



EC
ITB*

National Forum

25 February 2026

ecitb.org.uk



Lynda Armstrong OBE FEI

ECITB Chair

Agenda

- 10:00** Opening remarks and welcome
- 10:15** 2025 performance highlights
- 10:30** 2026 Business Plan
- 10:55** ACE renewal
- 11:05** New entrants delivery plan
- 11:15** Q&A
- 11.30** Close





Lynda Armstrong OBE FEI

ECITB Chair



Andrew Hockey
ECITB Chief Executive

Strategic objectives recap

The 2023-2025 strategy consisted of three pillars:

Foundations

- Fund high-quality training, enabled by the levy, for a safe and competent workforce
- Produce impactful labour market intelligence to enable data driven decision making
- Champion diversity and inclusion
- Work in partnership with industry and government to influence change
- Continuously improve how we work

Growing a skilled workforce

- Attract and develop the next generation
- Expand entry pathways into industry
- Deliver industry-leading standards, qualifications and competence assurance
- Help employers retain and upskill a flexible and transferable workforce
- Broaden access to training

Supporting industry in transition

- Prepare the workforce for net zero
- Identify emerging industry trends and longer-term skills needs
- Bridge the digital skills gap to drive innovation and productivity
- Evolve the remit of the ECITB to respond to the changing landscape
- Export ECITB products and services to establish a global standard for safety and skills excellence

2025 performance highlights



85% of employers in support of levy rates



13% growth in technical training



2024 workforce census, covered **78.8%** of in-scope-employers



£375k additional levy raised

28,348 CCNSG completions



Invested **£32.6m** in training grants & new entrant programmes



90% of in-scope levy payers receiving grants

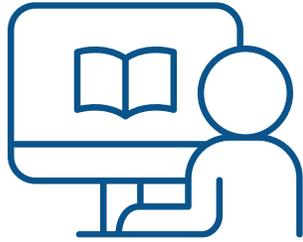


2026–2030 Strategy consultations, which engaged over **300 delegates.**



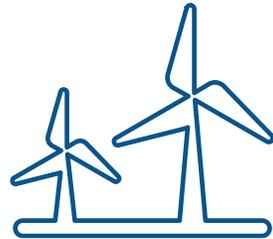
71,833 learners using ECITB-approved products

2025 performance highlights



28,503 unique
LXP users

59,084 online
course completions
(**£2m** value-add) 



Regional & net-zero
investments,
including **£478k**
Teesside Skills Hub



21,415 delegates
being trained in
23 countries
(**+37%**
increase)



Successfully
published the new
2026–2030
Strategy



EC
ITB*

Leading Industry
Learning

ECITB Strategy: 2026-30

ecitb.org.uk

Strategic outcomes



For the workforce

- Access to quality training & qualifications
- Transferable in-demand skills for a fulfilling career

For industry

- Able to train and retain an agile, diverse & competent workforce
- Benefit from optimised workforce skills to increase productivity

For the UK

- ECITB LMI supports better policy & decision-making
- ECI skills powering infrastructure and the clean energy transition
- ECI skills unlocking social mobility
- ECI skills attracting investment in UK plc and boosting regional growth

Strategy pillars



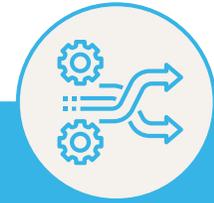
Deliver

Continue to meet our statutory responsibilities, with a clear focus on efficiency and value for money



Grow

Consolidate, standardise and scale our successful innovations, creating momentum and added value



Transform

Bold interventions to transform skills provision and positively influence industry

Deliver

New levy collection process

Delivering fairness and transparency for all levy payers.

Strategic grants review

Identifying high-impact, scalable initiatives aligned with long-term goals.

Qualifications review

Developing RQF qualifications to meet customer needs and funding priorities.

Deliver

Streamlined provider engagement

Simplifying access and standardising approvals, audits and quality assurance.

Digital certification

Enabling secure, portable skills recognition.

Enhanced workforce intelligence

Improving the Labour Forecasting Tool and capturing demand insights through vacancy data.

Grow

Competence and transferability

Implement Connected Competence review, relaunch ACE Scheme and expand cross-skilling to support workforce transition.

Digital learning expansion

Grow the LXP with approved providers and launch SkillsBuilder for employer skills tracking.

Grow

Higher education partnerships

Strategic plan to align degree provision with industry needs and enhance graduate grant impact.

New entrant programmes

Review-led improvements for value and strategic delivery, including Work Ready.

Career Progression Route Map

Refreshed framework to guide career paths in the ECI.

Transform

Trainer capacity

Pilot initiatives to boost trainer and assessor numbers and industry engagement.

New entry pathways

Data-driven pilot interventions for innovative routes into the sector.

Regional Skills Hubs

Strategic investment in hotspot areas, leveraging LMI and external funding.

Transform

Digital skills

Developing a Digital Skills Framework and priority e-learning modules.

TECSkills refresh

Flexible modular training for upskilling and new entrants, delivered with employers.

The devolved nations, regions and sectors

A regional focus with tailored approaches for local and sectoral needs, aligned with devolved government and local authority priorities.

Regional delivery plans

For new entrants, informed by skills supply analysis.

Work Ready Programmes

including a pilot within a British prison.

Support Net Zero Teesside

Through a Trainer and Assessor working group.



The devolved nations, regions and sectors

EDI and attraction initiatives

In each region, including STEM outreach in Central Scotland schools.

Client-contractor skills collaboration

Investment in new entrants and at-risk workforce transitions.

Nuclear Sector Skills Plan

Plus EDF/Sizewell C partnerships.





Working in partnership



CITB

Joint delivery on infrastructure skills, trainer capacity, green skills, workforce planning and skills passporting.

Trade unions

Ensuring workforce views inform strategic delivery through ECITB Council.

Government

Engaging DWP, Office for Clean Energy Jobs and Skills England on policy and delivery.

ECIA and BCECA

Reflecting employer views and ensuring employer-led priorities.

ACE
Reform

Why reform ACE now?

ACE was designed to assure initial competence.

The industry now expects assurance of ongoing competence, progression and professional development across a career.

Industry standards, apprenticeship reform and digital expectations have evolved and ACE must evolve with them.

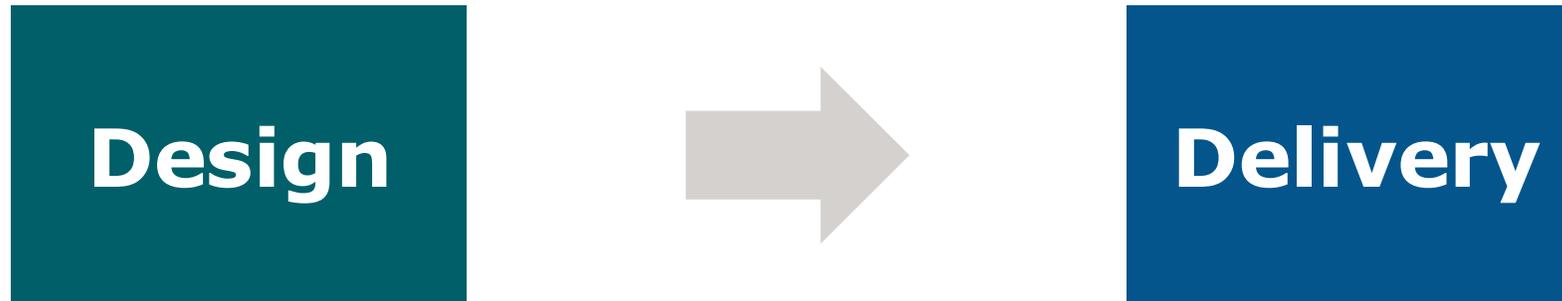
Since taking on stewardship of ACE, ECITB is:

- Expanding recognition to include a broader range of industry qualifications.
- Establishing strengthened, industry-led governance structures.
- Aligning the scheme with national apprenticeship and occupational standards
- Modernising the digital system and card infrastructure.

ACE reform – ECITB strategy

“Embed and optimise the role of Connected Competence and reform the Assuring Competence in Engineering (ACE) scheme”

ECITB Leading Industry Learning Strategy 2026–2030



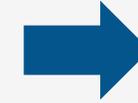
ACE Reform is entering the delivery phase

ACE governance

Governance Group

- ECIA
- NJC
- Unions

- CPCG
- ECITB



This group is established, formerly the ACE ISG

Steering group to guide product development

- Chair from industry
- Clients
- Employers

- Unions
- ACE Project Manager



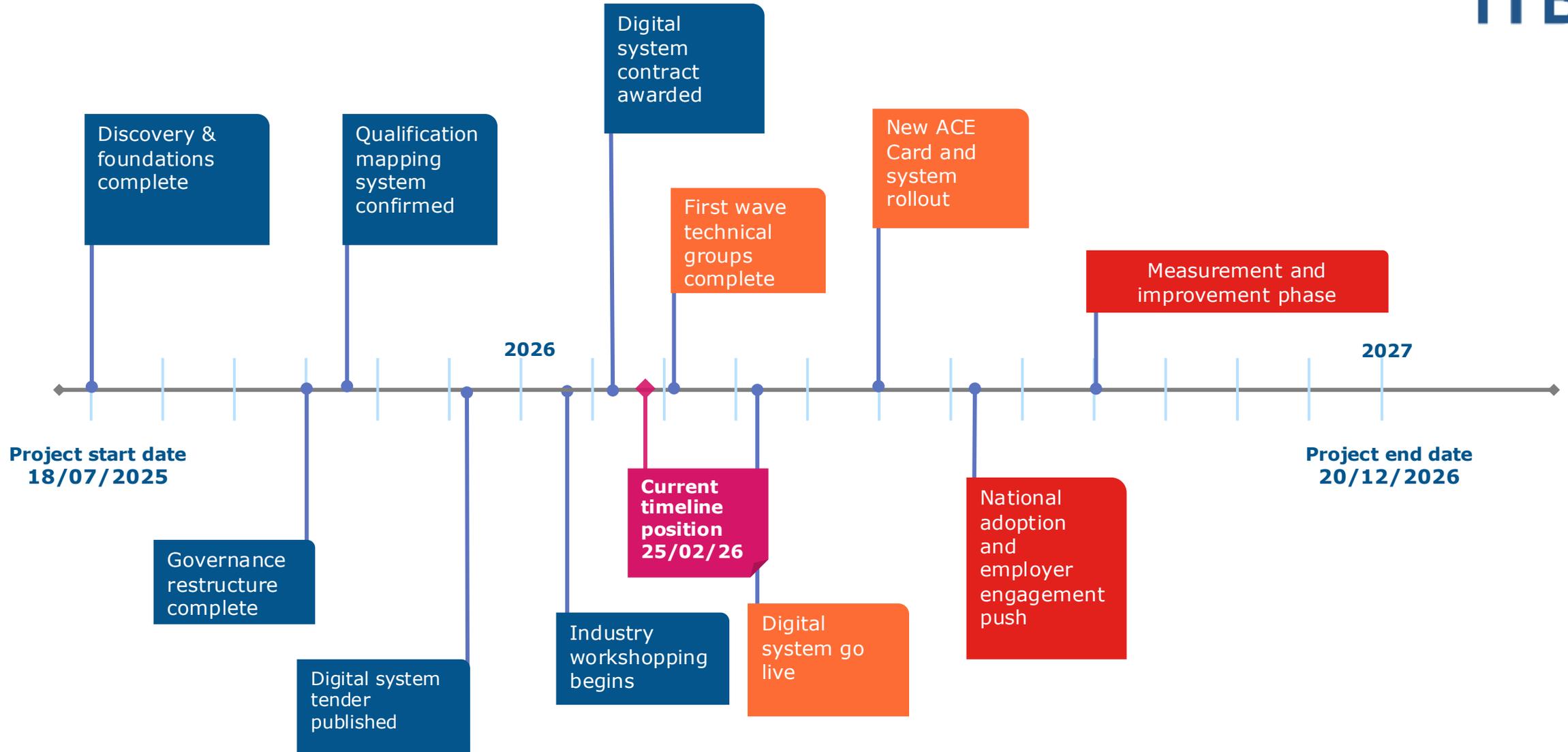
This group is formed and will begin meeting in March

Technical groups, discipline specific

Industry technical specialists and competency managers



These groups are formed and meeting regularly



Digital delivery

- Digital system procurement completed through open tender
- Supplier appointment completed early 2026
- Mobilisation and build phase underway
- Digital system and card service targeted for Spring 2026 go-live

Qualification recognition

- Structured qualification mapping framework established
- Initial priority qualifications mapped
- Validation through industry Technical Groups
- Wider qualification mapping programme underway

Governance restructure

- Governance Group established with industry leadership
- Steering Group formed to guide delivery
- Technical Groups established across key disciplines
- Regular meeting cadence in place to support delivery and decision-making
- Clear escalation and decision-making routes in place

Other workstreams

Industry workshopping – inform ongoing development, in collaboration with industry
Comms and messaging campaign – vital for successful adoption

What ACE reform will deliver

For employers & clients

Greater confidence in workforce competence

Clearer recognition of training routes

For the workforce

Improved portability of ACE cards and competence access

Improved usability

For the industry

Future proof platform aligned to national skills reform

Stronger assurance over time

ECITB-led
new entrants
programmes



Apprenticeships

Wider challenges:

- System complexity,
- Lack of confidence in pipelines,
- Lack of mentoring capacity,
- Retaining apprentices,
- Quality versus quantity of applicants.

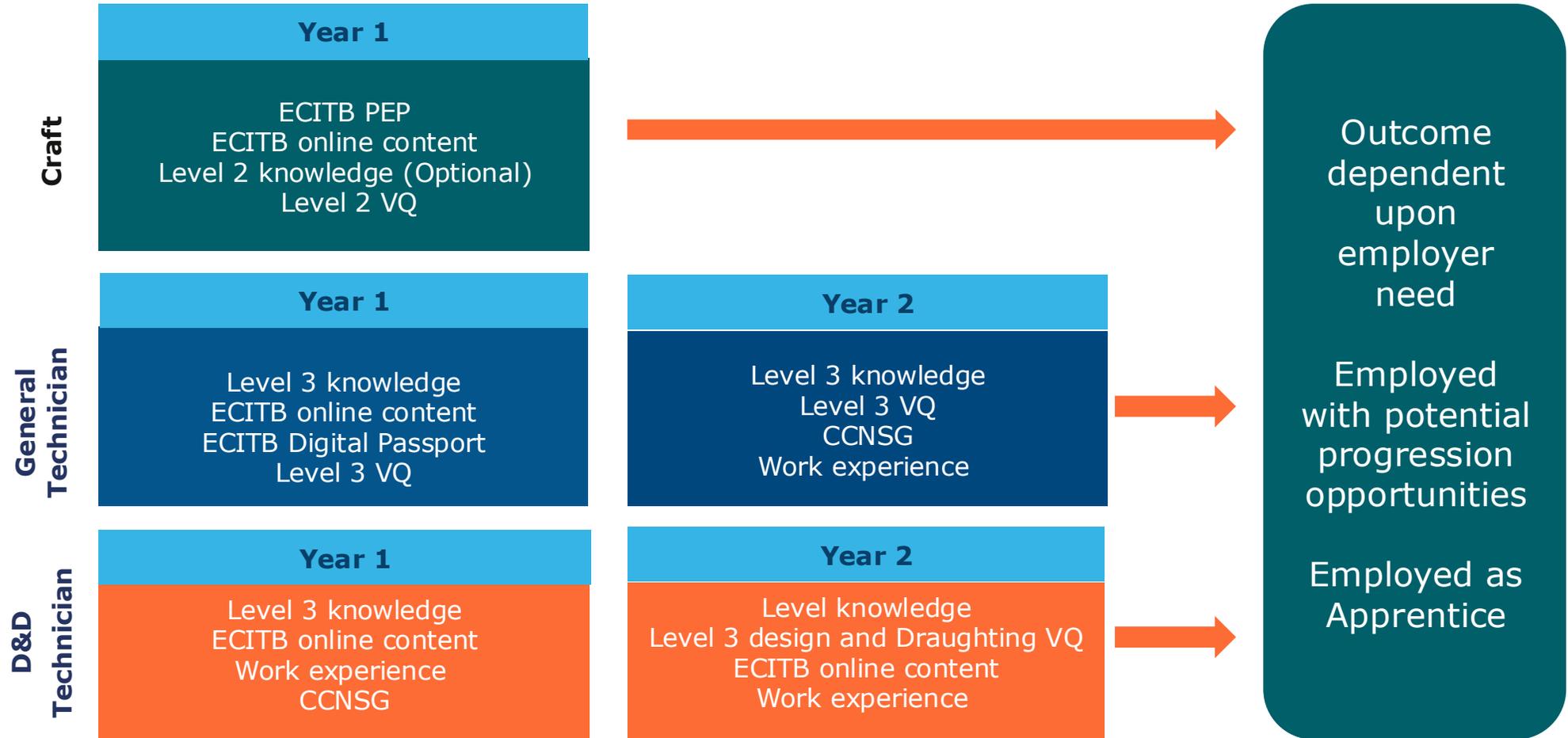


ECITB Scholarships



- The Scholarship removes the burden of employers having to **employ** a learner by allowing them to undertake some of the necessary components of an apprentice standard/framework, off the job in an approved centre without having to register on an actual apprenticeship.
- ECITB scholar will not be '**competent**' and will require an '**improvership**' in the workplace either through an **apprenticeship** or as a **direct site hire** to be deemed 'occupationally competent'.
- Since 2020 the scholarship has enrolled 100 - 150 learners per year across England, Scotland and Wales with many progressing into industry as direct hires or apprentices.

ECITB Scholarship framework



ECITB Work Ready

- Work Ready new entrant framework includes the Trainee Maintenance Operative and the Industrial Services Operative pathways.
- Targets a diverse range of demographics including NEETs, ex-offenders and service leavers, it uses public funding as opposed to the industrial training levy.
- Actual job role profiles and titles decided by the individual employers and dependent upon how the employer wishes to deploy the learners post programme.
- Employer led with guaranteed interviews on successful completion.
- ECITB acts as the programme custodian and stakeholder coordinator as well as the focal point for any issues.
- Site visits and workplace trials encouraged and key to the success of programme.

Recruitment



Recruitment always follows a similar process but can vary depending on the employers needs.

- Pre-recruitment: Contact with people providers (DWP, NCS, Job Centre and CTS).
- Recruitment starts: Information sessions, job fairs etc.
- Candidate selection: Interviews, ECITB, provider and employer-led.
- Typically course numbers = 8-16 (approx. 20 to be shortlisted).

Work Ready Framework



Programme content

ECITB Pre Employment Programme (PEP)

- Client and Contractor National Safety Group (CCNSG) Safety Passport.
- Manual Handling.
- Low Risk Confined Space.
- Handheld and Bench Mounted Abrasive Wheels.
- Working at Height.
- Working Safely with Hand and Powered Tools.

[ecitb.org.uk](https://www.ecitb.org.uk)

Technical content

- Level 2 engineering vocational qualification with optional units tailored to meet employer requirements.
- ECITB MJI 01 and 10 training.
- Basic rigging appreciation.

Q&A

Do you have any questions?





Thank you