



Health & Life Sciences

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

PURPOSE

The Workforce Development Partnerships (WDP) serve as a collaborative forum bringing together education and training providers along with employers to address workforce development challenges and formulate effective solutions. The primary objective of the WDP is to foster dialogue, exchange ideas, and promote collaboration to enhance the skills and capabilities of the local workforce.

The Health & Life Science WDP across Oxfordshire & Berkshire will initially focus on promoting reskilling opportunities, including the Boot Camps. It will align with the existing HLS Round Table, reporting its activities through to this wider membership.

WHAT ARE THE KEY OUTCOMES WE ARE SEEKING?

- Creation of a direct channel of communication between education providers and health and life sciences employers, focused on the key priorities for the sector
- Provide a forum for employers to gain insights into education and skills and providers to gain insights into priority sectors
- Generate resources and advice for signposting employers to skills
- Strengthen relationships between attending providers and employers, and those they are there to represent, to generate further partnership solutions
- Narrow skills gaps as identified in the LSIPs for Oxon and Berks
- Ease recruitment difficulties as identified in the LSIPs for Oxon and Berks
- Take up of places on reskilling programmes such as Skills Bootcamps
- Collaboration with the HLS Round Table so both groups can help one another achieve their key aims

WHAT WILL BE OUR WAYS OF WORKING?

- Meetings will occur quarterly, from Autumn 2023 to the completion of the current LSIP project – March 2025
- They will be convened by the LSIP team who will be responsible for minute taking and circulation and following up on actions decided upon
- They will be chaired by the LSIP Champion for Health and Life Sciences
- Members will attend both in their own capacity but also in the capacity of representing their wider sector
- Partnership working between meetings will be important to achieving desired outcomes. Members become part of a genuine workforce development partnership, where the work that goes on between meetings will be as important as the meetings themselves
- The partnership is designed to find practical solutions to skills shortages in the sector and will work in that spirit

KEY ACTION AREAS

- Creating more opportunities for new entrants to the sector and for STEM returners.
- More mentoring and work insights opportunities for potential new entrants to the sector.
- The creation of new education and training provision, including skills bootcamps.
- Creating industry upskilling opportunities for teaching staff.

Health & Life Sciences

RATIONALE

Whilst the number of enterprises in Human Health fell by 4% from 2017-2022, the number of workforce jobs in the sector increased by 12% (3,300) over the same period to 30,700. Of note, there was: 17% (2,700) increase in jobs in Hospital Activities, and a 39% (2,300) increase in jobs in Other Human Health Activities. In line with a 22% rise in the number of enterprises in Life Sciences, including the doubling of the number within Biotech, there was a notable spike in the number of workforce jobs in R&D in Biotech (120% / 1,200) and Other R&D in Natural Sciences & Engineering (48% / 3,200). At a detailed occupational level in Human Health, there was a notable 11% (900) rise in the number of jobs in nursing. And within Life Sciences, there was a notable 28% (600) rise in the number within Biological Scientist and Biochemists.

LABOUR MARKET

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SECTORAL CHALLENGES

The pipeline of new investment in the area will further increase demand: E.g., Moderna, Inc. has announced Harwell, the UK's leading science and innovation campus in Oxfordshire, as the location of its Moderna Innovation and Technology Centre (MITC).

SPECIFIC REPORTED SKILLS GAPS

Providing routine testing and technical support (e.g., for batch testing)
Perform specified methodologies- weighing, pipetting to provide reliable data
Use standard software packages and applications
Use Laboratory Information Management systems
Use Health Care Information Management Systems
Using diagnostic equipment

TABLE 1 Recruitment Difficulties Reported by Employers	Technical Occupations (Levels 2-3)	Higher Technical Occupations (Levels 4- 5)	Professional Occupations (Level 6+)	T Levels
Biologists			Biologist (L6)	T Level in Science
Chemists			Chemist (L6)	T Level in Science
Laboratory Technicians and Health Care Scientists	Healthcare Science Assistant (L2) Laboratory Technician (L3) Metrology Technician (L3)	Senior Metrology Technician (L5) Technician Scientist (L5)	Laboratory Scientist (L6)	T Level in Science
Production Scientists	Laboratory Technician (L3) Metrology Technician (L3)	Senior Metrology Technician (L5)	Laboratory Scientist (L6)	T Level in Science
Nurses and Nursing Associates	Senior Healthcare Support Worker (L3)	Nursing Associate (L5)	Registered Nurse (L6)	T Level Health
Radiographers			Diagnostic Radiographer (L6)	T Level in Science
Occupational Therapists			Occupational Therapist (L6)	T Level Health
Data Analysts	Data Technician (L3)	Data Analysts (L4)	Data Scientist (L6) Bioinformatics Scientist (L6) AI Data Specialist (L6)	T Level Digital Business Services

SECTOR SPECIFIC: HEALTH & LIFE SCIENCES

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE AND EXPECTED BENEFIT	ACTIONS	OWNER	EMPLOYER CHAMPION	TIMESCALE	POTENTIAL FUNDING
Partner with the existing Thames Valley Life Sciences Round Table to facilitate a Workforce Development Partnership (WDP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a forum and focus for employers to gain insights into skills, and providers to gain insights into priority sectors. • Generate resources and advice for signposting employers to skills. • Strengthen relationships between attending providers and employers to generate further partnership solutions. The WDP will promote expansion, development, and delivery of provision in the identified priority areas.	Work with the successful Life Sciences Round Table to identify partnership and collaboration opportunities. This will be pan Oxfordshire and Berkshire to maximise benefits. Education & Training Providers to use LSIF, Innovation Fund or Skills Bootcamps as alternative sources of funding to align delivery to the priority skills needs via new programmes such as short, modular courses. Education and Training Providers to work together collaboratively, through the LSIF to invest in up-to-date technologies, capital, and spaces for Health & Life Sciences.	ERB ETPs ETPs	In Place	Summer 2023-March 2025 Autumn 2023-March 2025	LSIP LSIF AEB 16-18 Bootcamp App Emp Other
Work with the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP to ensure the Skills Bootcamps in Berkshire for Life Science extend across Oxfordshire.	Work with the LEP and ETPs to help signpost employers to benefit from the Skills Bootcamps.	ERB LEP ETPs		Autumn 2023-March 2025	LSIP Bootcamp

Information Key PARTNERS

ERB

The Employer Representative Body- Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce (Thames Valley Skills Unit)

WDP

Workforce Development Partnerships

ETPs

Education & Training Providers

LEP

Thames Valley Berkshire LEP

PARTNERS

Including Trade Bodies, Careers Advisers, JCP and other agencies

CEIAG

Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance

Information Key FUNDING

LSIP

Local Skills Improvement Plan Funding

LSIF

Local Skills Improvement Fund (funding)

AEB

Adult Education Budget (inc Innovation Fund and Loans)

App

Apprenticeship Funding

16-18

16-18 year old education funding

Emp

Employer funded, or time commitment

Bootcamp

Skills Bootcamp

Health & Life Sciences

RATIONALE

Employers report chronic and acute difficulties in recruiting laboratory technicians and scientists which is backed up by the secondary jobs data. There is significant inward investment into Berkshire and surrounding areas such as Oxfordshire which will increase pressure in a tight employment market. In Life Sciences, there has been a growth in jobs over the last five years, particularly in the Wholesale of Pharmaceutical Goods, and the Manufacture of Pharmaceutical Products and Preparations.

LABOUR MARKET	SECTORAL CHALLENGES	SPECIFIC REPORTED SKILLS GAPS
<p>An 11% (1,900) increase in jobs in Hospital Activities</p> <p>A 28% (1,700) increase in jobs in the Wholesale of Pharmaceutical Goods</p> <p>A 216% (300) increase in the number of jobs in the Manufacture of Basic Pharmaceutical Products</p> <p>A 73% (600) increase in jobs in the Manufacture of Pharmaceutical Preparations</p> <p>High job postings for Nursing, Researchers & Analysts, Chemical Engineers, Chemists, and Lab Technicians.</p>	<p>During discussions with employers, they shared the challenges they face in sourcing specialist training locally, particularly for specific life science training.</p> <p>Employers highlighted the importance of enhancing their knowledge and utilisation of AI.</p> <p>The Health sector reports significant recruitment challenges and skills gaps:</p> <p>Health Care Scientists</p> <p>Adult Nurses</p> <p>Occupational Therapists</p> <p>Radiographers</p>	<p>Providing routine testing and technical support (e.g., for batch testing)</p> <p>Performing specified methodologies- weighing, pipetting to provide reliable data.</p> <p>Using standard software packages and applications.</p> <p>Using Laboratory Information Management systems.</p> <p>Using Health Care Information Management Systems</p> <p>Using diagnostic equipment</p> <p>Maths and English skills</p> <p>Employability skills – time management, communication, confidentiality</p>

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