



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Bedford Borough's Labour Market:

Q2 2025/26



Bedford Borough's Economy: Key Statistics

82,000 employee jobs



Over 8,300 businesses

Key Sectors:

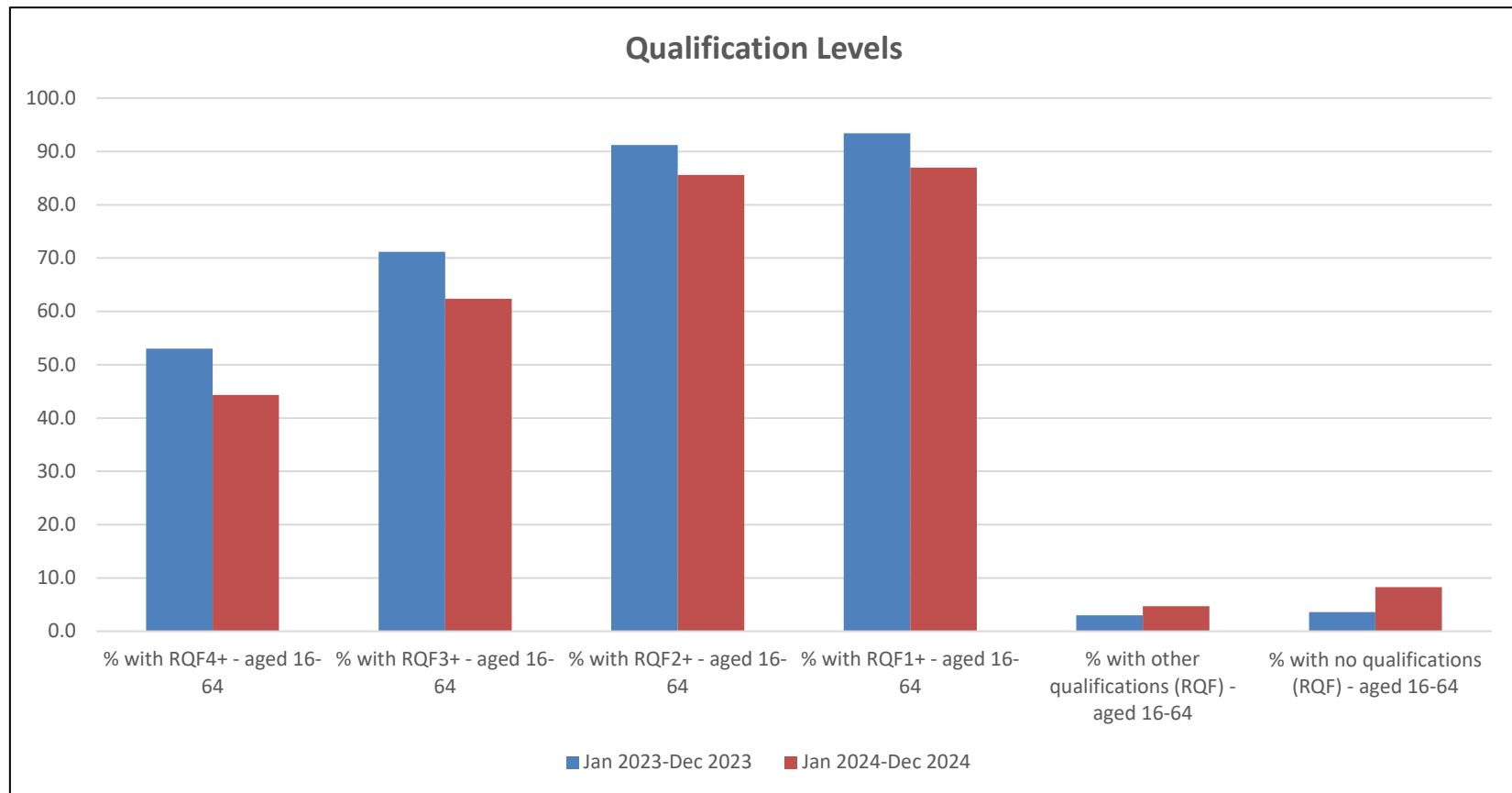
- Logistics
- Advanced Engineering
- Creative
- Food & Drink

Bedford Borough's Economy: *Yearly Comparison*

		2024/ 1 year prior	2025/ Most up to date	Movement
Total Population		174,700	185,800	Up
Total working age population		106,400 (60.9%)	117,400 (63.2%)	Up
% of the working age population that are in employment		82%	78.2%	Down
Unemployment rate		4.0%	4.3%	Up
Claimant rate		4.0%	4.7%	Up
Gross Weekly Pay (mean)	By resident	£823.7	£858.70	Up
	By workplace	£718.8	£768.0	Up

Bedford Borough's Economy: *Qualifications*

All qualification levels decreased compared to the year prior apart from other qualifications and no qualifications.



Job Market: *Most Advertised Jobs*

Occupation	Total/Unique (Apr 2025 - Jun 2025)	Posting Intensity	Median Posting Duration
Tractor-Trailer Truck Driver	515 / 245	2 : 1	23 days
Registered Nurse	550 / 188	3 : 1	27 days
Janitor / Cleaner	290 / 158	2 : 1	20 days
Home Health Aide	292 / 139	2 : 1	27 days
Preschool / Childcare Teacher	302 / 136	2 : 1	27 days
Warehouse Worker	251 / 135	2 : 1	24 days
Teacher Assistant	279 / 130	2 : 1	30 days
Office / Administrative Assistant	175 / 116	2 : 1	16 days
Physician	163 / 103	2 : 1	22 days
Sales Representative	161 / 102	2 : 1	16 days
Customer Service Representative	178 / 101	2 : 1	18 days
Retail Sales Associate	247 / 100	2 : 1	20 days
Healthcare Administrator	226 / 95	2 : 1	30 days
Caregiver / Personal Care Aide	215 / 93	2 : 1	28 days
Forklift / Pallet Jack Operator	152 / 90	2 : 1	20 days

Job Market: *Top Advertised Industry*

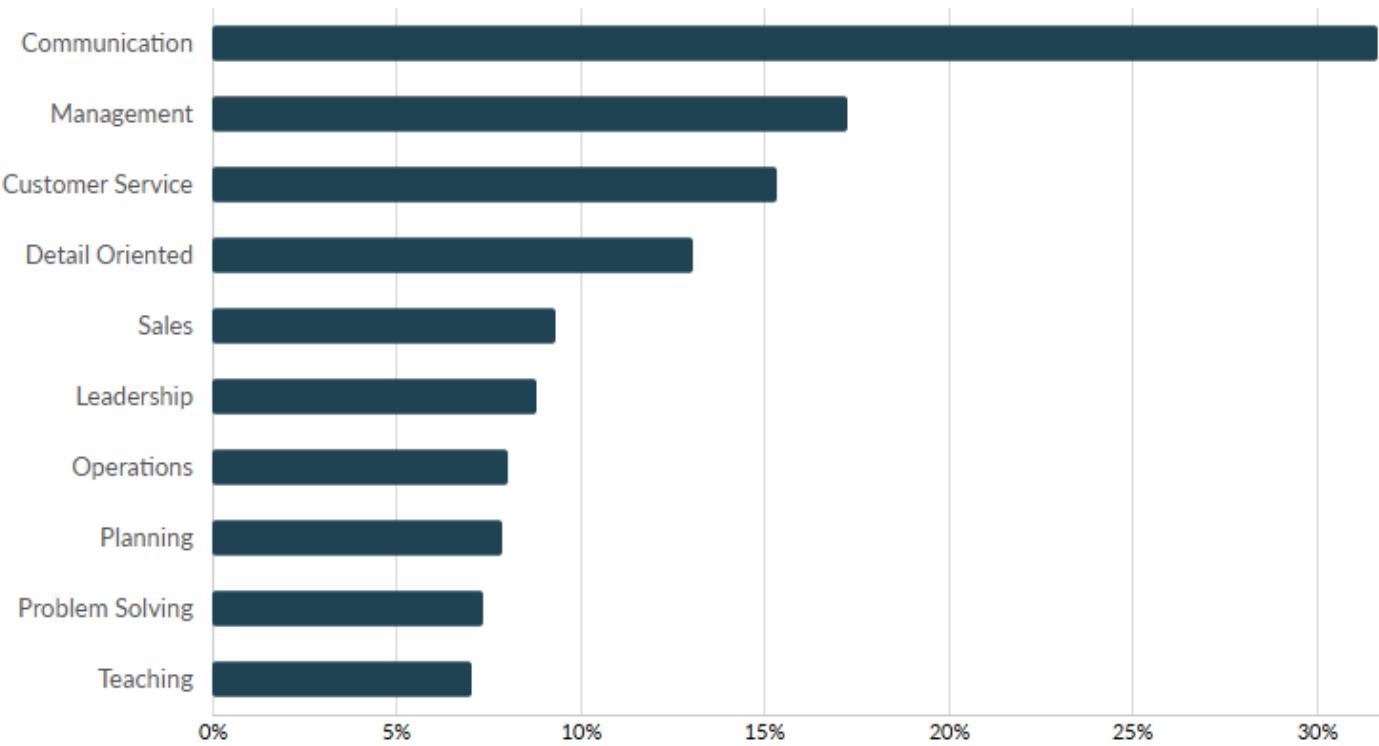
Industry	Total/Unique (Apr 2025 - Jun 2025)	Posting Intensity	Median Posting Duration
Employment Activities	5,662 / 2,716	2 : 1 	28 days
Human Health Activities	1,850 / 658	3 : 1 	25 days
Retail Trade, Except of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	736 / 280	3 : 1 	18 days
Office Administrative, Office Support and Other Business Support Activities	381 / 220	2 : 1 	24 days
Residential Care Activities	570 / 218	3 : 1 	30 days
Food and Beverage Service Activities	383 / 177	2 : 1 	23 days
Education	290 / 175	2 : 1 	19 days
Other Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	277 / 142	2 : 1 	23 days
Activities of Head Offices; Management Consultancy Activities	248 / 130	2 : 1 	29 days
Wholesale and Retail Trade and Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	244 / 126	2 : 1 	27 days
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	188 / 105	2 : 1 	19 days
Financial Service Activities, Except Insurance and Pension Funding	213 / 100	2 : 1 	25 days
Social Work Activities Without Accommodation	240 / 97	2 : 1 	28 days
Wholesale Trade, Except of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	168 / 92	2 : 1 	14 days

Job Adverts: *Top Common Skills*

Top Common Skills

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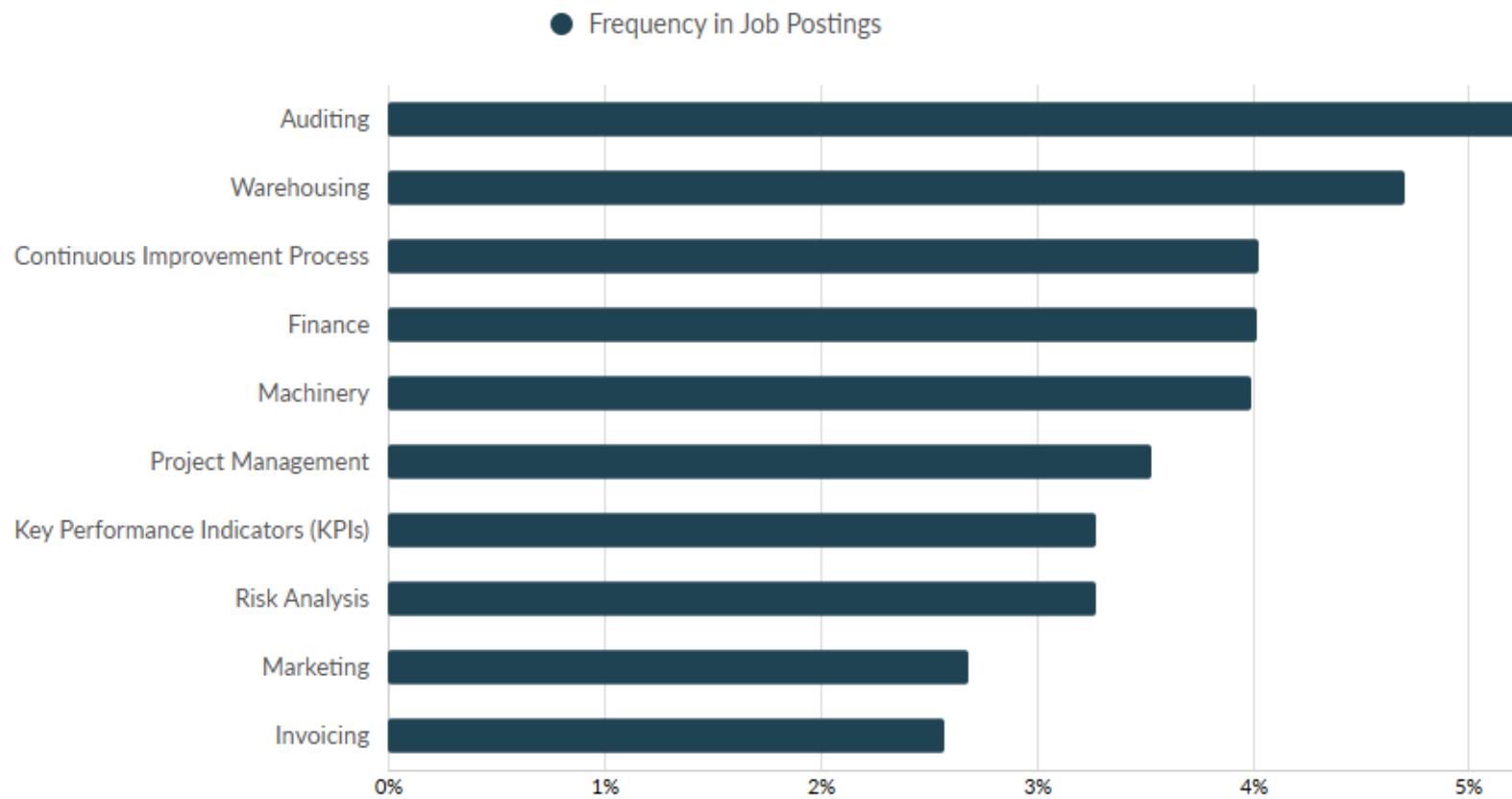
● Frequency in Job Postings



Job Adverts: *Top Specialised Skills*

Top Specialized Skills

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Employability Skills

Basic Skills			
Literacy	Numeracy	Spoken English	Basic Digital
Communication	Core Transferable Skills	Time management	
Organisation	Problem solving	Analytical	
Digital literacy	Creativity/Innovation	Teamwork/Collaboration	
Planning	Leadership	Resilience	
Detail orientated	Attitudes & Behaviours	Reliability	
Work ethic	Independent working	Politeness	
Willingness to learn	Flexibility	Humility	
Enthusiasm	Adaptability	Empathy	
Self-motivation	Honesty	Curiosity	
Job specific	Technical/Vocational Skills	Financial awareness	
Operations	Management	Working with hands	
Customer service	Specialist digital skills	Driving	
Sales	Commercial acumen		
Qualifications and Certification			

***Digital literacy** defined as: Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Word, Teams

***Basic digital** is defined as: search online, access a bank account, sending/receiving emails.

***Spoken English** includes ESOL



Bedford Borough's Economy:

Key Investments and Developments

Town Centre Advisory Board

Bedford Borough Council held its first Bedford Town Centre Advisory Board meeting on 17 September 2025, marking a major milestone in shaping the future of Bedford's town centre. The Bedford Town Centre Advisory Board has been established to provide the Council with strategic advice on issues of particular interest to businesses and stakeholders within the town centre. The Board will meet regularly and consists of 15 members including local business leaders, representatives from Bedford College, the police, the Mayor of Bedford, and ward councillors.

Bedford Heights

Bedford's largest business centre has entered a new chapter, following its recent acquisition by Sirius Real Estate and transition to new management under the BizSpace brand. The change in ownership was completed in early August, with Bedford Heights becoming part of BizSpace's UK-wide portfolio of 75 locations. Offering 238,000 sqft of office and co-working space, the centre is currently 96% occupied and home to a wide variety of businesses.

Twinwoods

Planning permission for a 12-acre industrial open storage facility at Twinwoods Business Park has been granted. The now approved plans include refurbishment of already established buildings and the development of the site for a further 7 acres of open storage facilities.



Bedford Borough's Economy: *Conclusion*

- Truck drivers, cleaners and nurses are the most advertised jobs this quarter.
- Range of employability skills that employers are looking for, including but not limited to qualifications only.
- Bedford's claimant count is now at 4.7%.
- Higher qualification levels have fallen.

LMI Statistics Definitions

Total working age population:

This is the number of 16-64 year olds living within the Borough boundary, who are in employment.

This is taken from the Annual Population Survey from the Office of National Statistics. This is updated every quarter but as a whole year, for example January 2020- December 2020.

% of the working age population that are in employment

This is the number of 16-64 year olds living within the Borough boundary. This is taken from the Annual Population Survey from the Office of National Statistics (ONS). This is updated every quarter but as a whole year, for example January 2020- December 2020.

Gross Value Added (GVA)

GVA is the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy. The GVA used is current price by industry. This is taken from ONS and is updated annually but is often delayed (2019 released in 2021).

% of the working age population qualified to Level 4/ No qualification

This is the number of 16-64 year olds living within the Borough boundary, who have the related level of qualification. This is taken from the Annual Population Survey from the Office of National Statistics, this is updated once a year.

Business Numbers

This is the number of businesses in Bedford Borough at the time data was collected. These are sorted into:

- Micro (0-9 employees)
- Small 10-49 employees)
- Medium (50-249 employees)
- Large (250+ employees)

This is from the Inter Departmental Business Register, from ONS, and is released yearly.

Job Numbers

This is the number of employee jobs by sector. This is taken from the ONS Business Register and Employment Survey and is updated yearly. These are sorted into the 'type' of job, eg administration or manufacturing.

LMI Statistics Definitions

Unemployment rate

The unemployment rate consists of those people, aged 16-64 years who are out of work, who are actively looking for work and are available to start immediately. The data is taken from the Annual Population survey from ONS.

The results are model based and uses the APS results to do this, where a percentage of the population is interviewed and results extrapolated to the whole population. This is updated every quarter but as a whole year, for example January 2020- December 2020.

Claimant count

The Claimant Count is the number of people who are receiving benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed. This includes Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit.

This is released every month detailing information from the month prior.

Unemployment Rate vs Claimant Count

There is a large degree of overlap between the claimant count and unemployment rate. In some circumstances people can claim benefits while they have relatively low earnings from part time work; these claimants in a paid job would not appear in the model based measure of unemployment.

Similarly claimants of unemployment benefits may not appear in the model based measure if, when interviewed for the survey, they stated that they are not seeking, or are not available to start work. Both of these types of people would appear within the Claimant Count but would not be classified as unemployed.

Similarly, people who are not claimants can appear among the model based unemployed if they are not entitled to, or choose not to claim unemployment benefits. For example:

- People whose partner was working
- People who are looking for work alongside full-time study
- People beyond or around State Pension Age who are looking for work.