

**Greater Birmingham
& Solihull**
Local Enterprise Partnership

Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP

Skills for Growth Apprenticeship Action Plan



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Skills for Growth Apprenticeship Plan

Executive summary



Executive summary

The Greater Birmingham and Solihull area is a fantastic place to live, work and do business. It has more than 52,000 VAT registered businesses, 835,000 jobs and a GVA of about £34 billion. Underpinning this local economy are the area's education and skills providers including schools, colleges, training providers and five universities. We know that skills, where they are well used, have the power to drive the economy and we are keen to ensure that in Greater Birmingham and Solihull we really put skills to work. The area therefore has a huge resource to draw upon, but we feel that it could be used even more effectively going forward. The Skills for Growth Action Plan and the Apprenticeship Action Plan have been developed to support the effective use of skills in the area and to create an upward spiral of skill development and economic growth based on effective partnerships between education and employers.

The Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBS LEP) is committed to a transformation of the skills and employment system in the LEP-wide area. This change will put the development of skills at the centre of the local economy. It will ensure that providers of education and training work closely with employers to the benefit of all. The Skills for Growth Action Plan and the Apprenticeship Action Plan set out how the transformation will be achieved by harnessing the energies of a wide range of local stakeholders, politicians, business leaders and providers of education and training.

The GBS LEP has developed a three pronged local development strategy based around the following top level objectives:-

Business	People	Place
Increasing the numbers of successful businesses starting, sustaining, growing and employing within the GBS LEP	Shaping the skills market so that it delivers a strong local talent pool filled with the skills that businesses need to support their growth	Providing an attractive environment where businesses are better connected to workforces, markets and coordinated development opportunities

Sectors

The GBS LEP has chosen five priority sectors where it can set the pace and build capacity to grow employment and the economy. In addition a further six sectors have been identified in this Plan demonstrating where current growth or churn creates a continuing skills demand.

GBS LEP Priority Growth Sectors	Growth Sectors and Sectors with high skills demand
Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering ICT Cultural Buzz Life Sciences Environmental Technologies	Health and Social Care Retail Transport and Logistics Food and Drink Manufacture & Production Construction Financial and Professional Services

Sector Needs

These priority and growth sectors have a number of needs which include increasing the volume of Apprenticeships across the LEP area and improving the images of key employment sectors such as Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, Environmental Technologies and Health & Social Care. It is also important that as the number of Apprenticeships in the LEP area is increased, we ensure they support the growth in the area's Enterprise Zone and Belt. Also, that they provide a progression pathway to Higher Level Apprenticeships, which can support the area's technological change, economic growth and succession planning. Employers and training providers also seek greater employability skills in prospective apprentices than they are currently able to find.

The role for Apprenticeships

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) argues that Apprenticeships are able to help businesses across all sectors by offering a mechanism to harness fresh talent. NAS note that UK businesses consider skills shortages and recruitment difficulties a bigger threat to performance than soaring oil prices and declining consumer spending, and more than a quarter of these businesses rate this form of vocational training higher than any other qualification. The GBS LEP would endorse this position and believe that Apprenticeships are a core element of the development of skills in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull area.

The GBS LEP recognises that Apprenticeships can ensure that the workforce has the practical skills and qualifications organisations need now and in the future. The mixture of on and off the job learning ensures that Apprentices learn the skills that work best for business needs. Apprenticeships can therefore benefit businesses through increased productivity, improved competitiveness and a committed and competent work-force.

Skills Actions:

The Apprenticeship Action Plan sets out 23 actions to focus on over the next five years to increase and improve the quality of apprenticeships. These actions also form part of the larger Skills for Growth Plan.

Core action: **C1** Development of the GBS LEP Skills for Growth Hub

Actions to Engage Employers:

- E1** Establishment of five priority sector-based groups to inform all sector focused activity
- E4** Supporting employer ownership of the skills agenda
- A2** Promoting Apprenticeships to employers
- A3** Considering the development of one or more Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA's)
- A4** Working with Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) in the priority and key sectors to support delivery
- A5** Ensuring that the priority sectors engage with Higher Apprenticeships
- P1** Organising strategic 'immersion' events which kick-start or reinvigorate relationships between employers and education providers around the needs of our priority growth sectors

Actions to Engage Learners and Apprentices:

- A1** Developing work-based pre-Apprenticeship programmes and/or traineeships
- A6** Delivering an Apprenticeship Campaign to schools
- S4** Creating engagement clusters - where groups of schools come together with colleges, universities and independent providers to build sustained relationships with local employers
- S5** Recruiting employers onto school Governing Bodies
- S9** Scoping an online career hub and learning resources for the GBS LEP area
- S10** Ensuring use of existing curriculum enrichment and career learning programmes by schools and employers
- W2** Developing appropriate occupational routeways for a range of unemployed individuals to up-skill and access job opportunities arising from major local developments and priority sectors

Actions that address the Quality of Apprenticeships:

- A7** Committing to the principles of sustainable Apprenticeships, ensuring a conducive learning environment
- A8** Developing the work based learning provider workforce to grow employer engagement
- A10** Developing the work based learning provider workforce to work with Higher Apprenticeships

Actions to raise the profile of Apprenticeships:

- A9** Developing Apprenticeship Ambassadors
- A11** Providing inset training and initial teacher education to increase teachers' awareness of Apprenticeships
- A12** Holding Apprenticeship celebration events
- A13** Improving the marketing and PR of Apprenticeships
- S1** Expressing local concerns about career education, guidance and work-related learning policy to government



Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP

Apprenticeship Action Plan: Key Actions

Apprenticeship Action Plan: Key Actions

In this plan the GBS LEP sets out the key actions that will need to be undertaken to **stimulate the growth and uptake of apprenticeships** in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull area. This Plan looks in more depth and focuses on apprenticeship needs. It expands on key skills needs and actions highlighted in the accompanying Skills for Growth Action Plan that also have a significant part to play in stimulating the growth of apprenticeships in the LEP-wide area.

Each action in this Plan identifies where key responsibilities lie for realising that action and sets out key milestones for its achievement: **short term milestones relate to years 1 and 2, medium term milestones relate to years 3 and 4 and long term milestones relate to year 5, i.e. achievement by 2018.** The Plan also describes what success will look like and establishes a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) which reflect the anticipated outcomes from these actions. The GBS LEP ESB will be reviewing progress against these KPI's annually, as well as reviewing the impact of the Apprenticeship Action Plan in year five, as part of its whole development of future planning.

There is one **core action**: the **Development of the Skills for Growth Hub**.

The further actions are divided into four sections: actions to engage employers, actions to engage learners and apprentices, actions that address the quality of Apprenticeships and actions that raise the profile of Apprenticeships.

Action C1	Lead	Partners
<p>Development of the GBS LEP Skills for Growth Hub</p> <p>The (virtual) Skills for Growth Hub will engage employers, learners and providers and encourage and support them to engage with education, training and Apprenticeships. It will develop mechanisms to ensure that the skills system works effectively, for example through ensuring that 'Talent Match', the National Careers Service and relevant national and European Union funding are well used within the LEP.</p>	Skills for Growth Hub	NAS SFA DWP FE Colleges Private Training Providers HE Job Centres Chambers of Commerce Careers and employability providers Intermediaries Employers Schools SSC's
Short-term Milestone	Initial scoping, conceptual design and action plan covering short, medium and long term areas of focus and development with partners and stakeholders. The Skills for Growth Hub is commenced and operational	
Medium Term Milestone	The Hub is engaging with key stakeholders, employers, private training providers, Sector Champions and learners in order to improve the take up of apprenticeships, develop new opportunities and to evaluate supply/demand issues. Medium term areas of Hub focus are reviewed	
Long Term Milestone	The Skills for Growth Hub will review and evaluate progress on developing projects that focus on future and long term skills and	

Actions to Engage Employers

Action E1		Lead	Partners
Establishment of five priority sector-based groups to inform all sector focused activity. Five sector-based groups will be established to represent a wide range of employer interests and cover the LEP geography. These groups will be set up and led by the Sector Champions		Growth Sectors Group	Sector Champions Employers NAS SFA
Short Term Milestone	Sector Groups established Immersion events take place Sector specific labour market intelligence reviewed by the groups Sector specific labour market intelligence packaged to inform training provision and careers advice Three key actions identified for each Sector Group to take forward Government meet with Sector Champions as part of their commitment to work with, support and enable their work. To include actively engaging them in policy and apprenticeship framework development, where necessary or needed		
Medium Term Milestone	Review of Sector Groups to assess impact and ongoing appropriateness of priority sectors Extend/appoint new Sector Champions and ambassadors Labour market intelligence reviewed and re-packaged annually		
Long Term Milestone	Review of Sector Groups to assess impact and ongoing appropriateness of priority sectors Extend/appoint new Sector Champions and ambassadors Labour market intelligence reviewed and re-packaged annually		

Action E4		Lead	Partners
Supporting employer ownership of the skills agenda The LEP ESB will work with policy makers, funders and employers to realise the vision of employer ownership of skills.		LEP ESB / Local ESBs	Sector Champions Employers SSC's Careers and employability providers
Short Term Milestone	Establish effective relationships with policy makers, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) and other key influencers in this agenda. Communication and support channels are developed to enable employers in the GBS LEP area to bid for future funding.		
Medium Term Milestone	Successful bids are being developed, implemented and evaluated.		
Long Term Milestone	Employer ownership of skills is being normalised in the GBS LEP skills system.		

Action A2		Lead	Partners
<p>Promoting Apprenticeships to employers Sector Champions ensure that opportunities are taken to outline the benefits of Apprenticeships to employers. This will include presentations at business events, sector events, professional associations as well as making use of relevant online tools.</p>		Skills for Growth Hub	Skills for Growth Champions Employers NAS FE Colleges Private Training Providers HE Careers and employability providers Intermediaries Business Support Agencies including Chamber of Commerce, Business Birmingham and Solihull Business Investment Team.
Short Term Milestone	A communications, marketing and PR plan is developed to achieve growth in apprenticeship numbers, by using targeted marketing methods and follow up actions. The plan will align with national NAS PR mechanisms and reflect local ESB campaigns. The plan will indicate the number of businesses across the GBS LEP area, broken down by geographical area and the approach for engagement. Develop content for Skills for Growth Champions toolkit Establish baseline of employers accessed		
Medium Term Milestone	Increase the numbers of employers engaged with Apprenticeships year on year (and by at least 20%), from previous years baseline data of employers accessed		
Long Term Milestone	Increase the number of employers engaged with Apprenticeships by at least 40% from the previous year's baseline data of employers accessed		

Action A3		Lead	Partners
<p>Considering the development of an Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) approach In order to assist employers to engage with Apprenticeships, options for the development of an ATA should be considered. which will ensure the continuity of employment for learners or enable the risk for some employers to be taken. The options will include assessing whether a new ATA should be developed or whether support from a current ATA on the national register can be harnessed and</p>		Skills for Growth Hub	NAS TBC following scoping exercise

expanded into the GBS LEP area, where appropriate.		
Short Term Milestone	Scoping exercise carried out to determine need and criteria used to determine appropriate option to follow Discussions with NAS re: national register Host/partnership identified Register ATA with NAS, if appropriate	
Medium Term Milestone	An ATA established or existing ATA support expanded to focus on SMEs in priority sectors (or otherwise) and operating across the GBS LEP area.	
Long Term Milestone	The ATA is able to respond to all employer skills and training needs where needs are not already met by a local provider.	

Action A4		
	Lead	Partners
Working with the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs). Employers and providers in the area should work more closely with the SSCs to ensure that their needs are adequately represented and to support the development of new Apprenticeship frameworks where required.	Skills for Growth Hub	Employers SSC's Sector Champions
Short Term Milestone	The Skills for Growth Hub works with the priority and growth sector SSCs in order to develop links and create pathways for engagement with employers. Following sector immersion events gaps in existing Apprenticeship frameworks are identified and plans developed to address this	
Medium Term Milestone	The Skills for Growth Hub brokers relationships between employers and SSCs in order to promote Apprenticeships and the SSC services.	
Long Term Milestone	Ongoing relationships between providers, employers and SSCs are in place to promote increases Apprenticeship numbers.	

Action A5		
	Lead	Partners
Ensuring that the priority sectors engage with Higher Apprenticeships The priority sectors engage with Higher Apprenticeships and provide progression opportunities where appropriate	Skills for Growth Hub	Sector Champions Private Training Providers FE HE Employers NAS
Short Term Milestone	Explore gaps in higher apprenticeship provision, based on employer needs and demands (in priority sectors and/or otherwise) and commence feasibility/development discussions.	
Medium Term Milestone	Agree timelines to develop and accredit new higher level frameworks, train providers/employers and promotion to employers in the sector.	
Long Term Milestone	Monitor demand and supply of higher apprenticeships in order to secure a manageable throughput of learners and assess that there are clear opportunities for progression	

Action P1		Lead	Partners
Organising strategic ‘immersion’ events – creating stronger links between training providers and employers The Sector Champions will co-ordinate a series of ‘immersion’ events which are designed to kick-start or reinvigorate relationships between employers and education providers around the needs of a particular sector.		Growth Sectors Working Group	Sector Champions Private Training Providers FE HE Employers Chambers of Commerce
Short Term Milestone	Five immersion events held Key actions agreed Evaluation of approach and re-design as appropriate		
Medium Term Milestone	Five immersion events held annually, one for each of the Priority Sectors Consideration of holding immersion events in other sector groups Evaluation of approach and re-design as appropriate		
Long Term Milestone	Consideration of holding immersion events in other sector groups Evaluation of approach and re-design as appropriate		

Actions to Engage Employers: What will success look like?

- Employers are driving the skills agenda in the LEP area.
- Apprenticeships are valued and prioritised by employers.
- Employers are influencing the curricula of education and training providers.
- Employers are playing a role in the delivery of learning within post-secondary education.
- Employers feel that they have successfully influenced the range of programmes available so that they meet the needs of the area’s labour market and that the range of provision continues to develop appropriately.
- Established relationships are developed between key employers and post-secondary providers particularly in the priority and growth sectors.

What success looks like in the priority and growth sectors:

Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering

- Apprenticeships targeted at age 19 plus learners and a separate focussed campaign on 16-18 year olds
- Larger volume of Apprenticeships across the region
- Higher level Apprenticeships for new and existing workforce to support technological change, economic growth and succession planning

Life Sciences

- Increase in number of Apprenticeships delivered especially in Birmingham
- Higher level Apprenticeships delivered for new and existing workforce

Environmental Technologies

- Apprenticeships support the growth of the sector

ICT

- Greater volume of Apprenticeships delivered across the region

- Higher Apprenticeships delivered.

Cultural Buzz

- Provision focuses on the leadership, management and entrepreneurial functions. For the creative sectors this is particularly relevant in relation to the exploitation of intellectual property, co-production and international trading. The higher Apprenticeship L5 in Management & Leadership, with a focus on the creative sector may assist with this skills need.

Health & Social Care

- More Apprenticeships delivered

Transport and Logistics

- Increased provision of all types across the area

Hospitality, Food and Drink, Tourism

- Increased provision of all types across the area

Financial and Professional Services

- Increased number of Higher Apprenticeships

Construction

- Increased provision for roles such as Senior, executive, and business process managers, construction managers, civil engineers, surveyors and logistics. -The Higher Level Apprenticeship in Sustainable Built Environment and Facilities Management and Construction Operations Management Higher Apprenticeship will support these roles.

KPIs:

- 5 Sector Groups established
- 25% of employers signed up to the Skills for Growth Compact
- 200 employers who have never engaged with Apprenticeships do so.
- 1000 additional apprentices recruited in priority sectors.
- The appropriate development of an Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) has been considered where employer demand demonstrates a need and the ATA is fully operational across the priority and growth sectors.
- Pre-Apprenticeship programmes for school students, schools leavers and the workless are being delivered.
- 200 Higher Apprentices are on programme.

Actions to Engage Learners and Apprentices

Action A1		Lead	Partners
Developing work-based pre-Apprenticeship programmes and/or traineeships Providers and employers to work together to develop work-based pre-apprenticeship and Traineeships programmes which map across to Apprenticeships in order to improve employability and work-readiness skills.		Skills for Growth Hub	Training Providers Employers Schools DWP Job Centre Plus 16-17 youth advisors
Short Term Milestone	Review current state, relevance and availability of pre-apprenticeship programmes. Assess demand, supply and market readiness. Develop interest and demand from employers for pre-apprenticeships and/or Traineeships.		
Medium Term Milestone	Ensure that pre-apprenticeship programmes contribute towards units of an Apprenticeship programme and that clear pathways to jobs, education and/or training are created.		
Long Term Milestone	Evaluate the improvement in work-readiness skills in order to help transition to apprenticeships and/or full time roles.		

Action A6		Lead	Partners
Delivering an Apprenticeship Campaign to schools Develop a schools Apprenticeship campaign aimed at students, parents and staff which reflects the diverse needs of students of different ages and capabilities. Develop and utilise supporting mechanisms such as the National Careers Service to provide unbiased information about apprenticeships within the whole skills offer to learners.		Skills for Growth Hub	Education / Business Working Group Local ESBs Local Authorities HE FE Private Training Providers National Careers Service
Short Term Milestone	Colleges and training providers work together to develop a promotional plan and campaign Promotional materials and produced and distributed All students have access to materials which promote and provide accurate information on Apprenticeships National Careers Service is utilised Evaluate impact of campaign and revise as appropriate		
Medium Term Milestone	Evaluate impact of campaign and revise as appropriate		
Long Term Milestone	Evaluate impact of campaign and revise as appropriate		

Action S4		Lead	Partners
Creating engagement clusters Groups of schools will come together to create clusters capable of supporting a joint member of staff who can build meaningful and sustained		Education / Business Links Working Group	Local ESBs School Cluster Leads Local Authorities Employers

relationships with local employers and post-16 providers of education and training.		
Short Term Milestone	Design an approach to the creation of engagement clusters Develop a communication strategy to promote the approach to schools within the LEP area Three School Engagement Partnerships have been formed. Evaluate impact and revise as appropriate	
Medium Term Milestone	Ten School Engagement Partnerships in place Evaluate impact and revise as appropriate	
Long Term Milestone	Twenty School Engagement Partnerships in place Evaluate impact and revise as appropriate	

Action S5		Lead	Partners
Recruiting employers onto school Governing Bodies. Schools will seek to ensure that they have employer representatives on their Governing Bodies and that these governors are used to inform their employer engagement and career and work-related learning strategies.		Education / Business Links Group	School Cluster Leads Education / Business Links Working Group Local Authorities
Short Term Milestone	Develop information to outline the benefits to employers and schools Develop a communications strategy to promote the benefits to the employer governors and options for how the governors will Short Term Milestone Medium Term Milestone Long Term Milestoneinfluence work-related learning strategies At least 30% of schools have an employer on their Governing Body Evaluate impact and revise as appropriate		
Medium Term Milestone	At least 40% of schools have an employer on their Governing Body Evaluate impact and revise as appropriate		
Long Term Milestone	At least 60% of schools have an employer on their Governing Body Evaluate impact and revise as appropriate		

Action S9		Lead	Partners
Scoping an online career hub for the GBS LEP area A project should be developed to explore how best to draw together existing online career and learning resources in the area. This may be aligned with a common application process for courses and other provision in the area. Consideration should be given to how the National Careers Service can support careers guidance across the LEP and possibly via localised pages.		Education / Business Links Working Group	Skills Hub Local Authorities Schools Sector Based Groups Providers National Careers Service
Short Term Milestone	Working group formed.		
Medium Term Milestone	Report presented outlining how resources could be drawn together, who the LEP should partner with and how such a project could be resourced.		

Long Term Milestone	Recommendations of the working groups report implemented.
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Action S10		Lead	Partners
<p>Ensuring effective use of existing curriculum enrichment and career learning programmes by schools and employers</p> <p>There are a large number of national and local programmes which employers can contribute to and schools can draw on e.g. national activities such as the Education and Employers Task Force “Speakers for Schools” and “Inspiring Futures” programmes, STEM NET, the Engineering Development Trust and local initiatives such as Step Up campaign and BBacc. The LEP should work to increase the profile of these programmes with stakeholder groups and monitor their take up.</p>		Education / Business Links Working Group	Schools Employers Local ESBS Association of Colleges Provider Networks
Short Term Milestone	Research good practice and current websites Produce a brochure or a website setting out all relevant programmes and explaining their utility.		
Medium Term Milestone	Review good practice and websites Report on take up of national and local programmes across Greater Birmingham and Solihull. Use this to engage more stakeholders and develop targets.		
Long Term Milestone	Review good practices, materials and websites Report on take-up of national and local programmes against targets. Review their impact in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull area.		

Action W2		Lead	Partners
<p>Developing appropriate occupational route ways for a range of unemployed individuals to up-skill and access job opportunities arising from major local developments and priority sectors.</p> <p>Recruitment campaigns should recognise the diverse characteristics and access to support of workless people and ensure that route ways are in place for them to access opportunities. Diverse approaches should be taken to broaden the access for under-represented groups – e.g. ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities, particular genders, offenders. Provision, for example through ‘Talent Match’ should be considered, in addition to how appropriate national and European Union funding streams can support the development of approaches.</p>		Local ESBS	Providers Jobcentre Plus Third Sector and Social Enterprises Talent Match
Short Term Milestone	Set up a strategic group of LEP area Work Programme Providers, DWP European Social Fund contractors and National Offender Service co-financing services to ensure that their provision aligns		

	<p>with LEP skills priorities and that they are fully aware of the opportunities arising from major recruitment campaigns.</p> <p>Identify issues and potential solutions and include within the LEP's bid to the Local Growth Fund and other funding and co-funding options</p> <p>Identify three key actions to take forward in year 1</p> <p>Evaluate impact of activity</p>
Medium Term Milestone	Evaluate impact of activity and revise as appropriate
Long Term Milestone	Evaluate impact of activity and revise as appropriate

Actions to Engage Learners and Apprentices: What will success look like?

- Young people develop employability skills which benefit transitions into Apprenticeships
- Young people have opportunities to develop their ambitions in ways that connect meaningfully with the opportunities that exist in the labour market and the progression routes that will take them there.
- Employers provide a powerful resource that schools can harness to re-energise careers education, enterprise learning and work-related learning.
- Schools are fully engaged with employers in delivering employability skills in students
- Improved perception of STEM subjects and careers for learners
- Improved sector image of environmental technologies for learners
- Improved sector image of the adult social care sector as an employment destination
- New methods used to engage an increased number of NEETs into appropriate Apprenticeships or traineeships.
- Diverse approaches are adopted to broaden the access for under-represented groups – e.g. ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities, particular genders, offenders.

KPIs:

- 50% of schools signed up to the Skills for Growth Compact
- School Engagement Clusters operational
- 50% of schools have an employer on their Governing Body
- All schools are delivering career education and work-related learning programmes
- Schools and employers are aware of the range of national and local programmes (National Careers Service, HE, FE, vocational work) that are available to support effective career learning and employability, the level of uptake is monitored and its effectiveness evaluated
- All FE Colleges based in the LEP area are signed up to the Skills for Growth Compact
- At least 40% of training providers are signed up to the Skills for Growth Compact
- The Skills for Growth Hub is active in supporting partnerships between employers and education and training providers

Actions that address the Quality of Apprenticeships

Action A7		Lead	Partners
Committing to the principles of sustainable Apprenticeships, ensuring a conducive learning environment A local Code of Conduct is developed which builds on the NAS minimum/definition of quality of an apprenticeship. Employers commit to these principles through the Skills for Growth Compact thereby ensuring Apprenticeships are provided with a beneficial learning environment for the apprentice in the workplace.		Skills for Growth Hub NAS Employers Training Providers	NAS Private Training Providers Employers HE FE Colleges
Short Term Milestone	Information, advice and guidance on the best approaches for supporting apprentices within the workplace is produced and circulated by NAS, Training Providers and the Skills for Growth Hub.		
Medium Term Milestone	Employers work with their training providers to ensure the best learning opportunities for Apprentices are provided whilst tailoring the Apprenticeship framework to suit the role and business needs.		
Long Term Milestone	Work with employers delivering best practice to support and guide core principles for Apprenticeship recruitment.		

Action A8		Lead	Partners
Developing the work based learning provider workforce to grow employer engagement Training Providers, Colleges and their supply chains invest in their staff in order to ensure all opportunities for working with employers are maximised		Skills Growth Hub	Private Training Providers FE Colleges HE NAS SFA Union Learn
Short Term Milestone	Undertake business support and engagement training with employer engagement facing staff. Assess communication flow between curriculum teams and employer engagement staff in order to improve customer service levels as well as feedback on apprenticeship delivery. Share information on further opportunities for apprenticeships and wider skills training.		
Medium Term Milestone	Develop plans to improve communication and working relationships between managers, curriculum teams and employer engagement staff in order to drive up quality and demand for apprenticeships.		
Long Term Milestone	Assess and evaluate performance in relation to engagement and continually improve processes and procedures.		

Action A10		Lead	Partners
Development of the work based learning provider workforce to deliver with Higher Apprenticeships Providers and their supply chains invest in and support their staff to deliver with Higher Apprenticeships		Skills Growth Hub	Private Training Providers FE Colleges HE NAS SFA

Short Term Milestone	Workforce development plans are put in place to support the workforce working with Higher Apprenticeships ensuring the sector occupational and pedagogical skills of the dual professional role are appropriate for learners working at level 4 and above.	
Medium Term Milestone	Workforce development plans have been implemented and reviewed	
Long Term Milestone	Workforce development plans are maintained	

Actions that address the Quality of Apprenticeships: What will success look like?

- Employers deliver best practice in supporting Apprenticeship
- Learners experience high quality provision at all levels
- Opportunities to engage with employers are maximised
- The workforce is enabled to deliver Higher Apprenticeships: levels 4 to 7
- The GBS LEP has developed its own standard for the quality of Apprenticeships

KPIs:

- All providers delivering Higher Apprenticeships have supported their workforce to deliver and assess these qualifications.
- All employers working with apprentices have committed to the principles of sustainable Apprenticeships.

Actions to raise the profile of Apprenticeships

Action A9		Lead	Partner
Developing Apprenticeship Ambassadors The national Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network provides a strong and supportive employer voice for Apprenticeships. Employers in the GBS LEP area should seek to engage with this network and become Apprenticeship Ambassadors.		Priority sector-based groups	Employers NAS
Short Term Milestone	The Apprenticeship Ambassador Network is publicised to all employers in the area and local structures developed to manage the Network.		
Medium Term Milestone	The Apprenticeship Ambassador Network is well known across the GBS LEP area and provides a strong employer voice around Apprenticeships.		
Long Term Milestone	The Apprenticeship Ambassador Network is well known across the GBS LEP area and provides a strong employer voice around Apprenticeships.		

Action A11		Lead	Partners
Providing inset training and input to initial teacher education (ITE) to increase teachers' awareness of Apprenticeships. Teachers are often key career informants for young people. It is important that they are well informed about Apprenticeships.		Education / Business Link Working Group	ITE providers Head teachers Teachers unions and professional associations
Short Term Milestone	A working group of ITE providers, representatives of schools and Apprenticeship providers is established. Resources are commissioned to be used in inset and ITE.		
Medium Term Milestone	A programme of inset is rolled out. The Apprenticeship awareness resources are integrated into ITE.		
Long Term Milestone	The resources and their implementation are reviewed and evaluated.		

Action A12		Lead	Partners
Holding Apprenticeship celebration events It is important that the achievement of Apprentices is recognised and celebrated. A regular celebration event should be held to provide a focus for this recognition.		ESB	Priority sector-based groups Employers Private Training Providers FE HE NAS
Short Term Milestone	A working group is established to plan the event, gain sponsorship and organise the resourcing of an annual celebration event. Press and publicity strategy for the event is developed. First event is held		
Medium Term Milestone	Funding and resourcing is considered to enable an Apprenticeship celebration event to be established as an annual fixture.		

Long Term Milestone	Apprenticeship celebration event is established as an annual fixture.
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Action A13		Lead	Partners
Improving the marketing and PR of Apprenticeships		ESB Skills for Growth Hub	Private Training Providers Provider Forum HE FE Colleges
Short Term Milestone	A review of the marketing of Apprenticeship across the GBS LEP area is commissioned. Gaps in marketing are identified. A new marketing plan is formed. A working group is established to implement the plan.		
Medium Term Milestone	The new marketing plan has been implemented. The impact of the new plan is evaluated.		
Long Term Milestone	A regular annual or biannual cycle of review and development is established to support the on-going development of the marketing of Apprenticeships.		

Action S1		Lead	Partners
Representing local concerns about current policy in the area of career education and guidance and work-related learning to government. Stakeholders engage with government to ensure that schools policy, including the Ofsted inspection framework, supports the aim of aligning skills supply and demand and incentivises schools to engage with employers. Government needs to put in place a system of incentives and levers that encourage schools to deliver curriculum that prepare young people for work and that give them insights into the local economy in which they are likely to be working.		Education / Business Links Working Group	Employers Schools Local authorities FE Colleges HE Work-based learning providers National Careers Service
Short Term Milestone	LEP Education/Business Links Working Group established Group agrees three key actions to take forward Group meets with representatives from DfE and BIS to discuss how they can support this activity and to look at the potential for departmental secondees to support LEP activity as agreed within the City Deal		
Medium Term Milestone	Revise approach in line with current and emerging policy		
Long Term Milestone	Revise approach in line with current and emerging policy		

Actions to raise the profile of Apprenticeships: What will success look like?

- Apprenticeships regularly receive favourable media coverage and support across the GBS LEP area.

- A wide range of young people aspire to an Apprenticeship.
- Teachers and other career informants are well informed about Apprenticeship.

KPI's:

- The Apprenticeship Ambassador Network is strongly established in the area.
- Teachers in all schools have received training and CPD around Apprenticeships.
- There is regular positive press coverage and PR of Apprenticeships.
- Young people have access to high quality careers education and guidance.

Evaluating and updating the plan

In order to monitor and evaluate the Apprenticeship Plan, a series of actions will be undertaken.

- Progress towards achieving the outcomes and KPIs is evaluated and reported annually.
- The Plan is updated and amended annually in light of progress.
- In year 5 the impact of the Plan is evaluated.
- The Plan is reviewed and a new Plan covering the following five years is produced.



Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP

Underpinning Research and Recommendations

1 The GBS LEP

Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP (GBS LEP) was one of the first LEPs to be approved by the Government. We have been leading the way ever since in developing our local economy. The GBS LEP is led by businesses and local authorities across an area which includes Birmingham; Solihull; Southern Staffordshire - Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Tamworth and North Worcestershire - Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest. The area has a population of nearly two million, contains 835,000 jobs and has a Gross Value Added (GVA) of about £34 billion.

Figure 1: Map of GBS LEP



1.1 Strategy for Growth

The vision and strategic plan for the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP (GBS LEP) 2013 – 2020: ‘**Delivering Growth**’ identifies three areas of focus for development:

Business	People	Place
Increasing the numbers of successful businesses starting, sustaining, growing and employing within the GBS LEP	Shaping the skills market so that it delivers a strong local talent pool filled with the skills that businesses need to support their growth	Providing an attractive environment where businesses are better connected to workforces, markets, and coordinated development opportunities

Delivering Growth sets out six strategic enablers for its focus. Central to skills is the strategic enabler: ‘**improving our skills talent pool**’, where it is recognised that the skills ecosystem needs radical reform and that there is a need to bring about an alignment between employers and education and training providers within a partnership that helps create a demand-led skills system.

The Skills for Growth Action Plan and Apprenticeship Action Plan refers to a second tier of strategic enablers which are intrinsic to supporting the focus of ‘improving our skills talent pool’. This second tier of strategic enablers also reflect core proposals from the skills element of the City Deal and will be required to transform the local skills ecosystem and need to engage all stakeholders in its implementation. These enablers are as follows:

- Providing **inspired leadership** by utilising the Employment and Skills Board (ESB) infrastructure and networks, recruiting local industry champions to inspire employers, providers and learners and influencing key changes at a national level.
- Creating a **dynamic partnership between business and skills providers** using a Skills for Growth Compact through which employers, schools, FE colleges, HE and training providers can work closely together and align careers advice, learning and preparation for work.
- Creating a **demand orientated local skills system** which maximises growth by identifying and articulating local business needs and targeting activity on the area’s key growth sectors, and development and investment opportunities.
- **Increasing aspiration** and opportunity amongst young people and adults by linking pupils and learners with real-world work opportunities; identifying and overcoming barriers to skills development and employment.
- **Supporting a thriving FE and HE skills ecosystem** by working with the area’s Further and Higher Education providers to support a world-leading reputation for educational excellence, and to develop an environment where students and graduates will want to study, live and work.

1.2 No Stone Unturned

A key context within which the Skills for Growth Action Plan has been developed, is the publication of *No Stone Unturned: in Pursuit of Growth*. In this paper Lord Heseltine sets out his vision for a greater role for local employers and the LEPs in directing the use of public funding in their area with the aim of stimulating growth. Heseltine identifies a number of mechanisms to deliver this local control of public services, the idea of creating a single funding pot which LEPs

can centrally bid to. This idea of a single funding pot was endorsed by the Chancellor in the 2013 Budget and is likely to form a critical element of business policy going forwards.

The LEP has been working closely with Lord Heseltine to explore the implications of *No Stone Unturned* for the GBS LEP area. The Skills for Growth Action Plan has been written with this context in mind and incorporates a number of actions that have emerged out of the discussions around *No Stone Unturned*.

1.3 City Deal

The GBS LEP agreed a City Deal in July 2012 which will “Deliver a world class skills system” by reinvigorating the connections between education and employment and driving growth in a number of strategic priority sectors. The GBS LEP has chosen five growth/priority sectors where it can set the pace: build capacity to grow employment and the economy. In addition a further six sectors have been identified in this plan demonstrating where current growth or churn creates a continuing skills demand. Within the GBS LEP area five sectors have been identified as priority sectors which have the capacity to grow employment and the economy. In addition, a further six sectors have been identified where there is current growth or churn which is creating a continuing skills demand.

GBS LEP Priority Growth Sectors	Growth Sectors and Sectors with high skills demand
Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering	Health & Social Care
ICT	Retail
Cultural Buzz	Transport & Logistics
Life Sciences	Food and Drink Manufacture & Production
Environmental Technologies	Construction
	Financial & Professional Services

The City Deal is focused on investing in growth and improving local workers’ skills and the skills of children and young people (from Primary School age to age 24). Skills will be developed in the local area that match the opportunities that exist now and in the future by empowering local businesses to work more closely with education. Through the City Deal, the GBS LEP Employment & Skills Board is striving to:

- Develop Inspired Leadership in the GBS LEP area by recruiting Sector Champions to galvanise the growth sectors (Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, Life Sciences, Cultural Buzz, ICT and Environmental Technologies). The Champions will provide leadership and inspiration to employers, providers and learners and be catalysts for change.
- Create a partnership between employers and education and training providers through a ‘Skills for Growth Compact’ that aligns careers advice, learning and preparation for work with real opportunities now and in the future.
- Deliver sustained business engagement in our schools, colleges and universities which help to build aspirations in young people, improve work readiness, embed enterprise development and provide informed and inspired routes to future opportunities and employment.

- Drive growth in the growth sectors through a 'Skills for Growth Hub', where a clear evidence base ensures a sustained focus is made in sectors identified as having the maximum growth potential and infrastructure and tools are put in place to help deliver this. A key role of this Hub will be to help to increase apprenticeship uptake across the GBS LEP area.
- Re-balance the local skills system to become demand orientated in targeted growth sectors, delivering employer-shaped learning opportunities and responding to development and investment opportunities in the GBS LEP area, including the Enterprise Zone.
- Evaluate the progress and changes that are being made in the GBS LEP area and use this evaluation to improve performance.

The objectives and actions set out in this Apprenticeship Plan are part of the wider Skills for Growth Action Plan and have been generated through extensive consultation with stakeholders across the GBS LEP area, to reflect both the priorities of key stakeholders and the practical actions that they have identified to drive up skill levels in the area. Two initiatives, for example, that are being implemented in support of the City Deal are the recruitment of Sector Champions and the establishment of a Skills for Growth Hub. Sector Champions have already been recruited for each of the five priority sectors and they have been tasked with providing leadership and focus for employers and providers in their sector to drive growth and raise skills. The Skills for Growth Hub concept and implementation plan is currently being developed and is geared towards providing a point of access for employers, learners and providers to foster development of skills and uptake of apprenticeships. Furthermore, stakeholders will commit to undertaking these actions by signing the Skills for Growth Compact.

1.4 Enterprise Zone and Belt

Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone comprises 26 sites across the city centre covering 68 hectares in seven clusters at Westside, Snow Hill District, Eastside, Southern Gateway, Digbeth Creative Quarter, Birmingham Science Park Aston and the Jewellery Quarter. These sites are focussed on the business and financial services, Information and Communication Technology, creative industries and digital media sectors which are already clustered in the city centre and present significant growth opportunities. The Enterprise Zone will support accelerated growth and has the potential to create 40,000 new jobs, add £2 billion a year to the economy and make available 1.3 million sq metres of floorspace over the lifetime of the project. Providers will need to be able to respond to the skills demand generated by the Enterprise Zones in terms of supporting the local workforce to acquire relevant and higher level skills and supporting any workforce re-locating into the area.

The Enterprise Belt covers 580 hectares outside of Birmingham and has the potential to generate £14 billion GVA growth by 2026, create well over 1 million square metres of floor space and up to 96,000 jobs. It includes the M42 Economic Gateway, which is a major growth pole with great potential for investment and job creation. A number of major economic assets are located along or close to the motorway including Birmingham Airport, the NEC, Jaguar Land Rover, Solihull Town Centre and major investment sites at Birmingham Business Park and Blythe Valley Business Park. The Belt also includes a number of sites in the E3I belt, a 20-40 km area

straddling southern Staffordshire and north Worcestershire. This area combines 'economic', 'entrepreneurial', 'environmental' and 'innovation' factors to create the conditions for business growth and potential for sustainable, knowledge-based economic growth.

1.5 The Skills for Growth Compact

The Skills for Growth Compact provides an opportunity for employers, providers, schools and other stakeholders in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP area to contribute to the growth of skills in the area.

The Skills for Growth Compact will take the form of a web site through which stakeholders can sign up to support a number of objectives and actions.

Stakeholders across the region have identified a number of aspirations which, when realised, will further improve the supply of skills in the region, raise expectations and drive growth.

Increasing the volume of relevant and high quality Apprenticeships in the area is one of the key strategies with the skills plan for the area.

2 How the plan was developed

This Apprenticeship Action Plan has been developed in line with reference to a number of sources of information, including data analysis, literature reviews (to inform the baselines) and interviews with a wide range of stakeholders, in order to feed in local perspectives. The format of the consultation varied depending on the organisation or individuals being consulted. The consultation was facilitated through group discussions, whilst in other instances, views were sought through one-to-one conversations or through online interaction methods. Due care and attention was taken to ensure contribution and involvement from the widest range of stakeholders possible. The stakeholders consulted in the creation of this plan included employers, private training providers, FE, HE, schools, learners/apprentices, job club attendees, local authority representatives and key business and employment interest groups.

2.1 Structure of the Plan

The underpinning research paper is set out to provide a clear articulation of the current state of Apprenticeships in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull area. We begin by exploring the demographics of the area and then assessing the current Apprenticeship landscape in those geographical areas, by focusing on the priority and growth sectors. Actions to engage employers, apprentices and to improve/enhance the quality of Apprenticeships are proposed along with actions to raise the profile of Apprenticeships thereafter.

3 Demographic and Employment Profile: GBS LEP Area

3.1 Population

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates that the GBS LEP area has a population of 1,944,057. This is just over 3.15% of the UK population which makes GBS LEP the sixth most populous LEP Region behind London (8,204,400), South East, (3,987,700), Leeds City region (2,954,700), Greater Manchester (2,685,400), and Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (2,110,300). The population is rising and the GBS LEP Plan for Growth forecasts a population increase of 167,000 by 2025 to 2,111,057.

Table 1: Population of the GBS LEP Area¹

	Population	% of GBS LEP
Birmingham	1,073,045	55.2
Solihull	206,674	10.6
South Staffordshire	388,512	20.0
North Worcestershire	275,826	14.2
GBS LEP Area	1,944,057	

The area has an ageing population, demonstrated in Table 2, reflecting that over the last decade the region has had a large increase in the pension age population and a fall in the number of young people.

Table 2: Age Profile: GBSLEP Area (2001-2010 Source: ONS²)

	Population (thousands)		Change
	2000	2010	
All	1,837,000	1,892,000	3%
0-15 years	400,000	388,000	-3%
Working age (16 – 64)	112,000	116,000	+3%
Pension age	312,000	342,000	+10%

However, the position is not uniform across the area (Table 3). Birmingham has a relatively young population with 22% of the population under the age of 16, whilst Wyre Forest (25%), Lichfield (24%) and Bromsgrove (23%) respectively have the highest number of people aged over 60. An ageing population could therefore be an issue for skills and employment in the local economy.

¹ Office for National Statistics (2013) 2011 Census , Population Estimates by five-year age bands, and Household Estimates, for Local Authorities in the United Kingdom. Available from: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/population-estimates-by-five-year-age-bands--and-household-estimates--for-local-authorities-in-the-united-kingdom/index.htmlaspx> [Accessed 9 May 2013].

² Marketing Birmingham (2012). *Future Skills Research – Contextual Review*.

Table 3: Age Breakdown: GBS LEP Area³

	0 – 15	16 – 19	20 – 24	25 – 64	65 and over	Total
Birmingham	229,920	80,278	93,914	530,720	138,213	1,073,045
Solihull	36,377	13,406	11,365	105,930	39,596	206,674
South Staffs	68,200	24,108	22,591	207,427	66,186	388,512
North Worcs	46,425	16,362	14,994	146,563	51,482	275,826
Total	229,920	80,278	93,914	530,720	138,213	1,944,057

Table 4: Economically Inactive Population (16-64): GBS LEP Area. (Oct 2011–Sep 2012 Source: ONS)⁴

	GBS LEP	GBS LEP %	West Midlands %	Great Britain %
All people				
Total	340,400	28.1	25.4	23.3
Student	102,100	30.0	25.7	25.2
looking after family/home	91,700	26.9	26.6	25.1
temporary sick	5,600	1.6	1.7	1.9
long-term sick	72,000	21.2	21.4	21.8
Discouraged	#	#	0.6	0.9
Retired	43,100	12.7	16.1	16.5
Other	24,400	7.2	7.9	8.7

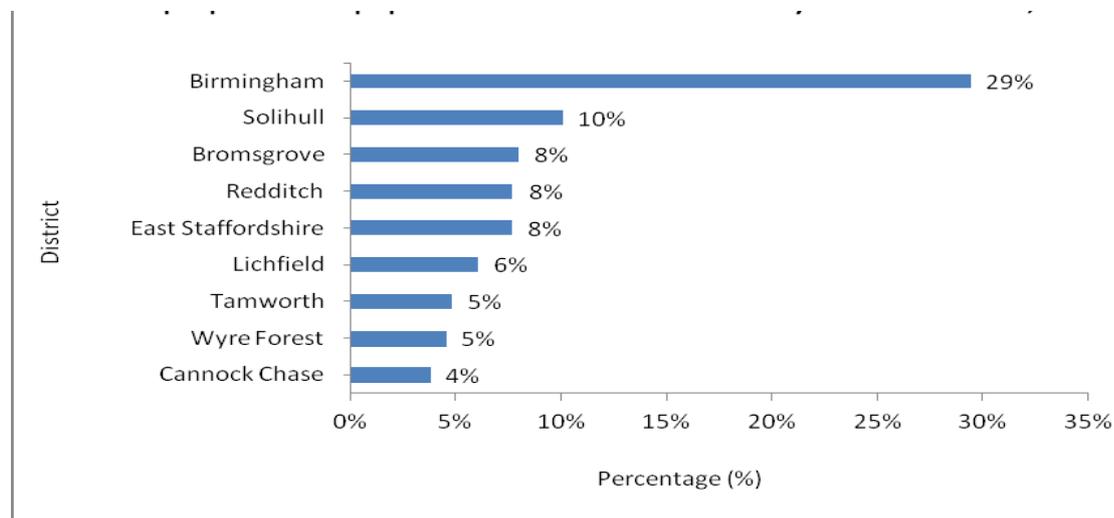
The available workforce is further affected by those who are aged 16 – 64 but are economically inactive due to study, caring responsibilities, ill health, etc. This group of economically inactive individuals make up 22.1% which is slightly below the national average of 22.6%.

³Office for National Statistics (2013). 2011 Census , Population Estimates by five-year age bands, and Household Estimates, for Local Authorities in the United Kingdom. Available from: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/population-estimates-by-five-year-age-bands--and-household-estimates--for-local-authorities-in-the-united-kingdom/index.htmlaspx> [Accessed 9 May 2013..

⁴ Office for National Statistics (2012). *Economic Inactivity (Oct 2011-Sep 2012): Labour Market Profile Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership*. Available from: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/lep/1925185545/report.aspx> [Accessed 12 February 2013].

Overall 78% of the population describe themselves as being white within the region, 20% non-white and 2% other which includes migrants from other EU countries. Figure 2 shows that the ethnic minority population is largely concentrated within the Birmingham area which is one of the most ethnically diverse regions within the UK.

Figure 2 Percentage of non-white population with the GBSLEP area. Source: ONS Mid-2009 Experimental Statistics⁵



The ethnicity of the area does not necessarily have any major implications related to skills policy in the area beyond some broad trends relating to the differential attainment of qualification by different ethnic groups.⁶ Potentially more relevant from a skills perspective are issues relating to the language skills of the population. However, the West Midlands has a higher than average percentage of people who report that English is their main language (92.8%) although Birmingham does have a particularly high concentration of Pakistani Pahari speakers (10,800). Of course the majority of Greater Birmingham and Solihull residents who are not native speakers do speak English well. However, the census did find that 2% of West Midlands' residents were unable to speak English well (or at all).⁷ Although language skills were not a main focus of our consultation, this was not identified as a serious issue by employers nor did any learners suggest that there was insufficient provision for this group across the LEP area.

The West Midlands Regional Observatory⁸ identified lack of relevant skills and qualifications, linked to factors such as disabilities and health problems and a lack of mobility as key barriers to participation in employment for disadvantaged individuals. Marangozov *et al.*, (2009) examined the under-representation of race, gender and disability in apprenticeships and found that the lack

⁵ Marketing Birmingham (2012). *Future Skills Research – Contextual Review*.

⁶ See for example Bhattacharyya, G., L. Ison and M. Blair (2003). *Minority Ethnic Attainment and Participation in Education and Training: The Evidence*, DfES Research Topic Paper RTP01-03 or Lindley, J. (2009). The Over-Education of UK immigrants and minority ethnic groups: Evidence from the labour force survey. *Economics of Education Review*, 28 (1), 80-89..

⁷ Office for National Statistics (2013). *Language in England and Wales, 2011*. Available from http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_302179.pdf [Accessed 5 April 2013].

⁸ West Midlands Regional Observatory (2009). *Economic Inclusion Baseline Report*. West Midlands Regional Observatory.

of tailored and specialist provision and a lack of awareness were key barriers to the underrepresented groups. They identified a number approaches to tackle the issue which included:

- Partnership/collaborative working between key agencies
- Securing employer commitment and addressing work place culture
- Specialised staff (role models, ambassadors and outreach)
- Mentoring and support
- Parental engagement
- Promoting Apprenticeships through role models and different media channels
- Equality training for employers, staff, careers advisers and community workers
- Targeted advertising, taster sessions and work trials.

Based on these findings the Skills Funding Agency and the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) created the Diversity in Apprenticeship pilots which examined pilots of underrepresented groups relating to gender, ethnicity, disability, learning disabilities and difficulties (LDD), religion/belief and sexual orientation as well as uptake among vulnerable groups such as young people not in education, employment or training, young offenders and care leavers among others. A recent evaluation (Newton et al., 2012) found that the most successful approach to tackling gender stereotyping was to start interventions at a young age within school and include provision involving role models and ambassadors. For ethnic minorities they found that a one size fits all approach to different communities does not work and more work is needed to establish what works with different communities relating to different types of apprenticeship. For people with disabilities they found that supported programmes were an effective approach as well as coaching and mentoring. For young people that are NEET or ex-offenders they recommended intensive support that developed employability skills and developed their understanding of work cultures and employer expectations as well support once they have entered employment.

In Australia there are well-developed apprenticeships and traineeships which are collectively described as “Australian Apprenticeships” Recent reform has been in acted to provide increased incentives to employers who take on apprenticeships in areas identified as requiring more skills in the Australian national Skills needs list and for underrepresented groups such as Indigenous Australians, the disabled ,people located in regional or remote Australia and people with poor language, literacy and numeracy skills (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011, Deloitte Access Economics Pty Ltd, 2012).

3.2 Employment

3.2.1 Occupations

The GBS LEP area has lower percentage of managers and professionals than the national average and a higher percentage of both skilled and low skilled occupations. Table 5 sets out further information about the types and levels of occupations in the area.

Table 5: Employment Numbers by Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) (Oct 2011-Sep 2011): GBS LEP Area⁹

	GBS LEP Numbers	GBS LEP %	UK %
1 Managers, directors and senior officials	78,400	9.8	10.1
2 Professional occupations	140,200	17.6	19.2
3 Associate professional & technical	101,700	12.8	14.2
Soc 2010 major group 1-3	320,200	40.7	43.7
4 Administrative & secretarial	88,300	11.1	10.9
5 Skilled trades occupations	86,500	10.8	10.7
Soc 2010 major group 4-5	174,800	22.2	21.7
6 Caring, leisure and Other Service occupations	73,400	9.2	9.0
7 Sales and customer service occs	64,200	8.1	8.2
Soc 2010 major group 6-7	137,600	17.5	17.3
8 Process plant & machine operatives	62,300	7.8	6.3
9 Elementary occupations	92,000	11.5	10.9
Soc 2010 major group 8-9	154,300	19.6	17.3

Alongside the employment profile of the area, it is important to take account of the skills and qualification profile. The GBS LEP area working age population has lower qualification levels than the rest of the UK (Table 6), however skill levels are gradually increasing. The region is likely to need to improve the skills levels of the whole labour force and particularly residents with lower skilled to keep pace with predictions of increasing demand for higher skill levels (UKCES, 2010).

Table 6: Qualifications of working age population. Source: ONS¹⁰

	GBS LEP Numbers	GBS LEP %	GB %
NVQ4 and above	307,600	25.6	32.9
NVQ3 and above	534,600	44.5	52.7

⁹ Office for National Statistics (2012). Employment by Occupation (Oct 2011-Sep 2012): Labour Market Profile Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership. Available from: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/lep/1925185545/report.aspx> [Accessed 12 February 2013].

¹⁰ Office for National Statistics (2012). Qualifications (Jan 2011-Dec 2011) (Labour Market Profile Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership). Available from: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/lep/1925185545/report.aspx> [Accessed 12 February 2013].

NVQ2 and above	753,400	62.8	69.7
NVQ1 and above	927,400	77.3	82.7
Other qualifications	103,300	8.6	6.7
No qualifications	169,600	14.1	10.6

3.2.2 Unemployment

Between 2000 and 2007, total employment rose by around 3% (26,000 jobs) in the LEP area to nearly 860,000. However, due to the recession, employment then fell by over 6% between 2008 and 2010. For example, Birmingham experienced the highest net fall in employment (nearly 37,000 jobs) followed by Solihull. In December 2012 ONS reported that the national unemployment rate dropped to 2.5 million (7.8% of the economically active population) however it is not yet clear whether this constitutes a long-term trend.

Table 7: Unemployment figures for the last quarter of 2012. Source: ONS¹¹

	Number of Unemployed People	Unemployment Rate %
Birmingham	61,800	13.8
South Staffordshire	3,100	5.9
Solihull	7,300	6.8
North Worcestershire	8,500	6.0
GBS LEP Area	90,700	8.41
National		7.8

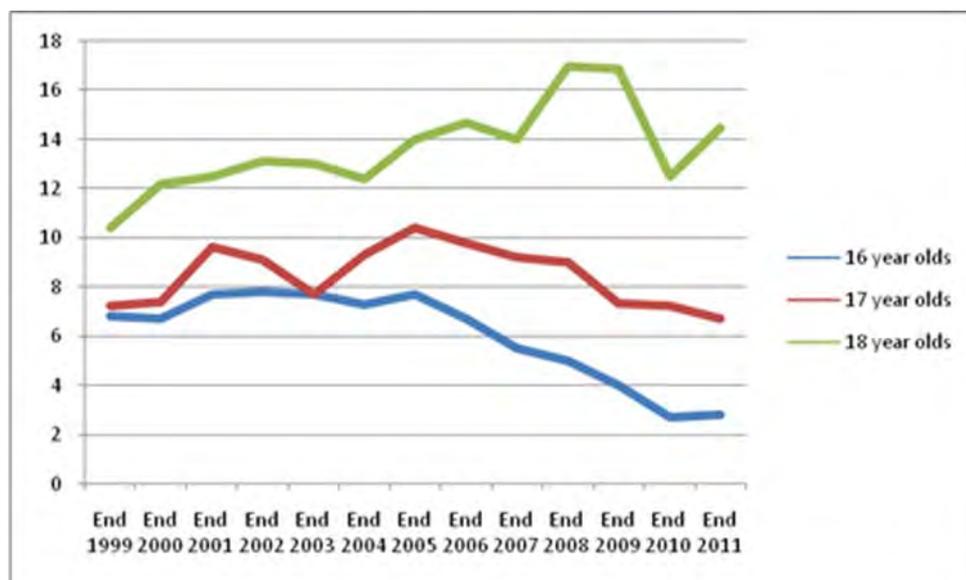
The GBS LEP area unemployment rate is higher than the national average at 8.41%, however, there is considerable variation across the area with unemployment concentrated in Birmingham (13.8%), while Solihull, North Worcestershire and South Staffordshire are all below the national average (Table 7). Two wards with highest rates in the country are in the GBS LEP area: Birmingham Ladywood at 11.7% and Birmingham Hodge Hill at 10.2%.

For young people there are a range of particular challenges related to the initial entry and attachment to the labour market. Many young people are not in education, employment or training (NEET) and it is important that local education and employment policy is formed with a strong recognition of this. The factors which influence NEET status are more complex than solely the individuals relationship with the labour and learning markets, they are also related to wider aspects of their life such as family, friends, poverty, their locality, their experience of education, their role as carers, and their status with respect to ethnicity, disability, homelessness, offending and substance abuse and similar aspects of social exclusion. Young people rarely are

¹¹ Office for National Statistics (2012). *All people - Economically Active – Unemployed*.

continuously NEET but transition in and out of education, training and employment. This transitioning contributes to higher NEET rates at 18 than at younger ages.

Figure 3: End of year NEET percentage 1999 to 2011. Source: DfE 2012¹²



There has been an overall decline in NEETs figures since a peak in 2005. Figure 2, however, shows that a reduction is more evident for younger NEETs (16 and 17 year olds) than for 18 year olds.

Table 8: 16 - 18 year olds NEET and not known by age 2011. Source: DfE¹³

	Age 16			Age 17			Age 18		
	Est No NEET	% NEET	% not known	Est No NEET	% NEET	% not known	Est No NEET	% NEET	% not known
Birmingham	580	4.6%	0.8%	920	6.9%	2.6%	1,240	9.1%	18.7%
Solihull	90	3.6%	0.4%	170	6.5%	3.3%	260	9.7%	8.6%

¹² NEET Statistics – Quarterly Brief, November 2012, available at: www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001099/sfr31-2012.pdf (accessed 13 December 2012).

¹³ DfE 16- to 18-year-olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) 2011 available at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/neet/a0064101/16--to-18-year-olds-not-in-education,-employment-or-training> (accessed 17.05.13).

Staffordshire	270	2.9%	1.6%	470	4.9%	8.6%	790	8.1%	18.3%
Worcestershire	200	3.4%	0.9%	310	5.2%	3.6%	420	7.0%	9.1%
WEST MIDLANDS	2,490	3.9%	1.3%	3,970	6.0%	6.0%	5,830	8.8%	20.1%

Despite the unemployment rate in the area, data from the Department for Work and Pensions indicated that in November 2012 (Table 9) there were still 16,836 unfilled vacancies.

Table 9: Unfilled Job Vacancies: GBS LEP Area (Source: ONS).¹⁴

	GBS Area	Great Britain
Unfilled jobcentre vacancies (numbers)	16,836	389,889
Unfilled jobcentre vacancies per 10,000 population aged 16-64	-	98
JSA claimants per unfilled jobcentre vacancy	3.8	3.7

3.3 Business and Employment Sectors

In 2011 the West Midlands Regional Observatory identified that the GBS LEP region was particularly sensitive to cuts in the public sector and that although private sector job creation was likely to increase, the result of public sector redundancies would produce a net result of 28,000 fewer jobs up to 2015. However the Business Register and Employment Survey from the Office for National Statistics¹⁵ revealed that the Greater Birmingham area experienced an increase in private sector employment of 16,300 between September 2010 and September 2011. The main growth areas were business, professional and financial services which enjoyed a growth of 15,300, whereas retail and computer programming saw decreases of 6,500. Despite these shifts in the local economy the public sector remains as the largest employer in the area (31% of employed people). Table 9 sets out employment by sector for the most recent dataset available.

Research by Cambridge Economics based on GVA suggested a number of sectors that were likely to experience significant growth in the future which included Advanced Engineering industries; Transport and Logistics; Hospitality & Tourism; Retail; and Construction.

¹⁴ Office for National Statistics (2012). *Jobcentre Plus Vacancies (November 2012): Labour Market Profile Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership*. Available from: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/lep/1925185545/report.aspx> [Accessed 12 February 2013].

¹⁵ Office for National Statistics (2012). *Business Register and Employment Survey, 2011*. London: Office for National Statistics. Available from: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_280655.pdf [Accessed 5 April 2013].

Table 10: Primary Sectors: GBS LEP Area (Source: Nomis)¹⁶.

Sector	Position in 2010		2008-2010 trend	
	Employment	Share of total (%)	Numbers	%
Public Sector (Public admin, education & health)	233,800	31%	+12,400	+5%
Wholesale & Retail	121,600	15%	-4,700	-4%
Manufacturing & Engineering	117,400	13%	-15,500	-13%
Higher value Financial & Professional Services	90,400	10%	-11,100	-12%
Lower value Business Services	86,000	9%	-13,400	-16%
Leisure & Tourism	56,200	6%	-10,800	-19%
Construction	43,100	5%	-7,000	-16%
Transport & Logistics	39,800	5%	-2,800	-7%
Other Services	34,800	4%	-4,600	-13%
ICT & Digital	24,300	3%	+2,100	+9%
Primary Industries	6,900	1%	0	0%
Overall GBS LEP	854,335	100%	-55,500	-6%

A number of sectors that had potential for growth that were not currently well represented in the region were also identified. These included:

- Pharmaceuticals and Biotechnology;
- Environmental Technologies and Low Carbon;
- Creative and Media.

They also identified that the Public Sector and Food and Drink, although significant to the region, were likely to have slower future growth.

Nationally family owned businesses employ 40% of all private sector workforce and generate 37% of all private sector turnover. The lower ratio of turnover to volume of business is in large

¹⁶ Marketing Birmingham (2012). *Future Skills Research – Contextual Review*.

part connected to company size as over 50% of family owned businesses employ 10 people or less. The industries with the highest concentration of family businesses are shown at Table 10.

Table 11: Family Owned Businesses (as a %of all private sector business). Source: Institute for Family Businesses¹⁷

	Highest percentage
Agriculture, hunting, forestry, fishing, and extraction and utilities	89.1%
Hotels and Restaurants	84.9%
Wholesale and retail trade and repairs	77.1%
	Lowest percentage
Community, social and personal service	46.2%
Health and social care	36.5%

In 2010, 58% of the West Midlands private sector firms were family owned. Historically family owned businesses tended to be less growth focussed and more risk averse with a preference to recruiting employees from within the family, which in turn can impact on Apprenticeship take-up.

3.4 Forecasting Growth Trends for the UK

It has been estimated the UK will generate 1.5 million new jobs in the period up to 2020 which is a slower rate of growth than in the previous ten years. Although at the same time a large number of people will retire meaning that there will be more “replacement” jobs. It is expected that the private services sector will be the largest growth area with an increase of 1 million jobs which will raise the sectors share of the workforce from 55% to 58%. The manufacturing sector is estimated to maintain its share of output but the share of employment is likely to fall by between 1% and 7%. The public sector is expected to shrink from 27% to 25% in the period¹⁸.

It is estimated that higher skilled, white collar occupations will continue to grow from 42% to 46% share of employment. Skilled and semi-skilled manual roles are likely to continue to fall with their share of employment falling from 18% to 16%. The low skilled will still make up a significant element of the economy with increases of 300,000 jobs in the caring, personal and other service occupations and 100,000 in other job roles.

The demand for skills as measured by formal qualifications is projected to rise as is the supply of people holding higher level qualifications. The number of jobs in occupations typically requiring a degree is expected to continue rise but at a slower rate than in earlier projections.

¹⁷ Institute for Family Businesses (2011). The UK Family Business Sector. London: Institute for Family Businesses. Available from: http://www.ifb.org.uk/media/44219/theukfamilybusinesssectorreportnov2011_final.pdf [Accessed 5 April 2013].

¹⁸ Wilson, R.A. & Homenidou, K. (2012). *Working Futures 2010-2020: Main Report*. Wath upon Dearne: UKCES.

4 The Apprenticeship Landscape: GBS LEP Area

The GBS LEP recognises and supports the take-up of Apprenticeships as an integral part of the strategy in developing skills in the area and creating growth in employment. There is already much good practice to build on in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP area, even though research to date suggests that engagement with Apprenticeships by employers is patchy across the sectors and the geographical regions of the GBS LEP area.

Whilst interest in Apprenticeships has been developing slowly over time and the take-up by employers increasing steadily, our consultation with employers suggested that in some areas the demand for apprenticeships was greater than provision available by training providers and that the quality of some of the potential recruits was poor. Issues such as these require addressing through the help and support of the Sector Champions and the Skills for Growth Hub, which will have a major role to play in supporting employers to access Apprenticeships.

Many of the Employers, FE colleges and training providers consulted also stated that they experienced a number of issues with recruiting new entrants to industries from Schools, Colleges, the Jobcentre and Work Programme providers. Many of the school students consulted expressed a number of misgivings about Apprenticeships, with an overall perception that they were only relevant for those who have little academic capability. Negative media stories and personal experiences amongst friends and families had also deterred some students from engaging with Apprenticeships. The Schools consulted were frequently unaware of the details of the Apprenticeship programmes and teachers often lacked any personal experience of them.

When probed, school leavers, employers and training providers who were seeking to recruit apprentices commented that:

- Higher education was promoted as the best option to higher achieving learners;
- There was limited awareness of apprenticeships amongst school staff which impacts on learner awareness;
- Where apprenticeships were promoted it was generally to the less academically capable learner;
- Learners/recruits often lacked high quality employability skills;
- Schools tended not to engage with employers to enhance employability skills;
- Raising of Participation Age (RPA) – colleges report concerns that school sixth form learners are not always aware of the full range of options open to them. In particular there are concerns that schools are protecting their cohorts of learners to maximise retention within the school. This issue was raised by the House of Commons Education Committee in the context of the loss of impartial career guidance in schools (2013).

Employers also went on to note that those leaving Further Education and Higher Education, as well as those who are workless, did not always demonstrate the employability skills they required. Employers participating in our consultation identified key areas of weakness, as summarised below.

- Punctuality: Employers felt that on completion of their schooling many young people have not acquired the ability to plan their own work day, pace their work, set priorities and meet deadlines;
- Communication: Employers needed employees who are effective communicators, who were confident in conversing with colleagues and customers, but generally felt that good interpersonal skills in applicants were lacking;
- Appropriate Appearance: Employers felt they had to stress the importance of dressing professionally and appropriately for the work environment;
- ICT: ICT is increasingly critical for a wide range of jobs. Employers noted that some of the more mature recruits who were re-joining the labour market after a period of worklessness, were not competent in the effective use of ICT;
- Commercial / Business Awareness: Employers stressed the importance of employees understanding how their work contributes to the overall business and found that this awareness was lacking in recent school leavers;
- Teamwork and the ability to establish productive working relationships: Employers noted some problems in effectively integrating young people into existing workforces and teams.

Despite the issues, the number of apprenticeships delivered by a range of further education, local and national independent training providers across the GBS LEP area is shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Achievements: Total Apprenticeships by home postcode 2010 / 2011. Source: The Data Service¹⁹

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	Total
Birmingham	2,850	1,270	4,120
Solihull	530	270	800
South Staffs	930	550	1,480
North Worcs	650	380	1,030
	4,960	2,470	74,30
%	67%	33%	

The areas listed represent those areas in the GBS LEP area as specified in section 1:

- Birmingham
- Solihull
- South Staffordshire – East Staffordshire, Cannock Chase, Tamworth and Lichfield
- North Worcestershire – Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wyre Forest

¹⁹ The Data Service (2012). *Apprenticeship Framework Achievements by Region, Level and Age (2005/06 to 2010/11)*.

5 Priority Growth Sectors

The GBS LEP has identified the five priority growth sectors where it wishes to set the pace for growth and building skills capacity:

- Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering;
- ICT;
- Life Sciences;
- Environmental Technologies;
- Cultural Buzz.

In this section we describe the current skills landscape, set out the particular challenges relating to each of these sectors, establish baselines and explain how the Apprenticeship Action Plan can support their growth in relation to Apprenticeships.

5.1 Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering

5.1.1 National Picture

SEMTA, the Sector Skills Council for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, describe these industries and businesses as using a high level of design or scientific skills to produce innovative and technologically complex products/processes. Some of the key areas of advanced manufacturing include composites manufacture and development, plastic electronics and nanotechnology. At a wider level this sector includes industries which incorporate advanced processes within production including automotive, aerospace, metals and their supply chains.

At a national level, advanced manufacturing is critical to the UK economy. In 2009 it accounted for over half of UK exports, accounted for 12% of gross value-added (GVA) and employed approximately 2.6 million people. It has been estimated the manufacturing sector is likely to face a number of skills demand and supply challenges in the next few years. In particular an ageing workforce means around 268,000 people will retire in the period up to 2016. Even taking account of the expected decrease of 98,000 jobs due to contraction, there will still be an overall net requirement for 171,000 jobs (24,400 per annum). There is also likely to be a shift in job roles with an 11% increase in managers, directors and senior officers and a 14 % increase in professional and technical jobs. However, it is expected there will be 16 % loss of skilled trade occupations and 23 % loss of process and machine operative jobs. Therefore skills demand across the sector is likely to continue to develop a need for more highly skilled staff as well as increase in the demand for Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) skills²⁰.

²⁰ Davis, C., Hogarth, T. and Gambin, L. with Breuer, Z. and Garrett, R. (2012). *Sector Skills Insights: Advanced Manufacturing*. Wath-upon-Deerne: UKCES.

SEMTA reported that 69% of employers found that applicants across all roles lacked technical, practical or job-specific skills, followed by problem solving skills (31%) and management skills (27%)²¹. These employers also view young people less well prepared for work, than required.

5.1.2 Local Picture

The Advanced Manufacturing sector is worth in excess of £600m to the Greater Birmingham and Solihull economy. Within the area it employs around 20,000 people and is comprised in excess of 760 businesses. This sector will be supported by one of the Enterprise Zones, the Advanced Manufacturing Hub based at the Aston Regional Investment Site²².

The GBS LEP area has a history of automotive manufacturing as well as production within the automotive supply chain. Collapse of these industries in the 80s and 90s largely resulted in the closure of many factories and a loss of jobs. Many of the skilled workers have since retired and are no longer available in the labour market.

More recently, the automotive industry is experiencing a resurgence with Land Rover production in Solihull and Jaguar production at Castle Bromwich operating at 24 hours and the development of the SAIC Motor UK Technical Centre Vehicle and MG production at the former Longbridge works.

Automotive manufacturing in the area is currently worth in excess of £375m and its GVA is expected to grow by 4.9% per year. It employs 11,600 and this is expected to increase at 3.7% per year²³.

The aerospace industry is also in growth with a new maintenance hub at Birmingham Airport creating 300 new jobs. Aero Engine Controls, a joint venture between Rolls-Royce and Goodrich, have plans for a £60 million manufacturing factory in the nearby Birmingham Business Park.

Producers and their supply chains are creating a demand for engineering skills (both in traditional engineering and advanced manufacturing processes), however an ageing workforce in the GBS LEP area is creating Level 3 skills shortage, particularly for roles such as mechanical engineers, production engineers, tool makers, etc.

5.1.3 Supply/Provision

There are two engineering focus UTCs supporting the GBS LEP area. The Aston University Engineering Academy (AUEA) has worked with a number of highly engaged employers who have identified what for them are key learning outcomes in terms of engineering skills and knowledge. These learning outcomes have then been mapped to qualifications at Y11 and Y13 so that learning is driven by real skill demand and qualifications fall out from that learning rather than learning being solely focussed on achieving the content of qualifications. The JCB Academy,

²¹ Semta (2010). *Sector Skills Assessment for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies*. Available from: http://83.223.124.19/~semta/store/files/England_SSA_full_report_2010.pdf [Accessed 5 April 2013].

²² Birmingham City Council (2012). *The Advanced Manufacturing Sector*. Birmingham: Birmingham City Council.

²³ Marketing Birmingham and PA Consulting (2012). *Key Sectors for Inward Investment. Final Report*. Available from: http://www.marketingbirmingham.com/marketing_birmingham_and_pa_consulting/ [Accessed 5 April 2013].

located just outside the GBS LEP area in Rocester, Staffordshire specialises in engineering, as well as management learning for 14-19 year olds.

Table 13: Technology related achievements by home postcode 2011. Source: The Data Service²⁴

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	40	50	980	540	1,610
Solihull	10	10	120	100	240
South Staffs	20	40	220	1,020	1,300
North Worcs	30	10	130	350	520
Total	100	110	1,450	2,010	3,670

These represent frameworks available from SEMTA the SSC for Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies and includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- Advanced Manufacturing Engineering L4
- Composite Engineering L2, L3
- Composite Engineering (Craft and Technician) L3
- Composite Engineering (Operator and Semi-skilled) L2
- Engineering Manufacture (Craft and Technician) L3
- Engineering Manufacture (Operator and Semi-skilled) L2
- Engineering Manufacture (Senior Technician) L4
- Improving Operational Performance L2
- Laboratory and Science Technicians L2, L3
- Metal Processing and Allied Operations L2, L3
- Metal Processing and Allied Operations (Craft and Technician) L3
- Metal Processing and Allied Operations (Operator and Semi-skilled) L2
- Operations and Quality Improvement L3

²⁴ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from: http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

Table 14: Process manufacturing achievements by home postcode 2011. Source: The Data Service²⁵

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Base Learning	Total
Birmingham	0	0	510	70	580
Solihull	0	0	90	10	100
South Staffs	0	0	150	50	200
North Worcs	0	0	140	90	230
Total	0	0	890	220	1,110

The Apprenticeship figures represent frameworks developed by Cogent the Sector Skills Council for Chemicals, Nuclear, Oil and Gas, Petroleum and Polymers. It includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- Nuclear Power Plant L3
- Nuclear Working L2
- Polymer Processing Operation L2, L3
- Process Manufacturing L3, L4
- Sign making L2, L4

SEMTA, the Sector Skills Council for Engineering, offers an Apprenticeship brokerage service for employers, whereby they diagnose training needs, arrange and broker the training and manage Skills Funding Agency (SFA) contracts on behalf of employers. SEMTA works extensively with employers through their network of regional representatives and regional employer boards to promote Apprenticeships. Currently there are 8000 Engineering Apprenticeships being delivered across England (at all levels) each year and SEMTA have an ambition to double these numbers by 2016.

SEMTA have also developed a L4 Apprenticeship programme for use by Airbus in Wales, which has been subsequently redesigned and rolled out in England as an Advanced Manufacturing Engineering L4 with 9 different pathways across a range of engineering roles. Employers such as Airbus, Rolls Royce and Siemens recruited the first cohort of over 500 apprentices in late 2012.

²⁵ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from: http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

A number of issues arising from this sector which work against Apprenticeship take up include:

- The poor quality of the recruits from school;
- Concerns about supporting an employee across the full period of an apprenticeship;
- Economic uncertainty;
- Fears that after investing in training, employees will leave and take their skills to an alternative, potentially higher paying competitor.

Universities also support this sector through the delivery of learning (see Appendix B for a list of relevant single honours undergraduate programmes), as well as through provision of research.

The skills supply for advanced manufacturing is likely to continue to come from the vocational education and training infrastructure, however there is also a need to develop senior managers and their ability to manage change, in order to enable them to develop effective product marketing strategies. In addition due to the rapid and high demands for new skills required by the sector it is likely that these demands will need to be met through internal staff development and through external knowledge networks

Our consultation also noted specific gaps in Engineering provision for businesses based in South Staffordshire, who reported being unable to access Engineering Apprenticeships from local providers and resorting to sending their apprentices to providers outside of the GBS LEP area such as Wolverhampton College. Some even trained new recruits entirely in house (outside of the Apprenticeship framework) in order to fill the supply gap. Furthermore in North Worcestershire, a group of manufacturing employers are discussing how they may work with North East Worcestershire College to focus the content and delivery of Apprenticeships more effectively to meet their training needs.

Similarly, employers have also echoed issues with accessing new recruits/apprentices stating that their main concern was with the younger apprentices aged 16 – 18, who lacked a work-ready attitude. There was greater success with 18+ recruits/apprentices, who had already gained work experience elsewhere. Employers in our consultation were keen to point out that apprentices have good career prospects, whereby they can progress through the business and achieve successful and rewarding careers.

5.1.4 Summary & Key Issues (Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering)

Key issues therefore for this sector include an ageing workforce, succession planning, on-going change in both markets and the technologies, and patchy delivery of Apprenticeships across the area. In order to address this it is important that stakeholders in this sector advocate for and work to implement the following actions within the context of this sector.

- Supporting the Skills for Growth Hub and Skills for Growth Compact.
- Promoting Apprenticeships to employers
- Consideration of developing an Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) or connecting to an existing ATA
- Links between employers and SEMTA to be enhanced through the Apprenticeship brokerage service.

- Ensuring that the priority sectors engage with Higher Apprenticeships
- Committing to the principles of sustainable Apprenticeships
- Delivering an Apprenticeship Campaign to schools
- Improving the marketing of Apprenticeships.

There are also some particular geographical issues relating to insufficient Apprenticeship provision in South Staffordshire and North Worcestershire which local ESBs may wish to attend to.

5.2 Life Sciences

5.2.1 National Picture

The UK life science industry employs over 120,000 people and invests at least £4.6 billion in research and development. The combined annual turnover for the pharmaceutical, medical biotechnology and medical technology markets is more than £30billion. The Medical Technologies sector in the UK serves a market that is both complex and fast-changing. The prime consumer of healthcare products and services is the NHS, while the industry base is made up predominately of SME's. Skills for Health et al. (2010) identified that increasingly the sector will become more high-tech; more diverse; more interdisciplinary in the shape of the workforce and dependent on highly skilled specialist capability; reliant on highly developed skills in research methodologies. They found that the sector was generally reliant on higher education graduates but increasingly will rely on workforce development within the sector to meet the demanding and ever changing skills needs and indicated a likely shortage in technical skills.

Thee sector has an ageing workforce. There is considerable investment in training by the NHS, though provision does not always match need. Medical engineers, for example, undertake a 4 year apprenticeship which consists of college attendance one day per week to obtain their HNC in Electronics, on the job training and completing NVQ Level 3 qualifications. This training does not, however, specifically relate to the equipment and machinery that engineers will be involved with in major hospitals. PFI partners who have responsibility for equipment maintenance transferred to them within their respective PFI agreements are also facing the same skills issues. Local picture

The Life Sciences Campus Economic Zone based around the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham and the University of Birmingham in Edgbaston will provide the focus for the clustering of activity associated with medical technologies including the National Institute for Health Research and launch of the new Centre for Translational Inflammation Research. The Life Sciences sector contributes £180m to the local economy, is comprised of in excess of 235 businesses firms in the city, and employs over 1600 people.

Medical technology is worth £152 million to the GBS LEP area and its GVA is expected to grow at 1.9%. Despite the projected growth in value, employment in the sector is expected to decline slightly from the current level of 3600 people by 1.1% per annum. Pharmaceuticals is a smaller area to the GBS LEP than Medical Technology and is currently worth £42 million to the LEP and

employs 800 people. Its GVA is expected to grow by 5% with the number employed growing by 2.4%²⁶.

5.2.2 Local picture

The Life Sciences Campus Enterprise Zone based around the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham and the University of Birmingham in Edgbaston will provide the focus for the clustering of activity associated with medical technologies including the National Institute for Health Research and launch of the new Centre for Translational Inflammation Research. The Life Sciences sector contributes £180m to the local economy, is comprised of in excess of 235 businesses firms in the city, and employs over 1,600 people.

Medical technology is worth £152mn within the GBS LEP area and its GVA is expected to grow at 1.9% and they employ 3600 people and this is expected to decline by 1.1% per annum. Pharmaceuticals is currently worth £42mn within the LEP and hires 800 people Its GVA is expected to grow 5% with the number employed growing at 2.4%.

5.2.3 Supply/Provision

Healthcare Apprenticeship frameworks and qualifications cover roles such as Healthcare Support Services, Blood Donor Support, Dental Nursing, Pharmacy Services, Optical Retail, and Emergency Care Assistance. Cogent the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for Life Sciences do not offer an apprenticeship framework at Level 2 or 3 but have developed two Higher Apprenticeships, one in Life Sciences & Chemical Science Professionals with four pathways in Chemical Science, Life Sciences, Healthcare Science and Process Development, and one for Laboratory and Science Technicians. Cogent also offers a Technical Apprenticeship Service, which acts as a brokerage service to employers within their industry. Much of this activity is about drawing together employer demand and then interfacing with local providers to meet provision/supply demands.

Table 15: Healthcare Achievements by home postcode 2011. Source: The Data Service²⁷

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	0	20	1,780	10	1,810
Solihull	0	10	140	0	150
South Staffs	0	10	450	20	480
North Worcs	0	10	350	10	370
Total	0	50	2,720	40	2,810

²⁶ *Marketing Birmingham and PA Consulting (2012). Key Sectors for Inward Investment. Final Report.* Available from: http://www.marketingbirmingham.com/marketing_birmingham_and_pa_consulting/ [Accessed 5 April 2013].

²⁷ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from: http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

Apprenticeship figures represent frameworks developed by Skills for Health the SSC for the health sector and includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- Health (Allied Health Profession Support) L3
- Health (Assistant Practitioner) L5
- Health (Blood Donor Support) L3
- Health (Clinical Healthcare Support) L2, L3
- Health (Dental Nursing) L3
- Health (Emergency Care Assistance) L2
- Health (Healthcare Support Services) L3
- Health (Informatics) L 2
- Health (Maternity and Paediatric Support) L2, L3
- Health (Optical Retail) L2, L3
- Health (Pathology Support) L3
- Health (Perioperative Support) L3
- Health (Pharmacy Services) L2, L3

Universities also support this sector, through delivery of learning (see Appendix C for a list of relevant single honours undergraduate programmes), as well as through provision of research.

5.2.4 Summary & Key Issues (Life Science)

Key issues for this sector include the growth in the importance of research and research skills, the general need for high level skills in this area, and the currently low volume of Apprenticeship provision in the area. In order to address this it is important that stakeholders in this sector advocate for and work to implement the following actions within the context of this sector.

- Supporting the Skills for Growth Hub and Skills for Growth Compact.
- Ensuring that the priority sectors engage with Higher Apprenticeships.
- Committing to the principles of sustainable Apprenticeships.

In addition there may also be a case for developing stronger route ways into this sector through the development of level 2 and 3 Apprenticeship frameworks. It is suggested that this might be pursued, probably in close partnership with relevant Sector Skills Councils, through the following actions.

- Working with the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs).
- Developing appropriate occupational route ways for a range of unemployed individuals to upskill and access job opportunities arising from major local developments and priority sectors.

5.3 ICT

5.3.1 National Picture

The skills needs of this sector are characterised by continuous technological change and development which demands high level technology specific skills. E skills have identified a future need for skills in digital security, new forms of technology, such as cloud computing, as well as high demands for Inter-personal skills, managerial, professional and technical skills over the medium term timeframe... For skills supply they recognise that there is a falling number of IT and computing related course applications and a decline in the quantity of graduates available in the labour market (particularly amongst women). On average, IT & Telecoms professionals are

qualified to a higher level than other UK workers with just over 50% holding an undergraduate or higher level degree (or equivalent). There is a history in the sector of spending more than average on training.

A survey in 2011 of 4,700 businesses by the National Skills Academy for IT²⁸ indicated that difficulties in vacant filling posts were commonly experienced especially in Programmers /Software Developers and Web Design / Development professionals. Issues with inadequate levels of Microsoft skills was the most common cause of these problems (e.g.NET/ASP.NET, Dynamics, SharePoint, Visual Basic/Visual Studio and C#) Around half of employers with skills gaps are experiencing delays developing new products or services as a result. Digital jobs, as defined by the respective SOC code, include:

- Telecommunications;
- Computer Programming;
- Consultancy and related activities;
- Information Service activities;
- Repair of Computers.

5.3.2 Local Picture

The Longbridge ITEC Park Enterprise Zone will support a range of IT and telecommunications businesses including software products, IT services, business process outsourcing, cloud computing, data mining and E-commerce etc. The ICT sector is worth £1.45bn within the GBS LEP area and this is expected to grow by 4.7% each year. It also employs 28100 and this is expected to increase by 1.3%.each year. The Skills Research Team at the West Midlands Regional Observatory²⁹identified that ICT in the GBS LEP area was creating a wealth of opportunities: ICT security, informatics, mobile & wireless, photonics and radio frequency identification, as being key emerging markets. They argued this was creating a demand for high level leadership and relationship management, project and programme management skills, business intelligence, information analytics and architecture skills, networking and a range of specific software skills which is similar to the national picture.

For digital media they identified a need for the development of digital content for entertainment, which is creating a skills need for graduates to move into the area to train existing staff on new forms of digital content. Marketing Birmingham and PA Consulting (2012)³⁰ found that Digital Media is worth £79mn within GBS LEP and hires 2900 people GVA CAGR of 1.6% Job number growth of 0.7% per year.

²⁸ E-Skills UK (2012). *Technology Insights 2012 United Kingdom Northern Ireland Scotland Wales*. London: E-Skills UK. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

²⁹ Skills Research Team, West Midlands Regional Observatory (2011). *West Midlands Skills Assessment 2010 briefing Paper Four: The Supply of and Demand for Employment at a Local Level*. Birmingham: West Midlands Regional Observatory.

³⁰ *Marketing Birmingham and PA Consulting (2012). Key Sectors for Inward Investment. Final Report*. Available from: http://www.marketingbirmingham.com/marketing_birmingham_and_pa_consulting/ [Accessed 5 April 2013].

5.3.3 Supply/Provision

A significantly lower volume of learners are engaged with Apprenticeships than other forms of learning in the area of ICT. The sector regularly recruits new starters and there is opportunity for increased numbers of Apprenticeships to be created where there is employer confidence in supply/provision.

The IT, Software, Web & Telecoms Professionals Higher Apprenticeship at Level 4 attracts 18 year olds (directly from schools), existing workforce (generally those aged 18 – 24) who have completed an Advanced Apprenticeship and more rarely individuals over 25. The Higher Apprenticeship is proving of particular interest to mobile operators for their software developers. This is to fill a gap in a highly dynamic environment whereby graduates may already be “out of date” upon completion of their degree. The Higher Apprenticeship allows employers to more closely influence learning, ensuring apprentices are able to engage with the market and that they are customer facing from early on in the role.

Table 16: Business Information Technology & Telecommunication achievement's by home postcode in 2011.. Source: The Data Service³¹

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	50	280	2,460	300	3,090
Solihull	10	30	310	40	390
South Staffs	10	20	600	100	730
North Worcs	0	30	330	60	420
Total	70	360	3,700	500	4,630

Apprenticeship figures represent frameworks from E Skills the SSC for the ICT sector and includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- IT Application Specialist L2, L3
- IT, Software, Web & Telecoms Professionals L2, L3, L4

Universities support these industries through delivery of learning (see Appendix D for a list of relevant single honours undergraduate programmes), as well as through provision of research. Birmingham City University hosts a Cisco Systems & Microsoft Academy Centre.

5.3.4 Summary & Key Issues (ICT)

Key issues for this sector include a highly dynamic technological environment, with a need for rapidly adapting high level skills. Apprenticeships, particularly Higher Apprenticeships, are promising within this sector, but their numbers remain small in relation to the size of the sector. In

³¹ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from:

http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

order to address this it is important that stakeholders in this sector advocate for and work to implement the following actions within the context of this sector.

- Supporting the Skills for Growth Hub and Skills for Growth Compact.
- Ensuring that the priority sectors engage with Higher Apprenticeships

5.4 Environmental Technologies

5.4.1 National Picture

Environmental technologies encompass a range of occupations and aspects of diverse sectoral development in relation to sustainability, including power production and control, energy, waste management, low carbon, etc.

5.4.2 Local Picture

The Tyseley Environmental Enterprise District is aimed at supporting resource recovery and low carbon technologies. The Skills Research Team at the West Midlands Regional Observatory³² indicated that the environmental technologies sector already accounted for 74,000 people in almost 4,200 companies and has the potential to be a key employer and driver for growth within the GBS LEP region in the future. They identified future employment opportunities in renewable energy technologies, recycling and waste management, as well as clean and waste water management. They identified skills needs in scientific specialists, operational waste plant specialists, installation skills relating to renewable energy systems and appropriately skilled and qualified energy assessors. They also identified more generic skills such as an ability to combine technical skills and commercial acumen, awareness of environmental technology development globally and a broad based understanding of sustainability issues. There is also a growing demand for staff that are multi-skilled and for staff that can help companies adapt to the implications of climate change.

The skills gaps identified from working with employers during our consultation related to specific job roles: design engineers and power engineers, process engineers with experience in waste treatment, CAD and software engineers with a good understanding of both current and obsolete systems, mechanical, chemical and electrical engineers with higher-level skills

5.4.3 Supply/Provision

In 2011 there were 25 Advanced and 10 Intermediate Apprenticeships being delivered, along with over 200 other achievements in energy and utility qualifications in Birmingham alone (no further data was available to comment on achievement elsewhere in the GBS LEP area).

Table 17: Energy and Utility Achievement's by home postcode in 2011. (Source: The Data Service)³³.

³² Skills Research Team West Midlands Regional Observatory (2009). *Environmental Technologies Skills Review: Key Findings*. Birmingham: West Midlands Regional Observatory.

³³ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from:

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	0	0	170	0	170
Solihull	0	0	0	10	10
South Staffs	0	0	1,140	0	1,140
North Worcs	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	1,310	10	1,320

The Apprenticeship figures represent frameworks from SSC Energy and Utility Skills. It includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- Power Engineering - L4
- Sustainable Resource Management L 2, L3
- Smart Meter Installations (Dual Fuel) L2
- The Gas Industry L2, L3
- The Power Industry L2, L3
- The Water Industry L2, L3, L4

These frameworks are considered here due to their significance in low carbon agenda.

Energy and Utility Skills has developed two Higher Apprenticeships: the Power Engineering L4 and Sustainable Resources Operations and Management L4 (Waste). There were a number of drivers for developing the higher apprenticeships including the growing requirements for the industries in relation to environmental sustainability (e.g. low carbon); increased public awareness and commercial focus on environmental policy; energy and resource efficiency; recovering energy from waste; the European Union Landfill Directive and environmental protection. There are no prerequisite entry criteria to undertake the Higher Apprenticeships, but the frameworks are demanding and are likely to require good A-level grades from new entrants and significant experience in the power industry or appropriate transferable skills from career changers. It is anticipated that the Apprenticeship will enable the industry to respond more quickly and effectively to change. Neither of these two higher apprenticeships are currently being delivered in the GBS LEP area and promoting their value to learners and employers can be a route to identifying potential demand and enhancing the skills base in these industries

Universities support these industries through delivery of learning (see Appendix E for a list of relevant single honours undergraduate programmes), as well as through provision of research. For example, Birmingham University is working with the University of Nottingham in cutting edge research into hydrogen fuel cell storage, as a future power source for the automotive industry.

5.4.4 Summary & Key Issues (Environmental Technologies)

Key issues for this sector include a poor profile for the sector and associated occupations with learners and prospective new entrants. In order to address this it is important that stakeholders in this sector advocate for and work to implement the following actions from the Skills Action Plan within the context of this sector.

http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm
 [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

- Supporting the Skills for Growth Hub and Skills for Growth Compact.
- Representing local concerns about current policy in the area of career education and guidance and work-related learning to government.
- Addressing barriers to and promoting the benefits of education/employer engagement.
- Ensuring that the priority sectors engage with Higher Apprenticeships
- Delivering an Apprenticeship Campaign to schools
- Improving the marketing of Apprenticeships.

5.5 Cultural Buzz

Cultural Buzz is a wider concept beyond the definition of the economic sector. It incorporates the cultural industries and refers to the Food, Hospitality and Tourism aspects of a locality which make it desirable in which to live and locate demonstrated by theatres, cinemas, retail, bars and restaurants, visitor attractions.

The cultural industries are those sectors which fit within the foot prints of the two Sector Skills Councils Creative Skillset for media related creative activity e.g. film, television, fashion, etc.; Creative and Cultural Skills covering the arts and culture sectors and People 1st covering the Food, Hospitality and Tourism sector.

The Sector Skills Councils Creative Skillset and Creative and Cultural Skills cite the creative industries as a major economic contributor, a source of innovation and driver of regeneration in regions, cities and towns throughout England and the UK. In 2008 exports of services by the Creative Industries totalled £17.3 billion in 2008. This equated to 4.1% of all goods and services exported. They rely on a predominantly highly-skilled workforce. The skills of the workforce need to remain world class for the industries to stay competitive.

Skills shortages in the creative media sector are cited by Creative Skillset Sector Skills Assessment as:

- Multi-skilling;
- Multi-platform skills;
- Management, leadership, business and entrepreneurial skills to understand audience interests and translate it into business intelligence;
- IP and monetisation of multi-platform content;
- Broadcast engineering

In the arts and culture components of the creative industries, the common issues with recruitment are cited as:

- Applicants lack the experience;
- Applicants lack the specialist skills;
- Applicants lack the transferable skills;
- Too few or no applicants;

- Poor attitudes and low motivation levels of applicants.

5.5.1 Local Picture

The Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone (EZ) will support the Financial and Professional Services, ICT, Creative industries and Digital Media sectors. The GBS LEP area has a rich cultural offer including:

- Birmingham Repertory theatre
- Birmingham Royal Ballet at the Hippodrome
- Brindleyplace leisure destination in Birmingham
- Cadbury World
- City of Birmingham Symphony orchestra (CBSO)
- English Heritage properties
- Forge Mill Needle Museum
- Galleries and museums
- Motorcycle Museum
- National Indoor Arena
- National Sealife Centre
- National Trust properties
- NEC
- Solihull Arts Complex

Good examples of employer clusters that cover this sector include:

- Big Peg in the Birmingham Jewellery Quarter
- Custard Factory Arts and Media Quarter in Birmingham

The skills needs are complex, with a requirement to meet the needs of diverse audiences, as well as diverse sub-sectors, e.g. media, creative cultural, tourism, hospitality, food and drink, fashion, arts, etc.

5.5.2 Supply/Provision

There are a large volume of qualifications being delivered against the creative and cultural sector requirements, quite possibly more than job roles exist within the GBS LEP area (Tables 18-120). However, the underlying employability skills learned in this area can prove highly transferable:

- Creative and independent thinking;
- Market awareness;
- Communication;
- Team working.

These subjects are popular and may encourage learners to develop their skills and further their education through pursuit of subjects they find interesting. Critical to success is that career information and guidance is appropriate to supporting these learners to explore wider employment options as a result of their learning

Table 18: Creative and Cultural achievements by home postcode 2011. (Source: the Data Service)³⁴.

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	80	30	1,760	0	1,870
Solihull	0	0	330	0	330
South Staffs	0	0	530	0	530
North Worcs	0	0	390	0	390
Total	80	30	3010	0	3,120

Apprenticeship figures represent frameworks from Creative and Cultural Skills and includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- Design L2,3
- Costume and Wardrobe L 2,3
- Cultural and Heritage Venue Operations L 2,3
- Technical Theatre: Lighting, Sound & Stage L2,3
- Jewellery, Silversmithing and Allied Trades L 2,3
- Live Events and Promotion L2,3
- Music Business L 2,3
- Community Arts L 2,3

Table 19: Creative Media achievements by home postcode 2011. (Source: the Data Service)³⁵.

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	80	30	1,770	0	1,880
Solihull	10	10	430	0	450
South Staffs	0	0	550	0	550
North Worcs	0	0	420	0	420
Total	90	40	3,170	0	3,300

Apprenticeship figures represent frameworks from Creative Skillset and includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- Advertising & Marketing
- Fashion and Textiles L 2, L3

³⁴ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from:

http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

³⁵ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from:

http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

- Communications L4
- Creative and Digital Media L3, L4
- Fashion and Textiles: Technical L4
- Journalism L3
- Photo Imaging L3
- Set Crafts L3

As Cultural Buzz incorporates those aspects of locality which contribute to a vibrant and rewarding environment for people to live in, work in and visit, we need to also consider provision relating to Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism. (Table 19).

Table 20: Hospitality and Tourism Achievements by home postcode 2011. (Source: The Data Service)³⁶.

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	170	40	950	260	1,420
Solihull	60	10	110	50	230
South Staffs	110	40	520	60	730
North Worcs	80	30	480	130	720
Total	420	120	2,060	500	3,100

Apprenticeship figures represent frameworks from People 1st and includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- Catering and Professional Chefs L2, L3
- Drinks Dispense Systems L2
- Hospitality L2, L3
- Licensed Hospitality L 2, L3
- Travel Services L2, L3

Universities also support these industries through delivery of learning (see Appendix F for a list of relevant single honours undergraduate programmes).

5.5.3 Summary & Key Issues (Cultural Buzz)

Key skills needs in this area include the leadership, management and entrepreneurial functions. For the creative sectors this is particularly relevant in relation to the exploitation of intellectual property, co-production and international trading. There is also a strong need to balance the facility for creative programmes to engage learners with the need to ensure that all learners remain conscious of the need to use their current learning to transition to the labour market. In order to address this it is important that stakeholders in this sector advocate for and work to implement the following actions within the context of this sector.

³⁶ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11*. Available from: http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

- Supporting the Skills for Growth Hub and Skills for Growth Compact.
- Representing local concerns about current policy in the area of career education and guidance and work-related learning to government.
- Developing appropriate occupational route ways for a range of unemployed individuals to upskill and access job opportunities arising from major local developments and priority sectors.

6 Other key sectors

The Priority Sectors are at the heart of the GBS LEP strategy for local economic growth include: Health and Social Care (particularly adult care); Transport and Logistics; Retail, Food and Drink, Construction and Financial and Professional Services. In this section we describe the current landscape of these six sectors.

6.1 Health and Social Care

At a national level the Health and Social Sector is one of the largest employers, employing over 4 million people. The net output of the sector in 2010 was £92 billion, nine per cent of the UK total having grown by 2.5 per cent per annum over the previous ten years and is expected to grow by 1.3 per cent between 2010 and 2020). The key driver of skill demand within the sector is demographic change (ageing population) and the need to cut costs caused by the economic downturn. The growth areas projected up to 2020 are most sections of the workforce, but particularly in managers, professionals and associate professionals.

The sector enjoys higher than average exposure to work based training (66%) and that broadly the sector had fewer future low skills shortages than other sectors, with a 60% fall predicted in jobs requiring no qualification. There is also likely to be a higher demand for qualifications across the sector. The areas where shortages are likely to be an issue are general caring staff, professionals and managers.

Table 21: Adult Social Care achievements by home postcode 2011. (Source: The Data Service)³⁷.

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	150	150	150	150	600
Solihull	30	10	70	170	280
South Staffs	60	30	280	420	790
North Worcs	30	30	200	280	540
Total	270	220	700	1,020	2,210

Apprenticeship figures represent the Health and Social Care L2, L3 frameworks from Skills for Care:

The Skills Research Team at the West Midlands Regional Observatory³⁸ identified similarly to the national picture that the key drivers of change in the Health & Social Care sector included the

³⁷ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from: http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

demands of an ageing population, a need to achieve efficiency savings (via exploiting new technology) and service redesign. This is creating a demand for literacy and numeracy, communication and interpersonal skills, IT skills and for expertise in information sharing, leading and working in multi-agency teams.

6.1.1 Summary & Key Issues (Health and Social Care)

Key skills needs within the sector are the requirement to continue to attract large numbers of workers and to progress them within the sector. In order to address this it is important that stakeholders in this sector advocate for and work to implement the following actions within the context of this sector.

- Supporting the Skills for Growth Hub and Skills for Growth Compact.
- Developing work-based pre-Apprenticeship programmes and/or traineeships.
- Promoting Apprenticeships to employers.
- Consideration of the development of an Apprenticeship Training Agency or expansion of an already established ATA from the NAS national register.
- Developing appropriate occupational route ways for a range of unemployed individuals to upskill and access job opportunities arising from major local developments and priority sectors.

6.2 Construction

Construction Skills the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for this sector reported in February 2013 that overall in the UK the sector is shrinking with sixty thousand jobs already lost and a 9% fall in output and the industry possibly tipping back into recession. It is anticipated that this trend will continue over the next five years with only the private housing, repair and maintenance and industrial sectors predicted to achieve anything like consistent growth.

As a whole, the industry will only grow at an average of 0.8%, and will not match its 2007 output peak until 2022. This weakness in performance is reflected in a predicted fall in construction employment every year from 2013-16, reaching a low of 2.36m, the lowest employment level in the industry since 2000. Recruitment to the industry is predicted to run at an average of 29,050 a year from now until 2017 – largely to fill vacancies arising from those leaving the sector. Across the UK only Greater London and the East of England can expect to see employment actively grow in this period.

For the West Midlands in the period up to 2014 total construction output is expected to increase at an annual average rate of 1.5% between 2010 and 2014, at a slightly slower than the national average of 1.7%. . In 2014 total construction employment in the region is predicted to reach 182,570, up 5% on the 2010 projection with major projects such as the new Birmingham Library and development of the Enterprise Zones expecting to contribute to this growth.

³⁸ Skills Research Team, West Midlands Regional Observatory (2011). *West Midlands Skills Assessment 2010 briefing paper four: The Supply of and Demand for Employment at a Local Level*. Birmingham: West Midlands Regional Observatory.

The impact of this business growth on job roles will generally be an increased demand for higher level skills in:

- Senior, executive, and business process managers;
- Construction managers;
- Civil engineers ;
- Non-construction professional, technical, IT, and other office-based staff;
- Surveyors;
- Logistics;

Increased demand for lower skilled roles will include:

- Labourers;
- Plant operatives;
- Wood trades and interior fit-out;

Reduced demand is anticipated in a number of job roles including:

- Bricklayers;
- Painters and decorators;
- Plasterers and dry liners;
- Roofers;
- Electrical trades and installation.

Table 22 and Table 23 show the number of achievements and Apprenticeships completed in 2011. This shows a focus on delivery off Intermediate Apprenticeships at level 2 whereas the forecast shows a skills need is at higher level roles and this would indicate that higher level skills provision needs to be delivered than is currently on offer.

Table 22: Construction achievements by home postcode in 2011. Source: The Data Service³⁹

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	110	20	1,800	1,230	3,160
Solihull	30	0	250	210	490
South Staffs	80	30	580	460	1,150
North Worcs	30	20	550	190	790
Total	250	70	3,180	2,090	5,590

³⁹ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from: http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

Apprenticeship figures represent frameworks from Construction Skills and the Construction Industry Training Board and includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- Construction Building L2, L3
- Construction Civil Engineering L2, L3
- Construction Specialist L2, L3
- Construction Technical and Professional L3, L4, L5

Table 23: Building Services Engineering achievements by home postcode in 2011. (Source: The Data Service⁴⁰).

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	20	60	890	40	1,010
Solihull	0	20	160	10	190
South Staffs	10	40	190	20	260
North Worcs	0	10	50	0	60
Total	30	130	1,290	70	1,540

Apprenticeship figures represent the Engineering Construction L2, L3 frameworks from Construction Skills.

Construction Skills, the Sector Skills Council for the sector, supported the development of the Higher Apprenticeships in Construction Operations Management, with Middlesex University’s Foundation Degree as the core technical qualification. Leeds College of Construction have now developed a second route based on a newly developed QCF qualification with pathways in Construction and the Built Environment; Civil Engineering and Building Services Engineering. These programmes are available nationally through open learning or to be adopted by other providers.

6.2.1 Summary & Key Issues (Construction)

Key within the sector are the requirement to continue to attract large numbers of workers and to progress them within the sector. In order to address this it is important that stakeholders in this sector advocate for and work to implement the following actions from the Skills Action Plan within the context of this sector.

- Supporting the Skills for Growth Hub and Skills for Growth Compact.
- Developing work-based pre-Apprenticeship programmes and/or traineeships.

⁴⁰ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from: http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

- Consideration of the development of an Apprenticeship Training Agency (SFA and NAS would recommend further detailed conversations regarding the levy/grant considerations in this sector if this is pursued).
- Improving the marketing of Apprenticeships.
- Developing appropriate occupational route ways for a range of unemployed individuals to upskill and access job opportunities arising from major local developments and priority sectors.

6.3 Transport and Logistics

The logistics sector covers ten subsectors, which together employs around 187,500 people across the West Midlands. This is 8% of the region's workforce. The main subsectors are wholesale, storage and warehousing, freight transport by road and national post activities. However, many logistics occupations are also found in other sectors such as Large (heavy) Goods Vehicle (LGV) drivers in retail or construction. Including these people, the true size of the sector stands at 242,600 or 10% of the region's workforce.

Research by Skills for Logistics⁴¹ the SSC for the sector identified that a large majority (83%) of the workplaces in the sector employ less than 10 people. Only 1% employs more than 200 employees. The net logistics sector workforce is anticipated to increase by 11,000 workers between 2007 and 2017 in the West Midlands. In addition replacement demand is expected to be around 75,000. In total the sector will therefore need to fill 86,000 jobs.

Across the sector employers cite lack of necessary skills and low interest in the sector as causes of hard to fill vacancies. Skills that are hard to find include technical, practical or job specific skills, customer handling skills and spoken communication skills. Nearly one in seven employers felt staff had skills gaps and they are recruiting people without the full skill set required. These skills gaps were mainly overcome by employers increasing the amount of training they provide or increasing the amount they spend on training.

Six in ten logistics employers provided some form of training or development in the previous 12 months in the West Midlands, which is slightly below the regional figure of 68%. Two fifths of employers that had provided training would have liked to have provided more. However, employers were unable to spare staff time away from their positions, along with citing a lack of funds for training as barriers.

⁴¹ Skills for Logistics (2009). *Logistics Sector Profile: West Midlands*. Milton Keynes: Skills for Logistics

Table 24: Freight Logistics and Wholesale Achievements by home postcode 2011.
(Source: The Data Service)⁴².

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	110	0	420	770	1,300
Solihull	10	0	20	110	140
South Staffs	30	0	0	520	550
North Worcs	10	0	0	230	240
Total	160	0	440	1,630	2,230

Apprenticeship figures represent frameworks from Skills for Logistics and includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- Commercial Moving L2 Express Logistics L5
- Driving Goods Vehicles L2, L3
- International Trade and Logistics Operations L2
- Logistics Operations L2, L3
- Mail and Package Distribution L 2
- Supply Chain Management L 2,3,5
- Traffic Office L2, L3
- Warehousing and Storage L2, L3

Given the size of this sector and its importance in the economic development of the GBS LEP area, it will need to be served well with relevant and timely skills and labour supply. The structure of the industry with a large number of small employers is most likely to benefit from the development of an Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) or through utilising an existing specialist ATA such as Logistics Apprenticeship Training Agency (LATA) or other ATA on the NAS register.

6.3.1 Summary & Key Issues (Travel and Logistics)

Key issues within the sector are the requirements to continue to attract large numbers of workers and to progress them within the sector. There are also issues relating to the image of the sector and the need to increase awareness and interest in it. In order to address this it is important that stakeholders in this sector advocate for and work to implement the following actions from the Skills Action Plan within the context of this sector.

- Supporting the Skills for Growth Hub and Skills for Growth Compact.
- Representing local concerns about current policy in the area of career education and guidance and work-related learning to government.
- Developing work-based pre-Apprenticeship programmes and/or traineeships.
- Improving the marketing of Apprenticeships.

⁴² The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from: http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

- Developing appropriate occupational route ways for a range of unemployed individuals to up-skill and access job opportunities arising from major local developments and priority sectors.
- Consideration of the development of an Apprenticeship Training Agency or expansion of an already established ATA from the NAS national register.

6.4 Retail

The Retail sector is the UK's largest private sector employer with 2.77million employees and a £325bn turnover (2010). A further 214,000 retail jobs are expected to be created between by 2017, with a further 1.2 million jobs needing to be filled as a result of people leaving the sector (replacement demand).

Table 25: Retail Achievements by home postcode 2011. (Source: The Data Service)⁴³.

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	160	20	60	290	530
Solihull	40	10	0	70	120
South Staffs	90	10	10	190	300
North Worcs	100	20	10	130	260
	390	60	80	680	1210

Apprenticeship figures represent frameworks from Skillsmart the SSC for Retail and includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- Funeral Operations and Services L2, L3
- Retail L2, L3

Employment profile for the sector shows 50% of retail staff are employed in sales and customer service occupations and 18% of all retail staff are managers or senior officials. The sector is engaged with qualifications, 38% of retail employees have a NVQ level 3, or higher, qualification, 22% of people employed within retail have a NVQ level 2 qualification and only 11% do not hold any qualification. There is ongoing demand for Apprenticeships for new entrants satisfying the replacement demand, or as progression opportunities within the workforce.

6.4.1 Summary & Key Issues (Retail)

Key issues within the sector are the requirements to continue to attract large numbers of workers and to progress them within the sector. In order to address this it is important that stakeholders in

⁴³ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from: http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report

this sector advocate for and work to implement the following actions within the context of this sector.

- Supporting the Skills for Growth Hub and Skills for Growth Compact.
- Developing work-based pre-Apprenticeship programmes and/or traineeships.
- Improving the marketing of Apprenticeships.
- Developing appropriate occupational route ways for a range of unemployed individuals to upskill and access job opportunities arising from major local developments and priority sectors.

6.5 Food and Drink Manufacture and Production

Food and Drink production includes Milling and Baking; Meat and Poultry; Fish and Shellfish; Brewing; Fresh Produce; Dairy; Livestock Market Drovers etc. The Food and Drink production sector has a turnover of more than £70bn annually in the UK and is growing by 4.7% annually and is relatively recession-proof. It also sees more than £300m spent on research and development annually. The Food Hub is located at the former IMI site in north Birmingham will provide an Enterprise Zone for processing, manufacturing and distribution businesses. North Worcestershire also has a significant concentration of these businesses.

Food and drink is one of the most resilient sectors during the recession and the quickest to show signs recovery. However to maintain future competitiveness Improve, the Sector Skills Council for Food and Drink (2010), identified a number of areas where skills development would be needed:

- There is a need to improve basic skills and employability skills amongst those in production roles across the workforce to ensure that employers have the opportunity to 'grow their own' from the existing workforce when businesses expand and require managers and supervisors;
- The industry will need high quality managers and supervisors encompassing higher level and intermediate skills (depending on their position) within all sectors and across all sizes of businesses to adopt new manufacturing and processing techniques;
- Food Scientists and Technologists (FST) with higher level skills (including variations of similar roles, e.g. food nutritionists and food health scientists etc.);
- Engineers with higher level skills that have the ability to adapt and learn about bespoke machinery which is required for complex automated systems across the industry will be needed;
- Skilled trades positions that require specialist craft skills (e.g. butchery, bakery, meat processing) with intermediate skills will be required.

Table 26: Food and Drink achievements by home postcode 2011. Source: The Data Service⁴⁴

⁴⁴ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from:

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Base Learning	Total
Birmingham	0	0	80	120	200
Solihull	0	0	0	0	0
South Staffs	0	0	0	60	60
North Worcs	0	0	0	80	80
Total	0	0	80	260	340

Apprenticeship figures represent the Food and Drink L2, L3, L4 framework from Improve the SSC for Food and Drink Production for roles such as: Specialist Operative; Team Leader; Technical Manager. Industry specific roles include: Specialist Butcher; Specialist Meat and Poultry Processing Manager; Dairy Operative; Specialist Miller; Specialist Confectioner; Specialist Cake Decorator; Brewing Operations Manager. These frameworks focus on lean production techniques and Just in Time methodologies which contribute to reductions in waste and enhanced profitability. This is a sector that would particularly benefit from the potential of an Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA).

The size and importance of this sector is not matched by the volume of delivery and work is needed with providers, employers and potential apprentices to support this sector.

6.5.1 Summary & Key Issues (Food & Drink)

Key skills needs are the need to progress skill levels at the low skill end of the workforce whilst developing stronger provision for attracting and developing intermediate and high level skills within the sector. In order to address this it is important that stakeholders in this sector advocate for and work to implement the following actions within the context of this sector.

- Supporting the Skills for Growth Hub and Skills for Growth Compact.
- Developing work-based pre-Apprenticeship programmes and/or traineeships.
- Promoting Apprenticeships to employers.
- Ensuring the sector engages with Higher Apprenticeships.
- Developing appropriate occupational route ways for a range of unemployed individuals to upskill and access job opportunities arising from major local developments and priority sectors.

6.6 Financial and Professional Services

Financial and Professional Services contributes over £4bn to the local economy with more than over 1,900 firms operating in the financial services sector employing in excess of 21,000 people. The sector has experienced a 9% growth since 2005.

http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm
[Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report.

Table 27: Financial and Professional Services achievements by home postcode 2011.
Source: The Data Service⁴⁵.

	Intermediate Apprenticeship	Advanced Apprenticeship	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	20	30	1190	0	1240
Solihull	10	10	100	0	120
South Staffs	20	40	230	0	290
North Worcs	20	40	200	0	260
	70	120	1720	0	1910

Apprenticeship figures represent frameworks from the Financial Skills Partnership and includes frameworks drawn from the following list:

- Accounting L 2, L3, L4
- Banking L4
- Bookkeeping L 2,3
- Insurance L 4
- Payroll L2, L3
- Professional Services L4
- Professional Services L7
- Providing Financial Services L2, L3
- Providing Financial Advice L4
- Providing Mortgage Advice L3

The Accounting sector is the only one in the area with a Higher Apprenticeship framework. This is eminently suitable for school leavers with appropriate A Levels and offers a real career development opportunity as the Apprenticeship provides the required qualification to become a licensed technician and progress further. New higher apprenticeships have been developed for additional roles in this sector and there is considerable opportunity for more engagement by provider and employers.

6.6.1 Summary & Key Issues (Financial and Professional Service)

Key skills needs in the sector relate to intermediate to increasing the supply of high level skills. In order to address this it is important that stakeholders in this sector advocate for and work to implement the following actions within the context of this sector.

- Supporting the Skills for Growth Hub and Skills for Growth Compact.
- Ensuring that the sector engages with Higher Apprenticeships
- Promoting sector opportunities to learners

⁴⁵ The Data Service (2012). *Local Authority Enrolments, Starts and Achievements by Sector and Delivery Postcode 2010/11* Available from: http://mireportslibrary.thedataservice.org.uk/demographics/geography_reports/local_authority.htm [Accessed 5 April 2013]. Geographic areas as defined in Section 1 page 2 of this report.

7 Actions to Engage Employers

A significant driver of growth in Apprenticeships uptake in recent years has been from within the existing workforce. Whilst this contributes to business efficiency and the economy as a whole, it does not necessarily drive new job creation. A focus for the actions set out in this plan is the development of new jobs at level 2, 3 or 4 (and above) with clear progression routes for the roles.

7.1 Sector Champions

A key pillar of the GBS LEP approach is the development of a series of Sector Champions representing each of the Priority Sectors. The Sector Champions will work with employers to engage them with the wider City Skills Plan and the Apprenticeship Plan. Employers, whom we consulted, were generally enthusiastic about these roles and were keen to work with the Sector Champions to define and shape future skills needs. There was support for establishing a series of sector-based groups which would work with the Sector Champions to contribute local labour market intelligence, provide a focus for engagement with schools and other education providers and cascade information to employers regarding developments, actions and initiatives.

7.2 Skills for Growth Hub

A Skills for Growth Hub is being developed in order to promote the take-up of Apprenticeships with employers, providers and prospective apprentices. The Hub will play a pivotal role in the successful delivery of this Apprenticeship Plan by:

- Promoting Apprenticeships to employers and sectors;
- Working with Sector Skills Councils to drive up demand for new frameworks and courses, in order to meet future skills needs;
- Working with Schools and Colleges to improve employability skills and ensure a “smoother” transition to Apprenticeship roles;
- Increase awareness of Apprenticeships within Schools and amongst teaching staff;
- Help to support and co-ordinate campaigns across the GBS LEP area to improve Apprenticeship take up;
- Share best practice of initiatives taking place to drive up demand for Apprenticeships;
- Work with niche industries and employers to full skills and Apprenticeship gaps;
- Provide a single point of access or information for employers, providers, learners and other stakeholders;
- Promotion of, and drive access to, funding which supports Apprenticeships, such as the AGE Grant, ESF funding, Employer Ownership Pilots, Work Programme, Big Lottery funding, etc.
- Promoting the principles of sustainable Apprenticeships to employers, by mentoring and supporting them to coach and integrate apprentices appropriately within their business;
- Delivering Apprenticeship Campaigns within Schools;
- Assisting Sector Champions with organising strategic ‘Immersion’ events and receiving feedback for developing new projects and initiatives;
- Supporting the development of an Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) or Group Training Agency (GTA), if considered appropriate where sectoral or employer demand exists. This will ensure a continuity of employment for learners or enable the risk for

some employers to be taken where they cannot take on an apprentice. The options will include assessing whether a new ATA/GTA should be developed or whether support from a current ATA on the national register can be harnessed and expanded into the GBS LEP area;

- Brokering relationships between SSCs and employers / providers for developing new provision and courses;
- Promoting Higher Apprenticeships within all industry sectors;
- Engaging with the development of an online career hub for the GBS LEP area, if considered appropriate/feasible;
- Providing access to labour market information and intelligence;
- Brokering provision, where there is demand for more services than can be supplied by one organisation;
- Engaging HEI's in establishing more higher apprenticeships;

7.3 Promotion of Apprenticeships

Engagement with Apprenticeships is not uniform across the sectors and the geography of the GBSLEP area. Apprenticeship take up has been growing with employers and in some area demand is greater than provision, in that frameworks are unavailable from some local providers or the quality of potential recruits is poor. The Sector Champions will be ideally placed to work with other stakeholders (NAS, Training Providers, FE Colleges, HE, Work Programme providers, Job Centre Plus, Employment Action Teams, Business Support Agencies, Chamber of Commerce, Local Authorities, etc.) in raising the profile of apprenticeships and increasing the take up of Apprenticeships at all levels. The Skills for Growth Hub will also have a major role to play in supporting employers to engage with and access apprenticeships, through campaigns initiated in partnership with key stakeholders.

7.4 Working with Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)

Sector Skills Councils offer a range of resources and services to support employers engage with apprenticeships. They also have access to a range of employers within their sectors, all of whom can be approached with a view to increasing Apprenticeship numbers either within their businesses or within their supply chain. The Skills for Growth Hub will be ideally placed to work with Sector Skills Councils to create new initiatives to engage employers into Apprenticeships.

7.5 Engaging with SMEs

NAS have identified that SME, micro and niche businesses are more likely to struggle to engage with Apprenticeships. This may be due to only being able to offer part-time work, being unsure in the current economic climate of being able to support an apprentice for the full period of the framework, or not being able to offer a wide enough range of learning to meet framework requirements. The development of an Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) can assist through providing continuity of employment for learners with sequential employers or less ideally through the use of a series of parallel employers. The Skills for Growth Hub will be ideally placed to monitor and evaluate opportunities for developing an ATA across the GBS LEP area.

7.6 Re-focussing Delivery by Training Providers

The Sector Champions and their sector groups will feed into Skills for Growth Hub, provider networks and key stakeholders to influence content and delivery of Apprenticeships. This may

take the form of building progression pathways for Apprenticeships. This may also involve refocusing or refinement of frameworks and shifting curriculum or models of delivering the programmes. Sector Champions, their Sector Groups and the Skills for Growth Hub will identify where employers have specific needs and where there are small numbers of learners in a locality to enable larger cohorts to be recruited from across the GBS LEP area.

Immersion events are aimed at developing dialogue and collaboration between employers from priority sectors and providers in the area. These one day facilitated events enable those in attendance to discuss and agree initiatives to enhance how employers and providers can work together to ensure skills gaps and skill shortages are addressed within each priority sector.

The events provide both employers and providers with an insight into the issues that each party faces. They also provided further education staff with excellent labour intelligence into what skills employers require their workforce to have.

7.7 Higher Apprenticeships

A recent NAS initiative has created a range of new apprenticeship frameworks at levels 4, 5, 6 and 7. These offer a real alternative to graduate recruitment for employers. Entry onto these frameworks may be a result of progression from an Advanced Apprenticeship or recruitment from sixth form or college. Some high level frameworks have an academic equivalent as the main technical / competence component of the qualification while others have one or more QCF qualifications. There is little awareness of these amongst employers and potential learners aiming at Higher Level Apprenticeships. Higher Apprenticeships offer real value for money to the priority sectors in meeting skills shortages and assisting with skills gaps. The Sector Champions and the Skills for Growth Hub has a role to play in educating employers, providers and potential learners of the opportunities offered by the higher level frameworks which are becoming increasingly valued by employers as valuable learning models.

8 Engaging with apprentices

8.1 Promoting Employer Engagement with Schools

Research by the Education and Employers Taskforce shows there is a positive relationship between the number of employer contacts (such as careers talks or work experience) that a young person experiences in school (between the ages of 14 and 19), their confidence in progression towards their ultimate career goals. More employer contacts are also related to a reduction in the likelihood of being NEET and to better earning if the young person is working⁴⁶. The research evidence therefore suggests that employer engagement with education supports young people to make effective transitions. Given the positive impact of employer engagement it is heartening that the consultation found that many employers were interested in engaging with schools. Employers generally felt that this engagement could have long term benefits by raising awareness among students of job roles and sectors available to them as well as supporting the development of their employability skills. Many employers also reported in the consultation that they have succeeded in developing sound relationships with schools, but others reported that they have struggled to do so. Aspects which have worked against this can be summarised as:

- lack of employer awareness of the potential business benefits of engagement;
- employers being unsure how make contact with schools;
- employers being unsure about what to offer or the best way that they can work with schools;
- lack of school responsiveness;
- bureaucracy, particularly in relation to Health and Safety for work placements, school visits and locating employer equipment within schools.

Schools play a major role in influencing how a young person approaches their career and transition into work. Under the Ofsted Inspection Framework, schools have a responsibility to equip their students with the skills necessary to make them employable.

There is evidence of innovative and successful employer engagement activity taking place in schools in the GBS LEP area. We are aware of schools across the area that invite employers into the classroom to take part in projects and competitions, where students work on a real life business problems, extensive work experience is undertaken and the experiences from all of this work-related learning are re-integrated into the curriculum. It is encouraging that schools with strategic employer engagement practices tend to also score as Outstanding in Ofsted inspections.

Embedding employability learning into the curriculum will significantly impact on students' ability to be exposed to multiple sectors, to learn about different occupations, to make meaningful decisions about Apprenticeships and to be better prepared for the workplace. Students can be assisted to acquire employability skills through employer engagement activities including employer talks, visits to employer premises, projects, competitions, valuable work experience

⁴⁶ Mann, A. (2012). *Work Experience: Impact and Delivery - Insights from the Evidence*. London: Education and Employers Taskforce.

placements, using live business projects in the classroom and off site, going through mock interviews, CV support etc. Some schools have staff with a remit for employer engagement but this is not common across the area. Many schools have identified that access to a shared resource would enable the school and employers to explore engagement without negative impact on other learning.

The development of school strategy in this area would also be assisted by the presence of a stronger employer voice with schools. The recruitment of a local employer or business representative to a school Governing Body provides a particularly effective way to achieve this within the current governance framework of schools. These employer Governors can also act as ambassadors with other employers in supporting engagement with schools. Recruiting an employer as a governor should be accompanied by giving that governor a strong remit to support the schools delivery of careers education and guidance, work-related learning and the development of relationships with employers.

It is important that schools recognise a range of local and national schemes that already exist in this area and make effective use of them. Schools can participate in local engagement initiatives with which employers can become involved such as the Step Up in Solihull, the BBacc in Birmingham and the Education Business Networks. These initiatives also have the potential to provide ready-made vehicle for employers to use to get started in working with schools.

There are also a range of national schemes and programmes which schools can engage with in this area. For example the *Inspiring the Future* and *Speakers for Schools* programmes are both free services run by the Education and Employers Taskforce to bring employers into schools. There are a wide range of other schemes like this that should be promoted to schools and employers.

8.2 Profile raising of Apprenticeships with learners

The consultation revealed that there is considerable misunderstanding amongst school students about Apprenticeships. Apprenticeships tend to have a poor image in schools and are often considered as only relevant for those who have lower academic capability. Some sixth formers reported that they had heard stories of bad experiences amongst friends and families and that this deters them from pursuing an Apprenticeship.

Many of the apprentices who participated in the consultation revealed that they had not chosen their particular apprenticeship with clear career goals in mind. Some felt that it was unlikely that they would stay in the field that they were undertaking an Apprenticeship in. If this is representative it suggests that a significant amount of training resource is being wasted on Apprenticeships where the learners are insufficiently prepared and have made poor or uninformed choices.

Schools are often unaware of the details of Apprenticeship programmes and few teachers have personal experience of them. The GBS LEP area colleges are working together to look at how they can promote Apprenticeships within schools. In the consultation sixth form students said they were not very excited by the idea of Apprenticeships. There was considerable ignorance of what they were, and how they could access them with many students believing that they had to find an employer who would take them on to do an Apprenticeship and having no awareness of the brokerage that exists to support this. Colleges reported that they often had to do work with prospective Apprentices in order to assist them to make applications to an Apprenticeship role.

There may be value in the GBSLEP promoting the careers advice that exists by phone for 13-18 year olds and face-to-face for 19 year olds to support potential Apprentices in understanding and accessing Apprenticeships. Such promotional campaign should also highlight the existence of the Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service website at <http://apprenticeshipvacancymatchingservice.lsc.gov.uk/>.

The FE colleges in the area are working on a joint marketing initiative to promote Apprenticeships to schools and sixth form students. This campaign may include print, flyers and advertising campaigns. Providers and stakeholders should aim to align their own marketing / PR campaign to the NAS national campaign and local campaigns.

8.3 Promoting Apprenticeships within the workplace

Unionlearn is committed to the promotion and delivery of quality Apprenticeships providing information and support to Apprentices and their colleagues. Unionlearn is currently delivering a project to develop the TUC's existing policy on apprenticeships and supporting affiliate unions' work on Apprenticeships across the country and developing a Smart phone App providing information and guidance for Apprentices. Skills for Growth Hub can engage with regional Unionlearn Representatives (ULRs) to share intelligence and promotion of local quality standards,

8.4 Foundation learning and employability programmes

During the consultation we engaged with people who are workless and those who support them. In general there was a strong perception that the main barriers to employment were a combination of lack of skills and lack of opportunity. Lack of opportunity was particularly an issue where major employers had closed down or left an area. However it was felt that better partnerships between providers and employers had an important role to play in supporting people to move back into work. A number of interventions were identified which it was felt could have impact:

- Work experience which enables the employer and potential employee to 'get to know each other'.
- Providers working with smaller employers, not focusing on larger employers, where there may be untapped employment opportunities;
- Pre-apprenticeships training for learners at a greater distance from the labour market, there is a need for 'pre-recruitment' training in order to get them to the required level for employment;
- Transferability – for those who are workless following recent redundancy they may have significant previous work history but are now marginalised without directly transferable skills. Training could enable them to fill skills gaps and become productive more quickly in new work than a new entrant might.
- Current employability courses do not away differentiate between the different needs of those who are new to the labour market, those who are long term unemployed and those who have recently become unemployed.

Employability courses for those who are workless and seeking work, often as a result of JobCentre Plus intervention, are considered a "growth" sector for many FE colleges, and numbers are high (Table 26). The provision comprises a range of solutions training from two

weeks taught programmes up to six week programmes including significant work experience opportunity.

Table 26: Employability Course Achievements 2010 – 11 Source: The Data Service

	FE Education and Training	Work Based Learning	Total
Birmingham	5,100	350	5,450
Solihull	640	80	720
South Staffs	3,840		3,840
North Worcs	140	10	150
	9,720	440	10,160

Employability courses and Foundation learning programmes are not always mapped into or lined to Apprenticeship pathways. Foundation learning and employability programmes do not always contain a work experience component in order to fully deliver on employability.

Potential apprentices who are not in work or are undertaking Foundation Learning or employability programmes may benefit from access to work experience and structured access to Apprenticeships.

8.5 Online career information

The Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP believes that online career information can assist the delivery of informed choices for transitions and support young people to engage with Apprenticeships and other vocational routes as well as conventional academic routes. Given the concerns raised in the consultation and elsewhere about the impartiality of schools and their level of awareness of Apprenticeships it is important that good quality information about Apprenticeships exists somewhere relevant for young people in Greater Birmingham and Solihull. The internet is a logically place to locate such a resource.

Currently there are a number of key websites that might support potential Apprentices to understand and engage with Apprenticeships. It is suggested that these existing websites are disseminated around key stakeholders. Useful sites include:

- The National Apprenticeship Service <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/>
- The Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service <https://apprenticeshipvacancymatchingservice.lsc.gov.uk/>
- The National Careers Service Apprenticeship pages <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/courses/typesoflearning/Pages/apprenticeships.aspx>
- The Gov.UK section on Apprenticeships <https://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide/applications-and-qualifications>
- Apprenticeship Frameworks Online <http://www.afo.sscalliance.org/>

There is considerable research that suggests that there are a large and useful range of websites out there that also support career exploration, job seeking and education/employment alignment

more generally. However, this research also shows that the online career support market is complex, fragmented and variable in quality. There may therefore be some value in providing some kind of local portal to support individuals and their career helpers to gain an overview of what resources are available and to identify particularly useful sites.

9 Quality

9.1 Quality principles

Employers and learners need reassurance that the Apprenticeship programme will deliver a high quality experience for the apprentice and the wider business. Delivery by providers is quality assured through Ofsted, funding contract monitoring and Awarding Bodies. NAS have identified a number of quality principles for employers which support the Apprenticeship journey and it is possible that a set of Quality Standards are developed for GBSLEP employers based on the NAS quality principles and adopted by employers through the Skills for Growth Compact. These standards would include:

- Clear processes for each stage or element of the learning journey;
- Key performance indicators;
- How feedback from individual Apprentices, managers and other people involved in the Apprenticeship will be collected and analysed;
- When and how assessors will share their experiences;
- Processes to spot check or 'sample' Apprenticeship documentation;
- How often training delivery will be observed;
- How checks will be made that agreed processes are being followed;
- Regular review of the Common Inspection Framework and the standards described;
- Identification of who will lead the implementation and future development of the plan;
- How equality and diversity are ensured in the Apprenticeship cohort
- How disadvantaged learners may access Apprenticeships

The Richard Review (2012) identifies a number of key actions to deliver improvements in Apprenticeships:

- Redefining apprenticeships: They should be targeted only at those who are new to a job or role that requires sustained and substantial training.
- Focusing on the outcome of an apprenticeship - what the apprentice can do when they complete their training - and freeing up the process by which they get there. Trusted, independent assessment is key.
- Recognised industry standards should form the basis of every apprenticeship.
- All apprentices should reach a good level in English and maths before they can complete their apprenticeship.
- Government funding must create the right incentives for apprenticeship training. The purchasing power for investing in apprenticeship training should lie with the employer.

- Greater diversity and innovation in training - with employers and government safeguarding quality.

This suggest there will be an increasing policy pressure on all stakeholders to improve the quality of delivery and deepen the value of Apprenticeships

9.2 Equality, Diversity and Disadvantaged Apprentices

The West Midlands Regional Observatory⁴⁷ also identified lack of relevant skills and qualifications, linked to factors such as disabilities and health problems and a lack of mobility as key barriers to participation in employment for disadvantaged individuals. Marangozov *et al.*, (2009) examined the under-representation of race, gender and disability in apprenticeships and found that the lack of tailored and specialist provision and a lack of awareness were key barriers to the underrepresented groups. They identified a number approaches to tackle the issue which included:

- Partnership/collaborative working between key agencies
- Securing employer commitment and addressing work place culture
- Specialised staff (role models, ambassadors and outreach)
- Mentoring and support
- Parental engagement
- Promoting Apprenticeships through role models and different media channels
- Equality training for employers, staff, careers advisers and community workers
- Targeted advertising, taster sessions and work trials.

Based on these findings the Skills Funding Agency and the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) created the Diversity in Apprenticeship pilots which examined pilots of underrepresented groups relating to gender, ethnicity, disability, learning disabilities and difficulties (LDD), religion/belief and sexual orientation as well as uptake among vulnerable groups such as young people not in education, employment or training, young offenders and care leavers among others. A recent evaluation (Newton et al., 2012) found that the most successful approach to tackling gender stereotyping was to start interventions at a young age within school and include provision involving role models and ambassadors. For ethnic minorities they found that a one size fits all approach to different communities does not work and more work is needed to establish what works with different communities relating to different types of apprenticeship. For people with disabilities they found that supported programmes were an effective approach as well as coaching and mentoring. For young people that are NEET or ex-offenders they recommended intensive support that developed employability skills and developed their understanding of work cultures and employer expectations as well support once they have entered employment.

In Australia there are well-developed apprenticeships and traineeships which are collectively described as “Australian Apprenticeships” Recent reform has been in acted to provide increased incentives to employers who take on apprenticeships in areas identified as requiring more skills

⁴⁷ West Midlands Regional Observatory (2009). *Economic Inclusion Baseline Report*. West Midlands Regional Observatory.

in the Australian national Skills needs list and for underrepresented groups such as Indigenous Australians, the disabled ,people located in regional or remote Australia and people with poor language, literacy and numeracy skills (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011, Deloitte Access Economics Pty Ltd, 2012).

Measures which may be considered by providers and employers in addressing equality and diversity are set out by Unionlearn as follows:

- What reasonable adjustments and support services they could offer in order to make their Apprenticeship programmes accessible to disabled people.
- Encourage applications for Apprenticeships from underrepresented groups – consider how marketing and recruitment strategies could help reach a wider audience.
- Review recruitment and selection criteria to ensure they don't exclude or discourage under-represented groups.
- Consider giving all 'atypical' applicants who meet the minimum selection criteria an interview, and consider using positive action to address under-representation.
- Carry out equality and diversity training for managers and others involved in recruitment.
- Introduce flexible working for all young people.
- Offer work experience to local schools, including same-sex open days.
- Ask current apprentices and employees from under-represented groups to act as role models or 'champions'.
- Target particular groups by holding recruitment days at community events.
- Look for training providers who are actively involved in training atypical apprentices, and have incorporated their views in the design, development, review and delivery of Apprenticeships.
- Target information on parents of young people from disadvantaged groups to help address their under-representation

9.3 Quality partnerships

A number of partnerships between providers exist in the GBS LEP area, notably the partnerships between funding Primes and their sub-contractors and most recently the collaborative working by college marketing departments to promote Apprenticeships in schools. There is potential for greater degrees of collaboration to be developed between providers in order to support employer needs. This collaboration could involve aspects such as:

- sharing labour market information and intelligence;
- offering integrated provision to employers here there is demand for more services than one organisation can offer;
- where a provider is unable to deliver all Apprentices required by an employer they can broker with other providers to identify learners;
- enables delivery of bespoke and specialist provision where there is small but critical demand;
- reduces competition and enhances the learner experience;
- allows for greater specialisation;
- providing a single point of access or information for employers.

9.4 The work-based learning workforce

A key driver in delivering high quality Apprenticeships is the quality of the work based learning staff (or individuals delivering the Apprenticeship qualifications and training). Research for the University of Derby Corporate, funded by NAS, synthesising data from the literature, contributors and a range of job descriptions identified that the workforce is comprised of four functional areas:

Table 27 Functional of the work based learning workforce

Learning and Assessment	Quality Assurance	Learning Support	Learning Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainer • Tutor • Teacher • Instructor • Learning Adviser • Assessor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Verifier • Head of Quality Assurance • Lead Internal Verifier • Internal Verifier • Lead Assessor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional skills tutor • Reviewer • Roles with responsibility for pastoral care of learners • Providers of career guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor • Manager • Mentor • Coach

The research further identified three aspects which contribute to success:

- currency and expert status of the technical occupational competence of the workforce
- an understanding of the business environment in which the apprentice is engaged and how their skills acquisition impacts on the business environment
- an understanding of the economics of the work based learning sector including the requirements of funding contracts; how to spot new opportunities to deliver programmes for employers and how to develop new business can be a valuable tool in developing new business.

The research also identified that there are particular challenges for the workforce in working with higher level learners at level 4 and above, particularly in three areas. Firstly in relation to the demands on the workforce's own technical expertise, which need to be current and comprehensive and at the same or a higher level than the work being assessed. Secondly a greater degree of assessment understanding is required in order to enable judgments to be made about more complex and less routine work. Finally skills are needed in managing learner expectation and dealing with higher level learners⁴⁸.

⁴⁸ Sutton, M, Neary, S and Marriott, J (2012) *Professionalizing the Work Based Learning Workforce - research for the high impact apprenticeships work based learning tutors programme*. Derby: UDC

10 Raising the profile of Apprenticeships

The Wolf review of vocational education⁴⁹ and the recent Richards Review of Apprenticeships⁵⁰ both highlighted the need to expand and improve the image of apprenticeships. While a recent Federation of Small Business⁵¹ report highlighted that thirty years of continual changes to apprenticeships had undermined business confidence in apprenticeships and made them less attractive to teachers, school leavers and parents. The research made a number of recommendations including the need for good quality and comprehensive career guidance at as young an age as possible, more work experience and greater employer engagement from schools. The GBS LEP shares the concerns of these recent reports and is working to address these issues.

A recent Education and Employers Taskforce and PWC report⁵² highlighted four reasons why young people held negative views about apprenticeships. Firstly they are perceived by young people to limit future careers choices and academic progression, secondly they are perceived as a second best option if the young person does not get the grades to go to university. Thirdly young people are unsure how employers view apprenticeships and finally many young women perceive apprenticeships to be a male dominated route to employment. The research highlighted a number of ways that the image of apprenticeships could be improved. The first was improving access to information provided to young people at school which highlighted recent Edge Foundation research⁵³ that found that only 22% of secondary school teachers and FE lecturers claimed to have a good or very good knowledge (as opposed to poor or very poor knowledge) about apprenticeships. They also highlighted three ways that employers could improve young people perceptions of apprenticeships, these included attending careers fairs and give careers talks to students, offering work experience and job shadowing and making recruitment process more apparent to young people.

Recommendations = using young people as ambassadors/advocates for apprenticeships and utilising case studies as a positive PR message.

⁴⁹ Wolf, A. (2011). *Review of Vocational Education – The Wolf Report*. London: Department for Education.

⁵⁰ Richard, D. (2012). *The Richard Review of Apprenticeships*. London: DBIS.

⁵¹ Federation of Small Business (2012). *The Apprenticeship Journey*. London :FSB.

⁵² Education and Employers Taskforce and PWC (2013). *Closing the Gap: How Employers can Change the Way Young People See Apprenticeships*. London: Education and Employers Taskforce

⁵³ YouGov (2012). *Edge Teacher Survey: Report*. London: Edge Foundation.

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