



Kirsty
Apprentice at Solus Newport

Helping the UK get ready for work

Aviva is supporting our communities and colleagues with the jobs and skills Britain needs.

Helping people get ready for work is one of the most effective ways to build stronger communities and support economic growth.

At Aviva, we're using our role as a major employer, investor and community partner to help people develop the skills, confidence and experience they need to succeed in work.

Through apprenticeships, internships, school engagement and targeted skills programmes, we're creating pathways into employment and helping build the workforce needed for the UK's future growth.

Working alongside schools, colleges, charities, local authorities and industry partners, we're supporting people at different stages of their journey into work, from raising aspirations in the classroom to developing specialist skills in growth sectors.

Here are just some of the ways we're helping people get ready for work across the UK

Creative opportunities: Factory Academy

The UK's creative industries are a major economic success story, contributing more than £120 billion to the economy and supporting jobs across the country.

Through Aviva's partnership with **Factory International** and **Aviva Studios in Manchester**, Factory Academy helps people access careers in the creative sector through free training, professional development and practical industry experience.

The programme opens up opportunities for people who may not otherwise have access to professional networks or industry experience, helping diversify the pipeline of talent entering a strategically important sector. Over the past year, more than 1,000 people benefited from Factory Academy's skills programmes, with 67% of trainees moving into paid roles after completing courses. The programme is reaching a broad and diverse talent pool, with 94% of students declaring a characteristic underrepresented in the industry, while more than 200 graduates have secured paid roles within Factory International.

“

[Factory Academy gave me] the confidence to talk about my ideas and projects within interview settings, which directly led me to getting new roles.”

Natalie, Factory Academy graduate

Opening doors: Internships with impact

For many people, a lack of access to professional networks, workplace experience or career guidance can make employment opportunities feel out of reach.

Aviva works with organisations including **upReach** and the **Taylor Bennett Foundation** to provide paid internships in a FTSE 100 company to talented individuals from a variety of backgrounds. Placements across our offices provide practical skills, professional experience and insight into long-term career opportunities.

Aviva also operates a **Supported Internship Scheme**, a government-backed programme for young people aged 16 to 24 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Launched in Norwich and York in 2024, the scheme combines workplace experience with tailored support to help participants transition into employment. More than 70% of interns have secured permanent roles with Aviva, and the programme is now being expanded to more locations to create more pathways into work.

“

Thanks to my experience as an intern, I had the confidence to take the first steps in my career at Aviva. I'm really happy to be able to continue working in an environment where I feel supported to learn, grow and contribute every day.”

**Intern Analyst, Cyber Security Team
Aviva**

Building skills: Aviva Investors' Social Value Label

Skills development is vital to supporting local growth and meeting labour needs across the economy.

To deliver the government's industrial strategy, the UK needs to train the next generation in critical industries and sectors like construction and engineering.

To help address this, Aviva Investors has embedded a social value strategy across its real estate portfolio. Since 2023, the programme has created opportunities for more than 5,000 students through

employer engagement, education outreach and skills development initiatives.

The **Social Value Label**, introduced in 2025, helps developers, contractors and partners deliver employment, training and skills outcomes that have a lasting impact on local communities. By working with schools, colleges, training providers, the Department for Work and Pensions and industry partners, Aviva is helping ensure investment delivers social value alongside economic returns.

Raising aspirations: In Sheffield

Access to opportunity often begins with exposure to possibility.

Research shows that meaningful engagement between employers and students can improve career outcomes and reduce the likelihood of young people becoming disconnected from education and employment.

That is why Aviva supports Sheffield's **“See It, Be It”** initiative. More than 100 Aviva colleagues have volunteered their time to deliver mentoring, interview preparation, office visits and employability sessions, helping over 3,000 students gain insight into the world of work.

Working with Sheffield College, Aviva has also developed practical routes into employment through CV workshops, mock interviews and assessment centre experiences.

Following its success, the programme is being expanded to other Aviva locations across the UK.

“

I'd never had a job interview before. It helped me massively and gave me much more confidence.”

Cadan, Sheffield College student

Building digital skills: The Foundry

Data, Technology and AI skills are increasingly essential to the UK's future workforce, yet many employers continue to face shortages in key technology roles. To help address this challenge, Aviva launched The Foundry in Norwich - before expanding the programme across the UK - partnering with digital education specialist Decoded to build digital capability across Aviva.

The initiative supports people to develop skills in areas including technology, data literacy, business analysis, digital product management and GenAI, creating pathways into high-demand careers while helping Aviva build capability in line with future skills required. It also supports local businesses through apprenticeship levy transfers, helping strengthen the UK's wider digital economy.

Unlocking growth: The Planning Skills Fund

Growth depends not only on investment, but on having the people and skills needed to deliver it.

Planning departments across the country face workforce shortages that can delay development and infrastructure projects. Research suggests that addressing planning constraints could unlock up to £70 billion of economic value.

To help tackle this challenge, Aviva has contributed £500,000 to the **British Chambers of Commerce Planning Skills Fund**, supporting the training of future planners and helping local authorities build the capacity needed to bring forward projects, accelerate development and support local growth.

Solus: Apprenticeships built for the future

Apprenticeships play an important role in developing the skills employers need today and in the future.

Within **Solus**, Aviva's vehicle repair business, apprentices are helping address critical workforce challenges in the automotive sector. With the UK facing a potential shortage of 25,000 electric vehicle technicians by 2035¹, building specialist skills will be essential to supporting the transition to electric vehicles and strengthening the UK's industrial capability.

The award-winning **Solus Apprenticeship Scheme** combines hands-on experience with technical training in vehicle repair, IT and finance. Solus currently supports **152 apprentices**, including **139 technical apprentices**, helping develop the next generation of automotive professionals. The programme was recognised as **Apprentice Employer of the Year** at the 2024 ABP Bodyshop Awards.

“

It's pretty cool repairing a customer's car and then getting it back to them because you'd want your car repaired to the best standard.”

**Reece, Apprentice Technician
Solus Sheffield**

1. Institute of the Motor Industry (2025) EV TechSafe Technician Forecast. Available at: <https://tide.theimi.org.uk/industry-latest/research/ev-techsafe-technician-forecast-july-2025>

Working together to unlock growth

As our case studies show, employability and skills challenges cannot be solved by any one organisation alone. National, regional and local government, employers, educators and community organisations all have a role to play in creating pathways into work and developing the workforce the UK needs.

Based on Aviva's experience of delivering employability and skills programmes across the UK, we believe policymakers can support increased workforce participation, address skills shortages and support sustainable economic growth by focusing on the following priorities:

1 Support workforce participation and skills development

Implement the Mayfield Review recommendations to improve workplace health and prevent ill-health absence from work. Separately strengthen apprenticeships and work-based learning pathways, and ensure training provision reflects employers' skills needs. This will help improve workplace health, tackle economic inactivity and drive productivity and growth

2 Develop stronger partnerships between employers, educators and government

National, devolved and local government should work alongside employers, schools, colleges, universities and community organisations to develop the skills people need to succeed in work. Stronger partnerships can help create talent pipelines that reflect labour market needs and support long-term economic growth.

3 Align skills provision with growth sectors

Work with employers to ensure qualifications, funding and training programmes support sectors critical to the UK's growth ambitions, including digital and AI, financial services, construction, planning, automotive repair and the creative industries.

4 Strengthen financial literacy and capability

Support initiatives that improve financial literacy and financial confidence, helping people develop essential life skills alongside employability skills and make informed decisions about their financial future.

5 Use investment to deliver skills, employment and social value outcomes

Embed employment, training and skills development opportunities within housing, infrastructure and regeneration projects, ensuring public and private investment creates lasting benefits for local communities while supporting economic growth.

Find out more about Aviva's work on skills, employability and social impact at www.aviva.com or email us on public.affairs@aviva.com