REGIONAL ENERGY SKILLS HACKATHON

For: Norfolk, Suffolk & Essex

27th June 2025

The Place, Gt Yarmouth

EEEGR EAST OF ENGLAND ENERGY GROUP

and

SKILLSforENERGY EEEGR EAST OF ENGLAND ENERGY GROUP

Sponsored by **ScottishPower** Renewables

Initial Report

Key Outcomes - Regional Energy Skills Hackathon

Building a Future-Ready Workforce

The Regional Energy Skills Hackathon brought together educators, employers, policymakers and training bodies to tackle three urgent, interconnected questions:

- **How do we ensure a competent and future-ready workforce?**
- **How do we collectively address the teacher and trainer recruitment challenge?**
- **How do we deliver broader, more inclusive and effective careers support?**

The key findings were:

Disconnect Between Supply and Demand

- Training provision is not keeping pace with rapidly evolving industry needs.
- Employers struggle to communicate future skills requirements to providers.
- Current qualification systems are too slow and fragmented to respond to change.

Recruitment and Retention Crisis in FE and Technical Education

- Pay, conditions, and public perception of the FE sector are significant barriers.
- Skilled professionals face opaque, unsupported pathways into teaching.
- Retention of existing educators is as critical as recruitment.

Careers Education Is Inconsistent, Underfunded, and Starting Too Late

- Schools lack capacity, resources, and incentives to prioritise careers support.
- Early inspiration and real-world exposure (from age 7+) are essential.
- Employer involvement is sporadic and too often reactive rather than strategic.

> The **Hackathon** made it clear: the region has the **ambition**, insight and **partnerships** needed to lead on **energy workforce development**. What it now needs is **execution**. That means **simplifying** systems, **investing** in talent pipelines, and building lasting **bridges** between business and education. **The stakes are high**.
>
> Without action, the region risks undermining its economic potential and failing the very people it seeks to empower.
>
> Kevin Keable, former **ECITB Apprentice**, Chair of EEEGR

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Summary

Participants recognised that while the challenges are complex, they are widely understood. The emphasis now must shift from further diagnosis to coordinated action.

Aligning Education and Industry -

There is a clear disconnect between the supply of training and the demand for skills. Employers are not always able to articulate their current or future workforce needs, while education providers are constrained by funding cycles, long course validation processes and a lack of agility. The result is a slow, disjointed system unable to keep pace with a rapidly evolving sector. A more strategic, collaborative model is needed — one that enables real-time feedback, regional labour market insight and co-design of provision.

Fixing the Pipeline into Teaching -

The recruitment and retention crisis in Further Education and technical training was described as acute and worsening. Pay and working conditions are often uncompetitive compared to industry roles, and the public perception of FE careers remains undervalued. At the same time, many skilled individuals from industry are open to teaching but face unclear entry routes, lack of induction support and minimal mentoring. Addressing this requires better communication, streamlined pathways and dual-professional models that allow practitioners to contribute while maintaining industry engagement. Crucially, retention of existing educators must not be overlooked; this means investing in CPD, creating supportive workplace cultures and recognising educators' vital contributions.

Rethinking Careers Education -

Careers advice is too often an afterthought in schools, constrained by timetables, resources and a curriculum dominated by exam outcomes. The result is that many young people remain unaware of the career paths available to them, particularly in engineering, energy and technical disciplines. There was strong consensus that inspiration needs to start much earlier — ideally in primary school — with hands-on activities, relatable role models and honest storytelling from employers. While some excellent models exist, these are not universally available or coordinated. A more consistent, inclusive and business-led approach is required, which can be led by EEEGR / Skills for Energy.

Emerging Priorities for Action -

Rather than more working groups or research, participants called for practical delivery. A trusted regional body — led by EEEGR — should be empowered to coordinate stakeholders, reduce duplication and act as a broker between industry, education and government. Work placements must be made easier through standardised toolkits and financial support. Apprenticeship models should evolve to allow shared responsibility across companies, especially to ease the burden on SMEs. Employers must play a more active role in shaping qualifications, providing early exposure to careers and supporting the transition of mid-career professionals into teaching roles.

The opportunity to scale what already works —

From ECITB programmes to Sizewell C's apprenticeship models — is significant. It will require greater cohesion between local authorities, businesses, training providers and national government. Equally, there is a need for culture change: away from competition between schools and colleges and towards shared ambition for a regional workforce that is inclusive, adaptable and prepared.

Conclusion

The Hackathon made it clear: the region has the ambition, insight and partnerships needed to lead on energy workforce development. What it now needs is execution. That means simplifying systems, investing in talent pipelines, and building lasting bridges between business and education. The stakes are high. Without action, the region risks undermining its economic potential and failing the very people it seeks to empower.

*This is a moment to lead —
and the
East of England Energy Group
& our partners are ready.*

Pledges

Several pledges were made on the day, here is a summary:

ECITB - to make 'Work Ready' happen in the East of England
www.ecitb.org.uk/career-pathways/work-ready/

Daniel Bradley - Establish & launch a structured governance
framework for this Skills Agenda - with EEEGR

Department for Work & Pensions, East Anglia
Strategic collaboration with EEEGR on skills & governance, delivering all pledges.

Norfolk County Council -
Strategic collaboration with EEEGR on skills & governance, delivering all pledges.
Mapping training, apprenticeships & student pipelines to support recruitment and connect employers with under-represented talent.

Suffolk County Council -
Strategic collaboration with EEEGR on skills & governance, delivering all pledges.
SCC pledges to engage training providers with ASEC funding opportunities.

Essex County Council -
Strategic collaboration with EEEGR on skills & governance, delivering all pledges.
Aligning with Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils to connect training providers with industry and grow talent.

Inspiration Trust -
to write a guide to help employers engage with schools

Warren Services - Will Bridgman -
Work experience programme for 10x Y10 students from Thetford Academy
EEEGR event for businesses to learn about our apprenticeship programme

ICANBEA, The Mason Trust -
onboard EEEGR members, strengthen links with UTCN and its 500+ work-ready students shape the next generation's skills and behaviours across the region.
Introduce the Youth Voice to this action plan

East Coast College -
Flexible, employer-driven delivery: co-design and deliver training. | Inclusive recruitment and engagement: inclusive hiring practices, mentor training, provide employer-led spaces for training and collaborative events.
Future-focused and responsive: committed to strengthen the talent pipeline.

Gt Yarmouth Borough Council
To share Hackathon information & follow up with 1,600 companies across the borough.

Reagit -
Offering two-week placements for Inspiration Trust and local high schools; interview skills with seven Norwich-based employers.

Obsidian Global Sourcing -
to help attract and pre-screen apprentices and career switchers for local employers.

Precise details of these pledges & how they are being enacted & measured will be communicated as we move forward with a plan.

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Actions

Set up an ACTION TASK FORCE to deliver.....

- **Appoint a central, trusted regional body – EEEGR** - to coordinate stakeholders, reduce duplication and lead skills governance. Daniel Bradley to write plan.

- **Streamline entry routes into teaching**, including paid inductions, secondments and dual-role models with industry.

- **Align employer needs with provision** by enabling co-design of short, agile training programmes and bootcamps.

- **Start careers engagement earlier** with primary-age interventions, school roadshows and storytelling by relatable role models.

- **Make work experience accessible** through coordinated toolkits, risk assessment simplification and financial support.

- **Build business-led partnerships to deliver mentoring**, workshops and visibility across the supply chain.

- **Reform apprenticeship models** to allow shared, cross-company training — especially benefiting SMEs.

- **Retain and support educator**s with better CPD, recognition and institutional culture.

- **Expand successful local initiatives**, such as skills fairs and employer-led engagement models.

- **Shift decisively from research to implementation**, acknowledging that the problems are known — the time for action is now.

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Number crunching.....

£122
billion spend

80
delegates

12
panellists

03
facilitators

10
speakers

1/3
not working

27
the day

06
the month

25
the year

01
young man

13*
pledges

01
common goal

* That is 13 people / organisations. Some made more than 1 pledge

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