

NSAR works with government, suppliers and employers to develop and inform apprenticeship standards.

Rail Engineering Operative (Level 2)

We were part of a working group made up of employers, training providers and end-point assessment organisations to create a new draft of the Rail Engineering Operative at Level 2.

The intention was to create a simplified structure built around two pathways (Infrastructure and Operations) rather than six pathways (track, signalling, traction and rolling stock, electrification, overhead lines and telecommunications).

The new apprenticeship standard aims to make the apprenticeship more flexible and attractive to the supply chain, contractor base and labour organisations. The more flexible approach will also make it more accessible and usable for training providers. Hopefully, this will see more apprenticeship starts, attract more young people to the sector and increase access to more publicly funded investment in rail training.

Rail Engineering Operative (Levels 3 and 4)

Another working group was convened to look at restructuring and rewriting Levels 3 and 4, which will now accommodate the High-Speed Rail and Infrastructure Technician Level 4 standard as this apprenticeship is being withdrawn. Again, the focus is on creating more responsive, fit-for-purpose apprenticeships that may be better suited to the industry's needs and attractive to employers and candidates.

Helping rail employers access public funding

One of NSAR's key roles is to ensure rail has a range of apprenticeship standards that allow employers to fully utilise the public funding of apprenticeship training made available through the Apprenticeship Levy. By supporting the Rail Engineering Technician standard at Level 3 and Rail Engineering Operative, we have ensured that £77m and £10m respectively have been accessed since 2018.

