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STAT OF THE WEEK: SOLID INCREASE IN UNIVERSITY TUNNELLING MASTERS STUDENTS

The University of Warwick has recorded a spike in the number of students on its tunnelling masters degree.

It enrolled 23 people on its tunnelling and underground spaces MSc course this academic year – up from 14 last year and just 11 in 2011/12.

Benoit Jones, principal teaching fellow at the

university's School of Engineering, told NCE the increase was "promising for the industry".

Skills shortages have been a major concern for the civils sector recently, and figures earlier this month showed the number of engineers coming to the UK from outside the European Union had risen by

more than a third this year.

Professionals from firms such as Morgan Sindall and Mott MacDonald champion modules of the Warwick course, and industry specialists deliver guest lectures.

Bursaries are offered by Balfour Beatty, Morgan Sindall and the British Tunnelling Society.