



# 2024 Training Industry Skills Outlook - Construction

**Workforce Skills Division**

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# Mapping Skill Demands in the Evolving Workforce Landscape

## 2024 Training Industry Skills Outlook - Construction

In 2027, the anticipated expansion of the worldwide soft skills training market is projected to reach [\\$154.06 billion](#). Training providers and professional associations need to identify and incorporate the latest trends and essential skills to remain competitive. Additionally, considering the [global skills shortage](#) in the construction industry, how can training providers and associations contribute to addressing this challenge?



# Mapping Skill Demands in the Evolving Workforce Landscape

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**Upskilling and reskilling are more important than ever due to rapid technological advancements. [Up to 1.4 million workers](#) will need reskilling by 2026. A global survey by ABB Robotics also found that [91% of large and small construction businesses](#) in Europe, the US and China are predicting a skills crisis over the next ten years.**

Particularly with the rise of generative AI and other disruptive technologies, the sector is now seemingly poised to realize improvements in [project design, schedule optimization, cost controls, site inspection, safety, compliance, and quality assurance](#). Businesses are seeking agile and adaptable individuals equipped with the necessary competencies to mitigate ongoing workforce, cost, and supply chain challenges.

Training providers and associations must offer updated programs and membership aligned with emerging skills to stand out in a crowded market. This report will look at some key learning trends in 2024 and reveal the **top ten most in-demand skills in construction roles**. The findings, supported by exclusive data from Faethm by Pearson, offer credible insights for training providers and associations to tailor their offerings effectively.

Our research extends to examining the emerging, popular, and trending skills in blue-collar jobs. This distinction allows us to shed light on the dynamic nature of skills required in the contemporary workforce and emphasizes the critical need for certifications in many highly regulated occupations, including construction. Additionally, we provide top tips to showcase the crucial role of digital credentials in skills validation across both blue-collar and heavily certified industries.

# Shaping the Future of Training

Explore the latest trends in learning and development that are shaping the construction landscape in 2024.

Nick Guidry at the Construction Career Collaborative says there are a few ways to close those skills gaps. For example:

- By delivering department-level training (e.g., training up a back office team on AI-powered estimating software).
- By connecting individual employees with personalized training.

## Soft Skills Training

Pearson's Skills Outlook shows that [human skills](#) are the most in-demand power skills, and [88% of business leaders](#) agreed with the statement that soft skills are directly related to business growth. Yet, [3 in 4 employers said they have a hard time finding graduates with the soft skills their companies need](#).

## AI Learning

While construction is often seen as a practical, hands-on industry, it's crucial not to underestimate the profound impact of AI on office, management and computer-based roles within it. Predictions indicate that AI could influence [nearly 300 million jobs globally](#), and construction is part of this transformative wave. In today's data-rich environment, where every under-utilized day holds substantial financial implications, AI swiftly presents significant [efficiency optimization](#) opportunities for construction.

## Personalized and Inclusive Learning

Various examples have demonstrated that personalized learning [improves student outcomes](#) and [boosts learners' engagement](#) in different industries. Leveraging technologies such as artificial intelligence enables tailored content delivery based on individual interests, strengths, and weaknesses, creating unique learning experiences efficiently and cost-effectively.

## Immersive learning

Experiential and immersive learning foster authentic learning experiences, placing learners in the context of real-world challenges. In fact, the use of virtual and augmented reality (VR) in construction sector have been extensively [studied and slowly implemented](#). For example, the London College of Design and Engineering UTC employs immersive technology, testing students' 3D modelling skills with Oculus Rift headsets. Meanwhile, Dudley College utilizes VR to familiarize students with high-cost tools and materials before hands-on application.



In-Demand  
Skills in  
Construction

# The Conversation Around Key Skills in the Construction Industry

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*“Clients are expecting real-time dashboarding capabilities using the likes of Power BI and Tableau, with coding and app-building skills to boot.”*

- Graham Harle,  
global CEO of Gleeds,  
a property and construction consultancy

The need for reskilling within the construction industry cannot be overstated. The ever-changing technology landscape is constantly shaping this industry, and construction firms are actively exploring the potential of generative AI to optimize their operational efficiencies.

For professionals like project managers, the current demand requires not only technical proficiency in interpreting computer-generated data on behalf of clients but also a fusion of practical experience and industry knowledge. Soft skills are also needed for contextualizing information and formulating and communicating informed recommendations.

In addition to evolving safety and environmental [compliance regulations](#), updating industry skill sets becomes more urgent.

Given the evolving landscape of the construction industry, it is suggested that certain employees in construction roles would benefit from training programs that enhance their ability to work with AI tools and interpret computer-generated data. Ongoing training emphasising areas such as [health and safety](#) and staying abreast of compliance requirements remains crucial.

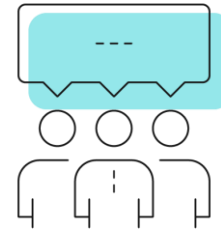
Furthermore, [soft skills are gaining prominence in the industry](#), with [interpersonal and intrapersonal skills](#) being highly sought after. In the era of AI, [critical thinking, problem-solving, and effective communication](#) are indispensable for contextualizing information, assessing risks, and articulating recommendations, contributing to professional success.

# Our Findings: Top 10 Most Demanded Skills in Construction Roles

Most construction roles are traditionally associated with blue-collar jobs, and it's unsurprising that skills such as heavy lifting, plumbing, and cleaning top the list.

Our research aligns with external insight, demonstrating that soft skills are increasingly important, with the top five most in-demand skills being soft skills.

This highlights a significant change in how employers recognize the value of soft skills in terms of productivity, safety, and overall job performance.



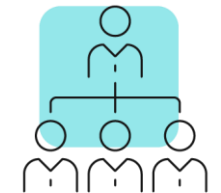
**Communication**



**Project management**



**Verbal  
communication**



**Leadership**

# Our Findings: Top 10 Most Demanded Skills in Construction Roles

The inclusion of both technical skills (plumbing, subcontracting) and managerial skills (project management, supervision) in the top skills emphasizes the need for a delicate balance between hands-on technical expertise and managerial capabilities within the construction workforce. This diversity highlights the multifaceted expectations placed on workers.

Yet, amidst the expanding array of skills, it is crucial to emphasize the enduring importance of fundamental skills. Heavy lifting and cleaning, often considered foundational, remain the bedrock of the industry. Even as the industry evolves and diversifies, these fundamental skills remain indispensable in sustaining the core functions and efficiency of construction work.

The Top 10 skills for Construction Roles are...





# Navigating Skill Trends: A Closer Look at Emerging Skills vs. Popular Skills vs. Trending Skills



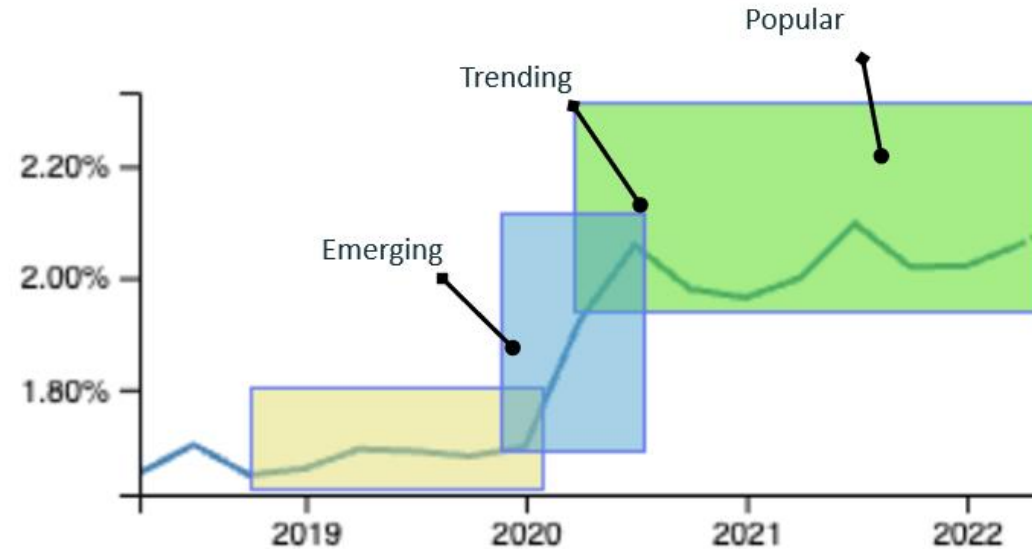
# Methodology

For this study, we categorize construction as a blue-collar workforce.

Identifying skills in blue-collar jobs that are transferable or adaptable to the construction industry can provide you with a competitive edge to enhance the versatility of training programs.

This part of the report examines job market data collected in the US, UK, and Australia since 2019. We extracted and analyzed the skills listed in job ads over time, categorizing them into three groups:

- **Emerging skills:** Skills that were previously in low demand but are now beginning to show signs of increased interest in the job market.
- **Trending skills:** Skills that have seen a significant rise in demand over the past six months and are among the top 5% of sought-after skills.
- **Popular skills:** Skills that are most often mentioned in job ads.



In this report, we will focus on analyzing emerging skills, as this forward-looking perspective helps individuals and organizations prepare for upcoming industry shifts.

Additionally, trending skills provide valuable insights into immediate market demands, while popular skills enable training programs to be aligned with current employer expectations. However, it's essential to acknowledge the potential discrepancy between skills in demand and those mentioned in job ads, underscoring the need for agility in skill development to navigate the dynamic landscape effectively.

# Blue-collar jobs

Blue-collar jobs tend to entail manual labor and working with hands and tools. Blue-collar work generally occurs in factories, warehouses, outdoors, construction sites and people's homes.

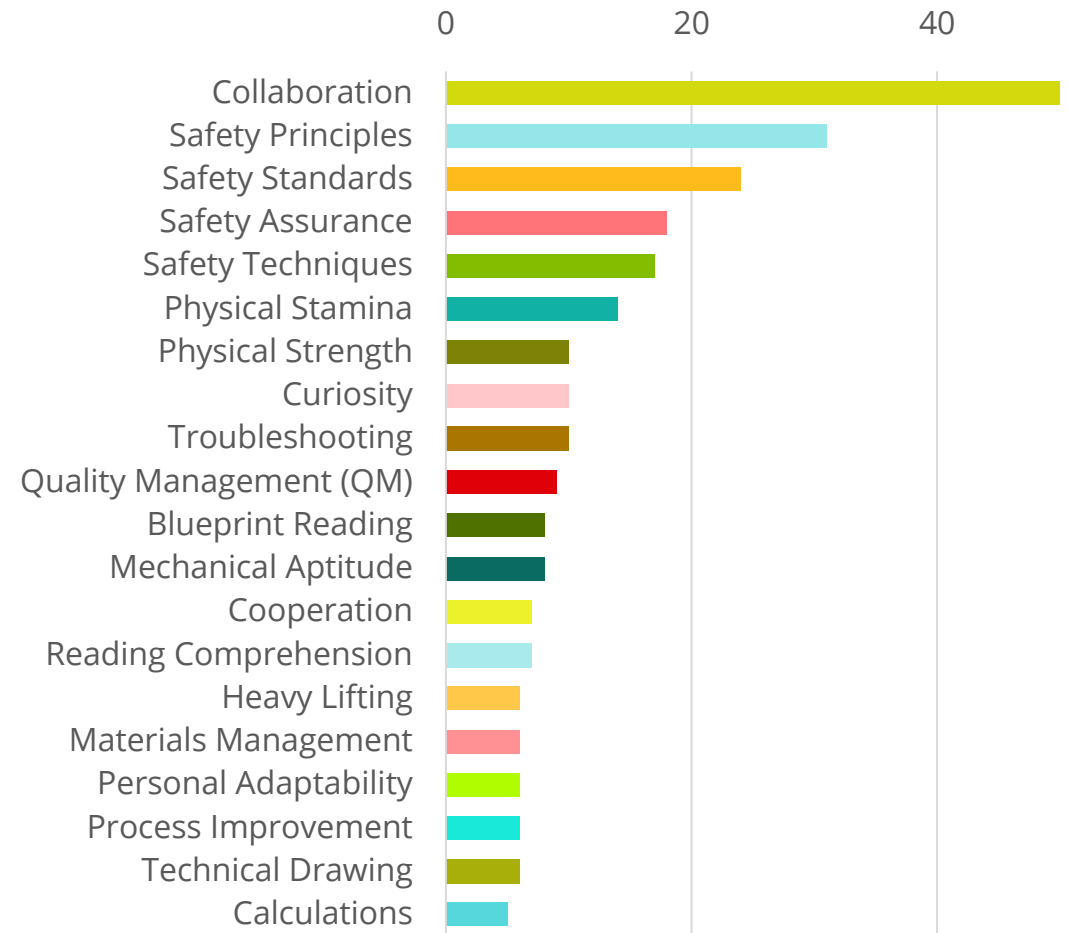
In an era where [artificial intelligence is becoming more prevalent](#), the human element remains essential in various aspects of the workforce. With their hands-on skills and adaptability, blue-collar employees can play a crucial role in filling the gaps left by automation. Training blue-collar workers in skills like [troubleshooting and repairing machinery](#) is imperative in this evolving landscape.

[Research](#) also found that employers increasingly prioritize soft skills, communication skills, digital literacy, and basic literacy skills when seeking blue-collar workers.

## What we found:

With the increasing use of AI in various industries, blue-collar workers must be proficient in operating and maintaining AI-driven machinery and systems. As seen in the data, **proficiency in specific tools and processes is becoming popular**, likely due to the need to navigate and collaborate with advanced technologies, ensuring efficiency and safety in the workplace.

## Analysis of Emerging Skills - Blue-Collar Roles



# Analysis of Trending vs. Popular Skills

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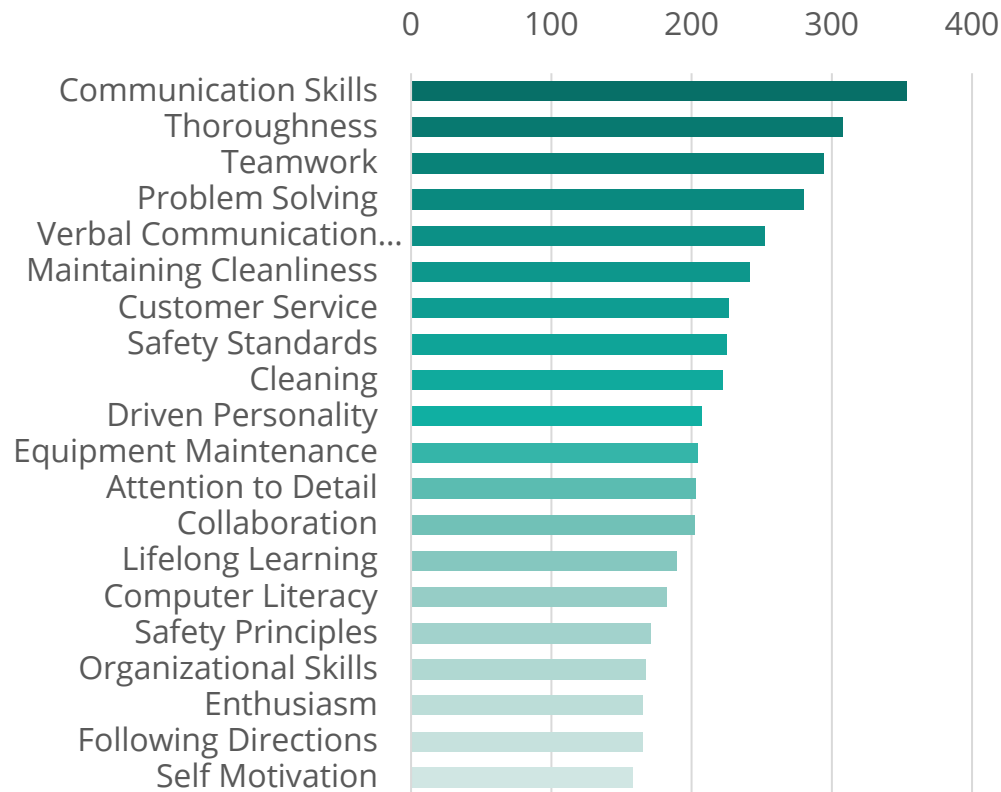
Trending skills offer insight into current market demands while popular skills, often featured in job ads, ensure alignment with current employer expectations. In our research, we found:

- **The top 3 trending skills for blue-collar roles are soft skills**, emphasizing the irreplaceable importance of these human-centric skills amidst AI growth.
- While soft skills trend high, **hard and technical skills remain fundamental in blue job ads**.
- **Communication becomes crucial in blue-collar jobs**, highlighting the need for effective internal and external interaction across sectors. However, **it's not consistently mentioned in ads**, revealing a potential gap between leadership expectations and explicit job requirements.
- **Leadership skills gain emphasis in blue-collar roles**, signaling a shift in the perception of traditionally non-hierarchical positions. This suggests a growing appreciation for leadership qualities in these domains.

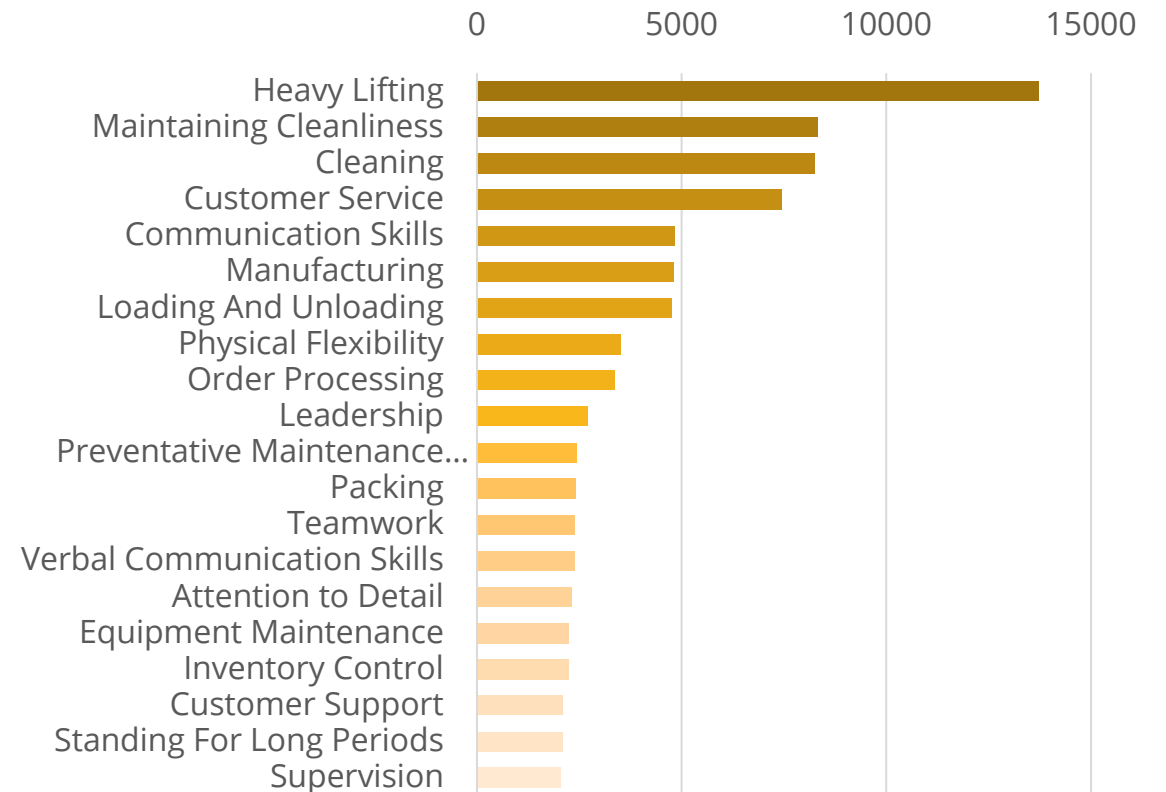


# Analysis of Trending vs. Popular Skills

**Top Trending Skills for Blue Collar Roles Across the US, UK and Australia**



**Most Sought After Skills in Blue Collar Roles Across the US, UK and Australia**



# Seizing Opportunities in 2024: How Digital Credentials Can Help

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Now that you possess this valuable data to shape the groundwork of your training and membership program, it is equally crucial to explore the use of digital credentials to authenticate these skills for your learners. This will enable you to provide a well-rounded and competitive offering.

A digital badge is a tangible representation of an individual's competencies and skills. They are designed to be easily shareable and verifiable, typically containing verifiable data such as the badge earner's name, the issuing organization, and the criteria met to earn the badge.

Here are some key benefits of including digital credentials by Credly in your program.

- 1. Standardization and Consistency:** Digital credentials provide a standardized format for presenting certifications, ensuring consistency and clarity across industries. This helps avoid misinterpretation of skills and achievements.
- 2. Add Value to Your Training & Membership Programs:** The [metadata](#) offers detailed insights into skills and accomplishments, facilitating easy verification and boosting learners' employability. For corporate clients, this information streamlines verification, enhances clarity and provides valuable insights into their workforce's skills and competencies.
- 3. Drive Demand for Your Programs:** Every time an earner shares their profile or digital credential, there's a measurable, organic impression of your brand, programs, and certifications. This digital credential sharing represents free marketing that engages new and existing customers and attracts individuals who want to upskill.
- 4. Rich Data Analytics:** The [rich analytics](#) within the digital badges provide details and trends on course engagement, program performance, and which badges are most accepted and shared. This helps you identify areas for improvement and make data-driven decisions to enhance your training program and membership.



## NEXT STEPS

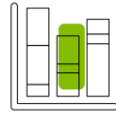
We trust this exclusive data guides you in creating tailored training for today's workforce. Digital credentials offer wide-reaching benefits, showcasing your alignment with sought-after skills and commitment to learner needs. Speak to our sales team now to learn more.

[Talk to Sales](#)

# Data Sources



# Data Sources



## Pearson Labor Market Data

This report leverages Pearson Labor Market Data. Utilizing Natural Language Processing (NLP), Faethm by Pearson gathers data from millions of job advertisements across the UK, US and Australia monthly. This process helps identify the skills demanded in the market. The collected data is then scrutinized to uncover trends and patterns.