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### **Foreword**



**EDWARD THURMAN** 

Managing Director, Head of Global Transaction Banking Group Ambassador for London Lloyds Bank Commercial Banking The 'skills gap' is amongst the most significant issues affecting British businesses, yet there remains a paucity of data on what it really means for them. Following our research on Brexit with London First last summer, it is great to be working together again on Skills, and delivering objective research into what businesses actually think about the skills of the workforce, and their needs of the future. As the Group's Ambassador for London, my objective is to ensure that we are doing our part to help London

prosper. Many of the trends in the report are most acute in London, and Lloyds Bank is committed to supporting businesses of all sizes to respond to these challenges and opportunities. We have just launched our third Group Strategic Review, we have mapped out the new and changing skill-sets that our people will need over the next three years to respond to digitisation, automation, and agile delivery. We've learned a lot about strategic workforce planning over the past year, and are keen to share some of this insight.

### Introduction



MARK HILTON

Executive Director, Policy London First

As we await the Government's White Paper suggesting what a new immigration system for EU skills and talent might look like, London First and Lloyds Bank have taken a close look at how recruitment, retention and the demand for skills have changed over the last 18 months since the EU referendum. In addition, we explored what challenges and opportunities recruiters see for the 18 months ahead, and over the longer-term through to 2025.

We explore skills shortages and the impact they have on businesses, and whether the UK's apprenticeship system is helping or hindering business to meet its skills needs. We also wanted to understand what would help increase engagement between business and schools, and finally, looking ahead to 2025, the impact that job automation is expected to have on business. This work, and our partnership with Lloyds Bank, is helping to inform the London Employment and Skills Commission. Established by London First, its purpose is to help deliver a business-led strategy to tackle London's skills crisis head on.

Until April 2018, the London Employment and Skills Commission is consulting on a proposed action plan for London – what is required of business and government – to build on our Capital's successes, challenge its weaknesses and secure the step-change we need on skills.

We hope you find this report useful. If you'd like to know more about this research, please reach out to the team – their details are listed on page 23.

The survey ran from 19th January to 14th February 2018. All respondents were senior leaders or HR decision makers of companies with 50+ employees based across the UK, covering all industry sectors and representing 1000 firms. Find further details on the survey approach and method on page 21.



### At a glance

#### Recruitment and retention since the EU referendum result

Businesses are telling us that they are seeing higher turnover of employees since the referendum ...and for businesses facing challenges recruiting, fewer applications by EU citizens is the number one cause Over three quarters of firms in London have skills shortages today and the majority see material business impact as a result

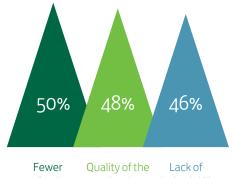


40%

of UK businesses have seen higher turnover in UK and the figure is



52% in London



Fewer Quality of the Lack of applications applications desired skills by EU citizens hasn't been good enough



46% j

increased workload and stress for other employees

39%

ability to respond to customer needs

30% ability to grow

#### Apprenticeships and the levy

Businesses strongly support apprenticeships, particularly in London, but the levy needs reform



55%

of businesses in London plan to recruit more apprentices (vs. 44% across UK)



45%

say apprenticeship levy requires improvement

### Engagement with schools and higher education

Businesses have a strong desire to work with schools to shape the workforce of the future...



% of businesses engaging with schools and higher education

#### Planning for the workforce of the future

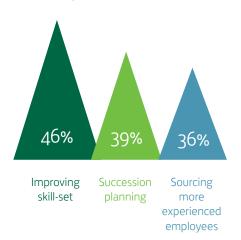
On a more positive note, British businesses plan to grow headcount over the next 18 months

In London, businesses foresee radical change in their workforces – the majority of roles are going to change

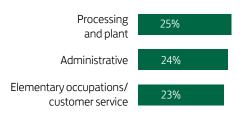


And businesses are prioritising skills development in their recruitment strategy

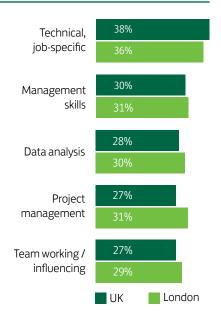
Recruitment priorities for the next 18 months



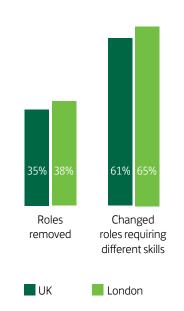
Rule-driven, process-based roles are amongst those most likely to change by 2025



Businesses foresee challenges recruiting 'new economy' skills over the coming 18 months



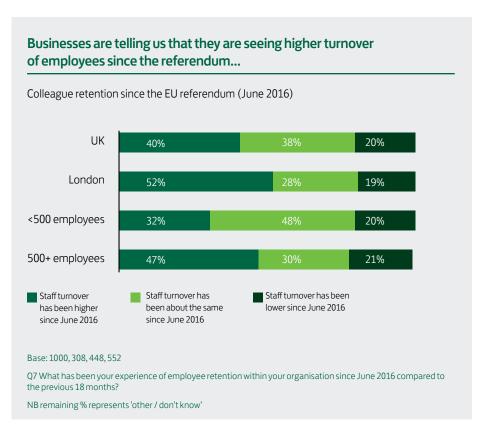
...and call out automation as an opportunity to change what people are doing, not just cutting roles



#### Planning for the workforce of the future

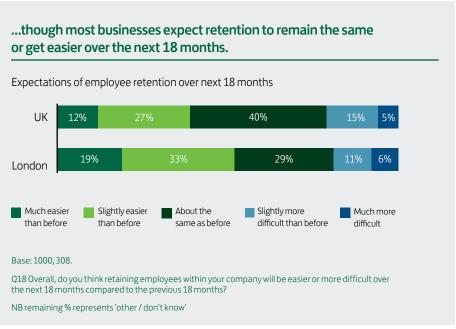
#### **Employee retention**

40% of British businesses have seen an increase in employee turnover since June 2016, rising to over half in London. The trend is also more pronounced in large businesses with more than 500 employees. The combined impact of the EU referendum result, which has caused uncertainty for EU27 workers, and economic growth leading to 'close-to-full' employment across the economy, appears to be making it more difficult for businesses to retain employees. However, there are positives to take from increased labour mobility – workers appear to be moving between employers more frequently, advancing their careers and focusing on work that is most rewarding for them.



### Employee retention outlook

In terms of future outlook, the results are mixed. Businesses in London are more optimistic than elsewhere in the UK, with 52% expecting retaining employees to get easier. The tentative deal on citizens' rights agreed between the UK and EU in December 2017 may be driving more confidence in British businesses that they will be able to retain key employees from Europe. At a national level, the largest cohort of businesses expect their experience of retention to remain broadly similar – which tells us that the key skills challenge for the next 18 months is what businesses are experiencing right now.

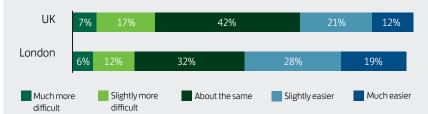


#### Employee recruitment

With retention data providing a decidedly mixed picture, it is encouraging to see a more positive view on recruitment. 47% of businesses in London have had an easier experience in recruiting employees since the EU referendum, vs. only 23% for whom recruiting has become harder.

This suggests that in the past 18 months, the particularly high levels of labour utilisation have not yet translated into structural shortages of candidates to fill roles – turnover has risen, but so too has firms' experience of recruiting. This is a trend that the government, and British businesses, will need to watch closely over the next 18 months.





Base: 1000, 308

Q8 What has been your overall experience of recruiting people into your organisation within the last 18 months compared to before June 2016?

NB remaining % represents 'don't know'

Key recruitment challenges identified

50% Fewer applications by EU citizens

**27%** Fewer applications by overseas citizens (from beyond the EU)

Quality of the applications hasn't been good enough

26% Fewer applications by UK citizens

 $46\% \ {}^{\text{Lack of }}_{\text{desired skills}}$ 

Base: 242,Total UK, % of all businesses

Q10: Why do you think it has been easier/harder to recruit people into your organisation within the last 18 months compared to before June 2016?

NB Other/don't know represented approx. 1% of responses

### Recruitment outlook over the next 18 months

On a positive note, companies in London appear resolutely optimistic about their recruitment plans over the next 18 months; 49% expect an easier experience compared to the past 18 months, vs. 20% who expect things to get harder.

### Overall, firms appear more optimistic about their prospects for recruitment over the next 18 months



NB 2% 'don't know' for UK and London

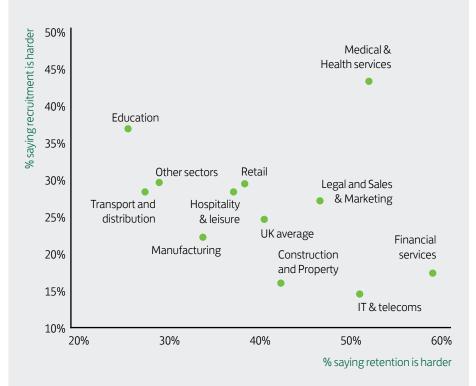
### Recruitment and retention by industry

Our findings identify Medical & Health services as the key outlier, with particularly significant issues in recruitment, and the third mostimpacted industry in terms of retention. The issues in healthcare have been well-reported. A combination of a particularly stretched NHS, an uncertain political climate following the referendum result, and the depressed value of Sterling (which reduced real incomes with wages taken home to countries of origin in mainland Europe) has resulted in a significant impact on the labour supply in the sector.

In the context of the skills gap, it is concerning that the four outlying sectors (Medical, Education, Financial Services, IT & Telecoms) are services industries, with particular reliance on highly-qualified employees with job-specific skills. For the government, it is also telling that the two sectors where recruiting has been most challenging are those where the public sector is by far the dominant employer.

# Firms' experiences by industry changes markedly, and organisations in the public sector and services have had a more challenging time than the overall view suggests

Recruitment and retention since June 2016



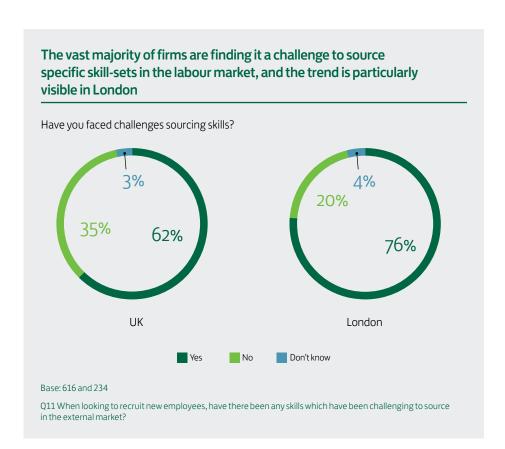
Base: Total 1000; number of responses by sector vary from 45-150, e.g. Medical & health services, with 76 responses

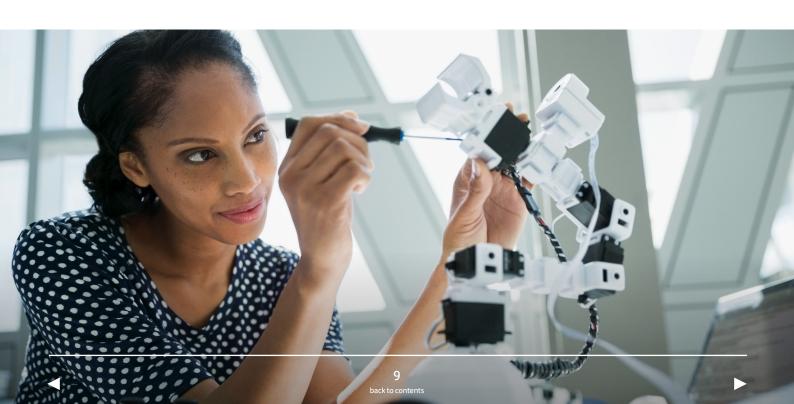
Q7 What has been your experience of employees retention within your organisation since June 2016 compared to the previous  $18 \, \text{months}$ ?

Q8 What has been your overall experience of recruiting people into your organisation within the last 18 months compared to before June 2016?

### Skill gaps

Recruitment may be getting easier overall, but finding employees with specific skills is still challenging – the overwhelming majority of businesses across the UK are experiencing challenges recruiting specific skills. Businesses seem able to find people to fill roles, but sourcing the right people with key skill-sets is a challenge.





#### Most challenging skills to source

Technical and job-specific skills are hardest to source, but there are skills shortages across the board. Many recruiters think the struggles to source the right skills stem from a shortage of supply from schools and universities, and this is increasing labour costs. Many applicants also lacked relevant past experience and were seen as less desirable by employers.

Why is it difficult to source skills?

Shortage of supply means 46% suitable quality candidates are too expensive to recruit

41% Applicants don't have relevant past experience

Applicants don't have 39% technical or specialist skill-set required

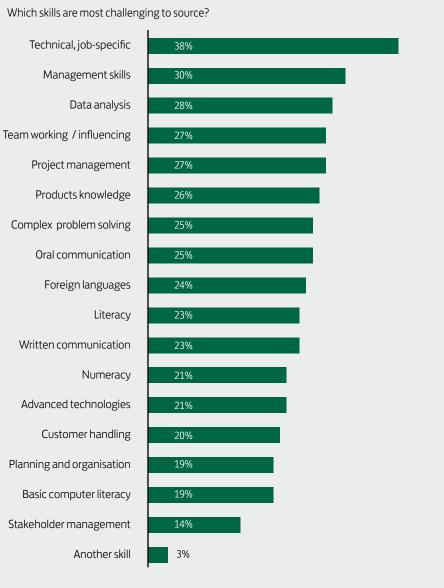
Schools and universities 38% are not producing suitably qualified candidates

26% Applicants lack employability skills

Base: 616 (All who say there have been skills that have been a challenge to source).

 ${\tt Q13\,Please\,tell\,us\,why\,you\,have\,found\,certain}$ skills difficult to source in the external market?

#### Firms have called out challenges recruiting 'new-economy' skills due to a shortage of qualified and experienced candidates



Base: 616 (All who say there have been skills that have been a challenge to source).

 ${\tt Q12\,When\,looking\,to\,recruit\,new\,employees}, which\,skills\,from\,the\,external\,market\,have\,been\,the\,most$ challenging to source?

### The impact of skills shortages on business

Skills shortages have adversly affected UK businesses, with nearly half saying they have seen an impact, rising to 58% in London. Almost half the businesses said that skills shortages have led to increased workload and stress for existing employees, creating further risks to employee retention, and contributing to the UK's productivity challenge. Four in ten said that skills shortages were impacting their ability to respond to customers needs, with others reporting they made it harder to maintain current revenue or take advantage of opportunities to grow the business. Skills shortages are unambiguously impairing firms' ability to grow. These findings clearly show that skills shortages across the UK economy are not an ephemeral risk in the medium / long-term: shortages of the skills identified are creating real problems for businesses today.

The industry sectors most impacted by the skills gap broadly align to those with greatest difficultly retaining or recruiting employees over the past 18 months – sectors we typically expect to be more reliant on highly skilled talent.

### Nearly half of UK firms note skills shortages are negatively impacting their business, with even more in London... Which skills are most challenging to source? Impact on business (description) 48% Total UK 46% Increased workload and stress for other employees Financial Services Respond to customer needs 55% Medical & Health services IT & Telecoms Take advantage of 30% opportunities to grow revenue or expand Legal and Sales & Marketing Construction and Property 30% Reduce costs Education Adopt new technologies 29% or fully utilise existing ways of doing things Manufacturing 42% 42% Retail 79% Maintain current revenue Other sector 39% 27% Stay ahead of competitors 38% Hospitality and leisure Transport and distribution 26% Innovate or launch new products or services Base: 476 (All who say a shortage of skills has had Base: Total 1000, by sector 150 to 45 an impact on their business) Q15 Has a shortage of skills had an impact on your business? Q16 What has been the impact on your business? Impact on business 48% 10% UK 58% London No impact Base: 100, 308 Q15 Has a shortage of skills had an impact on your business? NB 2% 'don't know'

### Workforce and recruitment plans for the next 18 months

It is encouraging to see a significant quantum of firms, both in London and across the UK, planning to grow their headcount over the next 18 months.

However, with the UK approaching full employment, and free movement of EU27 labour likely to end from March 2019, the obvious question to ask is where the additional employees are going to come from. Businesses are clearly telling us in these results that they want to grow their workforces, and recruit higher-skilled people.

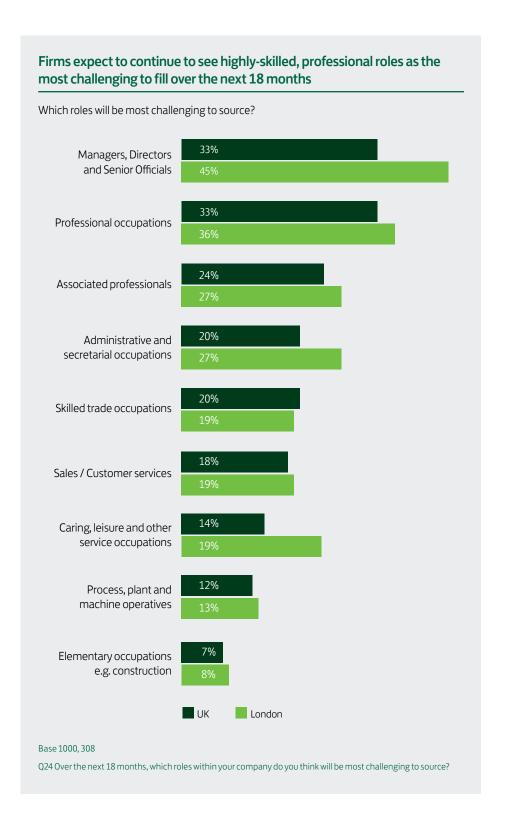
Businesses tell us that additional, higherskilled employees are needed immediately. It is clear that a greater focus on retraining and upskilling the existing workforce is required now but on its own this will not be sufficient; the UK will continue to need to attract additional talent from abroad to help close the gap.

For the medium and long-term, the British government, businesses and the education sector need to work through how to improve the skill-set of the UK workforce.



#### Future skills needs

The skills that firms have identified as being in short supply over the past 18 months map closely to the roles they expect to be difficult to fill over the coming year and a half. This gives us a clear indication of where the skills gap is most acute, and where Britain needs to focus its efforts to improve the supply.



Professional Occupations: Legal, Teaching and accountants, Associated professionals: Paramedic, police and brokers, Skilled trade occupations: Farmers, welders and electricians and electricians are professional occupations. The professional occupation is a second or professional occupation of the professional occupation occupation occupation of the professional occupation occupat





### Overall impact of automation on skills and employment

The automation of job roles – often referred to as the fourth industrial revolution – is already driving profound change in the world of work, and it will go on doing so. There will be major consequences for skills demand and for the skills system itself, as well as the nature of employment. Many commentators expect that the UK's future labour market will be increasingly automated, but there is much less certainty on the pace of change or the degree to which human labour will be replaced or altered by technological advances.

Our findings suggest the British economy will chart a middle course through the two extremes often posited by commentators: we are unlikely to see mass unemployment as a result of automation, nor will we see the sunny uplands of workers seamlessly moving into more productive and rewarding jobs. The majority of businesses surveyed (61%) expect automation to change the skills that people will need in work, almost twice as many as those who expected to cut their headcount by any material volume.

Given the uncertainty as a result of the workforce changes that businesses are facing or expecting, it is important that London, and the UK, have a plan for managing the impact of job automation.

### Firms expect automation to change the skills they need from employees, not simply reduce the number of people that they need

Automation impact on headcount and skills needs <sup>1</sup> % businesses planning



13% ...significantly reduce our headcount by 2025

21% ...change our skills needs and reduce headcount

39% ....change our skills needs, but not reduce our headcount

20% ...unlikely to have an impact on our industry and our headcount

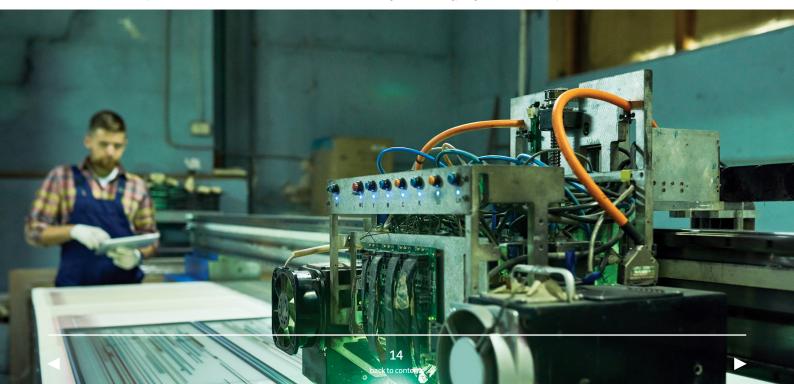
70/n not sure about the impact

#### Base 1000

Q26 Thinking ahead to 2025, for the main industry your company is in, which of the following statements would you say is most accurate? By 'automation' we mean the use or introduction of automatic equipment, computing or other technology designed to improve efficiency

NB remaining % represents 'don't know

 $<sup>^{1}</sup>$  For the purposes of this survey, we define automation as introduction of automatic equipment, computing or other technology designed to improve efficiency

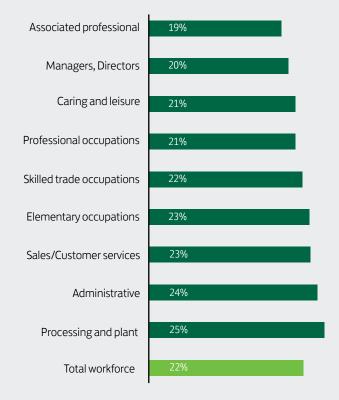


### Impact of automation on workforce

Unsurprisingly, automation will remove/ reduce certain roles, while others will continue to exist but will most likely prioritise an evolving skill-set. The survey highlighted that roles in processing and plant operations, which have already seen high levels of automation in the past year, are typically the most likely to see further reduction. What many may not realise, however, is how marginal the order of magnitude is forecast to be between the impact of automation on blue collar and white collar roles. Daniel and Richard Susskind outlined an uncompromising vision in The Future of the Professions (Oxford University Press, October 2015), with automation fundamentally reshaping the role of humans in disciplines as broad as law, medicine and architecture. Our data supports their basic premise – that automation is as relevant in professional occupations as elsewhere.

### Repetitive, process-orientated roles are most likely to be automated, but professional and skilled occupations are only marginally less impacted

What proportion of roles will be replaced by automation by 2025?



Base: 172 ('All who say a reduced headcount')

Source: London First / Lloyds Bank Skills Study 2017, takes mid points from score intervals,

Q27 In terms of rough order of magnitude, what proportion of your overall workforce in the following areas do you believe will be replaced by automation by 2025?

NB calculation used middle point of answer ranges and than '40%+' assumed to be 50%

### Meeting future skills requirements

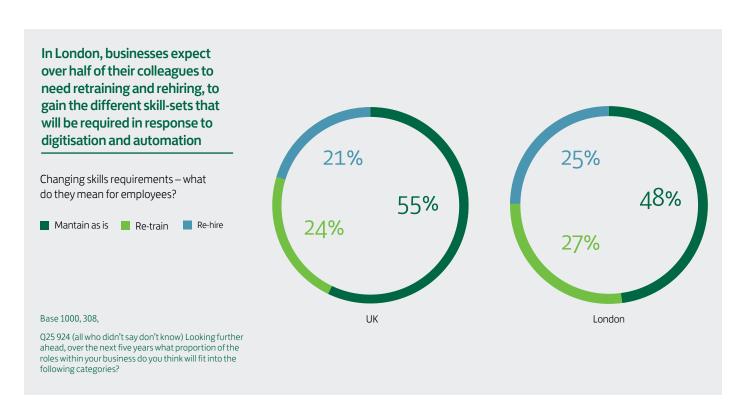
Having established the impact of automation, we asked businesses to provide a broader view of how the roles within their organisations will change in the next five years—taking into account other considerations, such as digitisation or agile working. We identified three broad categories which are commonly used by large organisations undertaking strategic workforce planning. Respondents were free to respond to the categories instinctively, but from our perspective we define these groups as follows:

- Maintain as-is: the role a given employee performs isn't expected to change materially by 2025. The implication here is that the employee currently performing the role has the skills they need to continue in post.
- 2. **Re-train**: put simply, these are roles that are expected to change materially by 2025, and the employee would need to be retrained.
- 3. **Re-hire:** the nature of the roles in this category will change so fundamentally, that employees currently performing them will need to leave their employer and be replaced by others with different skill-sets.

Across the UK, firms we spoke to estimated that they would need to retrain one in four employees, and replace or rehire as many as one in five. In London over half of all roles will require the people currently performing them to be retrained or rehired.

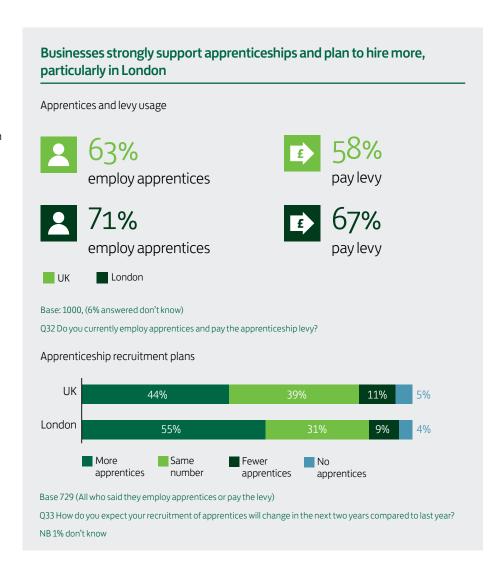
Looking at the magnitude of employees that are facing skills changes in their roles over the coming five years, businesses will need to implement lifelong learning processes, continued learning strategies during the whole duration of a career, to ensure that businesses have the right skills and employees are not left behind in the fourth industrial revolution.

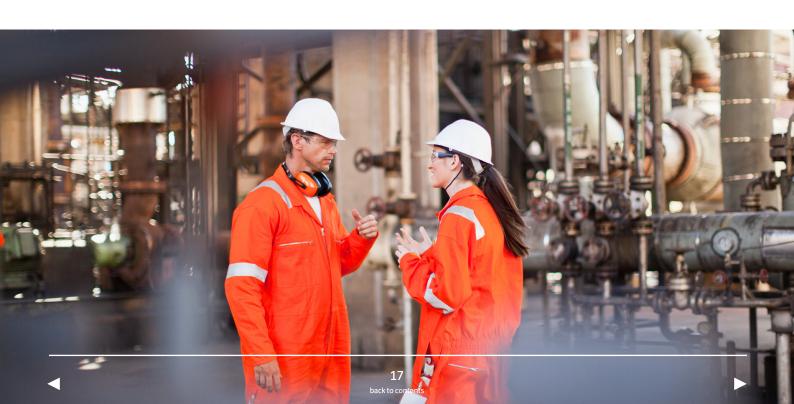
The changing nature of roles and the ability to automate repetitive roles also offers opportunities, including increases in productivity and the outlook of more creative and rewarding responsibilities, which will put a premium on transferable skills, like management and communication.



### Apprenticeship levy usage

Faced with skills gaps in the current market, and the potential of increasing gaps due to automation, we were keen to establish the view of businesses on the role of apprentices in providing a source of future talent. 63% of businesses in the UK employ apprentices, with a slightly higher proportion in London. In April 2017, the Government launched a levy on UK employers to ring-fence employer funding for new apprentices and incentivise this route - 58% of UK and 67% of London businesses surveyed were paying the levy. This is likely to explain why more than 8 out of 10 businesses across London and the UK were planning to increase the number of hired apprentices or maintain current levels. This tells us clearly that apprentices are creating value for their employers across the UK economy, and echoes our experience at Lloyds Banking Group, where they have become part of our business.





### Business view on the apprenticeship levy

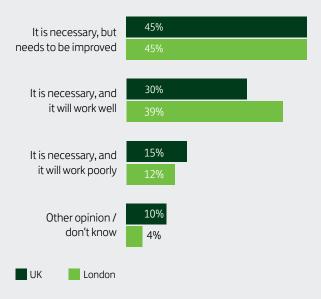
However, employers are struggling with the rules and bureaucracy which govern the use of the apprenticeship levy, which has resulted in a decline in apprenticeships starts across London and the UK since the levy launched last year, as the Department for Education's figures show. Part of this may be down to 'bedding-in' issues, but it could also be an indication that policy changes are required to smooth the process of businesses effectively utilising their levy funding.

It was encouraging to see that a majority of businesses accept the necessity of the apprenticeship levy. However, the results provide a clear call to action for the Department of Education. 61% of businesses feel that the levy is working poorly or needs improvement.

Most businesses would be happy to see some flexibility introduced by government in how to spend their levy funds. These include the ability to use levy funding to pay for employees to recruit apprentices or for training other employees, use of the levy to pay for wage costs of apprentices, or to allow employers to retain the funds for longer than two years.



Views on the apprenticeship levy



Government improvements to the apprenticeship levy allows employers to:

34% Spend funds on internal staff to support apprenticeship recruitment, management and training

25% Retain their levy funds for more than two years

31% Spend funds on training other than just apprentices

21% Devolve a greater proportion of their levy funds to their supply chain

31% Spend a proportion of their levy funds on wage costs for apprentices

10% Don't know / none of these

Base: 957 (All who are aware of the apprenticeship levy)

Q34 Overall, what is your view of the apprenticeship levy?

 ${\tt Q35\,How\,do\,you\,think\,the\,government\,could\,improve\,the\,apprenticeship\,levy?}$ 

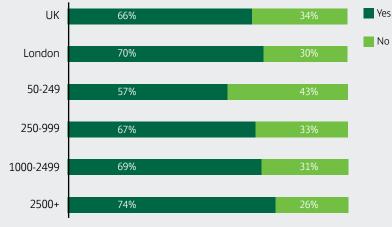
### School engagement

Businesses across the UK have recognised the role they have to play in shaping the next generation of the workforce, with two-thirds of businesses already engaging with schools and institutions in higher education. This engagement seems positive for British companies, and 60% would like to do more.

Larger businesses are significantly more likely to engage with schools and higher education, and the majority of businesses, regardless of workforce size, would like to do more...

Engagement with schools, colleges and universities

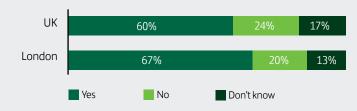
UK 66% 34%



Base: 1000, 308,

Q28 Does your organisation currently engage with schools, colleges and universities, for example by giving careers talks or taking pupils on work experience placements?

Appetite to increase engagement



Base: 1000, 308

Q30 Would your company like to engage / engage more with schools, colleges and universities and other training providers in your local area?

### Barriers to engagement and possible support

The most common barriers to increasing engagement with schools are lack of time and the cost of doing it. However, a significant number (46%) also cited that schools are difficult to deal or partner with. This is an area where intermediaries in the private sector may be able to help – businesses are asking for easy mechanisms to get in touch with schools and facilitate the process. On the public policy side, businesses feel that more support for engagement with students and young people should be incorporated into the national curriculum. Tax breaks were another (perhaps obvious) call out.

Engaging with schools and higher education is challenging, particularly for small businesses, and businesses feel that more needs to be done to make this easier

Support needed to engage more with schools, colleges and universities

#### **Government support**

### 36%

Schools required in the national curriculum to engage with business

31%

Tax breaks to support employees taking time to go into schools

#### Private sector support

32%

More accessible contact details for schools in your area

31%

A private sector led third party brokerage platform 32%

Re-establishing of local education and business partnerships

19%

A local borough led brokerage organisation

Base: 598, All who would like to engage more with schools, colleges and universities

Q31 If you would like to engage / engage more with schools, colleges and universities and other training providers in your local area, what type of intervention do you think would help your company do this?

Barriers to further engagement

31% We do not have enough time to release staff to do this

 $23\% \begin{array}{l} \text{It is too difficult to find a school} \\ \text{or schools to partner with} \end{array}$ 

24% It costs too much to release our staff

21% Our staff are not motivated to engage with schools

 $23\% \begin{array}{l} \text{Schools are difficult} \\ \text{to deal with} \end{array}$ 

21% No barriers

Q29 What have you / your organisation found are barriers to engaging more with schools, colleges and universities and training providers? Base: 323 (All who engage with schools, colleges and universities)



### Conclusion

## Our findings predict a profound transformation of the UK's workforce by 2025.

The results of this survey provide a clear call to action for businesses, with a number of future challenges and opportunities that need comprehensive skills planning.

The impact of the EU referendum and the uncertainty of Brexit are already adding to the pressures of existing skills gaps. Add in the significance of job automation over the mid-term, and a picture is painted of employers having to grapple with a period of unprecedented turbulence.

The change in the nature of roles and the skill-sets they require is accelerating fast, and this will require greater business focus and effort to ensure a continuous pipeline of talent.

Business and government need to work ever more closely together to ensure the UK's education and skills can deliver for the UK's workforce, today and tomorrow.



#### About the survey

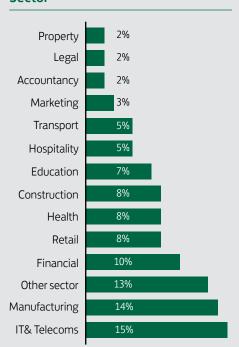
The study was conducted by OnePoll between 19th January 2018 and 14th February 2018. They polled 1000 HR business decision-makers from

businesses operating in Britain with more than 50 employees. Participants were recruited online and were paid to participate.

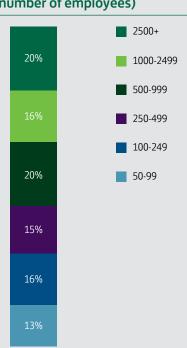
#### Region



#### Sector



### Company size (number of employees)







### Contributors

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#### Find out more





Go to londonfirst.co.uk



@London First

London First is a membership organisation, with the mission to make London the best place in the world for business. We're focused on keeping our capital working for the whole of the UK.

We've galvanised the business community to bring pragmatic solutions to London's challenges over the years.

We have established Think London, now part of London & Partners, to promote the capital worldwide and encourage foreign direct investment; been instrumental in creating the Mayor of London, pioneered Teach First, driven the campaign for Crossrail and, most recently, lobbied for government action on airport

capacity, which has led to the government's decision to build a new Heathrow runway.

Now, we are working on solutions to what our business leaders see as the top priorities for our capital: talent, housing and transport.

We also scan the horizon, link with other cities, and support our members on the key issues that will keep our capital globally competitive.

"London First speaks for London businesses and that means the government hears what London businesses have to say."

Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London



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