!
British Airways	Make UK	Tameside College
British Council	Manchester College	Texecom
Bury College	Manchester University	The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry
Capital City College	Middlesbrough College	The Careers and Enterprise Company
Cheshire College (South & West)	Middlesex University	The Education & Training Foundation
Chichester College	Milton Keynes College	The Manchester College
Coleg Cambria	MK Group	The MTC Training Centre
ColegauCymru	Morelli Group	Trafford College
College Development Network	National Careers Week CIC	Ultimaker
Colleges Scotland	National Inspection Council (NIC)	United College Group
Coleg Llandrillo Menai	NCFE	University College Birmingham
Craft Guild of Chefs	NET (National Electrotechnical Training)	University of Manchester
Create Education	New College Durham	University of Portsmouth
CrossCountry	New College Lanarkshire	University of Wales Trinity St Davids
CSL	New College Swindon	UVAC
Darlington College	Nineteen Group	Wago GB
Derwentside College	NOCN Group	Waltham Forest College
Didactic Services Ltd	Northern Regional College	Welsh Government
Doncaster College	North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College	West Herts College Group
East Durham College	Northern Ireland Government	West London IOT / HRUC
East Kent / North Kent College	Oldham College	West Midlands Combined Authority
Eng EPA	Omron	Weston College
Engineering Skills Competitions CIC	Pearson	Wigan and Leigh College
Enginuity	Pembrokeshire College	Wiltshire College
Exeter University	Reds Hair Company	Work Advance
EY		Yeovil College

# WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence members

Abingdon and Witney College	FMG Repair Services	RNN Group
Access Training	Gen2 – Genii Engineering & Technology Training	Rochdale Training
ACT Training	Glasgow Clyde College	Scarborough TEC
Adult Community Learning	Glass and Fenestration Training Solutions Ltd	SCUC (Solihull College and University Centre)
Aldershot College	Gloucestershire Engineering Training	Shrewsbury Colleges Group
AMRC Training Centre	Gower College Swansea	South Hampshire College Group (SHCG)
Ayrshire College	Harrow, Richmond & Uxbridge Colleges (HRUC)	South Staffordshire College
Barking & Dagenham College	Havant and South Downs College	South West College
Barnsley College	Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College	Southern Regional College
Bath College	Hertford Regional College	Stoke-on-Trent College
Bedford College	Hopwood Hall – Middleton Campus	Suffolk New College (Suffolk Rural)
Birmingham Metropolitan College	Hull College	Sunderland College Group (Education Partnership North)
Blackpool and The Fylde College	Humberside Engineering Training Association (HETA)	Sunderland Engineering Training Association Ltd (Seta)
Bolton College	Imperial College London	Tameside College
Borders College	Kirklees College	TDR Training
BPP Education Group (Firebrand)	Lakes College, West Cumbria	TEC Partnership (incl. East Riding College)
Bradford College	Leicester College	Telford College
Bridgend College	Lewisham College	The Brook House Sixth Form College (BSix College)
Brooklands College	LTE Group	The City of Liverpool College
Burnley College	Luminate Education Group	The College of West Anglia
Burton and South Derbyshire College	Merthyr Tydfil College	The Colleges Partnership
Bury College	Middlesbrough College	The Education Training Collective
Buxton and Leek College	Mid-Kent College	The Focus Training Group
Cardiff and Vale College	Milton Keynes College	The Institutes of Technology Network
Chelmsford College	Morley College	The Oldham College
Chichester College Group	Moulton College	The Sheffield College
City of Glasgow College	Myerscough College	The Windsor Forest Colleges Group
City of Wolverhampton College	Nelson & Colne College	Thermal Insulation Contractors Association (TICA)
City Skills	New College Durham	UHI Perth College
City, University of London	New College Lanarkshire	University College of Birmingham (UCB)
Coleg Cambria	New College Swindon	University of Derby
Coleg Gwent	North East Surrey College of Technology (NESCOT)	University of Kent
Coleg Sir Gar/ Coleg Ceredigion	North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College	University of Portsmouth
Coleg Y Cymoedd	North West Regional College	University of Sheffield
COPA (North Wales Training)	North West Training Council	Waltham Forest College
Debut Training Academy	NPTC Group of Colleges	Warrington and Vale Royal College
Derwentside College	NTG Training	West Herts College Group
Doncaster – Rotherham & District GTA	Oaklands College	West Lothian College
Doncaster College	Petroc	West Suffolk College
Dudley College of Technology	Portland Training	Weston College
Dumfries & Galloway College	Preston College	Wigan and Leigh College
Dundee and Angus College	Real Time Education	Wiltshire College and University Centre
East Coast College	Reaseheath College	Wirral Metropolitan College
East Durham College	Remit Training	York College
Edinburgh College		
Emtec (Nottingham College)		
Estio Training		
Fife College		
Firebrand Training		





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