

BESA welcomes surge in demand for engineers

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Demand for engineers is predicted to grow faster than for any other occupation, according to [a report commissioned by EngineeringUK](#).

The report found that vacancies for 'green engineering' roles in the UK had increased by 55% in the past five years driven by the focus on achieving a net zero economy by 2050.

The [Building Engineering Services Association](#) (BESA) said the report highlighted the importance of engineering to the UK economy but warned that the number of vacancies reflected the growing skills gap.

"Building engineering firms are struggling to recruit enough people to meet current demand but are simultaneously trying to assess their workforce needs to keep growing for the future," said BESA President Rab Fletcher.

"On the one hand, it is great to see that the number of engineering careers is growing and its profile rising, but on the other, we face a huge challenge to appeal to a much more diverse audience to recruit the future talent we desperately need," he added.

The Lightcast report, [Engineering Skills and Needs - now and into the future](#), calculated there were just over six million "engineering jobs" across all industries in 2021 - about 19% of all employment in the country - and that recruiting for engineering roles accounted for a quarter of all job postings last year.

Growth

The report concluded that "either the skills shortage in engineering is greater than in other areas, or that employers are hiring for future growth, or a combination of the two".

Engineering UK – a not-for-profit organisation set up to encourage more young people to take up engineering careers – said that the central role played by engineers in creating solutions to fight climate change was driving up demand. More than 212,000 job advertisements between 2021 and 2022 mentioned ‘green skills’.

“Given the soaring demand for engineers across all sectors, it’s essential that the UK has a robust plan and funding in place to train the future workforce, bringing more young people from all backgrounds into engineering and technology, alongside reskilling the current workforce,” said CEO Dr Hilary Leever.

Pay is also rising in line with growing demand, according to the report, with engineers commanding an average annual salary of £38,600, which is almost 30% higher than the £30,000 average for all occupations.

“Aspiring engineers have a world of opportunities ahead, as their skills and expertise become increasingly sought after,” said Fletcher, who is coming to the end of his year as BESA President next month.

“During my year in office, I have been delighted to witness noticeable growth in the prominence and status of built environment engineers. Their ability to solve complex problems, think critically, and adapt to new technologies will be invaluable in shaping the future and addressing the challenges that lie ahead.

“Engineering skills are also a gateway to a fulfilling career, play a pivotal role in advancing society, and can make a lasting impact on the world and our local communities,” added Fletcher. “The increased interest in the courses we run through the [BESA Academy](#) shows how much appetite there is for new and updated skills as we strive to shape our future workforce.”

**[BESA’s Annual Conference](#) on October 12 will have a particular focus on strategies for making the building services sector more attractive to a wider demographic so employers can recruit the skills they need for the future.*