

## Segment One

**Sector:** Rail

### Executive Summary:

The rail sector in Leeds City Region has unique skills system and does face some challenges surrounding the supply and the demand around the regions forecasted work. The report delves into the reasons behind this, whilst detailing the capacity and capability of the region's provider network.

For the railway industry in LCR to meet the demand and utilise the current investment, we need to address the challenges surrounding an ageing workforce and the current skills shortages the industry is witnessing, this includes the skill requirements needed to cope with the ever-growing advances in digitalisation.

Through various studies regarding the skill need for HS2, the Leeds City Region HS2 Growth Strategy Report documented that there are skill shortages within the rail sector in the following areas;

- Rail system knowledge
- Rolling stock manufacturing/maintenance
- Train operation and planning

Network rail is key intermediary and will be vital to our understanding and improvement the skills system within this sector. The company owns, operates and develops 20,000 miles of track, 30,000 bridges, tunnels and viaducts and the thousands of signals, level crossings and stations. In addition, they also manage 20 of the UK's largest stations. As the company have more than 40,000 employees, and still tender a lot of their work out to subcontractors, there forecast of work will determine the skills needed to meet the demand skills gaps that our project can work to improve, within the region.

HS2 and the Northern Powerhouse will bring long-term economic plan that aims to benefit the LCR by increasing its economic growth and competitive rate through investments in the private sector, innovation and R&D. Furthermore, this is the first time that Network Rail will have direct competition with a business similar to its size and hierarchy in the industry.

However, a challenging area noted by businesses and training providers, is a lack of framework, which resonates throughout the sector. The consequence of this, is under skilled employers doing work they are not fully skilled to do and employers leaving the sector as they are low skilled and do not know what skills are needed to progress. This also impacts upon training providers, as they cannot deliver courses and programmes based around a structure pathway. Standardisation will bring consistency across the industry and encourage employers to remain in the sector whilst becoming a more attractive and substantial career path for students.

Find out more about the Rail Collaborative Skills Partnership and get in touch through -  
<https://www.westyorkshirecolleges.co.uk/contracted-projects/lets-talk-real-skills/rail>