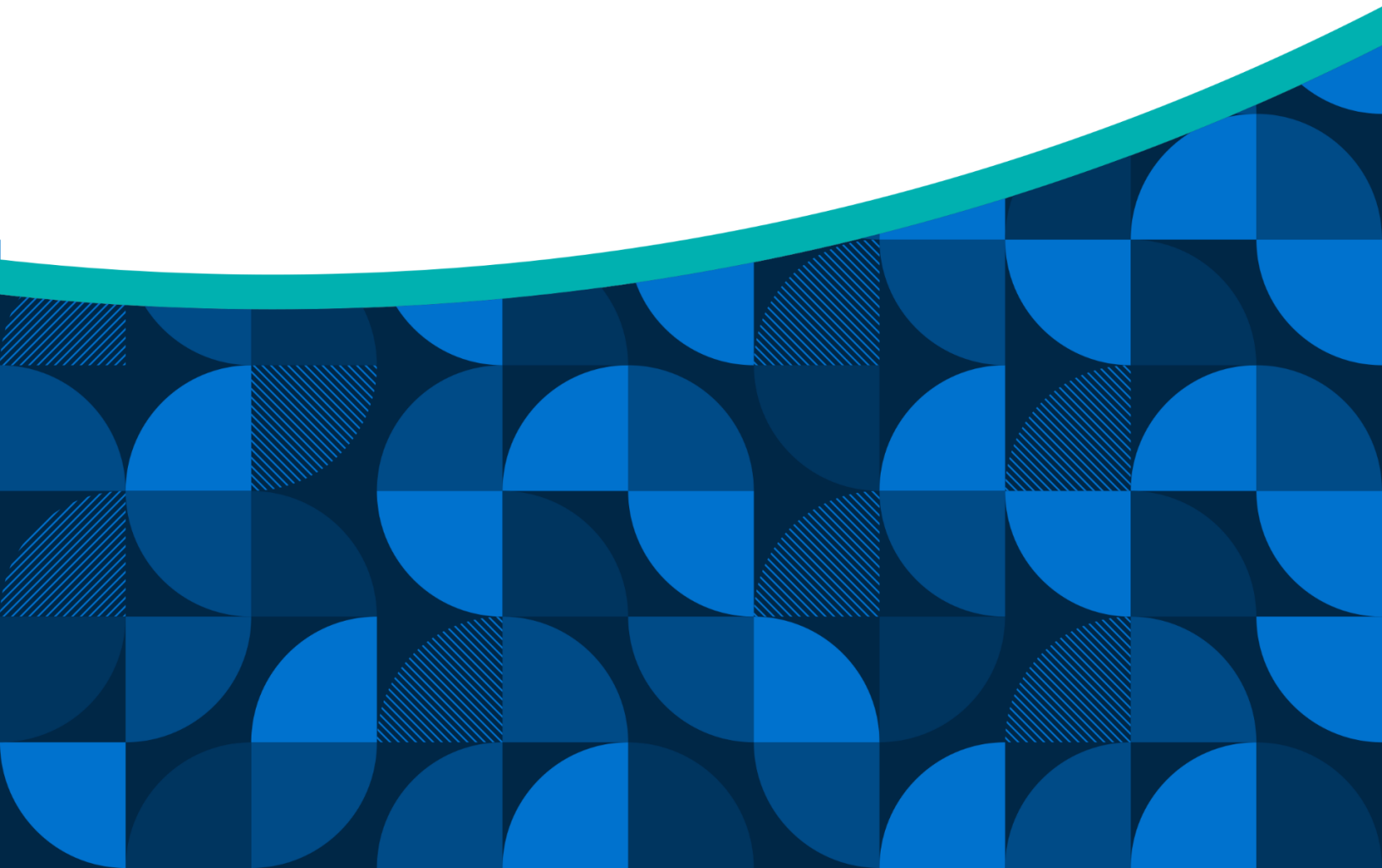




EAB MARKET INSIGHTS

# **New Postgraduate Course Growth Opportunities**

Completed for the Requesting Institution  
June 2025



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# Report Introduction and Table of Contents

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This report presents new opportunities for academic course development. The sections outlined below present a ranking of our recommended new course opportunities, provide the data supporting those recommendations and our underlying methodology, and explain how we can support your next steps.

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The report relies on labour market data, which is most useful in informing programming decisions for adult students as this student population is predominantly motivated by career outcomes. Because this report uses labour market data, it is more likely to identify potential opportunities that align with high-demand skills sought by employers. As a result, liberal arts degrees or degrees with a niche focus rarely emerge as new course recommendations.

# Report Introduction (cont.)

## Project Objective: Identify New Course Opportunities



### New Course Parameters

*Determined by the Requesting Institution*

#### Course Characteristics

- Type: Degree
  - Level: Postgraduate
  - Modality: Face-to-Face
- Region:
- United Kingdom



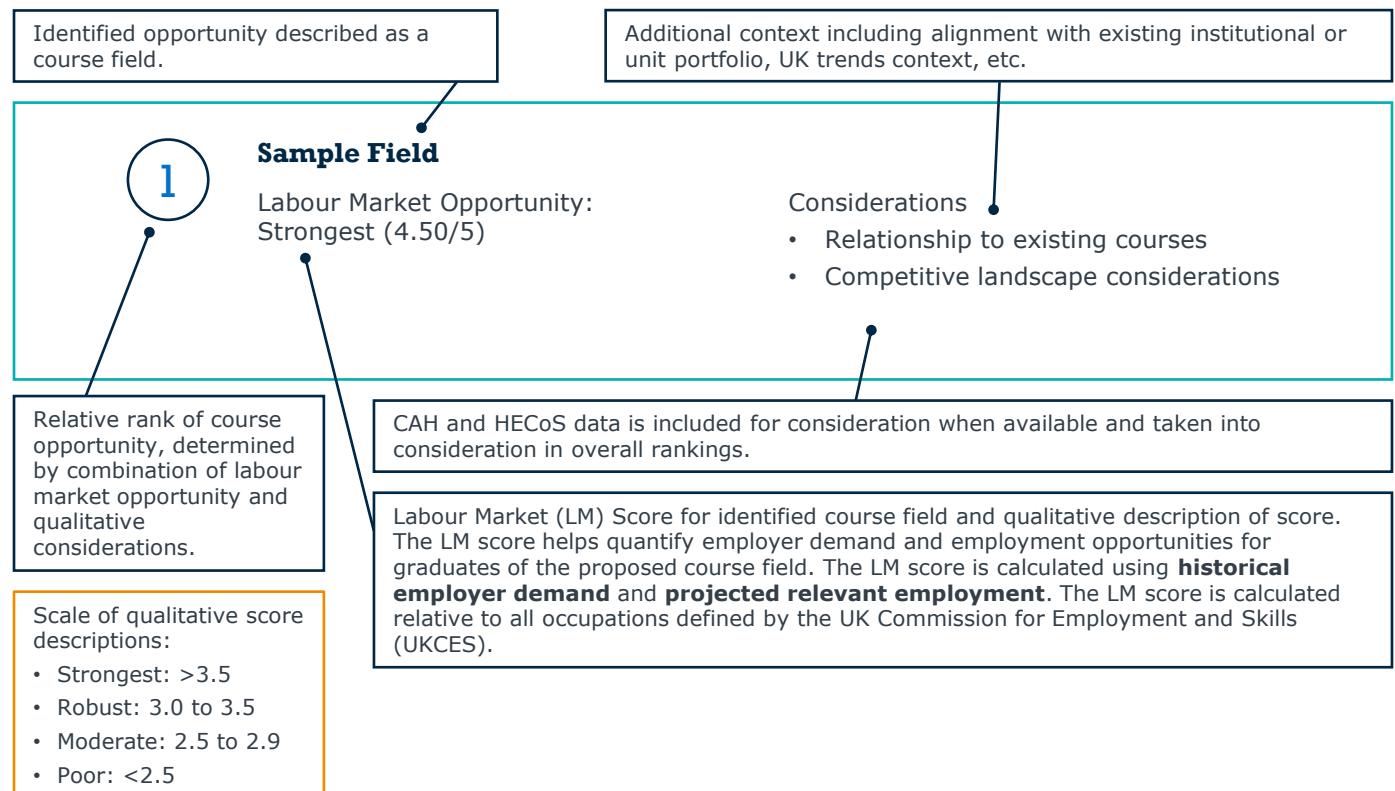
### Process to Identify New Course Opportunities

*Detailed methodology appears on [page 11](#)*

1. Analyse regional labour market to identify high-demand fields – *What fields best align to regional labour market needs?*
2. Assess each field's regional competitive landscape and alignment to desired course characteristics – *What fields demonstrate the most positive student trends, as well as relatively less competitive markets?*

Courses that present opportunity for growth based on the labour market and the competitive landscape, appear on the following page.

## How to Interpret Identified New Course Opportunities



# Executive Overview

## Fields with Greatest Potential for Growth

- 1

**Compulsory Education**  
Labour Market  
Opportunity:  
Strongest (3.81/5.00)

**Considerations**
  - Increasing demand for Early Education and Childcare Practitioners and Special and Additional Needs Education Teaching Professionals (5.83% and 1.36% on average monthly across quarters, respectively) paired with high demand for Special and Additional Needs Education Teaching Professionals and Secondary Education Teaching Professionals (21,779 and 27,436 job postings on average monthly across quarters, respectively) indicate ample employment opportunities in compulsory education.
  - Despite compulsory education courses under relevant HECoS codes (i.e., HECoS Codes: Education Studies (100459); Primary Education (100464); Secondary Education (100456)) reporting the highest number of enrolments (12,230 on average annually) amongst analysed fields, declining demand for reported enrolments under analysed HECoS codes and CAH code (i.e., Education (22-01-01)) could challenge a new course's ability to capture student demand (10.19% and 3.67% on average annually, respectively).
  - For course structure examples, see the [Primary Education MA](#) at the University of the Arts London or the [Education \(Teaching and Learning\) MSc](#) at the University of Bristol.
- 2

**Speech Language Pathology**  
Labour Market  
Opportunity:  
Strongest (3.78/5.00)

**Considerations**
  - Despite a low-to-moderate number of job postings (2,406 on average monthly across quarters), increasing employer demand (1.22% on average monthly across quarters) and the highest per centage projected growth (6.75% across 2024 to 2034) amongst analysed fields suggest increasing opportunities for relevant professionals.
  - The highest growth in enrolments (average annual 12.12%) between the 2020-2021 and 2022-2023 academic years indicates a favourable competitive landscape and the opportunity to capture increasing student interest for relevant courses (i.e., HECoS code Speech and Language Therapy (100255)).
  - See the [Language Pathology MSc](#) at Newcastle University for an example of an existing course.
- 3

**Occupational Therapy (Pre-Registration)**  
Labour Market  
Opportunity:  
Robust (3.27/5.00)

**Considerations**
  - While employer demand declined over the profiled period (average monthly 3.40% across quarters), a moderate number of monthly job postings across quarters and optimistic projected growth in employment across 2024 to 2034 (6,283 and 6.63%, respectively) indicate a fair labour market for Occupational Therapists.
  - Consistent student interest across the 2020-2021 to the 2022-2023 academic years (0.02% change in enrolments on average annually) suggests a stable competitive landscape.
  - The [Occupational Therapy \(Pre-registration\) MSc](#) at Brunel University of London provides an example course structure.

1) While professionals can become an occupational therapist with an undergraduate degree, career changers often complete pre-registration courses at the postgraduate level.

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## Fields with Greatest Potential for Growth

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4

### Education Leadership and Management

Labour Market  
Opportunity:  
Moderate (2.91/5.00)

#### Considerations

- Despite a low number of monthly job postings across quarters (1,701), growth in employer demand across quarters (4.80%) indicates an increasing labour market for Head Teachers and Principals. Further, despite a slight decline in employer demand (1.00% on average monthly across quarters) for Education Advisers and School Inspectors, a low-to-moderate number of job postings (2,470 on average monthly) suggests some opportunity.
- A high and growing number of enrolments (64,325 and 16.18% on average annually) for CAH code Management Studies (17-01-04) indicate opportunities within the broader field. However, HECoS codes Institutional Management (100815) and Management and Organisation of Education (100817) indicate a more challenging competitive landscape due to a low and declining number of enrolments (225 and 29.95% on average annually).

5

### Geology

Labour Market  
Opportunity:  
Robust (3.08/5.00)

#### Considerations

- A slight decline in employer demand across quarters (0.87% on average monthly) paired with the lowest number of job postings across quarters (1,274 on average monthly) indicates a competitive labour market for Physical Scientists. However, a projected growth per cent of 5.04% suggests opportunity for growth in the field from 2024 to 2034.
- Top job titles under the occupation Physical Scientists include Engineering Geologist and Geophysicists.
- A low number of enrolments (65 on average annually) across the 2020-2021 to the 2022-2023 academic years paired with a sharp decline in student interest (19.75% on average annually) suggests a challenging competitive landscape.

# Executive Overview (cont.)

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## Action Items

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*Detailed next steps and supporting EAB resources and services appear on [page 14](#)*



### **Within the Requesting Institution**

- Discuss identified new course opportunities with relevant leadership and academic staff.
- Use additional market data to make informed decisions on identified course opportunities before launch.
- Evaluate current budget capabilities and determine resources available to invest in new course launch.
- Consider potential employer partnerships to support growth.
- Determine impact of new course on existing portfolio.



### **In Partnership with EAB**

- Request a call with EAB research team to review the report and discuss next steps.
- Request further validation of desired new course opportunities via a Course Feasibility Study.
- Evaluate existing portfolio against labour market via a Portfolio Health Check.

# Project Analysis

Courses Preparing for These Occupations Should Attract Adult Students

**Labour Market Data for Relevant Occupations with Labour Market Scores above 2.5**

United Kingdom Data

Job Postings, 2022 Q2 – 2025 Q1

Employment, 2024 - 2034

| Occupation                                                    | Job Postings, 2022 Q2 – 2025 Q1                        |                                                |                                              | Employment, 2024 - 2034     |                           | Labour Market Score (Out of a max. of 5) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------|
|                                                               | Avg. Monthly Job Postings Across Quarters <sup>1</sup> | Avg. Monthly Change Across Quarters (Per Cent) | Avg. Monthly Change Across Quarters (Actual) | Projected Growth (Per Cent) | Projected Growth (Actual) |                                          |
| Early Education and Childcare Practitioners                   | 13,857                                                 | 5.83%                                          | 561                                          | 2,653                       | 3.69%                     | <b>3.81</b>                              |
| Speech and Language Therapists                                | 2,406                                                  | 1.22%                                          | 8                                            | 1,294                       | 6.75%                     | <b>3.78</b>                              |
| Special and Additional Needs Education Teaching Professionals | 21,779                                                 | 1.36%                                          | 120                                          | 2,372                       | 2.87%                     | <b>3.62</b>                              |
| Occupational Therapists                                       | 6,283                                                  | -3.40%                                         | -245                                         | 3,266                       | 6.63%                     | <b>3.27</b>                              |
| Physical Scientists                                           | 1,274                                                  | -0.87%                                         | -21                                          | 1,590                       | 5.04%                     | <b>3.08</b>                              |
| Secondary Education Teaching Professionals                    | 27,436                                                 | -0.34%                                         | -774                                         | 8,267                       | 2.42%                     | <b>2.91</b>                              |
| Education Advisers and School Inspectors                      | 2,470                                                  | -1.00%                                         | -32                                          | 1,217                       | 4.46%                     | <b>2.91</b>                              |
| Head Teachers and Principals                                  | 1,701                                                  | 4.80%                                          | -18                                          | 1,024                       | 2.98%                     | <b>2.71</b>                              |

1) To understand demand trends without single-month outliers over-influencing the data, this calculation considers the average number of monthly job postings in each quarter, then provides the average value across those quarters

## Project Analysis (cont.)

### These Course Fields Align with the In-Demand Occupations

#### Occupational Alignment to Identified Subject Fields

| <i>Occupation</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                              |   | <i>Field Name</i>                          |   | <i>Associated Enrolment Codes</i>                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Education and Childcare Practitioners</li> <li>• Special and Additional Needs Education Teaching Professionals</li> <li>• Secondary Education Teaching Professionals</li> </ul> | → | <b>Compulsory Education</b>                | → | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAH Code: Education (22-01-01)</li> <li>• HECoS Codes: Education Studies (100459); Primary Education (100464); Secondary Education (100456)</li> </ul>          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education Advisers and School Inspectors</li> <li>• Head Teachers and Principals</li> </ul>                                                                                           | → | <b>Education Leadership and Management</b> | → | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAH Code: Management Studies (17-01-04)</li> <li>• HECoS Codes: Institutional Management (100815); Management and Organisation of Education (100817)</li> </ul> |
| Physical Scientists                                                                                                                                                                                                            | → | <b>Geology</b>                             | → | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAH Code: None Applicable</li> <li>• HECoS Code: Geology (100395)</li> </ul>                                                                                    |
| Occupational Therapists                                                                                                                                                                                                        | → | <b>Occupational Therapy</b>                | → | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAH Code: None Applicable</li> <li>• HECoS Code: Occupational Therapy (100249)</li> </ul>                                                                       |
| Speech and Language Therapists                                                                                                                                                                                                 | → | <b>Speech Language Pathology</b>           | → | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAH Code: None Applicable</li> <li>• HECoS Code: Speech and Language Therapy (100255)</li> </ul>                                                                |

## Project Analysis (cont.)

Courses with Low or Declining Enrolments, High Competition Warrant Caution

### Competitive Opportunity Data for Market Aligned Subject Fields (CAH Codes)

United Kingdom Data

| Field                               | Degree Enrolments, 2020-2021 to the 2022-2023 Academic Years |                               |                             | Number of Competitors, 2020-2021 to the 2022-2023 Academic Years |                               |                             |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                                     | Avg. Annual Enrolments                                       | Avg. Annual Change (Per Cent) | Avg. Annual Change (Actual) | Number of Competitors, (2022-2023)                               | Avg. Annual Change (Per Cent) | Avg. Annual Change (Actual) |
| Compulsory Education                | 27,865                                                       | -3.67%                        | -1,040                      | 132                                                              | 2.43%                         | 3                           |
| Education Leadership and Management | 64,325                                                       | 16.18%                        | 8,350                       | 129                                                              | -0.77%                        | -1                          |

### Enrolment Data for Market Aligned Subject Fields (HECoS Codes)

United Kingdom Data

| Field                               | Degree Enrolments, 2020-2021 to the 2022-2023 Academic Years |                               |                             |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                                     | Avg. Annual Enrolments                                       | Avg. Annual Change (Per Cent) | Avg. Annual Change (Actual) |
| Compulsory Education                | 12,230                                                       | -10.19%                       | -1,475                      |
| Education Leadership and Management | 225                                                          | -29.95%                       | -118                        |
| Geology                             | 65                                                           | -19.75%                       | -25                         |
| Occupational Therapy                | 1,390                                                        | 0.02%                         | 0                           |
| Speech Language Pathology           | 1,125                                                        | 12.12%                        | 115                         |

### Why Examine Competitive Opportunity Data?

Regional degree enrolments over time and the number of institutions reporting those enrolments offer a sense of the competitive landscape. Course enrolments indicate student willingness to enrol and complete courses, which can help surface fields with challenging recruitment despite a strong labour market. Leadership may aim to avoid launching such courses or would need to plan recruitment efforts to surmount potential student disinterest.

The number of institutions reporting enrolments communicates how competitive a market will be for a new course to enter, while changes over time can suggest institutions responding to their market (e.g., closing courses that were perhaps costly to maintain).

Sources: National Center for Education Statistics, Lightcast Analyst, EAB Research & Analysis

# Project Methodology

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EAB conducted a two-step analysis to identify potential new course opportunities. All workforce demand data was collected from Lightcast, EAB's labour market intelligence partner. Competitive data was collected from the Higher Education Statistics Agency.



1

## Step One: Labour Market Analysis

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### **Analyse regional labour market to identify high-demand fields**

This analysis serves as an indicator of external labour market needs. The objective is to identify occupations with strong labour market demand, which serves as a proxy for adult student demand.

The analysis includes:

- Volume and growth of job postings
- Projected growth in employment

We review the top occupations in terms of labour market demand to identify trends. We then determine course fields aligned to these labour market trends.

#### *Data collected and scoring methodology*

EAB analysed labour market intelligence for the region and scored occupations (zero to five) based on growth and volume of job postings and employment.

EAB's analysis scored each occupation based on five discrete metrics:

Job Postings Data, 2022 Q2 – 2025 Q1:

- Average quarterly job postings
- Average quarterly per cent growth in job postings
- Average quarterly actual growth in job postings

Employment Projections Data, 2024 – 2034:

- Projected growth in employment (actual)
- Projected growth in employment (per cent)

Each occupation received a score of zero through five for each metric, based on its performance against all occupations considered. EAB then calculated a Labour Market Score (zero through five) for each occupation based on the average score for each metric.



## 2

### Step Two: Competitive Landscape Analysis

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#### **Assess each field's regional competitive landscape and alignment to desired course characteristics**

The volume and growth of degree enrolments serves as an indicator of student demand for each field. Data on the number of competitors informs competitive landscape saturation.

For each field, we analyse the competitive landscape in terms of:

- Number of competitors and degree enrolments
- Growth in number of competitors and degree enrolments

We also consider if each field aligns with the partner institution's provided parameters (e.g., can be delivered online).

#### *Data collected and scoring methodology*

EAB analysed the competitive landscape for the region using degree enrolments data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). For each field, EAB compiled a list of relevant Common Aggregation Hierarchy codes (CAH codes) and Higher Education Classification of Subjects codes (HECoS), which are used to categorise degree enrolment data.

The courses surfaced in this analysis may not be an exhaustive list of all competitor institutions, as some institutions may report relevant degree enrolment data under other codes.

EAB collected the following data for the 2020-2021 through the 2022-2023 academic years:

- Volume of degree enrolments
- Annual growth in degree enrolments
- Number of competitor institutions
- Change in number of competitors

# Project Methodology (cont.)

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## Data Sources

 **Lightcast** Lightcast  
<https://lightcast.io/>

This report includes data made available through EAB's partnership with Lightcast (formerly Emsi), a labour market analytics firm serving higher education, economic development, and industry leaders in the U.S., Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Lightcast curates and maintains the most comprehensive labour market data sets available for academic course planning, providing real-time job posting data, workforce and alumni outcomes data, and traditional government sources of data. Under this partnership, EAB may use Lightcast's proprietary tools to answer partner questions about employer demand, the competitive landscape, in-demand skills, postings versus actual hires, and skills gaps between job postings and professionals in the workforce. The Lightcast tools also provide EAB with in-depth access to unsuppressed, zip-code-level government data for occupations, industries, courses, and demographics. For more complete descriptions of the Lightcast tools, visit:

- <https://lightcast.io/solutions/education/analyst>
- <https://lightcast.io/solutions/education/alumni-pathways>

To learn more about Lightcast and its software and services, please contact Bob Hieronymus, Vice President of Business Development at [bob.hieronymus@lightcast.io](mailto:bob.hieronymus@lightcast.io).

 **EAB** EAB Research and Insights Library  
<https://eab.com/research-and-insights/>

 **HESA** Higher Education Statistics Agency  
<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/>

# Next Steps from this Market Opportunity Scan

## Follow These Steps to Act on New Course Opportunities

### Internal

Share the report with relevant leadership and faculty on campus. Use the recommended EAB resources below to guide conversations with stakeholders and make informed decisions.



**Identify most interesting opportunities for further analysis.** Consider how the report's findings match institutional goals. How do the fields surfaced in the report align with institutional strengths, available resources, and faculty priorities? See EAB's "[Top-Down New Course Opportunity Analyses](#)" toolkit to learn what internal and external data sources you should leverage to determine which new course fields to prioritise.



**Continue to use market data to make informed decisions.** Reference EAB's "[Market Demand Validation Checklist](#)" for additional guidelines on how to interpret the labour market and competitive landscape data in this report. Use this checklist to avoid underestimating competition or overestimating employer and student demand as well as to vet initial projections for new courses.



**Evaluate current budget capabilities and determine resources available to invest in new course launch.** Refer to EAB's "[New Course Cost-Minimization Checklist](#)" for ten tactics that can limit initial investment in new courses by leveraging existing resources and EAB's "[New Course Budget Templates](#)" to project costs for new course development.



**Consider potential employer partnerships to support growth.** Employer partnerships can help generate revenue to support mission-critical course and offerings. EAB's "[Toolkit to Grow Employer Partnerships](#)" and "[Critical Disciplines to Grow Employer Partnerships](#)" research can help administrators identify potential partners and build successful, long-lasting employer relationships.



**Determine impact of new courses on institution's existing portfolio.** Leveraging resources from existing courses can help limit course launch costs. However, those financial gains are diminished if a new course attracts enrolments away from an existing degree rather than securing net new enrolments. EAB's "[Portfolio Cannibalization Feedback Form](#)" can help institutional leaders and faculty flag new courses that serve similar markets as the institution's existing portfolio and determine if a new degree will result in net positive or net negative enrolment shifts.

### In Partnership with EAB



**Request a project debrief call with EAB research team to review the report.** Meet with members of our research team to discuss the findings of the report and potential next steps.



**Validate selected new course opportunities.** Request a Course Feasibility Study to explore the market viability of an identified new course opportunity.



**Evaluate existing portfolio against labour market and competitive opportunity.** Request a Portfolio Health Check to understand how existing offerings score on labour market and competitive opportunity.



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