



Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
Local Skills Improvement Plan

Led by Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce



Business-Education Translation Guides: **Transferable Skills**



Department
for Education



Cambridgeshire
Chambers of
Commerce



Cambridgeshire
Chambers of
Commerce

Contents

3	Transferable Skills - what are they and why they are needed?
4	Transferable Skills - the policy context
5	Skills Builder Universal Framework
8	The future of transferable skills
8	Basic features of the formal education landscape that employers should know
10	Benefits of transferable skills partnerships between businesses and education providers
12	Partnership models
16	Principles for effective communication and collaboration between partners
18	Glossary

Transferable Skills - what are they and why they are needed?

Transferable skills – also known as essential, soft, people, human or interpersonal skills – are highly sought after personal attributes and abilities that are foundational for employment. They support the effective deployment of job-specific knowledge and skills. They are distinct from basic skills like literacy, numeracy, or digital skills. They span all levels, industries and roles. The conversation around transferable skills arises because of the importance of team-working, collaboration and worker-to-customer interaction in modern workplaces.



The top skills in demand are transferable skills

The Skills Imperative 2035 study found that most of the top 10 skills for UK workers now, and the fastest growing skills by 2035, were transferable skills



Worth £125bn to the economy

Forecast to be the annual contribution of transferable skills to the UK economy by 2025 (Development Economics) – around 6.5% of UK economic output

Transferable skills are vital for **teamwork**, **customer interactions**, and **business leadership**.

Transferable Skills - the policy context

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Skills Improvement Plan (2023)

Highlights that transferable skills are the skills that businesses most need to maintain, develop or obtain over the next three-to-five years to remain viable and competitive. LSIP priorities for transferable skills include developing and adopting a regional approach and language around these skills. There is also a need for a skills brokerage service offer that promotes and supports the identification of transferable skills.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Employment and Skills Strategy (2022)

Emphasises that a focus on academic routes at school in combination with FE and HE providers being 'incentivised to deliver qualifications rather than skills', meant that opportunities were being missed to upskill young people for local jobs and future opportunities. A long-term outcome of the strategy is to ensure that people are equipped with both the transferable and technical skills to respond to local opportunities and plan clear pathways.

Skills Builder Universal Framework

Analytical/ Creative Skills	Interpersonal Skills	Self-Management Skills	Leadership Skills	Knowledge Transfer Skills
Detail Oriented	Communication	Planning	Management	Teaching
Research	Interpersonal Communications	Operations	Leadership	Mentorship
Innovation	Verbal Communication	Self-Motivation		Coaching
Problem Solving	Presentations	Organisational Skills		
Decision Making	Sales	Time Management		
	Customer Service	Enthusiasm		
	Influencing	Willingness to Learn		
	Teamwork			

Skills Builder Universal Framework

This framework is a widely used system for classifying and improving essential transferable skills. It breaks down eight key skills into steps for learning and assessment. Launched in 2020, it has a touchpoint with most UK secondary schools and has been adopted by a growing range of businesses, including Asda, Boots, KPMG, Jacobs, and Openreach.



1. Listening

Receiving, retaining and processing of information or ideas



2. Speaking

Oral communication of information and ideas



3. Problem Solving

The ability to find a solution to a situation or challenge



4. Creativity

Use of imagination and generation of new ideas



5. Staying Positive

Ability to use tactics and strategies to overcome setbacks and achieve goals



6. Aiming High

Ability to set clear, tangible goals and devise a robust route to achieving them



7. Leadership

Supporting, encouraging and developing others to achieve a shared goal



8. Teamwork

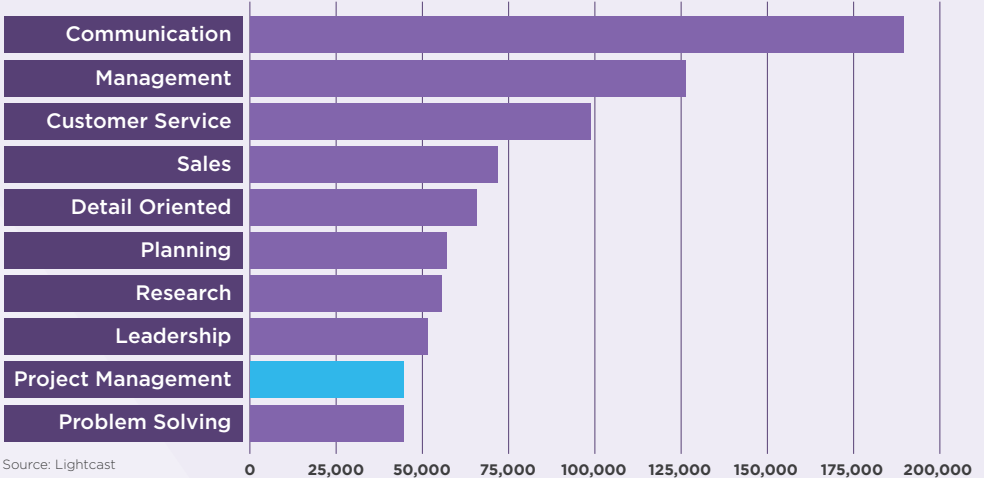
Working cooperatively with others towards achieving a shared goal



The most requested skills in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are all transferable skills

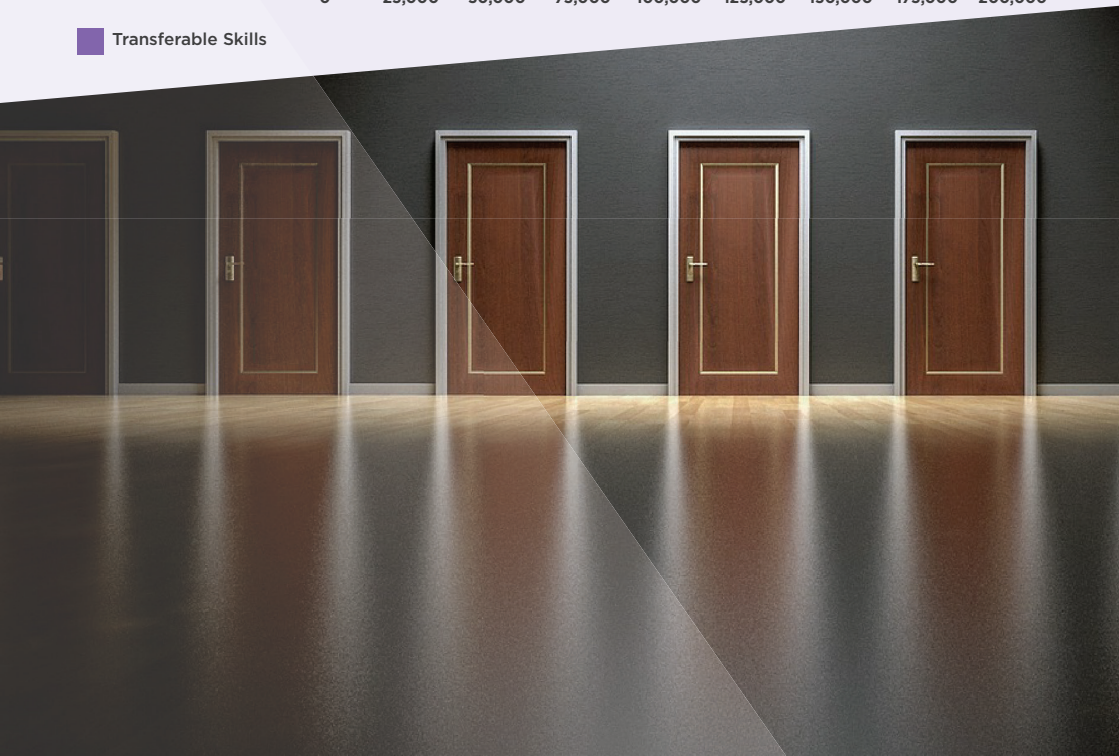
Job postings data are consistent with other research findings that transferable skills are the most utilised skills within the labour market. Across all job postings in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough over the past five years, the top eight skills required were all transferable skills, while transferable skills accounted for 17 of the top 25 skills.

Top 10 Skills Requested in Job Postings, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Feb-19-Jan 24



Source: Lightcast

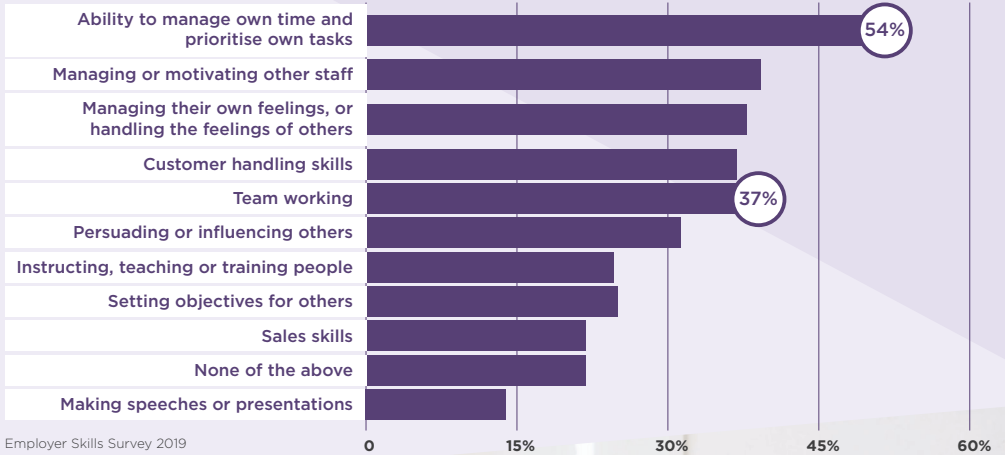
Transferable Skills



Time management is the biggest transferable skills shortage in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

More than half of all employers with skills shortage vacancies say that applicants lack good time management skills, followed by management skills, managing their own or others' feelings, customer handling skills and team working skills.

Transferable Skills Found Difficult to Obtain from Applicants (% employers with Skills Shortage Vacancies)



Employer Skills Survey 2019



The future of transferable skills



Technological adoption and automation

The future workforce will spend time on activities that machines are less capable of doing. These activities include managing people, communicating with staff, using creativity to problem solve and much more.



Globalisation

Workers will need to be able to communicate effectively and collaborate with colleagues, partners, and clients from diverse cultural backgrounds



Remote/hybrid work

Virtual communication, self-motivation, time management, and adaptability will be central to maintaining productivity and teamwork in dispersed environments



Ageing population

Will lead to more jobs in health and social care, where people skills will be critical



Customer service

Shifts away from price competition towards the quality of the customer experience, this will put a premium on interpersonal skills



Structural change within the economy

Will require workers to transition to different sectors, thereby increasing the importance of highly-transferable transferable skills

The future of work demands adaptability, collaboration, and strong transferable skills to thrive in a tech-driven, globalised landscape

Basic features of the formal education landscape that employers should know

Feature	Apprenticeships	T Levels	Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs)
Level of qualification	Intermediate (Level 2 and 3)	Intermediate (equivalent to Level 3)	Levels 4-5 (equivalent to higher education qualifications)
Focus	Job-specific skills and knowledge	Combination of vocational skills and broader knowledge	Specialised technical knowledge and professional skills
Delivery	Classroom learning and significant on-the-job experience (min 80%)	80% classroom learning, 20% industry placement (45 days)	Primarily classroom-based, may include work placements
Assessment	Combination of coursework, practical assessments, and employer evaluations	Exams, coursework, practical projects	Exams, coursework, assignments
Funding	Government and employer co-funding (via Apprenticeship Levy)	Government funding	Government funding, student loans

Apprenticeships and T Levels can provide pathways to relevant HTQs. Transferable skills development is a feature of all three qualifications. Apprenticeships offer the most on-the-job experience, while T Levels provide a balance between classroom learning and industry exposure. HTQs are typically pursued after completing an apprenticeship or gaining relevant work experience. T Levels offer a broader range of specialisms compared to the often highly specific focus of apprenticeships.

Benefits of transferable skills partnerships between businesses and education providers



Benefits for education providers

Greater relevance of course content

- ▶ Business insights inform course development, ensuring students / trainees possess in-demand transferable skills
- ▶ Educational providers stay up-to-date on evolving transferable skills needs within specific industries

Greater employability of students and trainees

- ▶ Course graduates are better equipped to compete in the job market with a strong foundation of transferable skills
- ▶ Stronger partnerships with businesses can lead to internship and job placement opportunities for students

Demonstrate value of education

- ▶ Partnerships showcase the relevance of education in preparing graduates for successful careers
- ▶ Educational providers can use data from partnerships to demonstrate graduate success in securing jobs

Improved communication and collaboration

- ▶ Gain valuable insights from employers on workplace expectations and transferable skill requirements
- ▶ Potential for education providers to participate in professional development programmes offered by partnering businesses

Benefits for businesses

Improved employability of recruits

- ▶ Access to a talent pool with strong communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills
- ▶ Reduced time and resources spent screening candidates based on transferable skills
- ▶ Increased confidence in hiring those emerging from formal education or training who can integrate seamlessly into existing teams

Reduced training costs

- ▶ Employees arrive job-ready, minimising the need for extensive in-house transferable skills training
- ▶ Businesses can focus resources on specific technical skills or company-specific needs

Stronger talent pipeline

- ▶ Shape curricula to align with industry needs
- ▶ Gain early access to high-performing students through internships and job fairs

Improved communication and collaboration

- ▶ Develop open communication channels with education providers to stay informed on emerging transferable skills demands
- ▶ Participate in course development to ensure future employees possess the most relevant skills

Partnership models

Work placements and internships

Industry guest lectures and workshops

Co-development of curricula and courses

Mentorship programmes

Work placements and internships

	Demands on participants	
Businesses	Time and resource investment	Allocating staff time to mentor and supervise placed learners and interns, providing necessary resources and equipment
	Safety and security	Ensuring a safe and secure work environment
	Clear learning objectives	Defining clear learning objectives and providing opportunities for skill development
Education providers	Planning and coordination	Developing internship placements, managing logistics, ensuring alignment with curriculum
	Supervision	Mentoring interns alongside business supervisors, assessing learning outcomes
	Quality assurance	Maintaining the quality of the internship experience for students
Learners	Initiative and adaptability	Actively seeking and engaging with assigned tasks, demonstrating a willingness to learn and adapt to a new work environment
	Meeting performance expectations	Delivering work to a professional standard and fulfilling assigned responsibilities
	Building relationships	Networking with professionals and colleagues, building communication and interpersonal skills

Industry guest lectures and workshops

	Demands on participants	
Businesses	Expertise and time commitment	Providing industry professionals to deliver lectures or workshops, tailoring content to the educational setting
	Clear communication	Effectively communicating industry knowledge and insights in a way that is engaging and relevant to students
Education providers	Coordination and logistics	Arranging guest speakers, scheduling sessions, ensuring alignment with curriculum and student needs
	Learning environment	Providing appropriate venue and presentational resources to support guest lectures and workshops
Learners	Active participation	Attending sessions, actively engaging with guest speakers, asking questions, and participating in discussions
	Critical thinking and analysis	Applying the presented information to their existing knowledge and understanding the real-world context of transferable skills

Co-development of curricula and courses

	Demands on participants	
Businesses	Time and resource investment	Committing staff time to collaborate with education providers aligning industry needs with curriculum development
	Sharing industry expertise	Providing insights into current skills requirements and emerging technologies
	Clear communication of needs	Clearly articulating the specific skills and knowledge needed by the industry
Education providers	Curriculum development expertise	Actively participating in curriculum development, adapting teaching methods to incorporate industry needs
	Staying updated	Ensuring curriculum reflects the latest industry trends and technological advancements
Learners	Adaptability and openness	Being receptive to changes in the curriculum based on business input, understanding the rationale behind industry-driven modifications
	Engaging with business input	Actively participating in discussions and providing feedback on the industry aligned curriculum



Mentorship programmes

Demands on participants		
Businesses	Time commitment	Mentors dedicating time to regularly connect with mentees, providing guidance and support
	Industry knowledge and expertise	Mentors possessing relevant industry knowledge and experience to share with mentees
	Communication and interpersonal skills	Mentors effectively communicating with mentees, building rapport, and fostering a supportive relationship
Education providers	Matching and facilitation	Matching learners with suitable mentors based on their interests and career aspirations
	Programme management	Overseeing the mentorship programme, ensuring effective communication, coordination, and addressing any challenges
Learners	Initiative and proactivity	Actively seeking guidance and feedback from mentors, taking the initiative to ask questions and engage in discussions
	Commitment and follow-through	Regularly attending meetings, completing assigned tasks, and demonstrating a commitment to the mentorship programme
	Building relationships	Developing a strong working relationship with the mentor, effectively communicating needs and aspirations

Example: co-development of courses

Demands on participants		
Businesses	Time and resource investment	Committing staff time to collaborate with education providers aligning industry needs with curriculum development
	Sharing industry expertise	Providing insights into current skills requirements and emerging technologies
	Clear communication of needs	Clearly articulating the specific skills and knowledge needed by the industry
Education providers	Curriculum development expertise	Actively participating in curriculum development, adapting teaching methods to incorporate industry needs
	Staying updated	Ensuring curriculum reflects the latest industry trends and technological advancements
Learners	Adaptability and openness	Being receptive to changes in the curriculum based on business input, understanding the rationale behind industry-driven modifications
	Engaging with business input	Actively participating in discussions and providing feedback on the industry-aligned curriculum

Principles for effective communication and collaboration between partners



Principles for effective communication and collaboration between partners

Action	Principles for education providers	Principles for businesses
Identify contact points	Designate a team or individual responsible for liaising with businesses	Identify key decision-makers within the business regarding workforce development needs
	Participate in industry events and conferences to network with potential partners	Establish a clear point of contact for communication with education providers
Establish joint objectives	Conduct needs assessments to identify the specific skills required by local businesses	Clearly articulate the desired skills and competencies needed for the workforce
		Collaborate with education providers to define measurable learning outcomes
Set out clear roles and efficient communication channels	Develop a communication plan outlining preferred methods and frequency of interaction (e.g., meetings, reports, online platforms)	Establish clear procedures for communication within the business to ensure information reaches the relevant decision-makers
	Designate specific individuals responsible for project updates and information sharing	Allocate dedicated resources to facilitate communication and collaboration with education providers
Explore opportunities to work with peer network organisations and sector partners	Reach out to national and local business networks, trade and professional bodies, to connect with their leads for people and skills	Engage with industry leaders and professional bodies to gain insights into emerging workforce trends
	Collaborate with other education providers to share best practices and leverage combined resources	Partner with other businesses to approach education providers with joint propositions for courses and training



Glossary: terms used to describe transferable skills

Jargon	Education perspective	Business perspective
Communication Skills	Developing strong written and spoken communication skills, including active listening.	The ability to clearly and effectively convey information, both verbally and in writing, to a variety of audiences.
Customer Service	Developing strong interpersonal skills and a focus on building positive customer relationships.	Providing excellent service to meet or exceed customer needs.
Detail Oriented	Developing strong organisational skills and the ability to identify and address minor issues.	A strong focus on accuracy, quality control, and paying close attention to details.
Enthusiasm	Demonstrating an interest and eagerness to learn.	A strong passion and positive attitude towards your work.
Influencing Skills	Effective communication, building rapport, and presenting compelling arguments.	Persuasion - the ability to persuade others to take a specific course of action.
Innovation	Encouraging creativity and fostering an environment that supports innovative thinking.	The ability to come up with new ideas and solutions.
Interpersonal Communications	Developing strong interpersonal skills, including active listening, nonverbal communication, and building rapport.	The ability to interact effectively with others in a professional setting.
Leadership	Learning leadership principles, including communication, decision-making, and providing constructive feedback.	The ability to inspire and motivate others to achieve a common goal.
Operations	Understanding core business operations within a sector.	The day-to-day activities that keep a business running smoothly.
Organisational Skills	Developing strong organisational skills, including creating schedules, prioritising tasks, and staying on top of deadlines.	Prioritisation - the ability to manage your time, resources, and tasks effectively.
Planning	Learning how to plan effectively, including setting deadlines, identifying risks, and establishing contingency plans.	The process of setting goals, outlining steps to achieve them, and allocating resources.
Presentation Skills	Learning how to create and deliver engaging presentations, including using visual aids and body language effectively.	The ability to confidently and effectively convey information to an audience.
Problem Solving	Developing strong problem-solving skills, including brainstorming solutions, evaluating options, and making informed decisions.	Critical thinking and trouble-shooting: the ability to identify, analyse, and solve problems effectively.
Research	Developing strong research skills, including identifying reliable sources, evaluating information, and presenting findings.	The ability to gather information, analyse it, and draw conclusions.
Self-Motivation	Developing strong self-motivation skills, including setting personal goals and managing time effectively.	Proactivity - the ability to take initiative and complete tasks without needing constant direction.
Teamwork	Learning to work effectively in teams, including communication, conflict resolution, and compromise.	The ability to collaborate effectively with others to achieve a common goal.
Time Management	Developing time management skills such as prioritising tasks, creating schedules, and avoiding distractions.	The ability to plan and manage your time effectively to meet deadlines and achieve goals.
Verbal Communication Skills	Developing strong verbal communication skills, including clear and concise language, active listening, and confident delivery.	The ability to effectively communicate ideas and information verbally.

Glossary: career development and workforce planning

Jargon	Education perspective	Business perspective
Career Path Planning	Developing a strategy to navigate your professional journey and achieve career goals.	Providing employees with resources and support to define career aspirations and plan their development within the business.
Learning Management System (LMS)	A software platform for delivering and managing training programmes online.	Investing in employee development to ensure they possess the necessary skills to stay competitive.
Talent Management	The process of attracting, retaining, and developing high-performing employees.	Providing employees with centralised access to online learning materials, tracking progress, and measuring the effectiveness of training courses.
Upskilling and Reskilling	Gaining new skills or improving existing ones to keep up with technology.	Investing in employee development to ensure they possess the necessary skills to stay competitive.

Glossary: approaches to learning

Jargon	Education perspective	Business perspective
Blended Learning	Combining traditional classroom learning with online components.	Providing a mix of instructor-led sessions and online resources for a well-rounded learning experience.
Collaboration Tools	Software applications that enable communication, document sharing, and project management within teams.	Facilitating teamwork, knowledge sharing, and efficient project completion.
E-Learning	Learning through online platforms with interactive modules, videos, and quizzes.	Offering flexible and self-paced learning opportunities for employees.
Gamification	Incorporating game mechanics (points, badges, leaderboards) into learning activities to increase engagement and motivation.	Making learning fun, interactive, and competitive, leading to improved knowledge acquisition.
Mentoring	Pairing experienced professionals with individuals seeking guidance and career development.	Facilitating knowledge transfer, providing support, and empowering employees to achieve their full potential.
Micro-Learning	Breaking down training content into short, focused modules for easier absorption and knowledge retention.	Delivering bite-sized learning content that can be easily integrated into busy schedules.

This project has been funded by the
Local Skills Improvement Fund

Contact us

cambridgeshirechamber.co.uk

01223 237414

enquiries@cambosci.co.uk



Cambridgeshire
Chambers of
Commerce



EASTERN
EDUCATION
GROUP



POLICY
DEPARTMENT
KNOWLEDGE | ANALYSIS | STRATEGY