Tay Cities Regional Skills Action Plan 2025-2029

Skills Development Scotland

Contents

Foreword

The Tay Cities Regional Skills Action Plan 2025–2029 is a significant step forward for our region. It represents a shared commitment to ensuring that people and businesses across Tay Cities have the skills and opportunities they need to succeed, both now and in the years ahead.

This plan is not being launched in a vacuum. Tay Cities already benefits from a strong foundation of further and higher education, a diverse network of training providers, and a strong tradition of partnership and collaboration.

Our local authorities, NHS boards, colleges, universities, and third sector organisations have long worked together to support skills and employability, including as part of the skills and employability strand of the Cities Deal.

We also have strong links with employers and industry bodies, including through Developing the Young Workforce, Chambers of Commerce, and sector partnerships. These connections ensure that our approach is rooted in the real needs of our communities and businesses.

However, the world is changing rapidly, and our region faces the same challenges which are common elsewhere, including

reshaping our economy to boost growth and productivity whilst dealing with a shrinking working age population.

At the same time, there are real opportunities, including those presented by the capital investments in the Tay Cities Region Deal. Sectors such as life sciences, health, digital technology, tourism, hospitality, and green industries are growing and offer new routes to prosperity. The transition to net zero, advances in technology, and demographic change are reshaping our labour market and demanding new skills. Our ambition is clear: we want everyone in Tay Cities to have the chance to develop their skills, embrace lifelong learning, and secure meaningful, fair, and rewarding work. We want our businesses to have access to the talent and skills they need to innovate and grow.

This plan sets out three central missions:

- building skills for future growth
- supporting job entry and progression
- securing the future workforce.

Each mission is underpinned by a commitment to inclusivity, agility, and partnership.

We know that the challenges ahead cannot be met by any one organisation alone. In a time

of constrained public finances and shifting economic realities, it is more important than ever that we work together to add value, avoid duplication, and find new, more effective ways to respond to the region's skills needs. This plan provides a framework for doing just that – aligning our efforts, pooling our resources, and focusing on what matters most for our people and our economy.

The Tay Cities Regional Skills Action Plan is a call to action. It sets out clear priorities and practical steps, but its success will depend on the continued partnership and dedication of all those invested in the region's future. Whether supporting young people at the start of their careers, helping workers to upskill or reskill, or enabling people to re-enter the labour market, we are committed to creating pathways for all.

If we succeed, the positive impact of this plan will be felt long after its timeframe – helping to build a more inclusive, resilient, and prosperous Tay Cities region for generations to come.

Tay Cities Skills Advisory Board

Executive Summary

Background and approach

The Tay Cities Regional Skills Action Plan (TCRSAP) is a framework for collaboration around skills development in the region, informed by a review of evidence as well as employer and stakeholder consultation.

Tay Cities economy and labour market

The Tay Cities region consists of the local authorities of Angus, Perth & Kinross, Dundee and the North-East area of Fife. Although Tay Cities is a significant contributor to the Scottish economy, there has recently been slow growth and declining productivity.

However, there are opportunities for growth in sectors such as information and communication, healthcare, construction and energy. Sectors that have a significant employment footprint in the region include healthcare, education, accommodation & food services, and wholesale & retail trade.

The future demand for labour is strong, fuelled by the need to replace retiring workers. Over the mid-term (2025-2028), there is forecast to be a total requirement for 29,400 people to work in jobs in Tayside; and in the long-term (2028-2035) for 66,000 people[1]. In Fife, the mid-term total requirement is forecast to be 22,100, and in the long-term, for 46,800 people.[2]

The largest employing industries in Tayside in 2025 were human health & social work (39,900 people), wholesale & retail trade (20,500 people), and education (20,300 people).[3] The largest employing industries in Fife were human health & social work (27,200 people), wholesale & retail (18,900 people), and education (18,000 people).[4]

Working age population trends vary across the Tay Cities Region. Dundee City and Perth & Kinross show slow growth while Angus and Fife have declining working age populations, driven by sharp drops in the 20-24 and 45-54 age groups.[5]

Skills challenges

Employer consultation identified recruitment as the number one challenge in the region, with three quarters of respondents to the employer survey indicating that they had difficulty filling vacancies, primarily due to a lack of applicants. As well as this, employers also highlighted concerns around work-readiness of those entering the labour market.

Stakeholders highlighted potential demand in digital, laboratory technical, and cyber security skills, with employers identifying issues with computer literacy skills. This emphasises the need to improve both digital literacy and healthcare skills, which could be done through the expansion of existing programmes such as the NHS Skills Academy.

Opportunities

Several industrial and technological strengths offer promising avenues for growth in the Tay Cities. Life sciences, health and digital and technology have been identified as priority sectors, and tourism and hospitality also remain significant economic drivers. Emerging green technologies also present opportunities for the region, particularly in terms of hydrogen energy and electric vehicle servicing. Cyber security, anchored by Abertay University's cyberQuarter, also shows potential for growth.

Partners in the skills system will build on existing collaboration to enhance connections between industry, education and academia, exploring opportunities to improve pathways into areas of identified skills shortages.

1   Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside

2   Skills Development Scotland (2025 Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

3   Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside

4   Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

5   Mid-2024 Population Estimates, National Records of Scotland. Data sourced from the Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland
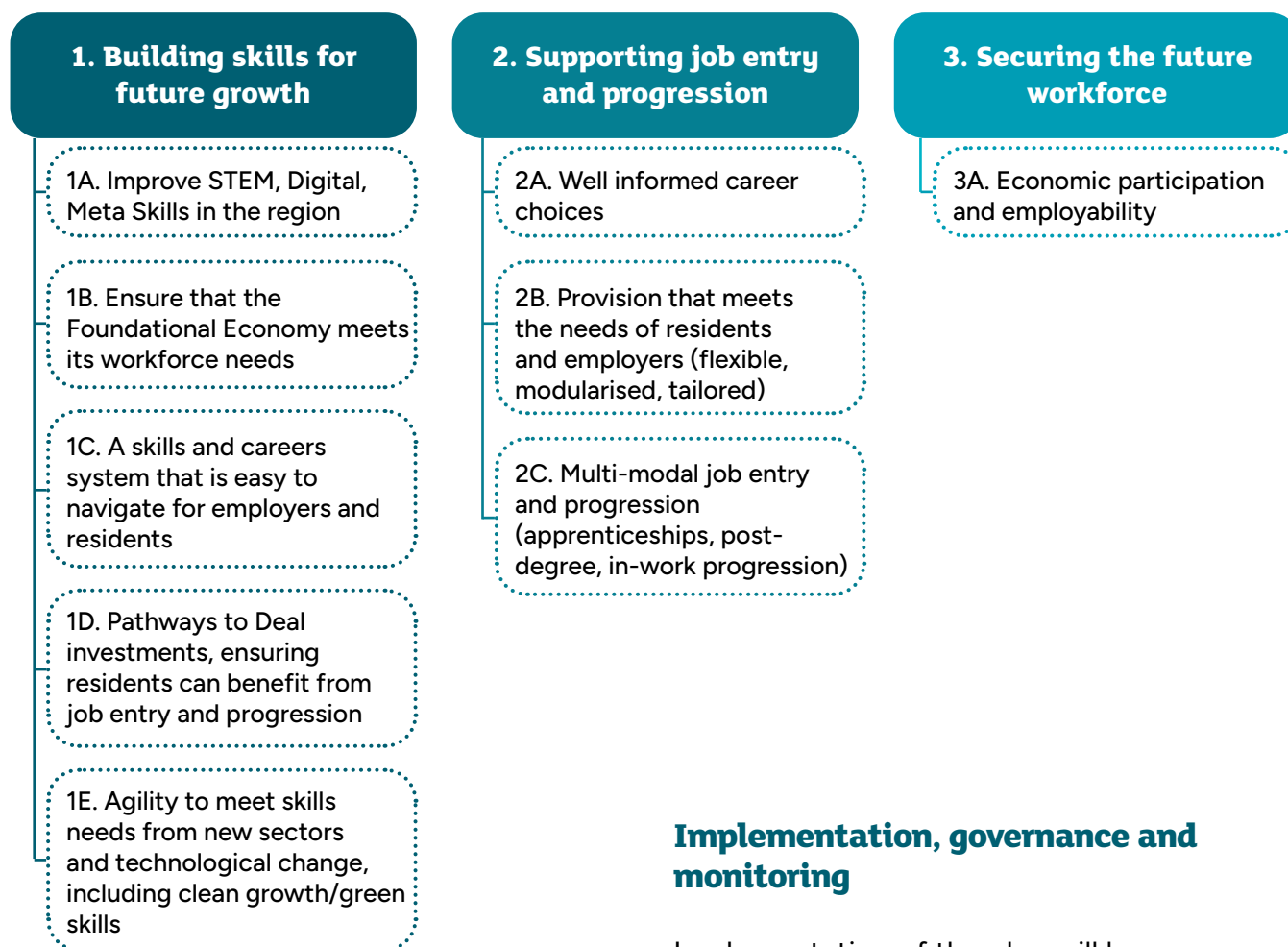
The action plan

The plan was designed to provide an agreed, collaborative and focussed response to the skills needs identified through the evidence base review and consultation with employers and stakeholders. It is important to acknowledge that there is already a wealth of activity underway to support skills development in the region. The plan adds to individual efforts by providing a focus for collaborative action and a framework for partners to come together around a region-wide effort to align skills provision with the needs of businesses and the wider economy.

The plan is formed around three central missions:

- **Mission 1 – Building skills for future growth**
- **Mission 2 – Supporting job entry and progression**
- **Mission 3 – Securing the future workforce**

Under each mission, the plan has a series of objectives and actions to achieve these objectives. More detail on timelines and lead/supporting partners are included in the detailed plan in section 6.

Figure 1.1 – A summary of action plan missions and priority areas for action

1. Building skills for future growth

- 1A. Improve STEM, Digital, Meta Skills in the region
- 1B. Ensure that the Foundational Economy meets its workforce needs
- 1C. A skills and careers system that is easy to navigate for employers and residents
- 1D. Pathways to Deal investments, ensuring residents can benefit from job entry and progression
- 1E. Agility to meet skills needs from new sectors and technological change, including clean growth/green skills

2. Supporting job entry and progression

- 2A. Well informed career choices
- 2B. Provision that meets the needs of residents and employers (flexible, modularised, tailored)
- 2C. Multi-modal job entry and progression (apprenticeships, post-degree, in-work progression)

3. Securing the future workforce

- 3A. Economic participation and employability

Implementation, governance and monitoring

Implementation of the plan will be overseen by the existing Tay Cities Skills Advisory Board (SAB). A monitoring framework and proactive communication plan will be developed to track the plan's progress.

1. Introduction

The Tay Cities Regional Skills Action Plan (TCRSAP) is a framework for collaboration around skills development. The plan sets out priority actions for the next four years (between 2025-2029).

Regional partners have a positive track record of collaborative working, including through the Tay Cities Region Deal Partnership, with a shared ambition to make the region one of the most desirable areas in Europe to live, work, invest and visit.

The Tay Cities Economic Prospectus 2025-35[6] sets out an ambition to make the Tay Cities region a cleaner and greener region driving the transition to net zero and growing production of clean energy as part of a green industrial strategy. The region aims to lead the transition for clean, green growth that fosters world-leading innovation, research and business entrepreneurship and growth. The vision outlined in the regional Economic Prospectus[7] is for the economy to be fully inclusive—putting people and wellbeing at the heart of everything, tackling disadvantage, poverty and inequality. Skills and talent is one of the enablers of the prospectus to support sectors such as clean growth, life sciences, health & agri-tech, tourism & culture, and the creative, digital, cyber and games economy.

Regional strengths include capital projects like the International Barley Hub and Advanced Plant Growth Centre, Abertay University cyberQuarter, Eden Campus, and initiatives to improve STEM education. Priority industrial sectors include life sciences, health, digital and technology, tourism & hospitality, creative industries, green technology, manufacturing, agriculture, and land-based industries. Regional employers have identified specific skills needs, including digital skills, cyber security, artificial intelligence (AI), and specialised technical expertise. The Tay Cities Deal (2019-2029)[8] has allocated £20 million for skills and employability development, overseen by a dedicated Thematic Board.

To succeed, the Regional Skills Action Plan will require collaborative resource pooling, innovations in policy and practice, and improved employer engagement. The aim is to address skills gaps in digital, laboratory, and cybersecurity fields, further support for STEM skills, and making the skills and employment system easier to navigate for residents and employers.

In developing this action plan, the latest evidence on the regional labour market has been analysed, including research on future skills needs. The current national, regional and local policy and strategy context has also been acknowledged as the framework for this action plan to operate within, and be complementary to.

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6   Tay Cities Region: Prospectus for Economic Growth

7   Tay Cities Region: Prospectus for Economic Growth

8   Tay Cities Region Deal

2. Economic and labour market context

Introduction

The TCRSAP was informed by a series of consultations and a desk-based review of existing data, evidence and relevant literature including forecast data from the Tayside and Fife Regional Skills Assessments.[9] This section draws on evidence gathered as part of this review to provide an overview of the regional economy and labour market.

The Scottish economy

The Scottish economy has experienced a period of slow growth and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. While there has been growth in recent quarters, the pace has slowed.[10] The UK economy has also seen similar trends, with GDP growth slowing down.[11] Inflation has fallen but remains elevated, and economic forecasts predict a challenging outlook with low growth rates.[12]

Scotland's labour market continues to show signs of moderation, amid persistent challenges. Between July and September 2025, Labour Force Survey data showed employment decreased 0.7 pp to 74.3%.[13] Unemployment marginally decreased to 3.7% (down 0.1 pp), while economic inactivity increased to 22.8% (up 0.8 pp). Job postings remain steady with a slight increase in October 2025 compared to the previous month (up 0.9% or 400 job postings) and wage pressures remain high, although there are signs of easing. Annual growth in regular pay declined to 4.6% over the July-September 2025 period.[14]

Overview of the Tay Cities regional economy and labour market

The Tay Cities region is a significant contributor to the Scottish economy,[15] with both Tayside and Fife in the second highest quartile of regions for GVA contribution in 2025. In the medium term (2025-2028), average annual GVA is forecast to increase at the same rate as the Scottish average in Fife (1.7%) with Tayside behind at 1.5%.[15] Over the same period, productivity in Fife and Tayside is forecast to grow at 0.9% each year, just above the Scottish average of 0.8%.[16]

There are opportunities for growth in sectors such as information & communication, construction, and energy. Other key industries in Tayside include real estate, healthcare, manufacturing, and wholesale & retail trade[17], while Fife's economy is driven by manufacturing, real estate, healthcare, and wholesale & retail trade. There are opportunities to enhance productivity in the Tay Cities region (£54,900 in Fife and £53,000 in Tayside) as it is currently below the Scottish average (£57,700).[18]

The Foundational Economy is a significant employer in the Tay Cities Region, with healthcare, retail and education being the largest employing industries in the region in 2025 by number of people.[19] Potential growth opportunities include the transition to a net-zero economy.

In the first six months of 2025, there was sustained demand for workers in the region.[20] Job postings in Tayside accounted for 6.4% of Scotland's total job postings between January and June 2025, whilst Fife accounted for 4.5% of Scotland's total jobs postings.[21] The top postings in both Tayside and Fife were for care workers and home carers.[22]

9 Regional Skills Assessments for Fife and Tayside, October 2025, Skills Development Scotland.

10 Office for National Statistics, Monthly Gross Domestic Product by Gross Value Added; Monthly Inflation and Price Indices.

11 Office for National Statistics, Monthly Gross Domestic Product by Gross Value Added; Monthly Inflation and Price Indices.

12 Office for National Statistics, Monthly Gross Domestic Product by Gross Value Added; Monthly Inflation and Price Indices.

13 Skills Development Scotland, Economy, People and Skills monthly report, November 2025.

14 Skills Development Scotland, Economy, People and Skills monthly report, November 2025.

15 Regional Skills Assessments for Fife and Tayside, October 2025, Skills Development Scotland.

16 Regional Skills Assessments for Fife and Tayside, October 2025, Skills Development Scotland.

17 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside

18 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

19 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside; Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

20 See Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife; Skills Development Scotland (2024) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside

21 Lightcast data, from Regional Skills Assessments for Fife and Tayside, October 2025, Skills Development Scotland.

22 Lightcast data, from Regional Skills Assessments for Fife and Tayside, October 2025, Skills Development Scotland.

The future demand for labour is strong, fuelled by the need to replace workers who have retired, moved away or changed jobs.[23] Over the mid-term (2025-2028), there is forecast to be a total requirement for 29,400 people to work in jobs in Tayside; and in the long-term (2028-2035) for 66,000 people.[24] In Fife, mid-term total requirement is forecast to be 22,100, and in the long-term, for 46,800 people.[25]

There are significant skills shortages and gaps in Tayside.[26] A higher proportion of vacancies in Tayside compared to the Scottish average are considered hard to fill due to a lack of suitable candidates.[27] This shortage impacts businesses, leading to increased workloads, difficulty meeting customer demands, and delays in product development.

Underemployment is a feature of the Tay Cities regional labour market.[28] A larger share of the Tayside workforce is underutilised, meaning their skills are not fully employed.[29] This suggests a mismatch between the skills possessed by workers and the requirements of their jobs.

The change in working population varies across the local authorities in the Tay Cities Region.[30] There is slow growth in Scotland's working age population (+1.6% between 2014 and 2024), with growth in Dundee City and Perth & Kinross below the national average (+0.9% and +0.4% respectively). In Angus and Fife, the working age population is shrinking. This is particularly pronounced in Angus (-5.9%), driven by an ageing population and notable declines in the size of the 20-24 and 45-54 age groups.

Economic Participation rates[31] vary amongst localities within the Tay Cities region. The main characteristics of economic participation and local variations include:

- **lower economic activity:** Angus and Dundee have lower economic activity rates compared to the Scottish average. In Angus, this is particularly the case among women[32]

- **unemployment:** while the overall unemployment rate is similar to the Scottish average, Dundee has a higher rate[33]

- **inactivity:** a significant portion of inactivity is due to long-term sickness and being in education, especially in Dundee[34]

- **worklessness:** Dundee has a higher rate of workless households compared to the Scottish average[35].

23 UK Employer Skills Survey 2024 – Scotland Report., data sourced from The Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland

24 Skills Development Scotland 2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside

25 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

26 UK Employer Skills Survey 2024 – Scotland Report., data sourced from The Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland

27 2022 Employer Skills Survey – Scotland Analysis

28 Mid-2024 Population Estimates, National Records of Scotland. Data sourced from the Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland

29 UK Employer Skills Survey 2024 – Scotland Report., data sourced from The Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland

30 Mid-2024 Population Estimates, National Records of Scotland. Data sourced from the Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland

31 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside; Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife; Office for National Statistics: Annual Population Survey.

32 Office for National Statistics: Annual Population Survey

33 Office for National Statistics: Annual Population Survey

34 Office for National Statistics: Annual Population Survey

35 Office for National Statistics: Annual Population Survey

A higher proportion of working-age residents in Tayside and Fife are disabled compared to the Scottish average.[36]

Considering ethnicity, ethnic minority groups have higher employment rates in Tayside, whereas in Fife white ethnicities have higher employment rates.[37]

Qualifications vary by local area. With 49.9% qualified to SCQF level 9 (degree level) and above, Fife has a lower share of working-age residents with degree-level qualifications compared to the Scottish average of 53.7%. Perth & Kinross has a higher-than-average share qualified to SCQF level 9 and above, at 63.2%, with Dundee (55.7%) and Angus (51.6%) near the Scottish average.[38]

There are lower earnings than the Scottish average in some localities. Average weekly earnings[39] in Tayside and Fife are below the Scottish average. Average workplace weekly wages in all local areas in the Tay Cities Region are below the Scottish average of £773.80, with weekly workplace earnings in 2025 of:

- Fife £741.20
- Perth & Kinross £750.20
- Dundee £709.50
- Angus £690.60

The share of working-age residents claiming benefits was above the Scottish average of 3% in Dundee (3.9%) and Fife (3.1%) but below average in Angus (2.9%) and Perth & Kinross (2.2%). The percentage of 18 to 24-year-olds claiming out-of-work benefits was higher than the Scottish average (4.4%) in Angus (5.5%), Dundee (4.9%) and Fife (4.8%), and below the average in Perth & Kinross (3.9%).[40]

Skills implications:

- A significant proportion of future labour market demand in Tayside and in Fife is for jobs requiring qualifications between SCQF level 7-10.

- The plan should take into account raising qualifications where needed.

- The slow growth or shrinking of the working age population in local authorities across the region poses challenges to meeting the total requirement outlined previously. The plan should look for ways to increase the available pool of labour.

- Skills and labour shortages may impact the region's ability to fully take advantage of opportunities offered by the transition to net zero and the digital economy. The plan should take into account the demand for STEM and digital skills.

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36 Office for National Statistics: Annual Population Survey. Data sourced from The Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland.

37 Office for National Statistics: Annual Population Survey. Data sourced from The Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland.

38 Office for National Statistics: Annual Population Survey

39 Office for National Statistics: Annual Population Survey;

40 Office for National Statistics: Annual Population Survey

Skills to support the transition to net zero

Understanding the scale of green jobs in the Tay Cities region is important when considering future demand and opportunity areas.

Green Jobs in Scotland: An inclusive approach to definition, measurement and analysis is a report which was commissioned by Skills Development Scotland to help develop a better understanding of green jobs.[41] It uses an evidence-based approach to create an inclusive definition of three different categories of green jobs:

- new and emerging jobs
- jobs with enhanced skills and knowledge
- jobs where there is increased demand.

Figure 2.1 sets out the definition and description of the three green jobs categories as presented in the Green Jobs in Scotland report. The Tayside and Fife Regional Skills Assessments use these categories to estimate the number of people employed in these roles at a regional level.[42]

Figure 2.1 – The three categories of green jobs

1. New and Emerging	The impact of green economy activities and technologies creates the need for unique work and worker requirements, which results in the **generation of new occupations**. These new occupations can be entirely novel or 'born' from an existing occupation. An example is solar system technicians who must be able not only to install new technology but also to determine how this technology can best be used on a specific site.
2. Enhanced Skills and Knowledge	The impact of green economy activities and technologies can result in **significant change to the work and worker requirements of existing occupations**. This impact may result in an increase in demand for these occupations. The essential purposes of the occupation remain the same but tasks, skills, knowledge and external elements, such as credentials, have been altered. An example is architects, an occupation in which greening has increased knowledge requirements pertaining to energy efficient materials and construction, as well as skills associated with integrating green technology into the aesthetic design of buildings.
3. Increased Demand	The impact of green economy activities and technologies can **increase employment demand for some existing occupations**. However, this impact does not entail significant changes in the work and worker requirements of the occupation. The work context may change but the tasks do not. An example is the increased demand for electrical power line installers and repairers related to energy efficiency and infrastructure upgrades.

41 Jeisson Cardenas Rubio, Chris Warhurst & Pauline Anderson (2022) Green Jobs in Scotland: An inclusive approach to definition, measurement and analysis, Warwick Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick.

42 Skills Development Scotland (2025 Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside; Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

The Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan (CESAP) 2020 - 2025[43], launched in 2020, set out a clear direction for the skills needed to support Scotland in its just transition to net zero. It identified five broad areas of economic activity that will make a significant contribution to the net zero transition and set out the opportunities and skills implications arising from this, much of which will be driven by the need to adapt to new technologies and approaches. This section summarises information on these five broad areas of economic activity:

1. **Energy transition:** This sector encompasses oil & gas, on & offshore wind, electricity, hydrogen and carbon capture & storage. Energy transition involves a move away from reliance on fossil fuels to zero emission energy sources as well as efforts to reduce and conserve energy use.

2. **Construction:** Activity in this sector includes design, build and retrofit of residential and non-residential properties to reduce the emissions from heating of buildings. The sector has a high carbon footprint, as a consumer of natural resources, and there are opportunities to reduce emissions by adopting circular approaches and investing in infrastructure such as heat networks etc.

3. **Manufacturing** (with a focus on engineering): This sector will play a significant role in the transition to net zero, with targets set for a reduction in industrial emissions. It is expected that technological innovation will play a key role by helping to reduce waste and improving the efficiency of manufacturing processes.

4. **Transport** (including road transport, railways, domestic aviation, shipping and aircraft support vehicles): The CESAP set out how this sector was responsible for more than one quarter (28%) of UK greenhouse gas emissions in 2018. The decarbonisation of transport may present a number of opportunities in areas such as Ultra Low Emission Vehicles and the electrification of railways.

5. **Agriculture and land-use** (including Forestry): The CESAP recognised the dual role that this sector can have in supporting net zero ambitions by reducing emissions from agriculture while also mitigating emissions through activities such as peatland restoration and adopting approaches such as precision farming.

Transition to net zero in Tay Cities

The Tayside and Fife Regional Skills Assessments provide information about the number of people employed in each of the five CESAP sectors mentioned above, split into green jobs and non-green jobs.[44]

In Tayside, around 48,300 people are employed in these sectors, equating to 7% of the Scottish total. In Fife, 38,900 people are employed across the CESAP sectors, equating to 6% of Scotland's total employment in these sectors.

Figures 2.2 and 2.3 present an overview of employment in CESAP sectors in Tayside and Fife, showing that:

- in Tayside, the construction sector employs the greatest volume of people of the five CESAP sectors at 14,100, the majority of which (84%) are considered green jobs

- transport employs the smallest volume of people in Tayside of the five CESAP sectors (5,000) but over half of these (52%) are green jobs

43   Skills Development Scotland (2020) Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan 2020-2025

44   Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside;
     Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

- in Fife, the manufacturing sector also employs the largest number of people across the CESAP sectors (12,700), 65% of which are considered green jobs, closely followed by construction (11,600), with 85% considered green jobs
- agriculture employs the smallest volume of people in Fife, with a total of 2,300 employed.

Figure 2.2 – Employment in Tayside CESAP sectors (2025)

Agriculture

18% 82%

Total: 5,700 people

Construction

16% 84%

Total: 14,100 people

Manufacturing (with Engineering)

35% 65%

Total: 11,900 people

Energy and waste treatment

33% 67%

Total: 11,600 people

Transport

48% 52%

Total: 5,000 people

Green Jobs   Non-Green Jobs
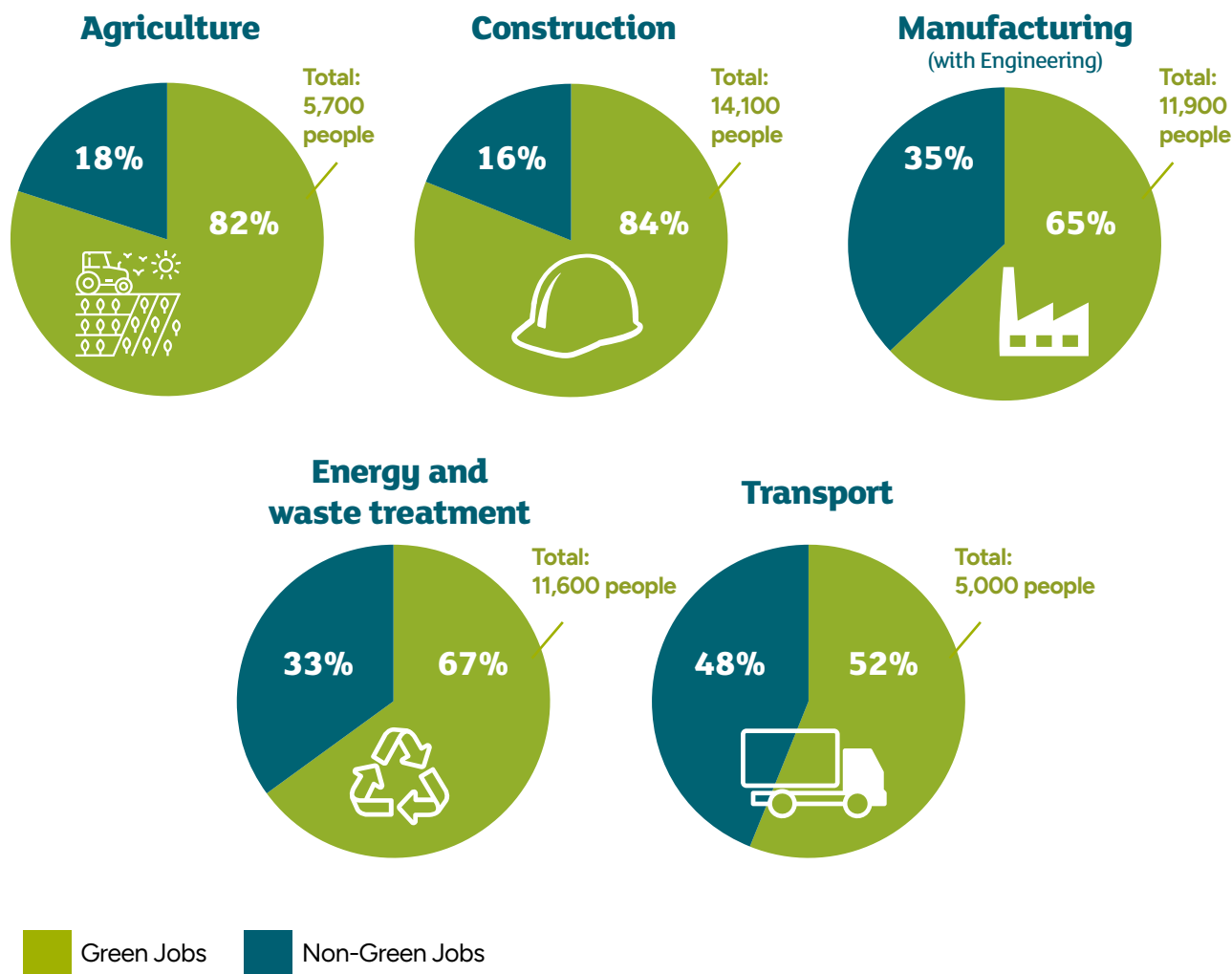
Figure 2.3 – Employment in Fife CESAP sectors (2025)

Agriculture
Total: 2,300 people

12%
88%

Construction
Total: 11,600 people

15%
85%

Manufacturing
(with Engineering)
Total: 12,700 people

35%
65%

Energy and waste treatment
Total: 4,200 people

34%
66%

Transport
Total: 8,200 people

49%
51%

Green Jobs   Non-Green Jobs
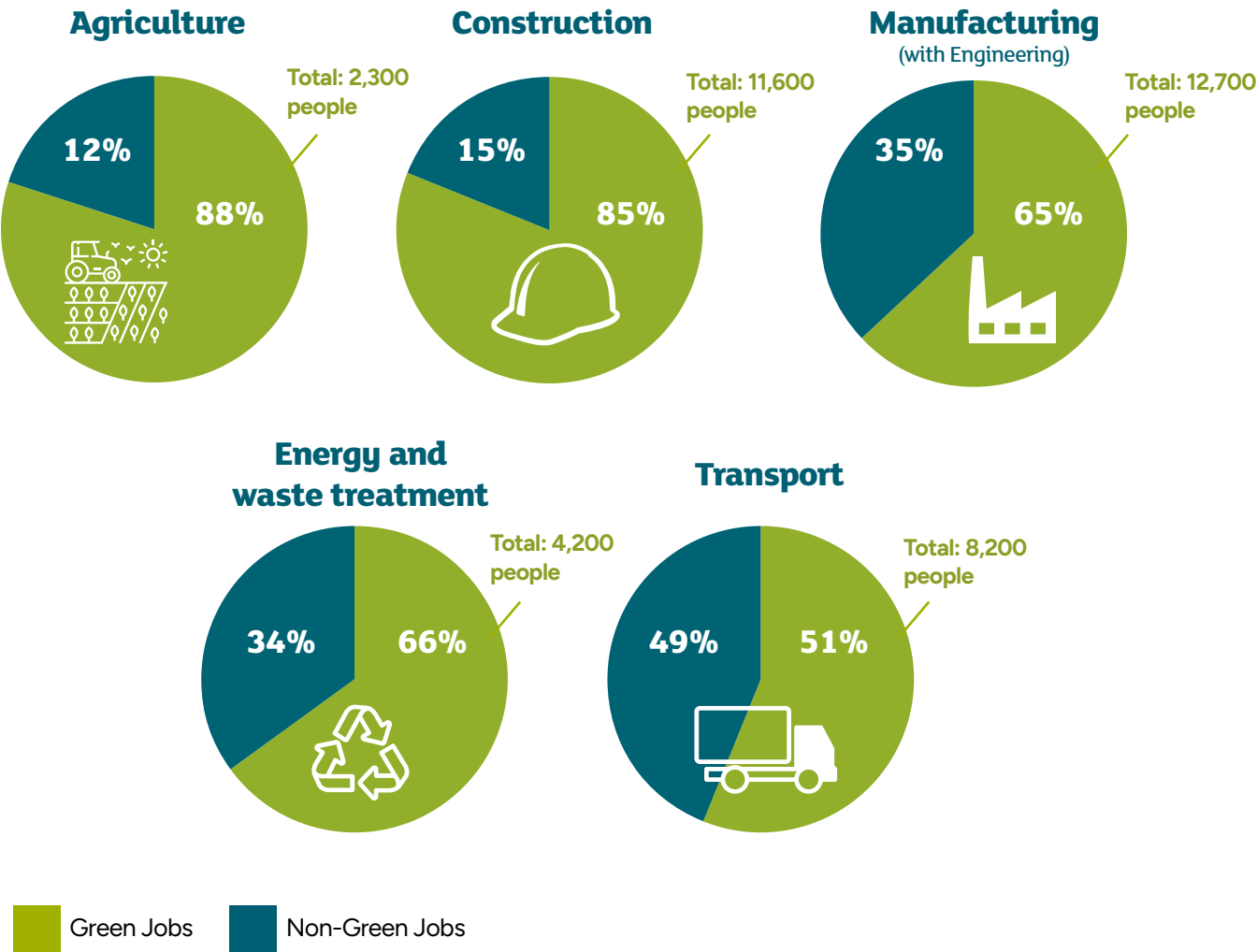
As well as providing an overview of employment in the CESAP sectors, the Tayside Regional Skills Assessment also includes an analysis of 17,400 job postings in the region between January and June 2025. Analysis of these job postings reveals that more than one-third (37% or 6,300) were for green jobs and that these green job postings have the following split across the three categories set out in the Green Jobs in Scotland report.

Skills implications:

- A significant proportion of recent job vacancies have been related to green jobs in the Tay Cities region.

- The plan should consider how to grow and promote skills associated with green jobs to ensure that the region is equipped to support the transition to net zero.

- **14%** of green job postings were for **new and emerging jobs** – new occupations which are created because of the need for unique work and worker requirements due to green economy activities.

- **58%** of green job postings were for **enhanced skills and knowledge** jobs – existing occupations which will require

significant change to the work and worker requirements due to green economy activities.

- **28%** of green jobs postings were for roles which will experience **increased demand** – existing occupations which will be needed in higher numbers due to green economy activities.

In the Fife Regional Skills Assessment[45], 12,200 job postings were analysed between January and June 2025, and over a third of these were for green jobs (4,300). In Fife:

- **14%** of green job postings were for **new and emerging jobs**

- **53%** of green job postings were for **enhanced skills and knowledge jobs**

- **33%** of green jobs postings were for roles which will experience **increased demand**.

Across the postings analysed, green jobs had a median advertised salary of £35,800 in Tayside, compared to a £28,900 median salary for all jobs in the region, and a median salary of £33,000 in Fife compared to a median salary of £28,000 for all jobs, showing that green jobs offer a premium in the region.

Labour market supply

Recent estimates suggest that the regional workforce in Tayside consists of 195,700 people, accounting for 7.2% of overall Scottish employment.[46] Between 2015-2025, the workforce in Tayside is estimated to have increased by 3.3%. The workforce in Fife is estimated to be 156,000 people, accounting for 5.8% of Scottish employment.[47] The regional workforce in Fife has grown by an estimated 3.9% between 2015-2025, equivalent to 5,900 people. Both regions are below the Scottish average of a 5.5% increase.

However, when compared to the Scottish average, the working age population is decreasing across the Tay Cities. Graph 2.1 below shows the percentage of the population aged between 16 and 64 in each of the constituent local authorities:

Graph 2.1 – Percentage of the population who are aged 16 to 64 in the Tay Cities local authorities

Percentage of the population aged between 16-24
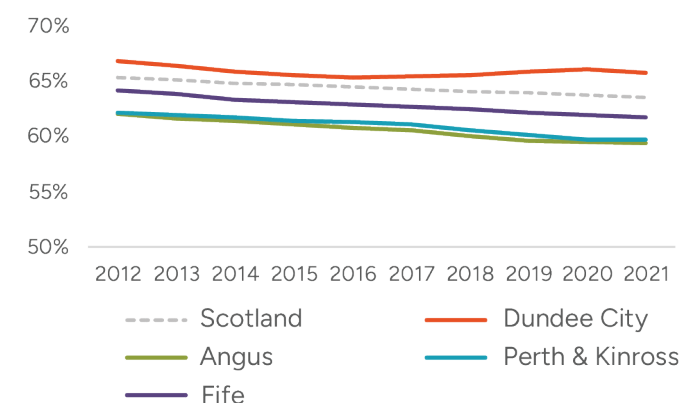
Data source: ONS population estimates

From Graph 2.1, the supply of working age people as a percentage of the population has steadily declined between 2012-2021 across the local authorities of Tay Cities, and in the case of Angus, Fife, and Perth & Kinross, the percentage of the population aged 16 to 64 is lower than the Scottish average. [48]

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45   Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

46   Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside

47   Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

48   Data from the Office of National Statistics accessed via NOMIS.

Considering economic inactivity, the levels vary across the different local authorities, for example 28.6% of those aged between 16 to 64 are economically inactive in Angus, above the Scottish average of 23%.[49] However, in both Fife and Perth & Kinross, the economic inactivity levels are low, at 21.1% and 21.8% respectively.[50] In Dundee, a large proportion of those who are economically inactive are either students or those with a long-term sickness. Despite this, 32.9% of those who are economically inactive in Dundee want to work, suggesting that there are opportunities to increase the supply of labour.

Along with increasing the overall supply of labour, it is important to consider differences in participation rates for groups of people across the Tay Cities region and identify opportunities to increase workforce diversity.

The employment rate of those who have an Equality Act (EA) or work limiting disability is significantly lower than the average employment rate at 48.1%, particularly in Dundee.[51]

The employment rate also differs for those from an ethnic minority, with the employment rate for these groups being slightly lower than white people for most local authority areas in the Tay Cities Region.[52]

Labour market demand

The future demand for labour is strong, fuelled by the need to replace retiring workers. Over the mid-term (2025-2028), there is forecast to be a total requirement for 29,400 people to work in jobs in Tayside; and in the long-term (2028-2035) for 66,000 people.[53] Demand is concentrated across SCQF levels 7-10.[54]

In Fife, the mid-term total requirement is forecast to be 22,100, and in the long-term, for 46,800 people.[55] For the mid-term in Fife, 51% of demand will require SCQF levels 7-10.[56]

The largest employing industries in Tayside in 2025 were human health & social work (39,900 people), wholesale & retail trade (20,500 people), and education (20,300 people)[57], whilst the largest employing industries in Fife were human health & social work (27,200 people), wholesale & retail (18,900 people), and education (18,000 people).[58]

In the mid-term (2025-2028) in Tayside, workforce demand is heavily concentrated across the following industries[59]:

- human health and social work activities (4,900 people)

- wholesale and retail trade (4,600 people)

- accommodation and food service activities (3,200 people).

49 ONS Annual Population Survey, Jan 2024 – Dec 2024, accessed via NOMIS.

50 ONS Annual Population Survey, Jan 2024 – Dec 2024, accessed via NOMIS.

51 ONS Annual Population Survey, Jan 2024 – Dec 2024, accessed via NOMIS.

52 ONS Annual Population Survey, Jan 2024 – Dec 2024, accessed via NOMIS.

53 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside

54 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside

55 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

56 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

57 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside

58 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Regional Skills Assessment for Fife

59 Oxford Economics Forecasts, available in the Regional Skills Assessment for Tayside

In the mid-term (2025-2028) in Fife, workforce demand is heavily concentrated across the following industries[60]:

- wholesale and retail trade (4,000 people)
- human health and social work activities (3,000 people)
- transportation storage (2,500 people)
- education (2,400 people).

Considering skills gaps, analysis of the 2024 Employer Skills Survey shows that in Tayside in 2024, 9% of employers reported having a skills shortage vacancy – vacancies that are difficult to fill because of challenges finding applicants with the right knowledge, skills, or expertise.[61]

Skills underutilisation was a key theme for employers in Fife, with 32% indicating that they had staff who were underutilised.[62] However, simultaneously, Fife also had one of the highest proportions of employers reporting a need for upskilling (62%, which was above the rate of 61% for Scotland overall)[63], suggesting that there is a level of skills mismatch.

Participation in education and training

Evidence suggests that the number of enrolments in higher education, further education and apprenticeships in Tay Cities has slightly declined over recent years. Enrolments across higher education, further education and apprenticeships are summarised below:

Further education (FE) and higher education (HE):

- There were 14,990 enrolments at the University of Dundee in 2023/24, a decrease from 17,365 in 2022/23.[64]

- At the University of Dundee in 2023/24, 2,205 enrolments were aligned to medicine and dentistry, and 2,840 were aligned to subjects allied to medicine.[65]

- The University of St. Andrews had 11,895 enrolments in 2023/24, a slight decrease from 2022/23 at 12,160 enrolments.[66]

- At the University of St. Andrews in 2023/24, 1,900 enrolments were aligned to social sciences and 1,865 were aligned to language and area studies.[67]

- Abertay University had 4,950 enrolments in 2023/24, a small increase from 2022/23, which saw 4,840 enrolments.[68]

- At Abertay University, a large number of enrolments in 2023/24 were aligned to computing subjects (1,075), business and management (1,015), and creative, design and performing arts (705).[69]

- In 2023/24, there were 15,907 enrolments at Dundee and Angus College, which was a significant reduction compared to 2022/23 (24,147). The reduction was due to the removal of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund, a fund designed to support workforce development and upskilling training for apprenticeship levy-paying businesses and SMEs.

- Full-time enrolments remained stable for Dundee and Angus College across both years, with 5,085 enrolments in 2023/24 and 4,955 enrolments in 2022/23. The areas with the most full-time and part-time enrolments in 2023/24 were construction & building services (1,718), social sciences (1,015) and engineering (927).

- For Fife College, in 2022/23, there were 29,059 enrolments, compared to 24,780 enrolments in 2023/24. The majority of enrolments for both years were for part time further education courses.

60   Oxford Economics Forecast, 2025. Data sourced from the Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland

61   Scottish Government (2024) Employer Skills Survey – Scotland. Data sourced from the Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland

62   Scottish Government (2024) Employer Skills Survey – Scotland. Data sourced from the Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland

63   Scottish Government (2024) Employer Skills Survey – Scotland. Data sourced from the Data Matrix, Skills Development Scotland

64   HESA (2025) Students by HE Provider

65   HESA (2025) HE Student Enrolments by HE Provider and Subject of Study

66   HESA (2025) Students by HE Provider

67   HESA (2025) HE Student Enrolments by HE Provider and Subject of Study

68   HESA (2025) Students by HE Provider

69   HESA (2025) HE Student Enrolments by HE Provider and Subject of Study

Apprenticeships:

- Statistics show that Modern Apprenticeship (MA) starts across all local authorities in Tayside have decreased in 2024/25 compared to the previous year.[70]

- There were a total of 1,944 MA starts across the Tayside constituent local authorities of Angus, Perth & Kinross, and Dundee City in 2024/25, a decrease from the previous year when there were 2,004 in 2023/24.[71]

- The number of MA starts in Fife was also lower in 2024/25 at 1,795 compared to 1,835 in 2023/24.[72]

- In Tayside in 2024/25, MA frameworks aligned to construction and related occupations, and sport, health and social care, had the highest number of starts, with 471 MA starts aligned to construction frameworks and 537 aligned to sport, health and social care.[73]

- Similarly in Fife, there were high numbers of MAs across frameworks related to construction and those aligned to health and social care.[74]

Annual Participation Measure:

Statistics show that the number of young people aged 16 to 19 who are participating in employment, education and training, varies across the local authorities in the Tay Cities[75]:

- Dundee: In 2024, 90.4% of young people were participating, increasing to 91.3% in 2025

- Angus: In 2024, 91.9% of young people were participating, decreasing to 91.5% in 2025

- Perth & Kinross: 92.5% of young people were participating in 2024, increasing to 93.7% in 2025

- Fife: In 2024, 90.8% were participating, increasing to 91.4% in 2025.

Skills implications:

- Of those who are economically inactive in Tayside, many want to work.

- The plan should take into account how to grow the available pool of labour, including making work accessible to different groups.

- Much of the demand in Tay Cities is likely to be across human health & social work, wholesale & retail trade, and accommodation & food services.

- The plan should look at ways to ensure careers in these sectors are promoted to create a pipeline of workers to fill current and future vacancies.

- The plan should also consider how to boost further and higher education enrolments to ensure there is a talent pipeline in the region.

70 Skills Development Scotland (2025) MA Starts by Local Authority 2024-25; Skills Development Scotland (2025) MA Starts by Local Authority 2023-24

71 Skills Development Scotland (2025) MA Starts by Local Authority 2024-25; Skills Development Scotland (2025) MA Starts by Local Authority 2023-24

72 Skills Development Scotland (2025) MA Starts by Local Authority 2024-25; Skills Development Scotland (2025) MA Starts by Local Authority 2023-24

73 Skills Development Scotland (2025) MA Starts by Local Authority 2024-25; Skills Development Scotland (2025) MA Starts by Local Authority 2023-24

74 Skills Development Scotland (2025) MA Starts by Local Authority 2024-25; Skills Development Scotland (2025) MA Starts by Local Authority 2023-24

75 Skills Development Scotland (2025) Annual Participation Measure

Future skills needs

Key findings from existing robust research sources such as the Fraser of Allander Institute's (University of Strathclyde) Skills for Today and Tomorrow report and The Institute for Employment Research's (University of Warwick) Skills Imperative 2035 report include the following key points[76]:

- Technological Advancement: Rapid digitisation, AI, and automation are transforming industries and creating new job roles.

- Sectoral Shifts: The economy is shifting towards service sectors, with a decline in manufacturing.

- Changing Business Models: The rise of the platform economy and remote work is altering traditional work structures.

- Demographic Shifts: An ageing population and longer life expectancies are impacting labour market dynamics.

- Environmental Change: The transition to a low-carbon economy necessitates green skills.

There is increasing demand for digital skills, as they become essential across all sectors, not just technology. Key drivers include:

- Technological Adoption: Businesses are increasingly adopting technologies like cloud computing, AI, and the Internet of Things (IoT).

- Hybrid Work: The rise of remote and hybrid work requires digital skills for effective communication and collaboration.

- Data-Driven Decision Making: Data analysis and interpretation skills are in high demand.

- Cyber security: As businesses become more reliant on technology, cyber security skills are crucial.

While automation will displace some jobs, it will also create new opportunities. Jobs that involve a high proportion of routine tasks are likely to be the most at risk, while highly skilled jobs requiring human interaction and creativity are unlikely to be fully automated.

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76 See Fraser of Allander Institute (2024) Skills for Today and Tomorrow; National Foundation for Educational Research (2022) The Skills Imperative 2035

3.   Policy and strategy context

In developing the Tay Cities Regional Skills Action Plan, an analysis of a range of local, regional and national strategy and policy documents was undertaken alongside the desk-based review of evidence. This section provides a high-level summary of the main themes identified from this review.

National context: six main themes

For skills and employment in Scotland, key priorities are set out in the national-level policies and strategies and can be summarised into six major themes:

1. Creating a more sustainable and inclusive economy

2. Reducing inequality

3. Improving skills and education

4. Tackling climate change

5. Supporting young people

6. Creating a more fair and just society.

These six themes or missions are not mutually exclusive - they are all affected by common trends and specific local circumstances.

Local and regional: five main policy themes

The Tay Cities Prospectus for Regional Growth 2025-2035 and individual local authority strategies and plans emphasise five key themes[77]:

■ Skills and talent

■ Economic growth

■ Social inclusion

■ Sustainability

■ Infrastructure and connectivity.

Evidence: priorities

Reading across the national and regional evidence, a set of priorities can be identified for the region to focus on addressing:

■ boosting economic growth rates by addressing lower productivity

■ helping employers by addressing skills shortages of applicants and skills deficiencies of workers with effective training and upskilling

■ helping employers with digital adoption and automation by education and skills provision

■ preparing for agile responses as digital, AI and green skills needs become more apparent

■ providing assistance to those who are not working but want a job, and helping employers to recruit and retain workers.

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77   Tay Cities Region: Prospectus for Regional Growth

Figure 3.1 – summary of the policy and strategy context for the action plan.

National Policy Context

Scottish Government focus on the following:

- Creating a more sustainable and inclusive economy
- Reducing inequality
- Improving skills and education
- Tackling climate change
- Supporting young people
- Creating a more fair and just society

Tay Cities Local Context

The Tay Cities Prospectus for Regional Growth – 2025 - 2035 and individual local authority strategies and plans emphasise five key themes:

- Skills and Talent
- Economic Growth
- Social Inclusion
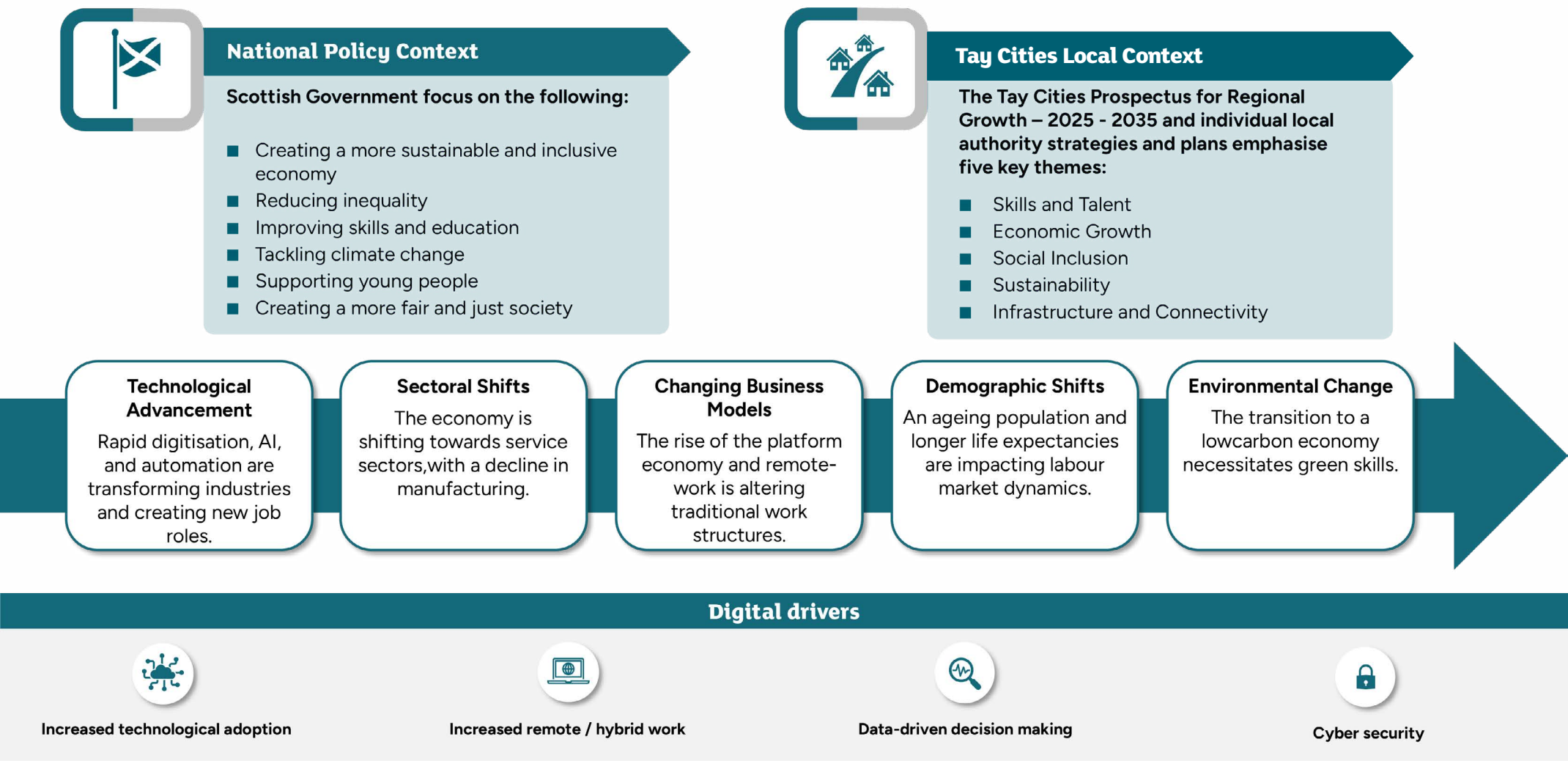- Sustainability
- Infrastructure and Connectivity

Technological Advancement
Rapid digitisation, AI, and automation are transforming industries and creating new job roles.

Sectoral Shifts
The economy is shifting towards service sectors,with a decline in manufacturing.

Changing Business Models
The rise of the platform economy and remote-work is altering traditional work structures.

Demographic Shifts
An ageing population and longer life expectancies are impacting labour market dynamics.

Environmental Change
The transition to a lowcarbon economy necessitates green skills.

Digital drivers

Increased technological adoption

Increased remote / hybrid work

Data-driven decision making

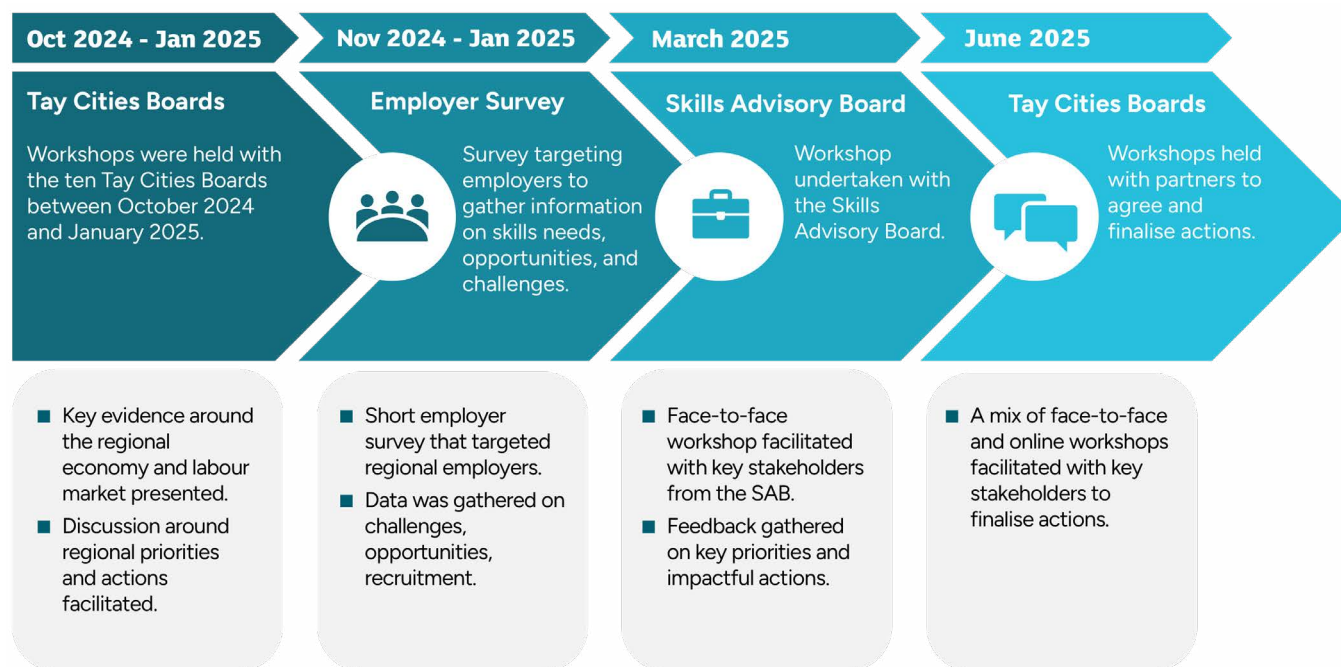Cyber security

4. Consultation insights

Introduction

Extensive stakeholder engagement was undertaken to support the development of the plan. This consultation included an online survey that gathered insight from 38 employers in the Tay Cities region, along with workshops with stakeholders who are members of the following Tay Cities boards, organisation and networks:

- Digital Board
- HE/FE Forum
- Heads of Economic Development Group
- Innovative, International Board
- NHS Tayside
- Regional STEM Partnership
- Skills Advisory Board
- Tay Cities Region Deal Management Group
- Tourism and Culture Board
- Transport Board.

Figure 4.1 summarises the consultation approach and the insights from employers and stakeholders are outlined in the next section.

Figure 4.1 – consultation approach

Oct 2024 - Jan 2025	Nov 2024 - Jan 2025	March 2025	June 2025
Tay Cities Boards	**Employer Survey**	**Skills Advisory Board**	**Tay Cities Boards**
Workshops were held with the ten Tay Cities Boards between October 2024 and January 2025.	Survey targeting employers to gather information on skills needs, opportunities, and challenges.	Workshop undertaken with the Skills Advisory Board.	Workshops held with partners to agree and finalise actions.

- Key evidence around the regional economy and labour market presented.
- Discussion around regional priorities and actions facilitated.

- Short employer survey that targeted regional employers.
- Data was gathered on challenges, opportunities, recruitment.

- Face-to-face workshop facilitated with key stakeholders from the SAB.
- Feedback gathered on key priorities and impactful actions.

- A mix of face-to-face and online workshops facilitated with key stakeholders to finalise actions.

Employer insights

Economic outlook

While businesses remain optimistic about their growth prospects over the next 12 months, concerns are growing regarding rising operating costs, recruitment difficulties, and the impact of recent economic measures.

Skills shortages

- Recruitment challenges: Three-quarters of respondents reported difficulties filling vacancies, primarily due to a lack of applicants and a lack of relevant work experience among candidates.

- Skills gaps: Critical skills shortages were identified in areas such as technical/professional skills, people management, and computer literacy.

- Work-readiness concerns: Employers expressed concerns about the work-readiness of school leavers, citing issues such as poor attitudes, limited work experience, and unrealistic expectations.

Training and development

- Barriers to training: Cost, lack of staff time, and inflexible training options were identified as major barriers to employee training.

- Limited use of formal training: While most businesses engage in some form of workforce development, reliance on internal training is high, while the use of FE colleges and universities for training is relatively low.

Employer engagement

- Collaboration with education providers: While many businesses offer work experience and engage with educational institutions, there is a need to further strengthen these partnerships.

- Limited use of apprenticeship programmes: Apprenticeship engagement remains relatively low amongst those employers who responded to the survey, despite employer recognition of their value.

Stakeholder insights

Existing strengths and opportunities

The Tay Cities Deal has laid a foundation for skills and employability development, allocating £20 million for skills and employability projects. A Skills and Employability Thematic Board (Skills Advisory Board) oversees these efforts. Capital projects such as the Tay Cities Engineering Partnership (TCEP) demonstrate a commitment to future-oriented skills. The region recognises the need to address skills shortages in key sectors including hospitality, tourism, digital, and manufacturing, and is working to align skills development with its recent economic prospectus.[78] Initiatives to improve STEM education and engagement, including partnerships with universities and colleges, further strengthen the region's capacity for skills development. These include projects within the Tay Cities Region Deal such as DigiTay, which aims to enhance digital and data skills in the region.

Several industrial and technological strengths offer promising avenues for growth. Life sciences, health, and digital/tech have been identified as priority sectors. Tourism and hospitality, despite recruitment challenges, remain significant economic drivers.

78 Tay Cities Region: Prospectus for Regional Growth

The region's cultural and creative industries require entrepreneurial and business skills development. Emerging green technology and renewable energy sectors, including hydrogen energy and electric vehicle servicing present opportunities for specialised skills training. While manufacturing faces national contraction, advanced manufacturing and upskilling in new technologies remain vital contributors to the regional economy. Agriculture and food & drink, along with heritage & construction (requiring specialised heritage construction skills), continue to be important. Cyber security, anchored by Abertay University's cyberQuarter, shows potential for growth, though student recruitment into specialist courses has been below expectations.

Key strategic employers, including the NHS, universities (Dundee, Abertay, St. Andrews), and the tourism and hospitality sector, have identified specific skills priorities. The NHS requires digital, laboratory technical, and computational science skills. There are also particular concerns with attracting those with skills to help fill entry-level trade roles, particularly in estates and facilities, including roles such as electrical, engineering, and plumbers. Universities need expertise in cyber security, AI, and professional services with digital capabilities. The tourism and hospitality sector needs improved customer service skills, career pathways,

and solutions to recruitment and retention issues. Manufacturing needs skills for emerging technologies and adopting existing technologies. Creative and cultural sectors require support for freelancers and small businesses, along with entrepreneurial skills. The public sector needs digital skills and enhanced service delivery capabilities.

Common priorities across the sectors include addressing digital skills gaps, developing and retaining talent in cyber security and AI, enhancing work-based learning, and supporting the green technology transition.

Challenges and constraints

Despite these strengths and opportunities, the Tay Cities region faces significant challenges. Centralised policies and resources may misalign with local needs, particularly concerning funding conditionality and responsiveness to emerging regional challenges. The annualisation of funds can create instability and uncertainty for delivery organisations. Much of the skills and employability delivery occurs at the local authority level, limiting regional-scale initiatives.

Persistent skills gaps exist in digital, laboratory technical and cyber security fields. Strengthening industry-academia collaboration, investing in CPD and upskilling,

and expanding successful programmes facilitated by NHS partner boards are crucial. The well-regarded regional STEM partnership faces challenges, including funding. The complexity of the skills and employment system makes it difficult for residents and employers to navigate, hindering access to crucial resources and support.

The evolving landscape of UK government policy presents both opportunities and challenges. Encouraging private sector investment in skills aligns with national policy, but it is unclear how the region will unlock such investment. Funding challenges, particularly the short-term nature of funding streams, make long-term planning difficult. Exploring models of provision such as skills boot camps and developing Fair Work Charters are potential avenues for progress, as is expanding youth pathways to give younger people the opportunity to take up roles. However, there has been limited implementation of flexible, modularised training provision.

The future of work, shaped by automation and AI, necessitates proactive planning to address job displacement and support the workforce transition. Further and higher education institutions play a crucial role, demonstrating strengths in engagement and partnerships, specialised course offerings, a digital skills focus, adaptability to industry needs, support for entrepreneurship, STEM

education, apprenticeship programmes, and research capabilities. However, they also face challenges in employer engagement, student uptake in specialised courses, and aligning skills provision with rapidly evolving economic needs. Local employability partnerships provide essential services, but with limited regional collaboration or coordination.

Skills implications:

■ Given that the consultations highlighted the following barriers to training staff: cost, lack of staff time, and inflexible training options, the plan should look for opportunities to provide more flexible training options in the region.

■ With accommodation & food services being one of the key areas of demand, and with tourism & hospitality identifying the following skills needs: improved customer service skills, career pathways, and solutions to recruitment and retention issues, the plan should look for ways to address these issues to help contribute to future economic growth for the region.

■ Health and social care activity is also a key area of future demand, and the NHS has identified the following specific areas of skills demand: digital, laboratory technical, and computational science skills, as well as entry-level skills for trade roles such as plumbing. The plan should aim to grow these skills to ensure that health and social care has the workforce it needs.

5.   Missions and objectives

The Tay Cities Regional Skills Action Plan is focused on missions and objectives that are applicable to the region which benefit from cooperation, collaboration, and joint use of resources or joint delivery at a regional level. The plan is focused around the following three missions:

- **Mission 1 – Building skills for future growth**
- **Mission 2 – Supporting job entry and progression**
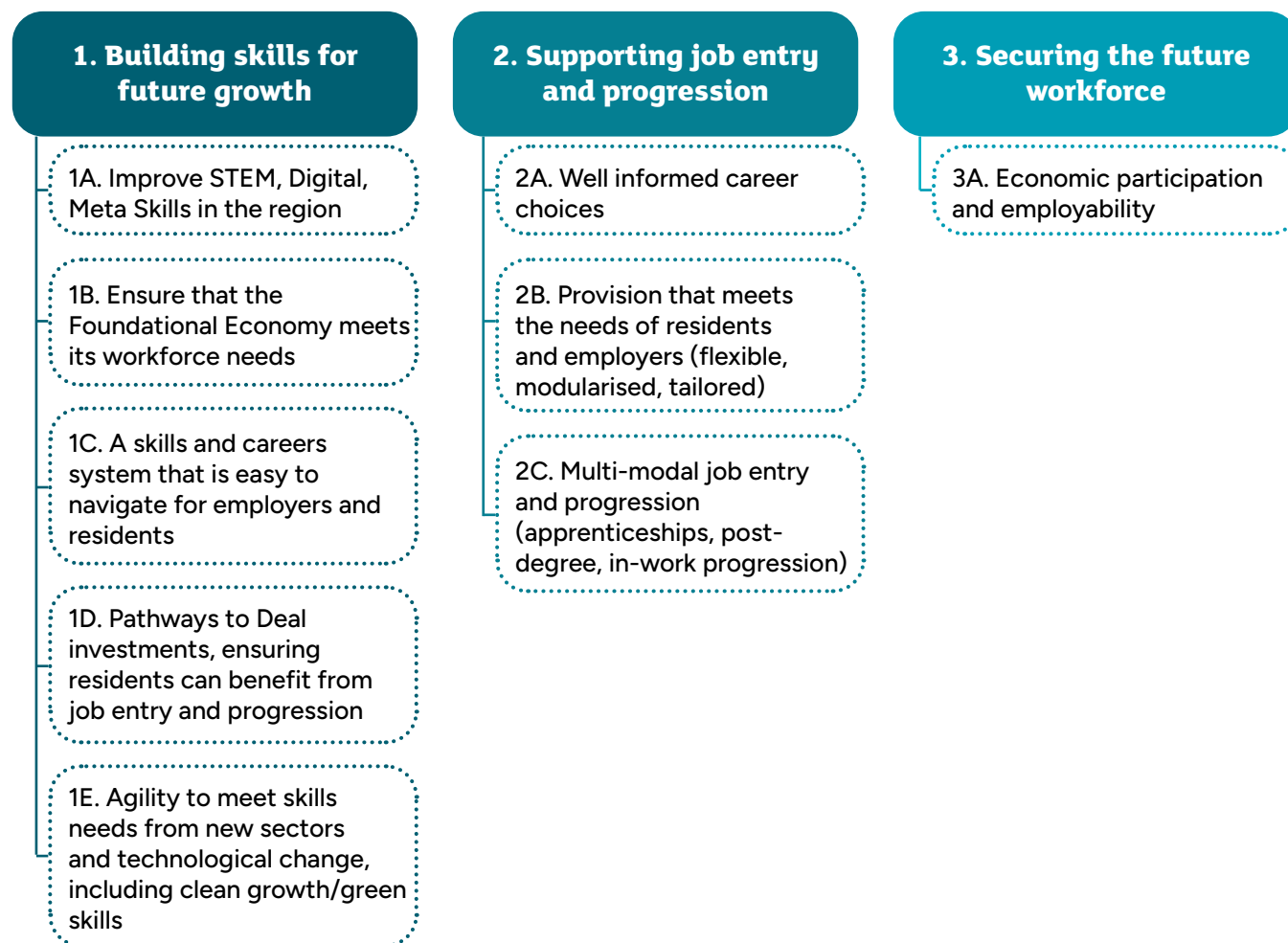- **Mission 3 – Securing the future workforce**

The development of the plan has recognised that skills are a derived demand, driven by employers with a need for particular skills. The plan responds to this by setting out actions to address identified skills needs in the region. However, the plan also reflects the role of skills as a lever in supporting broader ambitions around priorities such as community wealth building, tackling in-work and child poverty, and inequalities in the workforce.

As such, the missions and actions have been specifically designed to:

- respond directly to evidence of need highlighted through data analysis and consultation with employers and stakeholders

- align with the skills elements set out across the many regional investments underway including the Deals, and other priorities set out through the regional economic strategies

- support the delivery of broader policy ambitions including eradicating poverty and moving towards a wellbeing economy, for example, raising people's skillsets to help improve their work prospects and address in-work and child poverty, and providing targeted support to those in protected groups

- position the region to make the most of current and future opportunities, reflecting the need for a highly skilled workforce, by upskilling the people living and working in the region and giving businesses the skills they need.

Figure 5.1 summarises the missions and key objectives, with more detail on the missions, actions, outputs and outcomes provided in Section 6.

Figure 5.1 – Missions and objectives

1. Building skills for future growth

- 1A. Improve STEM, Digital, Meta Skills in the region
- 1B. Ensure that the Foundational Economy meets its workforce needs
- 1C. A skills and careers system that is easy to navigate for employers and residents
- 1D. Pathways to Deal investments, ensuring residents can benefit from job entry and progression
- 1E. Agility to meet skills needs from new sectors and technological change, including clean growth/green skills

2. Supporting job entry and progression

- 2A. Well informed career choices
- 2B. Provision that meets the needs of residents and employers (flexible, modularised, tailored)
- 2C. Multi-modal job entry and progression (apprenticeships, post-degree, in-work progression)

3. Securing the future workforce

- 3A. Economic participation and employability

6. Action plan

The priority areas for action outlined in the tables for Missions 1, 2 and 3 provide some headline actions at the regional level and the headline outcomes. More detail has been worked up around each of these actions and will be used by partners to support with the implementation of the plan. The plan identifies potential supporting partners, but this is not exhaustive and others may be identified as the plan progresses.

Mission 1: Building skills for future growth					
Objective	**Actions**	**Lead**	**Delivery partners**	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**
1A. Improve STEM, digital, and meta skills *Completion timescale: medium-term (by 2028)*	1A.1 Investigate existing STEM activity in the region to help identify any gaps.	Tay Cities STEM partnership	■ Tay Cities STEM partnership ■ Local authorities ■ Colleges ■ Universities ■ DYW ■ Industry ■ Skills Development Scotland	■ A document that reviews existing STEM activity in the region and any lessons learned.	■ Understand the scale of STEM activity in the region and identify gaps.
	1A.2 Embed meta skills through schools in the region and raise awareness of this with employers.	Skills Development Scotland		■ A systematic approach to embedding meta skills across all schools in Tay Cities.	■ Improve awareness of meta skills in the region for young people.
	1A.3 Promote development of digital skills and pathways into careers which require digital skills.	Skills Development Scotland		■ Campaign of enhanced promotion of relevant pathways.	■ Enhance digital skills in the region. ■ Increased number of people aware of what digital skills are and the different pathways into digital careers.
	1A.4 Future skills for growth programme.	Skills Development Scotland		■ A document that gathers, analyses and interprets existing intelligence on future skills needs relevant to the Tay Cities economy.	■ Stakeholders in the region understand what skills are

Mission 1: Building skills for future growth

Objective	Actions	Lead	Delivery partners	Outputs	Outcomes
1B. Ensure that the foundational economy meets its workforce needs *Completion timescale: medium-term (by 2028*	1B.1 Ensure NHS skills activity is represented across the region as a whole.	NHS	■ NHS Youth Academy ■ NHS Employability Initiatives ■ SDS ■ DYW ■ Health & Social Care Partnerships ■ Employability Partnerships	■ A joined-up picture of NHS skills activity across the region.	■ A better coordinated approach to health and social care workforce planning across the region, helping to make sure the right skills are in the right place at the right time.
	1B.2 Raise awareness of careers in health & social care and offer industry supported work experience opportunities to maximise work readiness.	NHS		■ Delivery of industry placements for students on relevant courses.	■ More people entering and progressing in health & social care careers. ■ Improved awareness and visibility of careers in health and social care for residents.
	1B.3 Strengthen pathways into health and social care roles.	NHS		■ Clearer, more accessible routes into health and social care jobs.	■ More people entering and progressing in health & social care careers.
	1B.4 Targeted support for individuals moving into health and social care careers.	NHS		■ A range of tailored support initiatives.	■ More people entering and staying in health and social care roles in the region.

Mission 1: Building skills for future growth

Objective	Actions	Lead	Delivery partners	Outputs	Outcomes
	1B.5 Coordinate the provision of employer engagement, work placements, CV and mock interview support.	Colleges / universities		■ Delivery of work placements, interview support, and CV support.	■ Residents are better prepared for employment in the workplace and more confident in applying for jobs.
	1B.6 Raise awareness of careers in tourism and hospitality.	Colleges / universities		■ Partner-wide career events showcasing tourism and hospitality roles and the pathways into them.	■ More people entering and staying in tourism and hospitality careers. ■ Improved awareness and visibility of careers in tourism and hospitality.
	1B.7 Offer industry supported work experience opportunities to maximise work readiness.	Colleges / universities		■ Industry-based opportunities provided to young people to increase their work readiness.	■ Improved work readiness, confidence, and employability among participants.
	1B.8 Targeted support for individuals moving into Foundational economy sector careers.	Colleges / universities		■ An increased number of people in the region receiving support to move into the foundational economy. ■ TBC when more specific activities are agreed.	■ More people successfully moving into jobs in the Foundational Economy, helping to fill vacancies in essential sectors.

Mission 1: Building skills for future growth

Objective	Actions	Lead	Delivery partners	Outputs	Outcomes
1C. A skills and careers system that is easy to navigate for employers and residents. *Completion timescale: short-term (by 2026)*	1C.1 Develop concept and options for a regional learning and skills hub to help navigation of learning and skills support for employers and residents.	Colleges / universities	■ Local authorities	■ A scoping paper that explores the purpose, options and delivery of a Tay Cities learning and skills hub.	■ Residents and employers can easily access signposting information about learning and skills in one place for the region.
1D. Pathways to Deal investments, ensuring residents can benefit from job entry and progression. *Completion timescale: short-term (by 2026)*	1D.1 Develop skills and workforce plans for Deal projects.	Skills Advisory Board	■ Thematic boards ■ Deal project leads	■ Delivery of skills and workforce plans tailored for the Deal projects.	■ Skills development is explicitly integrated into the capital projects in the Deal.
1E. Agility to meet skills needs from new sectors and technological change, including clean growth/green skills. *Completion timescale: short-term (by 2026)*	1E.1 Develop Clean growth / green skills event for the region to raise awareness of green jobs and skills requirements across the Tay Cities region.	Colleges / universities	■ Skills Development Scotland ■ Scottish Enterprise	■ Delivery of a green skills event for the region.	■ Increased awareness of green skills and the regional opportunities in clean growth for residents.

Mission 2: Job entry and progression

Objective	Actions	Lead	Delivery partners	Outputs	Outcomes
2A. Well informed career choices. *Completion timescale: medium-term (by 2028)*	2A.1 Develop a single Tay Cities workforce gateway.	Local authorities	■ Skills Development Scotland ■ Local authorities ■ College ■ Universities ■ DYW	■ Delivery of a workforce gateway to promote career opportunities and live vacancies in the region.	■ Residents in Tay Cities have access to information on regional career opportunities.
2B. Provision that meets the needs of residents and employers (flexible, modularised, tailored). *Completion timescale: medium-term (by 2028)*	2B.1 Improve employer engagement between education (HE/FE), and local employability services.	Skills Advisory Board	■ Local authorities ■ College ■ Universities ■ DYW ■ Employability Forum ■ Chamber of Commerce ■ SME support	■ TBC depending on specific activities	■ Employer engagement between education (HE/FE), and local employability services within the local authorities is improved.
	2B.2 Establish employer-education-employability forum to enhance coordination and provision of curriculum development, school engagement, employer engagement and work placements.	Skills Development Scotland		■ Employer / education / employability forum established and meets regularly.	■ Stronger collaboration between employers, educators, and employability services.

Objective	Actions	Lead	Delivery partners	Outputs	Outcomes
2C. Multi-modal job entry and progression (apprenticeships, post-degree, in-work progression) *Completion timescale: medium-term (by 2028)*	2C.1 Develop multimodal entry and progression pilot project with major employer.	Colleges / universities	■ Skills Development Scotland	■ Delivery of the pilot with a major employer.	■ Employers understanding the different levels of qualifications and differentiation between skills and qualifications.
	2C.2 Maximise upskilling and reskilling offer through existing sectoral employer-education forums and facilitate new groups as appropriate. Use these groups to scope current upskilling and reskilling offer in the region.	Colleges / universities		■ Mapping of existing regional upskilling and reskilling offer.	■ Stakeholders in the region understand what the current regional upskilling and reskilling offer is.
	2C.3 Identify and seize opportunities to increase flexibility of upskilling and reskilling offer, including opportunities for micro-credentials.	Colleges / universities		■ Identification of opportunities for more flexible delivery.	■ There will be more flexible upskilling and reskilling opportunities for residents.
	2C.4 Raise awareness of the regional short course offer in areas of identified need, for example, data science.	Colleges / universities		■ Communications campaign to raise awareness of the regional short course offer.	■ Residents are aware of the local short course options. ■ Increased take up of the regional short course offer in identified areas of need.

Mission 3: Securing the future workforce

Objective	Actions	Lead	Delivery partners	Outputs	Outcomes
3A. Economic participation and employability *Completion timescale: long-term (by 2029)*	3A.1 Explore and develop projects that support collaboration and co-delivery in areas such as: ■ Inequalities ■ NEET prevention ■ Economic inactivity ■ Apprenticeships	Local authorities	■ Employers ■ Employability services of local authorities	■ Partners work collaboratively to share best practice. ■ New or improved collaborative projects focused on key regional challenges like reducing inequalities and reducing economic inactivity.	■ Outcomes tbc based on specific activities, for example, a decrease in economic inactivity for the region.
	3A.2 Improve working conditions for those in the region, including continuing to promote fair work.	Local authorities	■ Scottish Enterprise ■ Employers	■ Employer engagement materials and case studies showcasing flexible working models and inclusive recruitment practices.	■ Employers understand fair work practices and the benefits of adopting it. ■ More employers in the region adopting fair and inclusive employment practices.

Appendix 1

Tay Cities Skills Advisory Board comprises of representatives from:

Tay Cities Skills and Employability Programme

Perth and Kinross Council

Angus Council

Dundee Council

Fife Council

Department for Work and Pensions

Developing the Young Workforce

Third Sector (Street League)

University of Dundee

Fife College

University of St Andrews

Dundee and Angus College

NHS

UHI Perth

Skills Development Scotland

Tay Cities Regional Deal Programme Management Office