Skills England: Skills Passport Survey

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Summary

A skills passport could provide significant value to the logistics sector if designed as a trusted, portable and interoperable record of verified capability. A passport could:

- Improve recruitment and compliance, for example, by enabling faster hiring through a single source of verified licences, qualifications and competencies.
- Support progression and mobility by making skills transferable across roles, supporting career development and better use of talent.
- Strengthen domestic pipelines by recognising partial progression to widen entry routes and support in-role training.
- Enhance access and opportunity by helping individuals, including those at risk of becoming NEET, understand pathways and next steps.
- Balance national and local needs by combining consistent national standards with visibility of locally important roles and shortages.
- Ensure trust and usability by aligning with existing standards, supporting verification, and integrating with employer systems to enable adoption.

Overall, a well-designed skills passport could improve recruitment efficiency, support workforce mobility and strengthen domestic skills pipelines in the logistics sector.

About Logistics UK

Logistics UK is one of the country's largest business groups, representing the entire logistics industry and supporting, shaping and standing up for safe and efficient logistics. Our membership of more than 20,000 includes global, national and regional businesses and SMEs spanning road, rail, inland waterways, sea and air as well as the buyers of freight services, such as retailers and manufacturers. As an organisation, we deliver services, representation and thought leadership, helping members and policy makers to seize new opportunities for the sector and the economy as a whole, right across the country.

Logistics underpins our economy and is fundamental to our way of life. It supplies our hospitals, schools, factories, construction sites, shops and homes with everything they need, everywhere, every day – nothing moves without it.

The efficiency of logistics and the productivity of the economy are completely intertwined. Due to this relationship, Oxford Economics found in 2023 that getting the policy and infrastructure environment right for logistics would unlock up to £8 billion a year in productivity-led growth.

However, we are not currently going in the right direction. The UK fell from 4th to 19th place in the World Bank Logistics Performance Index over the past decade, largely as a result of border friction and underinvestment in transport corridors.

Logistics is a major sector in its own right. It contributes more than £170 billion to the economy each year (12% of UK non-financial GVA), is one of the UK's largest employers, providing good jobs with strong career progression – 2.7 million people (8% of the UK workforce) are employed in logistics roles, and the sector's key hubs provide a catalyst for further growth and investment, helping places to thrive.

Response to consultation

How could a skills passport be useful for employers?

A skills passport could be valuable for logistics employers where it reduces friction in recruitment, onboarding, compliance checking, and workforce progression. Its primary value would be as a trusted, portable record of verifiable capability, rather than a general profile or reference.

Firstly, it could support faster and more confident recruitment. Logistics employers need to know whether an individual is deployable in operational roles, particularly where safety, compliance or licensing requirements apply. A passport that brings together verified licences, certifications, apprenticeship outcomes, and assessed competencies in one place would reduce duplication of checks and improve hiring efficiency. This is particularly relevant for roles such as HGV drivers, warehouse operatives, transport planners, traffic office staff, and maintenance technicians, where employers must confirm both competence and compliance before employment.

Secondly, a skills passport could support workforce flexibility and progression within and across logistics functions. Employers frequently redeploy staff between adjacent roles, such as from warehouse operations into transport coordination, or from van driving into HGV pathways. A passport that clearly evidences prior learning, in-house training, and assessed competence would make these transitions more visible and easier to support. It would also help employers recruit from adjacent sectors with overlapping skillsets, improving labour mobility into logistics, and could also support greater use of the domestic workforce by making skills and partial progression more visible, reducing reliance on overseas recruitment in shortage roles.

Thirdly, a skills passport could strengthen domestic skills pipelines by making entry and progression more flexible and lower risk. Evidence on HGV driver shortages shows that shorter, faster routes such as Skills Bootcamps are often more attractive than longer training routes, which can present practical barriers[1]. A passport could support by making partial progression visible and portable. For example, it could show that a candidate has already completed core elements such as safety training, route planning, tachograph use, customer service, or vehicle checks, even where they have not yet completed a full occupational route. This would enable employers to recruit individuals who are part-qualified and support them to complete training in role, reducing the risk of investing in training and preventing loss of prior learning where individuals move between employers. In turn, this would widen entry points into the sector and improve retention within the domestic workforce.

Employers should have a role in contributing to the passport, but not sole responsibility for it. A balanced model would involve training providers and awarding bodies verifying formal learning, employers verifying workplace competence and recency of experience, and relevant bodies verifying licences or regulatory requirements. This would ensure trust while avoiding unnecessary burden on employers.

How could a skills passport support individuals and improve opportunities, for those entering and those already in employment?

A logistics skills passport could help individuals by making their skills visible, transferable and progressively stackable across a career, not just at the point of first entry.

It should include formal training such as apprenticeships, bootcamps, technical qualifications, licence-based training, mandatory safety training, and employer-delivered operational training. It should also record shorter-form credentials and refreshed learning, because the logistics sector relies heavily on continuous compliance and operational updating rather than only long qualifications.

Initial research from Generation Logistics showed that 62% of careers advisors in schools and colleges have low awareness of careers in logistics and 94% were not aware of the resources available to them to support awareness[2]. As such, for young people, the passport could address a common barrier in logistics: lack of understanding of the depth and breadth of careers available. A passport linked to careers pathways would help people see progression routes from entry-level jobs to higher-skilled technical and supervisory roles.

[1] Paddeu, D., Parkhurst, G., Jain, J and Adeel, M (2023). *Understanding Industry Perceptions and Experiences of Seventeen of the Measures to Reduce the HGV Driver Shortage: Final report*. Report to Department for Transport

[2] Platypus Research (2023). *Project: Aware*. Report to Generation Logistics

A passport could include structured evidence from informal and non-formal learning, including work experience, volunteering, school projects, cadets, sector tasters and employer encounters, where this is proportionate and based on trusted verification. For logistics employers, early indicators such as punctuality, teamwork, digital confidence, customer awareness, and safe working behaviours can be predictive of success in entry-level roles. However, the passport should avoid becoming a form of reference or subjective appraisal. Instead, such behaviours should only be included where they are demonstrated through objective, structured, objective and verifiable evidence, such as completion of placements, assessed activities or recognised programmes, and verified by a trusted source such as a school, employer, training provider or placement organiser. This approach would recognise a broader range of learning without reducing trust or creating unnecessary administrative burden and ensures the passport remains a trusted record of what an individual can demonstrably do, rather than an opinion-based profile.

For individuals at risk of becoming NEET, a skills passport would be most effective if it is designed around accessibility, simplicity and immediate relevance to opportunities. Many individuals in this group face barriers such as low confidence, limited work experience and lack of formal qualifications[3], alongside practical challenges including digital exclusion and difficulty navigating traditional application processes[4]. A passport that works on a smartphone, is simple to understand, and does not depend on a long CV or prior formal qualifications would therefore reduce these barriers to entry. In addition, features such as “next best step” recommendations and direct links to local training and vacancies would help translate skills into clear, actionable pathways, supporting progression into employment or further learning. This is particularly important in sectors such as logistics, where there are multiple entry points but limited awareness of those routes into the sector.

How could a skills passport reflect both local and national skills needs?

A logistics passport should use a common national framework but allow local overlays.

Nationally, the passport should align to common occupational standards, apprenticeship standards, and Skills England’s standardised skills language so that skills are recognised across employers, regions and subsectors. This is essential in logistics because the sector is inherently mobile: workers often move across depots, customers, subcontractors, and regions, and employers need consistency in what a skill label means.

Locally, the passport should reflect differences in labour demand and economic geography. The logistics skills mix needed around a major port, airport, rail freight terminal, freeport, or logistics park will differ from that of a predominantly rural distribution area. Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) already identify transport and logistics among the sectors frequently reflected in local planning, and the Local Skills Dashboard is intended to support local skills analysis across England. A passport should therefore be able to surface locally important shortage skills without losing national comparability.

In practice, this means a skills passport should combine a core national spine of standardised occupations and skills with the flexibility to reflect local labour market needs. Alongside this national consistency, it should include a regional layer that highlights demand signals and locally important roles, as well as a career mobility function showing how skills are recognised and transferable across regions and occupations. This approach ensures the passport remains nationally consistent while still reflecting the specific skills demands of local economies. In logistics, this could include highlighting locally important skills such as port and maritime operations in port regions, customs capability near major gateways, and warehouse automation skills in distribution hubs.

How important is consistency across different employers, sectors and regions for skills passports?

Consistency is extremely important; the value of a skills passport depends on employers trusting that a skill, licence, standard or competency means the same thing wherever it is issued or viewed.

The most important national anchors for consistency include Skills England’s Standard Skills Classification and related common skills language, recognised occupational standards, apprenticeship standards, and

[3] Youth Employment UK (2024). *Youth Voice Census 2024 Report*
[4] Learning and Work Institute (2025). *Young people who are not in education, employment or training – what does the data tell us?*

occupational maps or progression frameworks such as CILT(UK)'s Competency Framework[5]. Using these anchors would help address several common recruitment and workforce planning challenges in the logistics sector including inconsistent job titles being used for similar roles making it difficult to compare candidates, a lack of clarity over how in-house training aligns with formal standards, and challenges in assessing equivalence between candidates from different employers or adjacent sectors. In addition, there is often limited visibility of transferable skills across related functions such as warehousing, transport operations, planning and fleet management. A more standardised and transparent skills framework within the passport would help employers make more informed and consistent decisions across these areas.

Consistency also matters because the transport sector's future skills needs are changing. NSAR's Future Skills Assessment for the Transport Sector (2024)[6] points to the importance of looking ahead to changing technology and labour needs across transport. For logistics, that means the passport should not only record current competence, but also allow for forecast needs such as digital operations, data use, low-carbon logistics, automation, more advanced diagnostics, and planning capability.

A skills passport is likely to be most effective if it is standardised in structure while remaining flexible in content. This would include common definitions, evidence types, and verification approaches to ensure consistency and portability across employers, sectors and regions. At the same time, flexibility would be needed through occupational modules and sector-specific fields to reflect the differing requirements of sectors such as logistics. This balance would help ensure the passport is sufficiently consistent to be trusted and widely used, while avoiding an overly generic approach that limits its practical value to employers.

What important lessons should be learnt from skills passports (or similar systems) that you currently use or have used in the past?

A skills passport will only succeed if it solves a real operational problem for both employers and workers. In logistics, employers often use a range of existing systems that perform similar functions to a skills passport, including HR systems, learning management systems, licence verification processes, and client compliance platforms. These systems are useful internally, but they are rarely portable for the worker and often create repeated checking across employers and sites. A successful passport should reduce duplication, not add another layer.

Evidence from existing skills systems and employer practice suggests that passports are more effective where credentials are clearly linked to real hiring, deployment or compliance decisions, are recognised and trusted by employers, and are easy to update, verify and use across organisations. Strong portability and a simple user experience are also important, alongside clear progression pathways. Conversely, approaches tend to be less effective where passports are overly broad or vague, lack employer buy-in, rely on untrusted or outdated information, require significant manual input from individuals, or are not integrated with recruitment, HR or training systems.

A further consideration is that the passport should support progression across the whole logistics system, not only within a single occupation. The transport and logistics occupational map already shows multiple pathways and progression links, and a passport should make these visible to the user. This is important because careers in logistics are often non-linear, with movement between roles such as warehousing, transport operations, planning, and driving. Making these pathways visible would help individuals understand how their existing skills can transfer into new roles, support progression over time, and enable employers to better utilise and retain talent across different functions.

What features should a skills passport have to provide a positive user experience and support interoperability?

For the logistics sector, an effective skills passport would need to balance usability for individuals with robustness for employers, and interoperability across systems. In practice, this means the passport should be simple and accessible for users, sufficiently trusted and detailed for employers, and capable of integrating with wider skills and labour market infrastructure.

[5] CILT(UK) (2022). CILT(UK) Competency Framework: A guide to professional competencies in logistics, transport and global supply chain operations

[6] NSAR (2024). Future Skills for the Transport Sector. Report for Department for Transport

A digital-first approach is likely to be most effective, particularly given that much of the logistics workforce is deskless and relies on mobile access. However, alternative formats and assisted access would remain important to ensure inclusivity for those with lower digital confidence. Trust would also be critical: the passport should support layered verification, clearly distinguishing between self-declared information and evidence that has been verified by providers, employers or relevant bodies.

Interoperability with existing systems would be a key enabler of adoption. The ability to exchange data with recruitment, HR, and learning systems would reduce duplication and administrative burden. At the same time, individuals should retain control over their data, including what information is shared and with whom, to support trust and engagement.

There may also be challenges in adoption, including integration with existing employer systems, ensuring consistent verification across sectors, and avoiding duplication with existing processes. These could be addressed using open technical standards, clear governance on verification, and alignment with existing systems to minimise additional administrative burden.

Given the importance of compliance and safety in logistics, the passport should also capture the recency and validity of skills, including issue and expiry dates and any refresher requirements. Beyond acting as a static record, it could support progression by indicating potential next steps, such as relevant licences, training or occupational pathways.

From a system perspective, the use of common technical standards would support interoperability and portability. Existing approaches such as verifiable digital credentials and recognised frameworks for skills recognition provide a useful foundation. Strong data protection and security measures, including clear consent, role-based access, and auditability would also be essential to ensure confidence among users and employers.

Finally, alignment with existing occupational and skills standards is critically important to ensure that information within the passport is meaningful and actionable in recruitment and workforce planning contexts.

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