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UK leader says hard hats as important as graduation caps – 3rd August 2026

Level 4

The UK has a new prime minister, Andy Burnham. One of his priorities is to increase access to technical training for children. He wants them to acquire the skills they need for the workplace. This is to reverse the problem of youth unemployment. Britain has more than one million young people not in education, employment or training. Mr Burnham said: "Fixing the youth unemployment crisis will require a major shake-up in how we do things."

Mr Burnham's aim is to change traditional views on white- and blue-collar work. He wants children to believe that a job as a carpenter is just as valuable as working as a lawyer. He said: "Britain will value the hard hat every bit as much as the graduation cap." He added: "Students have been told that they must take the academic path to do well and to be respected. The whole school system has been built around it, and that has let down young people."

Level 5

The UK's new prime minister, Andy Burnham, is determined to overhaul Britain's education system. Mr Burnham, 56, came to power on July the 16th. One of his priorities is to increase access to technical training for youngsters. He wants children as young as 14 to acquire the skills they need for the workplace. This is to address the problem of youth unemployment. Britain has more than one million young people not in education, employment or training. Mr Burnham said: "Fixing the youth unemployment crisis in Britain will require a major shake-up in how we do things."

Mr Burnham's aim is to change traditional views on white- and blue-collar work. He wants young people to believe that a career as a carpenter is just as valuable as working as a lawyer. He wants academic and technical skills to be equally valued. He said: "From today, Britain will value the hard hat every bit as much as the graduation cap." He added: "For too long, students have been told that they must take the academic path to do well and to be respected. The whole school system has been built around it, and that has let down young people."

Level 6

The United Kingdom has a new prime minister, and he is determined to overhaul Britain's education system. Andy Burnham, 56, came to power on July the 16th. One of his key priorities is to increase access to technical training for youngsters. He wants schoolchildren as young as 14 to start acquiring the skills they need for the workplace. This is to address the problem of unemployed youth. Britain has more than one million young people not in education, employment or training. They have been dubbed "the lost generation". Mr Burnham said: "Fixing the youth unemployment crisis in Britain will require a major shake-up in how we do things, and that's what this government will do."

Prime Minister Burnham's aim is to reset traditional views on white- and blue-collar work. He wants young people to believe that a career as a plumber, carpenter, or bricklayer is just as valuable as working as a lawyer or doctor. He said: "I want an education system based on parity between academic and technical, which gives all young people a clear path in life. From today, Britain will value the hard hat every bit as much as the graduation cap." He added: "For too long in this country, students have been told that they must take the academic path to do well and to be respected. The whole school system has been built around it, and that has let down young people seeking technical qualifications."