CEIAGCONNECT

W: WWW.SMITHSWOOD.CO.UK | E: D.LONG@SMITHSWOOD.FMAT.CO.UK | P: 0121 788 4100 ext 4736



Welcome to Careers Education at Smith's Wood Academy

It's been a fantastic and busy start to the academic year at Smith's Wood with students from across all year groups engaging in exciting opportunities designed to inspire their future ambitions. Our Careers Education, Information and Guidance programme continues to grow in strength — helping every student to explore the world of work, higher education, and their next steps after school.

Featured Inside

- > Y10 Work Experience
- > PWC LLP Insight Day
- > Y10 UniFest Applications
- > Y11 Career Interviews
- > Y11 Destinations Updates
- > Post-16 Updates
- > Virtual Work Experinence
- > Getting Ready for Your Future
- > Essential Skill of the Month

Year 10 Trip to Cambridge University - Girton College

A group of our Year 10 students had an incredible opportunity to visit Girton College, University of Cambridge this term. The day offered a real insight into life at one of the world's leading universities. Students explored the college grounds, attended workshops on university life and subject choices, and spoke with current undergraduates about their experiences.

The trip helped to raise aspirations, challenge perceptions, anourage students to think ambitiously about their future pathways, whether that's university, apprenticeships, or other higher-level qualifications. Many students commented on how the visit motivated them to work hard in their GCSE subjects and explore new opportunities beyond school.



YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE

WEEK COMMENCING 6TH JULY 2026

We are delighted to confirm that Year 10 Work Experience will take place in person for five days during the week commencing Monday 6th July 2025. This is an exciting and enriching opportunity for our students to gain valuable first-hand experience of the world of work, develop essential employability skills, and begin to explore potential career pathways before making important decisions about their post-16 education and training options.

Taking part in work experience helps students connect their learning in school to real-life situations, giving them a clearer sense of how their subjects and skills apply in the workplace. It also encourages independence, maturity, and responsibility — qualities that will serve them well both in their studies and in future employment.

All students should now have brought home three key documents to support their work experience placement:

- > Parent Letter providing key information about the programme, including dates, expectations, and guidance for families on how to support their child.
- > Employer Letter outlining the expectations and responsibilities for students while on placement, as well as information for employers about safeguarding and supervision.
- > Employer Pro-Forma a form to be completed by the placement provider prior to the start of the work experience week, confirming essential details such as insurance, contact information, and a brief outline of the role.

To help families with the process, parents and carers will also receive an MCAS notification listing employers who are offering work experience placements this year. Copies of all forms and letters will be available through MCAS, allowing students to reprint or access replacements if any documents are misplaced. For those without access to a printer at home, Mrs Long will have spare copies available in the Careers Hub, along with additional advice and guidance for students still seeking placements.





Year 10 UniFest Applications Now Live!

WHAT AN UNFORGETTABLE EVENING!

UniFest is our Year 10 summer school which offers you the chance to explore university life, meet current university students and staff and make new friends. With five summer school events to choose from at different universities across the West Midlands, you will have an action-packed, fun experience.

UniFest is for learners in Year 10 at non-selective, state-funded secondary schools in the West Midlands who are from backgrounds and communities that are less likely to consider university as an option. To apply for a place, you will need the support of your school and the consent of your parents or carers, and you should be able to answer "Yes" to at least one of the following:

- > I live in an area where not many young people go to university
- > I am a young carer
- > I have a disability or learning difficulty
- > I am in the care of my local authority
- > I receive Free School Meals / FSM6 / Pupil Premium
- > My parents or carers did not go to university



EXPLORE PAST UNIFEST EXPERIENCES



YEAR 11 INDIVIDUAL CAREERS GUIDANCE INTERVIEWS

All Year 11 students will have an Individual Career Guidance (IAG) interview with Mrs Long this term. These one-to-one meetings are an important opportunity for students to discuss their post-16 options, including sixth form, college, apprenticeships, and training opportunities.

During the interview, students will explore their strengths, interests, and career aspirations, and receive personalised advice to help them make informed decisions about their next steps. Following the meeting, each student will be given a personalised action plan, outlining recommended next steps and key tasks to support their transition beyond Year 11.

These interviews are a key part of ensuring that every student receives tailored guidance and the support they need to make confident, informed decisions about their future pathways.

YEAR 11 POST-16 DESTINATIONS UPDATE

APPRENTICESHIPS TO APPLY FOR, STARTING SEPTEMBER 2026.

As you begin planning your next steps after Year 11, it's important to explore all your Post-16 options, including apprenticeships, college courses, and sixth form pathways. Apprenticeships are an excellent way to earn while you learn, combining practical, on-the-job experience with nationally recognised qualifications. Employers such as Aldi, Tesco, and the NHS are currently offering apprenticeships for school leavers, with roles starting from summer 2025. These programmes provide a clear path for career progression and valuable skills for the future.

You can find current vacancies and guidance on applying through Find an Apprenticeship (GOV.UK). Many opportunities open early, so it's important to start researching and preparing your applications now to secure your ideal role. For extra support with applications, CVs, or advice on your next steps, speak to Mrs Long or your Careers Adviser. Taking action now will help you make confident, informed choices for your future.



Apprenticeships with Aldi

Aldi offers exciting apprenticeships for Year 11 students who want to earn while they learn. With roles in retail, logistics, and management, you'll gain hands-on experience, recognised qualifications, and great pay — all while building a clear path to a successful career.



Apprenticeships with Tesco

Tesco offers great apprenticeship opportunities for Year 11 students who want to start their career straight after school. You'll earn while you learn, gain recognised qualifications, and build valuable skills in retail, customer service, or management — all with plenty of room to progress within one of the UK's biggest employers.

Various Apprentiships with Employers

KMPG Apprenticeships

KPMG's apprenticeship schemes offer hands-on experience in audit, business and technology roles across the UK from Manchester to Birmingham and beyond.



EY Apprenticeships

EY's Apprenticeships allow young people to earn, learn and gain real-world professional qualifications while working alongside experts in finance and consulting.

> https://bit.ly/3JwsyBf

Great Western Railway Apprenticeships

From engineers and technicians to station staff, GWR's apprenticeships open the door to long-term careers in transport and rail operations across the South and West.

> https://bit.ly/3JWWgzm

College and Sixth Form Open Day / Evening Events 2025-2026

Here is a list of dates/times of our local providers open events over December and January 2025 for students leaving year 11 this year.

- > Solihull College (Blossomfield and Woodlands): Saturday 29th November | 10am 2pm
- Solihull Sixth Form: Saturday 18th October | 9:30am 3:30pm
- Access to Creative College (Digbeth, B'ham): Saturday 29th November | 10am - 1:30pm
- > Birmingham Metropolitan College (Sutton Coldfield, Matthew Boulton, James Watt): Saturday 18th October | 10:00am - 2:00pm







Wednesday 22 October 2025, 3:30 - 7:00 pm

Cranmore Park, Cranmore Avenue, Shirley B90 4LF lifeready@solihull.gov.uk

PREMED PROJECTS WORK EXPERIENCE

ASPRING TO WORK IN A MEDICAL FIELD?

Whether you're looking to apply for medicine, nursing, midwifery or dentistry, we offer hospital work experience courses for students aged 14+ from all over the world! Through both online, virtual projects and real-life hospital placements, you can experience first-hand what it's like to work in a medical career. Boosting your personal statement and helping you stand out in your med school applications and med school interviews.



Free online work experience for anyone aged 14-18 interested in becoming a doctor, dentist, midwife, nurse etc. Follow the link to sign up. Have both on and off-site placements.

VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES





www.finder.futuresforall.org/

www.springpod.com

All students are encouraged to set up accounts on Springpod and Futures for All to access a wide range of virtual work experience programmes. These platforms offer flexible, engaging opportunities to explore different career pathways, build new skills, and gain valuable insights into the world of work. Signing up is quick and free, and it's a great way to strengthen future applications while discovering what inspires you. Encourage your child to get started today!

Springpod Opportunities - Amazon



Our new Digital Skills programmes are now live, and engagement has been fantastic so far. We introduced these to emphasise the importance of diaital skills in any career path and to help students feel more confident using them. If you're looking to roll these out to your students, here's what you need to know:

- > Cyber Security
- > Data Analysis & Storytelling
- > Research
- > Digital Communication

> Al and Al Literacy

Springpod Opportunities - Rolls Royce



Our new Digital Skills programmes are now live, and engagement has been fantastic so far. We introduced these to emphasise the importance of digital skills in any career path and to help students feel more confident using them. If you're looking to roll these out to your students, here's what you need to know:

> View the placement here.



Explore a Career in Marketing and Heritiage

Experience creative marketing with The National Trust! Students will collaborate with professionals to plan a real campaign, explore storytelling through heritage, and gain valuable skills in teamwork, creativity, and communication.

> View the placement here.



Discover compassionate careers in healthcare

Discover the world of palliative care with \$t Columba's Hospice Care! Students will meet healthcare professionals, explore diverse clinical and support roles, and gain valuable insights into careers that combine skill with compassion.

> View the placement here.



Fragomen's 2025 UK Immigration Law School **Applications are now OPEN!**

Have you ever wondered how global firms like Uber, HSBC, or Netflix relocate hundreds of their employees worldwide? Or how some of the world's highestprofile sportspeople secure visas to work across the globe? Now's your chance to explore the fascinating field of corporate immigration law—a growing area of law you might not have considered before. Welcome to Fragomen.



STEM & Innovation with Mondalez International

Students will explore the science and creativity behind Cadbury chocolate with Mondelez International, learning how STEM, engineering, and innovation shape exciting products from idea to shelf.

> View the placement here.



Digital Careers with Kainos

Students will explore coding and digital careers with Kainos, gaining hands-on tech skills, meeting professionals, and discovering pathways into the growing IT sector.

> View the placement here.

Pathways into Accountancy

Join our upcoming webinar to hear ACCA professionals share their journeys and explore the many ways to get started. From apprenticeships to university degrees, there's no single route to success, only your route.

> View the placement here.



Curious what a day as an accountant is really like? Join this interactive session to hear current ACCA apprentices share their routines, real experiences, and top tips.

> View the placement here.



Leaders of Tomorrow

Looking for a career with stability, opportunity, and growth? Accountancy could be your perfect first step! Join our inspiring webinar featuring five incredible speakers.

> View the placement here.

Accountancy Application Masterclass

Ready to apply for an apprenticeship but not sure where to start? Feeling overwhelmed is normal. But with the right tools and guidance, you can turn confusion into confidence.

> View the placement here.

Debate Mate Launch





We are thrilled to introduce Debate Mate to Smith's Wood Academy! This exciting new club gives students the opportunity to develop essential skills such as confidence, communication, teamwork, and critical thinking in a supportive and engaging environment. Through lively debates, structured discussions, and interactive activities, students will learn how to express their ideas clearly, listen to others, and build persuasive arguments—skills that are invaluable both in school and beyond.

When: Every Tuesday after school

Time: 15:00 - 16:00

Whether you're new to debating or have some experience, Debate Mate is open to all students who want to have their voices heard and make a difference. Don't miss this chance to meet new friends, challenge yourself, and enjoy the excitement of friendly competition.

For more information or if you have any questions, speak to Miss Roche. Get ready to speak up, think big, and make your mark at Smith's Wood Academy!

BRITISH ARMY INSIGHT SESSION

TUESDAY 20TH JANUARY 2026 | 18:00 - 19:00

This online session is designed to give parents clarity and confidence about the opportunities the British Army offers young people.

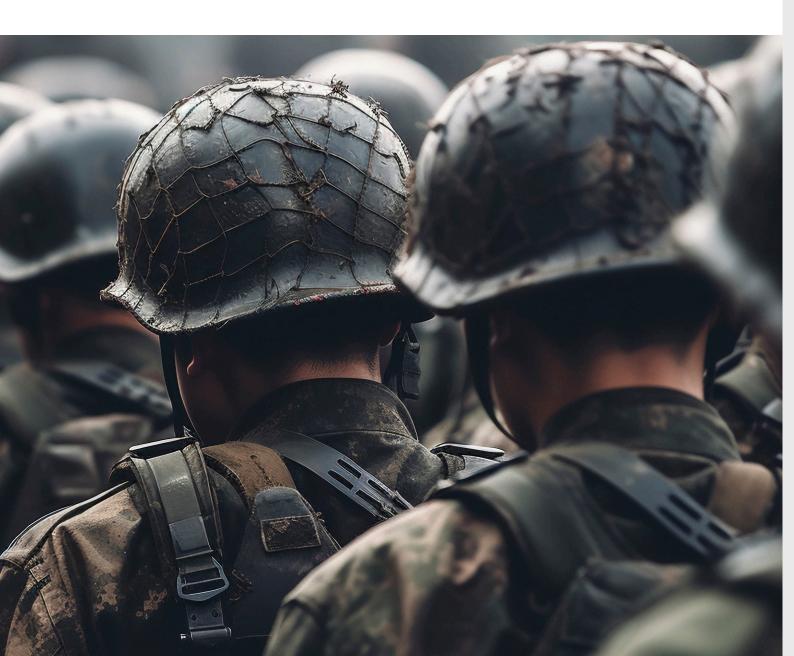
Survey Highlights:

- > Recent research with over 600 parents and guardians found that:
- > Only 27% feel fully confident supporting their child through the application process.
- > Nearly half (49%) want to attend an online session and receive resources about Army apprenticeships.

What to expect?

- **>** A real look at life in today's Army, including roles, training, and qualifications.
- > Inspiring stories from those with lived experience, plus practical advice and Q&A time.
- > Insights into how the Army helps young people build confidence, resilience, and valuable life skills all while earning and learning.

Click here to join the experience.



Step into your future: Careers & Opportunities in Solihull

Parent & Student Guide









Content

Your future starts here	2	Advanced Engineering	12
Digital, Tech & Creative	3	Construction	15
Health & Medical Devices	6	Green Tech	18
Clean Tech & Smart Energy	9	What's Your Next Step?	21

Your future starts here:

What you need to know about jobs, skills and opportunities in Solihull

Deciding what to do after school can feel overwhelming - with so many options, how do you know what's right for you?

That's where Labour Market Information (LMI) comes in. It's like a career compass, showing you where the jobs are, what skills you'll need, and what kind of future you can expect - right here in Solihull.

This guide will help you discover:

- What jobs are in demand right now
- What skills employers are looking for
- How much different jobs pay
- What's happening in your local area
- And where the biggest opportunities will be when you enter the world of work

In this booklet, we break down the latest job trends in Solihull, so you can make smart choices about your future. Whether you're thinking about college, sixth form, an apprenticeship, or jumping straight into work, this guide will help you connect your interests with real opportunities.

Whether you want to work with people, fix things, solve problems, start your own business or make a difference in your community, Solihull has more opportunities than you might think.

This guide gives you the facts, not guesses, so you can make informed choices about your next steps, with confidence!

RQF Levels Explained: The Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) categorises qualifications in England by level of difficulty and skill, from Entry Level to Level 8. Each level reflects the knowledge and abilities expected in education and the workplace. For example, Entry Level suits beginners, Level 2 equates to GCSEs (grades 4-9), Level 3 aligns with A-levels, Level 4-6 corresponds to higher education like degrees, and Level 7-8 represents advanced qualifications like master's or doctoral degrees. Employers use RQF levels to gauge a candidate's skills and readiness for specific roles.





The digital, tech and creative industries are rapidly expanding, driven by growth in AI, gaming, software development, cyber security, and media production. The West Midlands is one of the UK's fastest-growing hubs for digital innovation, with strong demand for programmers, designers, and digital marketing specialists. Creative talent is also vital for film, TV, advertising, and design, making this sector both technical and artistic.



Entry-Level Jobs

- Junior IT Support Technician
- Social Media Assistant
- Web Content Creator
- Graphic Design Assistant
- Trainee Games Tester

Typical Salary: £20,000 to £25,000

Skills: digital literacy, creativity, problem-solving,

teamwork, communication

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Web Developer
- Digital Marketing Executive
- UX/UI Designer
- Cyber Security Technician
- Broadcast Technician

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £35,000

Skills: coding, design software, data handling,

client engagement, analytical thinking

Advanced-Level Jobs

- Software Engineer
- Cyber Security Analyst
- Creative Director
- Data Scientist/Al Specialist
- Film/TV Producer

Typical Salary: £40,000 to £70,000+

Skills: advanced coding, leadership, digital strategy,

innovation, project management



Computer Science



Maths



Media Studies



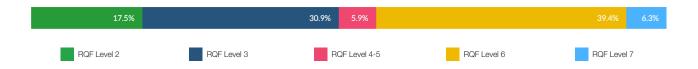
Art & Design

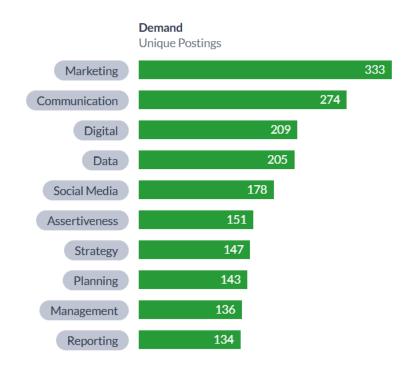


English

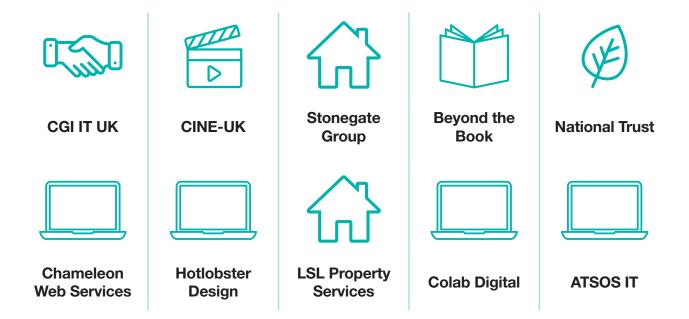


Business Studies





Top 10 Employers hiring in Solihull





The health and medical devices sector combines healthcare innovation with advanced technology. From developing life-saving equipment to supporting patient care through diagnostics and wearable tech, this sector is central to the West Midlands' growing life sciences cluster. It offers pathways into both clinical support and high-tech engineering roles.



Entry-Level Jobs

- Medical Devices Technician Trainee
- Laboratory Assistant
- Healthcare Support Worker
- Production Operative (medical equipment)
- Pharmacy/Dispensary Assistant

Typical Salary: £21,000 to £26,000

Skills: attention to detail, safety, teamwork,

basic lab/IT skills

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Biomedical Technician
- Quality Control Analyst
- Clinical Trials Assistant
- Regulatory Affairs Technician
- Manufacturing Technician (medical devices)

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £36,000

Skills: technical knowledge, data recording,

regulatory awareness, diagnostics

Advanced-Level Jobs

- Biomedical Scientist/Engineer
- Clinical Engineer
- Research Scientist (Medical Devices)
- Regulatory Affairs Manager
- Product Development Lead

Typical Salary: £40,000 to £65,000+

Skills: scientific analysis, innovation, research,

compliance, leadership



Biology



Chemistry



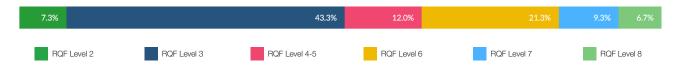
Physics



Maths



Design & Technology



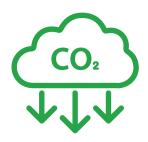


Top 10 Employers hiring in Solihull





This sector is growing rapidly as the UK transitions to net zero. Opportunities are expanding in renewable energy, battery storage, energy efficiency, and smart grid technology. The West Midlands is a centre for clean transport innovation and energy solutions, with strong demand for green skills across all levels. Careers in this sector allow you to play a direct role in tackling climate change while shaping a more sustainable future.



Entry-Level Jobs

- Solar Panel Installer Assistant
- Wind Turbine Maintenance Trainee
- Smart Meter Installer
- Recycling/Waste Technician
- Energy Efficiency Operative

Typical Salary: £21,000 to £26,000 Skills: practical skills, safety awareness,

problem-solving, teamwork

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Energy Systems Technician
- Environmental Compliance Officer
- Building Energy Assessor
- Smart Energy Network Technician
- Sustainability Coordinator

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £38,000

Skills: environmental knowledge, diagnostics, project coordination, technical reporting

Advanced-Level Jobs

- Renewable Energy Engineer
- Battery Technology Specialist
- Energy Systems Analyst
- Environmental Consultant
- Sustainability Project Manager

Typical Salary: £42,000 to £65,000+

Skills: engineering, data analysis, leadership,

innovation, regulatory compliance



Physics



Chemistry



Maths



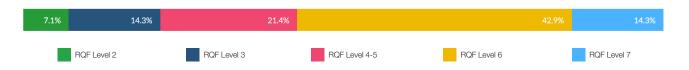
Geography

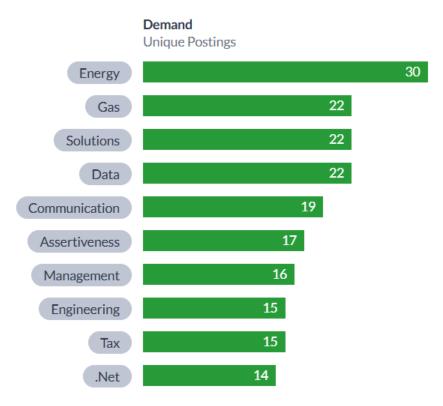


Design & Technology

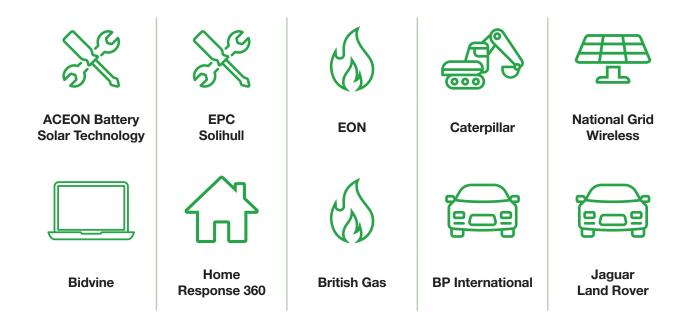


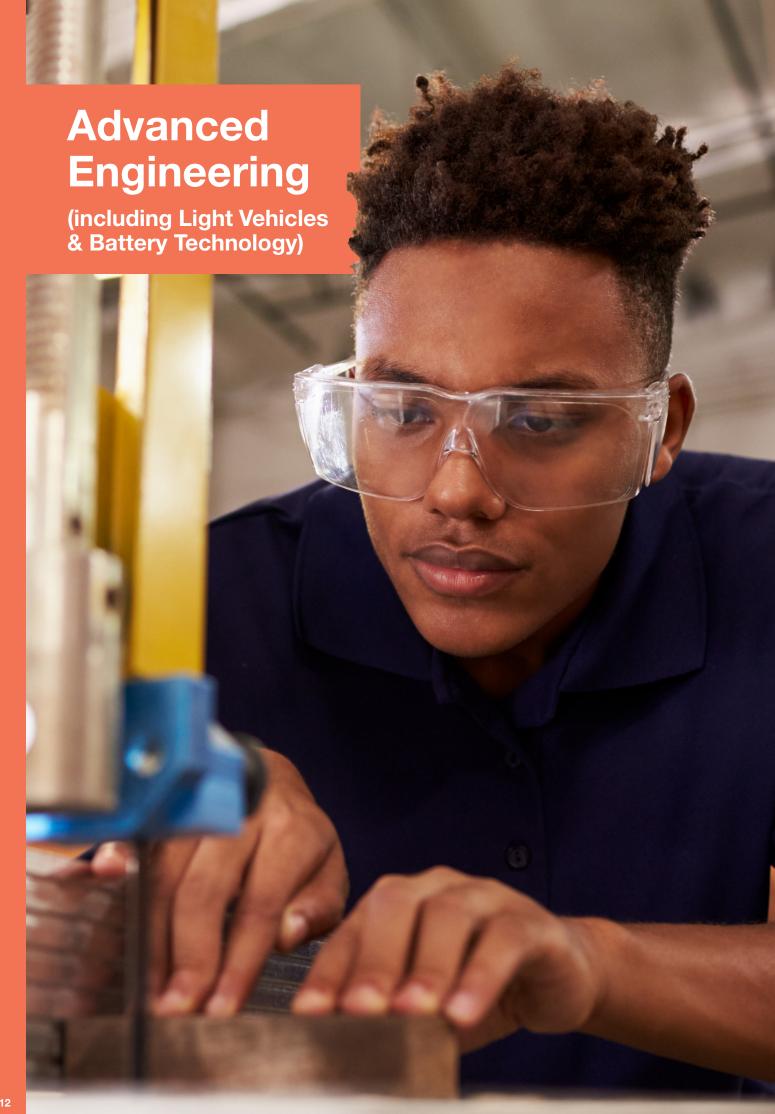
Computer Science





Top 10 Employers hiring in Solihull





Advanced engineering in the West Midlands is entering a new era, shaped by the global shift towards electrification, automation, and sustainable production. The region's industrial heritage, combined with cutting-edge innovation in light vehicles, robotics, and battery technology, is creating exciting opportunities for skilled workers. From designing electric vehicles and improving battery performance to developing new manufacturing methods, this sector needs both traditional engineering talent and expertise in future-facing technologies.



Entry-Level Jobs

- Engineering Apprentice (Mechanical, Electrical, Automotive)
- Machine/Production Operator
- Battery Assembly Technician
- CAD Trainee
- Vehicle Technician Trainee

Typical Salary: £20,000 to £25,000

Skills: technical precision, safety awareness, teamwork, hands-on problem solving

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Maintenance Engineer
- Design/CAD Technician
- Battery Test Technician
- Toolmaker or Machinist
- Automotive Diagnostic Technician

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £36,000

Skills: diagnostics, CAD, mechanical systems,

fault-finding, planning

Advanced-Level Jobs

- Automotive/EV Engineer
- Robotics Engineer
- Battery Systems Engineer
- Advanced Manufacturing Engineer
- Project Manager (Engineering)

Typical Salary: £42,000 to £70,000+ Skills: advanced maths, systems design, innovation, leadership, project delivery



Maths



Physics



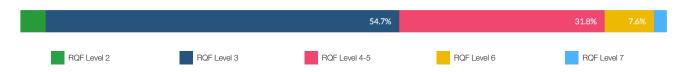
Design & Technology

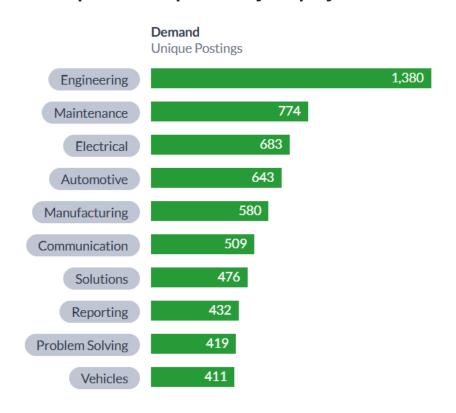


Engineering



Computer Science





Top 10 Employers hiring in Solihull





The construction sector is growing fast, driven by major infrastructure projects, ongoing housing demand, and the need to retrofit existing buildings to meet net zero targets. There's a strong focus on green construction, sustainability, and digital tools like Building Information Modelling (BIM) and off-site manufacturing. In the West Midlands, construction remains a vital sector offering well-paid, in-demand careers across practical and professional pathways.



Entry-Level Jobs

- General Construction Operative/Labourer
- Apprentice Bricklayer/Carpenter/Electrician
- Groundworker or Plant Operator Trainee
- Trainee Site Assistant
- Scaffolder

Typical Salary: £21,000 to £25,000

Skills: manual work, teamwork, attention to detail,

safety awareness

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Skilled Tradesperson
 (e.g. Electrician, Plumber, Plasterer)
- Site Supervisor or Foreperson
- Quantity Surveyor Assistant
- CAD Technician or BIM Coordinator
- Construction Plant Operator

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £38,000

Skills: precision, planning, problem-solving,

site coordination

Advanced-Level Jobs

- Construction Site Manager
- Quantity Surveyor/Estimator
- Civil/Structural Engineer
- Architectural Technologist
- Project Manager

Typical Salary: £40,000 to £60,000+ Skills: leadership, technical knowledge, planning, digital tools (e.g. AutoCAD, BIM)



Maths



Physics



Design & Technology



Engineering



Computer Science





Top 10 Employers hiring in Solihull





Green tech focuses on developing new technologies and solutions to tackle climate change and reduce carbon emissions. This includes sustainable materials, low-carbon construction methods, energy-efficient products, waste reduction, and circular economy innovations. The West Midlands is positioning itself as a leader in green innovation, with careers spanning design, science, and engineering.



Entry-Level Jobs

- Recycling and Resource Operative
- Environmental Technician Trainee
- Junior Sustainability Assistant
- Insulation Fitter/Retrofit Installer
- Waste Management Apprentice

Typical Salary: £20,000 to £25,000 Skills: environmental awareness, problem-solving, safety, teamwork

Intermediate-Level Jobs

- Sustainability Coordinator
- Retrofit Assessor
- Environmental Compliance Technician
- Green Product Design Technician
- Energy/Carbon Analyst (junior)

Typical Salary: £28,000 to £36,000 Skills: research, environmental knowledge, regulatory compliance, digital reporting

Advanced-Level Jobs

- Environmental Engineer
- Sustainability Consultant
- Circular Economy Specialist
- Climate Change Analyst
- Green Technology Project Manager

Typical Salary: £42,000 to £65,000+

Skills: innovation, system design, leadership, advanced research, regulatory knowledge



Geography



Environmental Science



Physics



Chemistry

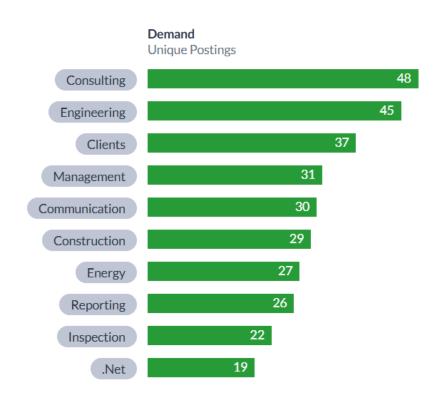


Maths

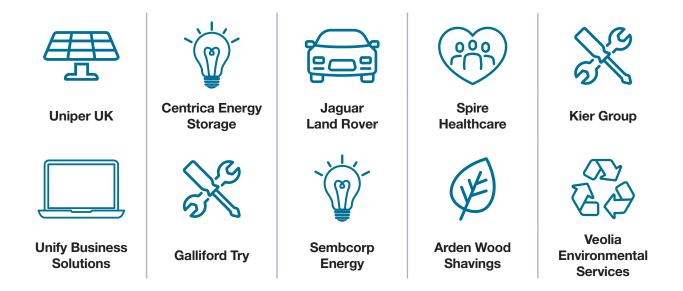


Design & Technology





Top 10 Employers hiring in Solihull



What's Your Next Step?

As you explore your next steps after school, it's important to have the right information, experiences, and support to help you make decisions with confidence. This guide gives you access to up-to-date Labour Market Information (LMI) for Solihull - showing you what skills are in demand, which sectors are growing, and how you can prepare for a positive career destination.

1. Reflect on your strengths and interests

- What subjects or activities do you enjoy most?
- What are your key strengths or skills?
- Are you interested in working with people, technology, your hands - or solving real-world problems?

Knowing yourself is the first step in making informed choices about your future.

2. Explore careers linked to growth sectors

Use what you've learned to identify:

- Local opportunities in key sectors (e.g. health, digital, engineering, construction)
- Roles aligned to your interests and abilities
- Skills that employers in your area need now and in the future

3. Use trusted career tools and resources:

www.prospects.ac.uk - A career website aimed at recent graduates.

www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-careers - Shows a variety of career profiles, under each there is information about salaries, working hours and typical duties.

www.lmiforall.org.uk - A comprehensive portal which collates LMI.

www.icould.com - A website aimed at young people, using personal stories to inform career choices with each video is linked to relevant LMI.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-labour-market-projections-2014-to-2024 UK Labour market predictions.

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk - Not Going To Uni was founded in 2008 to showcase the alternatives to the standard university route to school and college leavers.

www.amazingapprenticeships.com - Amazing Apprenticeships is a leading organisation in the education sector, working with schools, colleges and employers, tackling misconceptions and promoting the benefits of apprenticeships and technical education.

www.careersliveuk.com/partner/west-midlands-combined-authority - Provides careers advice and recruitment opportunities through live broadcasts.

4. Plan and take action

- Choose subjects that support a range of progression routes (A-levels, T Levels, apprenticeships, technical routes)
- Attend open days, employer insight events, or work experience
- Book a 1:1 appointment with your school careers adviser

Solihull LMI

Making informed decisions. Developing future skills. Taking control of your career journey.

RESPECT.

AMBITION.

RESILIENCE.

