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The headlines in numbers

100k

104,505 students from 574 institutions in 40 Careers Hubs completed the FSQ in the 22/23 academic year

8/10

8/10 (79%) Year 11 students report understanding apprenticeships as a post-16 option, doubling from 39% of Year 7 students

67%

Year 11 students had an average career readiness score of 67%, compared to 46% for Year 7 students

8/10

By Year 11, 83% of students had a plan for their next step and 79% had support to make education and career choices

80%

80% of Year 11 students report knowing what skills employers need

x4

Students in Year 11 were four times as likely to report understanding T Levels, compared to students in Year 7

2/3

2/3 (67%) of Year 11 students felt optimistic about their future careers

41%

While students generally rate their skills positively, 41% of Year 11 students do not feel confident talking about their skills in an interview

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Reflecting their general career readiness, students' understanding of the labour market increases as they progress through secondary school. But, even from a young age, they consider how the

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The 2020/21 academic year saw the phased introduction of T Levels, a new post-16 qualification, in selected sectors and institutions. Despite starting from a lower base of understanding, we see a significant increase in the proportion of students understanding T Levels as they progress through school. 11% of students in Year 7 reported understanding the T Level route, compared to 43% of Year 11 pupils.



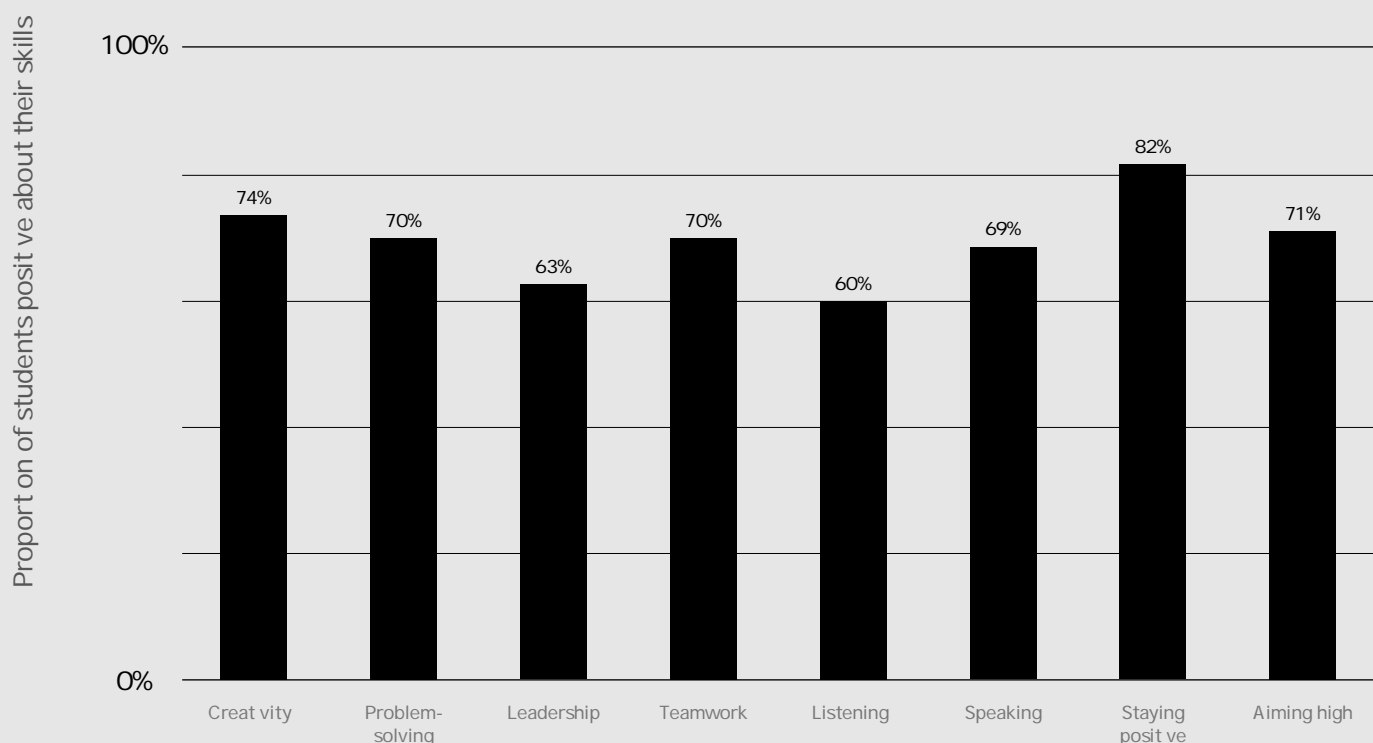
Insight 3

There is more work to be done on **transition and essential skills**

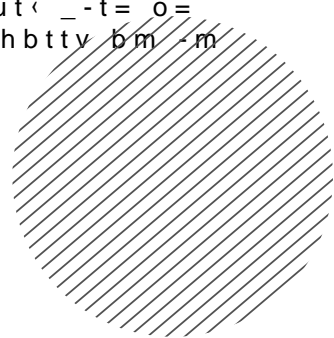
Mapped onto the Skills Builder Universal Framework, students reflected on their ability to demonstrate eight essential skills (listening, speaking, problem-solving, creativity, staying positive, aiming high, leadership and teamwork). As with last academic year, students' essential skills scores were high in Year 7 (70% average), dipped in Year 8 (59% average) and then steadily increased until Year 11 (70% average).

By Year 11, there were differences in students' confidence across the different skills (Fig. 3). Students were, on average, most confident about their ability to stay positive, with 8 in 10 (82%) Year 11 students saying they could identify the positives and negatives in an opportunity. More than 7 in 10 students were confident in their creativity (74%), problem-solving (70%) and teamwork (70%) skills and their ability to aim high (71%). Students were least confident in their listening skills, with only 60% being aware of how a speaker might exert influence through the way they speak.

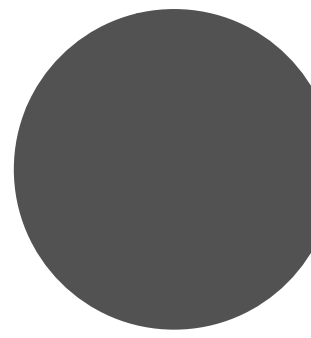
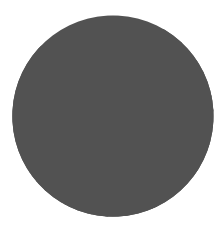
Figure 3: Proportion of students confident about their skills



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Over three-quarters (76%) of Year 11 students reported knowing how to make a good impression when applying for a course or job. But despite feeling generally optimistic about their skills and ability to make a good impression, students were less positive about the skills required for them to navigate and succeed in the transition between education levels or into employment. A significant proportion of Year 11 students said they did not feel confident talking about their skills in an interview (41%). This could be related to their understanding of recruitment and selection processes. Almost half (47%) of Year 11 students told us they didn't understand the different types of recruitment processes, such as interviews and assessment centres. Our recent Employer Standards insight briefing points¹³ to opportunities for employers to play a helpful role here.



This analysis is based on 104,505 students from 574 institutions who completed the FSQ between September 2022 and July 2023. Of these 574 institutions, the majority were mainstream secondary schools (517), with growing engagement from SEND institutions (46) and a small number of APs (9).¹⁴ Institutions showed good geographical spread, representing students in every region of the country, 40 Careers Hubs and 125 local authorities.

The sample includes the views of students aged from 11-19. Over ¼ of the responses were from Year 7 students, with students in Key Stage 3 making up the majority (62%) of respondents. Based on the student level characteristics available, the sample was broadly representative of the student population. A slightly higher number of female students completed the FSQ (48% male vs 52% female). The FSM rate of the sample (20%)¹⁵ was slightly lower than the average %FSM of the sample institutions (25%) and the national average FSM rate (24%).¹⁶ 14% of students in the sample¹⁷ were classified as having special educational needs, similar to the national average in state-funded secondary schools (12%).¹⁸ 18% of students in the sample have English as an additional language (EAL)¹⁹, reflecting the national average in state-funded secondary schools (18%).²⁰

