

Swindon and Wiltshire Needs Analysis for the Post 16 Area Review

Summary Paper

Final



September 2016

1.0 Introduction

1. The purpose of the analysis is for the LEP, Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council to inform the Post 16 Area review steering group of learner outcomes and needs and employer needs in the area. The work will also inform the refresh and further development of the LEP wide Skills Plan.
2. Data for each local authority is set out in the appendices which accompany this report. It should be noted that given the time lag for some published data, analysis of trends does not fully show the more recent changes that have taken place within the FE Sector.

The LEP's Vision

3. Swindon and Wiltshire's LEP's Strategic Economic Plan was published in January 2016 and sets out our ambitious plans to ensure that by 2026 Swindon and Wiltshire will be "world-renowned for its innovation, entrepreneurialism and great quality of life." To achieve this vision, the LEP has set out 5 strategic objectives. Amongst these, its number one priority is in relation to skills and talent: **"We need an appropriately skilled and competitive workforce to achieve our growth ambitions."** Our ambition is for the creation of a demand-led skills system, where employers have the opportunity to inform provision, working with providers to develop a better understanding of new and emerging sector requirements and replacement demands, and to support the creation of an education offer that is responsive and relevant to employer and learner needs.
4. Our actions to deliver those objectives are set out in the SEP¹ and include a number of actions of relevance to the Post 16 Area Review. In particular, action to: *"Ensure there is a robust and responsive post 16 education and skills sector operating to meet the needs of learners and employers which is financially efficient, sustainable and operates from campuses which are fit for purpose"* aligns closely with the overarching aim of the Post 16 Area Review and the opportunities it provides to reshape post 16 provision. A summary of priority action are in Appendix 1.

Swindon and Wiltshire

5. Locally, the councils' strategies align with this objective. This is outlined in the Employment & Skills Strategy and the Council launched its vision for Swindon in 2015 and one of the local authority's priorities to support this vision was to: **"Offer education opportunities that lead to the right skills and right jobs in the right places."**
6. In Wiltshire, the aim of the Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020 is, "to put employers at the heart of the employment and skills/education system to drive growth in the Wiltshire economy and provide a structured and coordinated partnership approach to sustained engagement in education, training or work across all age and client groups."

2.0 Demographics

7. Swindon and Wiltshire has a population of just under 700,000 people, making the sub-region one of the smallest LEPs in the country (31st of 39 LEPs in terms of population size). Wiltshire accounts for the largest proportion of the total with a population of 483,100, with Swindon accounting for the remaining 215,800.
8. In the past decade, the LEP area has been one of the fastest growing LEPs in the country with an increase in population of 10.6%, well above the average growth in England of 8.2%. Looking ahead,

¹ (<http://www.swlep.co.uk/resources/document635997701081146000.pdf>)

further strong growth is forecast with an increase of 11.3% between 2014 and 2024 compared with a rise of 7.1% in England.

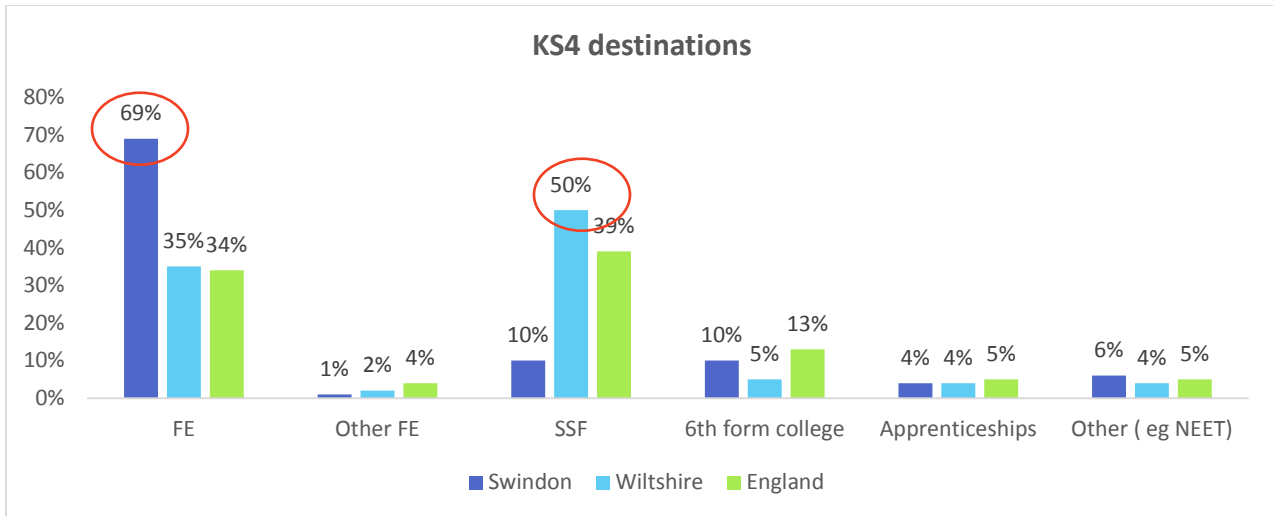
9. Much of the increase is driven by the ageing of the population and a challenge for the post 16 sector in the short term will be the continuing decline of the 16-18 year old population to 2019, after which there will be year on year increases. By 2024, projections suggest that there will be around 27,000 16 -18 year olds – almost 1,400 more than there are currently. Housing growth and the Army Basing programme (which will increase the population on Salisbury Plain) will strengthen the growth of the 16-18 cohort in the longer term.
10. Access and the rural nature of the county are particular issues for learners in Wiltshire where almost 1 in 2 of the population live in rural areas, limiting the options for post 16 learning.
11. Whilst Swindon and Wiltshire is one of the least deprived LEAs in the country, 45,000 people in Swindon and Wiltshire live in areas which are considered to be amongst the most deprived 20% in England. Skills for employability and independence are therefore vital.

School and college infrastructure

12. In Wiltshire, one FE College, Wiltshire College is the main provider of post 16 technical education and has sites in Chippenham, Lackham (specialist land based), Trowbridge and Salisbury. There are 29 secondary schools, 22 of which have a sixth form, 5 special schools, 4 of which have a sixth form and a UTC in Salisbury, specializing in Science and Engineering.
13. In Swindon, 2 FE Colleges, Swindon College, offering a mainly technical education and New College offering academic courses and technical courses. There are 11 secondary schools, 5 of which have a sixth form. 2 of these opened in 2014. 3 special schools, one with a sixth form and provision up to 25 and a further special school sixth form opening in September 2016. There is also a UTC specializing in Engineering.
14. The number of sixth forms across the area is increasing. In Wiltshire, 22 out of 29 schools currently have sixth form provision and others are in the process of acquiring sixth forms. In Swindon, there are now 6 sixth forms in mainstream schools and two in special schools. A new 11-18 free school – the Great Western Academy scheduled to open in September 2018 will be set up by New College, Swindon to meet population growth. The aim is to form a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) so that schools become part of the New College 'family'. There are also further secondary schools in the pipe line, aligned with the major development in New Eastern Villages and Wichelstowe.

3. Participation

15. The FE sector is of particular importance to the local economy, being the main provider of technical learning, but additionally in Swindon, it is also a major supplier of all post 16 academic learning. Through their role in providing learning from 16 year olds through to the delivery of skills for employability to adults the three colleges in Swindon and Wiltshire are vital to our ambitions for growth and innovation.
16. Swindon has fewer young people 'in learning' than average, whereas Wiltshire has above average rates in learning for 16 and 17 year olds, but well below average proportions of 18 year olds participating. The strength of the labour market is seen to be a strong attraction for those leaving learning, and we would like to see more young people take up apprenticeships to enable them to combine work and learning and to progress in the labour market.



Source: SFR05/2016

Chart 1: KS4 destinations of pupils in 2013/14

17. Whilst the numbers taking up apprenticeships is below average, numbers have been rising, and there is a good fit between our employment growth sectors and the subjects of apprenticeship starts. However, apprenticeships are by and large addressing lower level skills needs with 60% of starts at Intermediate level rising to 72% of starts of all under 19s. The Colleges have acknowledged the need to introduce more Advanced Apprenticeships and recognise the potential for more collective work to drive up apprenticeships through the development of Apprenticeship Training Agencies, promotional activities, developing specialisms and sharing staff. This is welcomed, and we would like to build on this work to develop creative responses to the opportunities arising from the apprenticeship levy.

4 Learner outcomes

18. We would like all our young people to receive high quality learning which equips them to progress to a wide range of further study, training and employment in our growing economy; however, we recognise that the context for post 16 learning is given by their prior attainment. In Swindon, whereas attainment is at or above average up to KS2, thereafter, key indicators show that on all key measures Swindon underperforms at KS4 and this then continues through to post 16 learning and subsequent destinations:

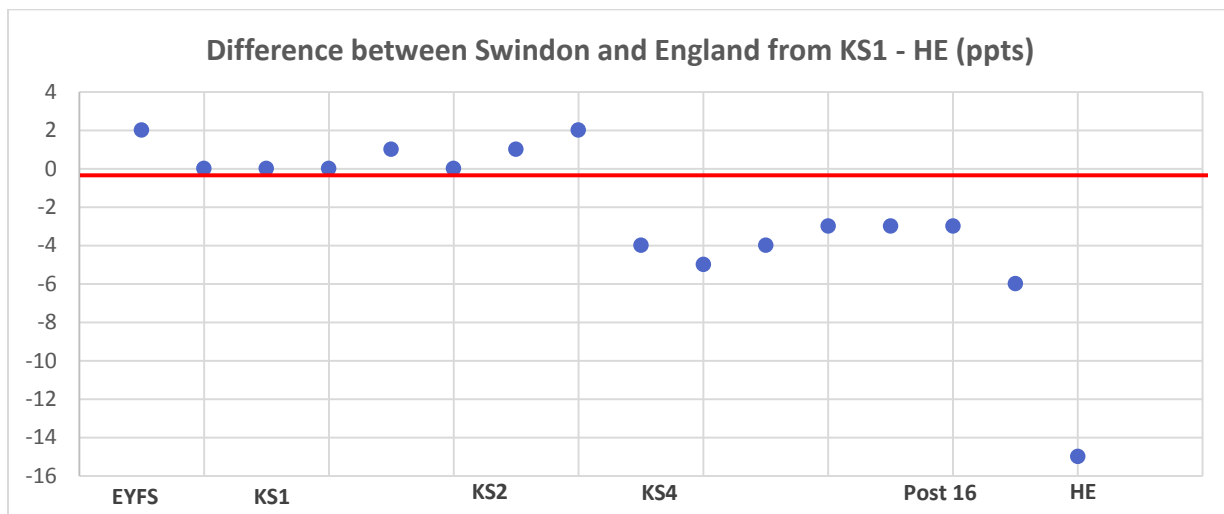
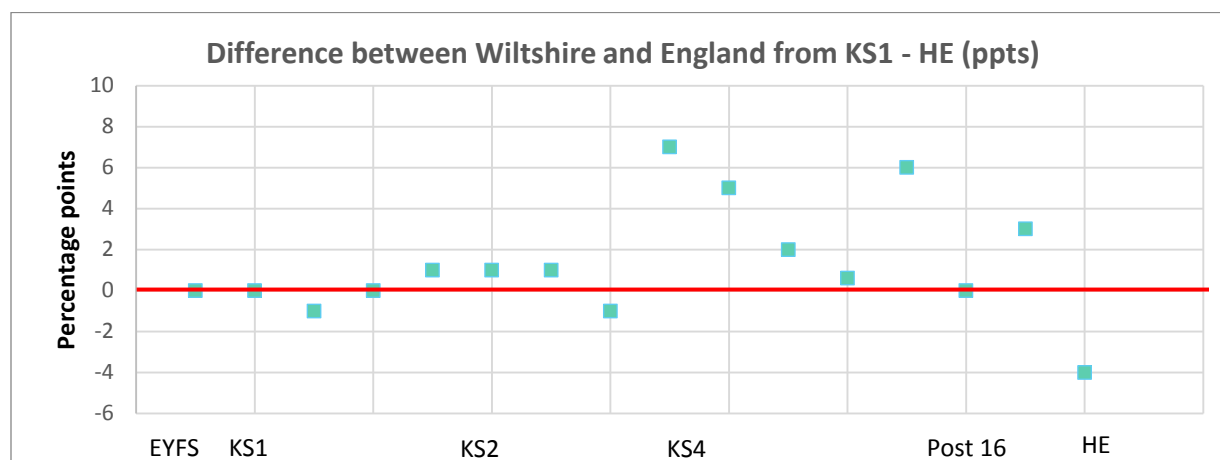


Table 2a.

Each blue dot represents a key stage as itemized in table 3 below.

**Table 2b.**

All attainment phases: Difference between Swindon and England (ppts)					
EYFS	Good level of devt.	2	KS4	5 GCSEs A*-C inc E&M	-4
KS1	Reading L2+	0		5 GCSEs A*-C	-5
	Writing L2+	0		Ebacc	-4
	Maths L2+	0		Expected progress in English	-3
	Science L2+	1		Expected progress in maths	-3
KS2	Reading L4+	0	Post 16	L2 by 19	-3
	Writing L4+	1		L3 by 19	-6
	Maths L4+	2	HE	% KS5 entering HE	-15

Source: LAIT/SFR36/2015 and SFR40/2015

Table 3a: Attainment stages in Swindon 2014/15 – difference from England average (See Appendix for key)

19. In Wiltshire, the pattern of attainment is more in line with the national average, however, here the concern is that the county averages disguise significant variation in attainment across the county (in relation to 5 GCSEs including English and maths, for instance, attainment varies from 40% in Pewsey and 48% in Amesbury to 85% in Salisbury (based on school location)). Subsequent progression to HE is below average.

All attainment phases: Difference between Wiltshire and England (ppts)					
EYFS	Good level of devt.	0	KS4	5 GCSEs A*-C inc E&M	7
KS1	Reading L2+	0		5 GCSEs A*-C	5
	Writing L2+	-1		Ebacc	0
	Maths L2+	0		Expected progress in English	0.3
	Science L2+	1		Expected progress in maths	6

KS2	Reading L4+	1	Post 16	L2 by 19	0
	Writing L4+	1		L3 by 19	3
	Maths L4+	-1	HE	% KS5 entering HE	-4

Source: LAIT/SFR36/2015 and SFR40/2015

Table 3b: Attainment stages in Wiltshire 2014/15 – difference from England average (state funded schools)

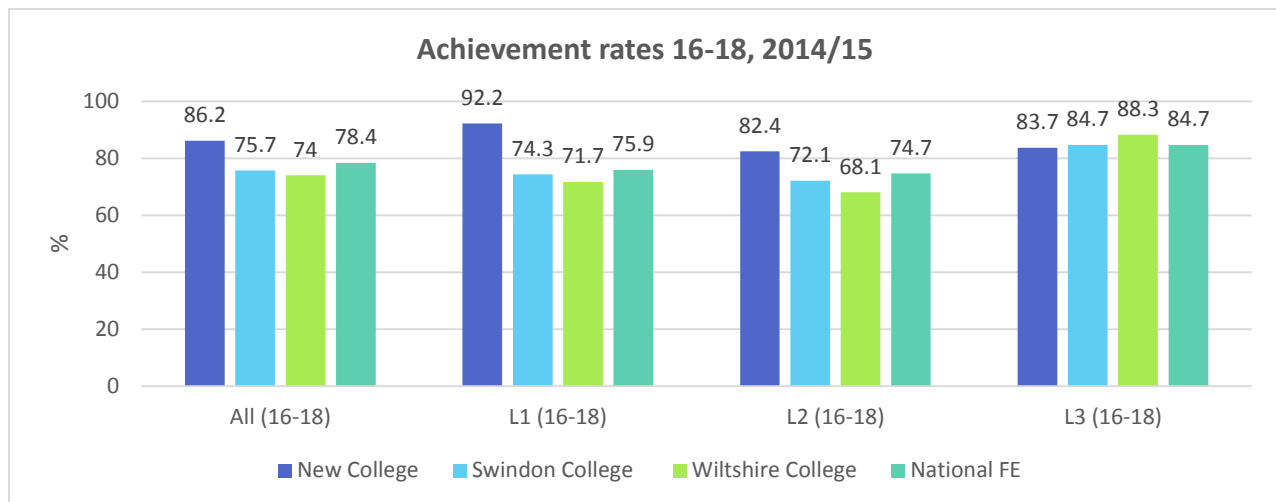
20. The colleges (particularly Swindon and Wiltshire Colleges) have to deliver significant amounts of English and maths to post 16 learners and adults. In 2014/15 our 3 colleges delivered learning to around 4,000 students in basic English and maths with 2,800 learners pursuing GCSEs in English and maths. 4,700 of these learners were aged 16-18, suggesting that despite high GCSE attainment in Wiltshire, too few of our young people attain good enough core qualifications to progress to the higher levels which the local economy needs. Fewer than 50% of 16-18 learners at Swindon College and Wiltshire College have GCSE maths compared with over 90% at New College.
21. In Swindon, no A level provider reaches the national average points (APS) per student threshold (calculated by the DfE by assigning points to exam grades)², although Ridgeway School and New College are closest. Similarly, no provider reaches the average national performance in relation to 3 A levels at A*-E, but New College is the best performing provider. Only New College attains a positive added value score for academic learning in Swindon. By contrast, Wiltshire is ranked 30th in the country for its A level performance, however, the average is brought up by excellent performance in a few schools and 13 of the 22 state institutions providing A levels in Wiltshire do not reach the national APS threshold. Disaggregation of the data for Wiltshire shows that highest attainment is concentrated in north-west Wiltshire and Salisbury, with the lower populated areas of central Wiltshire (Calne, Devizes, Amesbury and Westbury) having much lower APS scores.
22. In Wiltshire, many of our sixth forms are small, which means it is difficult for them to provide the breadth of offer, but because of their rurality and transport issues students lack the means to travel to alternative providers to extend their choice.
23. It should be noted that students at our two Swindon colleges serve a disproportionate number of disadvantaged people, with between 18% and 19% of their cohorts from the highest quintile of deprivation; twice as high as are present in the area review cohort, and this may be expected to impact on aspiration and attainment. At Wiltshire College, recruitment patterns are closer to the average with 5% of learners from the highest quintile of deprivation.
24. In relation to technical attainment at KS5, both Swindon and Wiltshire's APS (Average Point Score) per student is below average, with Swindon and Wiltshire Colleges' performance well below the average and New College consistently above it. However, it should be noted that many key qualifications such as City and Guilds are not graded and are excluded from the calculations, this means the data is not representative of the whole KS5 cohort and as can be seen in Chart 2 below, FE Level 3 attainment rates are generally good. None of the 3 colleges achieved a positive value added score for technical learning in 2014/15.
25. KS5 destination measures have been published since 2012 as "experimental statistics" and there are still high percentages of activity not captured in the key stage 5 measure, largely relating to those who enter

² For calculations, see:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/516434/16_to_18_calculating_the_average_point_scores_2015

employment. The data relates just to those studying for a Level 3 or equivalent qualification, which of course means that large proportions of students at Swindon College and Wiltshire College are excluded from the data. Latest data published in 2016 relates to students' destinations in 2013/14. Alternative data collected by the colleges is not gathered in a consistent format so with the above caveats - and acknowledging that the data includes a high proportion of 'unknowns', the measures show that overall, both authorities achieve below average performance in relation to the percentage progressing to positive destinations from FE Colleges.

26. For 16-18 year olds, there is room to improve attainment at Levels 1 and 2 for those pursuing technical routes at Swindon and Wiltshire Colleges, though attainment rates at Level 3 are good. More recent data shows that Wiltshire College's achievement rates have improved to above the national average (no data on the other colleges):



Source: National Achievement Rate Tables 2014/15

Chart 4: Achievement rates for 16 – 18 learners

For older learners, Swindon College achieves outcomes well above average and Wiltshire College achieves well above average at Level 3:

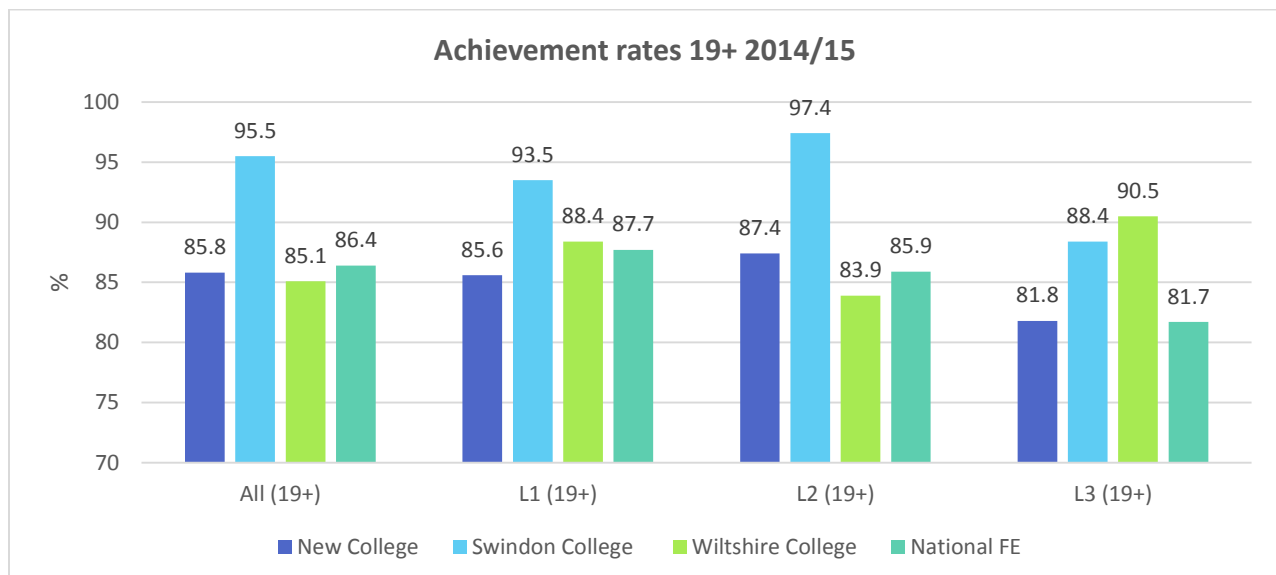


Chart 5: Achievement rates for 19+ learners

27. Our workforce is not sufficiently skilled to take advantage of the growing demand for higher level skills. Swindon's working age population is relatively poorly qualified compared to England as a whole, and whereas Wiltshire's working age population is relatively well qualified, the picture is not consistent across the county, with some areas having very low levels of graduate residents.

Learners with Special Educational Needs/ Disabilities (SEND) and vulnerable learners.

28. Overall, whilst numbers of pupils with an identified SEND are relatively stable, there is growing demand for specialist places, creating place pressure in the system and adding to the financial pressures. Planned housing developments and the Army Basing plans will see the numbers of pupils with SEND rise along with the overall rise in numbers of young people.
29. The main change through time has been an increase in young people with Aspergers and Mental Health Needs in Swindon; in Wiltshire there has been an increase in resident 16-18 year olds with multiple disabilities, no doubt reflecting fewer going out of county to learn.
30. In 2015/16, 762 learners in the SWLEP area were identified as High Needs learners. The majority of these learners are catered for by the FE sector and Swindon and Wiltshire Colleges are in the top 20 colleges nationally for their numbers of High Needs students and there are limited out of area placements. There have been some key developments in provision for the SEND group, including Supported Internships but numbers are small. A wider strategy is needed to improve outcomes and progression for this cohort, with below average proportions of KS5 SEND learners achieving positive outcomes or paid employment relative to national figures.
31. As is outlined below, other vulnerable groups of learners have poor attainment and progression outcomes across the area and do not perform as well as the national average. 'Narrowing the gap' is a key priority for the area.

5 Gaps in provision

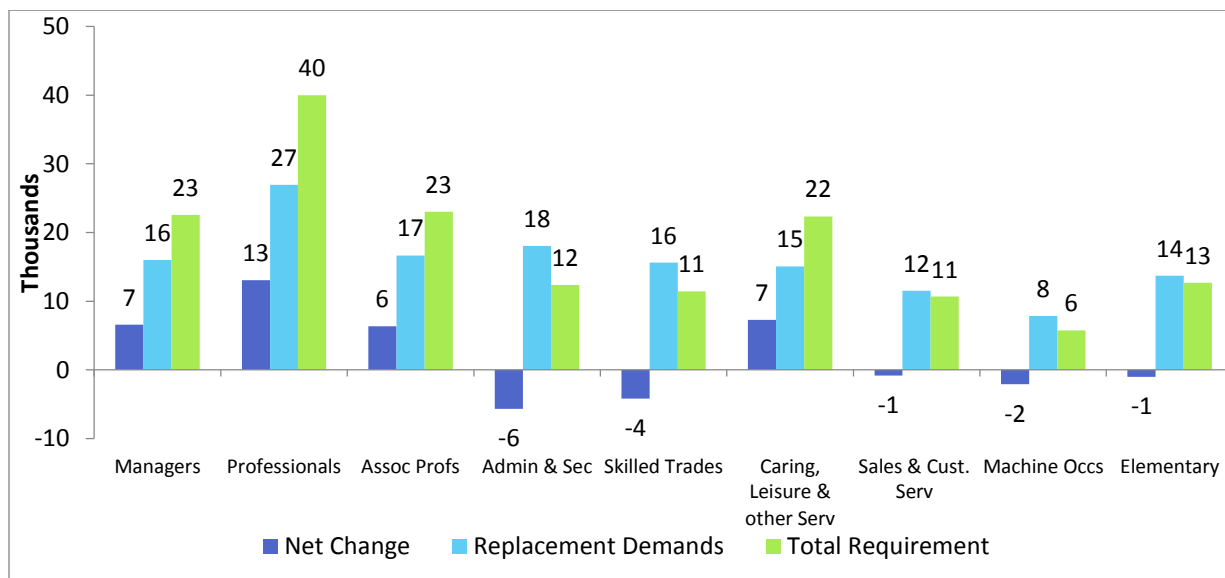
32. One of the LEP's priorities is to secure better higher education provision. Both Swindon and Wiltshire have **below average proportions** of young people who entered A levels or other Level 3 qualifications progressing to Higher Education. HE progression in Swindon is amongst some of the very lowest in the country. HEFCE 'cold spot' data shows that there are 9 wards in Wiltshire and 10 in Swindon where HE participation is not only at low levels (in the lowest 2 quintiles nationally) but is also far lower than might be expected given prior attainment.
33. By 2024, the LEP is expected to have a population of three quarters of a million and without any significant change in the provision of higher level learning, none of these residents will have ready access to Higher Education which meets the needs of local employers. At present, Swindon and Wiltshire is the only LEP in the country without a university campus. Recent BIS research on local competitive advantage demonstrates the LEP's weak position in this regard, being one of only two LEPs in the country which does not have the capacity to deliver STEM degrees to meet its employers' needs.
34. The local colleges' strategic plans acknowledge the shift in qualification needs and need for higher skill levels and are developing their plans for shaping how HE in FE over the next five years develops for mutual benefit, but historically there has been little change. If we are to achieve our ambitions for

growth and innovation then we need to raise aspirations, awareness and attainment so that all our residents to have the skills to compete for the high value jobs we are seeking to bring to the area and we want to explore all financially viable options to achieve this.

35. Another particular concern relates to the outcomes for our vulnerable learners (SEND/FSM/care leavers). At KS4 our vulnerable pupils not only fare less well than their counterparts but worse than nationally. These attainment gaps continue through to the age of 19, when in both authority areas young people eligible for free school meals (FSM) or identified as SEND attain L2 and L3 at below national average rates. Subsequent progression rates to Higher Education for those eligible for FSM are amongst the lowest in the country.
36. The growth of apprenticeships is the governments key strategy to improve skill levels for competitiveness and this is an area that requires a strategic approach to growth across the FE sector.

5 Skills

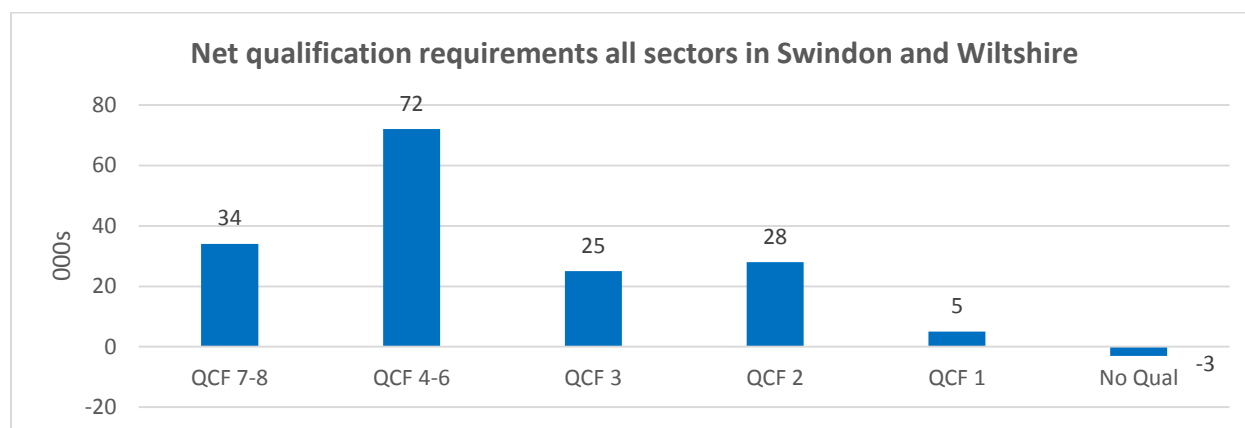
37. The LEP's key objective in relation to skills and talent is that **"We need an appropriately skilled and competitive workforce to achieve our growth ambitions."** We have a vibrant and competitive economy with high employment rates and good growth prospects.
38. Projections prepared by Working Futures show that the economy is expected to grow in line with the national average, generating 19,500 new jobs to 2022 (+5%). An additional 141,000 jobs will come about from replacing workers leaving the workforce.
39. Professional services will see the fastest level of growth at 16% or 13,000 jobs. A range of other services will also prove to be important sources of growth through replacement demand with Wholesale and retail and Health and social work generating 43,000 jobs between them.
40. In terms of occupations, Professionals, Managers and Associate professionals together with Care, leisure and other service jobs will account for **68%** of all job openings to 2022.



Source: Working Futures 2012- 2022, UKCES

Chart 6: Net change, replacement demand and total demand by occupation in Swindon and Wiltshire 2012-2022

41. The shift in the occupational structure of employment towards higher level, more skilled occupations, inevitably has implications for the qualifications required to fulfil demand for skilled labour.
42. The overarching picture is that around 106,000 new workers with **qualifications at L4 and above will be required accounting for 66% of all future demand**. Comparison of demand with the supply of post 16 learning shows that whereas there have been falls in the amount of provision at L2 and below (all ages) the shift to the provision of higher level skills is not happening fast enough and without change there will be shortfalls of people with L4+ qualifications in every key growth sector.



Source: Working Futures 2012- 2022, UKCES

Chart 7: the changing demand for qualifications in Swindon and Wiltshire 2012-2022

43. In addition to qualification needs, local employer research has shown that **technical, practical or job specific** skills are a priority for most sectors. As well as specific technical skills, employers were clear on the need for recruits to have improved **leadership and management, employability skills, communication skills, numeracy and literacy as well as corporate and behavioural/soft skills**.
44. The FE Choices Survey for 2014/15 showed Swindon College was in the top 5 in the country for employer satisfaction with a score of 9.4. Scores for New College (8.6) and Wiltshire College (8.0) were also relatively high suggesting that there are strong foundations on which to build.
45. The LEP has identified a number of priority sectors which are driven by innovation and contribute significantly to productivity but which do not all necessarily generate significant job opportunities. The common characteristics of these sectors is a need for **STEM skills** and high level technical skills. The Local Authorities have responded to their needs for STEM and higher level technical skills by developing UTCs in Swindon and Salisbury and the LEP has responded by the development of the City Deal Higher Futures programme. However, it is clear that there is a need for greater higher level provision, through FE, HE and apprenticeships to ensure that local residents have the skills to take advantage of the opportunities provided by these sectors.

6 Recommendations

46. We want to create the appropriate infrastructure for the future to support the delivery of high quality academic and technical learning across Swindon and Wiltshire, which raises aspirations and improves attainment and progression. We have a short term decline in numbers, combined with significant variations in learner outcomes across providers and significant gaps in attainment between vulnerable young people and the whole population. The current post 16 offer does not sufficiently enable routes

to employment, particularly apprenticeships or progression to higher level learning for all young people. The rural dimension in Wiltshire means that not all learners can access a broad academic or technical offer. In Swindon, a number of young people are choosing academic learning outside the area including Cirencester. The forecast changes in the labour market require more young people in the future to have higher level skills and with Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects.

Configuration of Provision

47. The infrastructure needs to support an integrated approach to technical and academic learning in line with the Sainsbury Review. This will require a strategic approach and forward planning with other providers i.e. schools, school sixth forms and training providers.
48. Learners need access to a full offer, regardless of where they live. In Wiltshire, there needs to be a broad academic and technical offer across the county with the FE College, school sixth forms and other providers working collaboratively.
49. We need to reduce duplication in both academic and technical provision and build on individual provider strengths. This should include strategic and collaborative approaches across the area with specialisms, ensuring duplication is limited. Options to ensure the colleges in Cirencester and Swindon are sustainable given the increase in sixth form provision need to be explored. In Swindon, the need to improve outcomes for learners and to offer a high quality broad academic and technical offer suggests that there would be significant advantages in collaborative approaches or a formal merger of the two colleges. This would be more sustainable than the current arrangement.

Outcomes for learners

50. There is a need to improve attainment in technical subjects, particularly at Levels 1 and 2 and to provide learning that adds value. At Level 3 we need to ensure that learners are able to achieve good outcomes across all provision and progress to higher levels.
51. We also need to drive up English and maths attainment pre 16 and by the age of 19 to give learners the foundations for progression and for employment. This is currently a presenting a barrier to progression.

Learners with Special Education Needs & Disabilities (SEND)/vulnerable young people

52. A particular concern is for vulnerable young people who have not achieved well in the past and we wish to explore a range of options to improve attainment, raise aspirations and improve outcomes.
53. We need to ensure that young people with SEND and other vulnerable groups have high quality options which enable them to achieve successful outcomes, including employment and apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships

54. The Apprenticeship levy provides new opportunities and there is a need to build up the numbers of employers and learners engaged in apprenticeships, particularly at higher levels as a route to providing the skills the economy needs. There is also mileage in providers working collaboratively to agree opportunities for specialisms, building on current strengths.

Progression into employment and Higher Education

55. There is scope for greater specialisation and we want to see clear progression pathways to higher education and employment, particularly in STEM subjects to provide the skills that employers need. There is a need to consider whether an Institute of Technology would support the shift to higher level skills provision.
56. The college offer needs to include clear pathways into employment including apprenticeships with opportunities for further learning and progression in partnership with employers so that employees are

able to gain higher levels of skills in the short or longer term. This is particularly the case in STEM subjects to provide the skills that employers need.

57. In the absence of a Higher Education Institution in Swindon and Wiltshire the development of local Higher Education provision and close collaboration with Universities from outside the LEP has a critical role in providing aspirational goals for young people and supporting pathways to learning.

Gaps in provision

58. There are two main gaps in provision; provision at level 2 and below which leads to progression into employment or apprenticeships and meets the needs of vulnerable young people and university level provision (level 4 plus).

Skills

59. We want employers to play a leading role in shaping and contributing to the curriculum to meet future needs and to support the delivery of an integrated approach to skills development with work experience and other experiences to gain an understanding of the world of work, internships and apprenticeships. In addition, the engagement in the curriculum for young people should link to a wider engagement in skills development for the workforce at all levels.
60. The skills system needs to respond to the increasing demand for jobs at higher levels and ensure pathways and progression routes to university level provision as well as increased numbers of apprenticeships. Planning of provision also needs to take into account the predicted volumes of jobs required by sector and the implications for up-skilling of the workforce. Large volumes of higher level skills are required in engineering, manufacturing, ICT, professional services and health and social work.

Appendix 1: Swindon and Wiltshire Strategic Economic Plan

Strategic Objective 1 – Skills & Talent. We need an appropriately skilled and competitive workforce to achieve our growth ambitions.

Priority actions

Skills system:

- Ensure there is a robust and responsive post 16 education and skills sector operating to meet the needs of learners and employers which is financially efficient, sustainable and operates from campuses which are fit for purpose;
- Improve progression routes to employment in the post 16 education sector, with strong employer involvement in the curriculum to ensure improved employability;
- Deliver options to enhance higher education participation across Swindon and Wiltshire meeting the demand for higher level and degree-level qualified employees locally; and
- Ensure that the learning and skills offer reflects the needs of the area, including the priority sectors, providing effective Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) skills.

Skills for growth:

- Develop a skilled and competitive workforce meeting the needs of employers;
- Develop higher level skills provision through smarter engagement between the higher and further education sectors and business;
- Achieve a higher proportion of individuals employed in higher skilled and higher value-added roles (Level 4 and above) in priority sectors; and
- Embed apprenticeships as an established route to employment and maximise the opportunities to grow higher and degree apprenticeships.

Skills for inclusion:

- Improve educational attainment, exceeding the national average, at age 16 (including English and Maths) and at age 19;
- Realise the potential of residents with barriers to employment, including young people and older workers and develop innovative approaches to providing support; and
- Ensure impartial and independent professional careers advice and guidance is operating across schools and colleges.

Enabler of other priorities:

- Ensure military service leavers and existing employees have clear pathways to new skills and flexible learning.