CAREERS IN:

CONSTRUCTION

A GUIDE FOR CAREER ADVISERS

2027

CONSTRUCTION

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CAREERS IN CONSTRUCTION

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

The construction industry spans the entire lifecycle of the built environment, from site preparation and new build projects to repair, maintenance, refurbishment, and retrofit. In 2026, the sector faces mounting pressure due to persistent and worsening skills shortages. There aren't enough new people entering construction, while a growing number of experienced workers are leaving the industry.

Demand for construction skills is rising faster than supply, leaving the industry increasingly stretched in its ability to deliver essential housing, infrastructure, and retrofit programmes. The construction workforce is projected to reach approximately 2.75 million by 2029 and the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) estimates that an additional 48,000 workers are needed each year to meet current demand. When government housing and retrofit ambitions are included, the annual skills gap could increase significantly, reaching as many as 160,000 workers each year.

Government commitments are adding further pressure to the system. These include building 1.5 million new homes during the current Parliament, retrofitting 27 to 29 million homes to meet the 2050 net zero target, upgrading 5 million homes over five years, and delivering major infrastructure projects such as clean power networks, HS2, rail upgrades, and flood defences. Alongside this, the Warm Homes Plan aims to upgrade up to 5 million homes by 2030, creating an estimated 180,000 jobs in energy efficiency and clean heating, including large-scale solar and heat pump installations. Additional growth is expected through the creation of 35,000 jobs in the solar sector and 45,000 jobs in onshore wind by 2030.

Addressing these challenges will require better alignment between training and real-world jobs, increased work experience opportunities, and stronger efforts to attract people from a wider range of backgrounds to ensure the industry has the skilled workforce it needs for the future.

INTRODUCING JOBS IN CONSTRUCTION

GROWING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

On the plus side these challenges and government commitments present huge opportunities for new entrants and career changers. Construction careers are changing due to pressures from net-zero targets, digital transformation, housing demand and skills shortages. Careers in construction are becoming more diversified spanning technology, sustainability, manufacturing, and data, offering career paths for a wide range of abilities and backgrounds into employment, self-employment and freelance work.

The greatest demand for skills are within private housing, infrastructure projects (e.g. HS2, rail network improvement, warmer homes plan, onshore wind strategy, UK solar road map), and repair and maintenance.

Digital & Data-Driven Construction Jobs

Construction is becoming a data-led industry, combining engineering with software, automation and analytics.

- Digital Construction Manager
- Construction Data Analyst, A BIM (Building Information Modelling) Technician

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and offsite roles

- Off site manufacturing technician
- Timber frame designer/engineer

Green and Net Zero Construction roles – retrofit and net zero related roles

The UK's legal commitment to net zero by 2050, plus large retrofit programmes, is driving huge demand for sustainability-focused roles.

- Retrofit Coordinator / Retrofit Assessor – managing energy upgrades in existing homes
- Heat Pump Engineer / Low-Carbon Heating Installer
- Solar PV Installer & Battery Storage Technician
- Sustainability Consultant – advising on carbon, materials and compliance
- Energy Modeller (SAP, SBEM, IES) – assessing building performance

JOB ROLES IN CONSTRUCTION

Advanced Skilled Trades

Traditional trades remain vital, but with higher technical and digital skill requirements.

- Electricians (EV charging, smart systems)
- Plumbers (heat pumps, hydrogen-ready systems)
- Carpenters (MMC and timber construction)
- Groundworkers (infrastructure and green energy projects)
- Steel erectors and metal workers

10 CONSTRUCTION HOT JOBS

1. ***Building Surveyor***
2. ***Architect***
3. ***Building Services Engineer***
4. ***Civil Engineer***
5. ***Environmental Consultant***
6. ***Planning and Development Surveyor***
7. ***Town Planner***
8. ***Building Control Officer***
9. ***Domestic Energy Assessor***
10. ***Electrical Engineering Technician***

Construction Technology & Automation Roles

- Robotics & Automation Technician
- Site Technology Coordinator
- Drone surveyor

Leadership and professional roles with evolving areas of expertise

- Project Managers with digital & carbon expertise
- Quantity Surveyors skilled in whole-life carbon costing
- Architects
- Health, Safety & Wellbeing Leads using data analytics
- Construction Trainers & Skills Coaches (critical due to retirements)

SKILLS NEEDED FOR CONSTRUCTION

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

In addition to technical skills specific to certain jobs, there are eight essential skills that are needed in ANY job, including in the construction sector:

- **Communication skills** - Listening and Speaking to share ideas and learn from others
- **Creative Problem-Solving skills** - Problem Solving and Creativity to find solutions to problems and use imagination to generate and test new ideas
- **Self-management skills** - Adapting and Planning to upskill and learn, to overcome challenges and plan ahead to make the most of emerging opportunities.
- **Collaboration skills** – Teamwork and Leadership to collaborate, share ideas and work effectively with others to achieve a shared goal.

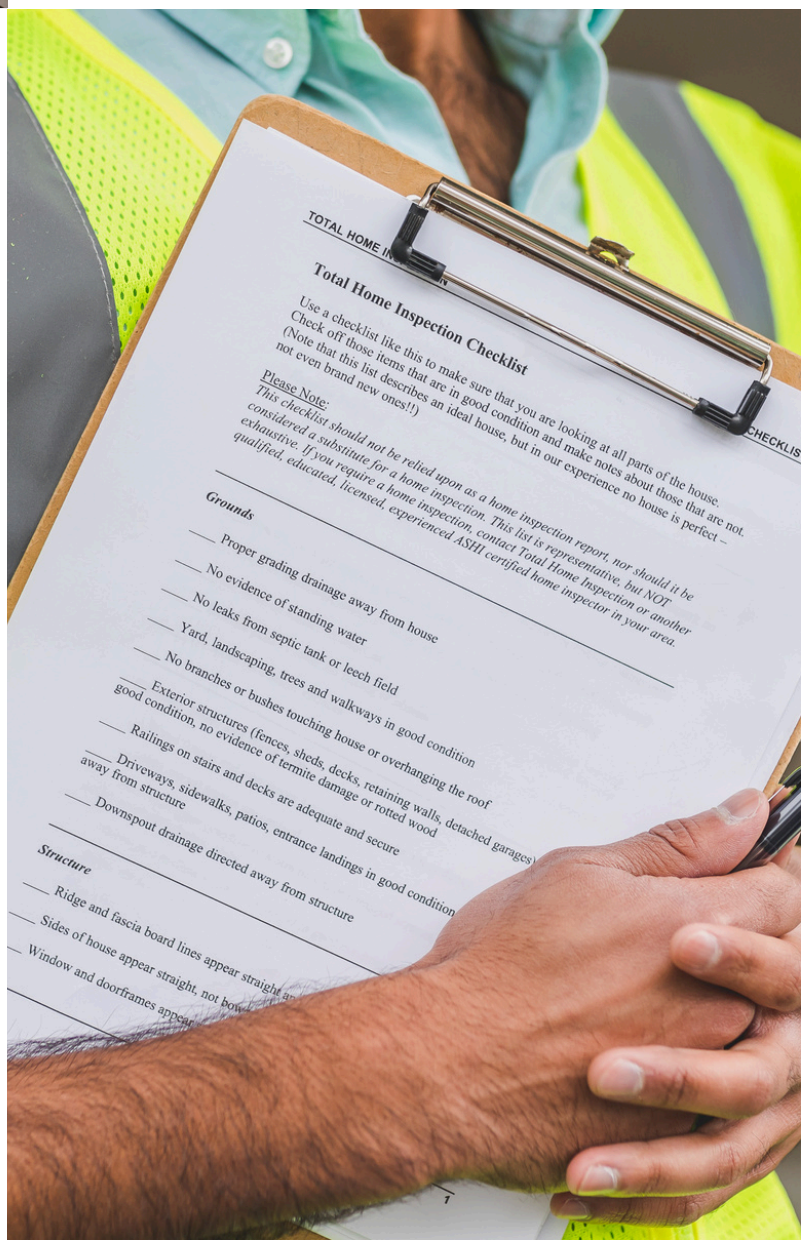
TECHNICAL SKILLS

The CITB summarises that we need a workforce that is more competent, adaptable, digitally literate, and capable of delivering high-quality work efficiently.

• Digital literacy skills for all roles (plus role specific e.g. BIM, data, software tools)
• Sustainability & net zero awareness – increasing need for green skills, e.g. energy efficiency, sustainable materials
• Systems thinking & collaboration
• Health, safety and regulatory competence
• Practical & Technical Construction Skills, role specific e.g. trade skills, operating tools and machinery, interpreting technical drawings.

As well as the skills above employers increasingly require recognised certifications:

• CSCS Card (ID card to show a worker has the right training, qualifications, and health & safety knowledge for their role on a construction site)
• SMSTS (Site Management Safety Training Scheme)
• First Aid Certification
• NEBOSH (Health & Safety)
• Digital construction training (BIM certification).



POST 16 PATHWAYS

ACADEMIC ROUTE

A Level subjects students may choose that relate to careers in Construction include:

- Maths
- Physics
- Design and Technology
- Computing
- Geogrpahy
- Business studies
- Art and Design
- Economics

VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL ROUTE

Students can study introductory courses in construction skills at entry level and level 1 and at level 2 they can take a diploma in specific trades. Level 3 diplomas, NVQs or T-levels are offered at a local college. However, do check with local education providers as not all are offering every construction T-level.

T Levels

- Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction
- Building Services Engineering for Construction
- Onsite Construction
- Maintenance, Installation and Repair for Engineering and Manufacturing
- Engineering, Manufacturing, Processing and Control

Search for your nearest T Level offer here.

APPRENTICESHIP ROUTE

Intermediate/advanced apprenticeships include:

- Construction Plant Operative
- Plasterer
- Building services engineering installer
- Carpentry and joinery
- Plumbing and domestic heating technician
- Civil engineering technician
- Energy Manager

Search for current live apprenticeship vacancies

POST 18 PATHWAYS

ACADEMIC ROUTE

For some construction careers it is necessary to have an accredited degree or postgraduate degree:

- Architecture
- Building and Construction Management
- Civil engineering
- Surveying
- Town planning

There's a huge choice of other relevant degree and foundation degree subjects including:

- Construction management
- Building Services Engineering
- Energy Management
- Sustainable Built Environments

Search for university courses.

VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL ROUTE

Students may choose to go to a local college or university centre to continue their studies through a Higher Technical Qualification or HNC/D or Foundation Degree in one of the following subjects:

- Construction Management
- Civil Engineering
- Building Services Engineering
- Architectural Technology
- Site Engineering

Search local providers to view their HTQ offer

APPRENTICESHIP ROUTE

Students can take a higher apprenticeship at level 4/5 and many employers offer degree apprenticeships where the young person can achieve a full honours/masters degree at Level 6 and 7:

- Construction site supervisor
- Construction design and build technician
- Civil engineering senior technician
- Construction Quantity Surveyor
- Facilities Management
- Building services engineering site management

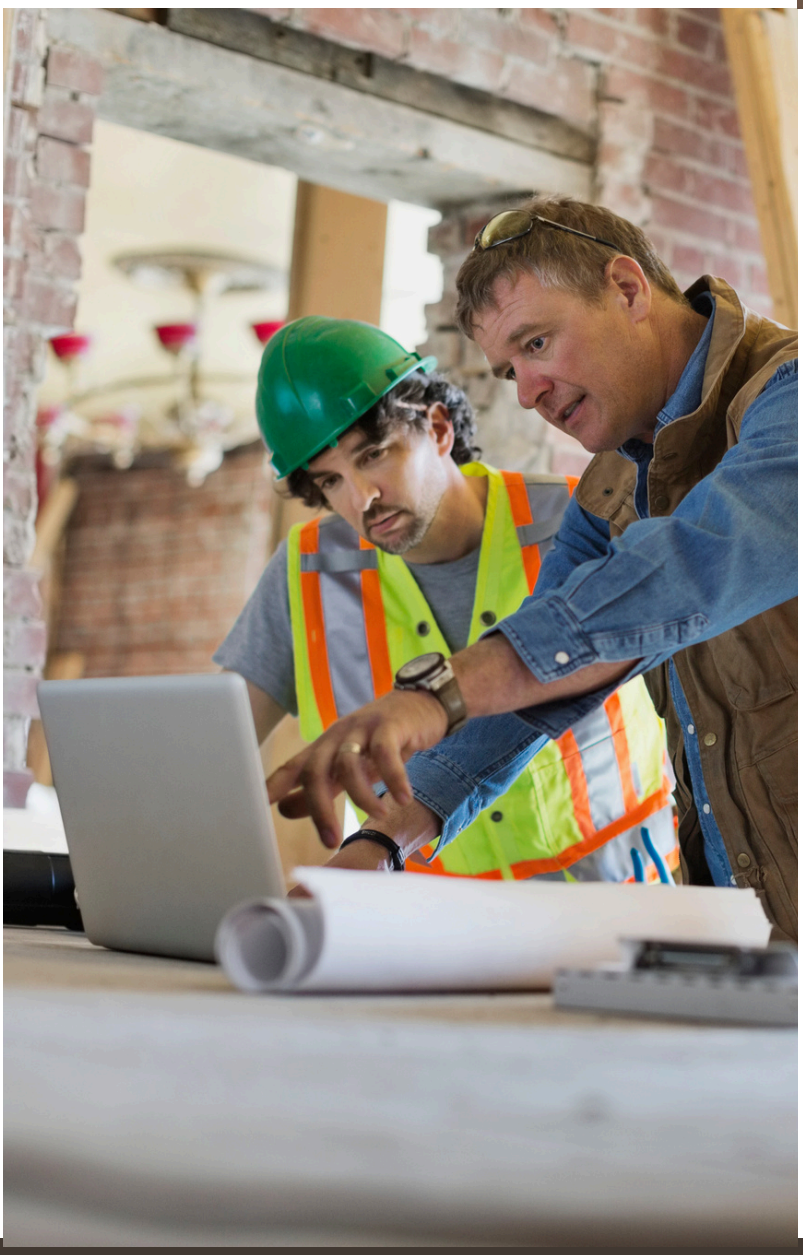
Search for current live apprenticeship vacancies

USEFUL LINKS AND RESOURCES

ADDITIONAL PATHWAYS FOR ADULTS

Providers such as The Open University offer professionally accredited, distance-learning certificates, diplomas and degrees in transferable subjects such as business management, engineering, computing, environmental science.

Online construction courses are offered by CITB, CIOB, CPD note, there may be fees for some. Government sponsored programmes for adults include Free Courses for Jobs and Skills Bootcamps



USEFUL LINKS & RESOURCES

Sources

- CITB the Industry Picture (Industry Insights)
- Construction Jobs Board (opportunities section)
- Skills England – Sector Skills Needs Assessment, Construction (Industry Insights, Opportunities and skills needs sections)

Other useful websites and programmes

- Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) Industry Insights and Careers Hub
- Go Construct Career information and pathways (info about routes in)
- Open Door Career Video
- Prospects – Overview of the UK's Property and Construction Industry
- Future Learn – online short courses in construction topics (most are free of charge)
- Skills Connect – Career insights, Retrofit
- National Retrofit Hub – information about qualifications and training