



# Black Country Business and Labour Market Intelligence July 2021



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## Introduction

Welcome to the July 2021 edition of the Black Country Business and Labour Market Intelligence report, produced by Black Country Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU). This is the third report of this kind produced, aiming to provide the Black Country LEP Board, other local forums and local partners with real-time intelligence on the Black Country business environment and labour market.

Using a mix of qualitative and quantitative insight, the analysis summarises key recent challenges and opportunities for Black Country businesses, while depicting the current status of local labour markets across sectors.

The production of this report reflects a collaborative local approach on business intelligence and engagement in the local area. Insight has been collated through multiple channels, including direct Growth Hub business engagement and through conversations with business groups and trade bodies (e.g., UK Metals Council, MakeUK). The Labour Market Information aspect uses data downloaded through the EMSI platform, providing live job vacancy data locally.

The intelligence provided is intended to influence policy and decision-making across relevant Black Country forums and those at the regional and national level. By utilising real time business insight and labour market data, we can more easily navigate key challenges and opportunities without the problem of data lags. This is particularly important in the context of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the UK's exit from the EU, but also as the business world looks forward to recovery out of these massive economic shocks.

This July edition provides a comprehensive live picture reflective of both qualitative business insight and relevant quantitative data. There are three key sections:

- 1) Bi-Monthly Economic Context** – providing an overview of the current economic environment locally, as Covid-19 restrictions continue to ease and the vaccine roll-out continues.
- 2) Black Country Business Intelligence Summary** – collating the challenges, issues, opportunities and trends arising from engagement with Black Country businesses in the last 2 months. Insight is collated from direct feedback from Black Country Growth Hub and in conjunction with other business group / trade body partners.
- 3) Black Country Labour Market Information** – summarises job vacancy data across the economy and within sectors, utilising the EMSI data platform. This provides a live picture of what roles Black Country businesses are looking for and the skills they require.

We are aiming to continue building on the content within this report so that it covers a wider set of data and insight collection. The Business and Labour Market Intelligence Report is a bi-monthly publication.

## Summary of July 2021 Findings

### ● Economic Context

- Following the continued easing of lockdown, key regional indicators continue to suggest an increasingly buoyant local economy: with the West Midlands Business Activity Index and Future Activity Index both still at very high levels.
- Positive figures have also been reported on regional FDI and the prospects of the manufacturing sector.
- The number of claimants, youth claimants and people furloughed continues to fall, while the Black Country has reached its population growth target (to reach 1.2m people) 13 years early.
- However, our sub-region lags behind regional and national average for claimants and unemployment, while disparities exist within the Black Country.
- New data shows the scale of business support loans provided during the pandemic: almost £5.9bn across the West Midlands.

### ● Business Intelligence

- There is a general theme of businesses looking to get back to 'business as usual', with many thinking about their growth, strategy and seeking investment/funding.
- However, businesses in the events, travel and hospitality sectors remain under huge pressure as a result of Covid as they start their recovery strategies.
- The further easing of restrictions on July 19th, including an end to social distancing, will provide a major boost to all sectors – especially those most hard hit. But as cases continue to rise, businesses will continue to be concerned about the reintroduction of restrictions and the loss of staff due to positive Covid cases.
- Various challenges still exist, such as the supply crisis in the building and construction industry, the shortage of lorry drivers and major concern associated with steel quotas.
- There is also still a concern around the impact of government schemes, for example furlough and support funding, coming to an end.
- Overall, Growth Hub support in the Black Country is trending away from Covid-based advice, which reflects the large drop in Growth Hub enquiries overall. BCGH Covid-19 enquiries fell even 86% between Q1 and Q2 2021, to just 10.
- The 2015-2020 Growth Hubs Evaluation report did show, however, that Covid-19 has raised the visibility and profiles of Growth Hubs and encouraged wider engagement.
- There are still some businesses experiencing issues because of EU Transition – owing to additional paperwork requirements that it seems many are still struggling with. These “on the ground” business issues are now coming through in trade data releases.
- Growth Hubs are dealing with more business-as-usual requests and growth support, while partners such as LEPs continue to develop and facilitate programme delivery / forums for local businesses.

### ● Labour Market Intelligence

- Demand is beginning to increase across all Black Country priority sectors – with a notable rebound in construction and advanced manufacturing.
- Demand in sectors such as environmental technologies, the public sector and retail are also showing signs of a strong rebound as the third lockdown is drawing to a close, with job postings now hitting pre-pandemic levels.
- Unsurprisingly, given the nature of the pandemic there was significant growth in demand for both health and the public sector roles in the lead up to the lockdown; particularly around nursing, care workers, social workers and teaching professionals.

- Analysis of locale shows that demand is highest (by volume) in Sandwell, followed by Dudley, Wolverhampton and Walsall.

## 1) Bi-Monthly Economic Context

Following the continued easing of lockdown, key regional indicators<sup>1</sup> continue to suggest an **increasingly buoyant local economy**:

- The West Midlands Business Activity Index slightly decreased from record highs of 65.9 in April 2021 to 65.5 in May 2021, although this is still the second sharpest increase since records began in January 1997.
- The West Midlands Future Activity Index increased from 80.2 in March 2021 to 80.8 in April 2021 – reaching the highest level since records began in mid-2012.

### West Midlands Business Activity Index

sa, >50 = growth since previous month



- The West Midlands has remained the **top location for attracting overseas investment outside London**. According to [official data from the Department for International Trade](#) (DIT), 145 FDI projects landed in the region during the 2020/21 financial year. Attracting more projects than Scotland and Northern Ireland combined, the West Midlands holds the third largest share of all UK regions outside the capital and South East areas, responsible for 9.4% of the UK's total FDI landscape.<sup>2</sup>
- Britain's manufacturers are accelerating as growth prospects **become significantly more positive for the rest of the year**, according to [Q2 Manufacturing Outlook](#), published on 14<sup>th</sup> June by Make UK and BDO.

There have also been positive signs from labour market and skills data:

- The Black Country had 63,830 claimants in May 2021, a **decrease of 2,000 claimants** (-3.0%) from April 2021.<sup>3</sup>
- In May 2021, there were 12,920 youth claimants in the Black Country, a **decrease of 3.8%** (-510) from April 2021,
- Furlough continues to decrease in the Black Country, now at 38,900 as of 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021. This reflects an 8.1% take-up of eligible employments for the scheme, compared to UK-wide of 8.2%.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> IHS Markit, Natwest PMI, June 2021

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.themanufacturer.com/articles/west-midlands-remains-uks-leading-hotspot-foreign-investment-outside-london/>

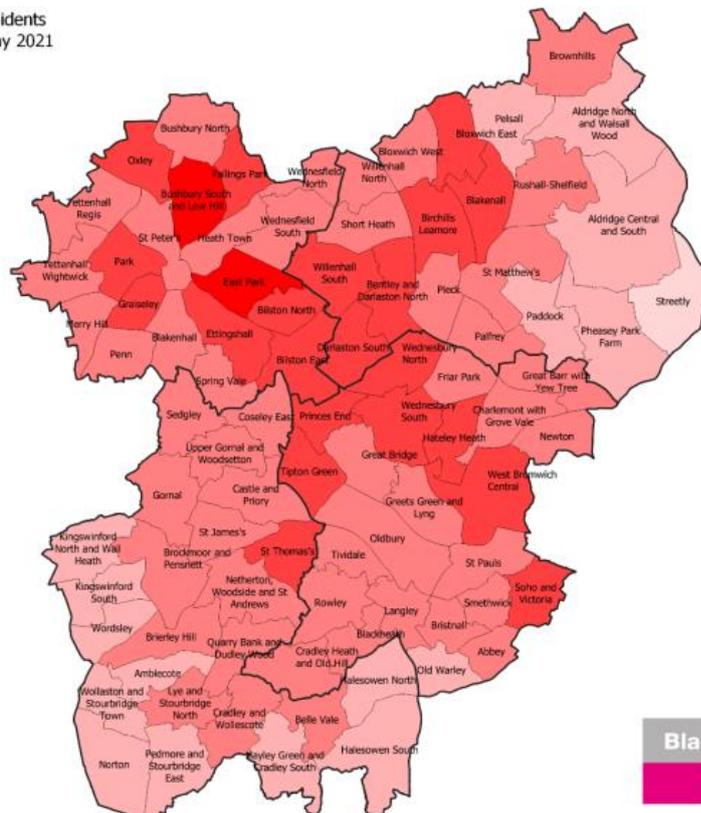
<sup>3</sup> [Black Country Claimant Count, May 2021](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Black Country CJRS Statistics, July 2021](#)

- It is also very notable that recent data confirms that the **Black Country's population growth target has been achieved 13 years early**. Mid-2020 population estimates show there are 1.2million residents in the Black Country; reaching the 2033 target.<sup>5</sup>

Despite short-term falls in joblessness, the **Black Country lags behind regional and national averages for claimants and unemployment**. There are also differences within the Black Country, creating the **need to level-up places within our sub-region as well as levelling up our sub-region with the rest of the country**.

Claimants as a % of all residents aged 16-24 per ward in May 2021



Economic Intelligence Unit

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Furthermore, the Black Country and wider West Midlands remains constrained by Covid and elements of EU Exit. Many businesses continue to be **hampered by restrictions and the economic slowdown**, despite the emergence of a recovery.

This is reflected in the sheer **amount of Covid support funding received by businesses** in the region:

- New [British Business Bank data](#) shows that **almost £5.9billion was paid to West Midlands firms under Government's Covid-19 loan schemes**. The figures show that more than 124,000 loans worth nearly £3.8 billion were provided to West Midlands firms under the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs), while more than 8,400 loans worth over £2 billion have been provided across the region under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILs).
- More widely on access to finance, other [British Business Bank](#) analysis shows that businesses in the West Midlands secured **seven per cent of UK equity investment in 2020 (£382m)**, an increase of 266% from £104m in 2019. Despite the large annual increase, the **West Midlands remains under-represented in its share of UK equity investment**, compared to the region's share of UK high growth businesses.

<sup>5</sup> [Black Country Mid-Year 2020 Population Estimates](#)

## 2) Black Country Business Intelligence Summary

Local, front-line business issues, challenges and opportunities are best understood by engaging directly with businesses in tandem with background data. The below sections summarise recent challenges and priorities raised by Black Country businesses or through representative bodies or local and national research.

### Outlook

Businesses in the Black Country have had a mixture of positive and negative areas to report in recent weeks. There is a general theme of businesses looking to get back to 'business as usual', with many thinking about their growth, strategy and seeking investment/funding.

However, businesses in the events, travel and hospitality sectors remain under huge pressure as a result of Covid as they start their recovery strategies. Additionally, travel agents have expressed continued concern of on-going government travel restriction legislation stating that **they will not survive much longer if restrictions are not lifted. Urgent clarity is required for the travel industry.**

The further easing of restrictions on July 19<sup>th</sup>, including an end to social distancing, will provide a major boost to all sectors – especially those most hard hit as above. But as cases continue to rise, **businesses will continue to be concerned about the reintroduction of restrictions and the loss of staff due to positive Covid cases.** Businesses are reporting a higher level of **temporarily losing key operational staff due to them having to self-isolate.** Impact is really felt on business operations, particularly as many of those employees traced, have tested negative.

In general though, the region's economic outlook is on an **upward trajectory**: there appear to be many more conversations about growth rather than survival. And investors are reportedly more willing to be slightly adventurous in comparison to this time last year. This is reflected in **a flurry of pipeline investment activity and business expansion**, such as from **Trebor in Wednesfield, Weatherite in West Bromwich and Crown Workspace in Wolverhampton.**

The optimism is reflected regionally: a combination of restrictions lifting, pent-up consumer demand, accumulated excess savings and a range of government incentives are expected to **spark a strong lift-off for the West Midlands economy this summer.** The latest analysis in [KPMG's UK Economic Outlook](#) says the region's **GDP is set to grow by 9.5 per cent in 2021 (up from 8.9 per cent forecast in September 2020)** and 6.4 per cent in 2022, allowing the economy to reach its pre-Covid level by the end of the year.

However, various challenges – some sector specific – have the **potential to stunt local recovery and growth.** For example:

- The **British building industry is in the midst of a [supply crisis.](#)** From roof tiles to steel, timber to insulation, paint to kitchen sinks, products are scarce and, when found, they're expensive. **Timber costs 80% more than it did in November**, steel joists are more expensive because iron ore has gone up by more than 80%. Soft wood is up by almost 100%. Aluminium is up by about a quarter. Copper is up 40%. Plastics up 60%. Paints are up by about a third. **A combination of Covid and Brexit has caused the crisis, while delays to global supplies caused by March's Suez crisis have not helped either.** They are affecting projects big and small in the Black Country and beyond.
- In a similar vein, manufacturers using steel are experiencing radically extended lead-times, product shortages and extreme cost inflation across all steel grades. The steel industry is

also deeply concerned that some import quotas may well exhaust in the current quarter, resulting in them incurring 25% safeguarding tariffs.

- The widely reported [loss of some 100,000 lorry drivers](#) as a result of the combination of Brexit and the pandemic is now causing major concerns – particularly in relation to the **frequency of collections from farms producing perishable food** products and deliveries to supermarkets. The worry is **that food shortages are set to get progressively worse over the summer**, affecting food supply to the public as well as **food & drink, agriculture and logistics supply chains**.

## COVID-19

Despite cautious optimism in the business environment, many issues surrounding Covid-19 still exist, not least the recent worry and uncertainty surrounding the Indian / Delta variant and **continually rising case numbers**. Sectors such as events/conferencing are really struggling, and while 19<sup>th</sup> July will be a huge relief, there is a **lack of belief for how long this will last and an acknowledgement that recovery will be a long process**.

There is also still a concern around the **impact of government schemes, for example furlough and support funding, coming to an end**. The concern of the lack of funding going forward is alarming to some businesses and certainly causing panic in some select industries. Growth Hub enquiries from businesses that have not received, or who have not been eligible for, COVID related grants are still trickling through. These commonly relate to:

- Taxi drivers seeking funding support.
- Businesses that are unable to access business restart grant via Local authorities due to renting premises from which they operate.
- The hospitality and events sector.
- Lack of financial support and grants.
- Lack of government bodies in the workplace slowing down planning permission committees which is causing delays in the construction industry.
- Lack of government bodies for planning permission committees' halts construction industry.

Additional Covid-related issues include:

- Challenges for junior staff and apprentices **starting positions online**
- **Capital expenditure on hold** due to uncertainty
- Issues with recruitment and retention of staff

However, the wider West Midlands region's Growth Hubs have also received **positive feedback** from businesses supported in the last 18 months. For example, one company in the region said:

*In 2020 when the pandemic was announced, not only did our company have to rapidly adapt to new ways of working but we also had to prepare our business for Brexit. The Growth Hub has been invaluable to us, especially when many other sources of information and communication were not available during lockdowns.*

*Together with the Chamber of Commerce, the Growth Hub has provided successful access to a grant scheme and a mentorship programme, as well as webinars for Brexit preparedness. We are also currently working with the Growth Hub to recruit additional staff through the Kickstart Scheme for 16 – 24 year olds, which we feel have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic.*

*All of the aforementioned has aided us to grow to meet record demand and deliver on our customer's expectations of un-interrupted supply at the time of the Brexit deadline and beyond.*

The 2015-2020 Growth Hubs Evaluation has been released and shows the uptake of Growth Hub support has increased on the last 3 years, primarily in the form of light touch engagements. This report has shown also that **Covid-19 has raised the visibility and profiles of Growth Hubs and encouraged wider engagement from new businesses who had previously not engaged with any Growth Hubs.**

Overall, Growth Hub support in the Black Country is **trending away from Covid-based advice**, which reflects the **large drop in Growth Hub enquiries overall**: there were 546 less enquiries in Q2 2021 compared to Q1 (-65%). Covid-19 enquiries fell even further, by 86% to just 10 in Q2. Funding enquiries will often reflect Covid enquiries too; this type of enquiry has also decreased sharply, by 78%.

**BGCH Number of Enquires by Nature of Enquiry – Q2 2021 and Change from Q1<sup>6</sup>**

Nature of Enquiry	Q2 2021	%	Change from Q1	% Change
Start-Ups	68	23.2%	-19	-22%
Funding	66	22.5%	-238	-78%
Development	27	9.2%	-48	-64%
General	20	6.8%	-45	-69%
Training & Skills	15	5.1%	-9	-38%
Energy Efficiency	14	4.8%	-13	-48%
Digital	13	4.4%	-9	-41%
Regulations	13	4.4%	7	117%
Innovation	11	3.8%	-11	-50%
Covid-19	10	3.4%	-59	-86%
Mentoring	8	2.7%	-52	-87%
Property	8	2.7%	-5	-38%
International Trade	7	2.4%	-19	-73%
Supply	7	2.4%	5	250%
EU Exit	6	2.0%	-31	-84%
<b>Total</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>-546</b>	<b>-65%</b>

## UK / EU Relationship

Similar issues related to the UK's trading relationship with the EU continue to be raised. These are now seemingly more like **structural issues rather than "teething" problems**. Businesses have reported:

- **Increased cost of materials and shipping** in the construction industry by circa 20%.
- **VAT complications** still causing delays in supply chains.
- Companies looking to other countries **outside the EU** due to increase in costs.
- Support required for **implementation of systems/support** to help accounting within SME's to adhere to the new EU guidelines and rules.
- Availability of **grant incentives to cover the cost importing and exporting**.

Primarily, there are still some businesses experiencing issues because of EU Transition – owing to **additional paperwork requirements** that it seems many are still struggling with. Manufacturing and construction sector business are reporting continued **shortage of materials and increase in costs**,

<sup>6</sup> Black Country Growth Hub CRM Data

which is proving a major challenge for them. These “on the ground” business issues, whether they be caused by EU Exit or Covid, are now coming through in trade data releases. For example:

- New export data reflects the initial impact of EU Exit on trade in goods. [ONS](#) have reported that **total trade in goods with EU countries decreased by 23.1% and with non-EU countries decreased by 0.8% comparing Quarter 1 2021 with Quarter 1 2018.**
- [Research on the impact of Brexit on service trade](#) has found that following the **UK’s departure from the EU more than £100bn in service exports have switch to Ireland.**
- **UK food and drink exports to the European Union almost halved in the first three months of the year**, compared to the same period in 2020. [The Food and Drink Federation \(FDF\) figures](#) show EU sales dropped by 47%.

While the data and anecdotal evidence points towards ongoing problems with trade, **Brexit-related enquiries to Black Country Growth Hub remain low** – a very small proportion of all (2%).

## Enquiries

More companies are now seeking **business as usual and growth support**. In particular, these enquiries are commonly related to:

- **Start-ups** – this was the most common BCGH enquiry in Q2 2021, reflecting increased demand for starting a business throughout the pandemic.
- **Digital** – A number of digital and technical innovation projects seeking support from Growth Hub advisors.
- **Employment** – Feedback from businesses that there are a large number of career opportunities and available jobs although it is a candidate driven market.
- **Grants (Non-COVID)** – a number of ongoing grant projects across a wide range of businesses across various industries. These are fed into partner programmes, with projects including machinery purchases, property renovations, green initiatives and product development.
- **Innovation** – A number of businesses looking to step up their Innovation activities to develop new technologies, processes and products

## Programmes and Support

Several **new Black Country and West Midlands business forums** have been launched recently, or are due to launch in the coming weeks:

- [Black Country Social Enterprise Taskforce](#): The Black Country LEP is seeking expressions of interest to be part of a newly established Social Enterprise Taskforce. The role of the Taskforce is to act as the leading strategic support body to the LEP, providing a forum for the engagement of employers, community groups, charities, education providers and liaison with public sector partners to develop, formulate and co-ordinate policies and proposals relating to the Black Country’s social enterprise sector.
- [West Midlands Metals & Materials Forum](#): The Black Country LEP has been convening a great deal of information via industry bodies for the Metals & Materials sector plan in the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy. A forum has now been setup to steer the development of that work. It will be an industry-led forum, with a private-sector chair and the majority of representation from the private sector.
- [The Innovation Alliance's Innovative Manufacturing Working Group](#), a sister group to the Low Carbon Working Group, launched on 29 June with a focus on making the most of the manufacturing innovation opportunities in the West Midlands. The launch brought together

manufacturers, academic partners and funding bodies to look at how to promote and support manufacturing innovation across the region.

- **Made Smarter** has [launched a £1.9 million digital adoption push to drive growth in West Midlands](#) manufacturing and engineering SMEs and help them boost productivity. Digital experts will provide advice to businesses on how to **switch to advanced and automated technologies** as well as working to improve employees' overall digital skills.

## New Investment Deals and Opportunities

NEW INVESTMENT, DEALS AND OPPORTUNITIES			
COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	DETAIL & SOURCE
<a href="#">Avara Foods</a>	Brierley Hill	Manufacturing	Avara Foods, a food company that supplies supermarkets and restaurant chains, is recruiting 130 full time staff in the Black Country. The company has positions open across all operations at its site in Brierley Hill, including production, technical, engineering, planning and stores.
<a href="#">Zero Point Eight</a>	Dudley	Manufacturing	A furniture manufacturer, Zero Point Eight, has secured new £120,000 funding to kickstart its recovery plans and expand its interior fit-out division. The loan was secured through the Midlands Engine Investment Fund.
<a href="#">Crown Workspace</a>	Wolverhampton	Construction	A workspace solutions firm is targeting regional growth after opening a new site in Wolverhampton. Crown Workspace - which specialises in services such as commercial relocations and refurbishment, interior fit-out and design and office furniture, storage and IT re-sale - has moved into a 30,000 sq ft warehouse at the Pantheon Park development.
<a href="#">DS Smith</a>	Sandwell	Logistics	A packaging group with a major site in the Black Country has committed to reach net zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050.
<a href="#">Trebor Developments</a>	Wednesfield, Black Country	Development	New regeneration plans have been unveiled to create an industrial park in the Black Country. The application site houses a Tata Steel service centre but will be renamed Revolution Park and contain a range of industrial and logistics units from 25,000 sq. ft to 200,000 sq. ft.
<a href="#">Job Centre</a>	Dudley	DWP	A new job centre is set to open in Dudley town centre under plans to help the town bounce back from the Covid pandemic. It forms part of a government initiative aimed at improving job opportunities in areas of the UK that have been worst hit by coronavirus.

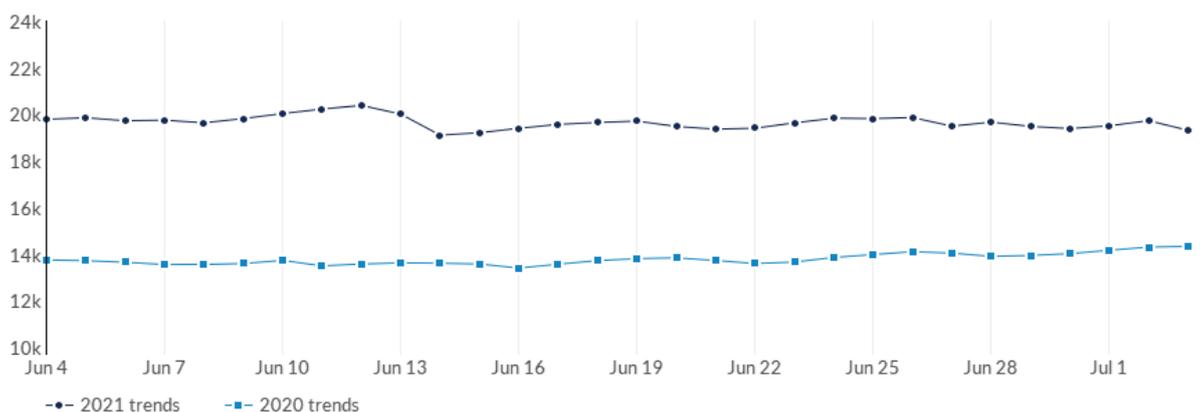
### 3) Black Country Labour Market Information

Using the EMSI data platform, this section summarises job vacancy data across the whole economy and within sectors. This provides a live picture of what roles Black Country businesses are looking for and the skills they require.

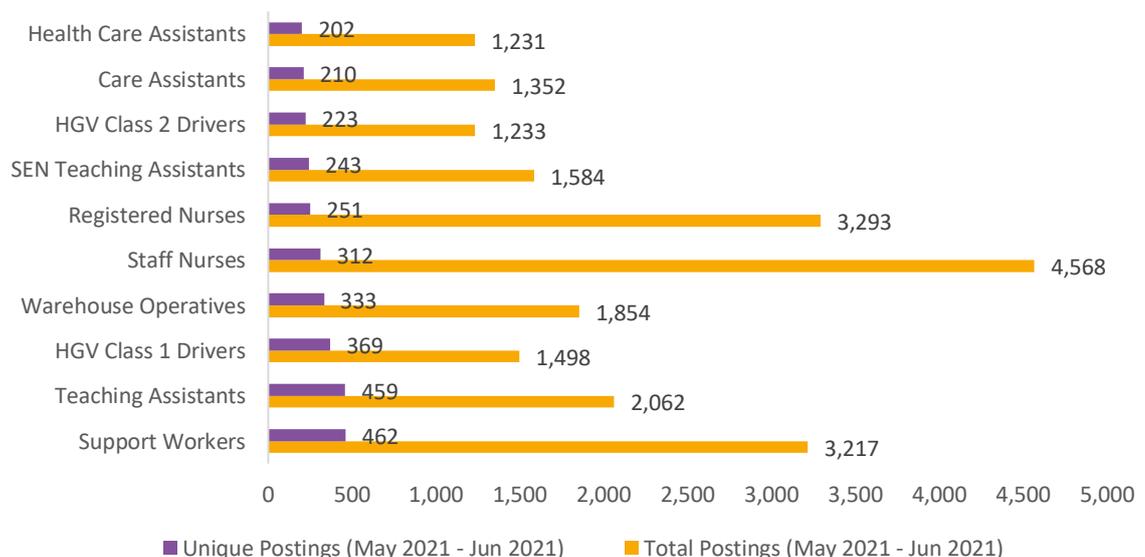
#### Sector Demand (May 2021 – June 2021)

- Demand is beginning to increase across all Black Country priority sectors – with a notable rebound in construction and advanced manufacturing.
- Demand in sectors such as environmental technologies, the public sector and retail are also showing signs of a strong rebound as the third lockdown is drawing to a close, with job postings now hitting pre-pandemic levels.
- Unsurprisingly, given the nature of the pandemic there was significant growth in demand both health and the public sector roles in the lead up to the lockdown; particularly around nursing, care workers, social workers and teaching professionals.
- Analysis of locale shows that demand is highest (by volume) in Sandwell, followed by Dudley, Wolverhampton and Walsall.

May to June Job Posting Trends

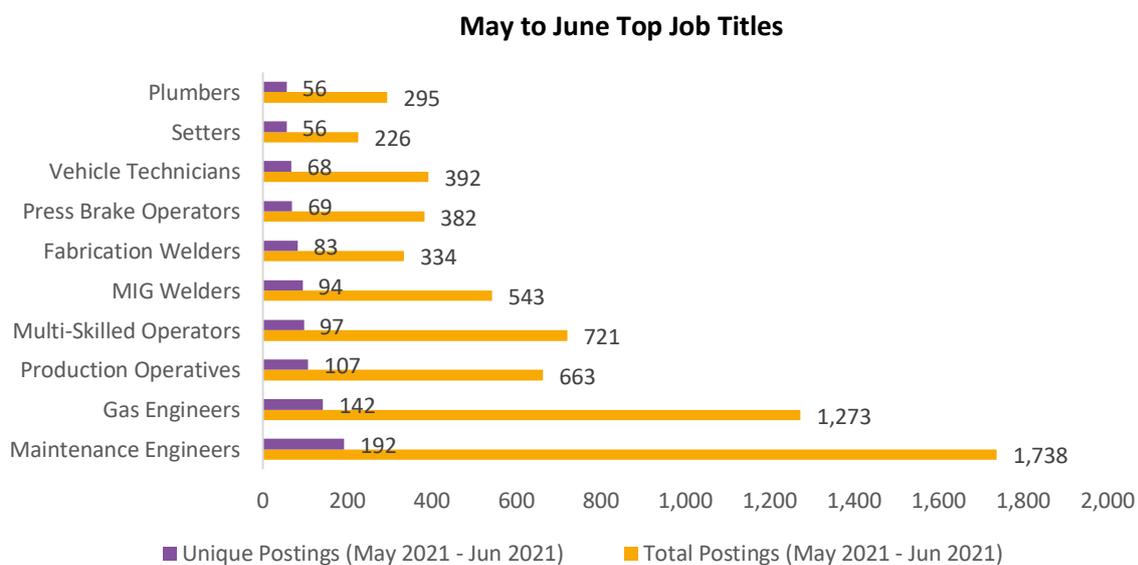
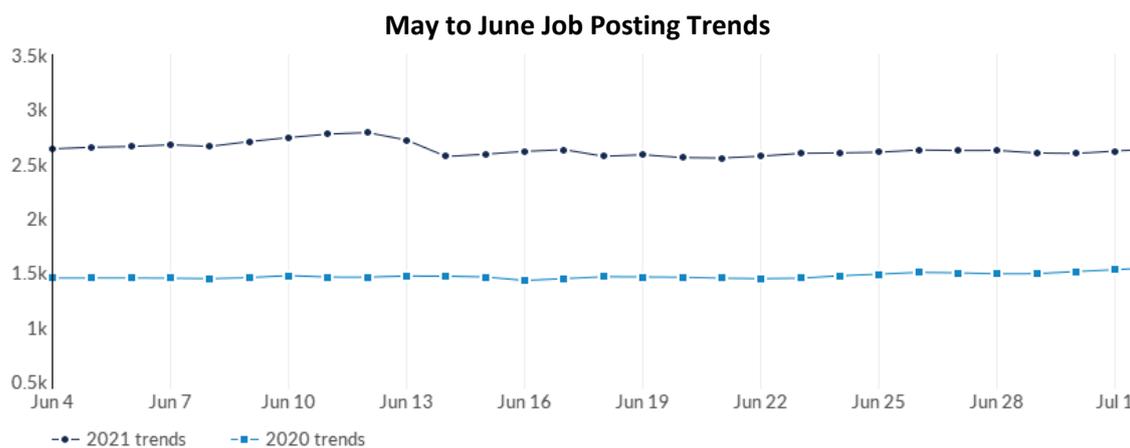


May to June Top Job Titles



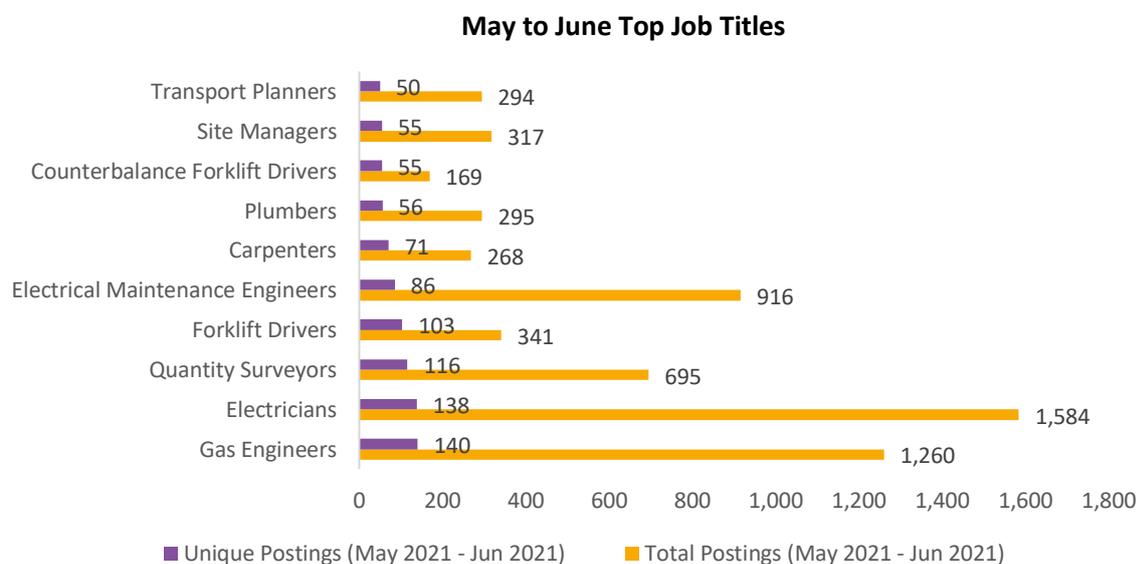
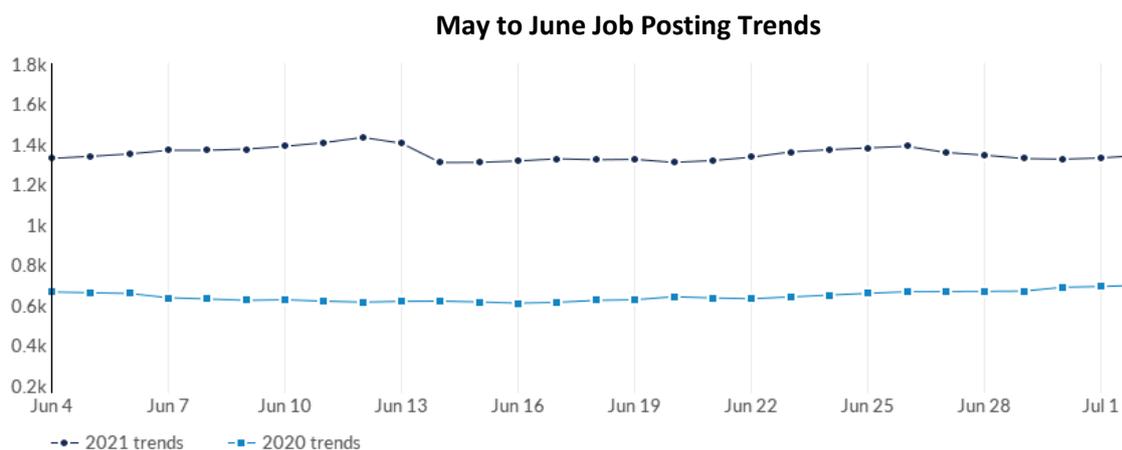
## Advanced Manufacturing:

- In May to June 2021 there were 29,985 total job postings and 5,136 unique job postings in the Advanced Manufacturing sector across the Black Country.
- The posting intensity was 6-to-1, matching the regional posting intensity of 6-to-1 suggesting that employers are putting in average towards hiring for positions.
- The average posting duration was 32 days compared to a regional average of 31 days.
- The average salary was £28,600.
- Job postings are now 62% above levels seen this time last year as the sector had rebounded well since the first lockdown last year.
- Demand via job postings was highest for metal working production and maintenance fitters' occupations at 7,625 total postings in the past month and a posting intensity of 7-to-1, but the largest effort was put into hiring for design and development engineers at 1,435 postings but a posting intensity of 9-to-1.
- The job title most sought after was for maintenance engineers with 1,738 total postings and a posting intensity of 9-to-1.
- Metal inert gas welding, mechanical engineering and engineering drawings were the top hard skills requested, with MIG welding having the largest skills gap at present, occurring in 6% of all postings but not in any workforce profiles.
- Communications, management and operations were the 3 top common skills requested.



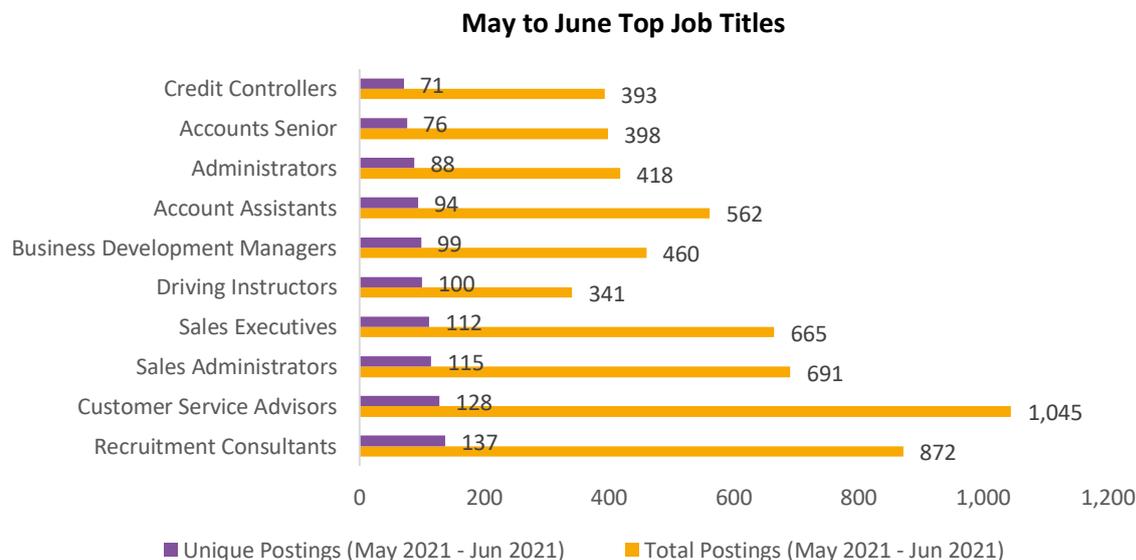
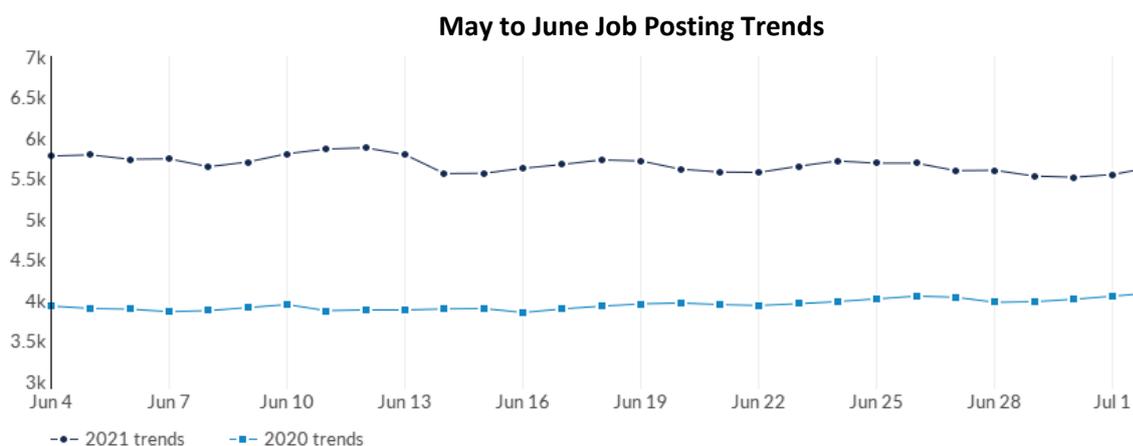
## Building Technologies:

- In May to June 2021 there were 15,255 total job postings and 2,690 unique job postings in the Building Technologies sector across the Black Country.
- The posting intensity was 6-to-1, matching the regional posting intensity of 6-to-1 suggesting that employers are putting in average towards hiring for positions.
- The average posting duration was 32 days compared to a regional average of 31 days.
- The average salary was £32,400.
- Job postings are now 85% above levels seen this time last year as the sector had rebounded since the first lockdown last year.
- Demand via job postings was highest for electricians and electrical fitters' occupations at 4,185 total postings in the past month and a posting intensity of 9-to-1.
- The job title most sought after was for gas engineers with 1,260 total postings and a posting intensity of 9-to-1. The highest posting intensity was for electricians and electrical maintenance engineers, both with an 11-to-1 posting intensity.
- Carpentry, plumbing and public liability were the top hard skills requested, with carpentry having the largest skills gap at present, occurring in 7% of all postings and 2% of workforce profiles.
- Management, communications and customer service were the 3 top common skills requested.



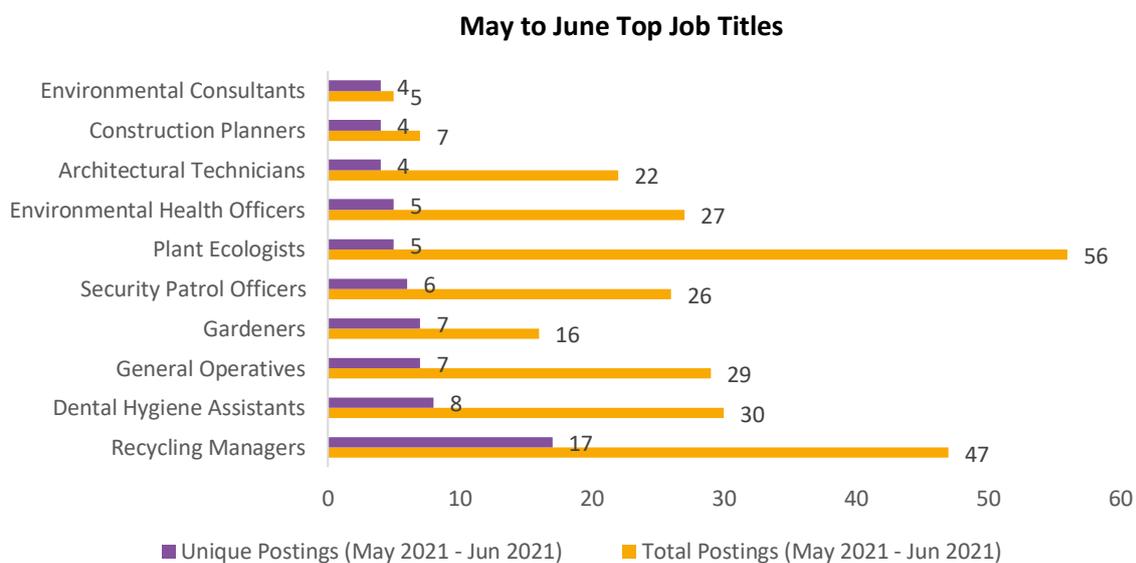
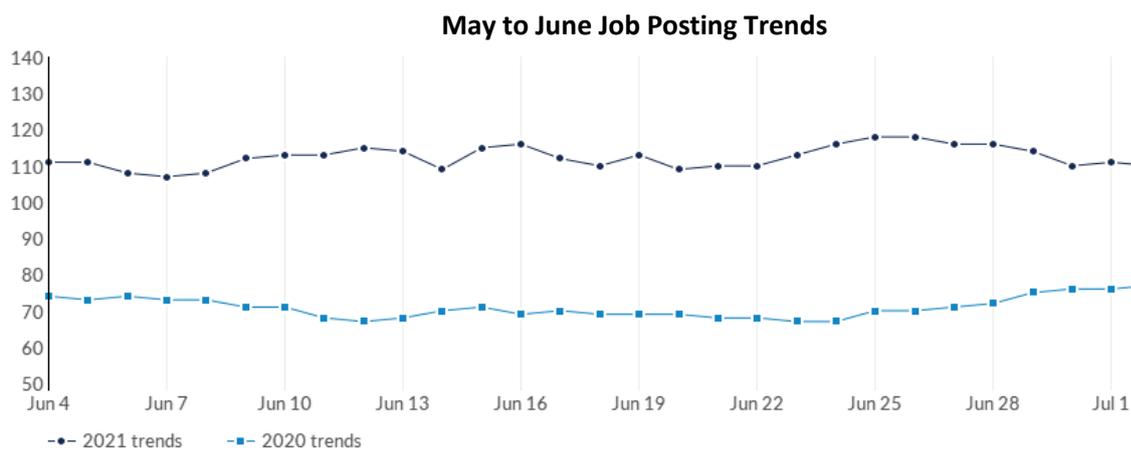
## Business Services:

- In May to June 2021 there were 64,305 total job postings and 12,082 unique job postings in the Business Services sector across the Black Country.
- The posting intensity was 5-to-1, slightly lower than the regional posting intensity of 6-to-1 suggesting that employers are putting in average towards hiring for positions.
- The average posting duration was 29 days compared to a regional average of 31 days.
- The average salary was £26,600.
- Job postings are now 35% above levels seen this time last year as the sector had rebounded since the first lockdown last year.
- Demand via job postings was highest for sales accounts and business development managers at 4,133 total postings in the past month and a posting intensity of 4-to-1, but the largest effort was put into hiring for finance and investment analysts and advisers at 2,712 postings, and also customer service occupations at 2,746 postings but a posting intensity of 7-to-1.
- The job title most sought after was for recruitment consultants with 872 total postings and a posting intensity of 6-to-1. Customer service advisors had 1,045 total postings and an 8-to-1 posting intensity.
- Accounting, auditing and business development were the top hard skills requested, with accounting having the largest skills gap at present, occurring in 7% of all postings but only in 4% of workforce profiles.
- Communications, sales and management were the 3 top common skills requested.



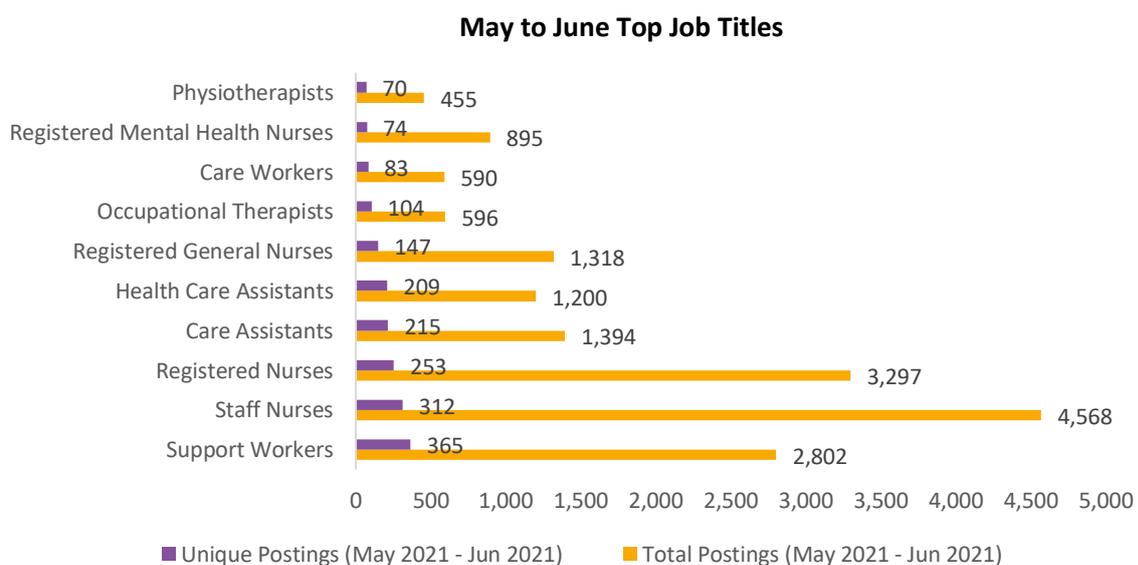
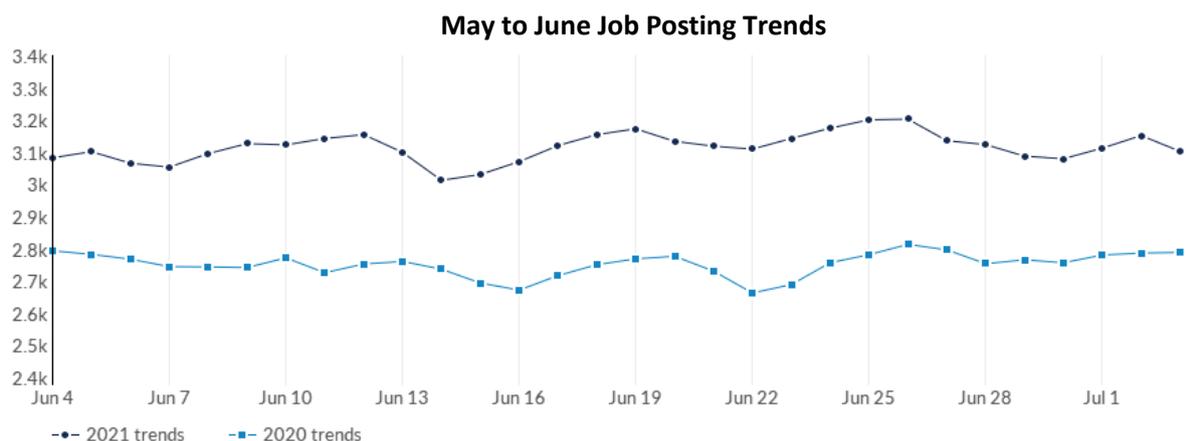
## Environmental Technologies:

- In May to June 2021 there were 1,034 total job postings and 240 unique job postings in the Environmental Technologies sector across the Black Country.
- The posting intensity was 4-to-1, lower than the regional posting intensity of 6-to-1 suggesting that employers are not putting in average towards hiring for positions.
- The average posting duration was 30 days compared to a regional average of 31 days.
- The average salary was £23,000.
- Job postings are now 43% above levels seen this time last year, suggesting the sector has rebounded well since the first lockdown last year.
- Demand via job postings was highest for refuse and salvage occupations at 265 total postings in the past month and a posting intensity of 4-to-1, but the largest effort was put into hiring for conservation professionals at 96 postings but a posting intensity of 10-to-1.
- The job title most sought after was for recycling managers with 47 total postings and a posting intensity of 3-to-1. But the job title with the highest posting intensity was for plant ecologists at 11-to-1 with a total of 56 job postings.
- Risk analysis, manual handling and landscaping were the top sought after hard skills in the sector, with risk analysis having the largest skills gap at present, occurring in 8% of all postings and only 3% of workforce profiles.
- Communications, management and planning were the 3 top common skills requested.



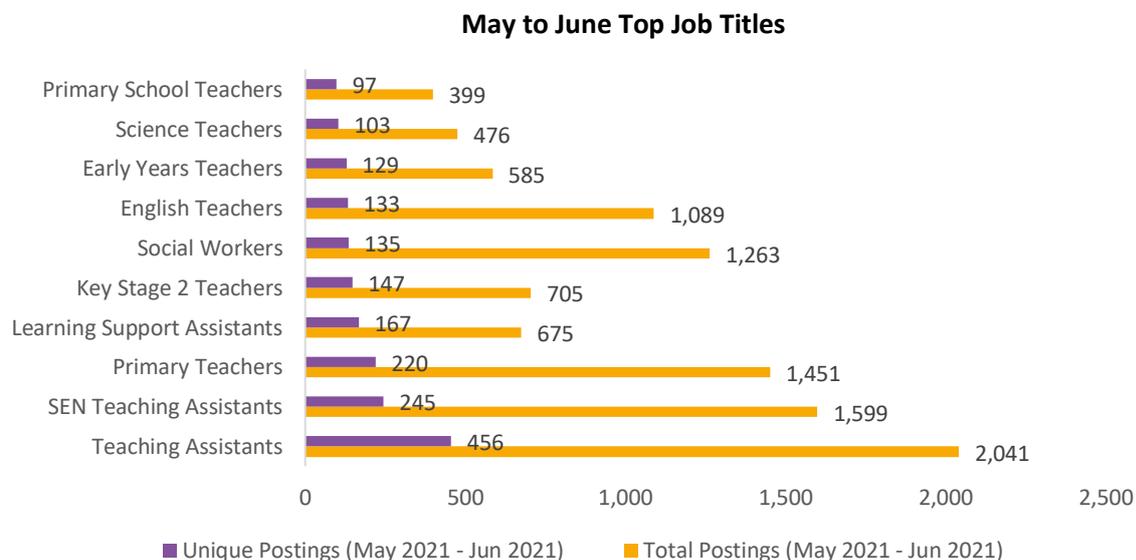
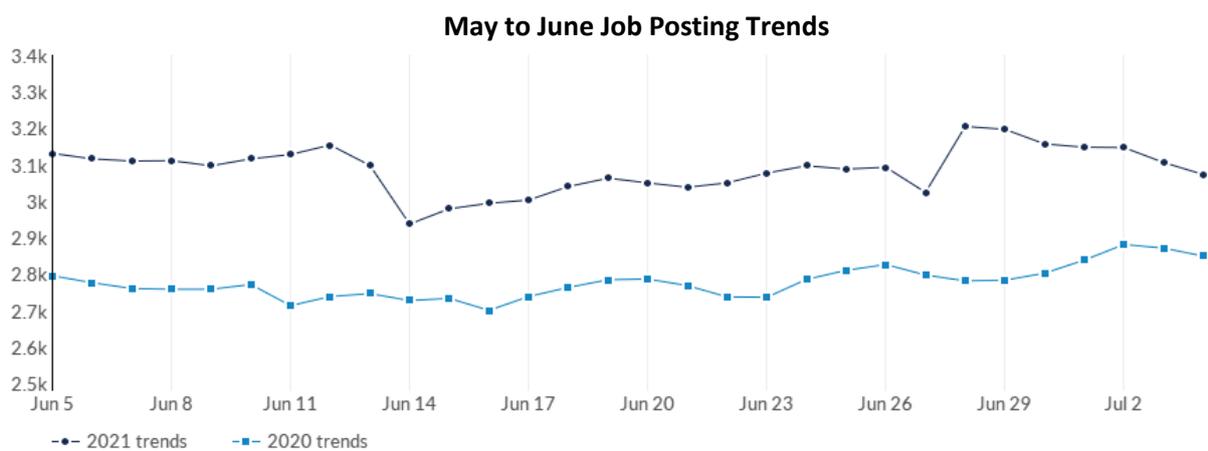
## Health and Care:

- In May to June 2021 there were 45,616 total job postings and 6,015 unique job postings in the Health sector across the Black Country.
- The posting intensity was 7-to-1, higher than the regional posting intensity of 6-to-1 suggesting that employers are putting in above average towards hiring for positions.
- The average posting duration was 32 days compared to a regional average of 31 days.
- The average salary was £34,000.
- Job postings are now 11% above levels seen this time last year as the sector continues to have high demand for roles as the pandemic continues.
- Demand via job postings was highest for nursing occupations at 23,296 total postings in the past month and a posting intensity of 10-to-1.
- The job title most sought after was for support workers with 2,802 total postings and a posting intensity of 8-to-1. The job title most in demand was registered nurses at 3,297 total job postings and a posting intensity of 13-to-1.
- Nursing, mental health and learning disabilities were the top hard skills requested, with nursing having the largest skills gap at present, occurring in 22% of all postings and in 3% of workforce profiles.
- Communications, management and enthusiasm were the 3 top common skills requested.



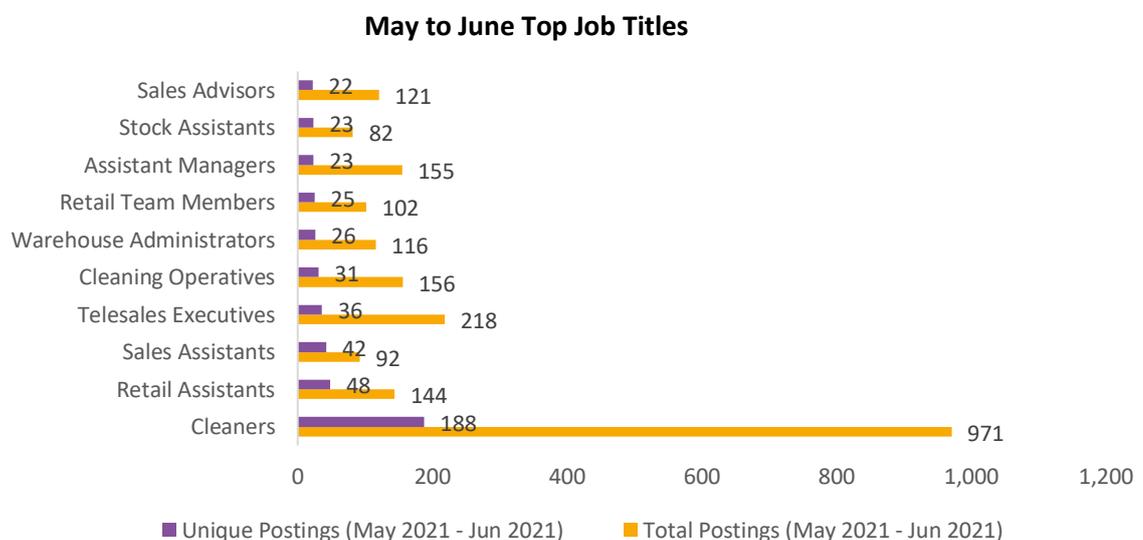
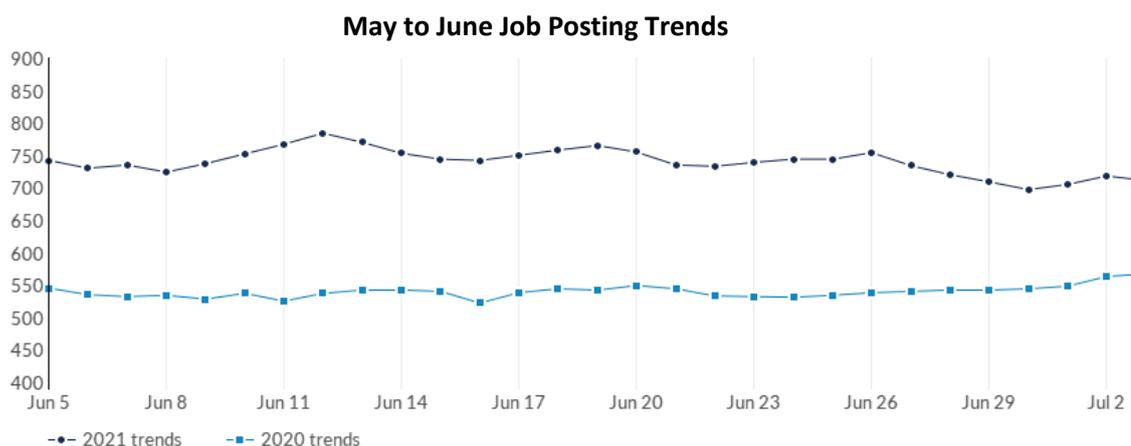
## Public Sector including Education:

- In May to June 2021 there were 33,505 total job postings and 6,389 unique job postings in the Public Sector across the Black Country.
- The posting intensity was 5-to-1, slightly lower than the regional posting intensity of 6-to-1 suggesting that employers are putting in average towards hiring for positions.
- The average posting duration was 29 days compared to a regional average of 31 days.
- The average salary was £24,500.
- Job postings are now 8% above levels seen this time last year as the sector rebounded above levels seen before the pandemic.
- Demand via job postings was highest for primary and nursery education teaching professionals' occupations at 8,726 total postings in the past month and a posting intensity of 5-to-1, but the largest effort was put into hiring for teaching and other educational professionals at 3,321 total postings and a posting intensity of 11-to-1.
- The job title most sought after was for teaching assistants with 2,041 total postings and a posting intensity of 4-to-1. The highest posting intensity was for social workers at 9-to-1 and 1,263 total posts.
- Working with children, autism spectrum disorders and social work were the top hard skills requested, with working with children having the largest skills gap at present, occurring in 11% of all postings but in 0% of workforce profiles.
- Teaching, enthusiasm and communications were the 3 top common skills requested.



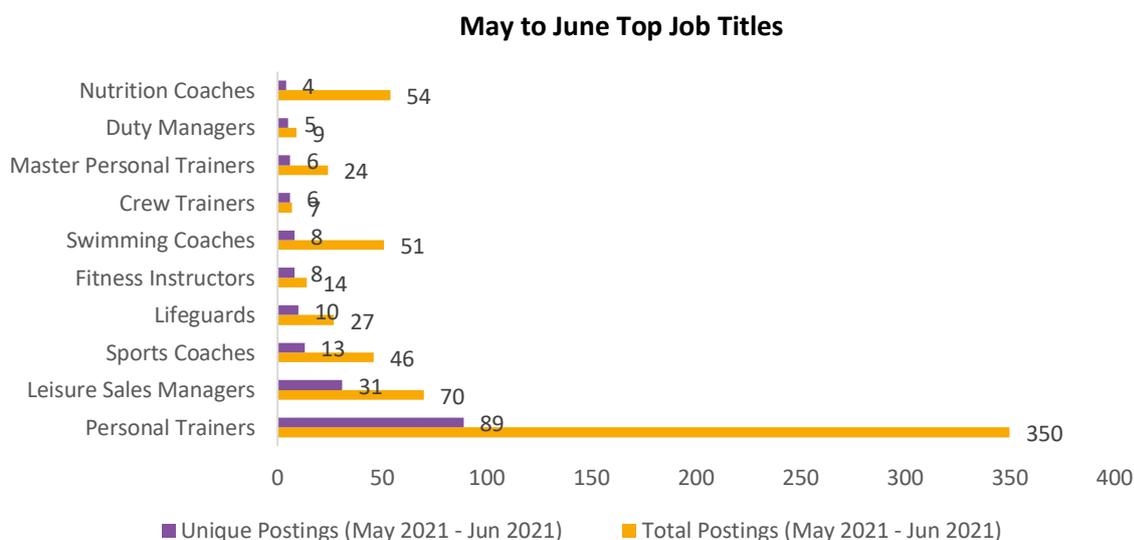
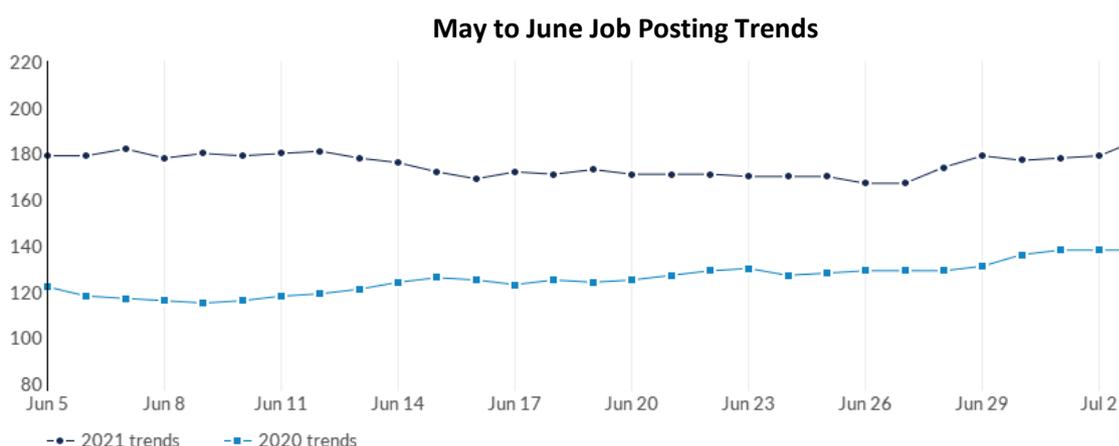
## Retail:

- In May to June 2021 there were 7,051 total job postings and 1,653 unique job postings in the Retail Sector across the Black Country.
- The posting intensity was 4-to-1, lower than the regional posting intensity of 6-to-1 suggesting that employers are putting in slightly less than average effort towards hiring for positions.
- The average posting duration was 23 days compared to a regional average of 31 days.
- The average salary was £19,600.
- Job postings are now 24% above levels seen this time last year as the sector has rebounded to levels seen before the pandemic.
- Demand via job postings was highest for cleaners and domestics occupations at 1,949 total postings in the past month and a posting intensity of 4-to-1, but the largest effort was put into hiring for managers and directors in retail and wholesale at 777 total postings and a posting intensity of 6-to-1.
- The job title most sought after was for cleaners with 971 total postings and a posting intensity of 5-to-1. The highest posting intensity was for assistant managers at 7-to-1 at 155 total postings.
- Selling techniques, warehousing and mopping were the top hard skills requested, with selling techniques having the largest skills gap at present, occurring in 8% of all postings but only in 2% of workforce profiles.
- Sales, customer service and communications were the 3 top common skills requested.



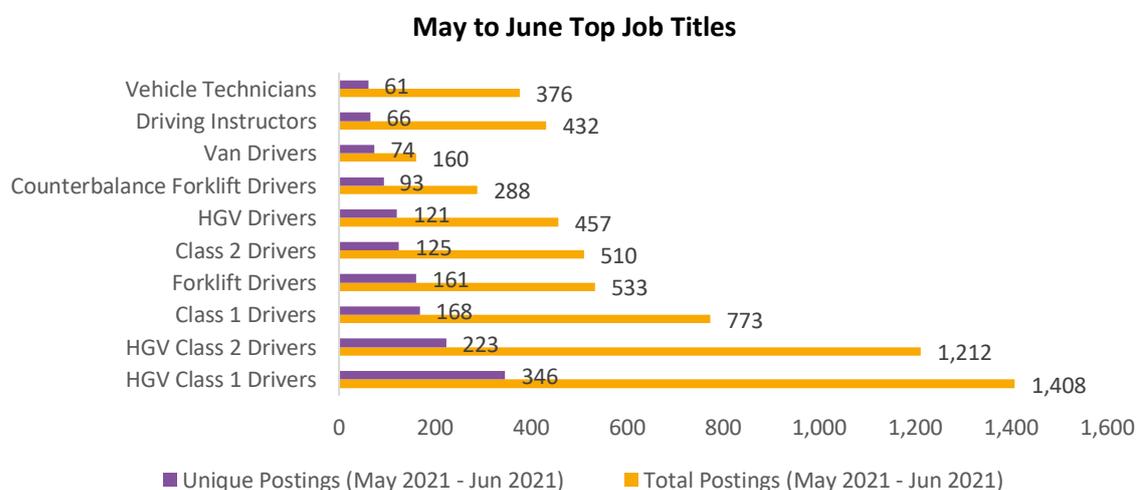
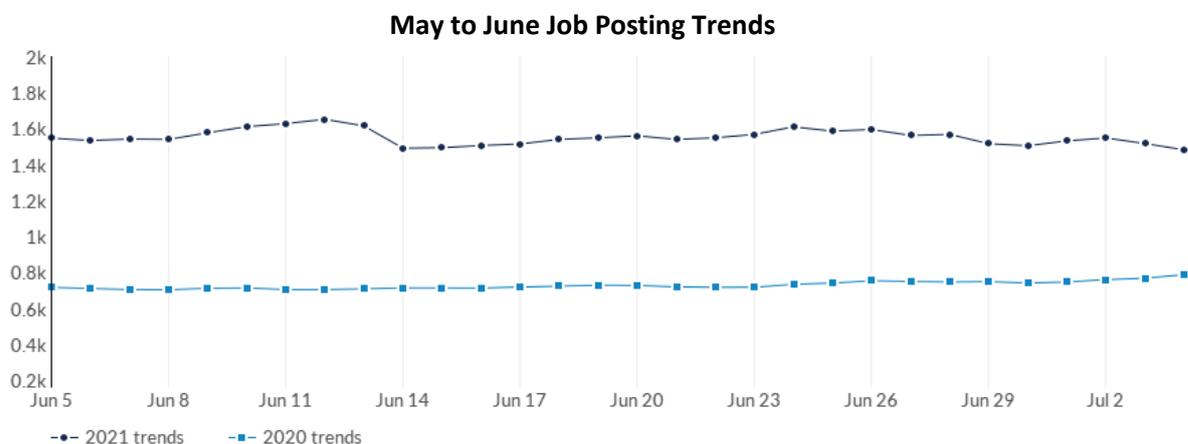
## Sports:

- In May to June 2021 there were 1,107 total job postings and 165 unique job postings in the Sports Sector across the Black Country.
- The posting intensity was 4-to-1, lower than the regional posting intensity of 6-to-1 suggesting that employers are putting in less than average effort towards hiring for positions.
- The average posting duration was 33 days compared to a regional average of 31 days.
- The average salary was £21,000.
- Job postings are now 33% above levels seen this time last year as the sector has now recovered since the pandemic began.
- Demand via job postings was highest for fitness instructors' occupations at 743 total postings in the past month and a posting intensity of 4-to-1.
- The job title most sought after was for personal trainers with 350 total postings and a posting intensity of 4-to-1. The highest posting intensity was for nutrition coaches at 14-to-1 and 54 total postings.
- Anatomy, physiology and instructing were the top hard skills requested, with anatomy having the largest skills gap at present, occurring in 25% of all postings but appearing in no workforce profiles.
- Enthusiasm, customer service and first aid were the 3 top common skills requested.



## Transport Technologies:

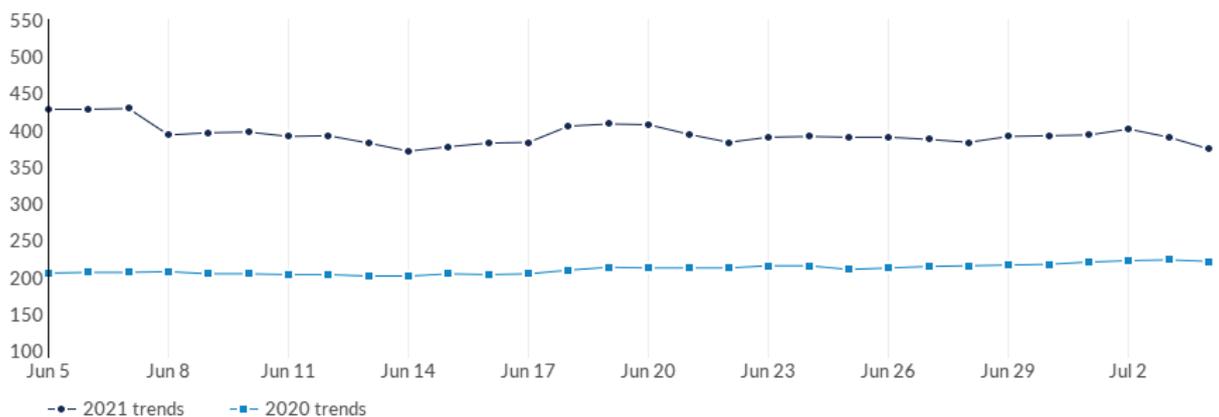
- In May to June 2021 there were 15,024 total job postings and 3,281 unique job postings in the Transport Technologies Sector across the Black Country.
- The posting intensity was 5-to-1, slightly lower than the regional posting intensity of 6-to-1 suggesting that employers are putting in slightly less than average effort towards hiring for positions.
- The average posting duration was 32 days compared to a regional average of 31 days.
- The average salary was £25,700 an hour.
- Job postings are now 88% above levels seen this time last year as the sector has rebounded to levels seen before the pandemic.
- Demand via job postings was highest for van driving occupations at 6,077 total postings in the past month and a posting intensity of 5-to-1, but the largest effort was put into hiring for vehicle and parts salespersons and advisers at 567 total postings and a posting intensity of 8-to-1.
- The job title most sought after was for HGV Class 1 drivers with 1,408 total postings and a posting intensity of 4-to-1. The highest posting intensity was for driving instructors at 7-to-1 and 432 total postings.
- Warehousing, trunking and mechanics were the top hard skills requested, with warehousing having the largest skills gap at present, occurring in 10% of all postings but only in 3% of workforce profiles.
- Customer service, communications and loading and unloading were the 3 top common skills requested.



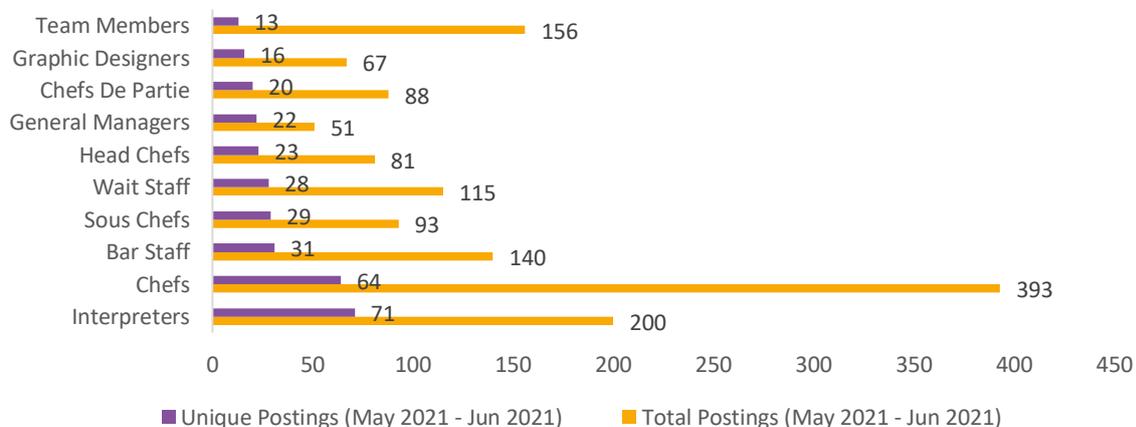
## Visitor Economy:

- In May to June 2021 there were 4,861 total job postings and 909 unique job postings in the Visitor Economy Sector across the Black Country.
- The posting intensity was 5-to-1, below the regional posting intensity of 6-to-1 suggesting that employers are putting in below average effort towards hiring for positions.
- The average posting duration was 32 days compared to a regional average of 31 days.
- The average salary was £22,800.
- Job postings are now 69% above levels seen this time last year as the sector has rebounded to levels seen before the pandemic.
- Demand via job postings was highest for chef occupations at 1,537 total postings in the past month and a posting intensity of 5-to-1, but the largest effort was put into hiring for catering and bar managers at 811 total postings and a posting intensity of 11-to-1.
- The job title most sought after was for interpreters with 200 total postings and a posting intensity of 3-to-1. The highest posting intensity was for team members at 12-to-1 and 156 total postings.
- Restaurant operation, cooking and social support were the top hard skills requested, with restaurant operation having the largest skills gap at present, occurring in 16% of all postings but only in 2% of workforce profiles.
- Communications, enthusiasm and customer service were the 3 top common skills requested.

**May to June Job Posting Trends**



**May to June Top Job Titles**





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