**Demand analysis and critical posts**

**Critical posts** are essential for the operation of an organisation. In a workforce planning context, this definition is usually applied to posts that are not only critical to the operation of the organisation, but there is also a significant lead-in time for someone to get the necessary qualification or skills. For example, school crossing patrollers are critical posts in the wider sense, but little training is required so shortages can be addressed by taking local action such as local recruitment campaign. In contrast, a nation-wide shortage of Environmental Health Officers would not be so easily resolved because of the length of training required to become qualified.

If there is a significant shortfall in the supply of skilled and qualified employees anticipated, there may be creative workforce planning solutions needed to address essential recruitment criteria. The following questions can help when thinking about the workforce and what it will need to look like in the future.

Where you can, complete the column ‘How do you know?’to explain and evidence your position. For example, the answer to the first question may be unfilled vacancies. If you cannot answer the question, use the right hand column to outline what information is needed in order to give an answer.

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| **Key Questions** | **Response** | **How you know?** | **Information required** |
| What critical posts are you short of now? |  |  |  |
| What critical posts will you be short of in 5 years time? |  |  |  |
| What is or will be the impact on the organisation if the post is unfilled? |  |  |  |
| What specialist skills and knowledge does the role require? |  |  |  |
| What related skills and knowledge will the workforce of the future need? |  |  |  |
| What % of the workforce currently has these skills? |  |  |  |
| What strategies are currently in place to address these critical issues? |  |  |  |