

What skills will today's young people need to be successful in the future world of work?

Why have we asked this question?

The world is changing at an unprecedented rate and so too are the skills that young people will need to thrive in the future world of work. From robots to globalisation, population ageing, urbanisation, and the rise of the green economy, the jobs of the future will no doubt be different to today. Nesta and Speakers for Schools have considered these challenges to explore what skills are fundamental for the future and how young people can best prepare for an evolving job market.

In its 2017 report, *The Future of Skills: Employment in 2030*, the UK's innovation foundation, Nesta, explored how employment is likely to change in the future. Additionally, Speakers for Schools, a charity that works with leading figures who want to give back to young people in state schools through free school talks, has considered the same issue from a different angle. Working with YouGov and the *i* newspaper, they surveyed school students to find out how young people viewed the future of work.

This briefing document brings together these findings to provide teachers, school leaders and parents and carers with a summary of these issues and activities to help stimulate discussion in the classroom to give young people a better understanding of key skills for the future.



What skills, abilities and knowledge will be in demand in 2030?

Interpersonal skills such as social awareness, understanding of others and the ability to collaborate

Higher-order cognitive skills such as **originality** and the ability to come up with a number of different ideas

Broad based knowledge in addition to the more specialised (such as STEM and foreign languages). For example, areas such as English language, history, philosophy, and administration and management

Learning skills - including the ability to set goals, ask relevant questions and get feedback as students learn and apply that knowledge meaningfully in different contexts

Speakers for School's YouGov survey showed that students are aware of some of these trends:



55% of students believe there will be more jobs requiring technical skills in 2030



Computer/ IT, communication, good reading and writing among skills selected for future career success



38% of students believe that not having enough work experience opportunities would stop them from having a successful career



29% of students thought not knowing the right people would be a barrier to future success

Which occupations will be in demand in 2030?

Nesta's 'The Future of Skills' report identified which occupations are likely to grow in the workforce in the future. These were some of the key findings:

- Education, health care and wider public sector are predicted to grow in part due to an ageing population and increased interest in lifelong learning
- Creative, digital, engineering and design occupations have a bright outlook and are strongly complemented by advances in digital technology
- Manufacturing, administrative, secretarial - some occupations in these fields, such as mobile machine drivers and assemblers, are expected to see a decline in workforce share
- Opportunities for lower-skilled jobs - although some skilled trades such as building and construction are likely to lose share, others such as building finishers and electrical trades are likely to fare better



A key finding of the report is that future employers will require individuals who combine broad-based knowledge and specialised skills. Subjects like English language, history, philosophy and management, as well as STEM knowledge and foreign languages, are strongly associated with occupations that are likely to see a rise in their workforce.

How can teachers, schools and parents use these findings?

As a teacher, here are some ways you could engage your students in discussion about this topic:

- Inspire your students to have a class discussion about key challenges that will affect the workplace globally, such as automation, population ageing, and urbanisation. Considering these challenges, how different do they think jobs might be in 2030? Ask your students to list what jobs they think might exist in the future.
- Encourage your students to develop interpersonal skills through collaborative tasks. For example, ask your students to work in pairs and discuss what they think would constitute a 'transferable skill' e.g. communication, flexibility, teamwork etc. Ask your students to present their ideas back to the class.
- Encourage students to articulate and build fluency of their ideas, increasing critical thinking and communication skills through class debates and presentations. Split the class into two groups. Ask group one to support this statement: 'there will be more opportunities for interesting jobs in the future' and group two to support this statement: 'there will be fewer opportunities because more jobs will be automated'.

Find out more: [nesta.org.uk](https://www.nesta.org.uk) and [speakers4schools.org](https://www.speakers4schools.org)