

NSAR launches Skills Match to proactively support rail employers on apprenticeship recruitment

May 18, 2023



NSAR has introduced its new service **Skills Match** offering comprehensive support for rail industry employers seeking to recruit apprentices.

Skills Match was created to help solve the severe shortfall of workers urgently required across the rail industry and introduce new talent and skills needed to modernise the industry.

The rail industry has a low apprenticeship recruitment rate comparative to other industries. Around 2,500 apprentices join the sector each year, NSAR estimates that the UK's rail industry requires at least 5,000 new apprentices per year to meet demand for its current work pipeline and to replace the sector's aging workforce. Furthermore, wholesale industry upskilling is needed to improve the sector's digital tech capability.

Skills Match removes the main barriers cited by employers to apprentice recruitment. Our approach begins by working with employers to identify skills gaps and shortages. We then create cohorts of individuals that

will address their needs and match them with the right training and education providers to allow apprentices to thrive in their workforce.

Skills Match can support employers through the entire apprenticeship procurement process including help with recruitment and navigating the government's apprenticeship levy. We can also advise on upskilling existing staff to meet future skills gaps and shortages.

NSAR's *Skills Match* team of dedicated rail and education professionals are already working with employers either offering a comprehensive apprenticeship service or simply advising on aspects of their apprenticeship recruitment and development process.

Rail sector employers can contact Skills Match team directly www.nsar.co.uk/services/skills-match/

Neil Robertson, CEO NSAR said: "As the Government seeks to drive economic growth, improve our standard of living whilst striving for net zero in our transport system – it's rail that can provide many of the solutions. Collectively the industry must inspire and attract a new generation of talent to meet the huge skills gap and workforce shortages. Skills Match simplifies the processes for employers to recruit apprentices."

Mark Holmes, Head of Membership and Development, NSAR said: "We have analysed and modelled rail workforce data, listened to large and small employers throughout the UK and talked to school leavers thinking about their career path and those wishing to change career. It all pointed towards the need for a supportive programme to sensitively match people's skills with employers and trainers. Dedicated to the rail sector, Skills Match will support and help employers navigate apprenticeship recruitment."

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