

ESSEX CAREERS

Your guide to local employment and skills

Featuring:
Sector focus on
energy sector
North Essex

SUCCESS

SKILLS

CAREERS

FUTURE



Find out more about:

- inclusive employment
- top skills to stand out
- volunteering

and much more...



Looking for support into training or employment?

The **Essex Opportunities Portal** is a website dedicated to information, advice and guidance on careers and skills.



You'll find information on:

- **further education**
- **re-training**
- **learning new skills**
- **apprenticeships**
- **job opportunities in Essex**

The website also features helpful tips on writing a CV, preparing for interviews and thriving at assessment centres.

You can even search and apply for local courses, apprenticeships and jobs!

Sign up to our newsletter

for more information and opportunities sent directly to your inbox.

Follow us on Facebook

for handy tips, information on events and local training and job opportunities.

This magazine has been produced by the **Essex County Council Employment & Skills team** to provide a comprehensive insight into all matters relating to the **Employment & Skills opportunities within Essex.**

We are very grateful to all the individuals and organisations who have contributed to the eighth issue.

Essex County Council welcomes your input. Please get in touch if you have any questions or would like to contribute to future issues.

Enjoy reading and don't forget you can contact us at essex.careers.magazine@essex.gov.uk and view all editions at **Essex Opportunities**.

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If you would like to discuss how Careermap can help your organisation to create bespoke useful guides, don't hesitate to get in touch with Simon Bell, Founder at simon@careermap.co.uk



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FOREWORD

Councillor Tony Ball
Essex Careers Magazine

It is my pleasure to introduce the eighth edition of Essex Careers. As with all previous editions, it contains a wealth of information on employment and skills opportunities across the county. This includes a spotlight on the energy sector, with information on roles, key skills and training within the industry. You can read articles from key infrastructure projects that will offer exciting employment opportunities within the energy sector for the county. In addition to a whole host of information on the support available to you in your job search.

For our geographical focus, we take a closer look at what is happening in north Essex, with an insight into Army careers and Colchester barracks. In addition to articles from the University of Essex and Freeport East. There's also information about support available within Essex libraries to support your job search, volunteering opportunities here in Essex and much more!

A huge thank you to contributors and all those involved in putting together this edition. Enjoy reading and don't forget you can contact us at Essex.Careers.Magazine@essex.gov.uk and read all previous editions on [Essex Opportunities](#).

Councillor Tony Ball,
Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Lifelong Learning and Employability

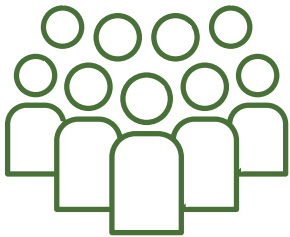


SECTOR SPOTLIGHT -
Energy sector

The energy industry is changing. In Essex and across the world, we're using more clean, renewable energy – like wind and solar – instead of fossil fuels. This shift is about more than power. It's about protecting the Essex environment, improving air and water quality and supporting healthier communities.

As these changes happen, new career opportunities are emerging in energy and the environment.

In the next few pages, you'll discover the different roles available and find helpful links to explore your options and learn how to get started in this growing sector.



National age breakdown:
25 – 34: **22%**
35 – 44: **23%**
45 – 54: **33%**
55 – 64: **19%**

Largest employers in Essex:
Proctor and Gamble
Tarmac Trading
Cfb Boilers LTD
Biocrucible LTD



National average salary is **£50.5K**



National gender breakdown
Male: **83%** Female: **17%**

Skills needed in the energy sector:

- **Management**
- **Mentorship**
- **Coaching**
- **Report writing**
- **Solar energy systems installation**
- **Carbon footprint reduction**
- **Fire protection**

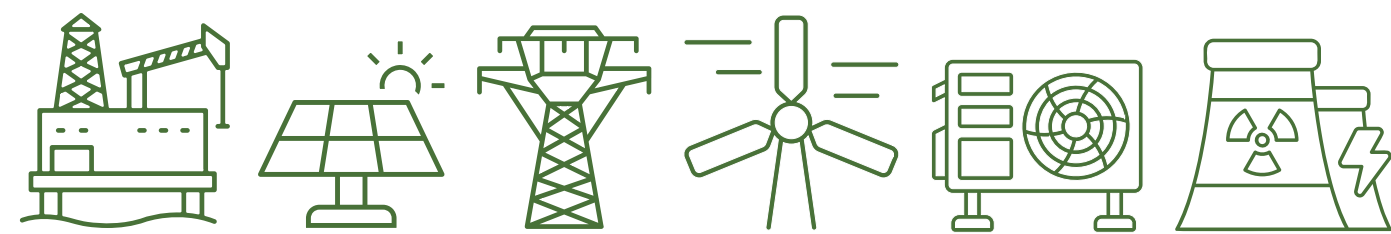
Common qualifications:

- Core domestic gas safety CCN1
- Smart Meter Installer Core CMA1
- Gas meter safety MET1
- IOSH Managing safely

Top three advertised occupations in Essex:
Manufacturing Technicians | Operating Engineers | Site Operators

Source: Official Labour Market Statistics (ONS) and Lightcast Analyst | Figures include Southend and Thurrock

Energy sector career pathways in the UK

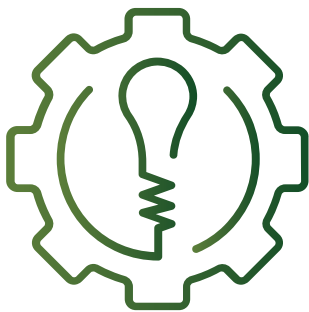


Qualification	Description	Length of time	Assessment		Level of study	Award UCAS points	Entry requirements	Work experience	What does it lead to?
Apprenticeship	Apprenticeships involve completing vocational qualifications while receiving paid, on-the-job training. Examples include roles in renewable energy, oil and gas and nuclear power.	Typically 1-4 years, depending on the level.	Combination of coursework, practical assessments, and end-point assessments	➡	Levels 2-7 (intermediate to degree apprenticeships)	Varies by level	Usually 5 GCSEs at grade 4/C or above, including English and maths.	Yes, as apprenticeships are work-based	Higher-level apprenticeships full-time employment further education
A Levels	Academic qualifications that can be taken at a college, sixth form centre, or online. Subjects like maths, physics, and chemistry are particularly relevant.	2 years	Mainly exams at the end of the course, can include coursework	➡	3	Yes	Typically 5 GCSEs at grade 4/C or above.	Not required	University, degree apprenticeships, or work.
Technical/vocational	Qualifications that teach specific skills related to the energy sector. Examples include BTECs in Engineering, Environmental Science and Energy Management.	Course dependent	Combination of coursework and exams	➡	Levels 2-3	Yes	Varies by course.	Course dependent	Apprenticeships, university, or work.
Degree apprenticeship	Academic qualifications where you study part-time at a university while working. Examples include degrees in Renewable Energy Engineering, Nuclear Engineering and Energy Management.	3-6 years, depending on the course level	Dependent on the course, often includes an end-point assessment	➡	Levels 6-7 (Bachelor's or Master's degree)	Yes	Typically requires A Levels or equivalent qualifications.	Yes, as part of the apprenticeship	Full-time employment or further education.
Degree	Academic qualifications completed at university. Relevant degrees include Renewable Energy, Mechanical Engineering and Environmental Science.	3-4 years	Mostly exams, with some coursework	➡	6	Yes	Typically requires A Levels or equivalent qualifications.	Course dependent	Postgraduate courses, full-time employment.
Post-graduate courses	Advanced academic qualifications for further study. Examples include a Master's in Renewable Energy a PhD in Energy Systems.	1-2 years for a Master's, 3-4 years for a PhD	Exams, coursework, and research projects	➡	Levels 7-8	Not applicable	Requires an undergraduate degree.	Often required	Advanced research roles, academic positions, or specialised industry roles.

Additional resources

Energy Skills Passport: A digital platform designed to help professionals in the energy sector showcase their skills and qualifications, and unlock new career opportunities. Explore the [website](#) to see how it works.

Careers in the energy sector



Essex is at the heart of the world’s largest market for offshore wind which is likely to grow and encompass other forms of renewable energy in the future. The scope and scale of planned developments in the region’s energy sector means that the benefits could be vast, creating thousands of new jobs and securing many existing positions.

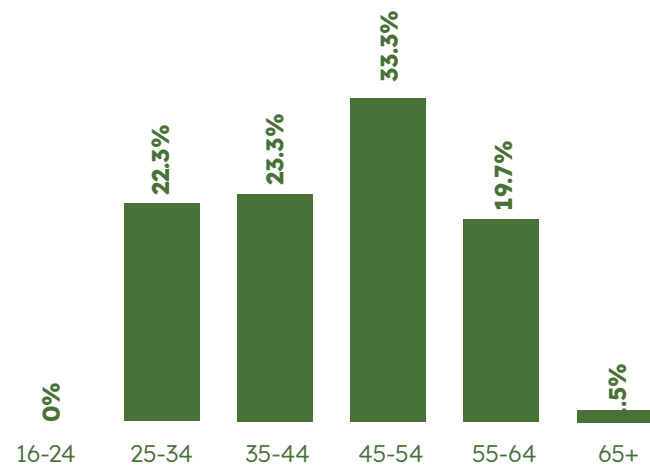
Professionals within this sector work across both the public and private sectors; in industry, energy and environment consultancies, government, international organisations, think tanks and charities. You could work on improving energy systems, reducing waste, protecting nature and wildlife, or helping organisations be more environmentally responsible.

The energy sector offers a wide range of career opportunities, from traditional roles in oil and gas to emerging positions in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

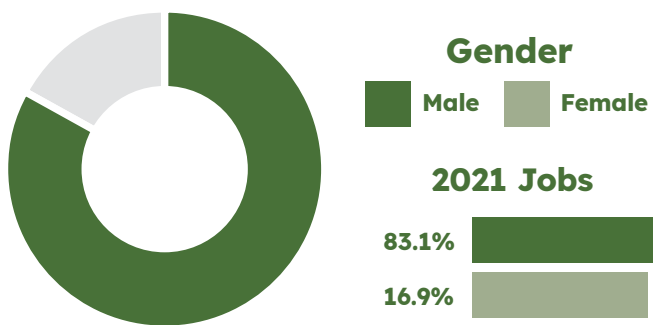
To enter the energy sector, you might consider pursuing relevant education and certifications, such as degrees in engineering, environmental science, or renewable energy. Additionally, gaining experience through internships or entry-level positions can be valuable.

Types of careers in the energy sector:

- Renewable energy technician:**
Install, maintain and repair renewable energy systems like solar panels and wind turbines.
- Energy analyst:**
Analyse energy consumption data to help organisations improve efficiency and reduce costs.
- Environmental engineer:**
Develop solutions to environmental problems, often focusing on pollution control and sustainable practices.
- Project manager:**
Oversee energy projects, ensuring they are completed on time and within budget.
- Transmission system operator:**
Manage the flow of electricity through power grids.
- Wind turbine technician:**
Specialise in the maintenance and repair of wind turbines.



National occupation age breakdown



National occupation gender breakdown

The East of England is a UK leader in offshore wind. By 2030, the sector will add 6,500 jobs — growing the workforce to around 11,167. This includes 1,699 new roles in management and project engineering, and 1,120 in mechanical and turbine maintenance.

* Source : Powering the Future 2030 Workforce Needs for Offshore Wind in the East of England SUMMARY - April 2025



Other roles in energy include:

- Manufacture of chemicals and chemical products
- Civil engineering
- Services to buildings and landscape activities
- Manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products
- Repair and installation of machinery and equipment
- Architectural and engineering activities; technical testing and analysis
- Scientific research and development
- Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
- Specialised construction activities
- Office administrative, office support and other business support activities

Skills you need

- Technical skills:** knowledge of engineering principles, renewable energy technologies and data analysis
- Problem-solving:** ability to identify issues and develop effective solutions
- Project management:** skills in planning, executing and overseeing projects
- Communication:** clear and effective communication with team members, stakeholders and clients
- Stem knowledge:** strong background in science, technology, engineering and mathematics
- Cross-functionality:** ability to work across different functions and teams
- Social awareness:** understanding of environmental impact and social responsibility



Power your career with National Grid

National Grid sits at the heart of the UK's energy system, delivering electricity safely and reliably. As the country shifts to low-carbon energy, National Grid is driving the transition. Thousands of skilled job opportunities are being created along the way.

With more than 22,000 employees already, National Grid expects to support more than 55,000 more jobs by 2030. From engineers to planners, project managers to technicians, a wide range of careers are essential to support the UK's future in clean energy.

Why East Anglia matters

East Anglia, including Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and eastern parts of Essex, is fast becoming a hub for renewable energy.

The local grid, built in the 1960s, needs a major upgrade to handle new offshore wind, nuclear, and other clean power sources. That's where The Great Grid Upgrade comes in.

Some key projects in East Anglia include:

Sea Link: A proposed under the sea electricity link between Suffolk and Kent. It is designed to increase the capability of the network to carry low carbon and renewable energy.

Norwich to Tilbury: Proposed to reinforce the network in East Anglia between existing substations. This includes Tilbury, Essex. It would also connect new offshore wind generation.

Bramford to Twinstead: A newly approved network reinforcement scheme between Bramford substation in Suffolk and Twinstead Tee in Essex. The project is currently in the pre-construction stage.

These projects not only support the green transition but also bring training, job creation and local investment.

Inspiring future talent

National Grid often attends skills events in Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk to inspire the next generation.

In March, National Grid partnered with the East of England Energy Group to attend the Festival of Knowledge in Norfolk. Students learned that careers in energy go beyond engineering. Roles can span from planning and communications to surveying and the environment.

There are many ways to get into a role in energy. Whether you're starting out or looking for a career change, there's a role for you at National Grid.

They offer:

- Internships (including Power Academy Scholars)
- Industrial placements
- Graduate scheme
- Apprenticeships
- A STEM returner (12-week-long) scheme
- Construction Development Programme (for Site Supervisors, Quantity Surveyors, and Project Managers)

Kim's career in energy

For Kim Sibilla, it started with a summer work experience placement. Now she works on community engagement for National Grid's infrastructure projects. She also supports Grid for Good. This initiative helps disadvantaged young people into energy careers. Many secure long-term jobs after the programme.

Whether you're into geography, data, design, or problem-solving – energy has a future for you.



Explore careers in the [National Grid](#) | Find out more about [Grid for Good](#)

Energy careers in North Essex: The East of England Energy Group

The East of England Energy Group (EEEGR) is leading the UK's energy sector.

Working with over 250 organisations, it brings together businesses from across offshore wind, oil and gas, nuclear, hydrogen, and new renewable technologies.

Its goal is to help businesses grow and to support the next generation of workers.

At the heart of EEEGR's work is the 'Skills for Energy' (SfE) programme. This initiative connects schools, colleges and industry partners to create clear pathways into energy careers.

From workshops and site visits to training opportunities and employer partnerships, SfE is all about giving young people the knowledge, experience, and confidence to succeed in this fast-evolving sector.

North Essex is home to an increasing number of energy projects, particularly in renewables like wind and solar power. This shift toward cleaner energy is not just good for the planet, it's creating exciting new jobs and supporting the local economy.

There is something for everyone in the energy sector. Whether you're a hands-on problem solver, a data enthusiast, or someone who enjoys teamwork, you can find a job that suits you.



Here are just a few examples of roles in the energy industry:

- Wind turbine technician
- Solar panel installer
- Energy analyst
- Mechanical or electrical engineer
- Project manager
- Environmental consultant
- Sales and customer support roles in energy services

EEEGR plays a vital role in bringing together industry, education providers, and local communities. This collaboration ensures that as the energy sector grows, so does a strong, skilled workforce for the future.

With major energy projects already underway and many more planned, North Essex is on track to become a hub for clean, green innovation. That means more jobs, more training opportunities, and more pathways into careers.

For young people exploring their options, or anyone looking for a fresh start, the energy sector offers a future full of purpose and potential. There has never been a better time to get involved.

Find out more on the [East of England Energy Group website](#).





People of offshore wind

Offshore wind is growing fast and there are many exciting job opportunities in clean energy. It takes many different skilled people to build and operate an offshore wind farm, such as communications, engineers, project managers, environmental experts and turbine technicians.



Here are four people working in different roles on projects in Essex. Hear about what they do and how they are contributing to creating a greener future.

Shruthi Vijayakumar

Year in Industry Intern - Civils and Structures Team, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm, RWE

"I'm doing a Year in Industry with RWE's Civils and Structures Team, where I'm helping with offshore wind projects like Five Estuaries and Scroby Sands. After studying Civil Engineering for three years at Imperial College London, I decided to pause my Masters in Engineering to gain hands-on experience — and I haven't looked back since.

"I started as a summer intern, working on engineering tasks, project management, and buying equipment. The fast-paced, collaborative environment made me want to extend my placement to a full year.

"In my role, I check the strength of wind turbine foundations and make cost plans for their lifetime. I'm

also working on improving designs using soil data and smart tools. At Scroby Sands, I gained valuable insight into the importance of maintenance in extending the life of wind farms.

"I've also built an in-house automated analysis tool, combining coding skills with engineering knowledge. This placement has helped me see how what I learned in class applies in real life. I've learned a lot about offshore wind, from design to operation.

"I really enjoy working with such a supportive team, and I would encourage other students to try renewable energy placements — even if it isn't your first choice — the experience you will get is invaluable."

Georgina Harbottle

Geotechnical Project Engineer (Offshore), North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, SSE

"As a child, I loved rocks. During school holidays, I often brought home buckets of pebbles from the beach near my grandparents' house. I was always interested in geology, but I didn't realise it could be a career. So, I started out studying law instead.

"It didn't take long to see that law wasn't for me. Luckily, I got the chance to switch courses and follow my passion. I earned a degree in Geology and Petroleum Geology.

"Since then, I've worked in many roles. I started onshore, supervising ground investigations and collecting samples. I moved into contaminated land work, then offshore, helping to install telecom cables, pipelines, and power cables under the sea.

"Now, I work at SSE, focusing on geoscience for offshore wind projects. I assess the seafloor's geology to help manage ground risks. This includes leading offshore surveys, analysing data, and working with engineers from many fields—like structural, mechanical, and electrical.

"What I enjoy most is using my geology skills every day while learning from others. Working with such a wide range of experts means I'm always picking up new ideas and sharing my own. The flexible, hybrid setup also helps me balance work and life.

"I think my seven-year-old self would be thrilled to know I still work with rocks!"

David Reid

Engineering Manager, North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, RWE

"I was always interested in maths and the practical side of physics and chemistry at school, so engineering felt like a natural choice.

"Engineering is a huge field that people often take for granted. It's behind the roads we drive on and the electricity that powers our homes.

"At university, I started with a general engineering course and later specialised in electrical engineering. I focused on renewable energy but also gained a broad understanding of other areas. This mix has helped me a lot in my career.

"Over the past 15 years, I've worked in electrical engineering across the oil, gas, and water industries before moving into renewables.

"Since joining RWE, my role has grown. I now lead the design of the North Falls Offshore Wind Farm. I handle everything from choosing turbines and planning the layout to designing the grid connection.

"One of the best parts of my job is solving problems. No two are ever the same. I enjoy balancing different factors to make the best decisions for the project."

Rosie Underhill

Offshore Wind Technician, Galloper Wind Farm, RWE

"I started my career in offshore wind with a hands-on apprenticeship at Galloper in 2019 which led me to a full-time job that I really enjoy.

"I chose not to go to university and by chance found the apprenticeship through a newspaper clipping. It was a great fit for my love of practical work and being outdoors.

"At college I studied Mechatronics — which combines mechanical and electrical engineering — and also trained on-site at Galloper. I worked alongside skilled technicians, joined safety sessions and team training, and slowly grew my skills and confidence.

"I'm also very proud to have previously won the Energy Skills Apprentice of the Year award and to have become a STEM ambassador, where I help inspire students to explore offshore wind jobs just like mine.

"Since finishing my apprenticeship in 2023, I've kept growing. I've worked offshore in Germany, lived on a Service Operations Vessel, and I'm now training to become an authorised technician and team leader.

"My story shows that apprenticeships are a great way into the offshore wind industry — no matter your age. They offer real experience, strong support, and a clear path to a successful career."



To find out more or get in touch with any of the projects visit the links below:

[Five Estuaries](#) | [Galloper Windfarm](#) | [Greater Gabbard](#) | [North Falls Offshore](#)



Longfield
Solar Farm

Building solar energy careers in Essex

EDF Renewables UK is one of the country's leading clean energy companies. They're working on exciting projects that use wind, solar, battery storage and other modern energy solutions, including electric vehicle charging infrastructure and green hydrogen.

One of their biggest upcoming projects is Longfield Solar Farm. This will be on a 452-hectare site in Braintree. Once complete, it will be able to generate enough electricity to power nearly 100,000 homes. This number will rise as technology improves.

This project is a great example of a growing sector in Essex that's helping to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and improve the way we power our lives.

Although some early works have started, the main construction phase is set to begin in 2026 and will last around two years. During this time, hundreds of people will be working directly on the project and in the supply chain. This means real chances to gain hands-on experience, learn new skills and be part of something that will benefit Essex communities for decades to come.

EDF Renewables is working closely with Essex County Council and local partners to make sure residents benefit from job and training opportunities. These will be defined by the contractors delivering the project.

EDF Renewables apprentices shared their views on working in clean energy. They discussed how their jobs help Britain achieve a net zero future.

Ben Ferguson: "Helping Britain to achieve Net Zero is a privilege and it makes me a proud employee at EDF Renewables. As an apprentice, I still have many things to learn about my job, but I know that helping Britain achieve Net Zero is something I would like to do for the rest of my career."

Craig Johnstone "It has many positives. Net Zero is making a cleaner future for myself and my family. And it's good to be training in an industry that is only going to grow, so I am more likely to be job secure than if I was working in another industry."



Working on a solar farm can involve many different skills - from general construction work to highly technical roles in electrical and mechanical engineering. Whether you're just starting out or already skilled in a trade, there will be a wide range of opportunities.

Jobs during construction could include:

- photovoltaic (solar panel) installers
- construction managers
- plant operatives
- electrical specialists

Once Longfield is up and running, around 10 permanent roles will be needed to keep the site operating smoothly.

EDF Renewables is also helping young people discover careers in renewable energy through their Destination Renewables programme at Colchester Institute and Chelmsford College. It's a two-year course for 16-18-year-olds that explores different pathways into this growing field.

To stay up to date with job opportunities and project news, visit the **Longfield Solar Farm website**.



Sustainable skills begin at Colchester Institute

By 2030, Essex is expected to have around 14,000 green jobs. These roles will span green energy, eco-friendly construction, recycling, engineering, manufacturing and smart technology.

At Colchester Institute, sustainability is built into every course. This helps students understand the environmental challenges shaping their industries and gives them the skills and values to lead positive change.

Departments across the Institute are integrating sustainable practices and energy-efficient technologies into their programmes. For example, the engineering department runs Destination Renewables. This pilot project brings in energy experts to deliver masterclasses. These sessions give students real insight into renewable technologies and the careers they can lead to.

Students also gain hands-on experience at the Institute's dedicated Net Zero Centre. Here, they work with solar panels, heat pumps and other systems that are helping to protect and enhance the Essex environment.

For professionals looking to upskill, the Institute offers short, affordable courses in green tech. These include practical training in heating systems and heat pumps, as well as courses on carbon awareness and a Net Zero certificate.

Working with employers to shape the future

Colchester Institute works closely with local employers like Hutchison Ports and Freeport East to ensure training meets real-world needs. Apprentices gain direct experience with green technologies, preparing them for in-demand jobs in a fast-growing sector.

A key initiative is the Freeport East Skills Escalator, which helps people gain qualifications while supporting local businesses.

Find the right training for you

Colchester Institute isn't just educating future professionals. They are equipping people with the skills to build a greener Essex.



A representative from the project said: "The project aims to raise aspirations, inspire, and upskill people living in the Freeport East area.

It focuses on key sectors such as logistics, modern construction, maritime, manufacturing, agri-tech, and green energy. Together, we can ensure local people are ready for the exciting job opportunities on their doorstep."

The Institute also partners with Latimer by Clarion Housing Group to explore modern, eco-friendly construction methods. This is a key part of the Colchester Tendring Garden Community.

Through collaborations with Longfield Solar and the National Energy Skills Consortium (NESC), Colchester Institute ensures its training aligns with local and regional needs. This helps address the growing skills shortage in renewable energy and construction.

Visit the Colchester Institute website to explore courses and opportunities.



EastWind: Powering Essex's renewable future

EastWind, the Offshore Wind Cluster in the Eastern Region, leads sustainable growth in Essex's clean energy sector. EastWind brings together industry leaders, local businesses and community members. They work together to grow the industry and create local opportunities.

Essex is becoming a key location for clean energy. EastWind is at the heart of this transformation.

Major offshore wind farms like Galloper and Greater Gabbard are already generating clean electricity off the Essex coast. Upcoming projects such as North Falls and Five Estuaries will add even more power and jobs to the region.

As the offshore wind sector expands, EastWind works to make sure Essex benefits. Through its skills, innovation and supply chain groups, it helps young people and businesses get involved.

The Skills Group links education with industry needs. It helps students build the technical and employability skills needed in offshore wind careers.

The Innovation Group encourages collaboration across industries. It helps Essex companies stay competitive and explore new technologies.

The Supply Chain Group supports local businesses, especially small and medium-sized ones. It ensures they become part of the offshore wind ecosystem.



From engineers and project managers to data analysts and logistics coordinators, offshore wind offers a wide range of careers. Whether you want to work outdoors on turbines or indoors planning the future of energy, there's a role for you.

EastWind is helping to power both Essex and the next generation. It's a great time to get involved.

To discover roles in offshore wind, [visit the EastWind website.](#)

What do you know about Essex?



The Essex population is projected to grow by over 56,000 over the next five years.



Essex is home to 1.8 million people, 60% of whom are aged 16 to 64.



There are 750,522 jobs in Essex, expected to rise to 772,889 by 2030.

For the first 3 months of 2025 there were **37,094 vacancies** from over **4,500 employers**.

76.6% Essex employment rate is 76.6%, the UK rate is 75.5%.

The **construction, transport, health and social work** and **wholesale/retail** sectors are set to **see the most growth**.

In terms of jobs, the **largest sectors of employment in Essex** are **wholesale and retail, health and social care, construction, education, transportation and insurance**.



There are over 80,000 businesses in Greater Essex – 99% of these are SMEs (small to medium sized enterprises), employing fewer than 250 people each.

Those offering the **highest wages** are: **aviation, transport and logistics, health and social care** and **engineering**. Collectively these sectors bring the **most GVA (Gross Value Added)** to Essex along with manufacturing.

Source: Official Labour Market Statistics (ONS) and Lightcast Analyst | Figures include Southend and Thurrock

Finding your way in Essex

Essex schools, colleges, universities and training providers

- 1

ACL Essex – Adult education and apprenticeships
- 2

Anglia Ruskin University
- 3

Chelmsford College
- 4

Colchester Institute – Colchester Campus
- 5

Colchester Institute – Braintree Campus
- 6

Colchester Institute – Harwich Energy Skills Centre
- 7

Harlow College
Harlow College - South East Institute of Technology (Harlow College campus)
- 8

New City College – Epping Forest Campus
- 9

South Essex College – Basildon Campus – Centre for Digital Technologies and Luckyn Lane Campus
- 10

South Essex College – High House Production Park – Purfleet
- 11

South Essex College – Southend Campus and Stephenson Road Campus
- 12

South Essex College – Thurrock Campus
- 13

Southend Adult Community College
- 14

Stansted Airport College (part of Harlow College)
- 15

The Sixth Form College Colchester
- 16

Thurrock Adult Community College
- 17

University of Essex – Colchester Campus
- 18

University of Essex – Southend Campus
- 19

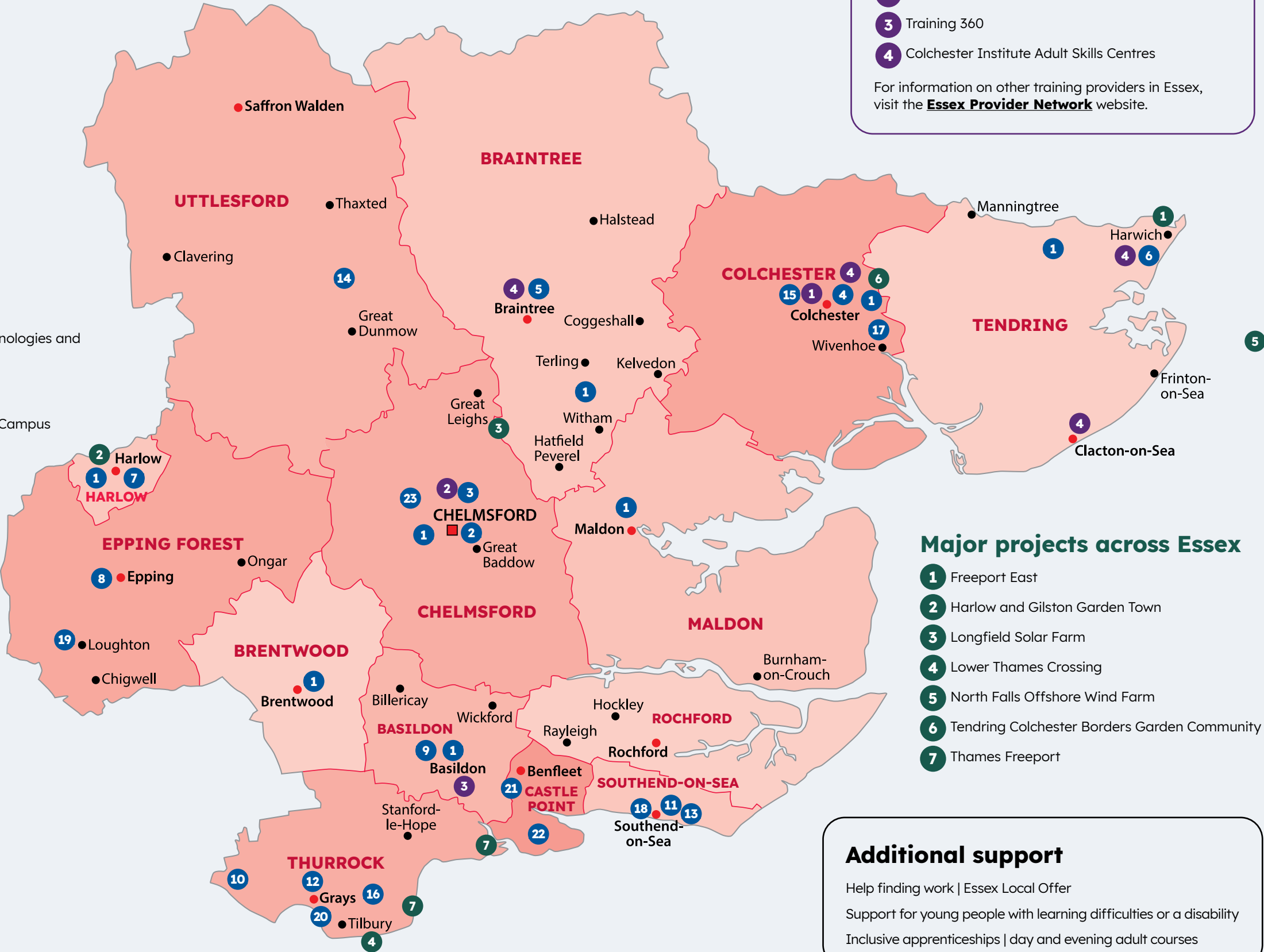
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USP College – Palmer’s Campus
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USP College – Seevic Campus
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XTEND Digital Campus
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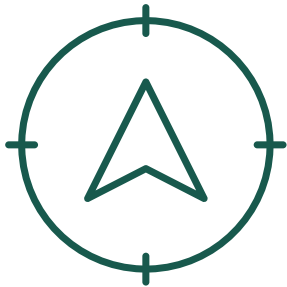
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For more information on further education in Essex, visit www.federationofessexcolleges.org



Regional focus North Essex



North Essex has a population of 341,003 and is a diverse mix of both urban and coastal towns.

It is home to the City of Colchester — Britain’s first Roman city — which is over 2,000 years old.

Colchester Zoo spans 60 acres (approximately 24 hectares) of beautiful parkland and lakes and it is home to over 150 species of animals.

Colchester has also been an important military base since the Roman era, with Colchester Garrison currently housing the 16th Air Assault Brigade.

The Tendring District is located in the northeastern corner of Essex and includes coastal towns like Harwich, Clacton-on-Sea, Frinton-on-Sea, and Walton-on-the-Naze.

Tendring is also home to Harwich International Port, which is renowned for its versatility in handling both freight and passenger traffic.

The port’s strategic location and excellent connectivity make it a vital hub for trade and travel in the UK.

DID YOU KNOW?

The biggest industries in **North Essex** are **hospital activities, retail** and **primary education**.



Between January 2024 to January 2025, North Essex has seen **30,852 vacancies** posted by **3,977 employers**.



North Essex has a population of **341,003**, of which **203,048** are working age.

The **Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community** will include up to **9,000 new homes**.

It will also feature new schools, healthcare facilities, commercial spaces, and significant green spaces to promote sustainability and quality of life.

Approximately **24,000 people** commute to **Colchester** for work from neighbouring towns.



University of Essex’s Colchester campus is home to more than **13,000 students** from over 130 countries, making it one of the UK’s most international campuses.



ARMY
BE THE BEST

Operating from Colchester, across the globe: working in 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron

Based at Merville Barracks in Colchester, 216 (Para) Signal Squadron is part of the Royal Corps of Signals. This unit provides high-level communication support to **16 Air Assault Brigade Combat Team** (16 AA BCT).



Scan the QR
code to learn
more about the
Royal Signals



This is a fast-deploying, elite force. This unit is held at very high readiness to deploy worldwide. It is renowned for innovation and success on operations around the world.

What they do

The Squadron works with specialist teams and enables command and control across the full spectrum of conflict. This includes the Pathfinders, Air Manoeuvre Battle Group, and international partners, often including parachute jumps.

Career opportunities

Network Engineers: set up and manage complex and secure communication systems.

Information Services Engineers: manage the setup and upkeep of various communication systems. This includes custom systems for the military and standard equipment from commercial suppliers.

Power Engineers: manage the deployment, setting up, and maintenance of power distribution systems.

Supply Chain Operatives: logistics experts who make sure equipment is ready when and where it's needed.

Officers: lead and manage soldiers, ensuring effective command and leadership.

All soldiers in the Royal Signals begin with an apprenticeship in 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron. Depending on the role, you can achieve a Level 2, Level 3, or Level 4 qualification.

Key facts

- The only unit in the **Royal Corps of Signals** to undertake annual overseas jungle warfare training.
- There is strong camaraderie and a track record of operating in challenging conditions.
- There are vast opportunities for adventure training, parachute qualification, and overseas deployments.
- You can access growth in technical skills through the Capability Development Team.
- 216 (Para) Signal Squadron seeks individuals with potential. They provide all training needed to build successful people and teams. As a Network Engineer or a para-signaller, you play a key role.
- You are the essential link for successful airborne communications.



University of Essex

Innovating for the future: Daniel's robotics journey at the University of Essex

Daniel, a Robotics Research Scientist at the University of Essex, shares his journey from a curiosity about technology to developing robots aimed at reducing food waste. He discusses his research and offers advice for those aspiring to start careers in clean energy, construction, and logistics.

I've always been curious about how things work. As a kid, I loved taking things apart to figure them out. Over time that curiosity evolved into a passion for robotics and computer science.

The spark was the realisation that tools can create impressive items and solve real-world problems.

As I grew older, I also developed a strong interest in aerospace and space exploration. Engineering, computer science, and the exploration of the unknown are the true sources of my motivation.

My work is all about using technology to create a positive impact in the world.

I'm creating a strawberry-picking robot for the agrifood sector. It uses computer vision and robotics. This will help cut down on food waste and improve harvest efficiency.

That means fewer resources wasted, more precise farming, and a smaller environmental footprint.

Challenges like climate change, food security, zero hunger, and reaching net zero emissions are some of the most urgent issues of our time.

Technology, especially in robotics and computer science, plays a key role in tackling them.

Sustainability and robotics have a strong connection. Both are essential if we want to move humankind forward while protecting the planet we call home.

I chose the University of Essex because of its supportive environment.

The facilities are fantastic, but the culture was the most remarkable aspect.

The University of Essex encourages experimentation, collaboration, and thinking beyond traditional boundaries.

I love creating new things and making science easy to understand. I need a place to explore both of these interests.

I've worked with the first vertical growing system for strawberries in Tiptree. I've also been at the UK's only deep-water pool-based lettuce farm in Thorrington. These experiences have taught me how robotics can shape the future of sustainable farming.

Our team gained national recognition by winning Best Demonstrator at the 2025 UKRI AI & Robotics Research Awards. This event took place at the Royal Society in London. This moment highlighted the real-world impact and innovation behind our work, and it is one that will remain etched in my memory.

If anyone wants to pursue a career in clean energy, construction, and logistics, I would suggest that they start by staying curious. Build, explore, fail—the only limit is your imagination.

Whether it's learning to code, experimenting with electronics, or 3D printing mechanisms, the key is to begin.

Keep strong grades in maths and science, and also spend time on what inspires you.

I also recommend documenting your journey—through videos, blogs, or posts. You never know what doors that might open.

And most of all, stay passionate about building things. It doesn't matter if they don't work at all—what matters are the lessons you take from everything you create.

Build, learn, share, and repeat.

To find out what courses and opportunities are on offer visit the University of Essex [website](https://www.essex.ac.uk)

Young people and volunteering: helping others while helping yourself

Community Voluntary Services Tendring (CVST) aims to help young people aged 16 to 18 (or up to the age of 21 with additional needs) find volunteering opportunities.



In the past, volunteering was simply about helping local communities or supporting those in need.

The world might have changed a lot in the past few decades, but the need for volunteers is as strong as ever.

And when it comes to getting a job or into university, skills and experience from volunteering can be vital.

Three years ago, CVST launched the Youth Inspired Tendring youth volunteering project. It has helped individuals find volunteering opportunities at charities and community organisations.

Lisa Andrews, deputy chief officer at CVST, said: "Those wanting to volunteer decide for themselves what sort of projects they want to take part in and involve themselves in the planning of them as well."

"This helps them develop leadership skills, teamwork, and confidence."

The Youth Inspired Tendring group won a Tendring Youth Award for their work and received a nomination for a Can Do Health and Care award.

Volunteering is a great way to step into the community and gather the tools and skills to navigate the world of work or further education.

The top 10 benefits of volunteering

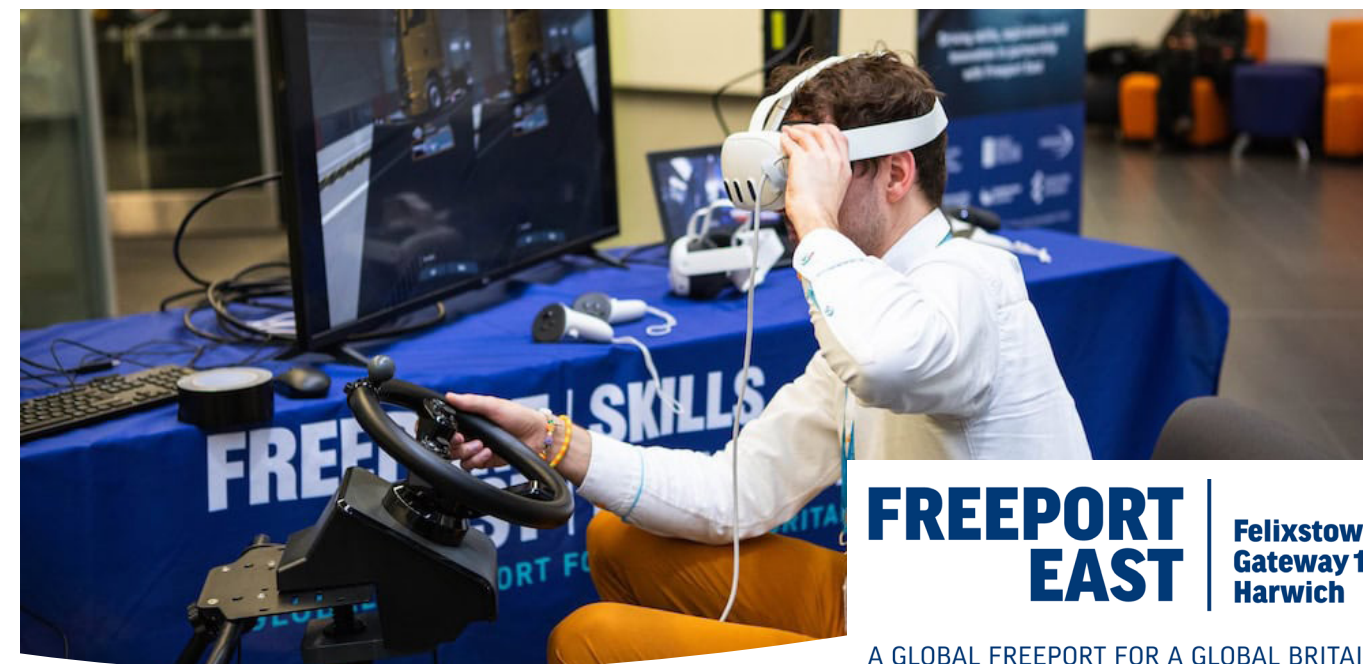
- Learn new skills and gain knowledge
- Gain valuable work experience
- Develop communication skills
- Increase physical activity
- Improve mental health and wellbeing
- Give back to your community
- Boost your confidence
- Make new friends
- Feel a sense of connection to others in the community
- Help make your community a better place to live

Community Voluntary Services Tendring enables young people aged 16 plus to take up volunteer opportunities in various other charities and organisations across the district.

This summer CVST is running a youth volunteering project for ages 16 to 21 at it's Kennedy Way Community Garden to design and build a living wall using recycled materials.

Discover volunteering opportunities near you on the Volunteer Essex [website](#).

Contact lynnreed-golden@cvstendring.org.uk or call **01255 254692** to get involved.



Freeport East – the gateway to your new career

Freeport East is an Industrial Strategy Zone on England's east coast. This zone covers over a thousand square kilometres. It stretches from Felixstowe and Harwich down through Clacton and Jaywick, out around Colchester and Sudbury, Stowmarket and Woodbridge.

This zone includes two major ports - the Port of Felixstowe, Britain's busiest port for containers, and Harwich International Port - and Gateway 14, the region's largest business, innovation, and logistics park.

Freeport East offers tax and customs benefits to attract businesses. This aims to boost trade and create jobs. The key focus is on green energy projects like clean maritime fuel and offshore wind power.

To make sure local people can benefit from these exciting developments, education providers near Freeport East are getting ready to offer training in key skills for the area. This is known as the Freeport East Skills Escalator Project. Suffolk New College is leading this effort.

The project prepares people, especially young learners, for careers in a range of industries. This includes logistics, clean energy, manufacturing, construction, food production, agri-tech, and maritime.

A key part of the project is a series of roadshows across the Freeport East area. These events connect employers with students, jobseekers, and local communities. This helps people understand the vast opportunities ahead.

There's also a unique chance to get involved as an Innovation Skills spokesperson. These local innovators will inspire others by sharing their career journeys and experiences.

Involvement as an Innovation Skills Champions might include:

- speaking at a roadshow
- talking to learners at partner organisations
- taking part in a video interview
- addressing the end-of-project conference

If you're interested in becoming a Innovation Skills Champions, email: lesleyrayner@suffolk.ac.uk

Read more about the Freeport East Skills Escalator Project at: www.icanbea.org.uk/app/explore/organisations/freeport-east-1139/

Businesses keen to take part can contact: charlotterossiter@suffolk.ac.uk



Building future careers through enterprise

In a fast-changing job market, one national charity is helping young people build the skills and confidence they need to thrive.

Young Enterprise works to cut youth unemployment. They achieve this by offering hands-on employability and enterprise programmes.

The charity aims to give the next generation vital life skills. To do this, it teams up with young people, educators, parents, volunteers, and employers. Their focus? Building financial literacy, developing entrepreneurial thinking, and supporting real-world learning.

At the heart of Young Enterprise's work is the belief that enterprise and financial education can change lives. Their programmes help students build strong money habits. They learn to spend wisely, manage financial risks, and think like entrepreneurs. These are key qualities for life and work.

Young Enterprise champions applied learning. This is a hands-on approach that connects classroom knowledge to real-world experiences. This method helps students think critically, work in teams and communicate effectively. They can then apply what they learn to solve real problems.



Young Enterprise

Member of JA Worldwide

Two excellent examples of this approach are the Company Programme and the Start-Up Programme. Both offer young people the chance to take control of their learning and gain practical experience.

Both programmes help bridge the daunting gap between education and employment. They help young people build confidence and take meaningful steps toward their future careers.



The Start-Up Programme: for students aged 18 and older in Further and Higher Education

For older students, the Start-Up Programme offers a chance to test business ideas while gaining workplace skills. It can run for 12 weeks or a full academic year, adaptable to course schedules. It helps learners gain job skills and test their business ideas by starting a small business as they study.



Start-Up caters to a wide range of subjects, from Sports Science and Psychology to Fashion Studies and Business Management. It's designed to enrich the curriculum and give students real-world experience that enhances their studies.

Eleanor Jones, a Business Management student at the University of Chester, shared how Start-Up made a difference:

"When I joined Start Up, I knew this practical work would teach me skills beyond my textbooks. I realised that market research, planning, team dynamics, and problem-solving would give me real-world skills. These skills are something no classroom can match. Young Enterprise helped me test my resilience. I learned to bounce back from setbacks and keep moving forward, even with obstacles in my way. The programme has taught me skills and views that will shape my future, whether in entrepreneurship or elsewhere."

The Company Programme: for 13 to 19-year-olds

This programme gives young people the opportunity to launch and run a real business. This takes place over an academic year. Students take on different roles in marketing, sales, finance, and product development. A volunteer mentor is on hand to support them. This experience gives them a taste of what it's like to work in and run a business.



Donna Neely-Hayes, Head Teacher at Denbigh High School, has seen the impact first-hand:

"The progress of our students who undertook the Company Programme exceeded all expectations. It has been a joy to see how a group of pupils, who might have lost interest in school, found new ways to be creative and grow. They did this through the practical learning offered by the Programme. Attendance has improved, and morale and engagement in the classroom are higher."

To find out more about the full range of Young Enterprise programmes, email your regional manager:

Tara.Bell@y-e.org.uk

Some programmes may be free in your area!

Lower Thames Crossing: paving the way for careers and skills development

The Lower Thames Crossing is more than an infrastructure project. It's a chance for people across Essex and Kent to start exciting careers, learn new skills, and help build the UK's greenest road.

In March, the authorities approved plans for a new road. This road will connect Essex, Havering, Thurrock, and Kent through the longest road tunnel in the UK. The team is now working with the government to secure funding, which will decide when work starts and the road opens.

A range of roles on your doorstep

The project will create thousands of jobs during its six-year construction phase. Roles will be needed for signallers, labourers, concreters, and vehicle drivers. You will also find roles for plant operators, project managers, and ground workers.

Whether you're starting your career or changing paths, the Lower Thames Crossing offers something for everyone.

Local people first

At least 45% of the people hired will live within 20 miles of the scheme. This local-first approach will boost the economy, support communities, and help more people access long-term careers.

By hiring local people, the project also helps raise skills in the region. It will also improve training standards for building world-leading low-carbon infrastructure.

There will also be roles for:

- traffic marshals
- supervisors
- civil engineers
- designers
- cleaners
- caterers
- steel fixers
- carpenters
- health, safety, and environment officers



New Skills Hubs are coming

The Lower Thames Crossing is also setting up Skills Hubs in the Southeast. These training centres will give people the experience and support needed for jobs in construction and green energy.

Last year's pilot Skills Hub saw over 20 people take part. This included six men and women on day release from prison. They trained as plant operators and worked alongside staff learning to use electric machinery.

Now, two new Skills Hubs are on the way. One will be based in Thurrock, Essex and the other in Gravesham, Kent. These hubs will work with local colleges, the Construction Industry Training Board, and employers.

They'll fill training gaps and focus on the skills most needed for the future. That includes low-carbon building, using modern equipment, and site safety.

Be part of the UK's greenest road

This will be the greenest road ever built in the UK. The team is finding ways to cut carbon and protect nature.

They're planning to:

- use electric and hydrogen-powered machines
- reduce carbon emissions during construction
- create bigger, better, and more connected habitats for wildlife

This will set a new standard for how roads are built in the UK.

Opening doors for everyone

The Lower Thames Crossing team wants the workforce to reflect the communities it serves. That means breaking down barriers and challenging stereotypes.

The project is focused on helping people who may not see construction as a path for them. This includes:

- people out of work
- prison leavers
- young people not in education or training
- women returning to work
- military veterans
- adult learners
- homeless individuals or those at risk
- people with special educational needs or disabilities

The team is working to make the industry more diverse, welcoming, and inclusive.

Get involved

The Lower Thames Crossing isn't just a transport project. It's a career launchpad, a training hub, and a big step toward a greener future.

As the project moves forward, it will offer thousands of training and job opportunities to take advantage of.

If you want to work in construction, design, or logistics, there will be many chances to get involved. You can start a new career or learn skills that will last a lifetime.

Keep an eye out for future job opportunities on the Lower Thames Crossing [website](#) and following the project's social media channels.

- @LowerThames @LowerThames
 @LowerThames LowerThamesCrossing
 [lowerthamescrossing](#)



Inclusive employment opens up a wealth of opportunities

Are you a person with a learning disability or autism?

Do you have potential but need help finding paid and meaningful work? ECL's award-winning Inclusive Employment service is funded by Essex County Council. It has already supported over 540 people with learning disabilities and/or autism find paid jobs. Could you be next?

Personal support to help you succeed

ECL's friendly inclusive employment team is here for you. They'll work with you one-on-one to understand your skills, interests, and goals, then help match you with a job that's right for you.

Support includes:

- creating or updating your CV
- filling out job applications
- interview practice
- work trials to try a job before committing
- on-the-job coaching for you and your employer

You'll be supported for as long as you need it!



Watch how it works:

Scan the QR codes to watch videos about:

The East of England Co-op



Perryfields School



Work with inclusive employers

ECL collaborates with inclusive employers across Essex, such as:

- The East of England Co-op
- FedEx
- Essex County Cricket Club
- MAG (London Stansted Airport site)
- Princess Alexandra Hospital
- East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

ECL also partners with independent businesses committed to recruiting diverse talent.

Michael

Michael, 22, has a learning disability and ADHD. He loves horror films, music, and cricket, and sought financial independence. After a seasonal job at Essex County Cricket Ground, he wanted something stable.



With ECL's support, he applied for 95 jobs before securing a role at The Cornish Bakery in Chelmsford. Initially nervous due to a lack of catering experience, he received on-the-job support and training from an ECL Job Coach and grew more confident. ECL also helped him join the Independence Project and move into supported living.

Michael enjoys his routine, friendships, and new experiences, including concerts and planning his first holiday abroad. "I love my job. I enjoy having things to do, and it's busy here, which I really like. I work with really friendly, kind, and understanding people who are always there for me if I need anything. Now that I work, I can do new things like go to concerts and the cinema and buy new clothes and shoes. I'm even going on my first holiday abroad with The Independence Project, which I am really excited about."

Want to know more?

Visit the website: ecl.org

Call: 03330 135 438

Email: Inclusive.Employment@essexcares.org

Get support into work from the Essex Library Service

- Struggling to find a job?
- Ready for a career change but unsure where to start?
- Need help honing your interview skills?
- Worried about gaps in your CV?
- Unsure what skills you have to offer?

If any of this sounds familiar, the Chelmsford Central Library Work Club is here to support you.

Every Thursday morning between 9.15am and 12.00pm, friendly staff and volunteers offer free, one-to-one appointments to help you take the next step in your job search.

You'll meet with Richard, Alison, or Andrew — an experienced team who truly care about helping people into work. Whether you're looking for your first job, or are returning to work after time away, they're ready to listen and help.

Support includes:

- writing or updating your CV and cover letters
- finding jobs online
- practising for interviews
- exploring training, volunteering, or education options to build your skills

What people are saying:

Mark: "When I left school, I got a job in construction through word of mouth. Thirty-seven years later I was made redundant. I had no idea how to get a new job. In three visits to the Work Club, I wrote my CV and applied for jobs online. Now I'm very happy to be working again."

Elizabeth: "This service is beneficial in my job search... Richard has been very helpful with my CV, which I am still tweaking with his ongoing support."



Ready to get started?

To book an appointment: email: chelmsford.library@essex.gov.uk with your name and preferred time or visit the Hello Desk at Chelmsford Central Library to sign up in person

More than just a Work Club

Chelmsford Library Work Club also works with local partners to run employability events throughout the year.

Find out what's coming up:
<https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/events>

Need help with IT skills too?

If you're new to using computers, the library also offers a free six-week course called Learn My Way to help build your confidence with digital skills for work.

To join, email chelmsford.library@essex.gov.uk or speak to a member of staff in the library.



Beyond 9-5: exploring freelance, remote and hybrid careers

In today's world of work, the traditional 9-5 job is no longer the only option. Whether you're a school leaver, a recent graduate, or exploring a career change, flexible roles such as freelance, remote and hybrid careers are more accessible than ever.

Can you freelance without experience?

Yes, you absolutely can. Many freelancers begin by offering services in areas they're passionate about or skilled in, like graphic design, writing, admin or social media. You can start small, build a portfolio through voluntary work, personal projects or by helping friends and family. Platforms like Fiverr or PeoplePerHour are ideal for beginners. With consistency and professionalism, even a few early projects can turn into a strong foundation.

From side hustle to career

What begins as a side hustle, perhaps working evenings or weekends, can become a full-time freelance career. The key is to build a steady stream of clients, improve your skillset, and price your work appropriately. Managing your time and tracking your earnings is crucial. As your confidence and client base grow, you'll be able to transition from occasional gigs to full-time freelance success.

Hybrid work: the best of both worlds or a compromise?

Hybrid working, splitting your time between the office and home, is quickly becoming the new normal. Many companies now support this model to give employees greater flexibility. For example, hybrid working allows people to attend meetings in person but also manage school runs, personal errands or avoid long commutes. It offers a work-life balance that suits many, but it does rely on clear communication and good time management.

How to build a remote-friendly CV (even with no experience)

When applying for remote roles, your CV should highlight digital communication, time management and self-motivation. If you lack direct experience, focus on transferable skills from school, volunteering or hobbies. Include examples of how you've managed tasks independently or used tools like Google Drive, Zoom or Canva. Make your CV clean, clear, and tailored to remote job listings.

Freelance, remote, and hybrid careers are changing the way we work. With the right mindset, a willingness to learn, and a well-crafted remote-friendly CV, anyone can explore opportunities beyond the traditional 9-5. Whether you're starting out or shifting direction, now is the time to embrace flexibility in your career.

Top skills to stand out – what recruiters want

Whether you're a school leaver, apprentice, or early career seeker, understanding the skills recruiters are looking for in 2025 is key to standing out in a competitive job market. You might think you need loads of experience to get hired, but the reality is that many employers value skills and attitude just as much as qualifications. In fact, showcasing the right mix of skills on your CV or during an interview could be the very thing that lands you the job.

Top 10 skills recruiters are looking for in 2025

As the world of work continues to evolve, so do the skills employers value. In 2025, recruiters are paying attention to a balance of technical ability and essential soft skills.

Here are the top 10 skills you should aim to develop and showcase:

- 1. Communication** – Whether written or verbal, clear communication is essential in almost every job.
- 2. Teamwork** – Employers want people who can collaborate well with others, even in remote settings.
- 3. Adaptability** – The ability to cope with change and learn quickly is more important than ever.
- 4. Digital Literacy** – Comfort with tools like Microsoft Office, Google Workspace, and video conferencing platforms is now a basic expectation.
- 5. Problem-Solving** – Being able to approach challenges calmly and creatively is highly valued.
- 6. Time Management** – Knowing how to prioritise tasks and meet deadlines shows maturity and responsibility.
- 7. Emotional Intelligence** – Understanding your emotions and those of others can improve teamwork and leadership.
- 8. Initiative** – Recruiters admire candidates who show enthusiasm and take ownership of their tasks.
- 9. Customer Awareness** – Understanding the needs of customers or service users is key across many industries.
- 10. Willingness to Learn** – A growth mindset is often more important than what you already know.

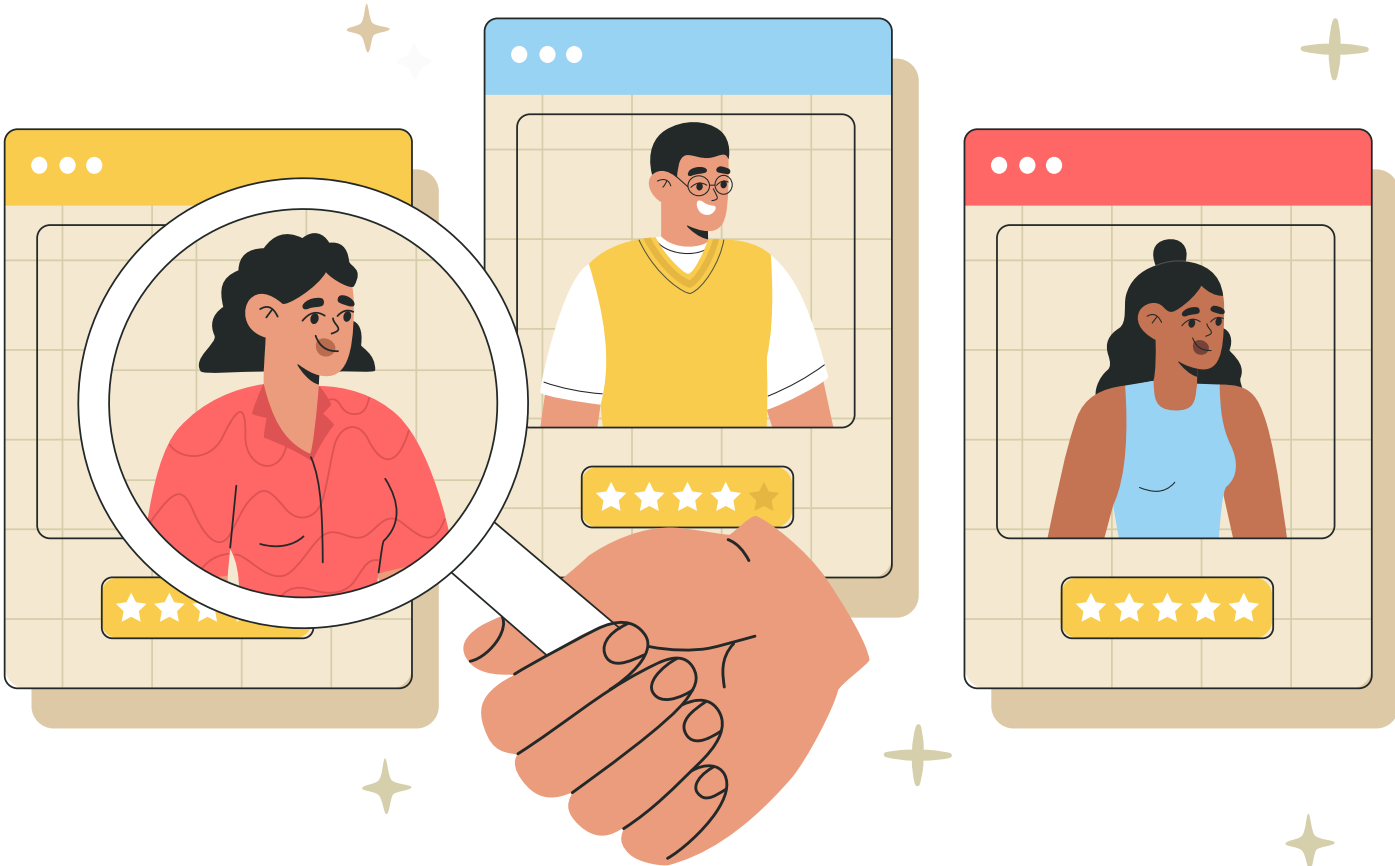


Top transferable skills everyone should showcase

Transferable skills are abilities you can apply in different roles or industries. Even if you've never had a job, you've likely gained these through school, volunteering, extracurricular activities or life experience.

- Leadership** – Have you captained a sports team or led a group project? That counts.
- Organisation** – Planning a school event or managing homework deadlines shows strong organisation.
- Creativity** – Problem-solving in unique ways, or producing original content can make you stand out.
- Resilience** – Handling pressure during exams or bouncing back from setbacks are great examples.
- Collaboration** – Working well in group settings, whether in class or clubs, shows you're a team player.

Make sure you highlight these clearly on your CV, especially if you're applying for apprenticeships or entry-level roles.



Don't have experience? These skills still impress recruiters

If you're just starting out, you may feel like your lack of work experience is a disadvantage. The good news? Many companies are open to hiring young people and training them on the job – as long as you show the right attitude and foundational skills.

Here are a few tips to showcase your potential:

- Use examples from everyday life** – Have you helped a family member with a project or taken on a role of responsibility at school? Share it.
- Show motivation and reliability** – Turning up on time, being willing to learn, and showing genuine interest go a long way.
- Be honest, but confident** – It's fine to say you don't have experience, but follow it up with the skills you do have and how quickly you're willing to learn.

Employers often say they "hire for attitude, train for skill." Make that work in your favour.

Top CV skills for apprenticeship applications

When applying for apprenticeships, your CV is your first impression. While you may not have direct job experience, the skills you list can show that you're the right candidate for the opportunity.

Here are some skills to include:

- Attention to detail** – Especially important in technical or hands-on apprenticeships like engineering or construction.
- Basic IT skills** – Even in trades, digital systems are often used for tracking work or communication.
- Listening skills** – A big part of learning on the job is paying attention and asking good questions.
- Teamwork and communication** – Employers want to know you'll fit in with the team and communicate clearly.
- Positive attitude** – Showing that you're keen and eager to learn is often more important than experience.

Customise your CV for each role, using keywords from the apprenticeship advert, and always include examples that prove your skills.

In 2025, standing out to recruiters is about more than just what's written on your CV. It's about how well you communicate your strengths, whether you've got experience or not. By developing and showcasing in-demand, transferable skills, you'll boost your chances of landing that job or apprenticeship, and begin your career with confidence.

We want to hear from you!

Take our quick survey to let us know what you liked in this issue and what you'd like to see in future editions.



Scan me!

Or email us at

essex.careers.magazine@essex.gov.uk