



# Understanding student demand

Unique insights into career and subject engagement across Further Education.

May 2025



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## Introduction

This report provides a comprehensive analysis of student engagement and subject demand based on interactions with the Pathways One product during 2024.

Embedded on over 29,000 college web pages and generating more than 35 million interactions, Pathways One offers a unique window into the interests and aspirations of prospective learners across England and Wales.

Drawing on data from over 12.8 million subject views and nearly 16 million career-focused interactions, this report highlights national and regional trends in student demand—revealing how learners are exploring subject areas, vocational routes, and career pathways.

The findings help illuminate emerging priorities in education and employment, offering valuable insights for planning, outreach strategy, and regional alignment with student demand.

**29,173**

Web pages with Pathways One

**12,832,833**

Views of subjects

**35,398,756**

Student interactions

**15,979,042**

Views of careers



# Career engagement

# Career engagement

## Most viewed careers

With over 400 careers having been viewed nearly 16 million times across 2024, we see the role of '**Programmers and software development professionals**' is by far the most viewed career with 836,014 views. This single job role accounts for over 5% of all career views.

This is over 200,000 more views than '**Graphic and multimedia designers**' in second place and double that of '**Nursing professionals**' in third place.



1	<b>Programmers and software development professionals</b>	<b>836,014</b>
2	<b>Graphic and multimedia designers</b>	<b>607,326</b>
3	<b>Nursing professionals</b>	<b>443,514</b>

# Career engagement



## The top 20

Looking at the **top careers** you get a high-level view of which careers students are engaging with most. Whilst this in itself is interesting, it's when you begin to dive deeper into the data that a **slightly different trend** begins to emerge.

The **16 million career views** provides us with a league table, here highlighting the **top 20**, which includes a broad range of roles across numerous job sectors.

#	Career	Job Sector	Views
1	Programmers and software development professionals	Computing & IT	836,014
2	Graphic and multimedia designers	Art & design	607,326
3	Nursing professionals	Nursing, therapy & care	443,514
4	Marketing associate professionals	Advertising, marketing & business	438,728
5	Primary education teaching professionals	Childcare, education & training	433,862
6	Sports coaches, instructors and officials	Sports, leisure & tourism	432,793
7	Care workers and home carers	Nursing, therapy & care	417,710
8	Construction and building trades	Building trades	392,062
9	Hairdressers and barbers	Hair, beauty & wellbeing	391,393
10	Legal professionals	Law, politics & government	379,167
11	Electricians and electrical fitters	Building trades	375,789
12	Animal care services occupations	Agriculture, animal & environment	358,703
13	Secondary education teaching professionals	Childcare, education & training	349,822
14	Vehicle technicians, mechanics and electricians	Motor vehicle	327,866
15	Beauticians and related occupations	Hair, beauty & wellbeing	281,834
16	Mechanical engineers	Engineering	248,521
17	Business and financial project management professionals	Finance & accounting	225,010
18	Bar and catering supervisors	Catering & hospitality	218,348
19	Book-keepers, payroll managers and wages clerks	Finance & accounting	210,543
20	Finance and investment analysts and advisers	Finance & accounting	210,342



# Job sectors

# Job sectors



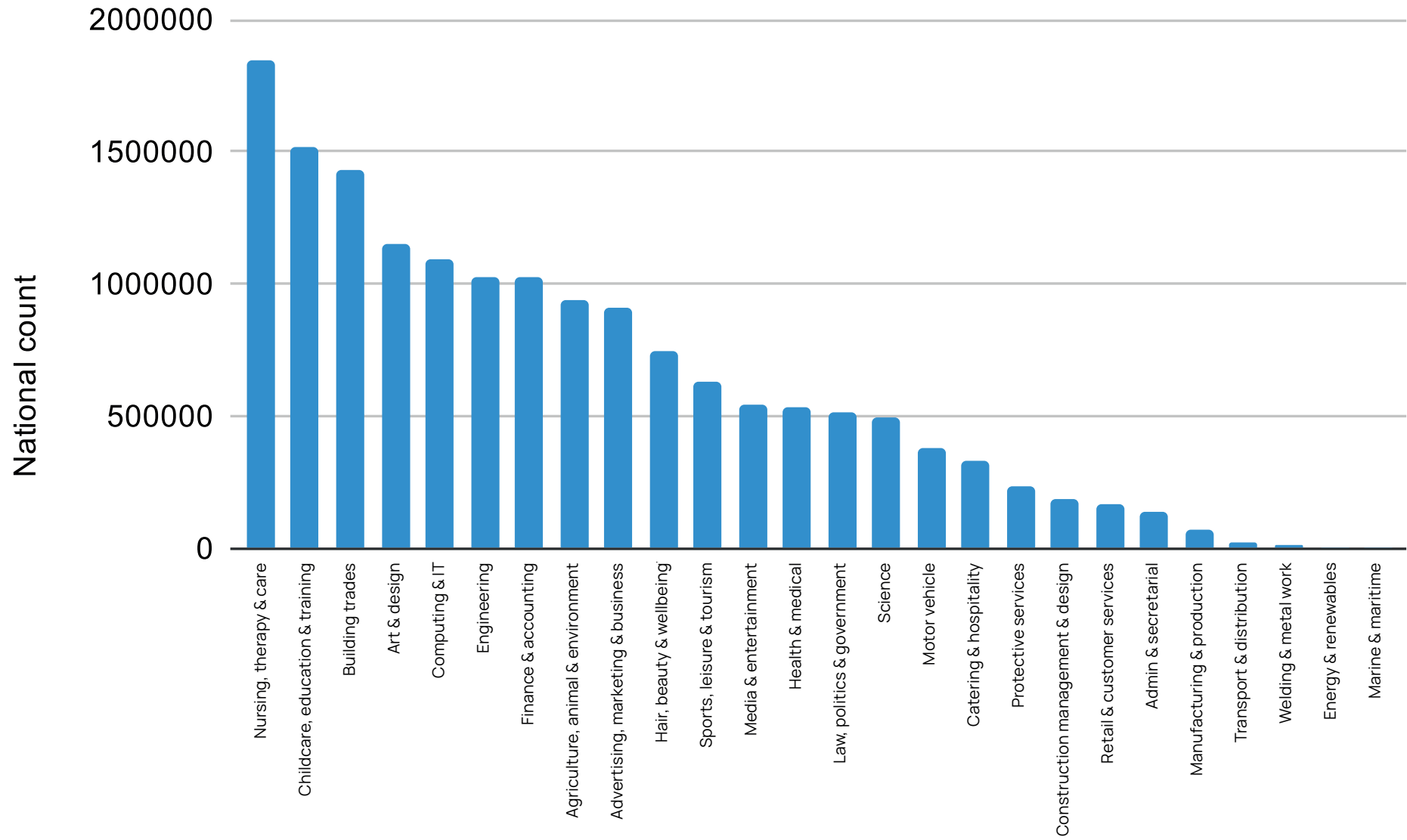
## Views by sector

Within Pathways we have **26 different job sectors**, to which all careers are assigned a primary sector. When you look at this same dataset grouping careers by their primary job sector, a new trend becomes clear.

Whilst the role of '**Programmers and software development professionals**' was by far the most viewed individual career, the job sector of '**Computing & IT**' is only in 5th position. Careers in the job sector of '**Nursing, therapy & care**' have collectively had the most views from prospective students across the UK at nearly **2 million views**.

1	<b>Nursing, therapy &amp; care</b>	<b>1,843,670</b>
2	<b>Childcare, education &amp; training</b>	<b>1,514,860</b>
3	<b>Building trades</b>	<b>1,432,357</b>
4	<b>Art &amp; design</b>	<b>1,148,625</b>
5	<b>Computing &amp; IT</b>	<b>1,095,997</b>

# Job sectors



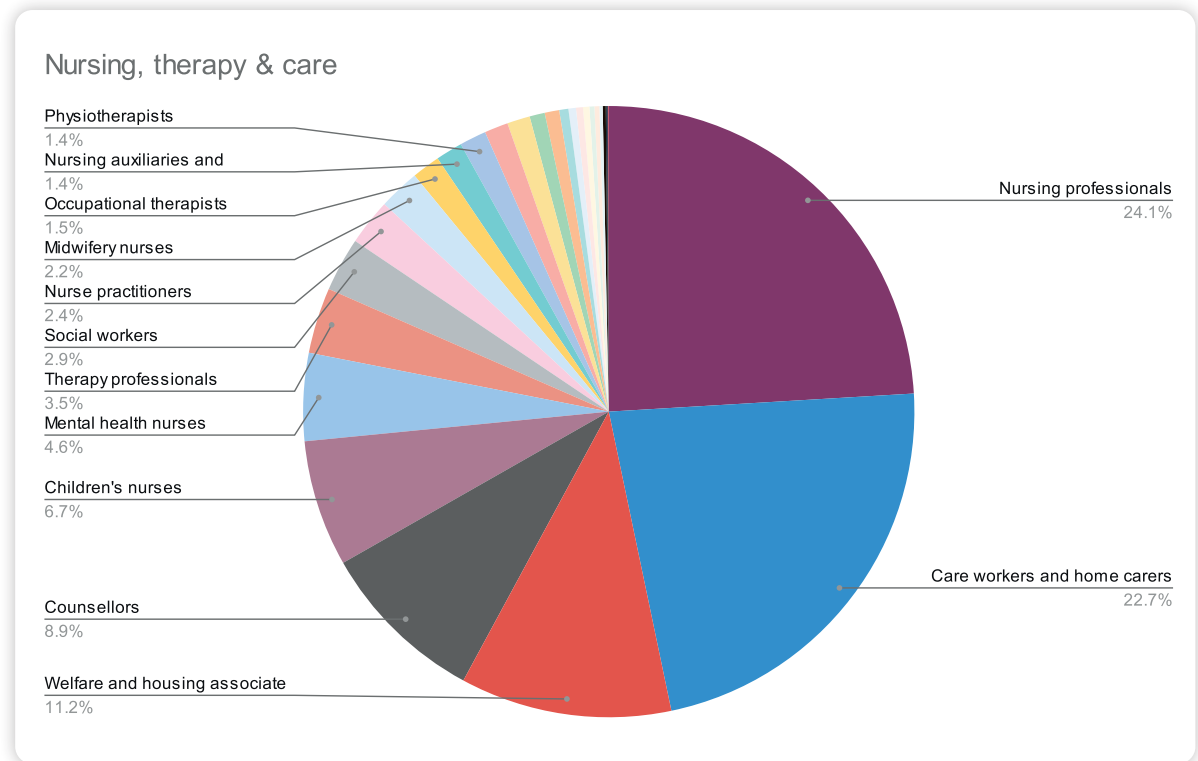
# Job sectors

## 1. Nursing therapy & care



This sector received significant attention with **1.84 million career views**. Leading the interest is the role of **Nursing professionals**, capturing nearly **25% of all views**. This is followed closely by **Care workers and home carers** at **22.7%**.

Other notable roles include **Welfare and housing associate professionals (11.2%)**, **Counsellors (8.9%)**, and **Children's nurses** rounding out the top five with **6.7%** of views.



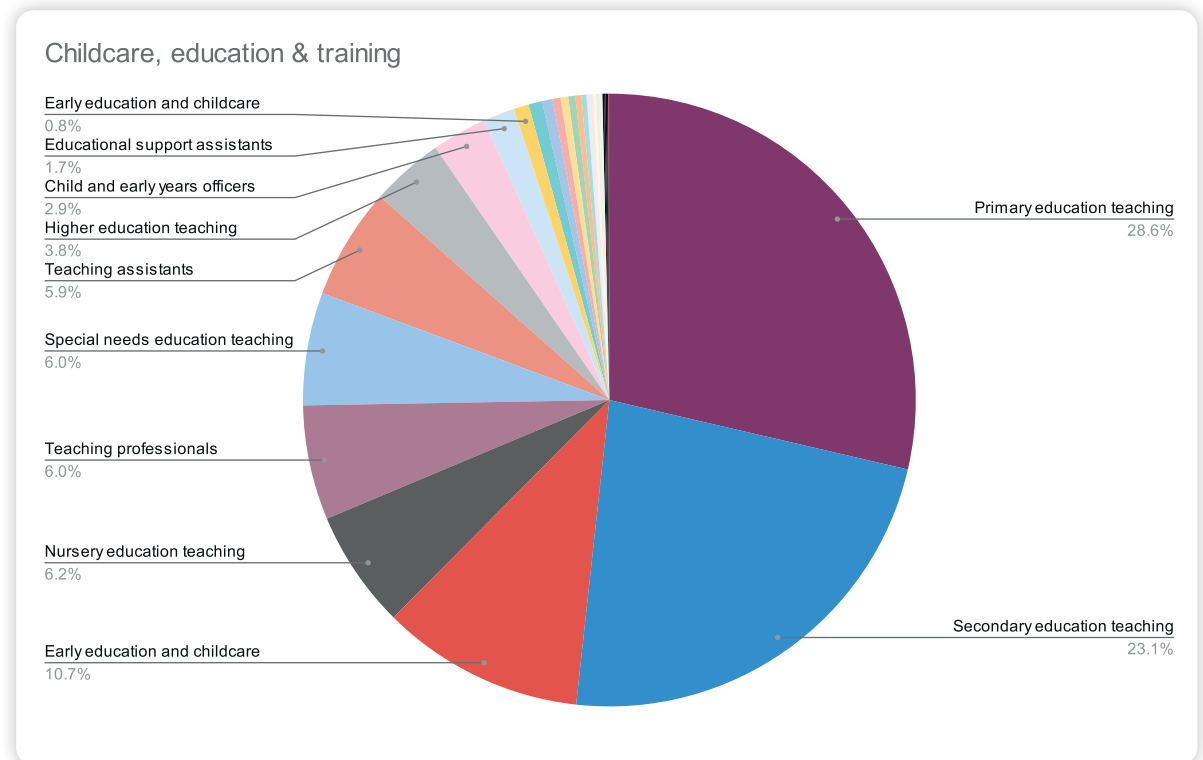
# Job sectors

## 2. Childcare, education & training



This sector attracted **1.51 million career views**. Over **50% of these were focused on teaching roles**, with **Primary education teaching professionals** leading at **28.6%**, followed by **Secondary education teaching professionals** at **23.1%**.

Other key areas of interest include **Early education and childcare practitioners** (**10.7%**), **Nursery education teaching** (**6.2%**), and **Teaching professionals** (**6.0%**).



# Job sectors

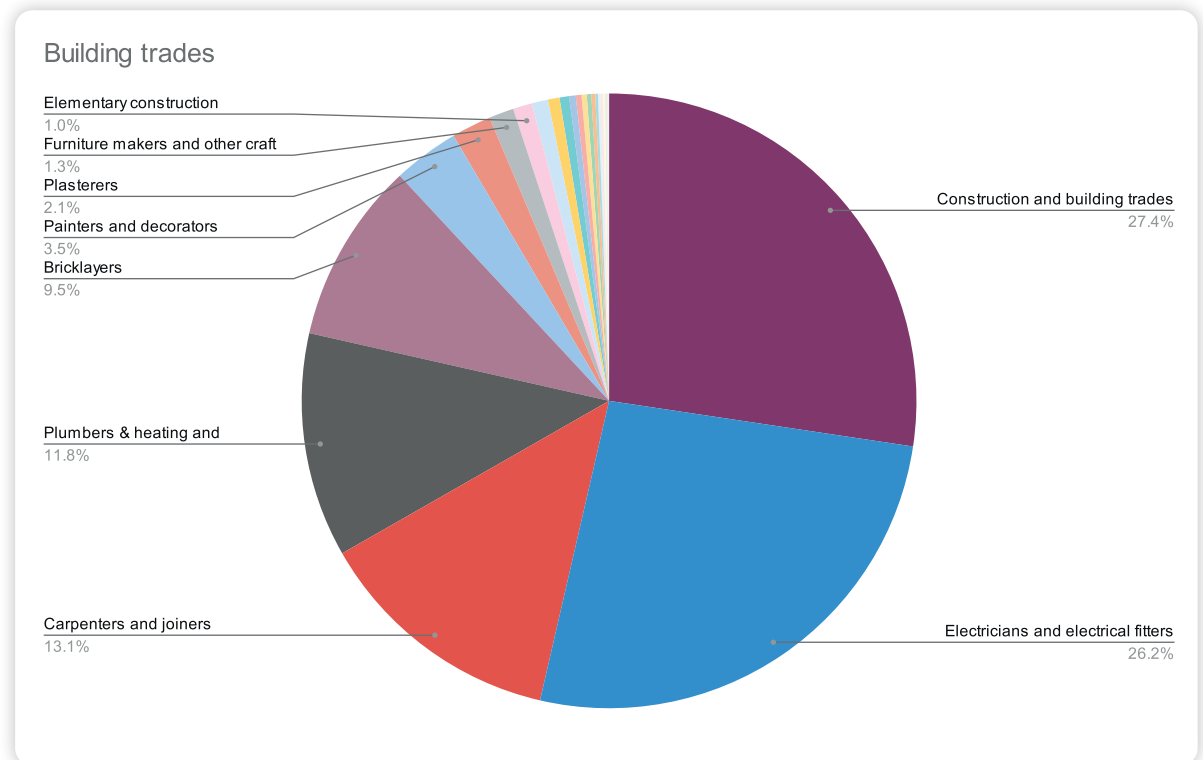
## 3. Building trades



This sector recorded **1.43 million career views**.

**Construction and building trades** topped the list with **27.4%** of views, closely followed by **Electricians and electrical fitters** at **26.2%**.

Interest then dips to **Carpenters and joiners** at **13.1%**, followed by **Plumbers & heating and ventilating installers and repairers** (**11.8%**) and **Bricklayers** with **9.5%**.



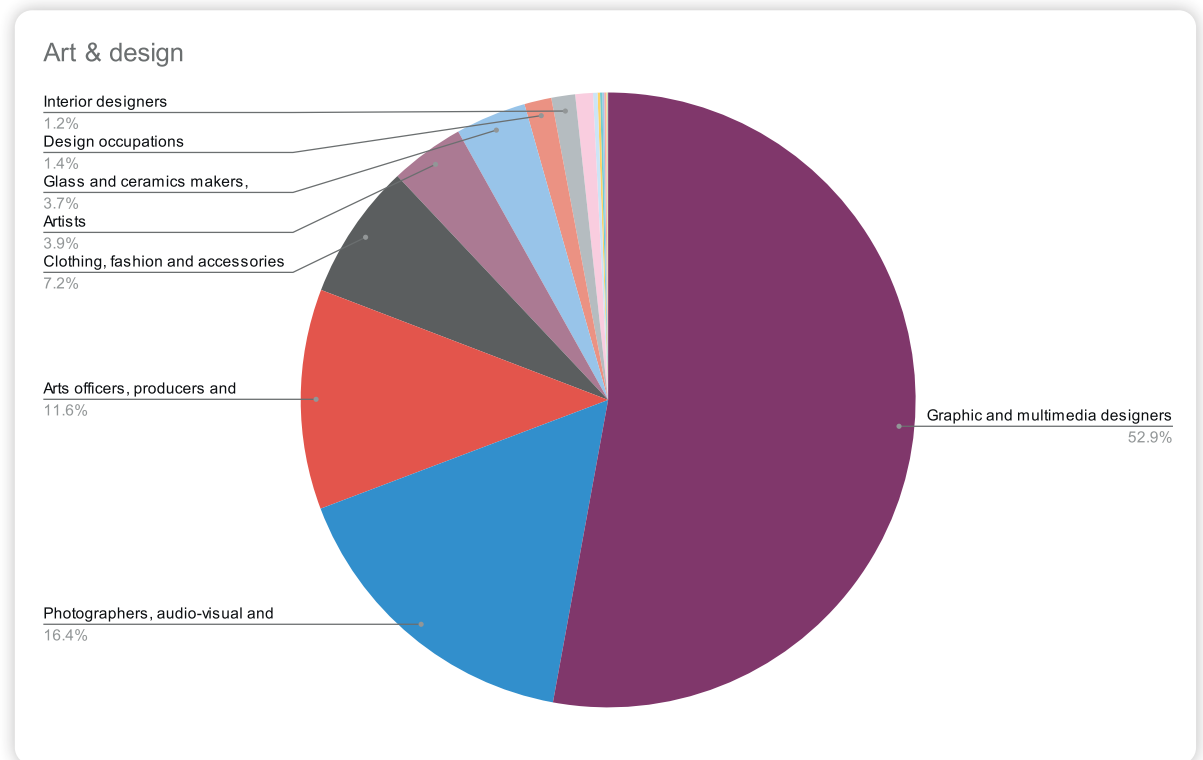
# Job sectors

## 4. Art & design



With **1.15 million career views**, the Art & Design sector is heavily dominated by interest in **Graphic and multimedia designers**, which accounts for nearly **53%** of all views.

Trailing behind is the role of **Photographers, audio-visual and broadcasting equipment operators** at **16.4%**, **Arts officers, producers and directors** at **11.6%**, **Clothing, fashion and accessories designers** at **7.2%**, and **Artists** with **3.9%** of the sector's views.



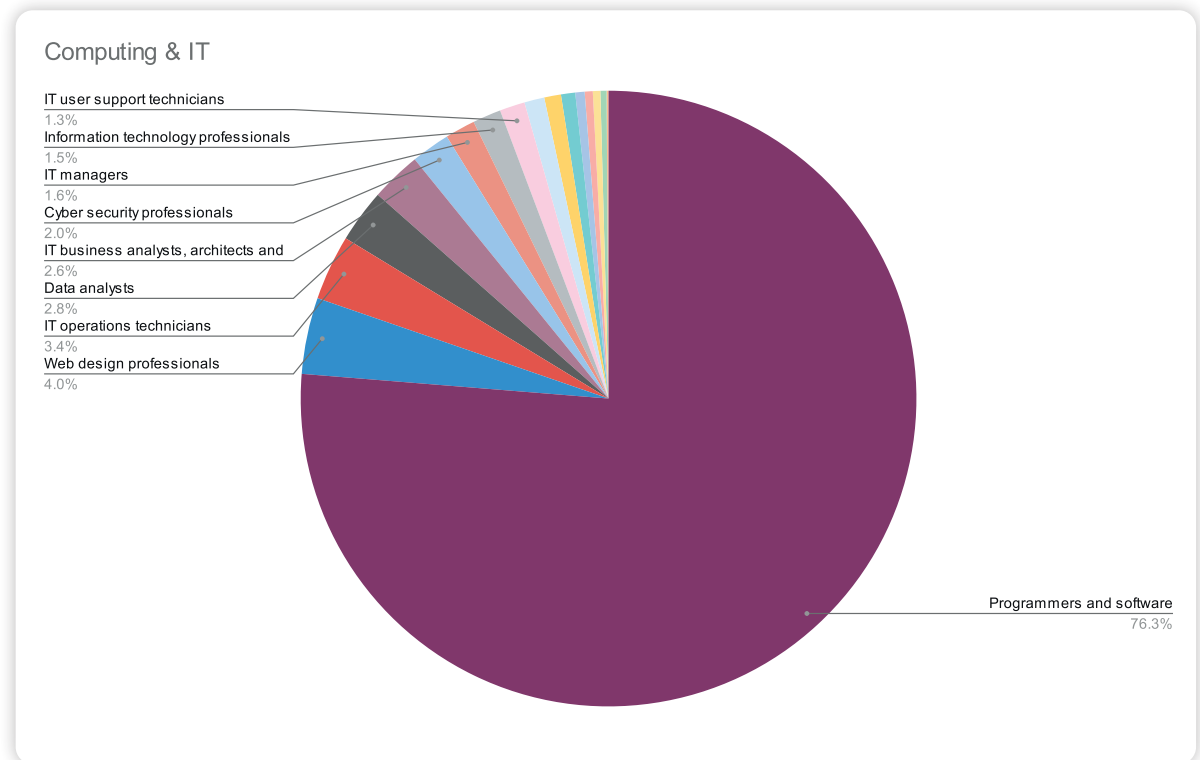
# Job sectors

## 5. Computing & IT



The sector saw **1.1 million career views**, with a dominant **76.3%** focused on **Programmers and software development professionals**.

Other roles received significantly less attention, with **Web design professionals** at **4.0%**, **IT operations technicians** at **3.4%**, **Data analysts** at **2.8%**, and **IT business analysts, architects and systems designers** at **2.6%**.

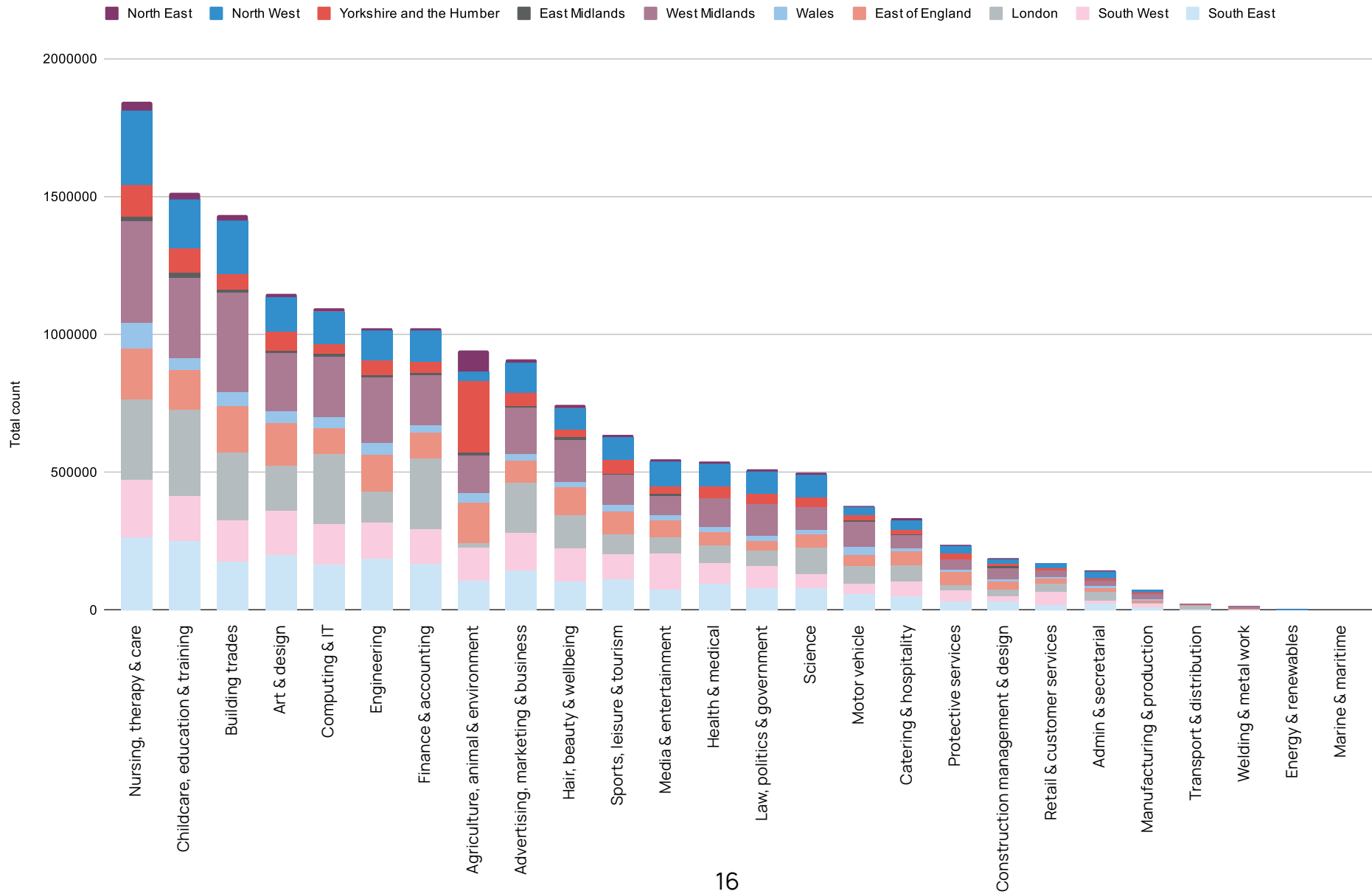




# Regional insights

We can break this dataset down further and begin to examine regional trends, looking at which job sectors prospective students are engaging with across different parts of the UK.

# Regional insights



# Regional insights

## Job sectors split by regional engagement

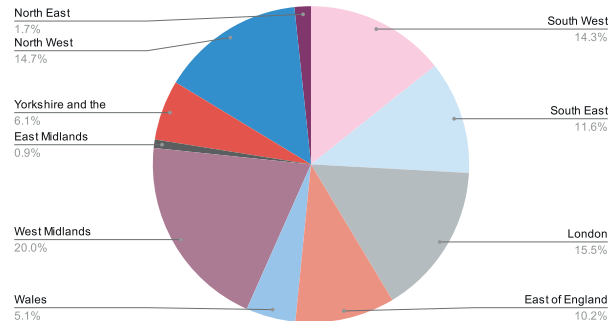
**Nursing, Childcare, and Building trades** show particularly strong engagement, with the **West Midlands** emerging as a key hotspot – highlighting the prominence of essential services and skilled trades in that area.

**Agriculture, animal & environment** sees its highest engagement in **Yorkshire and the Humber**, where student interest significantly surpasses all other regions. This suggests the sector's alignment with rural landscapes and local economic priorities.

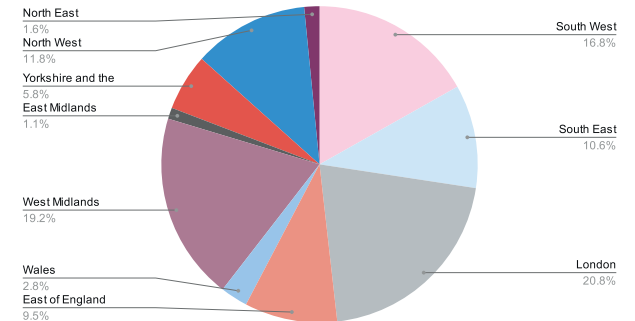
**Finance & accounting, Computing & IT, and Childcare & education** receive their strongest interest in **London**, reflecting these sectors' synergy with the capital's role as a major commercial, financial, and educational hub.

Note that the number of institutions using Pathways varies per region \*

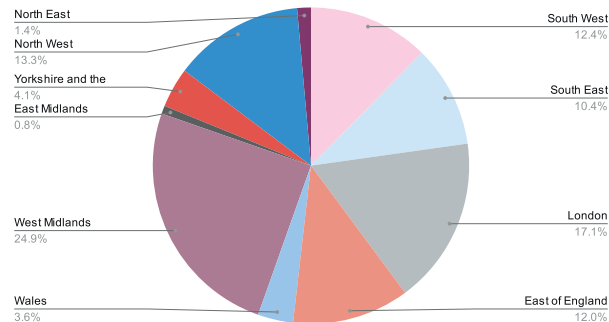
Nursing, therapy & care - by region



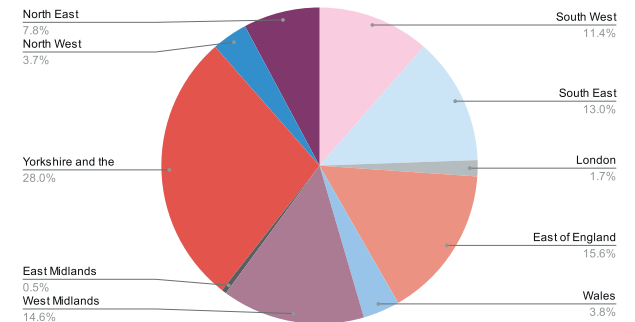
Childcare, education & training - by region



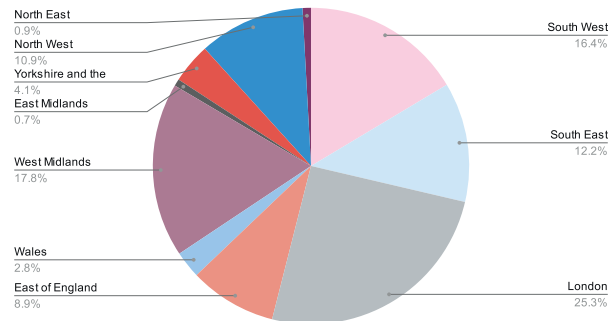
Building trades - by region



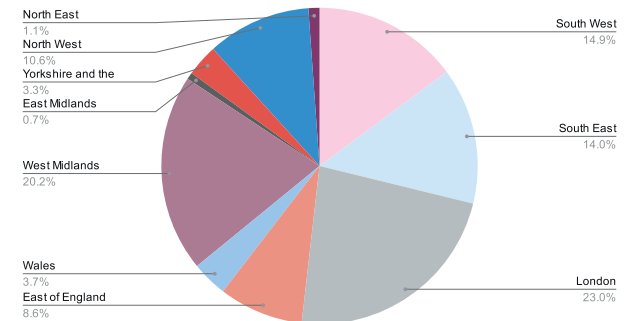
Agriculture, animal & environment - by region



Finance & accounting - by region



Computing & IT - by region



# Regional insights

## In your region

This table shows the Top 3 Sectors by relative engagement in each UK region:

Region	1st	2nd	3rd
South West	Nursing, therapy & care	Childcare, education & training	Art & design
South East	Nursing, therapy & care	Art & design	Childcare, education & training
London	Childcare, education & training	Nursing, therapy & care	Finance & accounting
East of England	Nursing, therapy & care	Building trades	Art & design
Wales	Nursing, therapy & care	Building trades	Engineering
West Midlands	Nursing, therapy & care	Building trades	Childcare, education & training
East Midlands	Childcare, education & training	Nursing, therapy & care	Building trades
Yorkshire & Humber	Agriculture, animal & environment	Nursing, therapy & care	Childcare, education & training
North West	Nursing, therapy & care	Building trades	Childcare, education & training
North East	Agriculture, animal & environment	Nursing, therapy & care	Childcare, education & training

- **Nursing, therapy & care** dominates as the top sector in 6 out of 10 regions.
- **Childcare, education & training** is consistently in the top 3 across most regions.
- **Agriculture** uniquely leads in Yorkshire and the Humber and North East.
- London is the only region where **Finance cracks** the top 3.
- **Computing & IT** does not make it into any region's top 3s.

# Regional insights

## South West

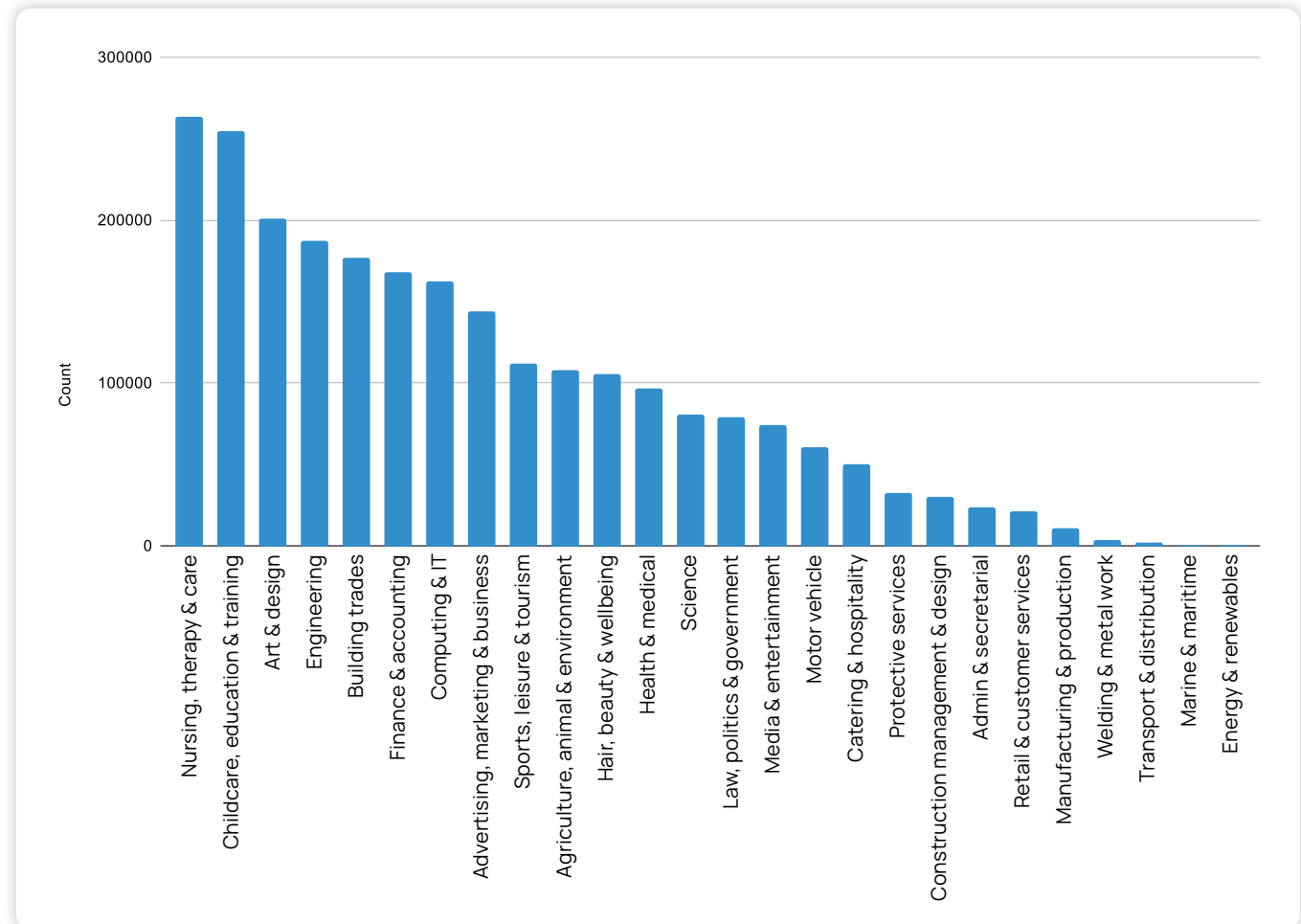
Career views: 2,449,646

The highest number of views is concentrated in a few key sectors:

**Nursing, therapy & care (263,804)** and **Childcare, education & training (254,915)** clearly dominate – showing strong regional interest in healthcare and education-related careers.

**Art & design (200,691)** and **Engineering (187,526)** follow, suggesting a balanced demand for both creative and technical fields.

**Building trades (177,187)** and **Finance & accounting (167,928)** are also strong, pointing to ongoing interest in infrastructure and economic roles.



# Regional insights

## South East

Career views: 2,126,848

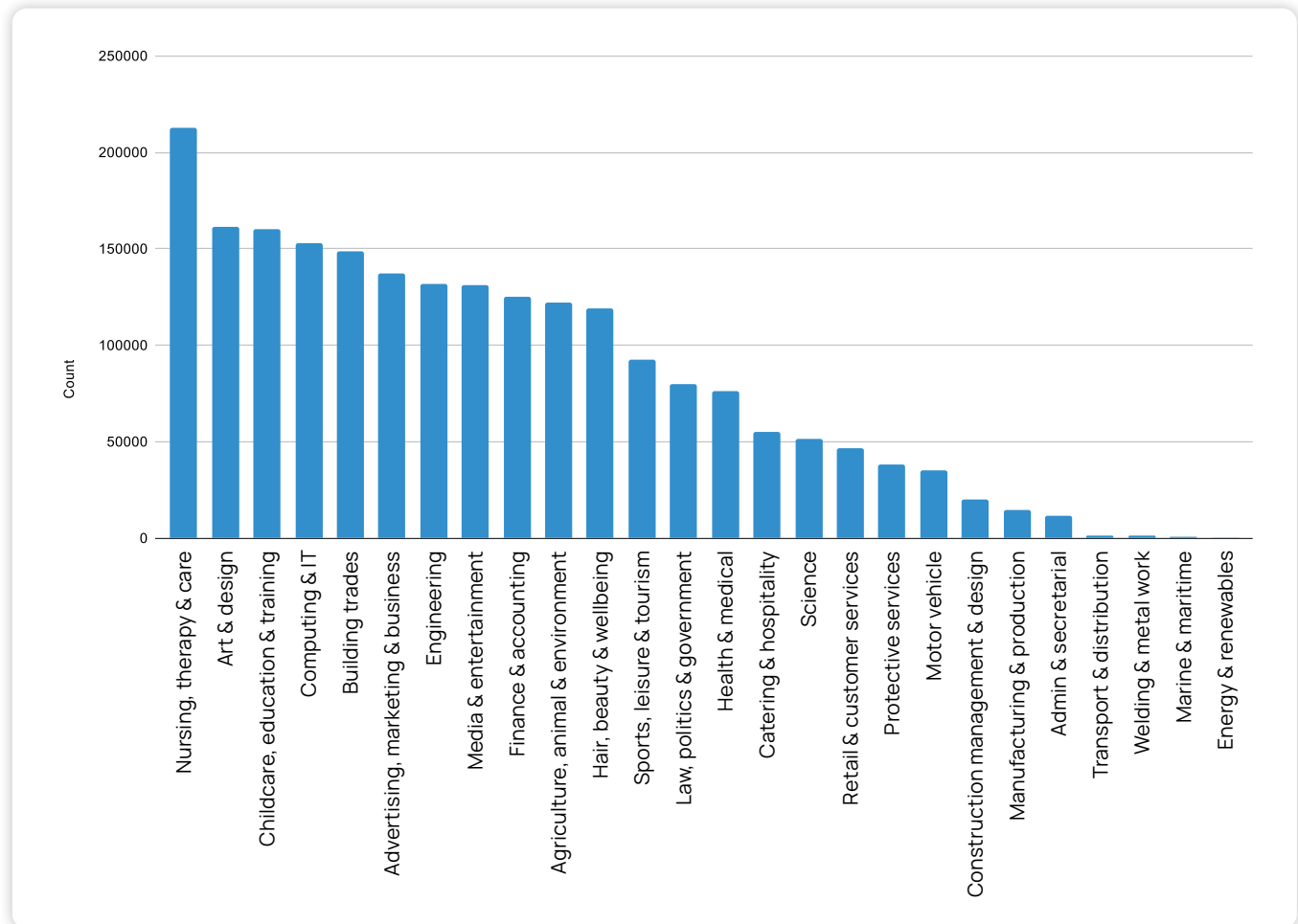
**Nursing, therapy & care leads again (212,881 views)**, affirming strong public interest in health and care roles, similar to the South West.

Close contenders include:

- **Art & design (161,553)**
- **Childcare, education & training (160,015)**
- **Computing & IT (152,933)**

This signals a diverse talent interest spanning creative, educational, and digital sectors.

**STEM** sectors like **Computing**, **Engineering**, and **Science** have solid representation – pointing to a tech-aware and innovation-leaning region.



# Regional insights

## London

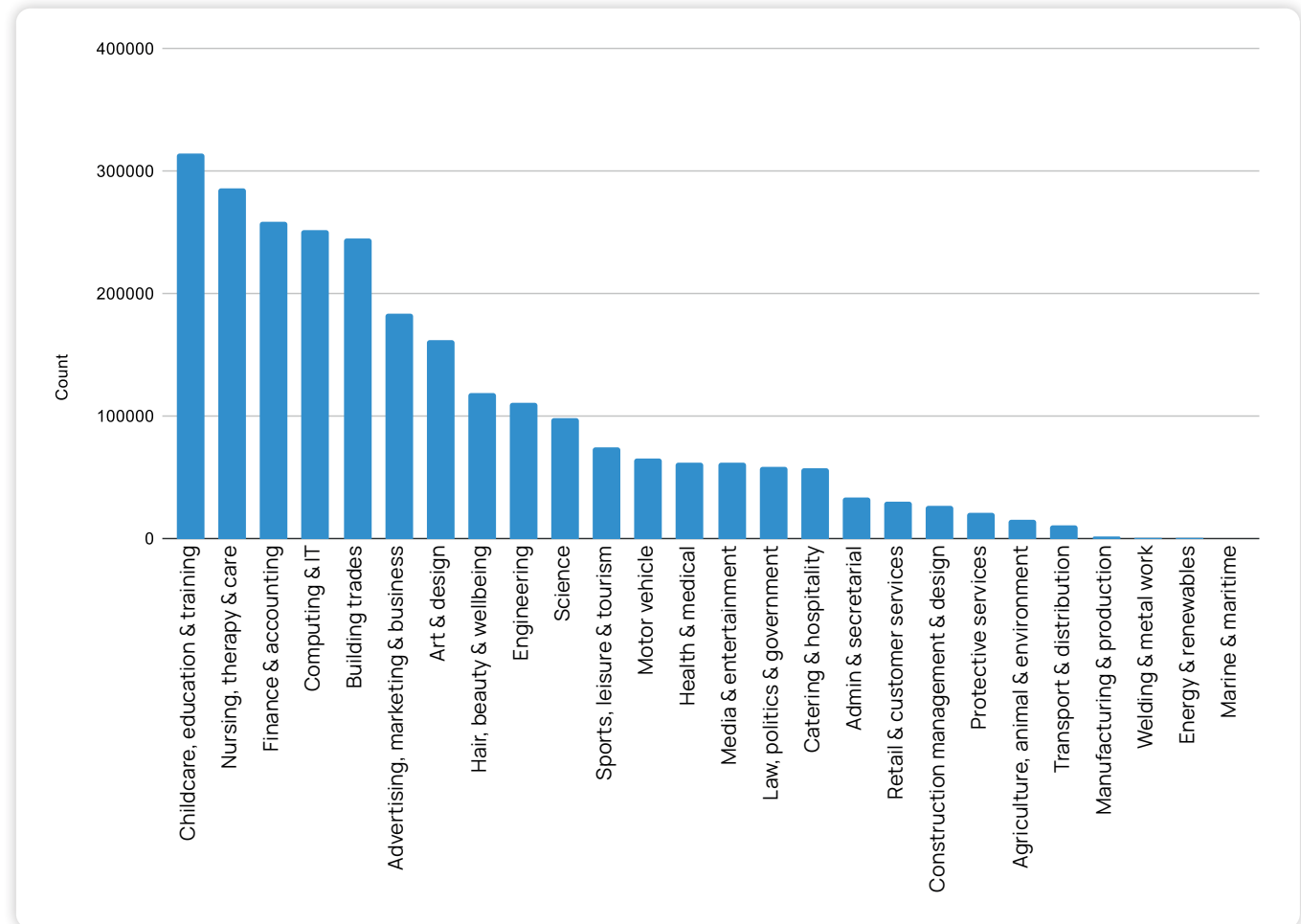
Career views: 2,550,851

London shows a **distinctively different pattern** than other regions, reflecting its role as a **financial, tech, and services** hub:

**Childcare, education & training (315,011)** and **Nursing, therapy & care (286,356)** dominate again, showing Londoners' primary interest in healthcare and education-related careers..

But unlike other regions, **Finance & accounting (258,755)** and **Computing & IT (251,628)** are **exceptionally high**, underscoring London's global status as a **financial and tech capital**.

**Building trades** also rank strongly (**244,653**), possibly reflecting the city's constant development and infrastructure needs.



# Regional insights

## East of England

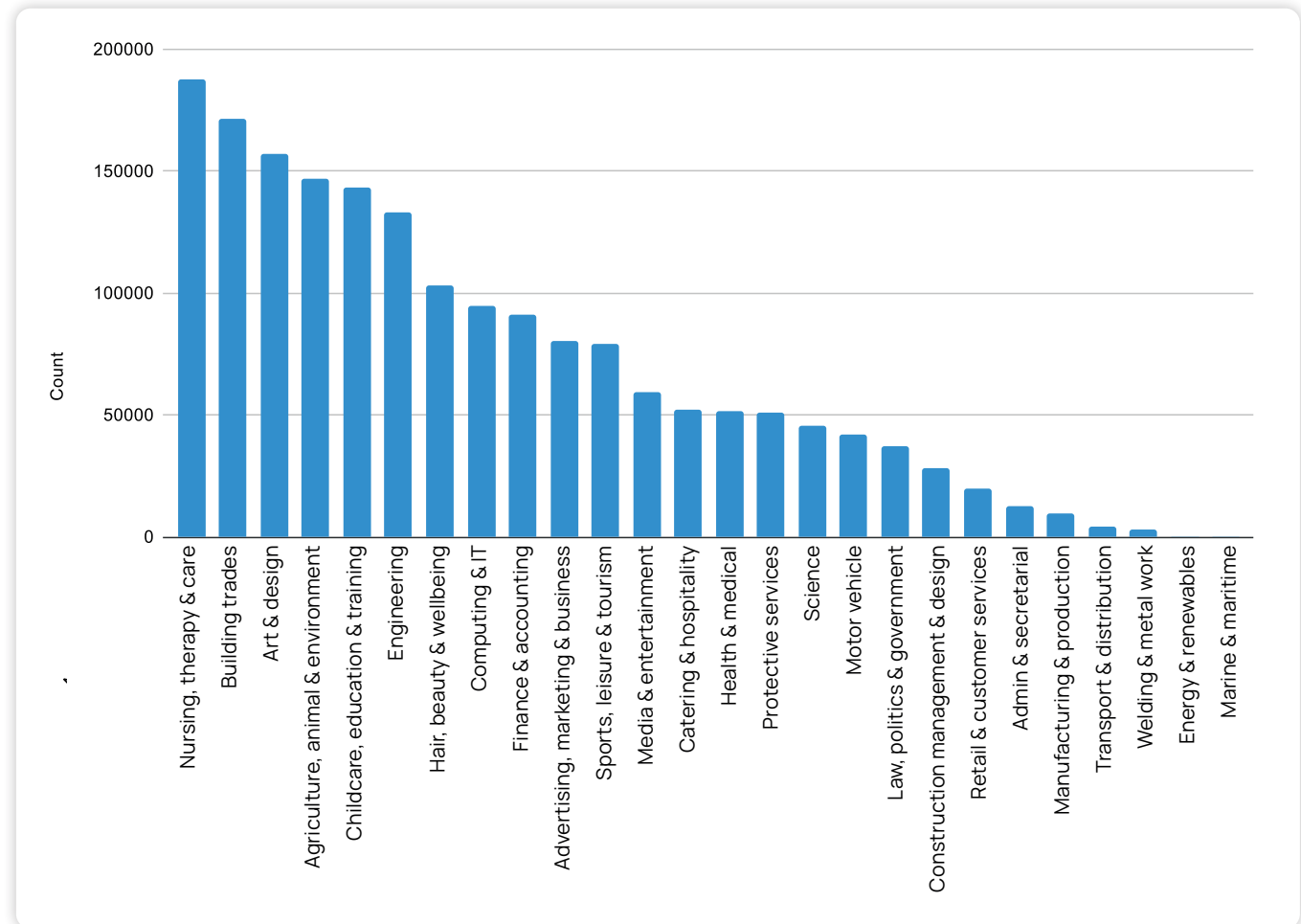
Career views: 1,806,033

The East of England displays a strong blend of **vocational**, **creative**, and **public service** interest:

**Nursing, therapy & care leads (187,528)**, keeping with national trends.

**Building trades (171,243)** and **Art & design (157,293)** are also highly viewed, showing a regional balance between **hands-on skilled work** and **creative professions**.

Notably, **Agriculture, animal & environment (146,930)** ranks 4th – much higher than in most regions – reflecting the region's **rural profile and agricultural economy**.



# Regional insights

## Wales

Career views: 574,051

### Nursing, therapy & care (93,543)

continues its national trend as the most viewed sector by far.

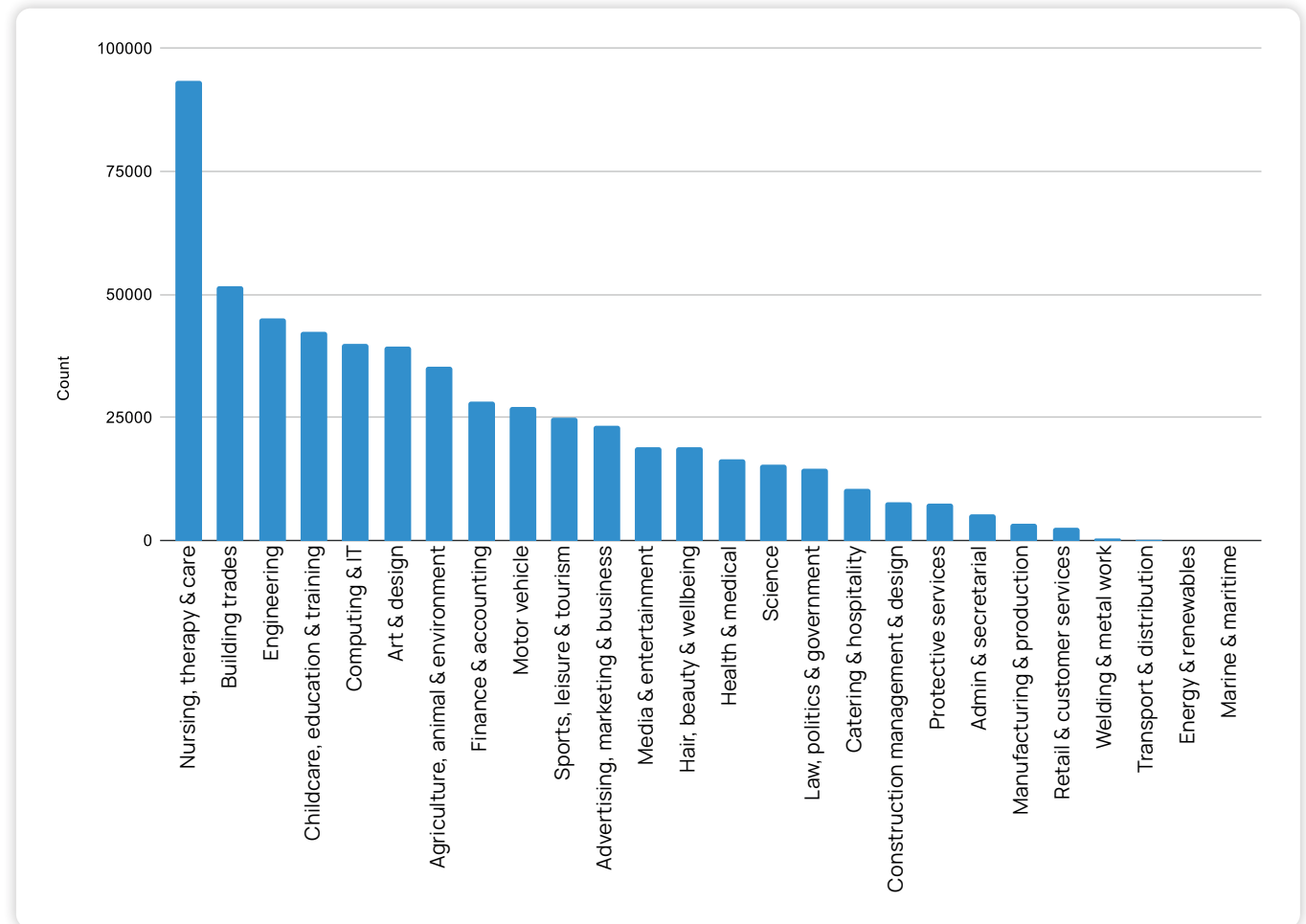
**Building trades (51,814)** and **Engineering (45,268)** follow

– emphasising Wales' strong vocational and skilled trades interest.

### Childcare & education (42,414)

and **Computing & IT (40,095)** round out the top 5.

This suggests Wales leans toward **essential services** and **trade-based roles**, with a growing interest in **tech**.



# Regional insights

## West Midlands

Career views: 3,096,363

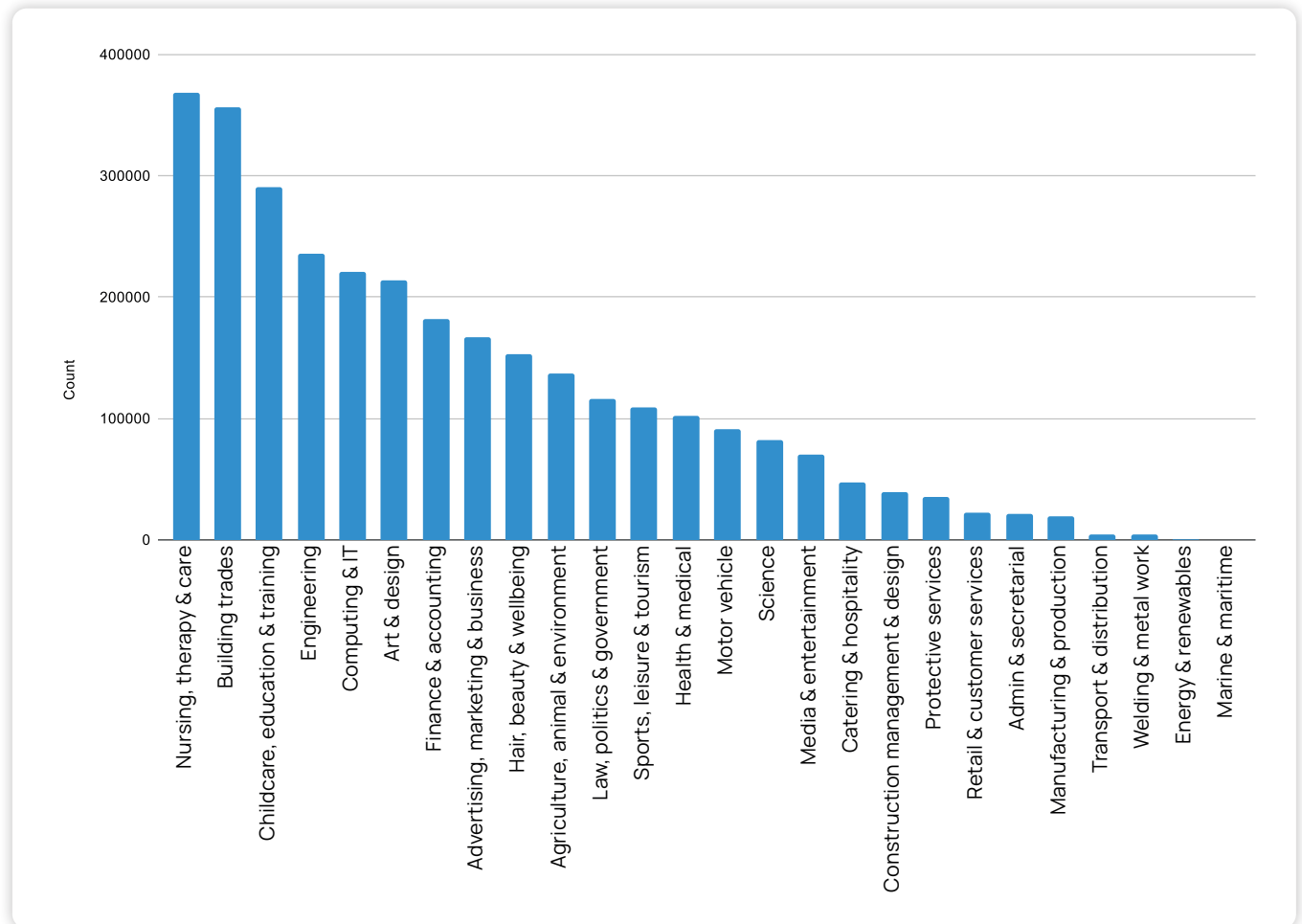
The West Midlands stands out with **some of the highest overall engagement volumes** seen:

**Nursing, therapy & care** dominates with a massive **368,723** views.

**Building trades (356,868)** is nearly on par, showing **extraordinarily high demand or awareness in construction-related fields.**

**Childcare, education & training (290,313)** rounds out a top three heavily focused on essential services and vocational training.

This reflects a **service-driven and highly practical** workforce focus.



# Regional insights

## East Midlands

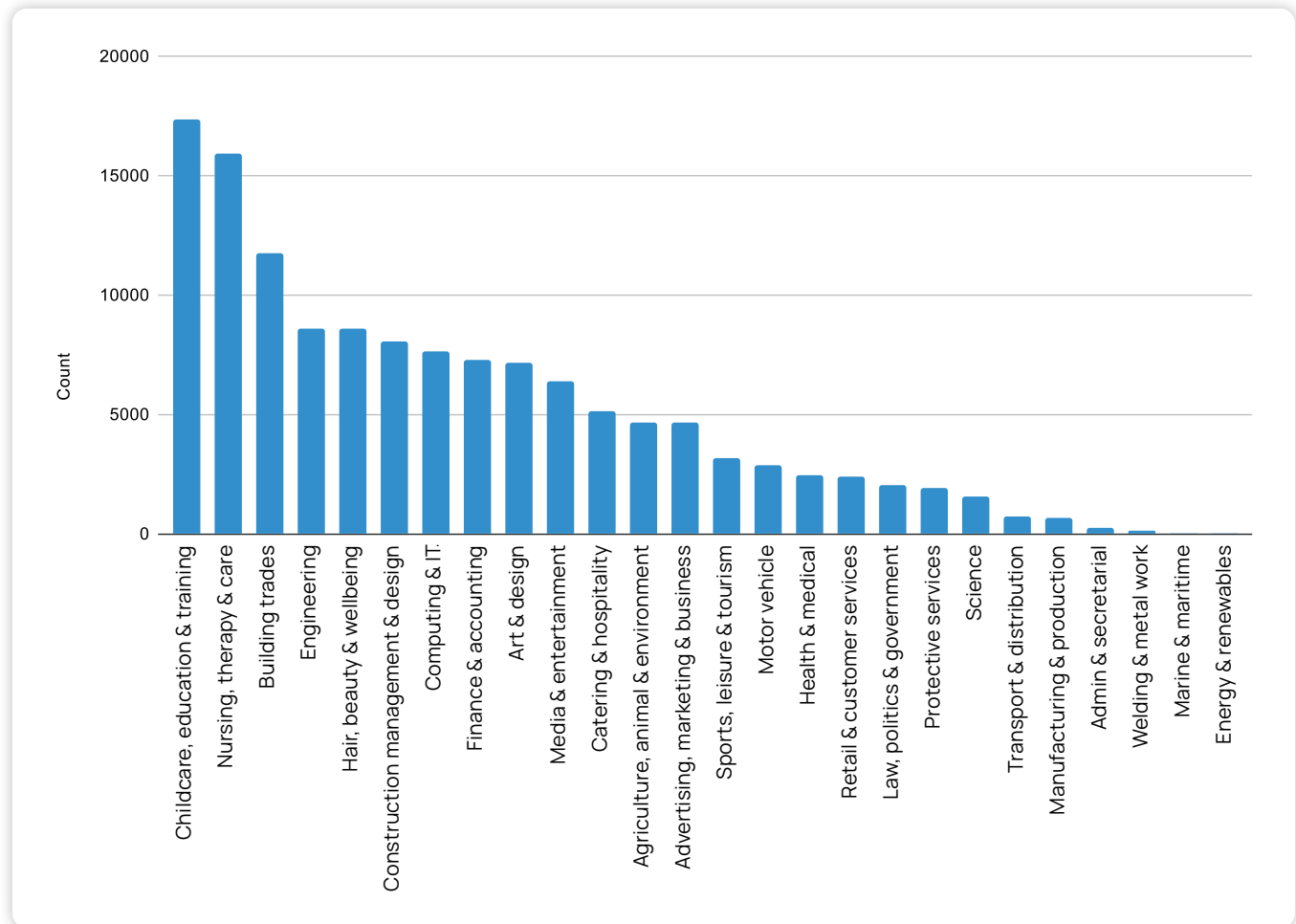
Career views: 131,351

In contrast to regions like **West Midlands** or London, the **East Midlands** shows overall lower engagement volumes, but still reveals clear sector preferences:

**Childcare, education & training leads (17,346)**, showing a regional emphasis on education and social impact careers.

**Nursing, therapy & care (15,908)** and **Building trades (11,763)** follow closely, consistent with national trends but on a smaller scale.

These indicate that the **core public services and skilled trades** remain foundational, even in a lower-engagement context.



# Regional insights

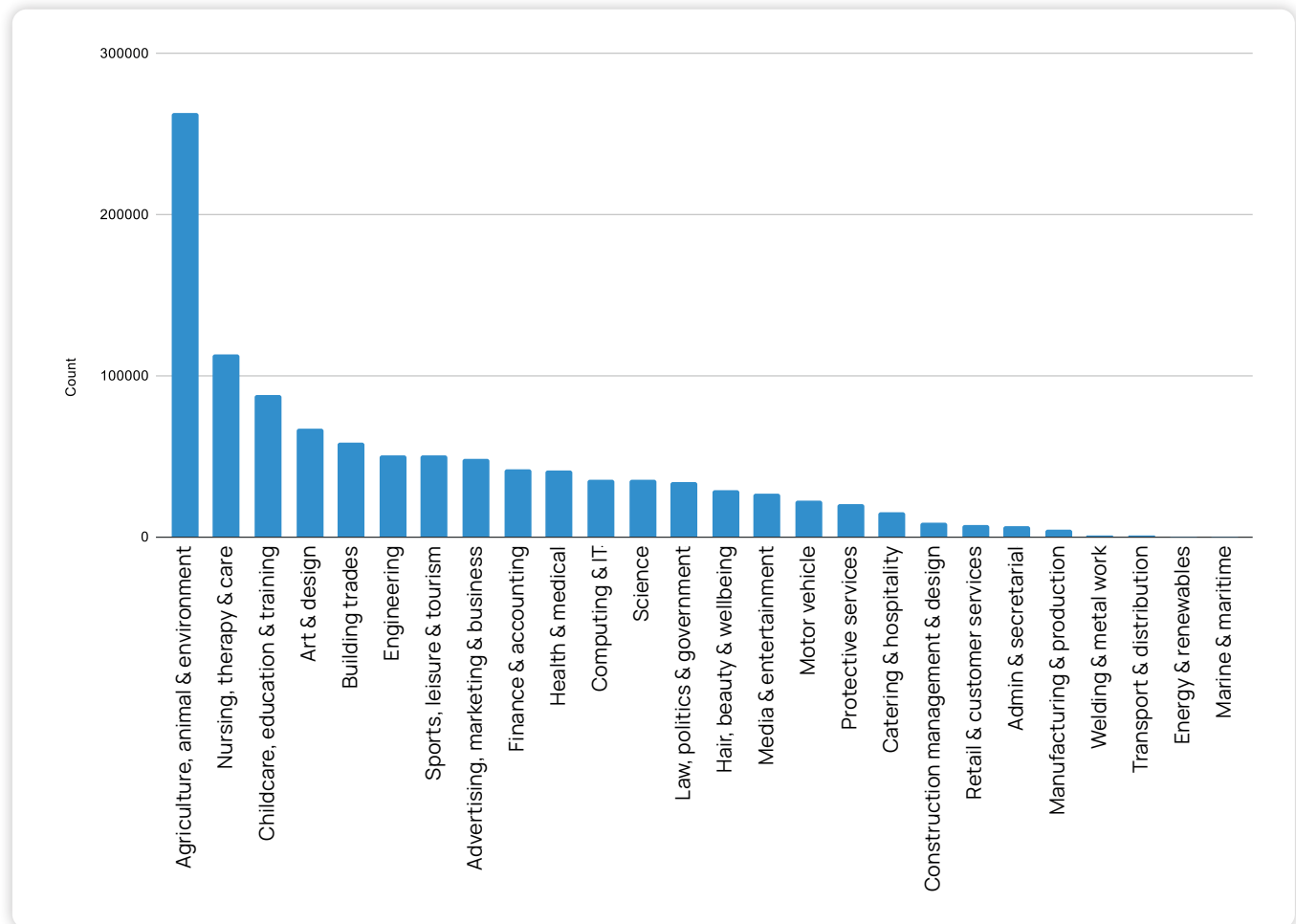
## Yorkshire and the Humber

Career views: 1,071,208

This region has one of the most distinctive sectoral profiles:

**Agriculture, animal & environment** leads by a huge margin (**262,879**) – more than double the second-highest sector. This is a clear outlier nationally, likely reflecting the region's strong rural and environmental industries.

**Nursing, therapy & care (113,330)** and **Childcare, education & training (87,967)** remain consistent with UK-wide trends, reflecting ongoing demand for health and education services.



# Regional insights

## North West

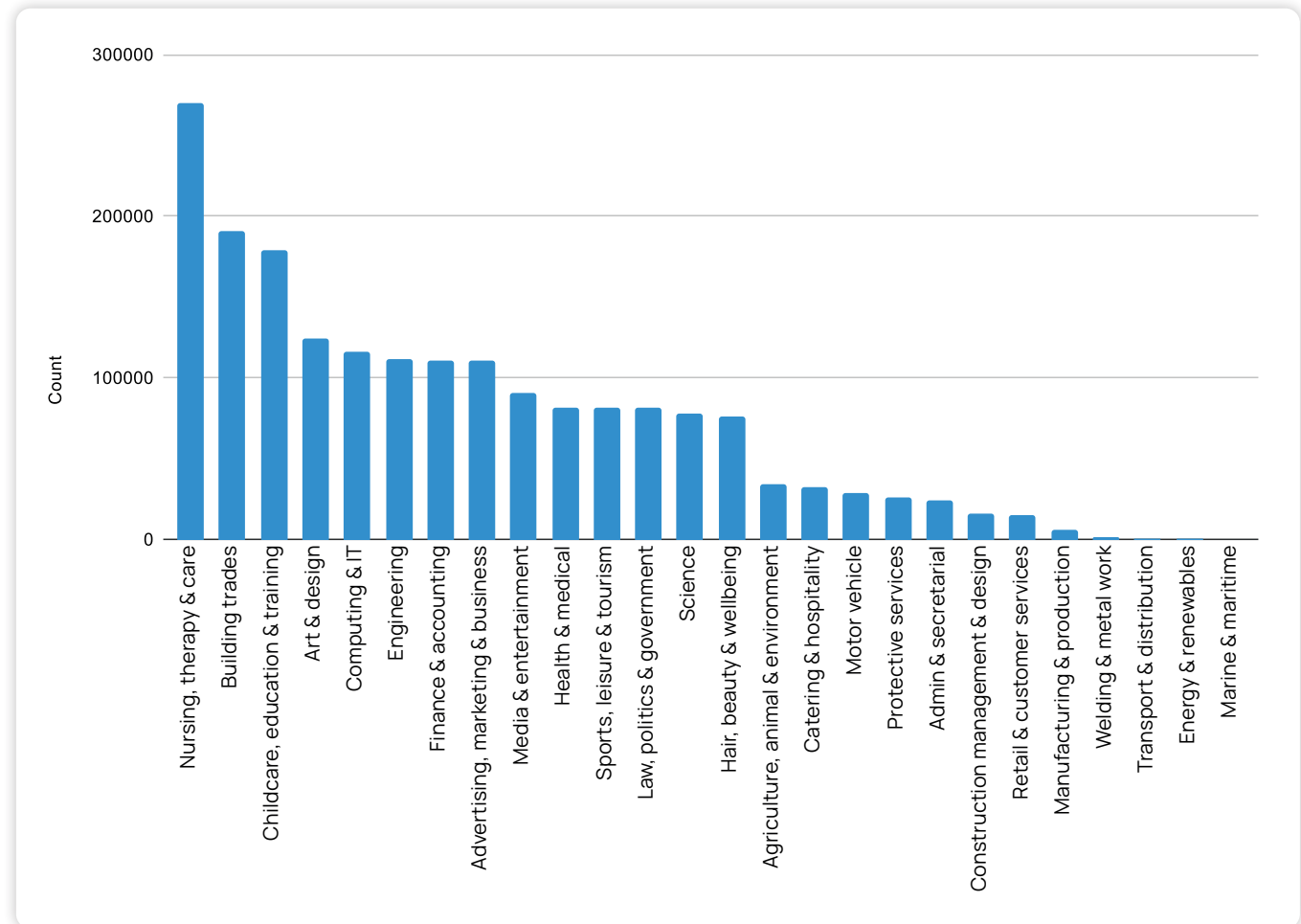
Career views: 1,890,972

The **North West** shows well-distributed and high engagement across several major sectors:

**Nursing, therapy & care (270,017)** again tops the list, underscoring widespread regional interest in healthcare.

**Building trades (191,029)** and **Childcare, education & training (179,015)** follow – continuing a strong **practical and service-focused trend** seen in nearby regions like the West Midlands.

A standout feature of the North West is its **even distribution across creative, technical, and professional roles**, suggesting a well-rounded workforce interest with strong appeal toward both creative expression and technical upskilling.



# Regional insights

## North East

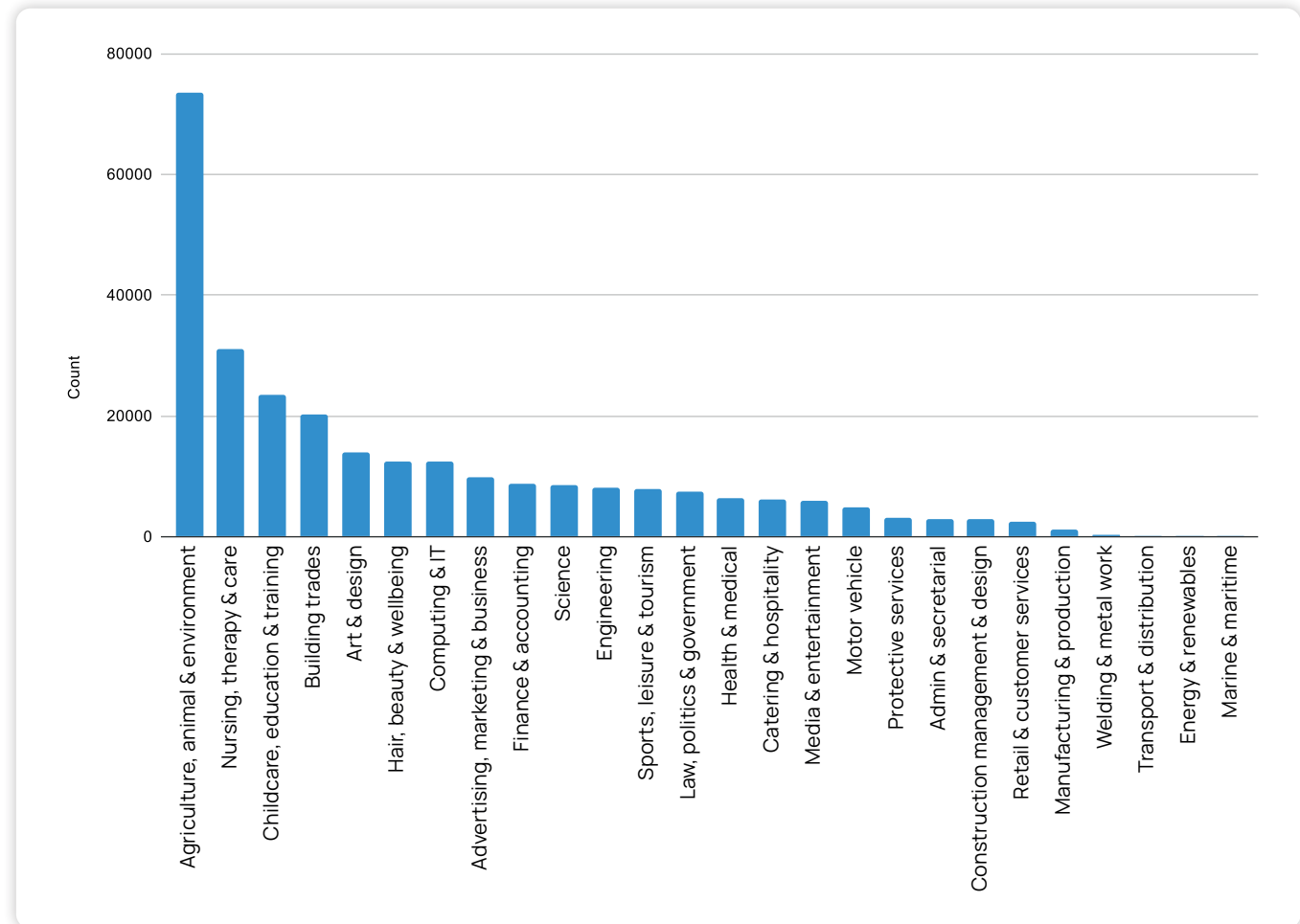
Career views: 274,126

The North East has **lower overall engagement volumes** than most other regions but still shows clear sector preferences:

**Agriculture, animal & environment** is the top sector (**73,483**) – a notable regional outlier, showing stronger interest in **rural and environmental careers** than urban-focused areas.

**Nursing, therapy & care (30,988)** and **Childcare & education (23,565)** follow – consistent with national interest in service-oriented careers.

The region's **top interest in agriculture** aligns with areas like Yorkshire & Humber and East of England – indicating continued economic ties to the land and environment.



# Regional insights

## Regional interest among prospective college students

Our data offers a detailed picture of how prospective students are engaging with different career sectors. It highlights clear patterns of aspiration and shifting priorities that can help inform more targeted, relevant marketing approaches.

### Health and Education: Central Pillars of Student Interest

Across nearly every region, careers in Nursing, Therapy, and Care are the most viewed, closely followed by Childcare and Education pathways.

This reflects a strong generational desire for purpose-driven, community-focused careers – a trend likely reinforced by societal emphasis on healthcare and education in recent years.

The consistent popularity of these fields suggests that prospective students are drawn not only to job security but also to



roles that offer emotional fulfilment and social impact.

### Skilled Trades and Construction: A Practical Career Choice

There is significant interest in building trades, electrical work, plumbing, and vehicle maintenance, particularly across the West Midlands, South West, and North West.

In many cases, interest in trades careers rivals even healthcare sectors, pointing to a strong value placed on practical, tangible skills and clear employment outcomes.

The resurgence of interest in vocational routes highlights the appeal of careers that provide visible results, stability, and progression opportunities.

### Environmental Careers and Agriculture:

# Regional insights



## Strong Rural Engagement

In regions like Yorkshire and the Humber, East of England, and the North East, Agriculture, Animal Management, and Environmental sectors show much higher levels of engagement than elsewhere.

This reflects a deep-rooted rural identity and an increasing awareness of sustainability and environmental stewardship as important career drivers among students.

## Creative and Cultural Careers: Urban Popularity

Urban areas such as London, South East, and the North West continue to show strong student interest in Art & Design, Media, and Advertising and Business fields.

These career paths appeal to students' desires for self-expression, creative freedom, and entrepreneurial opportunity, aligning closely with vibrant local creative economies.

Interest in these sectors also reflects a broader cultural shift toward careers that value personal brand, digital presence, and storytelling.

## STEM Careers: Strong but Regionally Uneven

Computing & IT, Engineering, and Science subjects generate significant engagement, particularly in regions like London, West Midlands, and the South East.

However, engagement drops in areas such as the East Midlands and North



# Regional insights

East, suggesting that while STEM careers are seen as desirable, regional access, perception, or opportunities may vary considerably.

This unevenness points to opportunities to broaden understanding and enthusiasm for tech and engineering careers among a wider pool of students.

## **Industrial, Green & Marine Careers: Low Awareness**

Sectors such as Energy & Renewables, Marine & Maritime, Transport & Distribution, and Welding & Metalwork consistently attract very low engagement from students across all regions.

Given the national and global importance of these sectors – especially in the context of green economy growth and industrial regeneration – this low visibility is worth noting. It suggests potential gaps in awareness, sector image, and aspirational appeal among the next generation.



## **Conclusion: Shifting Priorities, Evolving Interests**

Prospective students today are strongly motivated by careers that offer social impact, hands-on skills, creative expression, and innovation.

While some sectors attract consistently high interest, others – particularly industrial, green, and maritime fields – remain less visible in student decision-making.

This data reflects a generation seeking purposeful, dynamic, and engaging pathways, and highlights opportunities to broaden awareness and inspire interest across a wider range of careers.

A photograph of two young people, a male and a female, both wearing blue V-neck sweaters over white collared shirts. They are standing outdoors, possibly on a school campus, and are looking at a smartphone held by the male student. The female student is smiling and has her hand near her chin. The background is blurred, showing other people in blue clothing. The entire image has a light blue tint. The text "Subject choices" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

# Subject choices

# Subject choices



## Most viewed subjects

With Pathways One embedded on over **29,000 college web pages** and over **12.8 million views** of subject-specific information, we can understand the student demand for particular subjects and course types across the UK.

There are **1,420 distinct instances** of Pathways One that have recorded views in 2024 and this table highlights the top 20.

#	Career	Views
1	Electrical (subject preset)	270,838
2	Beauty Therapy (subject preset)	263,456
3	Building trades (job sector)	254,597
4	Computing (subject preset)	237,551
5	Health & social care (subject preset)	207,814
6	Art & design (subject preset)	199,210
7	Vehicle maintenance (subject preset)	198,876
8	Hair, beauty & wellbeing (job sector)	186,901
9	Education (subject preset)	179,978
10	Accounting & Finance (subject preset)	170,949
11	Hairdressing (subject preset)	157,612
12	Sport (subject preset)	155,361
13	Animal management (subject preset)	155,324
14	Counselling (subject preset)	150,334
15	Engineering (subject preset)	143,692
16	Business professional (subject preset)	142,272
17	Early Years Educator (subject preset)	139,498
18	Psychology (A Level)	129,171
19	Plumbing & gas (subject preset)	128,246
20	Building trades (subject preset)	119,054

# Subject choices

## Thematic insight

Thematic area	Subjects in Top 20	Insight
<b>Skilled Trades</b>	Electrical, Building, Plumbing, Vehicle Maintenance	Massive demand for practical, job-ready pathways
<b>Personal Services</b>	Beauty Therapy, Hairdressing, Wellbeing	High interest in client-facing, aesthetic careers
<b>Health &amp; Care</b>	Health & Social Care, Early Years, Counselling	Caring professions remain socially desirable
<b>Digital &amp; Tech</b>	Computing	Strong appeal with potential for broader regional uptake
<b>Creative &amp; Niche</b>	Art & Design, Animal Management	Creativity and environmental care retain strong student interest
<b>Business &amp; Enterprise</b>	Accounting, Business Professional	A steady and professional route, especially in urban centres
<b>Psychology (A-Level)</b>	Psychology	Often a gateway to multiple fields including education, health, HR

Student interest clusters around **seven key thematic areas**:

1. **Skilled Trades** lead with strong demand for hands-on, job-ready careers.
2. **Personal Services** attract those drawn to client-facing, aesthetic roles.
3. **Health & Care** remains popular, reflecting the appeal of supportive, people-focused work.
4. **Digital & Tech** is led by Computing, showing solid interest with room to grow.
5. **Creative & Niche** subjects like Art and Animal Management highlight passion-driven choices.
6. **Business & Enterprise** offers a stable, professional route.
7. **Psychology** serves as a flexible gateway to various sectors.

# Subject choices



## Subject choices split by most popular types

We can dive deeper into Pathways data highlighting student demand for specific subjects and split the data to focus on the **type of subjects being viewed**.

**Subject presets (5,459,971)** are by far the most utilised type of Pathways instance, however each type reveals its own **unique interest areas** and student-led trends.

1	<b>Subject presets</b>	<b>5,459,971</b>
2	<b>A Levels</b>	<b>1,720,670</b>
3	<b>Job sectors</b>	<b>1,536,861</b>
4	<b>BTECs</b>	<b>893,729</b>
5	<b>Apprenticeships</b>	<b>796,989</b>
6	<b>T Levels</b>	<b>574,970</b>
7	<b>Access to HE</b>	<b>383,818</b>
8	<b>Higher Education</b>	<b>337,353</b>

# Subject choices

## Top 5 subjects by type

#	Subject presets	Views
1	Preset Electrical	270,838
2	Preset Beauty Therapy	263,456
3	Preset Computing	237,551
4	Preset Health & social care	207,814
5	Preset Art & design	199,210

#	BTECs	Views
1	BTEC Business	89,202
2	BTEC Information Technology	76,644
3	BTEC Sport	62,683
4	BTEC Health and Social Care	54,372
5	BTEC Applied Science	39,961

#	Access to HE	Views
1	Access to HE Education	32,002
2	Access to HE Science	21,277
3	Access to HE Health and Care Professions	21,248
4	Access to HE Nursing and Midwifery	20,389
5	Access to HE Biomedical Science (NQF)	17,741

#	A Levels	Views
1	A Level Psychology	129,171
2	A Level Biology	101,378
3	A Level Mathematics	87,086
4	A Level Law	83,282
5	A Level Sociology	72,616

#	Apprenticeships	Views
1	Apprenticeship Teaching assistant (level 3)	66,270
2	Apprenticeship Business administrator (level 3)	38,096
3	Apprenticeship Carpentry and joinery (level 2)	34,670
4	Apprenticeship Team leader or supervisor (level 3)	31,896
5	Apprenticeship Accounts or finance assistant (level 2)	29,156

#	Higher Education	Views
1	Higher Education Engineering	22,747
2	Higher Education Animal science	20,131
3	Higher Education Electrical and electronic engineering	20,044
4	Higher Education Information technology	15,597
5	Higher Education Computer science	14,052

#	Job sectors	Views
1	Building trades	254,597
2	Hair, beauty & wellbeing	186,901
3	Childcare, education & training	114,775
4	Motor vehicle	111,224
5	Art & design	106,391

#	T Levels	Views
1	T Level Education and Childcare	79,120
2	T Level Health	67,964
3	T Level Management and administration	65,807
4	T Level Design and development for engineering and manufacturing	43,971
5	T Level Digital Production, Design and Development	38,378

# Subject choices

## Summary for all qualification and subject types

**Vocational subjects** clearly dominate student interest, especially those with a **direct route into employment**.

While academic pathways (A Levels, Higher Education) retain importance, they are **not the default or dominant choice** for many students.

**Education** is the most in-demand subject area across **Apprenticeships, T Levels** and **Access to HE**.

Emerging routes like **T Levels** and **Apprenticeships** are gaining ground, offering flexible and career-focused options.

This points to a **diversifying post-16 education landscape**, where students increasingly prioritise **job readiness, skill application**, and **alternative routes to success**.



# Subject choices

## South West

In the South West, student interest spans a diverse range of subjects, with a total of **1.92 million subject views**. The most in-demand areas are **Computing (41,321 views)**, **Beauty Therapy (38,907)**, and **Art & Design (35,182)**, indicating strong engagement with both digital and creative fields.

There is also significant interest in **Counselling, Electrical, and Health & Social Care**, reflecting demand for careers in mental health, skilled trades, and public services.

Other notable subjects include **Sport, Hairdressing, and Vehicle Maintenance**, suggesting a continued preference for **vocational and hands-on learning paths**. The inclusion of **A Level Psychology** and **Biology** in the top 20 highlights ongoing relevance of academic routes as well.

#	Subject	Views
1	Computing (subject preset)	41,321
2	Beauty therapy (subject preset)	38,907
3	Art & design (subject preset)	35,182
4	Counselling (subject preset)	35,080
5	Electrical (subject preset)	33,422
6	Sport (subject preset)	29,310
7	Health & social care (subject preset)	28,474
8	Hairdressing (subject preset)	25,465
9	Vehicle maintenance (subject preset)	24,776
10	Psychology (A Level)	23,700
11	Early Years Educator (subject preset)	22,782
12	Language (subject preset)	22,721
13	Education (subject preset)	22,397
14	Accounting & finance (subject preset)	22,376
15	Animal management (subject preset)	21,217
16	Hair, beauty & wellbeing (job sector)	20,506
17	Performing arts (subject preset)	20,346
18	Media production (subject preset)	19,966
19	Biology (A Level)	19,258
20	Motorsport (subject preset)	18,349

# Subject choices

## South East

Student subject interest totaled **1.73 million views**, with the highest demand concentrated in **vocational job sectors**.

**Hair, Beauty & Wellbeing (68,443 views)**, **Building Trades (61,698)**, and **Computing & IT (43,381)** lead the way, reflecting a strong orientation toward **practical, employment-driven careers**.

Academic pathways like A Level Psychology, Maths, Biology, and Law remain relevant, although with lower view counts.

Overall, the South East shows a preference for **hands-on, career-aligned subjects**, balanced with continued interest in **academic and creative disciplines**.

#	Subject	Views
1	Hair, beauty & wellbeing (job sector)	68,443
2	Building trades (job sector)	61,698
3	Computing & IT (job sector)	43,381
4	Agriculture, animal & environment (job sector)	41,486
5	Art & design (job sector)	41,369
6	Advertising, marketing & business (job sector)	36,940
7	Media & entertainment (job sector)	35,382
8	Engineering (job sector)	32,930
9	Psychology (A Level)	28,404
10	Childcare, education & training (job sector)	26,702
11	Catering & hospitality (job sector)	25,905
12	Mathematics (A Level)	22,416
13	Beauty therapy (subject preset)	20,964
14	Business (A Level)	20,759
15	Biology (A Level)	19,380
16	Motor vehicle (job sector)	19,317
17	Art & design (subject preset)	17,818
18	Performing arts (subject preset)	17,562
19	Business (BTEC)	17,511
20	Law (A Level)	16,690

# Subject choices

## London

With over **2.1 million subject views**, London's top areas of demand reflect a diverse, opportunity-driven learner base with a strong mix of **technical, vocational, and career-focused pathways**.

Leading the list are **Electrical (77,037 views)** and **Computing (72,473)**, highlighting a strong emphasis on **STEM and skilled trades**. **Accounting & Finance (68,685)** also ranks highly, suggesting significant interest in business and financial services, consistent with **London's economic landscape**.

Vocational subjects such as **Building Trades, Beauty Therapy, Vehicle Maintenance**, and **Plumbing & Gas** point to student engagement with hands-on and employment-ready careers. Interest in **Education-based Apprenticeships** underscores demand for such professions.

#	Subject	Views
1	Electrical (subject preset)	77,037
2	Computing (subject preset)	72,473
3	Accounting & Finance (subject preset)	68,685
4	Building trades (job sector)	56,817
5	Beauty Therapy (subject preset)	55,734
6	Teaching assistant (level 3) (Apprenticeship)	50,677
7	Education (subject preset)	49,354
8	Vehicle maintenance (subject preset)	45,700
9	BTEC Information Technology	45,366
10	Art & design (subject preset)	38,809
11	Plumbing & gas (subject preset)	32,662
12	Health & social care (subject preset)	32,659
13	Early Years Educator (subject preset)	31,629
14	Childcare (subject preset)	30,618
15	English (subject preset)	29,430
16	Business (BTEC)	29,012
17	Hair, beauty & wellbeing (job sector)	28,975
18	Team leader or supervisor (level 3) (Apprenticeship)	27,955
19	Food & Cookery (subject preset)	26,742
20	Hairdressing (subject preset)	25,458

# Subject choices

## East of England

With **1.47 million subject views**, the East of England reveals strong student interest in **vocational, creative, and public service pathways**.

The top subject, **Beauty Therapy (41,507 views)**, leads a broader trend toward personal service careers, followed by **Art & Design (38,069)** and **Animal Management (37,627)**. The latter reflecting the region's rural profile and affinity for land-based careers.

There is notable demand for **public service and security-related fields**, with **Uniformed Protective Services (33,210)** ranking fourth.

**Social Care** and **Education** subjects highlight a strong commitment to **community-oriented and caring professions**.

#	Subject	Views
1	Beauty therapy (subject preset)	41,507
2	Art & design (subject preset)	38,069
3	Animal management (subject preset)	37,627
4	Uniformed protective services (subject preset)	33,210
5	Electrical (subject preset)	30,636
6	Health & social care (subject preset)	29,964
7	Business professional (subject preset)	26,504
8	Hairdressing (subject preset)	25,868
9	Sport (subject preset)	25,164
10	Food & cookery (subject preset)	24,217
11	Vehicle maintenance (subject preset)	22,907
12	Engineering (subject preset)	22,777
13	Performing arts (subject preset)	22,364
14	Carpentry (subject preset)	20,074
15	Education (subject preset)	19,842
16	Building trades (subject preset)	18,558
17	Media production	17,961
18	Computing (subject preset) (subject preset)	16,665
19	Early Years Educator (subject preset)	16,413
20	Plumbing & gas (subject preset)	15,248

# Subject choices

## Wales

With **455,195 subject views**, Wales demonstrates a clear student preference for **vocational and career-focused learning**, particularly in **trades, personal services**, and **practical professions**.

**Building Trades** lead the way (**24,849 views**), reflecting strong interest in **hands-on, skilled labour pathways**, a trend echoed by high demand for **Vehicle Maintenance** and **Motor Vehicle** sectors.

**Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy (22,577)** and **Beauty Therapy (12,702)** also rank highly, showing enduring interest in **personal service and creative roles** that offer flexibility and self-employment opportunities.

Overall, demand is rooted in practical, applied learning, with an emphasis on **skilled trades, care sectors**, and **rural industries**.

#	Subject	Views
1	Building trades (job sector)	24,849
2	Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy (custom)	22,577
3	Vehicle maintenance (subject preset)	14,829
4	Beauty Therapy (custom)	12,702
5	Motor vehicle (job sector)	11,066
6	Health, Care and Early Years (custom)	9,921
7	Accounting & finance (subject preset)	9,915
8	Engineering (custom)	9,088
9	Agriculture and Animal Care (custom)	8,584
10	Art & design (job sector)	7,987
11	Information Technology (BTEC)	6,741
12	Accountancy, Business and Law (custom)	6,491
13	Computing & IT (job sector)	5,960
14	Sport (subject preset)	5,729
15	Electrical (subject preset)	5,347
16	Catering and Hospitality (custom)	5,288
17	Counselling (subject preset)	5,160
18	BTEC Business	4,903
19	Health & social care (subject preset)	4,855
20	Higher Education Animal science	4,711

# Subject choices

## West Midlands

With **2.47 million subject views**, the West Midlands demonstrates the highest level of student engagement in the UK, with a strong leaning toward **skilled trades, vocational training, and practical career pathways**.

**Electrical (80,460 views)** tops the list, closely followed by **Beauty Therapy, Vehicle Maintenance**, and **Building Trades**—highlighting sustained interest in hands-on professions with **clear employability**. The presence of **Carpentry, Plumbing**, and **Bricklaying** further reinforces this focus on **construction and engineering-related fields**.

Overall, the West Midlands presents a highly career-aligned subject interest profile, pointing to a student population highly attuned to **real-world job opportunities and practical skill development**.

#	Subject	Views
1	Electrical (subject preset)	80,460
2	Beauty therapy (subject preset)	62,566
3	Vehicle maintenance (subject preset)	57,541
4	Health & social care (subject preset)	56,686
5	Building trades (subject preset)	55,768
6	Computing (subject preset)	54,505
7	Engineering (subject preset)	47,531
8	Business professional (subject preset)	44,473
9	Education (subject preset)	40,818
10	Hairdressing (subject preset)	39,166
11	Early Years Educator (subject preset)	37,746
12	Carpentry (subject preset)	33,974
13	Plumbing & gas (subject preset)	32,079
14	Art & design (subject preset)	31,496
15	Accounting & finance (subject preset)	30,339
16	English (subject preset)	29,042
17	Sport (subject preset)	28,904
18	Psychology (A Level)	28,182
19	Bricklayer (subject preset)	24,199
20	Hair, beauty & wellbeing (job sector)	23,045

# Subject choices

## East Midlands

With **88,493 subject views**, the East Midlands shows a modest but diverse range of student interest.

**Construction (BTEC)** leads in the region (**5,956 views**), reflecting demand for practical, skills-based learning tied to the trades, while **Beauty Therapy, Hairdressing,** and **Plumbing & Gas** further reinforce a preference for hands-on pathways.

**English** holds the second spot (**5,901 views**), and along with **Maths, Education,** and **Childcare**, suggests an underlying interest in academic development and community-focused careers.

While total engagement is lower than in other regions, the East Midlands reveals a balanced student demand in **academic study,** **vocational training,** and **creative pursuits.**

#	Subject	Views
1	Construction (BTEC)	5,956
2	English (subject preset)	5,901
3	Beauty therapy (subject preset)	4,239
4	Education (subject preset)	2,338
5	Maths (subject preset)	2,022
6	Media & entertainment (job sector)	1,987
7	Electrical (subject preset)	1,973
8	Health & medical (job sector)	1,896
9	Fashion & textiles (subject preset)	1,836
10	Computing (subject preset)	1,835
11	Counselling (subject preset)	1,834
12	Agriculture, animal & environment (job sector)	1,819
13	Hairdressing (subject preset)	1,758
14	Plumbing & gas (subject preset)	1,711
15	Childcare, education & training	1,682
16	Health & social care (subject preset)	1,557
17	Catering & hospitality (job sector)	1,551
18	Hair, beauty & wellbeing (job sector)	1,539
19	Performing arts (subject preset)	1,521
20	Protective services (job sector)	1,442

# Subject choices

## Yorkshire and the Humber

With **875,852 subject views**, Yorkshire and the Humber displays a distinctly **vocational and land-based profile**, driven by interest in animal and environmental subjects.

Leading the list are **Animal Management, Equine, Agriculture**, and broader **Agriculture, Animal & Environment** job sectors—collectively drawing tens of thousands of views.

Complementing this are steady interests in **Sport, Counselling**, and **Health & Social Care**, suggesting a parallel focus on health, wellbeing, and personal development pathways.

Overall, student demand in Yorkshire and the Humber is shaped by a **unique mix of rural sector alignment, community-focused roles, and creative pursuits**.

#	Subject	Views
1	Animal management (subject preset)	34,731
2	Agriculture, animal & environment (job sector)	27,988
3	Equine (subject preset)	26,371
4	Agriculture (subject preset)	22,653
5	Sport (subject preset)	20,720
6	Counselling (subject preset)	14,202
7	Animal Management (custom)	14,022
8	Education (subject preset)	13,426
9	Art & design (subject preset)	12,393
10	Health & social care (subject preset)	12,105
11	Uniformed protective services (subject preset)	10,892
12	Motor vehicle (job sector)	10,724
13	Forensic & criminology (subject preset)	10,569
14	Beauty therapy (subject preset)	9,548
15	Floristry (subject preset)	9,264
16	Educational support (subject preset)	8,727
17	Psychology (A Level)	8,514
18	Engineering (subject preset)	8,318
19	Horticulture (subject preset)	7,606
20	Education and Childcare (T Level)	7,550

# Subject choices

## North West

With **1,455,311 subject views**, the North West region shows a strong demand for **practical, care-oriented, and creative subject areas**.

At the top of the list, **Building Trades** dominates, followed by notable interest in **Counselling, Childcare, Education & Training**, and **Hair, Beauty & Wellbeing**, all suggesting a regional emphasis on **hands-on vocational careers and community-focused roles**.

Health-related fields are well represented through **Health & Social Care, Nursing, Therapy & Care**, and **Psychology (A Level)**, highlighting a robust interest in the **health and wellbeing sector**.

In summary, student interest reveals a region invested in both **supportive professions** and **skilled hands-on careers**.

#	Subject	Views
1	Building trades (job sector)	65,367
2	Counselling (subject preset)	31,031
3	Childcare, education & training (job sector)	30,151
4	Hair, beauty & wellbeing (job sector)	26,423
5	Electrical (subject preset)	24,635
6	Beauty therapy (subject preset)	23,839
7	Health & social care (subject preset)	23,719
8	Art & design (job sector)	23,611
9	Computing (subject preset)	23,149
10	Nursing, therapy & care (job sector)	22,458
11	Psychology (A Level)	20,119
12	Sport (subject preset)	18,854
13	Art & design (subject preset)	18,818
14	Education (subject preset)	18,074
15	Biology (A Level)	17,969
16	Language (subject preset)	16,844
17	Hairdressing (subject preset)	16,308
18	Plumbing & gas (subject preset)	15,667
19	Carpentry (subject preset)	14,339
20	Early Years Educator (subject preset)	14,266

# Subject choices

## North East

With **214,916 subject views**, the North East shows a clear regional identity, with strong interest in **land-based, animal-related, and practical vocational subjects**.

**Animal Management** leads the way significantly, with additional related subjects like **Equine, Agriculture, Floristry, Arboriculture**, and **Dog Grooming** also appearing high in the list.

There's also notable engagement in practical and hands-on fields, such as **Carpentry, Vehicle Maintenance, Bricklaying**, and **Beauty Therapy**—highlighting a preference for **vocational and trade skills**.

The North East's subject demand is firmly rooted in **rural industries, vocational education, and hands-on careers**.

#	Subject	Views
1	Animal management (subject preset)	13,734
2	Floristry (subject preset)	7,900
3	Land-based (subject preset)	5,740
4	Arboriculture (subject preset)	5,576
5	Equine (subject preset)	4,540
6	Computing (subject preset)	4,103
7	Carpentry (subject preset)	3,923
8	Educational support (subject preset)	3,881
9	Vehicle maintenance (subject preset)	3,712
10	Beauty therapy (subject preset)	3,630
11	Agriculture (subject preset)	3,606
12	Dog Grooming (custom)	3,300
13	Bricklayer (subject preset)	3,059
14	Photography (subject preset)	3,033
15	Animal Management (vocational)	2,871
16	Hairdressing (subject preset)	2,862
17	Science (Access to HE)	2,652
18	Counselling (subject preset)	2,634
19	Childcare, education & training (job sector)	2,396
20	Florists (custom)	2,280

# Subject choices

## Regional insights and geographical trends



### London, West Midlands, North West

These regions show diverse and high-volume demand, particularly in technical, vocational, and professional subjects.

- **London** has the second highest subject views overall, with Electrical, Computing, Accounting & Finance, and Apprenticeships leading – reflecting urban career opportunities in tech, finance, and public services.
- **West Midlands** has the highest subject engagement and mirrors London with high demand for Electrical, Vehicle Maintenance, and Engineering, suggesting a strong connection to its manufacturing and automotive sectors.
- **North West** combines Building Trades, Counselling, and Childcare with strong demand for Hair & Beauty, showing balance between technical skills and community-facing careers.



### North East, Yorkshire & the Humber, East Midlands

These regions exhibit a specialised preference for animal care, agriculture, and land-based studies.

- **North East** is uniquely focused on Animal Management, Floristry, Arboriculture, and Equine, highlighting its rural economy.
- **Yorkshire & the Humber** reinforces this trend with Animal Management, Agriculture, and Horticulture in top spots.
- **East Midlands**, while having lower total views, still emphasises Construction, Agriculture, and Environment, with Fashion and Textiles also emerging – possibly linked to local niche industries.

# Subject choices

## Regional insights and geographical trends



South Coast & West

### South West, South East

These regions show balanced demand across creative, vocational, and care-based sectors.

- **South West** shows strong interest in Computing, Beauty Therapy, Counselling, and Electrical – suggesting a mix of traditional and modern vocational pathways.
- **South East** highlights Hair & Beauty, Building Trades, and Computing & IT, but also reflects creative fields like Media & Entertainment and Art & Design.



Wales

### Wales

**Wales** demonstrates a distinct vocational and trades-driven pattern with an emphasis on local employment opportunities.

- Building Trades and Hairdressing & Beauty top the list.
- Interests in Vehicle Maintenance, Accounting & Finance, and Health & Social Care indicate demand for practical skills and community service careers.
- There's relatively low engagement with academic subjects, suggesting a strong vocational leaning.

# Subject choices

## Observed trends

Region	In-demand subjects	Observed Trends
London	Electrical, Finance, IT, Apprenticeships	Urban, professional, diverse career routes
West Midlands	Engineering, Electrical, Hairdressing	Industrial legacy, vocational focus
North West	Trades, Care, Counselling	Balanced vocational & social careers
Yorkshire & Humber	Animal & Land-Based, Forensics	Rural, environment-focused
North East	Animal Care, Floristry, Practical Trades	Highly rural & vocational
East Midlands	Construction, Fashion, Childcare	Low volume but vocationally consistent
East of England	Beauty, Animal Care, Protective Services	Strong FE pathways, youth focus
South West	Beauty, Counselling, Sport	Service-oriented with technical interest
South East	Hair & Beauty, Trades, Creative sectors	High demand, wide-ranging interests
Wales	Building Trades, Vehicle Maintenance	Vocational and trades-dominant

Vocational education dominates across the UK, especially in regions with a strong industrial or rural heritage.

- **Animal and land-based subjects** are uniquely prominent in the **North East** and **Yorkshire & the Humber**, but nearly absent in London and SE regions.
- **Electrical and Engineering** consistently perform well in **urban and industrial regions** (London, Midlands, North West).
- **Beauty Therapy** and **Hairdressing** have **nationwide appeal**, with strong demand across both urban and rural areas.
- **Creative and media subjects** are more pronounced in southern regions, particularly **South East** and **South West**.
- **Apprenticeships** have notable presence in **London** and **West Midlands**, hinting at strong promotion and availability of work-based learning routes there.
- **Demand for academic A Levels** is significantly lower compared to vocational subjects, highlighting student preferences for practical pathways and reflecting the Further Education sector's strong emphasis on vocational training and career-focused courses.

# Notes

## Data source

All data is from usage of our Pathways One product across 2024, where it was embedded on 116 FE institution websites across England and Wales.

## \* Regional variance

Data provided per region is informed by the number of institutions using Pathways in that region as highlighted in the following table:

Region	Count
North West	21
South East	19
South West	16
London	16
West Midlands	15
East of England	10
Yorkshire and the Humber	10
East Midlands	5
North East	3
Wales	1

# Contact us

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