



### What are Green Skills careers?

Green skills are becoming more important as Northern Ireland works towards a **low-carbon, more sustainable future**<sup>1</sup>.

Climate challenges and new technologies are already changing how organisations work and the skills they need. Green skills help people use energy and resources more efficiently, protect the environment and work in ways that support practical, future-ready jobs.

**Green jobs can be found in every sector.** Some roles are green at their core, meaning their main purpose is to tackle environmental and climate challenges. Other jobs are becoming greener over time, as people use green skills alongside their existing skills. Both types of roles are important in helping build a greener economy.

### Where could I work?

Green skills are used in hands-on and office-based jobs across Northern Ireland, in many sectors – not just environmental roles. These careers help reduce emissions and support a greener future.<sup>2</sup>

**You could use green skills in careers such as:**

- ▶ Construction and building services
- ▶ Renewable energy and low-carbon technologies
- ▶ Manufacturing and engineering
- ▶ Agriculture, land-based and environmental services
- ▶ Transport, infrastructure and the public sector



You can find out more about these career areas in the [Careers A-Z](#)

### Future trends in Green Skills careers

As Northern Ireland moves towards net zero, demand for green skills is expected to grow across many sectors, creating long-term career opportunities at different levels across the economy.<sup>3</sup>

### Myth-busting Green Skills careers

#### Quick myth-busters



**Myth: Green skills careers are only about the environment.**



**Reality:** Green skills are used across many industries, including construction, engineering, manufacturing, transport and the public sector.



**Myth: You need to be a scientist to work in green skills.**



**Reality:** Green skills careers include practical, technical, planning and creative roles at different levels across key sectors - from installers and technicians, to planners, co-ordinators and designers.

### What skills do I need and how can I build them?

Employers value transferable skills that can be developed at school and beyond, such as **teamwork, communication, problem-solving, organisation and digital confidence**. Green skills also include understanding how everyday choices can help reduce environmental impact.

These skills can be built through activities like **clubs, volunteering, part-time work, projects and work experience**. You may also develop green skills by helping improve recycling at school, taking part in an eco-project, or supporting a community activity. It's helpful to keep a record of the skills you're developing, along with examples of how you've used them.

1 [DfE Green Skills Action Plan \(2025\); Climate Change Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2022; DfE Energy Strategy: Path to Net Zero Energy \(2021\)](#)  
2 [DfE Green Skills Action Plan \(2025\); Climate Change Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2022; DfE Energy Strategy: Path to Net Zero Energy \(2021\); Energy & Utility Skills, NI Energy Transition & Circular Economy Skills Review](#)  
3 [DfE Green Skills Action Plan \(2025\)](#)

## How can I get started?

**There is no single route into a green skills career.**

Options include GCSEs, A levels and vocational courses; apprenticeships; further education college courses; university degrees; and entry-level jobs with training. Many roles offer clear career progression over time.

## Choosing subjects for a Green Skills career

There is **no single 'right' set of subjects**. It's a good idea to choose subjects that you enjoy and feel motivated by, and which keep your options open. Some pathways (for example, engineering, construction, or environmental courses) may require specific subjects and/or minimum grades, particularly at higher levels. Entry requirements can also vary depending on the course provider.

You should research any careers or courses you're interested in as early as possible, so you can check whether you need particular subjects or qualifications, before deciding what to study next.

## GCSEs/equivalent qualifications – Useful subjects



**Science** – introduces energy, environment, materials and how natural systems work



**Maths** – supports measurement, problem-solving, budgeting and data skills



**Technology and Design** – develops practical design and making skills used in green solutions



**Geography** – builds understanding of climate, land use and sustainability issues



**ICT or Digital subjects** – useful as green sectors increasingly use data and digital tools



**Engineering or construction-related courses** (where available) – helpful for retrofit\* and the built environment.

### Subject-choice checklist



Am I choosing subjects I enjoy and feel motivated by?



Am I keeping my options open for different pathways (college, apprenticeships, university)?



Have I spoken to a careers adviser about my choices?

## Post 16 – useful subjects



**Maths** – valuable for engineering, planning, modelling and analysis



**Physics or Chemistry** – supports energy, materials and environmental technologies



**Technology and Design or Engineering** – develops design, systems and practical problem-solving skills



**Geography or Environmental subjects** – help build understanding of climate and sustainability



**ICT / Digital Technology** – supports data, smart systems and digital tools used in low-carbon sectors



**Construction or built-environment courses** – useful for retrofit\*, surveying and low-carbon building



**Geography, Politics, Sociology or Psychology** – help develop analytical, research and people-focused skills

## Summary

Green skills careers are future-focused and open to young people with different interests and strengths. By building skills and exploring options over time, you can help shape a greener future for Northern Ireland.

## Want to find out more?

This factsheet is based on the Careers Service [Careers Occupational Information Unit Bulletin - Green Skills careers bulletin](#).



The [DfE Careers Service](#) provides free, professional and impartial careers advice to help you explore your options and plan next steps.

## Key Terms

\***Retrofitting** - the process of improving existing buildings to use less energy and reduce carbon emissions.

**Source: Department for the Economy (NI) - Energy Efficiency**