



INSTITUTE OF THE
MOTOR INDUSTRY

AUTOMOTIVE STRATEGY

IMI Position

The IMI believes the United Kingdom's industrial and economic policy frameworks, including but not limited to the Industrial Strategy, must recognise and invest in the entire automotive workforce, not just those working in manufacturing and research and development, if the country is to achieve its ambitions for industrial competitiveness, green growth, future mobility, and net zero.

Technicians, service and repair specialists, diagnostics professionals, logistics workers, customer-facing roles, and managers are all high-skill professions, requiring structured training, ongoing development, and formal recognition that are critical to the success of the United Kingdom's industrial and environmental goals. The IMI calls for funding and policy frameworks to explicitly support the skills, training, and professional recognition of these roles alongside manufacturing and innovation priorities.

The IMI also calls for stronger recognition of the automotive workforce across national policy, funding, and data frameworks. This includes, but is not limited to, forthcoming revisions to Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes, which play an important role in ensuring the sector is fully visible in official statistics. Alongside this, workforce recognition must be embedded in skills funding priorities, professional standards, and public policy so that all parts of the automotive sector are acknowledged as critical enablers of economic growth and net zero.

Background

The United Kingdom's ambitions for green growth, net zero and future mobility rely on a skilled and adaptable workforce across the entire automotive sector, not only in manufacturing and research, but also in service, repair, diagnostics, logistics, customer-facing roles, and management.

However, recent skills assessments highlight significant workforce gaps in many of these roles, which are critical to the electrification, automation, and digitalisation of vehicles. At the same time, national funding streams, from green technology investment to regional skills pilots, have historically focused on manufacturing and research, leaving much of the wider automotive workforce overlooked.

With major reforms now underway across skills policy, industrial strategy, and net zero planning, there is a timely opportunity to ensure that investment, funding, and professional recognition extend across the entire sector, enabling all parts of the workforce to contribute to the transition to electric, connected, hydrogen-powered, and digitally enabled vehicles.

Embedding workforce recognition into these reforms will be critical. This includes ensuring that skills policy, funding priorities, and professional standards reflect the full breadth of automotive roles, while also making use of technical mechanisms such as the forthcoming SIC and SOC revisions to improve the visibility of the sector in official data and evidence used for policymaking.



IMI Goals

Secure skills reform that delivers accessible, high-quality, and industry-relevant training for the entire automotive workforce, ensuring lifelong learning pathways keep pace with technological and industrial change.

Unlock national and devolved policy and funding investment so employers across all parts of the automotive sector, not just manufacturing, can access training and professional development aligned to net zero, digitalisation, and industrial growth priorities.

Position the Institute of the Motor Industry as the strategic partner and lobbying voice shaping national and regional funding priorities, skills frameworks, and workforce policy.

Build public, political, and policymaker recognition of the automotive workforce, including technicians, service, repair, logistics, customer-facing, and management roles, as critical enablers of net zero, innovation, and economic growth.

Ensure the automotive workforce remains globally competitive and future-ready, equipped with the skills, qualifications, and career pathways needed for green and digital transformation.

Influence national data and classification systems, including forthcoming SIC and SOC revisions, so that the automotive workforce is accurately represented in official statistics, strengthening the case for investment, recognition, and skills reform.

Opportunities

Funding reviews provide a timely opportunity to embed automotive workforce training and professional recognition within national growth, net zero, and skills priorities.

Skills England and devolved governments are shaping new skills and funding frameworks, creating a route for the Institute of the Motor Industry to influence policy from the outset and secure explicit commitments for the entire automotive workforce.

Parliamentary debates and select committee inquiries on net zero, green growth, and industrial competitiveness offer platforms to position the automotive workforce as essential to delivering the United Kingdom's economic and environmental goals.

Cross-government agendas on industrial innovation, transport decarbonisation, and digital transformation provide multiple entry points for lobbying activities that connect workforce priorities with policy ambitions.

Partnerships with employer coalitions and sector bodies create the chance to present a united, evidence-based case for national funding to support skills reform and workforce development at scale.

The revision of SIC and SOC codes provides an additional opportunity to improve the visibility of automotive roles in datasets, strengthening the evidence base for funding, skills planning, and recognition across policy.

IMI Actions

Lobby central government and parliament to ensure national funding and policy frameworks explicitly support workforce training and professional recognition across the entire automotive sector.

Engage with Skills England and devolved administrations to influence the design of skills and funding frameworks so they embed long-term investment in training, lifelong learning, and professional standards.

Produce evidence-based policy briefings, consultation responses, and parliamentary submissions using IMI workforce data and labour market insights to shape funding and workforce policy funding priorities and skills reform.



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Engage with MPs, Peers, and Select Committees to secure explicit commitments for workforce training and professional recognition within policy and net zero planning.

Collaborate with employer coalitions, sector bodies, and industry leaders to present a unified, high-profile case for funding and skills reform at the national policy level.

Run targeted campaigns, thought leadership pieces, and stakeholder events to raise the profile of non-manufacturing roles, ensuring policymakers, the public, and employers recognise their critical role in industrial growth and green transition.

Position the Institute of the Motor Industry as the authoritative voice on automotive workforce policy, shaping national debate and influencing the design of future policy frameworks and funding mechanisms.

Work directly with ONS and classification coordinators to influence SIC and SOC reforms, ensuring the full scope of automotive workforce activity is properly reflected in data, which in turn strengthens the sector's case for funding, recognition, and regulatory support.

Raise the status of automotive careers by embedding professional recognition, clear progression pathways, and consistent standards across all roles in the sector.