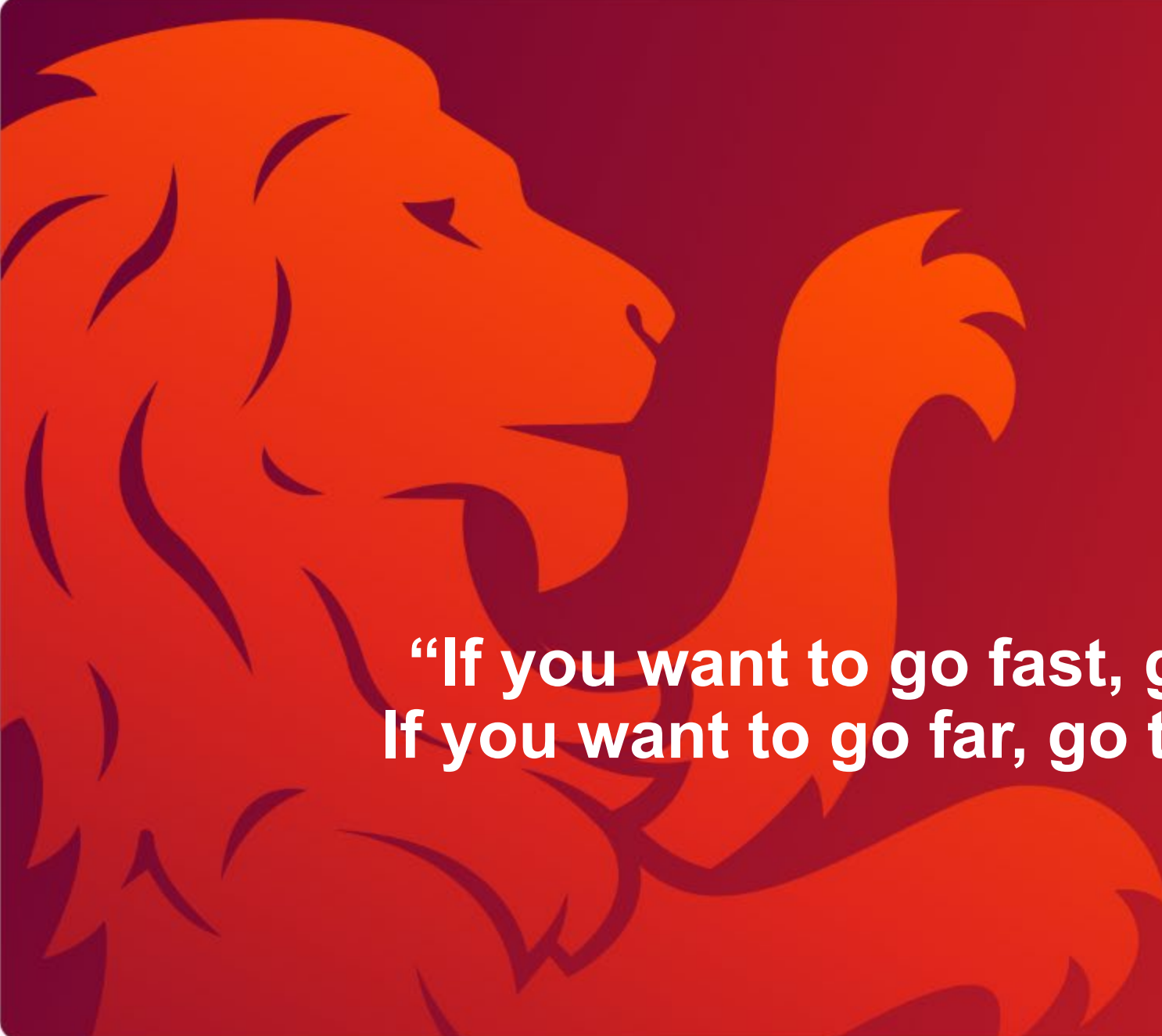




Partnerships in Practice – Transforming Skills

June 2026



**“If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together.”**

Workshop speakers



Charlie Freeman

Head of UK Sales

City & Guilds



Bryony Kingsland

**Head of Funding &
Policy Insight**

City & Guilds



Luke Muscat

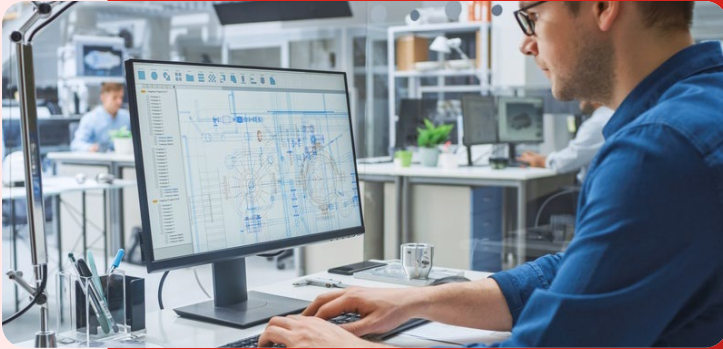
CEO

LEEP



Rebecca Hollamby
Partnership Manager

City & Guilds



Industrial Strategy

The UK Industrial Strategy is a 10-year government plan aimed at boosting productivity, economic growth, and regional development by investing in skills, infrastructure, research and development.

Fostering collaboration between business, skills providers, and government is a key focus of the strategy.

Priority sectors include advanced manufacturing, clean energy, digital and life sciences.

Skills priorities include employer investment in skills, with changes such as the new procurement rules influencing that agenda, e.g. -

1. Set at least one award criteria in major procurements which relates to the quality of the supplier's contribution to jobs, opportunities or skills.
2. Set at least one social value Key Performance Indicator relating to jobs, opportunities or skills in major contracts and report regularly on delivery



Local Skills Improvement Plans, Round 2

Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) are strategic plans designed to align local education and training with the skills needs of employers in a specific region.

All areas of England are developing a new three-year Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) covering the period 2026 to 2029.

LSIPs are central to achieving the government's Opportunity and Growth Missions, supporting Skills England's driving ethos of Better Skills for Better Jobs. LSIP's plan to:

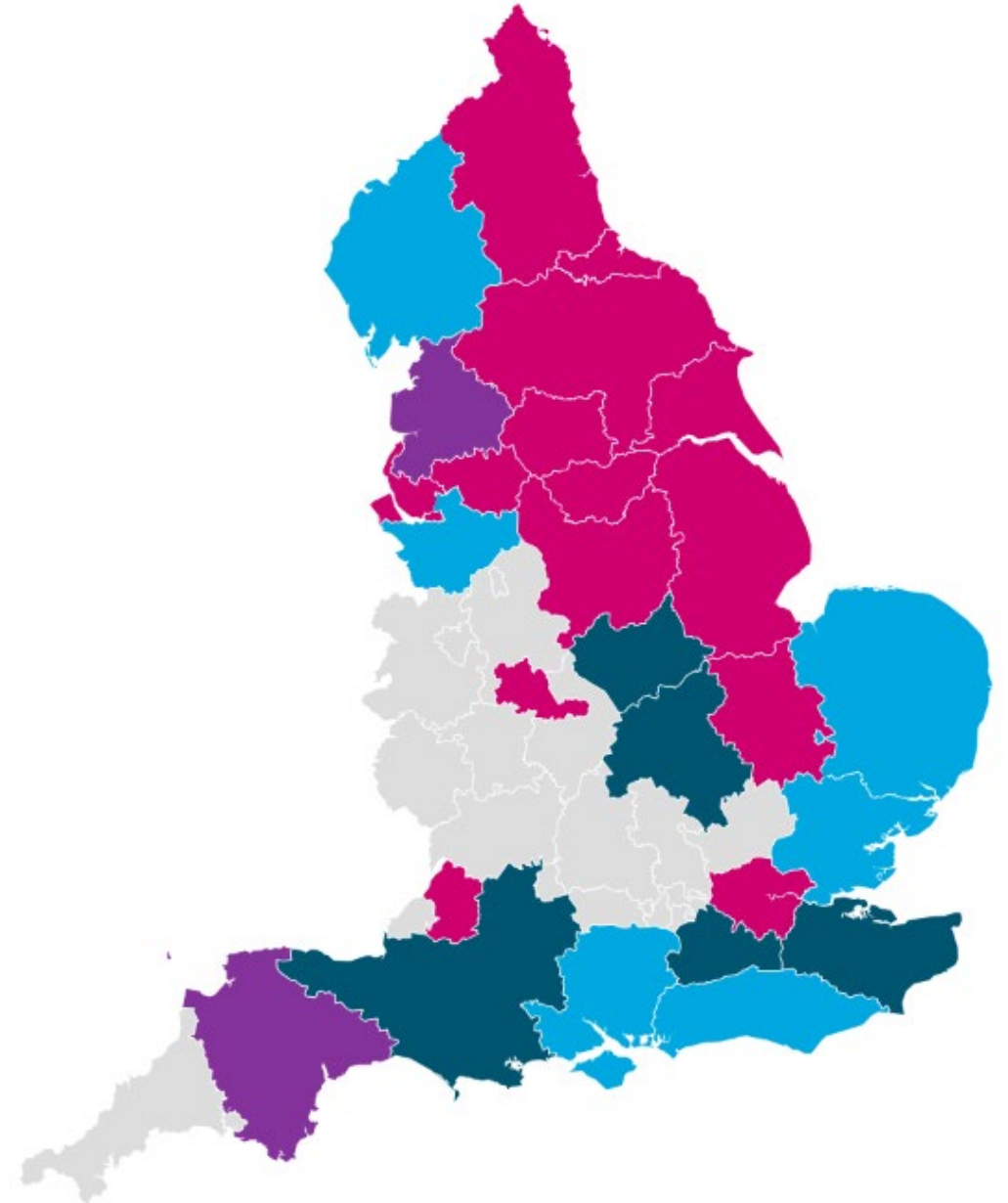
- understand our nation's skills needs and improve our skills offer
- simplify access to skills to boost economic growth
- mobilise employers and other partners, co-creating solutions to meet national, regional and local skills needs.



Devolution Bill

- Government devolution plans mean that over the coming 3-4 years, the majority of the Adult Skills Funding will be devolved down to Strategic Authorities.
- Those regions will commission providers to deliver their skills priorities, linked to Government's Industrial Strategy and LSIP's.
- Working in partnership with local commissioners, and other regional bodies that support education or transition into work is a key aspect of regional skills arrangements.
- Taking local skills needs into consideration when curriculum planning, Ofqual measure this during inspection.

Existing mayoral devolution Non-mayoral devolution DPP Unsuccessful DPP application



Key policy changes

Rapid technological change and evolving employer needs are redefining expectations, along with skills shortages, the desire for increased economic growth and funding pressures.



Simplification of post-16 to three Level 3 routes

Streamlined to:

A Levels (academic)

T Levels (large technical programmes)

V Levels (new flexible vocational qualifications)



Introduction of V Levels and Level 2 routes

V Levels are new Level 3 qualifications, broadly equivalent in size to one A Level.

Introduction of new Level 2 routes, 1yr foundation for progression to higher study, or 2yr occupational with progression into work.



Employer-led design and alignment to labour market

Employers continue to play their role in:

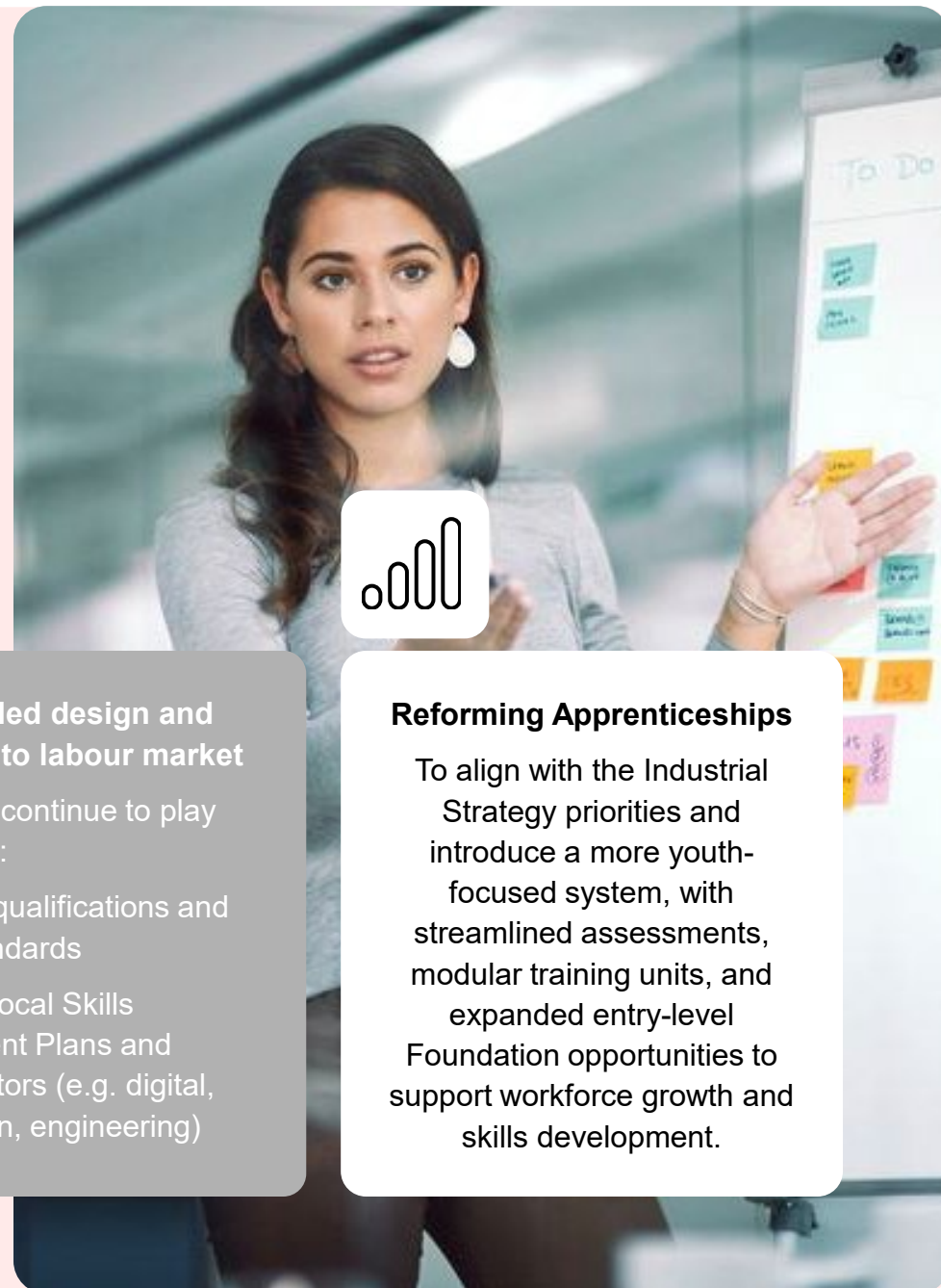
Designing qualifications and setting standards

Linked to Local Skills Improvement Plans and priority sectors (e.g. digital, construction, engineering)



Reforming Apprenticeships

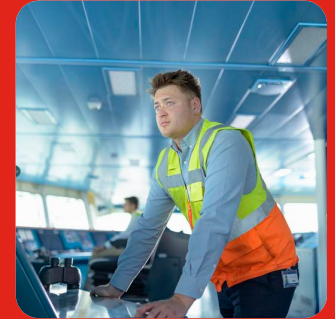
To align with the Industrial Strategy priorities and introduce a more youth-focused system, with streamlined assessments, modular training units, and expanded entry-level Foundation opportunities to support workforce growth and skills development.



Milburn Review Interim Report

The final review recommendations are expected in the early Autumn. These could drive further reforms and potentially introduce policies that:

- Support better transition for young people from education into work
- Require more partnership working between post-16 sector and employers
- Enhance the work experience aspect of post-16 education
- Offer more incentives to employers, particularly SME's to take on young people.



- Over a million young people aged 16 to 24 are not in education, employment or training - at a cost of £125 billion a year
- One in 8 young people are NEET
- And yet, employers face enormous long-term pressure on the supply chain of workers



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Post-16 qualification reforms – a new vocational education landscape

Supporting providers through the qualification reforms in England

Sign up to receive updates on qualification reform including our qualification developments.

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What you need to know about **qualification reforms**

You will find key policy updates, guidance on qualification changes, new products in development, and upcoming events to help you

Post-16 reform and apprenticeship webpages

City & Guilds will continue to provide a comprehensive update and support service to providers, via our regularly updated webpages, and a series of monthly webinars and workshops.

Qualification reforms

<https://www.cityandguilds.com/qualifications-and-apprenticeships/qualifications-reforms-in-england>

Apprenticeships

<https://www.cityandguilds.com/apprenticeships/apprenticeship-assessment>



Thank You