

BRIEFING NOTE: Director - Business Development Education and Skills

Report Title: Curriculum Development Opportunities in **Digital Skills & Computing**.

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Purpose of report

To review the 2021 Digital curriculum offer and existing campus facilities, to realise curriculum opportunities going forward in support of regional growth priorities and to enhance the likelihood of success of those interested in a career in Digital occupations. Digital occupations being vital in underpinning the success of the majority of significant industries for example Human Health and Social Work, Manufacturing, Retail and Education as well as underpinning the future of agile working within the rurally located community.

Background

Northumberland County Council Skills Service digital curriculum offer is not yet aligned to yield greatest positive outcomes for young people and adults alike. A broad and detailed review of emerging apprenticeship opportunities combined with a review of H.E. opportunities will provide the necessary information to in turn revise study programmes to effectively feed into apprenticeship and H.E. progression streams.

Unlike other industries under review, the labour market analytics for those working in digital, computing and I.T. occupations appear skewed, potentially by the fact that many digital, computing and I.T. operatives and professionals work within organisations for which the core business is not in digital, computing and I.T. functions. The core business is however supported by digital, computing and I.T. functions and those employees in the supporting occupations.

Emsi labour market analytics study completed August 2020 indicates that '*Information & Communication*' is only the 16th largest industry in terms of employment number in Northumberland (Fig 1.1) accounting for less than 2,000 employed positions (against 133,000 total regional employment of 190,000 working age population), Office for National Statistics census data suggests that this figure is circa 3650 however ONS data is less current. Also indicated by Emsi is that '*Information & Communication*' is only 16th largest in providing regional GVA generating in the region of £70m (Fig 1.2). '*Information & Communication*' is also indicated as an insignificant growth sector in both the 2020 Emsi report and the larger Emsi report issued 2018. (Fig 1.3 and 1.5). '*Information & Communication*' does however have 3rd highest average wages at circa £33,000 (Fig 1.4).

Figure 1.1: Industry share of jobs (Northumberland), Emsi 2020.

Largest Industries

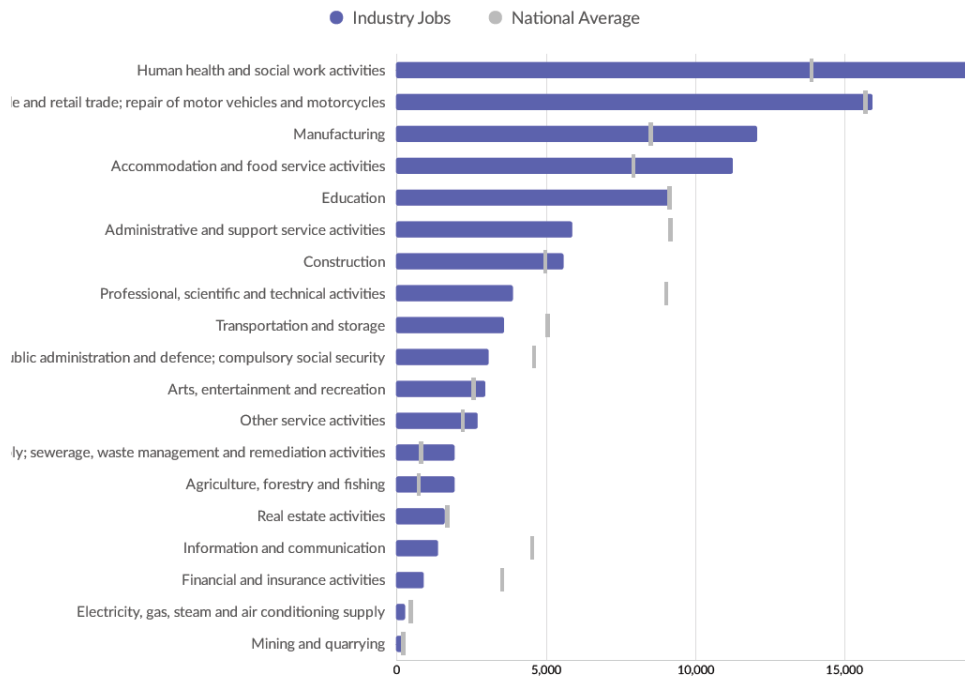


Figure 1.2: Industry share of GVA (Northumberland), Emsi 2020.

Top Industry GVA

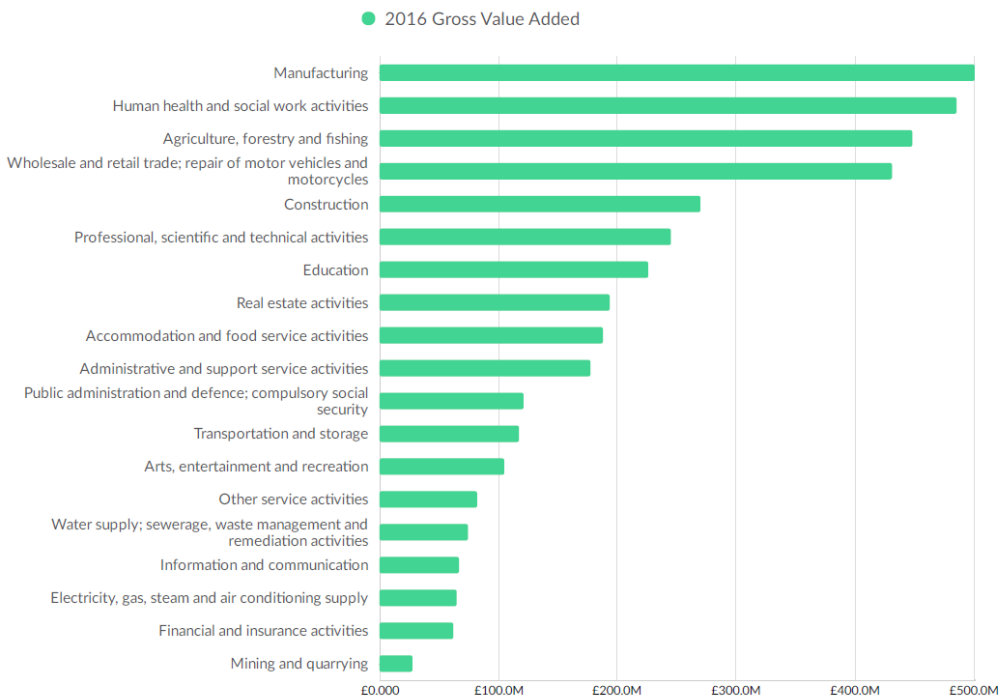


Figure 1.3: Industry share of top growing industries (Northumberland), Emsi 2020.

Top Growing Industries

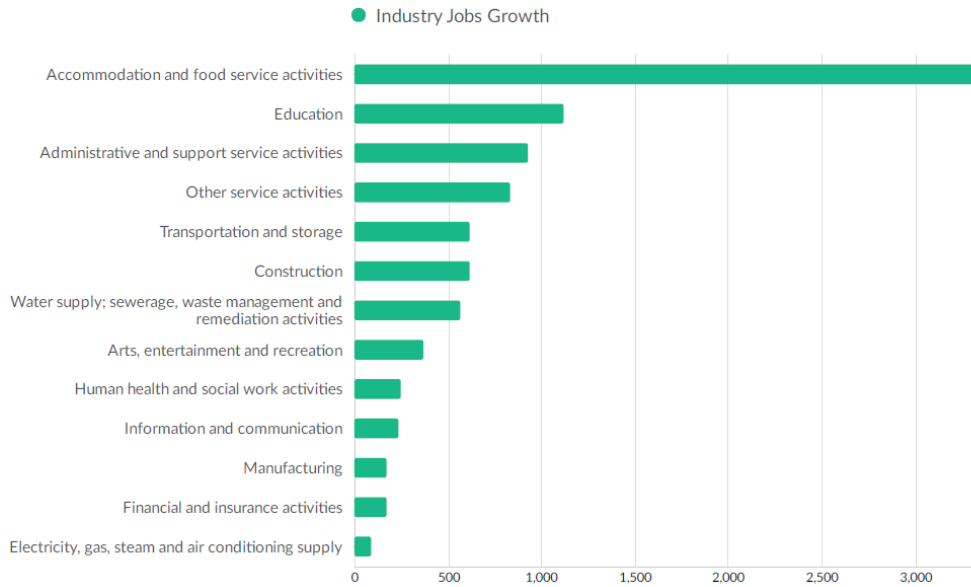
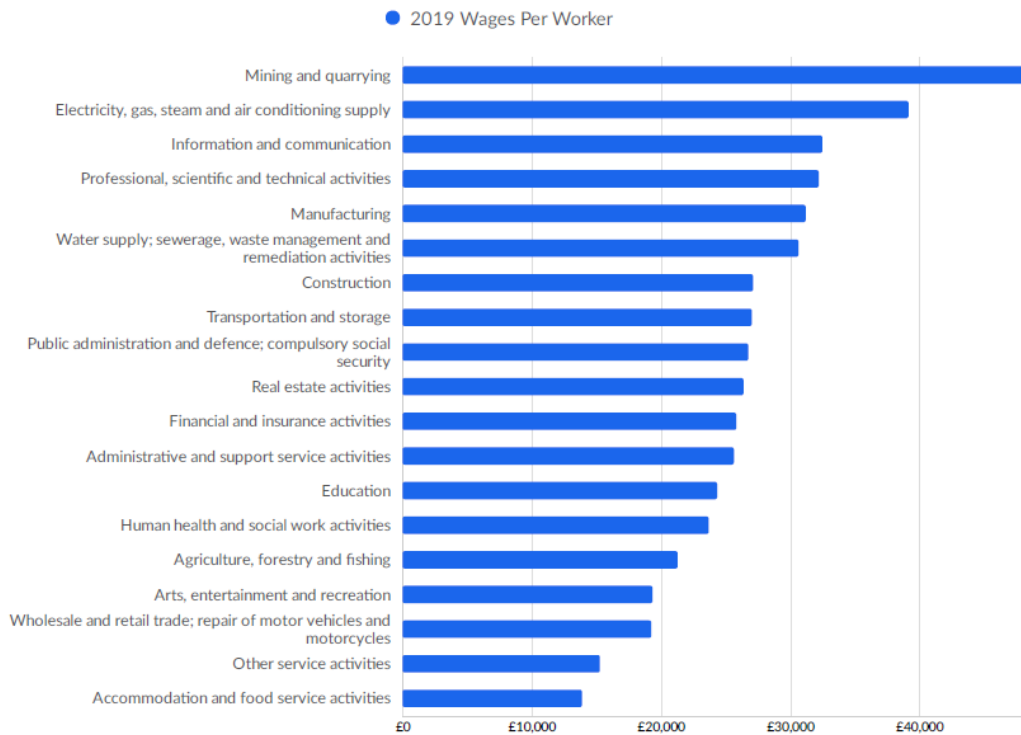


Figure 1.4: Top Industry Wages (Northumberland), Emsi 2020.

Top Industry Wages



Emsi Economic overview published 2018 correlates with Fig 1.3 data in that it indicates within Northumberland County '*Information & Communication*' is in a period of positive but not significant growth (Fig 1.5).

Figure 1.5: Change in jobs by industry (Northumberland), 2008-2024, Emsi 2018.

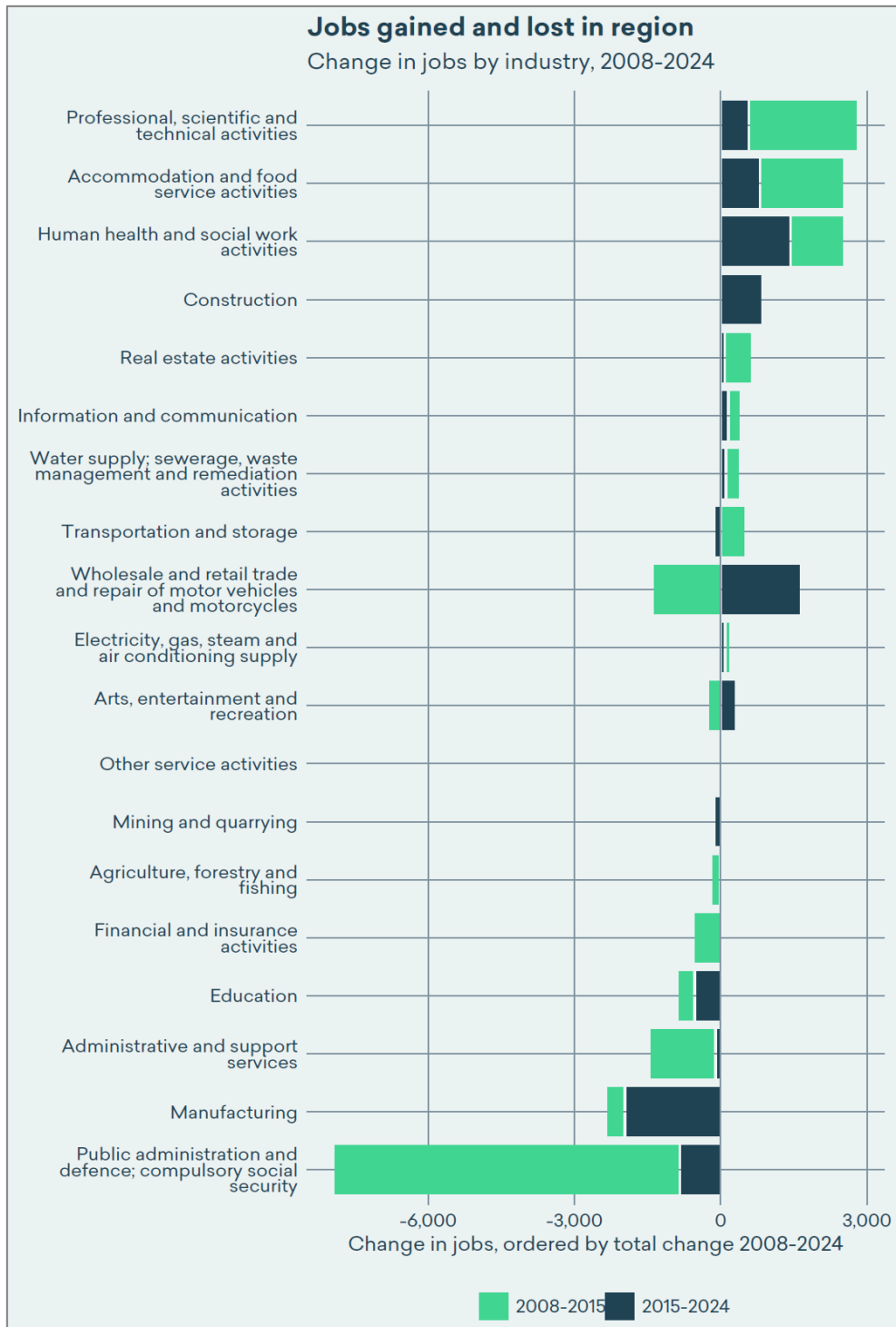
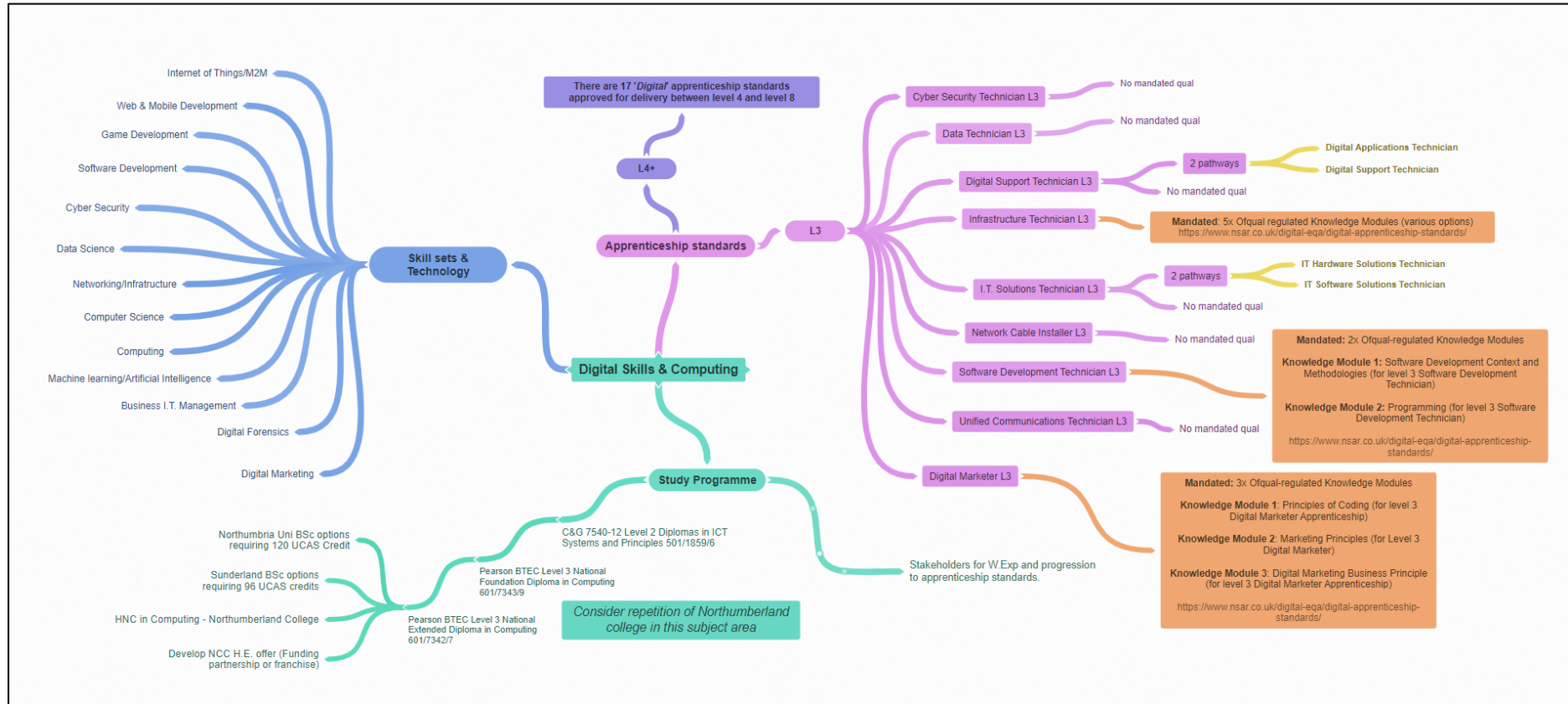


Figure 1.6: Digital curriculum intent mapping, L.S.S. Senior Manager – Educational Development & Collaborative Projects, 2020.



Next steps

- Review of report with Director - Business Development Education and Skills
 - Informal feasibility review with potential stakeholders.
 - Curriculum proposal review with potential stakeholders.
 - Staffing review with Learning & Skills Service.
 - Resources review with Learning & Skills Service.
 - Campus review with Learning & Skills Service.
 - Review of county geography and learner access obstacles.
 - Campus concept review with Property Services.
 - Business planning.
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Key Issues

- Assessment of campus facilities and space utilisation to be able to determine capital investment.
 - Presentation of a capital investment plan and an initial business operating plan.
 - Recruitment of staff with specialist skills against market competitiveness.
 - Securing of partnerships essential to success.
 - Securing of a work placement pool of stakeholders.
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