

# The Workforce Digital Skills Charter

**As leaders and employers from across business, government, and civil society, we're on a mission to supercharge workforce essential digital skills.**

Closing the workforce digital skills gap is not just a problem to solve, it's an opportunity to realise.

The rapid rise of artificial intelligence (AI) adds urgency. A digitally capable workforce will secure economic opportunities for all and ensure the UK keeps pace with the rest of the world. It will also fortify against cyber threats, reducing risks for individuals and organisations alike.

Everyone in the UK workforce, whether paid or voluntary, must be supported to build the essential digital skills they need to prosper in work now and in the future.

## The digital skills gap in the UK workforce

Our society and economy cannot digitally transform without a digitally confident and capable workforce. Digital technology doesn't deliver change or guarantee productivity. That comes from good design and great adoption; people using technology effectively.

Today, over half of working adults<sup>i</sup> cannot perform all 20 digital tasks<sup>ii</sup> industry and government agree are vital for today's workplace. That's c.22 million adults unable to do things like check a payslip online, set secure passwords, or use digital tools to improve productivity. These skills gaps cut across the workforce, including high earners<sup>iii</sup> and those with high levels of education<sup>iv</sup>. For example, how many of us struggle to manage privacy settings and other online safety features?

Most people in the workforce have not been taught these skills in their education, hence the need to explicitly help them build strong digital foundations. This reality has largely been hidden in plain sight, potentially masked by assumptions that adults naturally gain core digital competence through use.

Worryingly, against that backdrop, only 4 in 10<sup>v</sup> adults plan to build their digital skills this year. This must change.

## Rising to the challenge

We're coming together to play our part and drive action to close this essential digital skills gap. This includes using a consistent framework, pooling resources, and driving at ambitious targets.

We invite you to join us as we commit to:

**1. Raising awareness of the essential digital skills gap in the workforce and the opportunity to be realised through concerted action.**

We will rally our voices, unite across sectors, and spotlight gaps and opportunities that come from building a future-ready workforce.

**2. Working together as part of a national change program to supercharge action on workforce digital skills.**

We will deliver the means for every UK worker to tackle essential digital tasks with confidence and keep developing these skills as technology evolves. This includes a unified vision for core digital skills, a future-fit framework that includes AI skills, cranking up training, sharing best practice, and re-using content across the business community.

### 3. Empowering people of working age to build-solid digital foundations.

As employers, we will support working age people in our workforce and beyond to build core digital capability and confidence. This does not necessarily require bespoke programmes, it's also about weaving targeted action into existing activities. By proactively addressing knowledge gaps and destigmatising the need to build the digital basics, we can help people unlock a world of benefits including skills growth, career development, and digital wellbeing.

#### Join our growing movement

We're breaking out of silos and uniting to build a future-fit, digitally confident, workforce. Together we already have a reach of millions through our employees, volunteers, supply chains and customers. We can drive change at even greater pace with you alongside. Come join us.

To find out more, visit [www.futuredotnow/charter](http://www.futuredotnow/charter)

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<sup>i</sup> [Lloyds Bank Consumer Digital Index 2023](#), p.56.

<sup>ii</sup> The Government first worked with business in 2018 to define these skills for adults and create the Essential Digital Skill Framework. See <https://futuredotnow.uk/about-us/the-essential-digital-skills-framework/>. More info also can be found in the [Consumer Digital Index 2023](#), pp.72-74.

<sup>iii</sup> A third of people (34%) earning over £75K a year cannot do all 20 tasks. [Consumer Digital Index 2023](#), p.122.

<sup>iv</sup> Just under half of people (45%) with a degree/masters/PhD cannot do all the tasks. [Consumer Digital Index 2023](#), p.122.

<sup>v</sup> [Consumer Digital Index 2023](#), p.65.