



DRIVING THE FUTURE OF AUTOMOTIVE PROFESSIONALS

ATTRACT AND RECRUIT TALENT ■ RETAIN AND PROGRESS ■ SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE



INSTITUTE OF THE
MOTOR INDUSTRY

The professional body for people working
and learning in automotive since 1920.

Scan to find out more about our commitment.



Introduction

As an industry, the UK automotive sector has always been at the heart of our economy. From the jobs it creates to the innovation it drives; the sector is a powerful engine of growth. However, we are now facing a crucial challenge: the need for a skilled workforce to support and sustain our future.

At the IMI, we understand that a thriving automotive industry is reliant on a workforce that is not only skilled but adaptable to the evolving demands of new technologies and changing market dynamics. That is why we are committed to driving change, empowering businesses, and ensuring that talent is nurtured at every stage of its journey.

This manifesto outlines our commitment to the urgent action required to address the skills gap, including attracting new talent, developing clear pathways into the sector, supporting the upskilling of the current workforce and ensuring the future skill needs of the sector are fulfilled. It also highlights the need for collaboration across employers, policymakers, and industry leaders to remove the barriers that hinder growth.

By championing these actions, we believe we can ensure the UK automotive sector remains a leader on the global stage, securing the jobs of tomorrow and strengthening the economy for years to come.

The Institute of the Motor Industry



Driving the Future of Automotive

The UK automotive sector is a cornerstone of the nation's economy, employing 866,000 individuals and contributing £37 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2023. However, the sector is facing a critical challenge: attracting and retaining talent. Not only have record high vacancies had an impact across the sector, the workforce is also ageing. By 2032, there could be the need to replace 144,000 individuals (19%) due to retirement.

The industry is also undergoing rapid transformation, driven by advancements in technology such as electric vehicles and Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS), which are reshaping future skills requirements. As these changes unfold, it is essential that potential entrants to the sector have a positive understanding of automotive careers and clear, accessible pathways to enter.

The IMI plays a vital role in ensuring that the next generation of talent is equipped to meet the challenges of a fast-evolving industry. This includes collaborating with employers to eliminate barriers to apprenticeships, creating flexible pathways that align with operational needs, and supporting businesses, with the tools and resources they need to navigate complex funding systems and qualification requirements.

Equally important for continuous professional development is the retention and upskilling of the existing workforce, ensuring they are prepared for today's technologies and those emerging on the horizon. Through ongoing dialogue and tailored solutions such as My CPD, we aim to empower employers to invest in the future of their workforce, while also advocating for policies that better support apprenticeship uptake across the sector.

All stats are correct as of April 2025



The IMI is committed to systemic reform, working closely with government, industry leaders, and educational institutions to create accessible pathways into the sector. Our efforts align with activities such as the government's modern Industrial Strategy and its mission to achieve an 80% employment rate, ensuring economic opportunity is spread across all communities. By collaborating on reforms such as apprenticeship flexibility and qualification alignment, we aim to remove barriers to entry and empower individuals from diverse backgrounds.

By attracting and retaining a skilled, agile workforce and drawing talent from the widest possible pool, we can ensure that the UK automotive sector remains an influential global leader, equipped with skills needed just for today, but for the future too.

The IMI plays a vital role in ensuring that the next generation of talent is equipped to meet the challenges of a fast-evolving industry



ATTRACT AND RECRUIT

Showcasing the automotive sector
as a career of choice for future talent.



The automotive sector is undergoing the biggest technological and skills shift since the invention of the internal combustion engine.



The IMI is committed to ensuring the automotive sector attracts the most talented individuals in the UK who can support with this shift.



For this to happen, a coordinated effort to attract fresh talent, foster inclusion, and drive innovation at every level of the industry is necessary.

The Challenge

Thanks to rapid technological advancements in electric and autonomous vehicles, it's the most exciting time to work in automotive in over a century. Yet, the UK automotive sector is facing a vacancy challenge due to high numbers of unfilled roles and an aging workforce that could see 144,000 individuals (19%) needing to be replaced by 2032 due to retirement.

With 218 different occupations across the sector, there is no shortage of attractive career opportunities that go far beyond the traditional perceptions of working in automotive. Outdated misconceptions about the sector not being viewed as an appealing or accessible career destination, attracting and recruiting new and diverse talent is a growing challenge.

It is crucial to break down barriers, especially for underrepresented groups, and create clear pathways into the sector for everyone, ensuring that the workforce of tomorrow is as diverse and exciting as the new technology rapidly entering the workplace.



Our Commitment

The IMI is committed to supporting the sector in attracting the best talent, from the widest talent pool available. This includes supporting our members and automotive businesses with the right tools and resources to foster inclusive recruitment strategies by engaging with them to eliminate systemic barriers.

Through campaigns like our 'There's More to Motor', we are working to transform public perceptions, showcasing the automotive sector as an innovative and inclusive career destination.

It also means the IMI is committed to engaging with employers and the government on key issues impacting automotive talent and skills, representing our membership community in the process. This work will include engaging to remove the barriers employers may face in hiring apprenticeships and addressing qualification gaps.

The IMI also provides resources for school leavers, career switchers, and work returners, helping them to access and understand the numerous opportunities in the sector.

The IMI is committed to supporting the sector in attracting the best talent, from the widest talent pool available



The Change

To secure a professional, sustainable, and long-term workforce, the automotive sector must urgently address the critical gaps in workforce diversity, accessibility, and technological readiness. This challenge calls for a coordinated effort to attract fresh talent, foster inclusion, and drive innovation at every level of the industry.

As the automotive sector undergoes transformative change due to advancements in electrification, automation, and green technologies, the IMI's strategy will prioritise equipping the workforce with the necessary skills to stay ahead of technological trends. This aligns with the government's objectives of addressing skills mismatches and scaling up investment in training to drive productivity growth.

Through our partnership with policymakers and stakeholders, we advocate for policies that integrate skills development into government strategies, including Get Britain Working and the Industrial Strategy, ensuring the automotive workforce remains resilient, agile, and confident in producing and maintaining the vehicles of the future. Our vision is a sector that not only adapts to change but thrives as a global leader in innovation and sustainability.



RETAIN AND PROGRESS

Empowering and enabling automotive professionals to succeed.



As technological and skills advancements continue, an automotive workforce that is upskilled with these new demands is essential.



The IMI is committed to ensuring the automotive workforce has access to continuous professional development and an environment where they feel included and can thrive.



Therefore, individuals from all backgrounds must have clear pathways for advancement, providing them a career destination for life.

The Challenge

Retention of existing employees in the automotive workforce and ensuring that they are sufficiently upskilled with the required demands of today's technologies, as well as those that are fast emerging, is vital for the industry.

With ongoing technological advancements, it is essential that workers continuously develop their skills to remain relevant in a rapidly changing industry, ensuring that they can safely work with the vehicles on UK roads.

Not only do individuals need continuous career development and progression, they also need to feel valued and included by their employers. Creating a more diverse and inclusive workplace, is essential to retaining the best talent within the industry, with more and more individuals wanting to work for a business that represents and reflects their personal values.

Our Commitment

The IMI is committed to providing lifelong learning pathways to its members, and the wider automotive workforce, through dynamic learning solutions that continuously evolve with the industry's needs. Professional recognition, via the IMI's Professional Register and other additional recognition, such as IMI TechSafe, are on offer through the institute.

Through the provision of career guidance, the IMI provides up to date information, resources and tools to individuals as they progress in their careers. Even as the industry demand changes, the IMI strives to empower individuals with the support that they need, whether that's online learning, networking or even CV building, to ensure their careers progress within the sector.

Scan here to visit the IMI Professional Register



The IMI also advocates for equitable access to career progression, through the implementation of clear and fair mechanisms for career progression that reflects the growing diversity of the workforce, as well as through resource provision for employers.

We also must continue to advocate on behalf of our members for the flexible use of funds available for education, engaging with government and business in the process. Access to this funding will be imperative for the continuous professional development of automotive professionals.

The automotive workforce, both present, and future, must feel empowered at all stages of their career

The Change

For the existing automotive workforce to want to remain within the industry, and to see their careers continuously progress and develop, they must be supported and recognised by the work of the IMI.

The automotive workforce, both present, and future, must feel empowered at all stages of their career, meaning not only will their job satisfaction be enhanced, but they will also be more likely to stay in the sector. They also must be supported by the government and their employers, be that via freeing up of funds used for education, or by working in an environment that celebrates the diverse individuals within the industry.

Through our commitment to all professionals and students within the sector, we will continue to work to ensure that individuals from all backgrounds have clear pathways for advancement, providing them a career destination for life.



SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

Supporting the workforce of today, enabling the workforce of tomorrow.

The Challenge

As the automotive sector continues to evolve, particularly with advancements in electric vehicles (EVs) and autonomous driving technologies, the skills required by the workforce are changing.

This not only creates a challenge in ensuring that the workforce is being continuously upskilled, but also the need to anticipate emerging skill requirements in the short, medium and long term.

Proactive skills forecasting, and collaboration and partnerships with government, educators and industry leaders to ensure training programmes align with the future sector needs, is therefore essential to developing the skills required for tomorrow's workforce.

Our Commitment

The IMI is committed to not just supporting the automotive professionals of today, but it goes one step further by adopting a forward-looking approach, leveraging data from labour market trends and emerging technologies to anticipate the skills needed in the future. Research reports, government consultation responses and the IMI's Insights by IMI series, all provide a valuable vision for the future of the automotive sector.

Through industry collaboration, the IMI can continue to provide and advocate for training programs that are aligned with industry innovations and technological advancements.



As the sector continues to advance at a rapid pace, new skills requirements will be needed for its long term success.



The IMI is committed to not only supporting the automotive workforce of today, but also the automotive workforce of the future.



Through skills forecasting and collaboration, automotive professionals of the future can be prepared for the vast opportunities and exciting challenges that lay ahead.

The IMI also facilitates partnerships that provide practical experiences and insights into new technologies, ensuring that career advice is informed by the latest industry developments.

The Change

The automotive industry needs to ensure the workforce of tomorrow is sufficiently prepared to meet the challenges and demands of a rapidly changing industry.

Through proactive collaboration, the IMI will ensure it is successfully influencing training programs to include emerging skills, equipping professionals with the knowledge and experience needed for the future of the industry. By providing government and businesses with the skills forecasting needed, the sector will be able to future proof itself.

Ultimately, it is this foresight that will ensure that the sector has the required skills and talent that it needs and that the automotive professionals of the future are prepared for the vast opportunities and exciting challenges that lay ahead.

The IMI will ensure it is successfully influencing training programs to include emerging skills, equipping professionals with the knowledge and experience needed for the future of the industry



In Summary

The automotive sector in the UK has reached a crucial point, with the need to attract new talent, retain our existing workforce and to ensure that they are equipped with for future technological and skills needs pivotal to the industry's continued success.

As such, the IMI is committed to ensuring that the sector, including automotive professionals, students, employers and training providers have the tools and knowledge that they need to not only meet the demands of today's workforce but is also fully prepared for the future.

To do this, the IMI is committed to addressing outdated perceptions of the sector, creating clear entry pathways for new talent, and advocating for apprenticeship reform. This will ensure that the IMI can support the automotive sector in widening the talent pool and ensuring the next generation of employees view the industry as an attractive career destination.

The IMI also remains committed to ensuring the retention and progression of automotive talent through professional recognition, continuous professional development opportunities, and inclusive workplaces will help to secure a sustainable workforce for years to come.

Finally, future-proofing the sector requires proactive collaboration between industry, government, and education providers. The IMI will continue to lead the charge, leveraging insights, championing policy reforms, and ensuring skills development remains at the heart of industry growth.

A thriving UK automotive sector depends on a highly skilled and adaptable workforce. By working together, we can build a sector that is not only resilient but also a global leader in innovation, sustainability, and opportunity.

About the IMI

Who we are

The Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) was founded in 1920 when society – as now – was experiencing rapid technology-driven change. We believe passionately that industry personnel (over 800,000) need the most relevant, up-to-date skills and qualifications to progress – especially during times of intense change. We are first and foremost a people-first business.

Our services support over 120,000 members and 73,000 learners across 89 countries. We are a sector-led professional body meaning that we focus on the workforce of the automotive industry servicing a broad range of people from different sub-sectors and occupations. We also hold awarding body and end-point assessment status and work closely with relevant regulators to maintain our standards.

We are a values-based organisation who places great importance on the professional conduct of our staff and members.



What we do

The IMI are committed to furthering the automotive profession. We have a team of dedicated and trained staff who achieve this across three key areas:



- **Promote** the sector as a career of choice through campaigning and developing resources for schools, building partnerships to deliver career activities and showcasing world-class talent through skill competitions.



- **Develop** the skills of automotive people and equipping new entrants to the sector with the skills and competence to be effective through apprenticeships and qualifications. Advancing the knowledge and skills of the workforce through developing e-learning, CPD courses and accreditations to support and encourage continuous professional development.



- **Support** our members by providing professional credentials through post nominals and professional registration. Promoting and overseeing adherence to professional standards for technical and ethical competence. Providing support to members throughout their career journey and representing our members' voice on issues that matter to them.





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