



AUTOMOTIVE EDUCATION REPORT

Analysis of automotive qualifications and apprenticeships in the UK



Executive summary

Introduction

This report analyses the number of people who complete in automotive qualifications and start automotive apprenticeships in the UK. We use data from the regulatory bodies of the four nations:

- OfQual - The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation [England]
- The Scottish Qualifications Authority [Scotland]
- Qualifications Wales [Wales]
- CCEA Regulation [Northern Ireland]

These datasets give quarterly updates on certifications awarded for each qualification, with the latest data up to 2024 Q3 (July to September).

We align Scottish qualification levels with those in England and Wales for consistency.

For apprenticeship data, we refer to monthly reports from the Department of Education (DfE) in England on starts and achievement rates.

Summary of Q3 key findings

- 22,926 certificates issued, up 55% from last quarter and 2% year-on-year.
- General vocational qualifications grew by 1%.
- 15% of all automotive certificates are in EV and hybrid qualifications.
- EV certification dropped by 15%, with a potential skills gap of 22,500 by 2035.
- England issued 89% of certificates, with declines in Wales.
- Apprenticeship starts are 6% lower than the previous year but 9% higher than in 2022/23.
- 72% of automotive apprenticeships are advanced, down 6%.
- 32% of automotive apprenticeship starts are aged 29 to 24, a decrease of 5%.

Top qualifications

The IMI Level 2 Diploma (VRQ) led with 1,816 certificates (8% of automotive qualifications). The top ten qualifications accounted for 49% of certificates, down 3% from last quarter.

TechSafe EV

2,540 technicians gained EV certification in Q3 2024, bringing the total to 60,961, though this dropped by 15% on Q3 2023. The IMI now predicts a skills gap of 6,000 in 2033, widening to 22,500 by 2035.

TechSafe ADAS

In Q3 2024, 408 ADAS-related certificates were issued, totalling 5,175. A Q4 increase to 552 brought the total to 5,700, just 2% of UK technicians.

Automotive apprenticeships in England

In 2023/24, there were 7,326 automotive apprenticeship starts, 5% fewer than the previous year but 9% more than 2021/22.

Apprenticeship levels and age

In 2023/24, 72% (5,381) of automotive apprenticeships were advanced level, well above the 43% average for all apprenticeships.

62% of automotive apprenticeship starters were under 19, well above the 23% average.

Funding

Levy funds in 2023/24 supported 68% of all apprenticeship starts but only 55% of automotive starts, down from 62% the previous year.

Pathways and subject areas

Motor Vehicle Technician pathway led with 3,089 starts despite a 17% drop. The Autocare Technician pathway grew 21%, making up 27% of starts.

Vocational qualification certifications

Automotive qualifications

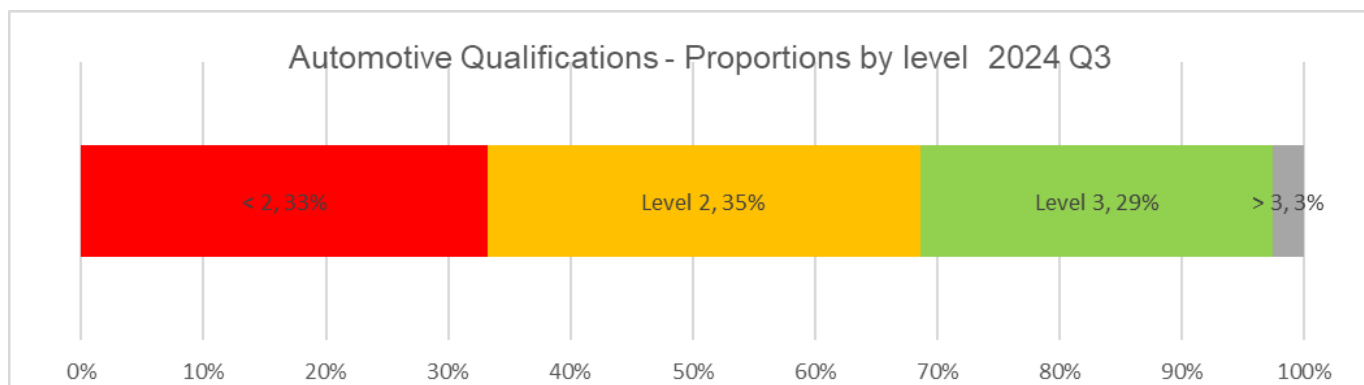
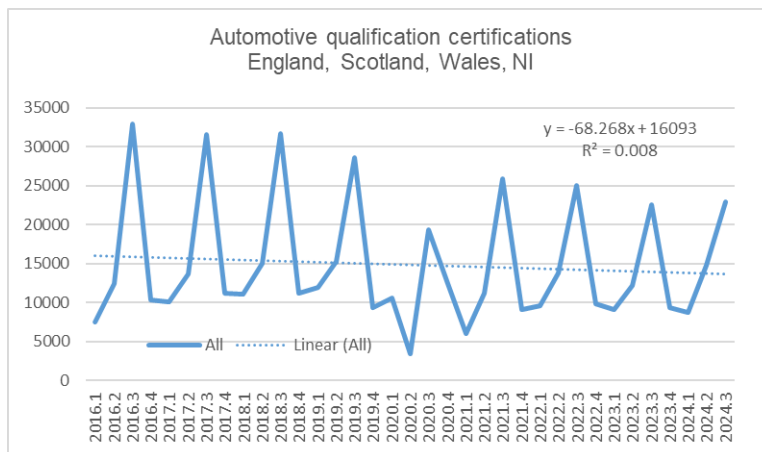
Automotive qualification certificates issued:

22,926

2024 Q3

In Q3 2024, the automotive sector issued 22,926 certificates, a 55% rise from the last quarter and a 2% increase from the same time last year.

At the same time, general vocational qualification certifications shrunk by 1% compared to the same period last year. However, the number of automotive qualifications is decreasing by an average of 17 per quarter.



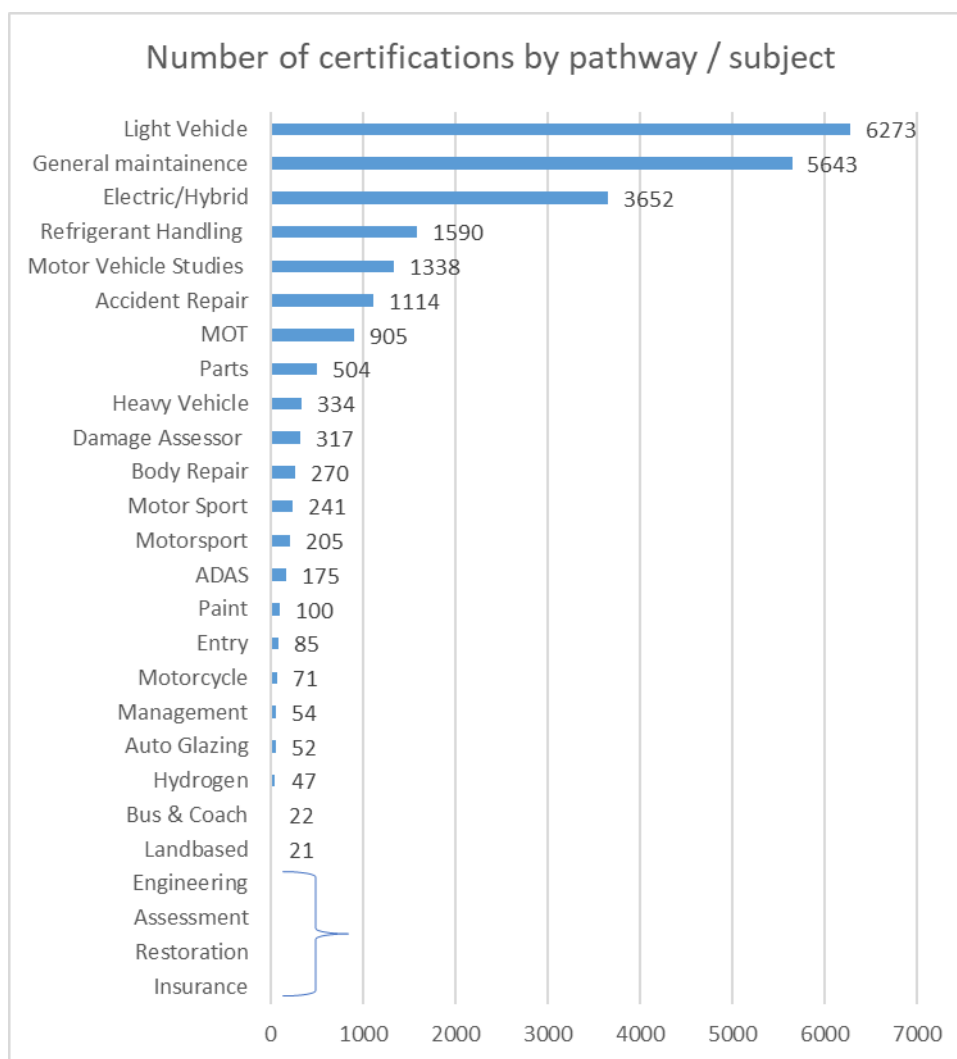
In Q3 2024, Level 2 automotive qualifications led with 8,115 (35%), while Level 3 qualifications made up 29%.

Top ten automotive qualifications

Qualification title	No.	Level	Pathway
IMI Level 2 Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Principles (VRQ)	1,816	2	Light Vehicle
IMI Level 1 Diploma in Automotive Maintenance	1,815	1	General maintenance
IMI Level 3 Award in Automotive Refrigerant Handling (EC842-2006) (VRQ)	1,590	3	Refrigerant Handling
IMI Level 3 Award in Electric/Hybrid Vehicle System Repair and Replacement	1,413	3	Electric/Hybrid
IMI Level 3 Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Principles (VRQ)	966	3	Light Vehicle
City & Guilds Level 1 Diploma in Vehicle Maintenance	910	1	General maintenance
City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Principles	870	2	Light Vehicle
City & Guilds Level 2 Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Principles	760	2	Light Vehicle
IMI Level 2 Award in Electric/Hybrid Vehicle Routine Maintenance Activities	570	2	Electric/Hybrid
IMI Level 2 Subsidiary Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance & Repair Technology (VRC)	545	2	Light Vehicle

In Q3 2024, the IMI Level 2 Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Principles (VRQ) was the top qualification, with 1,816 certificates issued, making up 8% of all automotive qualifications. The top ten qualifications accounted for 49% of all automotive certificates issued this quarter, a 3% drop on the previous.

Automotive qualification certifications – pathways / subject areas



This quarter, light vehicle qualifications accounted for 27% of all automotive certificates, making them the largest category. The next largest area is general maintenance (25%), followed by electric and hybrid (16%).

Four Nation comparison

Nation	Number certificates issued 2024-Q3	% Chg last year	% of Level 3 and above	Top Qualification
England	20,530	0%	32%	IMI Level 1 Diploma in Automotive Maintenance
NI	645	12%	41%	IMI Level 2 Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Principles (VRQ)
Scotland	961	76%	26%	Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Principles at SCQF Level 5
Wales	790	-12%	17%	IMI Level 1 Diploma in Automotive Maintenance

England issued 89% of all automotive certificates, while Wales was the only nation to experience a decrease in certifications compared to Q3 2023.

IMI TechSafe



Electric Vehicles

Technician forecasts - December 2024

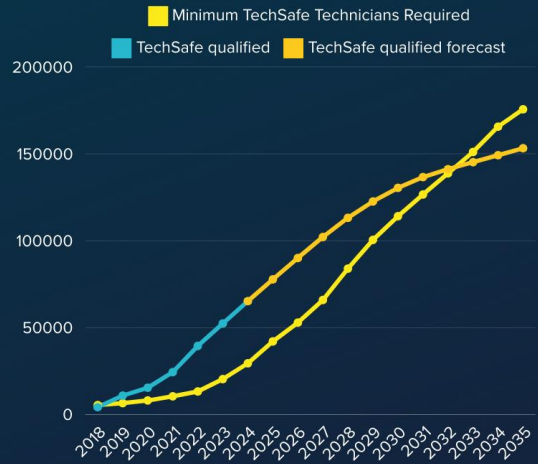
65,300

qualified EV technicians
in the UK

27%

of all technicians in the
country are EV qualified

	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Technicians Required	114,000	126,500	139,000	151,000	165,500	175,500
Gap				6,000	16,500	22,500



Forecast gap between predicted number of technicians required to service and maintain Electric Vehicles and TechSafe EV Technicians



ADAS

Technician forecasts - December 2024

17%

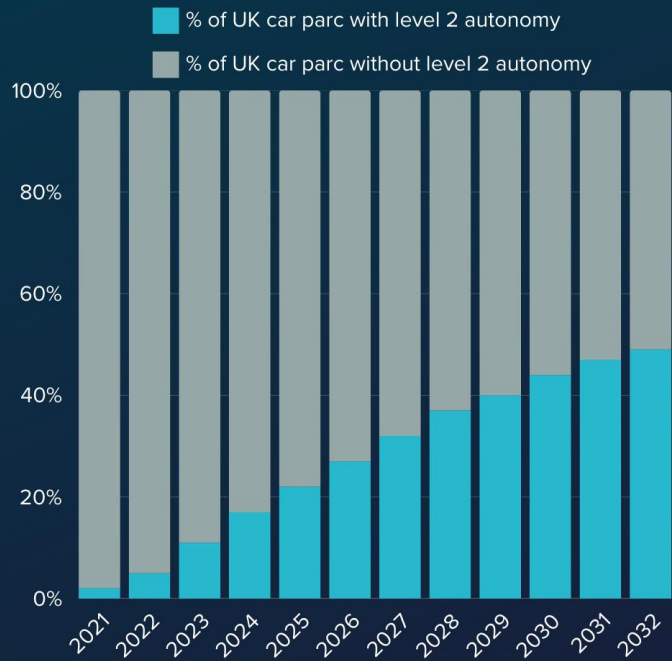
of UK cars have
some degree of
level 2 autonomy

5700

ADAS TechSafe eligible
qualified

2%

of all technicians in the
country are ADAS
qualified



Proportion of UK car parc with level 2 autonomy

TechSafe EV

In the third quarter of 2024, education regulatory authorities reported that 2,540 technicians gained their Electric Vehicle (EV) certification, including those who earned an eligible IMI accreditation.

This is a 15% drop compared to Q3 2023. The total number of certified EV technicians in the UK, using confirmed figures, now stands at 60,961.

Unofficial IMI data suggests a significant uptake in Q4 2024, with an estimated 3,450 certifications, 10% higher than in Q4 2023. This would bring the total number of qualified technicians to 65,300, being 27% of technicians in the UK.

Based on trends, we predict that 145,00 technicians will be qualified by 2033, rising to 153,000 by 2035. However, the projected demand for technicians is 151,500 by 2033 and 175,500 by 2035.

This points to a potential skills gap of 6000 in 2033, widening to 22,500 by 2035, and highlights the ongoing need for technicians to continue their training.

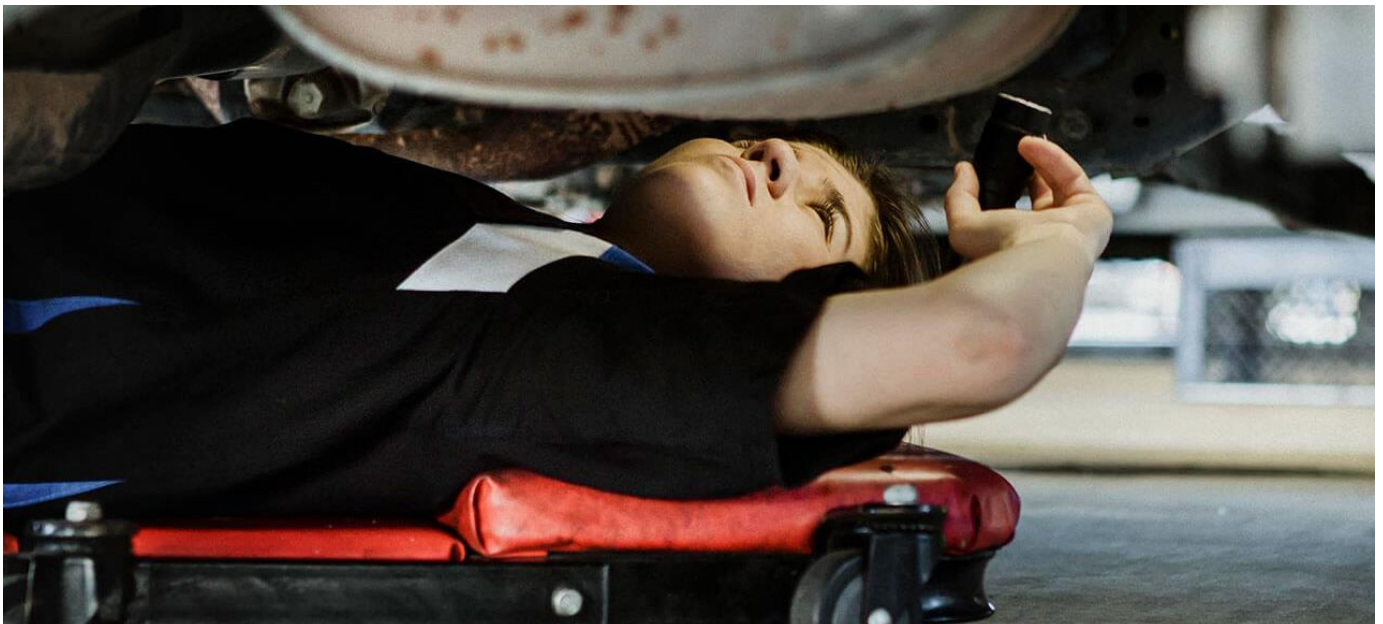
TechSafe ADAS

In the third quarter of 2024, regulatory authorities issued 408 ADAS-related certificates and accreditations eligible for TechSafe, bringing the total number of certified ADAS technicians in the UK to 5,175.

Analysis of unofficial IMI data shows a small increase in the fourth quarter of 2024, with 552 awards issued. This brings the total number of qualified technicians to 5,700, being just 2% of technicians in the UK.

17% of the UK car fleet has some Level 2 autonomy, and this is forecast to rise to 50% by 2032. We estimate that the UK will need 156,000 trained technicians to support this growth.

Although predicting the exact role of technicians in ADAS-related diagnostic activities is challenging due to the rise of software-managed diagnostics, certain roles—such as body repair and glazing—will need skills, knowledge, and an understanding of ADAS technology in the future.



Automotive apprenticeships – England

Apprenticeship Starts – academic year 20 23 /24

Automotive apprenticeships starts:

7,426

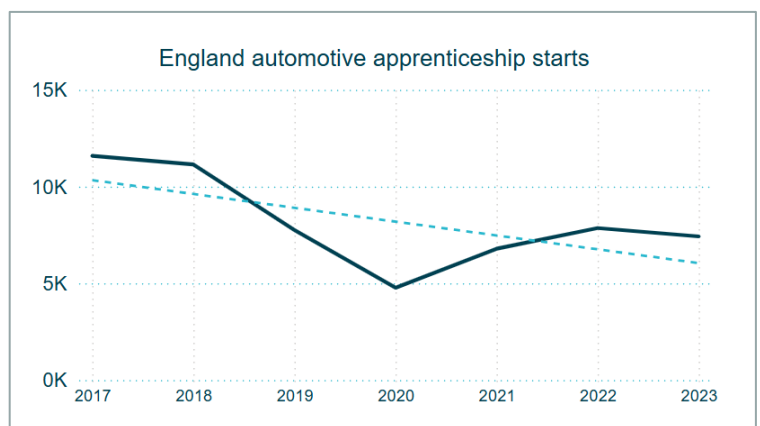
2023/4

Automotive apprenticeship starts have not returned to pre-pandemic levels and are 5% lower than in 2022/23 and one third that of 2018/19.

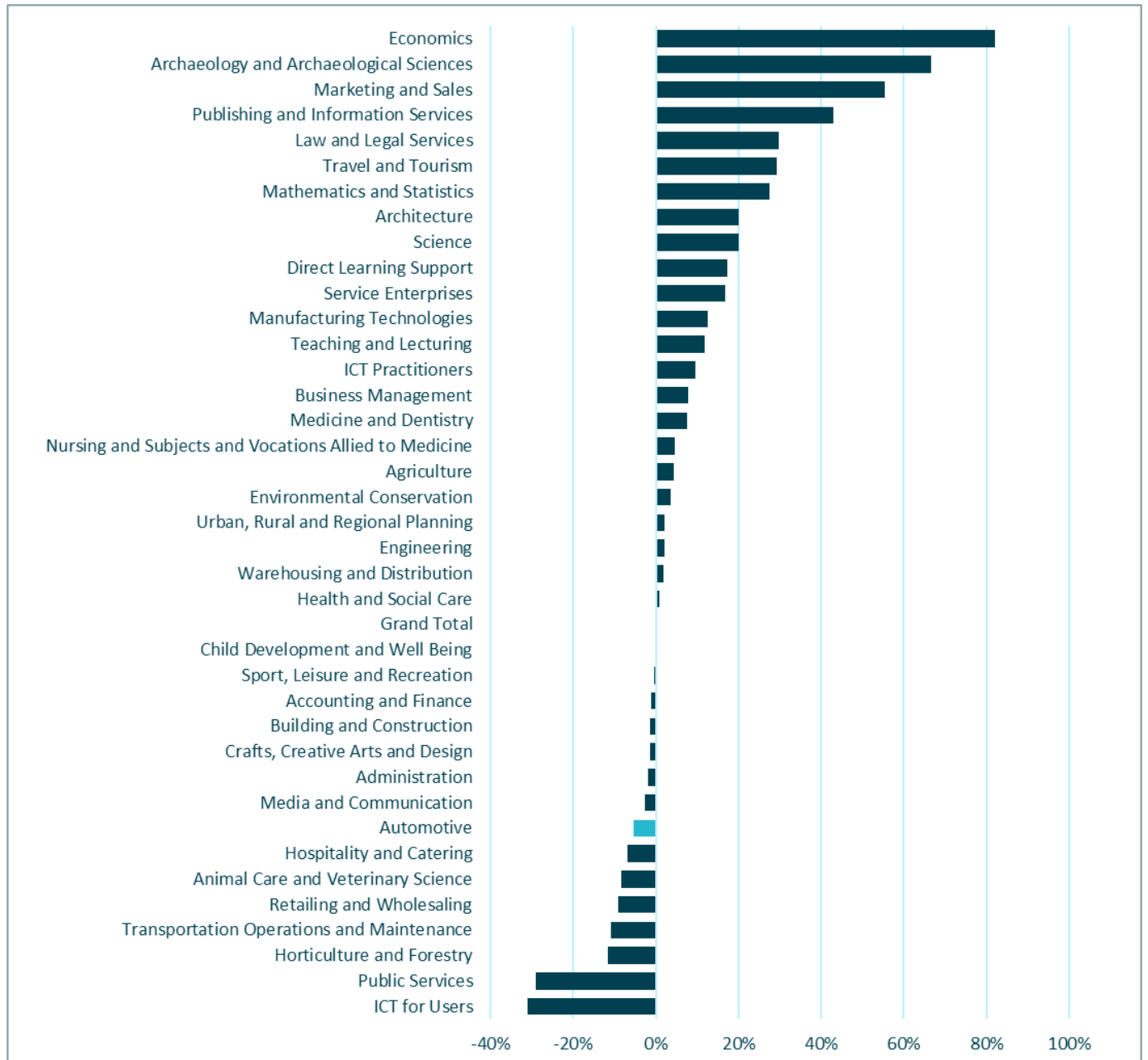
The trend shows an average yearly decline of 803 apprenticeship starts.

In the 2023/24 academic year, there were 7,426 automotive apprenticeship starts. This figure is 5% lower than the previous year but 9% higher than in 2021/22.

It is also 5.5% higher than the overall number of apprenticeship starts during this period.



Comparison of apprenticeship subject areas



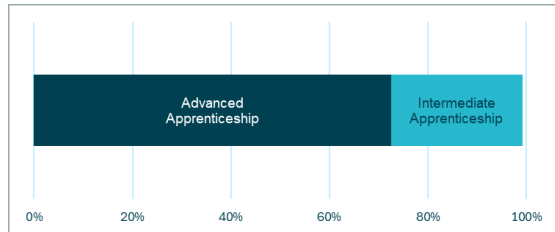
The 5% decline in automotive apprenticeships is higher than the overall average for apprenticeships, which had a 0.7% increase compared with the previous academic year.

Of the 39 subject areas analysed, automotive had the eighth largest percentage decrease in apprenticeship starts. Notably, apprenticeship starts in retailing and wholesaling also dropped by 9%. While this sector includes roles in industries outside of automotive, it also covers key positions within the automotive sector.

This trend reflects broader challenges in apprenticeship funding and rising delivery costs, which continue to affect training providers.

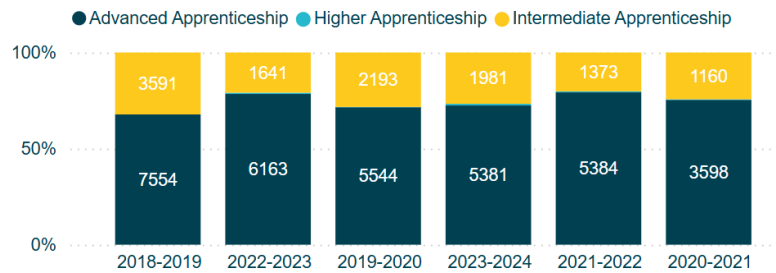
Apprenticeship starts – level

Automotive apprenticeship starts
2023/4:
72%
Advanced apprenticeship



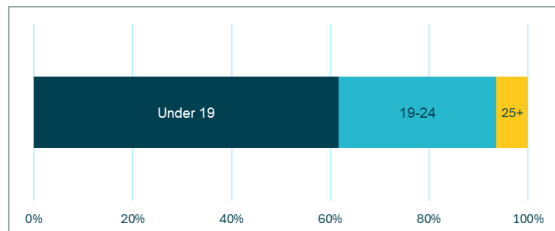
72% (5,381) of automotive apprenticeships were at an advanced level, significantly higher than the average of 43% for all apprenticeships. Since 2017/18, most automotive apprenticeship starts are at the advanced level.

However, this proportion has dropped from 78% last year, with a 1% increase in intermediate-level starts.



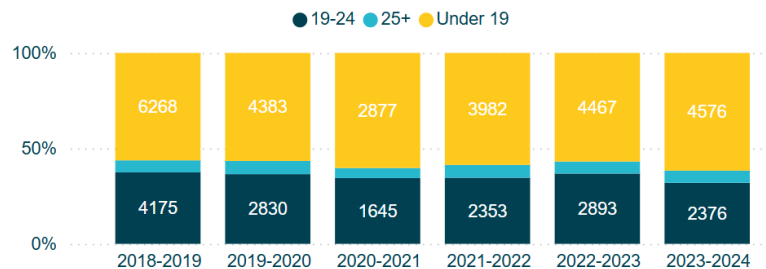
Apprenticeship starts – age profile

Automotive apprenticeship starts
2023/4:
62%
Under 19



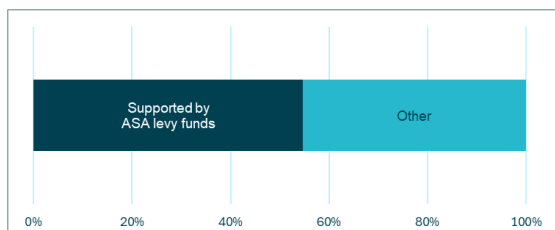
In the 2023/24 academic year, 62% (4,576) of automotive apprenticeship starters were under 19, considerably higher than the 23% average for all apprenticeships.

However, those aged 29 to 24 have decreased 5% to the lowest level since 2019.

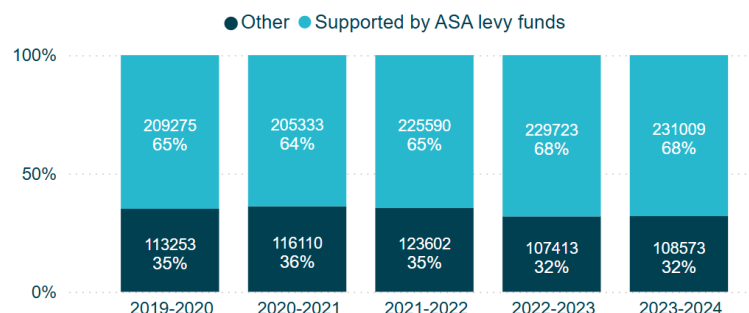


Apprenticeship starts – funding

Automotive apprenticeship starts
2023/4:
55%
Levy-funded



In 2023/24, ASA levy funds supported 68% of all apprenticeship starts, but only 55% of automotive starts relied on these funds. This marks a decrease from the previous year, when 62% of automotive apprenticeships were levy-funded.



Automotive apprenticeships starts by pathway

	202223	202324	% Change
Motor Vehicle Service and Maintenance Technician - Light Vehicle	3728	3089	-17%
Autocare Technician	1640	1981	21%
Heavy Vehicle Service and Maintenance Technician	1263	1132	-10%
Vehicle Damage Paint Technician	345	304	-12%
Bus and Coach Engineering Technician	215	224	4%
Vehicle Damage Panel Technician	212	215	1%
Vehicle Damage Mechanical, Electrical and Trim (MET) Technician	157	186	18%
Accident Repair Technician	151	112	-26%
Motorcycle Technician (Repair and Maintenance)	57	96	68%
Vehicle Damage Assessor	52	64	23%
Automotive Glazing Technician	23	21	-9%
Motor Finance Specialist	9	2	-78%
Vehicle Maintenance and Repair	2		-100%
Vehicle Parts Operations	2		-100%
Grand Total	7856	7372	-6%

In 2023/24, 3,089 apprentices started the Motor Vehicle Service and Maintenance Technician (Light Vehicle) pathway, making it the most popular. However, this pathway experienced a 17% decline compared to last year.

The Motorcycle Technician (Repair and Maintenance) pathway had the largest increase, although its numbers stay relatively small. The Autocare Technician pathway grew by 21% from last year and made up 27% of all automotive apprenticeship starts.

Data sources

1. OfQual (England) – Vocational Qualifications Dataset (Certificates awarded for all vocational qualifications excluding GCSEs, AS levels, and A levels), Quarter 3, 2024.
2. SQA Accreditation (Scotland) – Quarterly Statistical Reports, July to September 2024.
3. Qualifications Wales (Wales) – Vocational and Other Qualifications Quarterly: Quarter 3, 2024.
4. CCEA Regulation (Northern Ireland) – Technical and Professional Qualifications Bulletin, Quarter 3, 2024.
5. DfE (England) – Apprenticeships and Traineeships, data released November 28, 2024.

Institute of the Motor Industry

Fanshaws, Brickendon, Hertford, SG13 8PQ

+44(0) 1992 519 025

hello@theimi.org.uk

www.theimi.org.uk



Company Number 00225180

