

## South East Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Report (draft)

\*\*\*Please note that this is a final draft of the SELEP SAP Skills Report, to be signed off by the SELEP Strategic Board in March. The DfE has provided comments on an earlier draft which have been incorporated into the following. The final version will be published by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 \*\*\*

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## Chapter 1. Foreword from SELEP Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) Chair

It is my pleasure as SELEP's SAP Chair to introduce this Skills report which is a great opportunity to set out our work to date and future priorities. Our SAP was formed in September 2019 and includes a fantastic range of employers, representing our key sectors. I've been a member since the beginning, representing the construction sector and was thrilled to become SAP Chair in September 2020. Special thanks to Colette Bailey of creative company Metal who chaired our SAP for the first year.



SELEP is the largest LEP area nationally and the population is set to increase to 5 million by 2039. Our geography includes East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock. Our Skills Advisory Panel reflects the international significance of this area, with eight ports, two airports and high-speed rail links. We are home to over 176,000 enterprises of which 97% are small or micro.

The LEP's Skills Strategy identified priority sectors based on projected growth and skills shortages. These include construction, creative, tourism, energy, logistics, health, care, digital, agriculture and finance. As you will see from our membership, we represent all of these. Members include BT, HSBC Konica Minolta, Oakdown Care Home, Berry Gardens, Stansted Airport and DP World London Gateway. As the largest LEP area in the country, this is a powerful collective working with the education and broader public sector to address skills shortages.

Clearly the pandemic has presented us with new challenges and we are all feeling the impact in different ways, but our sectors are among the most significantly impacted; some facing unprecedented demand and others with premises shut down or with staff furloughed and unable to operate. We have been really pleased to feed into the LEP's Covid-19 recovery funds, which are outlined in chapter three and to engage in government funding starting to address the immediate challenges such as kick-start and increased apprenticeship support.

A real highlight this year was our joint online conference with the SELEP Digital Skills Partnership attended by over 230 people. We had originally planned to hold this as a face to face event but were determined to go ahead and we used an innovative platform to do so, enabling virtual networking and table discussions. This actually made the event more inclusive and more accessible than it might otherwise have been and we are still receiving positive feedback and requests for the recording now!

One of our biggest challenges is in raising awareness of the sectors we represent and the range of roles within them to both adults and young people. Assisting people into these sectors clearly remains key for the economy and for individuals. Training needs to be employer led, flexible and accessible to adults, young people and employers, particularly at the current time. We must counter the projected unemployment and fall in apprenticeship opportunities and provide the critical skills needed. We are really pleased to have launched

a new South East Skills website to share our labour market information and showcase our sectors.

We have also established a Skills Major Projects Group, bringing together some of the large infrastructure projects and which will clearly have an impact on the skills and employment landscape. These include the Lower Thames Crossing, Public Health England, Garden communities, Ebsfleet Garden City, Bradwell B, the London Resort and Stansted Airport. Such significant growth also enables us to look ahead with optimism about opportunities.

Across all these groups what we are continually struck by is the energy, passion, expertise and strong commitment to work together. This has translated into action and progress including our innovative Tutor Bursary Programme and [www.becomealecturer.org](http://www.becomealecturer.org) website, skills capital investments and work with government. Over the last few years SELEP has invested nearly £70 million skills capital funding for a wide range of exciting projects to ensure we have facilities fit for industry led training. Nearly £80 million European Social Funding has supported individuals into jobs and training and to progress within work.

There is clearly still much to address. Our skills levels remain below the national average and those of our counterparts and we have seen a huge increase in those claiming out of work benefits, over 151,000 in January 2021 which is 83,000 more than the same period last year. This report is an excellent opportunity to set out how we will rise to the challenge and I'd like to thank all our colleagues and partners for their hard work and commitment. I hope you will find the report useful and informative and that you will be inspired to join us in this commitment.

**Helen Clements, SELEP Skills Advisory Panel Chair**

## **Chapter 1a: Linked Resources**

SELEP produced a [Skills Strategy in 2018](#), covering the period 2018-2023 and with endorsement by the LEP board and federated boards. This provided an ideal foundation for the SAP to build upon and deliver against. The development of this Skills Report enables a review of the Strategy and action plan contained within it, particularly given the considerable impact of COVID-19. Much of the strategy remains relevant and therefore will be integrated with this Skills Report as is outlined in chapter 4. Additionally, there was a [comprehensive evidence base](#) supporting the original Strategy including reports such as the [South East LEP wide Economy and Skills report](#) which outlined a wide range of data and included benchmarking against other LEPs and a [districts table report](#) to break data down at local level. In addition to the data set out in Annex A of this report, similar updated information will be produced at district level and included on the new [South East Skills website](#), which already includes a [labour market information](#) section with district reports. Through this version and the next update of the Skills Report, the original Skills Strategy will be amalgamated into this document.

In the context of Covid-19, it should be noted that the LEP has also produced a [Road to Recovery Document](#), which includes skills as a top priority.

SELEP's Economy and Recovery strategy is also underway and due for publication by April 2021. The framework for this has already been agreed and this includes strategic priorities and objectives. The objectives include 'to deliver a skilled workforce that drives employment and productivity.' Across the strategic priorities as follows, skills is a common thread throughout and clear area of priority.

Vision: To create a strong platform for recovery and growth in the South East; bolstering our role as the UK's global gateway, delivering investment to drive innovation, productivity and sustainable growth and powering trade and prosperity throughout the UK

#### Strategic priorities

1. *Business Resilience and Growth*, including access to skills and training opportunities and increasing digital skills
2. *UK's Global Gateway*, including supporting gateway locations with their diverse skills needs
3. *Communities for the Future*, including addressing the construction skills deficits
4. *Coastal Catalyst*, including understanding the impact of access to post 16 education on our coastal and rural communities

## Chapter 2. SELEP Skills Advisory Panel introduction

### Skills Advisory Panels: the national context (statement provided by the national SAP Programme team at DfE)

Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs) bring together employers, skills providers and key local stakeholders to better understand and resolve skills mismatches at a local level. There are 36 SAPs across England as part of Mayoral Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships.

The Department for Education (DfE) supports SAPs with grant funding primarily to produce high quality analysis of local labour markets and [Local Skills Reports](#). The Reports set out the local strengths and skills needs and how the SAP proposes its area addresses its key priorities. The Reports aim to influence local partners and feed intelligence to central government, including the national-level [Skills and Productivity Board](#) (SPB).

In January 2021, DfE published its White Paper “[Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth](#),” which set out a number of reforms aimed at putting employers more firmly at the heart of the skills system. The White Paper outlined plans to test in 2021-22, in a small number of areas, “Local Skills Improvement Plans” created by business representative organisations.

The White Paper committed to build on the work of SAPs to date. SAPs and their Local Skills Reports will continue as the DfE trailblazes “Local Skill Improvement Plans” and until any potential changes are made to a SAP’s remit and responsibilities.

The SELEP SAP covers East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock as illustrated by the map (right). The SAP membership includes members from local skills and boards to ensure join up and local representation.

The SELEP SAP Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) is an employer-led local partnership, established in October 2019 to strengthen the link between public and private sector employers, local authorities, colleges, universities and providers and to pool knowledge on skills and labour market needs. The strong partnership with education is illustrated by the fact that the SAP Vice Chairs are from further education and the SAP also includes membership from universities, provider networks and third sector.



SELEP’s SAP is reflective of growth sectors and membership was informed by the **SELEP Skills Strategy and Evidence Base** . Full membership is as follows:

Name and organisation	Representing
Helen Clements (Chair), <b>Morgan Sindall</b>	Construction
Angela O'Donoghue (Vice Chair), South Essex College	Further Education and SELEP Board member (Chair, Skills Working Group)
Jeremy Kerswell (Vice Chair), <b>Plumpton College</b>	Further Education (Vice Chair Skills Working Group)
Jane Thomas, <b>BT Group</b>	Digital and telecommunications
Liz Austin, <b>Stansted Airport</b>	Airports and Tourism
Ana Christie, <b>Sussex Chambers of Commerce</b>	SMEs
Andrea Cunningham, <b>Metal</b>	Creative
Samantha Desforges, <b>Berry Gardens</b>	Food production
Diana Garnham, <b>RDBInsight</b>	Chair, Skills East Sussex
Iain Hawthorn, <b>HSBC</b>	Finance
Kirsty Hawkins, <b>Social Enterprise Kent</b>	Voluntary and Community
Lindsey Hayward, <b>Konica Minolta</b>	Engineering
Trevor Hutchinson and Karris Rowbotham, <b>DP World London Gateway</b>	Logistics
Lynne Matthews, <b>EDF Energy (Bradwell B)</b>	Energy
Jo Nolan, <b>Screen South</b>	Creative
Mike Derrick, <b>Oakdown House</b>	Care
Paul Winter, <b>Wire Belt Company</b>	Chair, Kent and Medway Skills Commission
Amy Cable, <b>Lower Thames Crossing</b> / Highways England	Major Projects
Pauline Smith, CXK, <b>National Careers Service</b>	Careers support
Vanessa Potter, <b>Sussex Council of Training Providers</b>	Independent Training Providers
Viki Faulkner, <b>University of Brighton</b>	Higher Education
Holly Aquilina, <b>East Sussex County Council</b>	Local authorities
Ajay Sharman, <b>STEM Learning</b>	STEM / Digital Skills Partnership

In addition to members outlined above, Ben Derham of the Education and Skills Funding Agency is a regular attendee at meetings and presentations have been given by Careers Enterprise Company's Regional Co-ordinator for the SELEP area Georgina Angele. DWP colleagues will also be invited to join the Skills Advisory Panel going forward.

Due to the size of the SELEP area, to ensure a strong education and public sector voice, there is also a SELEP Skills Working Group which works closely with the SAP. Further information is at <https://www.southeastlep.com/our-strategy/skills/skills-working-group>.

SELEP's Skills Lead co-ordinates both the SAP and Skills Working Group, ensuring agenda setting, meetings dates and minutes working with the Chairs.

## Meetings and Minutes

SAP meetings are held quarterly with dates set at the start of the calendar year. To ensure transparency, minutes and the SAP Terms of Reference are published on the SELEP website along with further information about members. Further information is available at <https://www.southeastlep.com/our-delivery/skills/skills-advisory-panel/>.

During the first Covid-19 lockdown, an additional meeting was held given the importance of gaining employer feedback during that time on the issues and challenges they were facing. During this period, meetings also defaulted to being online and with attendance remaining high.

**Contact details for queries** – you can get in touch with the SAP via SELEP at [hello@southeastlep.com](mailto:hello@southeastlep.com) and clearly marking your query as skills related.

## Chapter 3. Skills strengths and needs

### Background

The South East LEP is the largest in the country with a size and location that make it nationally and internationally significant and instrumental to keeping goods moving in the UK. The productivity of the SELEP area impacts on the national picture. In a geography that stretches from Harwich, through Ramsgate and Dover all the way to Peacehaven there are many tangible examples of growth which have clear impact on skills needs and opportunities. Outlined below are some major projects which will impact on future jobs and growth. This is coupled with some significant challenges. The SELEP geography is very diverse, home to the longest coastline in England (by LEP area), large rural areas and urban concentrations and enjoying a close relationship with London. Key measures such as skills levels, earnings and benefit claimants vary greatly across the SELEP area and so it is important to view LEP wide figures in this context and also utilise the local information such as [district reports](#) which SELEP has developed to support the SAP.

SELEP's population is 4.3 million set to grow to nearly 5 million by 2039. This is roughly the same as a county such as Croatia or Estonia.

Some key facts and figures which help to put the LEP area into context are:

- The nearly 177,000 enterprises in the South East LEP area employ 1.9 million people and for virtually all sectors the South East LEP has far greater numbers of employees than most other LEP areas outside London
- For virtually all sectors the South East LEP has far greater numbers of employees than most other LEP areas outside London. There are over 108,000 in manufacturing, 112,00 in construction, 42,000 in finance and 226,000 in health and social work.
- The creative and IT sector is flourishing and influential on an international level
- There is growing success and economic impact of the south east wine and food industry
- The South East is an area of diversity, home to the longest coastline in England, large rural areas and urban concentrations and a close relationship with London
- Local communities are among the most prosperous but also most deprived nationally
- SELEP is home to world beating international companies as well as burgeoning SMEs and a high proportion of self-employment

### Key facts and figures

The table below illustrates that SELEP's skills levels are below the national average at all levels although the gap has reduced compared to previous years. There are also big variations across the SELEP geography, with some areas being well above and others well below the national average. Generally, coastal areas have lower levels than the SELEP and England average. Additionally, whilst resident based earnings are slightly above the level of England (which likely reflects the high level of commuting to London where salaries are higher), work-based earnings (of individuals working in the SELEP area) are below. Again,



there are variations across the LEP and the gap is considerable in earnings and skills levels when comparing SELEP to some other southern LEPs. For example, work- based earnings in the Enterprise M3 LEP area are £644.40 and in Thames Valley Berkshire £692.10. In fact, the SELEP area work- based earnings are 20<sup>th</sup> of all LEPs in order of the highest, below areas such as Liverpool City Region, South East Midlands and Greater Birmingham. Similarly, SELEP falls within the bottom 10 of all LEPs when looking at level 2, 3 and 4 skills attainment. A sizeable 201,400 of people also have no qualifications (7.9%).

	<b>SELEP</b>	<b>England</b>
Total population	4,264,000	56,287,000
Working age population	2,567,600 (60.2%)	33,352,000 (59.3%)
*Skills Level 1+	85.4%	85.8%
Skills Level 2+	72.7%	75.7%
Skills Level 3+	53.5%	58.5%
Skills Level 4+	34.6%	40%
No qualifications	7.9%	7.5%
Weekly work-place earnings	£549.60	£589.90
Weekly resident-based earnings	£608.70	£589.80
Out of work benefit claimants	151,780 (5.9%)	2,200,965 (6.3 %)
Aged 16-24 (Jan 21)	31,085 (10%)	429,180 (NA)
Workless Households	155,400	2,356,700 (13.3%)
% of households that are workless	12%	

(\*Skills levels are % of the working age population)

### **A diverse area**

Made up of rural, coastal, urban, wealthy and deprived populations. It is impossible to singularly categorise the SELEP area, the various geographies that make up the whole require different understanding and approach. From areas such as Jaywick in Essex, the most deprived ward in the country, to Wealden, which has amongst the highest earnings nationally, low-level unemployment and high qualification levels. This diversity makes the area applicable to a wide range of government policy.



### **National and international significance**





The SELEP area is nationally and internationally important home to key sea and airports and important road and rail infrastructure key to the UK's economy and supply chain and providing a gateway to the world and the rest of the UK. This area is vital and instrumental in keeping people, goods and services moving and enabling international trade. Overall, SELEP has lower than average skills levels and although these are improving, rates of improvement fall behind the national average in all but one level. Generally, SELEP falls within the bottom half of LEPs for skills levels. As a diverse and large area however, SELEP

has areas well above and well below the national average. SELEP borders Greater London, Cambridge, Hertfordshire, West Sussex and Suffolk.

## Major growth

Home to world-leading companies Including household names such as Ford, Saga, London Stansted Airport, P&O Ferries, Konica Minolta, Eurotunnel, Royal Opera House, Turner Contemporary, Maidstone Studios, DP World London Gateway and Amazon, to name a few, as well as a wide range of small and start-up businesses in sectors such as digital, creative and construction. The SELEP area is soon to be home also to Public Health England, a new power station at Bradwell, a London entertainment resort, Lower Thames Crossing, housing developments such as Ebsfleet Garden City and expansion at a number of its ports and airports. To this end, SELEP has established a Major Projects Group and a sub-group focused on skills has been set up through which the skills needs and opportunities of the major projects can be quantified and shared actions agreed. Some headlines for these projects help to illustrate their scale and impact across the SELEP area but also the important role they can play in raising awareness of growth sectors more generally and encouraging more people to take up jobs within them. Planned activities such as an online careers event will help to showcase these further and a report to provide detail on the skills and jobs needs is planned. Clearly some of the following are impacted by Covid-19 and due to undergo delays and / or changes:

Project	Website and key info	Images
<b>Lower Thames Crossing</b>	<p><a href="#">Lower Thames Crossing - Highways England</a></p> <p>The proposed Lower Thames Crossing is part of the biggest investment in the country's road network for a generation. It will be the longest road tunnel in the UK.</p> <p>The <a href="#">new LTC apprenticeships page</a> is already featuring opportunities.</p>	
<b>London Resort</b>	<p><a href="#">The London Resort</a></p> <p>London Report Holding Company is proposing to develop a world-class, sustainable, next generation resort which will be in Ashford in Kent.</p>	

<b>Ebsfleet Garden City</b>	<p><a href="#">Ebsfleet Development Corporation</a></p> <p>Up to 15,000 new homes and a Garden City in north Kent.</p> <p>One of a number of housing developments across the South East LEP area.</p>	
<b>Public Health England</b>	<p><a href="#">PHE Harlow</a></p> <p>PHE Harlow will be PHE's future 40-acre campus and headquarters. Up to 2,750 staff including scientists, technicians, finance, human resources, communications and marketing.</p>	
<b>Bradwell B</b>	<p><a href="#">Bradwell B</a></p> <p>New nuclear power station in Maldon, with new jobs to include construction, engineering, business and training opportunities.</p>	
<b>Stansted Airport Growth</b>	<p><a href="#">Transformation Stansted Airport</a></p> <p>An upgrade to the airport and a new arrivals terminal.</p>	

## Creative Estuary

The Creative Estuary is a consortium of public sector and cultural organisations, working together to support the Thames Estuary Production Corridor (TEPC) project. The area includes 60 miles of the Thames Estuary across the South Essex and North Kent coastline,



representing a cultural hub. The ambition of the programme is to transform the visibility, identity and future of the area's creative production infrastructure, supporting more than 400 new jobs and delivering new skills, qualifications and apprenticeships across an area of 1.5 million people.

With the support of the Cultural Development fund, the project will shape and develop infrastructure, boost production capacity, catalyse talent development and drive innovation. At local level, the project will include festivals and cross partner collaborations.

There is also exploration of a project around a coastal strip of cultural venues in Sussex.

### **The pandemic**

Clearly the pandemic has had a big impact on the economy across the SELEP area and an additional SAP meeting was held during the summer to ensure continued engagement with employers and gain their feedback on experiences. This varied from increased pressure on the Care sector and unprecedented reduction of passengers at airports. Companies such as Berry Gardens reported huge demand. Further reflection is provided in the sector table below.

In the SELEP geography, as of January 2021, there were 151,505 people claiming out of work benefits compared to 68,495 in the same period the previous year. Younger people have been disproportionately impacted making up over a fifth of the total and with 9.8% of 18-21-year olds claiming out of work benefits compared to 5.9% of the working age population. This has been coupled with significant numbers of people being furloughed; at the end of June 553,000 people across SELEP were furloughed which is 34% of the workforce. Regional figures show significantly higher proportions for sectors such as hospitality with 72% of employees in the East of England and 73% in the South East Region furloughed. Figures were also high for arts, entertainment and recreation at 66% and 69% respectively. This has been strongly echoed by companies feeding back to SELEP in these sectors.

The pandemic also highlighted and heightened the issue of digital access, basic digital skills and kit and connectivity. Sectors such as Care fed back that digital skills needs had massively increased as a result of the pandemic and a clear need has emerged for digital skills and connectivity to access work and training. Based on ONS figures of access nationally, a conservative estimate is that at least 330,000 people don't have internet access across the SELEP area and even where they do this may be patchy and via pay as you go mobiles and devices. The Lloyds Consumer Index measures basic digital skills and its report outlined that 21% of people lack full basic digital skills and 8% have no digital skills at all. Furthermore, 10% of working adults are without basic digital skills and people with a registered disability are four times more likely to be offline.

### **Freeports**

The government is establishing new Freeports as national hubs for trade and investment across the UK. This is a secure customs zone, usually located at ports or airports, where different customs rules apply. The UK Government's plan for Freeports focuses on customs, tax relief, planning, regeneration funding and innovation. There will be skills and job

opportunities arising from these and their location in coastal areas means that they may also help to address some of the issues of deprivation experienced in coastal areas.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021, it was confirmed in the Chancellor's Budget that two SELEP area Freeport bids had been successful, further to endorsement by the SELEP Board on 29<sup>th</sup> January and submission in February. Development has included work with SELEP, local colleges and local authorities and include skills outcomes.

Thames Freeport – DP World and Forth Ports are bidding for a Thames Freeport, with London Gateway, the Port of Tilbury and Ford's Dagenham engine plant at its heart. This highlights the role of the River Thames. The proposal includes a Thames Freeport Skills Accelerator. Further information is available at <https://thamesfreeport.com/>

Freeport East – this is a cross LEP bid from the Port of Felixstowe (Suffolk, New Anglia LEP) and Harwich International. Both ports are owned by Hutchison Ports but principal endorsement of this bid is from New Anglia LEP as the principle tax site will be based there.

Additionally, there is an approach by the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel to develop a submission for a Global Trade and Innovation (GTI) Zone.

## Sector needs

In terms of need, across all sectors in addition to those set out below, there are some cross-cutting skills illustrated in vacancies and employer feedback. These include leadership and management and communication. Further information on skills needs and vacancies is contained within Annex A.

Headlines for SELEP's key sectors include:

Sector	SELEP Picture now	Future outlook / <b>pandemic impact</b>
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>27,325 enterprises</li> <li>112,000 employee jobs</li> <li>Ageing workforce</li> <li>Disproportionately male workforce</li> <li>Competition from London offering higher salaries to people trained within SELEP area</li> <li>Vacancies and occupation include quantity surveyors, bricklayers, architects and carpenters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued growth - up to 300,000 new homes across SELEP</li> <li>Large infrastructure projects, as per SELEP's Major Projects Group</li> <li>Growing need for green and low carbon skills</li> <li>Public perception hindering new entrants</li> <li>Large requirements for 'off site' jobs</li> <li><b>Has shown resilience and continued operation through pandemic after initial slowing</b></li> </ul>
Health and Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7,240 enterprises</li> <li>226,000 employee jobs</li> <li>Disproportionately female workforce (particularly Care)</li> <li>Occupations and vacancies include care workers, nurses, social workers and residential care managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population growth to 5 million by 2039 and ageing population larger (up to a fifth) will impact on health and care sector needs</li> <li>Public perception of sector (particularly care) hindering recruitment but good opportunities to progress to manager</li> <li>Opportunities to use digital technologies in care</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in need and vacancies through pandemic. Some reduction of EU and overseas care workers. May help to raise the profile of the sectors</li> </ul>
IT, Digital and creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 84,000 employee jobs</li> <li>• 19,170 enterprises</li> <li>• IT has a disproportionately male workforce</li> <li>• Creative sector has a lot of freelancers who may lack capacity to engage in traditional skills models (e.g. apprenticeships)</li> <li>• Occupations and vacancies include software developers, coders, IT support, graphic designers and programmers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of clusters across SELEP and significant activity through areas of work such as the Creative Estuary Eastbourne creative clusters and London Resort</li> <li>• Digital roles required across all sectors given the 'digital revolution'</li> <li>• Sizeable Games, Entertainment and cultural part of sector likely to see growth</li> <li>• IT jobs have been resilient and shown some growth through the pandemic through vacancies. Creative sector has seen large negative effect with high levels of furlough (70%+) and lack of income.</li> </ul>
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3,020 enterprises</li> <li>• 42,000 employee jobs</li> <li>• Strong relationship to London- many SELEP residents commuting to finance jobs</li> <li>• Occupations and vacancies include insurance underwriters, finance analysts, sales related roles and financial managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trend for some finance companies in London relocating to parts of SELEP due to available workforce / lower rents</li> <li>• Growing need for IT (software) skills due to online nature of industry</li> <li>• Potential risk of jobs moving elsewhere in Europe or beyond</li> <li>• Continued operation through pandemic as move to home working. Longer-term could see a shift in the London focus.</li> </ul>
Manufacturing and engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 108,000 employee jobs</li> <li>• Disproportionately male workforce</li> <li>• Ageing workforce</li> <li>• Internationally famous companies located here (i.e. Ford, Raytheon, e2v)</li> <li>• Occupations and vacancies include mechanical engineer, production manager, engineering manager, test engineer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public perception of sector hindering recruitment</li> <li>• Ageing workforce likely to impact on skills needed – high need for technical skills</li> <li>• Impact of digital and robotics on future skills requirements</li> <li>• Reduction in employment overall projected but replacement of ageing workforce, the need for digital skills and competition from other sectors means skills shortages still likely</li> <li>• Continued operation through pandemic and measures to protect workforce</li> </ul>
Transport and Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6,270 enterprises</li> <li>• 86,000 employee jobs</li> <li>• Disproportionate male workforce</li> <li>• Of national and international significance:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of digital and robotics on future skills requirements (e.g. automated warehousing)</li> <li>• Airport expansion potential at Stansted, Southend</li> <li>• Potential for Freeport in SELEP area</li> </ul>



	<p>SELEP has 9 Ports, Eurotunnel and airports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of top sectors recruiting during pandemic</li> <li>• Occupations and vacancies include HGV driver, forklift truck driver, warehouse manager, transport manager and depot manager</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parts of sector (e.g. HGV driving) saw huge increase in demand through pandemic whilst airports vastly reduced and potential impact on future expansion</li> </ul>
Agriculture and land based (Kent and East Sussex priority)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6,000 enterprises</li> <li>• Rich and diverse food production / manufacturing sector showcasing innovations and importance of food security / links to tourism</li> <li>• Some famous companies, e.g. Thanet Earth and Rathfinny Wines</li> <li>• Occupations and vacancies include landscaper, veterinary nurse and farm estate worker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important to food security and potential move to more UK production if imports become costly</li> <li>• Innovations in areas such as wine production could lead to further growth</li> <li>• Growing need for farm based Research and Development and response to climate change</li> <li>• Increased demand through pandemic and spotlight on the sector which has increased training demand.</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 155,000 employee jobs</li> <li>• 2,935 enterprises</li> <li>• Reported difficulties recruiting and retaining staff</li> <li>• High levels of vacancies</li> <li>• Occupations and vacancies include education teaching professionals, teaching assistants, primary and nursery education teaching professions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Largely public sector so reliant on public funding but a continued need given population growth</li> <li>• General challenge in schools, colleges and universities to recruit to sector specialisms especially where there are shortages in the sector itself</li> </ul>
Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11,495 enterprises</li> <li>• 281,000 employee jobs</li> <li>• Some large retail concentrations offering significant employment (e.g. Lakeside)</li> <li>• Occupations and vacancies include store manager, sales executive and retail salesperson</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy reliance and inter-relation with transport and logistics sector</li> <li>• Impact of online retail impacting jobs, IT side of retail likely skills need</li> <li>• Significantly impacted by the pandemic and with high proportions of people furloughed (70%+). Likely to see long-term impact with increased move to online retail.</li> </ul>
Professional, scientific and technical (cross sector priority area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 27,950 enterprises</li> <li>• 120,000 employee jobs</li> <li>• Reflecting the high level of technical and higher-level jobs across SELEP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical roles are increasing and likely to continue to do so as well as legal and medical roles</li> <li>• Factors such as climate change and exploring new approaches to areas such</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflects jobs in sectors such as IT, construction and also legal</li> </ul>	<p>as crop growth could be an area for expertise and expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential for Institute for Technology in SELEP Area</li> </ul>
Energy & Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17,500 employee jobs</li> <li>Occupations and vacancies include water and sewerage operatives, engineering technicians and business sales executives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sector reports requirements in engineering and experiencing similar shortages to the engineering sector</li> <li>Likely future need for intelligent energy systems that track usage as well as skills around technologies such as solar, wind and carbon capture</li> </ul>
Accommodation, Food, hospitality, and tourism (Kent, Medway and East Sussex priority)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8,615 enterprises</li> <li>125,000 employee jobs</li> <li>Particular focus in some of SELEP's coastal and rural areas</li> <li>Links to agriculture and land-based</li> <li>Occupations and vacancies include restaurant manager, bar staff, hotel manager</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued adaptation of the market through trends such as Airbnb</li> <li>Growth of jobs across the SELEP (pre pandemic) through increase in new restaurants, hotels and bars</li> <li>Language skills potential area for development</li> <li>High employee turnover rate</li> <li><a href="#">Huge impact from pandemic with high rates of staff furloughed (70+%). Recovery may be assisted by UK based holidays</a></li> </ul>

### Institute of Technology (IoT)

There is currently not an IoT within the SELEP area but with a LEP wide bid having been submitted and supported by the LEP. This would bring together a range of FE colleges, universities and employers across the LEP area and specialise in logistics, automation, construction, health and life sciences. Given the importance of these sectors as illustrated in the headlines within this chapter, this would be an asset to the SELEP area. Stage 2 bids are expected in April 2021, with outcomes by June 2021.

### Opportunity Area

The Department for Education identified 12 Opportunity areas nationally in 2017, through social, economic and cultural challenges faced. Hastings is an Opportunity Area within the SELEP geography and with priorities around improving literacy and attainment in maths, improving mental health and resilience and broadening horizons and preparing young people for work. [The Hastings Delivery Plan](#) provides further information and the partnership Board includes representation from SELEP Vice Chair, Graham Peters. This has also meant additional resource and funding through the Careers Enterprise Company and commitment from 'cornerstone' employers to tackling social mobility. Further information about the wealth of work underway is available at <https://hastingsopportunityarea.co.uk/>.

### Towns Fund

Seven towns in the South East LEP area can bid to the £3.6 billion Towns Fund pot. Colchester, Grays, Harlow, Hastings, Margate, Newhaven and Tilbury have been named in



the list of 101 towns that could benefit from the Towns Fund pot, created by government to bolster economic opportunities, with a focus on urban regeneration, improved transport, connectivity, skills and culture.

Each town could receive up to £25 million if they can make a strong bid for funds to create jobs, support local businesses and diversify the towns' economies. The areas identified have been granted capacity funding by the Ministry for Communities and Local Government to support their Town Deal proposals. Government has asked each Town Deal to be supported by a board, developed by the local council and led by a representative of the local business community. Members also include SELEP, MPs, local government, community representatives, investors and local businesses, both large employers and SMEs. Town Investment Plans will inform business cases to apply for funding. Further information about the local Boards are available at:

- Colchester: <https://www.colchester.gov.uk/we-are-colchester/board/>
- Grays: <http://graystownsfund.co.uk/about/>
- Harlow: <https://www.harlow.gov.uk/business/regeneration/towns-fund>
- Hastings: <https://www.hastings.gov.uk/regeneration/towndeal/board/>
- Margate: <https://www.thanet.gov.uk/campaigns/margate-town-deal/>
- Newhaven: TBA
- Tilbury: <http://tilburytownfund.co.uk>

**Additionally, £80 million of European Social Funding has been invested across the SELEP area and £69 million capital funding related to skills. These are described further in chapter 7.**

### **Occupations with highest growth forecast (Working Futures)**

The following table shows forecast growth based on occupations and sectors. Although these were produced before the pandemic, they remain relevant and vacancy data supports the fact that these are growing. Given the level of growth set out above, construction jobs will clearly also see growth. In the short-term, the arts and entertainment sector has clearly been impacted by Covid-19 but it is hoped that a return to growth will return in the medium to longer-term.

South East LEP	
Occupations with highest forecast growth (2017-2027)	Occupations with lowest forecast growth (2017-2027)
1) Caring personal service occupations	1) Secretarial and related occupations
2) Teaching and educational professionals	2) Process, plant and machine operatives
3) Health and social care associate professionals	3) Skilled metal, electrical and electronic trades
4) Health professionals	4) Textiles, printing and other skilled trades
5) Corporate managers and directors	5) Elementary trades and related occupations

## Sectors with highest growth forecast (Working Futures)

South East LEP	
Sectors with highest forecast growth (2017-2027)	Sectors with lowest forecast growth (2017-2027)
1) Arts and entertainment	1) Engineering
2) Health and social work	2) Rest of manufacturing
3) Water and sewerage	3) Agriculture
4) Real estate	4) Food drink and tobacco
5) Professional services	5) Finance and insurance

## Further Education

The SELEP area has 14 Further Education colleges / college groups:

- Chelmsford College ([www.chelmsford.ac.uk](http://www.chelmsford.ac.uk))
- Colchester Institute ([www.colchester.ac.uk](http://www.colchester.ac.uk))
- East Sussex College Group ([www.escg.ac.uk](http://www.escg.ac.uk))
- EKC Group ([www.ekcgroup.ac.uk](http://www.ekcgroup.ac.uk))
- Harlow College ([www.harlow-college.ac.uk](http://www.harlow-college.ac.uk))
- Mid Kent College ([www.midkent.ac.uk/](http://www.midkent.ac.uk/))
- New City College Epping Forest ([www.ncclondon.ac.uk/epping-forest](http://www.ncclondon.ac.uk/epping-forest))
- North Kent College ([www.northkent.ac.uk/](http://www.northkent.ac.uk/))
- Plumpton College ([www.plumpton.ac.uk/](http://www.plumpton.ac.uk/))
- South Essex College ([www.southessex.ac.uk/](http://www.southessex.ac.uk/))
- The Sixth Form College Colchester ([www.colchsfc.ac.uk/](http://www.colchsfc.ac.uk/))
- USP College ([www.uspcollege.ac.uk](http://www.uspcollege.ac.uk))
- West Kent College ([www.westkent.ac.uk/](http://www.westkent.ac.uk/))
- Writtle University College (<https://writtle.ac.uk/>)

The colleges are represented locally by the Federation of Essex Colleges ([www.federationofessexcolleges.org](http://www.federationofessexcolleges.org)) Kent FE ( <https://www.kentfurthereducation.org/>) and FE Sussex (<https://www.fesussex.org.uk/>). The National College for Creative Industries ([www.creativeindustries.ac.uk](http://www.creativeindustries.ac.uk)) is also based in the SELEP area and is partnered with South Essex College.

The LEP and SAP has a strong relationship with colleges and FE Networks across the LEP and with FE representation on the LEP Board, SAP, Skills Working Group, Digital Skills Partnership and also other LEP Working Groups such as the Rural Working Group. Various LEP events and meetings have been hosted in colleges and over £69 million of capital investment has been made to date in facilities and equipment relevant to industry. Stansted Airport College featured as part of the LEP's AGM in summer 2019.

Similarly, there is a strong relationship with provider networks locally, with regular meetings and representation on the SAP and Skills Working Group. SELEP's Skills Lead regularly attends provider meetings to provide updates. The networks are the Essex Provider Network (<http://essexprovidernetwork.com/>), Kent Association of Training Organisations

(<https://kato-training.org/>) and Sussex Council of Training Providers (<https://www.sctp.org.uk>).

## Higher Education

The SELEP area has nine universities, all of which are members of the SELEP U9 Group which promotes the higher education sector across the SELEP region. As with FE, there is a strong relationship with the universities and a lot of collaboration between FE and HE also. HE is also represented on the SELEP Board, SAP and Skills Working Group. The universities are:

- University of Kent ([www.kent.ac.uk/](http://www.kent.ac.uk/))
- University of Greenwich ( [www.gre.ac.uk/](http://www.gre.ac.uk/))
- University of Essex ([www.essex.ac.uk](http://www.essex.ac.uk))
- University of Sussex ([www.sussex.ac.uk](http://www.sussex.ac.uk))
- University of Brighton ([www.brighton.ac.uk](http://www.brighton.ac.uk))
- Anglia Ruskin University ([www.aru.ac.uk](http://www.aru.ac.uk))
- Canterbury Christ Church University ([www.canterbury.ac.uk](http://www.canterbury.ac.uk))
- University for the Creative Arts ([www.uca.ac.uk](http://www.uca.ac.uk))
- Writtle University College (<https://writtle.ac.uk/>)

## Chapter 4. SELEP Skills Strategy

[SELEP's Skills Strategy \(right, top\)](#) was launched in 2018, at the [Construction Skills Centre](#) at Folkestone College in Kent, which SELEP had invested skills capital in (*right, bottom*). Given the size and growth of the construction sector, this was an apt setting and was attended by SELEP Chair Chris Brodie, CEO Adam Bryan and local MP Damian Collins and local construction companies. Videos of the launch are also available [here](#) and [here](#).

[The strategy](#) set out an employer and growth led approach to skills, informed by a [large evidence base](#) with a range of reports and data informing the conclusions. It was the process of extensive consultation with SELEP's federated Skills and Employer Boards, working groups, wider stakeholders, survey and was signed off by SELEP's Board.



In setting up the SAP, the Skills Strategy vision, priorities and actions were shared and agreed as being relevant in informing the Panel's work. In preparation for the Skills Report and in view of the significant impact COVID-19 has had on the landscape, the strategy vision and priorities have been looked at once again. These were again agreed by the SELEP SAP in December 2020 as remaining relevant with some slight **updated amendments** as follows:

### SELEP Skills Strategy Vision and priorities:

**Vision:** to help deliver a flourishing and inclusive economy across the biggest LEP in the country by equipping employers, adults and young people with the skills, conditions and aptitudes required for significant **and clean** growth today and tomorrow.

### **Priorities:**

- Increase apprenticeships and industry relevant qualifications for all ages, particularly in priority sectors and at higher and degree level
- Simplify the landscape for employers, stakeholders and individuals
- Build **a diverse** and inclusive economy and reduce polarisation
- Raise awareness of jobs and growth across SELEP and the area's size, scale, national and international significance
- Foster and support the spirit of pride, entrepreneurship innovation and enthusiasm across SELEP to bring about change

Additionally, the key challenges identified in the strategy were reviewed and agreed as still being relevant and, in some cases, exacerbated by COVID-19 challenges. A summary of these is as below

Review of main challenges set out in SELEP Skills Strategy 2018-2022:

<b>2018-2022 Strategy headline</b>	<b>Still a challenge / priority?</b>
<b>Skills levels below the national average at levels 2-4</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>210,000 people with no qualifications</b>	<b>YES – still 201,400</b>
<b>Nearly 68,000 people on out of work benefits</b>	<b>YES – now 151,780</b>
<b>163,000 workless households</b>	<b>YES – still 155,400</b>
<b>Workplace earnings below national average / neighbouring LEAs</b>	<b>YES – still significantly below</b>
<b>Some of the most deprived and most wealthy areas nationally</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Fluctuating apprenticeship numbers and short-term decline</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Declining adult participation in further education</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>High levels of out commuting to London / surrounding areas</b>	<b>Possible area of change due to more home working</b>
<b>Shortage of Tutors</b>	<b>YES</b>

SELEP's Skills Strategy also identified key sectors based on a number of key factors such as forecast growth, skills shortages and vacancies, as set out in chapter 3 and which remain relevant. These are all represented by SAP member employers and remain important. [Further information on sectors](#) is provided on the new SELEP South East Skills website and which will be added to with new information.

The Skills Strategy has informed the work of the Skills Advisory Panel and Skills Working Group and also helped to inform priorities for ESF, Skills capital and other areas of work such as a Tutor Bursary programme, which will be described more fully in chapter seven. It has also informed a wide range of partners and programmes such as DWP and ESFA programmes. The evidence that underpinned the Strategy has also been utilised by a range of partners, helping to inform priorities and funding bids.

## Chapter 5. Action Plan

The 2018-2023 skills strategy set out themes and actions for delivery to ensure progress against the vision and priorities outlined above. **Delivery against these** are outlined below with outstanding and long-term actions from the skills strategy which will now be incorporated into **one SAP Action Plan for 2021 going forward:**

*Action Plan Theme: Continue to secure funding and opportunities to support our most disadvantaged people and communities*

Action identified in Skills Strategy 2018-2023	Progress	Continued SAP Action Plan 2021 priority?	Timescales
Launch remaining ESF tenders to support areas of identified need	<b>GOOD</b> -ESF tenders have continued to be published and a range of Calls have been issued responding to need, as per chapter 3. Also engaging with related areas of work such as DWP Kickstart and Restart programmes	<b>Yes</b> – new ESF Call published March 2021  Ensure engagement with similar future funding streams	Final Calls in 2021, continued delivery to 2023
Achieve greater local control of Skills Funding to deliver growth	<b>GOOD</b> -The forthcoming SELEP Skills Covid-19 funding is repurposed Growing Places fund and will support the skills agenda, being entirely LEP led.	<b>Yes</b> – utilise Covid-19 Recovery Fund as example of locally led skills funding.  Continue to engage with new funding such as the National Retraining / Skills Fund and Digital Bootcamps	Ongoing
Be an established partner to test / input to areas of national policy	<b>GOOD</b> -SELEP is a Digital Skills Partnership pilot area  Also in conversations with DWP regarding the roll out of the Beacon project (supporting mental health and well-being)  Help to put forward ideas such as MAKE UK Training / Skills Tax Credits proposals	<b>Yes</b> – Year 3 of DSP funding due to be confirmed  <b>Yes</b> – due to join pilot from April	Year 3 DSP to June 2022  Potential Beacon project pilot from April 2021
Ensure a proportionate share of the UK	<b>PENDING</b> - Awaiting further information on the UKSPF and how this will roll out	<b>Yes</b>	Ongoing

Shared Prosperity Fund			
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Action Plan Theme: Promoting careers where there are current and future vacancies to adults and young people

Action identified	Progress	Continued SAP Action Plan 2021 priority?	Timescales
Support the growth of the Careers Enterprise Adviser network across SELEP	<b>GOOD</b> – SELEP and SAP engagement in the Enterprise Adviser Network is ongoing (CEC presentation at September SAP meeting).	<b>Yes</b> - Looking at options for Essex CC area coverage with CEC. Engaging in activity such as careers events  Support further recruitment of Enterprise Advisers and STEM Ambassadors	Ongoing
Explore and showcase innovative new solutions for careers and training (i.e. virtual reality, online careers Shows, materials for adults)	<b>GOOD</b> – -Virtual reality headsets featuring the logistics sector (developed by SAP member DP World London Gateway) have been used at a range of events across the SELEP -Virtual work experience best practice being developed by SAP Chair and Morgan Sindall and a paper outlining experience	<b>Yes</b> - online careers events planned in 2021 working with the SELEP Digital Skills Partnership and sector factsheets developed for new Skills South East site.	Autumn 2021
Work with relevant partner organisation to articulate growth areas outlined in Skills strategy / evidence base (i.e. National Careers Service, Job Centre Plus)	<b>GOOD</b> – regular meetings / events held with Job Centre Plus and National Careers Service and NCS members of SAP, with JCP to be added as members also.	<b>Yes</b> JCP colleagues to join SAP	Ongoing
Ensure support for and awareness of entrepreneurship and self-employment	<b>ONGOING</b>	<b>Yes</b> - identified as an area for development in SELEP's Economy and Recovery Strategy	Ongoing

Action Plan theme: Removing any barriers to provision, such as the availability of tutors and facilities

Action Identified	Progress	Continued SAP Action Plan 2021 priority?	Timescales
Pilot an online skills portal for potential roll out	<b>GOOD</b> - Work is now underway in different parts of the LEP on portals to house information in one place, e.g. Careers East Sussex ( <a href="https://careerseastsussex.co.uk/">https://careerseastsussex.co.uk/</a> ) and Thurrock Opportunities ( <a href="https://www.thurrockopportunities.co.uk/">https://www.thurrockopportunities.co.uk/</a> ). (Essex site launching in March 2021).	<b>Yes</b> – The new South East Skills website will link to these and house key information. <a href="https://www.southeastskills.org.uk/">https://www.southeastskills.org.uk/</a> )	Ongoing
Support Government Initiatives for Adults (e.g. Fuller Working Lives, Disability Confident)	<b>ONGOING</b> – SELEP has engaged with DWP regarding Fuller Working Lives / pilot but due to capacity is unable to take forward a specific programme on this	<b>Yes</b> - SELEP has worked with DWP and Cornwall & Isles of Scilly LEP on the potential roll out of their <a href="#">Beacon website</a>  -Encouraging greater take up of Disability Confident could be an area for further development.  -Supporting the take up of new level 3 adult offer across SELEP  -Ensuring take up of digital entitlement	Ongoing  April 2021  Ongoing
Utilise ESF for areas of need (i.e. tutor recruitment, digital skills)	<b>GOOD</b> – as outlined in chapter 3, SELEP has been successful in a number of business cases to DWP for utilising the ESF Reserve fund to deliver against SELEP priorities. -Additionally, SELEP has utilised Sector Support funding to tackle the tutor recruitment challenges and	<b>Yes</b> – and other sources of government funding as apt  ESF Reserve Fund call supporting young people with pathways to employment –	Ongoing  April 2021



	which will be outlined more fully in chapter 7.	published March 2021	
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*Action Plan theme: Ensuring that local provision and curriculum matches employer need and is led by employers*

Action identified	Progress	Continued SAP Action Plan 2021 priority?	Timescales
Launch tenders for remaining European Social Funding (to 2023)	<b>ONGOING</b> – as outlined in chapter 3 new tenders have been launched and are still being launched	<b>Yes</b>	Ongoing – last calls in 2021, delivery by 2023
Work with industry bodies to respond to growth	<b>ONGOING</b> – work is ongoing with a number of sector bodies such as the Construction and Industry Training Board (CITB), Federation of Master Builders and the Code Institute (SELEP's Skills Lead fed into reports for the latter 2).	<b>Yes</b>  Further work with other sector bodies could be an area for development.	Ongoing
Oversee the outputs from the existing £37m capital investments	<b>ONGOING:</b> A review of all capital investments (now £69m) is due to be undertaken in 2021	<b>Yes</b> – now £69m of skills capital to review	During 2021
Share skills strategy and evidence base and updates with providers to ensure an understanding of employer need	<b>GOOD / ONGOING:</b> Regular updates have been provided and the Skills Strategy and evidence base has been widely shared with a range of providers and partner organisations.	<b>Yes</b>  As with the Skills Strategy, the Skills Report and supporting information will be shared.	Throughout 2021
Ensuring that schools, colleges and HEI have the right tutors in place	<b>GOOD / ONGOING:</b> SELEP has funded a tutor bursary programme and campaign which received an extension.	<b>Yes</b> - There is still a need for tutors so this is an ongoing area of work. Sharing the <a href="http://www.becomealecturer.org">www.becomealecturer.org</a> website also important  The Skills for Jobs White Paper includes a commitment to supporting teaching.	Throughout 2021

Working with adult education providers to align delivery to growth	<b>ONGOING:</b> Adult providers are reflected on the SAP and Skills working Group.	<b>Yes</b> further engagement could be an area for further development.	Ongoing
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*Action Plan theme: Be ambitious and work in partnership with government and employers, directing spend to meet these objectives*

Action	Progress	Continued SAP Action Plan 2021 priority?	Timescales
Play a leading role in government sector deals	<b>ONGOING:</b> There has been some discussion with Sector Deals (e.g. Construction, nuclear) but no activity as yet	<b>Yes –</b> A continued area for development and also via SELEP's Economy & Recovery Strategy	Ongoing
Inform Delivery & Commissioning of National Programmes (e.g. National Careers Service)	<b>ONGOING:</b> Some LEP engagement with commissioning programmes such as NCS and forthcoming programmes such as Restart and Digital Bootcamps has taken place.	<b>Yes</b> Greater SAP role in this could be an area for development.	Ongoing
Pilot Government Initiatives (e.g. Digital Partnerships, Inclusive Employment)	<b>GOOD:</b> SELEP put in a successful bid to be a Digital Skills Partnership, which received a second-year extension and has been working with	<b>Yes</b> Year 3 DSP funding being confirmed  Working with Cornwall LEP and DWP on the roll out of the Beacon project.	Ongoing
Establish a LEP wide employer led Skills Employer Panel	<b>GOOD:</b> Skills Advisory Panel established and delivering as outlined in this report.	<b>Yes</b> Continue to develop the work / delivery of the SAP	Ongoing
Respond to Industrial Strategy Opportunities (e.g. National Retraining Scheme Funding)	<b>ONGOING:</b> Engagement with DfE regarding the National Retraining Scheme Funding and sharing learning from SELEP's Covid-19 Skills Recovery Funding.	<b>Yes -</b> An area for continued development, particularly as the National Skills Fund starts to roll out.  SELEP's Covid Recovery Fund learning to be	Ongoing

		shared with government also	
Upscale what is working well locally through Employment and Skills Boards	<b>GOOD:</b> SELEP's Skills Lead attends local boards and local leads regularly share best practice through the Skills Working Group and SAP. Cross LEP approach developed where this makes sense (e.g. Tutor Bursary programme).	<b>Yes</b> - Potential to further develop upscaling, e.g. apprenticeship work.  Skills Board Chairs represented on the SAP	Ongoing
Work with neighbouring LEPS to tackle Common Areas of Ambition	<b>GOOD/ ONGOING:</b> New grouping 'Catalyst South' has been established, bringing together SAP Chairs and Skills Leads for southern LEPS (SELEP, Hertfordshire, Coast to Capital, Enterprise M3, Solent and Thames Valley Berkshire).	<b>Yes</b> - exploring a roll out of the Digital Skills Partnership.  Joint response on areas such as the FE White Paper	Ongoing

*Action Plan theme: Ensuring that employers understand and are engaged in the skills and employability landscape*

Action	Progress	Continued SAP Action Plan 2021 priority?	Timescales
Raise the profile and understanding of apprenticeships	<b>GOOD:</b> SAP has supported Apprenticeship ambassador videos produced more for National Apprenticeship week as well as a Panel Q&A with SAP Chair Helen Clements. A session has also been held for SELEP Growth Hubs on apprenticeships	<b>Yes –</b>  Resources now on the new <a href="#">South East Skills website</a> , to be added to  Potential for further Panel / Q&A sessions through 2021  SELEP LA Leads group meeting regularly	Ongoing
Secure public 'skills commitments' from employers across SELEP	<b>ONGOING:</b> Work is ongoing with SELEP's Major Projects Group to secure shared commitments to skills activity across the LEP.	<b>Yes</b> Major Projects tab to be added to new Skills South East website  SAP / Major projects activity such as Careers events to be held	During 2021

Inform and support the introduction of T-levels	<b>ONGOING:</b> Information on T-levels has been added to the new south East Skills website.	<b>Yes</b> – SELEP South East Skills website will be added to  This is a potential area for further development and in showcasing local colleges and providers offering T-levels.	Ongoing
Communicate across the LEP networks (particularly Growth Hubs)	<b>GOOD:</b> SELEP’s Skills Lead regularly attends SELEP’s Working Groups (e.g. <a href="#">South East Creative Economy Network</a> and <a href="#">Clean Growth Working Group</a> ) to update on skills and areas of actions. Similar engagement takes place with Growth Hubs and attendance / presenting at Growth Hub events.	<b>Yes</b>  Ongoing commitment to sharing information and feeding into the SELEP Economy and Recovery Strategy also	Ongoing
Support SMEs to skill and upskill (e.g. apprenticeships, T-levels, leadership, digital)	<b>GOOD</b> - the SELEP ESF call for supporting SMEs with apprenticeship take up helped to facilitate progress in this area and programme information is regularly shared with Growth Hubs.	<b>Yes</b>  Support for SMEs is also a key feature of the SELEP Covid-19 Business Support Recovery Fund set out in chapter 3.	Ongoing

Across the actions identified above, there is also a commitment to building an understanding of the skills needed for the green economy (e.g. the electrification of cars) and delivering against these. This will be done in conjunction with the SELEP Clean Growth Working Group. This will also be considered as part of the skills research on the major projects across SELEP cited in chapter 3.

The SAP has agreed that it would be positive to hold a number of panel and Q&A sessions to further explore and discuss some of the areas of action as outlined above and to engage more widely.

## Chapter 6. Assessment of progress

Chapter 5 looked at original SELEP Skills Strategy Action Plan and progress made against this, along with those actions that carry forward into the SAP Action Plan for 2021. As this outlined, a lot of progress has been made to date. The SELEP SAP will receive the actions and progress as outlined above regularly through 2021 to ensure further progress and to identify any new areas of action.

In addition, the Department for Education guidance for this report contains aspects of the SAP to explore progress further in this report:

### Leadership:

The SELEP SAP has quickly been established as a powerful employer led voice on skills across the south east. As the largest LEP area in the country and with some prominent employers as outlined in chapter 2, the SAP has been very positive. The leadership role of the SAP is exemplified by the [SAP and Digital Skills Partnership Conference](#) held in October 2020. Chaired by SAP Chair Helen Clements, this attracted over 230 delegates from across the LEP area and SAP members gave presentations on their sectors. Explored in further detail in the next chapter, feedback was extremely positive, and this firmly established the SAP locally. Moreover, the platform used was innovative and enabled networking and table discussions. It has since been adopted for a number of other local events.

The SAP members work with a range of other providers and employers across the LEP and many are already proactive in the skills landscape, volunteering as Governors, Enterprise Advisers or STEM Ambassadors for example. There is also good joint working and collaboration with the Digital Skills Partnership and local skills and business boards. During the pandemic, the SAP adapted well to online meetings and attendance remained high. An additional meeting was held in 2020 to consider the issues faced by various sectors and to feed into the SELEP Covid-19 Recovery fund, which SAP input was key to.

In order to set out its ambition, in September 2020 the SAP members also wrote to all SELEP area MPs, the Secretary of State for Education, the SAP Team at the Department for Education and LEP Leads at the Cities and Local Growth Unit at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. This set out the work already underway and the challenges that remain and invited MPs and the Secretary of State to the October conference.

### Enhancing local knowledge

Regular evidence and data presentations are provided at SAP meetings including by the SAP Data Officer and sector bodies (e.g. Skills for Care). Building a knowledge base has been



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<https://www.southeastlep.com/our-delivery/leap-advisory-panel/>

To: All South East LEP area MPs  
Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE, MP  
CC: Skills Advisory Panel Team, Department for Education  
Abigail Cunliffe-Hall and Iain McNabb, Cities and Local Growth Unit, BEIS

4<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear MPs and Secretary of State,

Re: Introducing the South East LEP Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) and 8<sup>th</sup> October virtual conference

We are thrilled to write to you to introduce the SELEP Skills Advisory Panel (SAP). As you will be aware, all LEPs have established SAPs in partnership with the Department for Education. This represents an excellent opportunity to bring together employers from across our geography to provide a joined-up approach to skills. Our role has taken on a new significance as we work collectively to tackle the challenges represented by COVID-19.

We had planned to hold a conference in the autumn to reach out to the business community more widely, share our data and update partners on our plans and support available. We're pleased to confirm that this will still go ahead as a virtual conference on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October in collaboration with our Digital Skills Partnership. We would be pleased to have your involvement in this exciting event and would also be very happy to welcome you to a future SAP meeting if this is of interest.

The largest LEP nationally, with a population set to grow to 5 million by 2039, ours is an area of international significance with eight ports, two airports and high-speed rail links. We are home to nearly 175,000 enterprises of which 98% are small or micro. The LEP's Skills Strategy (2018-2022) identified priority sectors based on projected growth and skills shortages. These include construction, creative, tourism, energy, logistics, health, care, digital, agriculture and finance. As you will see from our membership, we represent all of these. We are feeling the impact of the pandemic in different ways, but our sectors are among the most significantly impacted; some facing unprecedented demand and others with premises currently shut down or with staff furloughed and unable to operate.

Positively, the SELEP Board has recently approved a £2 million Skills and £2.4 million SME pot to respond to COVID-19 and which we have helped establish priorities for. However, given the significant scale of the challenge and size of our geography, the need remains considerable and we look forward to hearing further about the National Skills Fund, National Retraining Scheme, support for apprenticeships and the UK Shared

central to the work of the SAP and making information widely available is a key priority, leading to the development of the [Skills South East website](#). This has also provided a location for the wide range of sector reports available and regularly updated. A good foundation has been built in terms of the knowledge base and this will be grown in the coming weeks and months and enhanced through the development of reports looking at growth (e.g. the Major projects and their skills needs).

#### Impact on local skills provision

Local education providers have fed back that they find the labour market information and knowledge base being developed very useful. Additionally, information set out at events such as the October conference has been welcomed. SELEP's Skills Lead who co-ordinates the SAP regularly gives presentations on the data and knowledge locally and there is a commitment to developing the Annex A section of this report as locally as possible (e.g. districts). Furthermore, the knowledge base informs SELEP's capital spend and ensuring it is industry relevant as well as ESF and other funds.

#### Covid-19 Recovery and renewal plans

SELEP launched a COVID-19 Recovery fund through repurposed Growing Places Funding at the start of 2021 to tackle the challenges presented by the pandemic. This has included feedback from the SAP and SELEP's Digital Partnership and their feedback has been instrumental to shaping the focus for the funding. £2 million has been committed to skills and £2.4 million to business support with the focus being:

#### Skills £2 million COVID-19 Recovery Fund:

- retraining for key sectors recruiting, helping those who lost their jobs during the pandemic and are looking for employment in essential industries;
- retraining for digital roles across all sectors, to ensure that South East residents are equipped for these vital roles; and
- basic digital skills, kit and connectivity, to help those areas in the South East currently suffering from poor connectivity and access to kit.

A further procurement will be launched to look at innovative solutions to skills barriers and to tackle the gaps that have emerged in areas such as online learning and virtual reality. It is hoped that this will enable development of some pilots for national application.

#### Business Support £2.4m:

- Supporting pre-starts and start-ups
- Digitising business, supporting retail and e-commerce; and
- Supporting the visitor economy

With procurement due to close in early February, organisations to deliver these programmes of work will be confirmed and delivery should commence by April 2021. The SAP has also fed into SELEP's Economy and Recovery Strategy as outlined above.

### Highlights of progress from the action plan

The progress against the action plan outlined above illustrates good progress and particularly during the period of Covid-19. Highlights from this include:

- An extended **Tutor Bursary programme** and [www.becomealecturer.org](http://www.becomealecturer.org) website (delivered by FE Sussex) developing a range of videos, resources and training 130 new tutors
- A **new website** ([www.southeastskills.org.ukk](http://www.southeastskills.org.ukk)) with a wide range of resources including labour market information, SAP sector factsheets, resources and courses and to offer a location for partners across the LEP to share events, news and case studies
- A **highly successful online SAP and Digital Skills Partnership event** attracting over 230 delegates and receiving very positive feedback
- The development of a wide **range of apprenticeship videos** featuring SAP employer apprentices and those of a wide range of partner providers, employers and apprentices.
- Sharing **best practice with other SAPs** across the South East, with regular meetings of SELEP SAP Chair and other SAPs
- A successful **panel and Q&A during National Apprenticeship Week** with SAP Chair Helen Clements and local apprentices and employers
- The development of **£2 million Covid-19 recovery funding** and ensuring this responds to issues identified by the SAP
- Feeding into a successful case for ESF, **securing £2 million** for a new Call for Tender supporting young people with **pathways to employment**
- Being confirmed as a **future pilot area for the Beacon project** with Cornwall LEP and DWP **supporting mental health and well being**

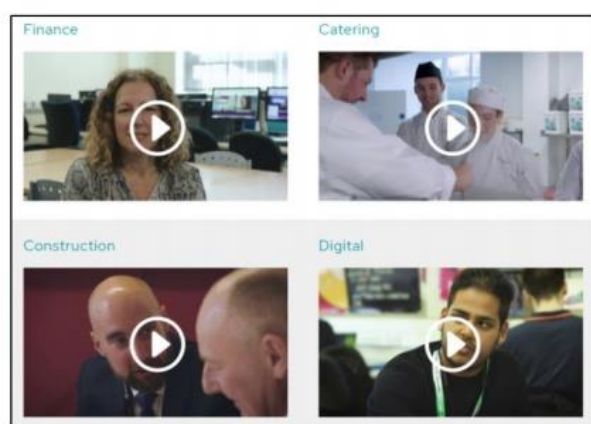
## Chapter 7. Case studies and positive impact stories

Following are examples of how the SELEP and SAP is delivering against the areas identified in the original skills strategy and progressing the actions outlined in chapter 6.

### Tutor Bursary programme and [www.becomealecturer.org](http://www.becomealecturer.org) website – addressing the action plan commitment to tackling the shortages of tutors

Through the Skills Strategy and beyond, colleges and providers across the geography reported that they had difficulties recruiting and particularly to key sectors such as digital, construction, engineering and logistics. This therefore represents a key barrier to tackling the skills shortages across the area and which has also been identified in the Skills for Jobs White Paper.

To this end, a bid was submitted to [SELEP's Sector Support fund](#), for a bursary programme, to help cover the teacher training costs (which colleges had fed back were prohibitive for people in industry joining Further Education) and to fund a high-profile awareness raising campaign via videos (*right*) and social media. This was successful and further to a Request for Quotation, awarded to FE Sussex, delivering in partnership with



college and provider networks across the SELEP area. The project has been very effective and a bid for an extension was also successful in 2020, supported by the SAP. Videos showcase people working in local colleges and illustrate the rewarding aspect of teaching.

Phase one of the project delivered 97 bursaries, far exceeding the target of 34 and with the extension, 130 bursaries have been supported.

Example of feedback from colleges:

*“Attracting staff into the sector in a realistic way, setting expectations of job roles and responsibilities and providing full induction to typical duties is key to their retention. This project has enabled us to tick all these boxes and improve our efficiency in trying to recruit the right staff first time. On the back of this we are incorporating becomealecturer.com into the recruitment procedures of hard to fill vacancies such as engineering, gaming and maths”.* **Clive Cooke, East Sussex College Group**

*“For the past few years we have had difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers of maths, English, science (chemistry and physics) and engineering. The SELEP campaign has enabled us to provide financial and practical support for new teachers when undertaking in-service training for teaching qualifications which has been an incentive for recruitment and retention. The generic website <https://www.becomealecturer.org/> provides very good*



awareness raising of what life is like teaching in the post-16 sector”. **Karen Hucker, Bexhill College**

“The SELEP bursaries have enabled us to continue to offer support to new teachers to gain a PGCE despite the pressures on our budgets. It has been an attractive part of a recruitment package which has drawn experts from industry into teaching.” **Elaine Hart, Colchester Institute**

### **Tutor Bursary Case Study Sean McLaughlin, Plumpton College**

Sean decided on a career change in his late 30's and to improve skills enrolled on an environmental course at Plumpton College. After his training he set himself up in his own business and over the next 10 years established a track record as a reliable and high-quality forestry and firewood company. During this period he helped train volunteers from a local charity to use chainsaws.



When he saw a job advertised for a teacher of forestry at the college he decided to apply as he felt he could now put something back into the system. “Since I joined Plumpton I have broadened my skills and now teach not only forestry but on a range of other courses. Helping and shaping young people attracts me to the job and it is immensely satisfying. Sure, it is hard work studying for teaching qualifications but the rewards are great”.

Sean would recommend anyone who has vocational qualifications and experience to consider teaching as a career move. “I haven’t looked back since I changed jobs. The college and sector have supported me to become a qualified teacher and the bursary has enabled this to happen. As a result, I am keen to continue to train the next generation in forestry and land-based industries”.

### **Raising the profile of the SAP – Skills Advisory Panel and Digital Skills Partnership Annual conference – addressing the action plan commitment to engage locally and nationally, share evidence and work with government**

The Skills Advisory Panel had intended to hold a conference in London in Autumn 2020. However, clearly COVID-19 prevented a face to face event and so online solutions were sought. A platform ‘Digital Lounge’ was identified which would also enable networking and table discussions and it was agreed that it would be positive to hold this as a joint SAP and Digital Skills Partnership event.



Over 230 people attended and many more have accessed the event recording. Presentations included SAP members Lynne Matthews (for Bradwell B) and Jo Nolan (for Screen South) and the SAP part of the day was opened by SAP Chair Helen Clements. The day as a whole also included some opening words from SELEP Chair Chris Brodie. One of the [‘Become a Lecturer’ videos](#) was played as well as a [new apprenticeship video](#) featuring an apprentice at SAP members DP World London Gateway. Presentations were also given by the National Apprenticeship Service and DWP on some of the latest initiatives such as Kickstart and apprenticeship incentives.

Feedback regarding the event was very positive and has helped to raise the profile of the SAP and increase understanding of the sectors and their skills needs to a greater audience which included SMEs, intermediaries, colleges, providers and the voluntary and community sector. It has been agreed that this should be an annual event and the SAP has also agreed that a series of webinars on specific topics would be a good approach for 2021.

A full recording of the event and copy of presentations is available [here](#).

**A SELEP Digital Skills Partnership – addressing the action plan commitment to test areas of national policy with government and to address digital skills shortages**

The importance of digital skills has increased even further since the original SELEP Skills Strategy and particularly during COVID-19.

Across SELEP digital jobs have been resilient through the pandemic and indeed their importance has been clearly illustrated. Nearly 40,000 digital vacancies were live across the SELEP geography annually and these include software engineers, coders and Games Engineers. Added to this, it is estimated that 17.1 million people or 52% nationally lack digital skills in the workplace. To quantify this for the SELEP area, with a working age population of 2,567,600 an estimated 1,300,000 people lack digital skills across the SELEP geography. The DSP has presented an excellent opportunity to tackle such issues.



The DSP funding secured a Coordinator who reports to the LEP Skills Lead, responsible for the [SAP](#). On a practical level therefore, it is straight forward to ensure alignment in agendas and two-way communication between the DSP and SAP. Several SAP members are also members of the DSP to further ensure cross collaboration (Jane Thomas of BT, Ajay Sharman of STEM Learning and Jo Nolan of Screen South). The conference outlined above was a culmination of this strong partnership approach and a similar approach has been taken to other work such as careers events and National Apprenticeship Week.

As with the SAP, the DSP is employer led and co-Chaired by Alison Parmar of the FSB and Melissa Hanna-Brown of Pfizer. There is regular work and engagement with corporates such as Google and Microsoft. The DSP has benefited from having working groups to take

forward various aspects of work (e.g. support to educators, digital inclusion and supporting SMEs) and a similar approach will be explored for the SAP.

Key achievements to date have included:

- A partnership with Coursera with 2200+ enrolments onto online learning courses supporting individuals locally to gain training.
- An SME Working Group online event (*right*) in July 2020 with over 100 attendees and presentations including strategy, communications and digital marketing. This event was very well engaged and feedback was really positive in terms of the support set out.
- Donation to the Good Things Foundation for 50 devices (with 24GB over 24 months) ensuring support for those who need it and raising the profile of the digital divide.
- Speaking at events such as the Code Institute events (*right*) on digital skills
- Connecting Microsoft to the prison network across the South East has since led to delivery of digital skills sessions for inmates.
- 8 Google Digital Garage events across the region, targeting SME's and students
- Delivery of a Facebook digital skills session, with Braintree District Council.
- Distributing Virtual Reality headsets showcasing DP World London Gateway and the logistics sector across the region for use at local careers events. Utilising these also at events such as the SELEP AGM (*right*).



Given the increased and continued importance of digital skills, SELEP is fully committed to continuing delivery against this area of work and as outlined above, a potential roll out of the DSP to southern LEPs ('Catalyst South') is being explored.

### **New apprenticeship videos and resources – delivering against the action plan commitment to raise the profile and understanding of apprenticeships**

The skills strategy highlighted the fact that apprenticeships across the SELEP area have remained fairly stagnant and take up in subjects aligned to key sectors is not as strong as it needs to be. To this end, the SAP has supported local Apprenticeship Ambassador Networks with videos and has also generating new videos as part of National Apprenticeship Week to be used in the longer-term.





These give a range of perspectives, including the apprentice, employer and provider. They also offer a great showcase of the opportunities in the local area and challenge perceptions of apprenticeships. The full range of apprenticeship videos are available to view at

<https://www.southeastskills.org.uk/apprenticeships-t-levels/videos/>

Additionally, online apprenticeship training for SELEP Growth Hub colleagues was undertaken in the summer of 2020, to ensure they were up to date on the changes, reforms and incentives around apprenticeships and had the opportunity to ask questions. [Videos of the training](#) have been uploaded to the new South East Skills website to ensure other colleagues can benefit from them.

**A new South East Skills Website - <https://www.southeastskills.org.uk/> - delivering against the action plan commitment to share evidence and resources and to create a portal for information**

A common theme through the action plan is to raise awareness of SAP, skills needs and to engage as widely as possible. Making sure data and evidence was available was also identified as being key. Since



the formation of the SAP and the Digital Skills Partnership, SELEP has received a high level of interest in both groups and the information and resources developed by them. To this end, it was agreed that a website to house such information would be beneficial and ensure transparency and is also something wider stakeholders and partners can contribute to.

The site is now live and through a 'soft launch' feedback from partners has been very positive. This includes a section for labour market information produced for the SAP, an apprenticeship and T-level section, resources and support and a section for online learning. A Major Projects section will be added to outline these projects and the skills, growth and employment needs attached to them.

The site also includes SAP sector factsheets (examples below) which showcase some of the SAP key sectors and members, with information on why they like working in their sector.





**Investing in facilities: delivering against the action plan commitment to ensuring that local provision and curriculum matches employer need and is led by employers**

### Stansted Airport College

Stansted Airport College is just one example of the £69 million of capital investments made by SELEP to respond to industry need. The first of its kind nationally, SELEP made a £3.5 million investment, with funding also provided by Harlow College, Stansted Airport and Essex County Council. The project was also featured at SELEP's AGM in 2019, with a presentation and video from Will Allanson, Deputy Principal at Harlow College ([www.stanstedairportcollege.ac.uk](http://www.stanstedairportcollege.ac.uk)). A really good articulation of the partnership approach and positive impact of this facility is available via the launch video available [here](#).



### Thameside Jetty, North Kent College

SELEP's funding has supported a project to refresh and equip the Thameside Jetty to ensure it is fit for purpose, including cabling, security measures and davits. This enables delivery for maritime, including seamanship, survival, health and safety and supports an additional 30 learners per year including apprenticeships.

### Skills and Business Support for Rural Businesses post Brexit, Plumpton College (£2.9m)

Supporting the infrastructure and training to support the Agri-food sector through construction of a centre of excellence, redevelopments including automated milking stations (due to complete in Summer 2022).



### Skills Capital - £69 million invested locally

In addition to these examples, SELEP has invested significant skills capital through its Local Growth Fund to ensure industry led FE and HE facilities and equipment are in place. **The first of these investments totalling £22 million are described in a ‘Celebrating Skills’ booklet** giving an overview of the various projects and facilities for a SELEP Skills Showcase event which was held at Harlow College and showcasing one of these investments (the [Harlow Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Centre of Excellence, or HAMEC](#)). As the booklet describes, facilities range from STEM facilities, construction and engineering equipment, robotics and virtual reality. This is responding to the sector needs as outlined in chapter 3.

Since the booklet publication, further skills-based capital investments have been made across the SELEP area to respond to industry need through Local Growth Funding (LGF), Getting Building Fund (GBF) and the loan scheme ‘Growing Places Fund GPF):

Capital investment	Information
<b>Stansted Airport College, £3.5m LGF</b> (with Essex County Council, Harlow College and Stansted Airport investment also)	Training in engineering, aircraft maintenance, cabin crew and hospitality ( <a href="http://www.stanstedairportcollege.ac.uk">www.stanstedairportcollege.ac.uk</a> )
<b>Kent and Medway Engineering Design, Growth and Enterprise (EDGE hub), £6.1m LGF</b> (with Higher Education Funding Council for England and the Garfield Weston Foundation funding also)	Facility at Canterbury Christ Church University to develop a training and research facility and including engineering, product design and technology ( <a href="https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/business/edge-hub/edge-hub.aspx">https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/business/edge-hub/edge-hub.aspx</a> )
<b>STEM Innovation Campus Braintree (£2.5m LGF) and Centre of Excellence in Health and Care (£2.5m LGF), Colchester Institute</b> (with funding also from Essex County Council)	STEM based training and health and care-based training and enabling the overall vision for a STEM Innovation Campus at Braintree to be realised. <a href="https://www.colchester.ac.uk/stem-innovation-centre-braintree">https://www.colchester.ac.uk/stem-innovation-centre-braintree</a>
<b>Basildon Digital Technologies Campus (£2.2m LGF)</b> and with funding also from South Essex College	Digital campus in centre of Basildon to provide digital based skills such as cyber-security animation and gaming ( <a href="https://www.southessex.ac.uk/new-state-of-the-art-campus-in-basildon">https://www.southessex.ac.uk/new-state-of-the-art-campus-in-basildon</a> )

<b>Chelmsford College new Construction Centre (£1.3m LGF)</b> and with funding also from Chelmsford College	Replacing temporary buildings to house multi-skilled workshops, classrooms and delivering construction skills (completing Autumn 2021)
<b>Colchester Institute Groundworks Training Centre (£50,000 LGF)</b> and with funding also from employers and Colchester Institute	The development of a standalone Groundworks and Scaffolding Training Centre at Colchester Institute. The facility will replicate site conditions.
<b>Kent and Medway Medical School Canterbury (£8m LGF)</b> and with funding also from Canterbury Christ Church University and the University of Kent	Joint delivery by the universities and local health providers including lecture theatres, clinical skills simulation laboratory space and IT suites. ( <a href="http://kmms.ac.uk">kmms.ac.uk</a> )
<b>North Kent College: Performing and Production Digital Arts Facility (£12m GBF)</b> and with funding also from North Kent College	A new facility for Performing Arts and Digital production and to include a new 2-storey building with performance venue, digital design classrooms, dance studies and new food court (due to complete in Spring 2022).
<b>Remodelling of T Level Buildings at Harlow College (£1.5m GBF)</b> with funding also from Harlow College	To repurpose accommodation to a centre for delivering healthcare, health science, education and childcare, sustainable modern construction methods and digital technologies to fully prepare for the delivery of T Levels. (Completion date TBC).
<b>Centre for Advanced Engineering, Eastwood (£2m GPF)</b> with funding also from South Essex College	To provide 8,000 square metres (Gross Internal Area) of state of the art advanced automotive, electronic, process engineering and technical construction facilities in new freehold premises ( <a href="https://www.southessex.ac.uk/stephenson-road-campus">https://www.southessex.ac.uk/stephenson-road-campus</a> )
<b>Skills and Business Support for Rural Businesses post Brexit, Plumpton College (£2.9m LGF)</b> with funding also from Plumpton College	Supporting the infrastructure and training to support the Agri-food sector through construction of a centre of excellence, redevelopments including automated milking stations. (due to complete in Summer 2022).
<b>Thurrock Logistics Centre (£600,000 GBF)</b> with funding also from South Essex College	Supporting training for the logistics sector including software logistics management, supply chain management, logistics technologies and warehouse planning. (completion date TBC).
<b>USP College Centre of Excellence for Digital Technologies and Immersive Learning (£900,000 of LGF)</b> with funding also from USP	To create an immersive learning environment with multi-media, digital and IT technologies. To be used by students and local businesses (completion date TBC).

A list of these and all SELEP capital investments is available at <https://www.southeastlep.com/projects/>

### European Social Fund - £80 million invested locally

SELEP had an original allocation of £71.6 million European Social Funding, which increased to £80 million due to exchange rate changes. In addition, SELEP has put forward successful cases for ESF Reserve Funding which have resulted in additional Calls for Tender locally. The

first projects are outlined in [SELEP's Celebrating Skills booklet](#) and some of these projects (e.g. those match funded by The National Lottery; Building Better Opportunities) are still delivering, having been given project extensions. SELEP works closely with the opt ins and the project leads to ensure these are delivering against SELEP priorities and to identify areas of need. Regular project meetings are held.

In addition to those outlined in the Celebrating Skills booklet, there are several ESFA match funding ESF projects still delivering; [a Community Grants programme delivered by CXK](#), a programme of up to £20,000 grants to local community organisations and which has proved to be popular and successful. There are also programmes supporting people to find work, ['Fresh Start', delivered by Twin Training UK](#) and individuals in work to progress ['Skills Support for the Workforce'](#), also delivered by Twin Training UK. There is also a programme delivered [by Skills Training UK, 'Positive Directions'](#) which targets 15-18 year olds and has been developed in collaboration with the local authorities. The SELEP area also has three Community Led Local Development (CLLD) programmes which are part funded by ESF and part by ERDF. These are [Folkestone Works](#), [Connecting Hastings and Rother Together \(CHART\)](#), and [Tilbury CLLD](#) there is also a Youth Employment Initiative in Thurrock for 16-29 year olds (only certain geographies nationally are eligible) which includes YEI and ESF funding with one third provided by the programme deliverers. This is called ['Thurrock On Track'](#), delivered by Thurrock Council.

In addition, through consultation and evidence gathering, SELEP identified additional areas of need and submitted successful business cases to the DWP (in their capacity as Managing Authority for all ESF) which resulted in additional Calls for Tender. These have been 'direct Calls' and so haven't had opt in match funding and so the bidder has been required to provide 50% match funding. Direct Calls issued included:

- [Wheels to Work and Training \(£1.5m\)](#), *tackling the barriers around getting to work and training, particularly in rural parts of the South East LEP*
- Driving apprenticeship growth across the SELEP area [for SMEs \(£1m\)](#) and [for individuals \(£1.7m\)](#), *tackling the shortages in apprenticeships and to encourage more take up within SMEs*
- [Enabling progression in entry level jobs \(£2m\)](#), *tackling the lower skills levels in some sectors and lack of progression*
- [Industry and education work placements and support in South East LEP \(£2.5m\)](#), *encouraging collaboration between education and SMEs*
- [Using virtual reality and online learning to support growth in South East LEP \(£750,000\)](#), *to take learning and training to areas and individuals harder to reach*

As of March 2021, the **DWP also approved an additional £2 million ESF Call for Tender** which was developed further to a successful business case from SELEP to the ESF reserve fund. This is called ['Pathways to Employment for young people'](#) and will offer support to younger people across the SELEP area, who have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. This call closes in May 2021 and will offer pre-employment and pre-apprenticeship support which has emerged as an area of need.



There have been some delays with bids and therefore some of the above Calls are still being processed, whilst for some no bids were received. However, some delivery is starting such as an [East Sussex 'Transform'](#) project which is the result of a successful bid to the apprenticeship Call for Tender listed above.

These programmes all deliver against SELEP's 'escalator of opportunity' (right) as outlined in its original ESIF Strategy whereby individuals should be assisted nearer, into or within the labour market to improve their lives.



## Chapter 8. Looking forward

As was set out in SELEP's Skills Strategy 2018-2023 and is evident throughout this Skills Report, the continued key requirement across all activity is for greater alignment between education and employers to drive up skills levels.

The original Skills Strategy in 2018 set out the unprecedented growth forecast accompanied by factors such as the digital revolution and population advances. In the context of Covid-19, recovery will be an important part of growth and ensuring that this can respond to the increased unemployment across the SELEP area. Positively, there is already large-scale commitment to respond to challenges from employers, local authorities, education providers and the voluntary sector. The Skills Advisory Panel is at the centre of this and can continue to offer leadership and action in the year ahead.

Clearly delivery against the action plan set out in chapter 5 will be at the heart of the SAP's response in the coming year. This will enable further progress and delivery against the sector needs outlined in chapter 3. This will include a series of webinars to consider issues such as clean growth, inclusivity and technological advancements. It will also include a large cross LEP careers event to set out our sectors and the range of opportunities within them. The SAP will continue to engage at a national level and to maximise the benefits locally of new opportunities such as the digital entitlement and new level 3 adult entitlement.

The delivery of the £2 million Skills Covid-19 recovery fund will be a major milestone and will support hundreds of individuals across the SELEP geography to retrain and gain access to kit and connectivity. A Call to explore innovative solutions to training barriers will be issued soon also and will enable important progress against the action plan. Alongside the Digital Skills Partnership, the SAP is looking forward to becoming a pilot area for the Beacon project with DWP and seeing further ESF projects delivering in the SELEP area to address barriers.

The SAP will continue to be led by evidence and to utilise and share the data, reports and intelligence gathered for this report and beyond. Information will be shared via the South East Skills website which will be expanded through 2021. The data will also continue to help with identifying areas of geographical need or cohorts requiring additional support.

Clearly technological advances and the green economy are becoming increasingly important and the SAP is committed to looking at this in further detail for the November refresh of this report.

Continuing to support existing initiatives will also be important, encouraging more employers to become Enterprise Advisers, Governors and STEM Ambassadors or to offer an apprenticeship or kickstart opportunity. With an excellent record of progress and action already outlined, the SAP is looking forward to continuing to deliver and work in partnership in the year ahead.

The SAP also looks forward to strengthening links with the SELEP Strategic Board and Digital Skills Partnership and to ensuring alignment and join up with the LEP's Economy and Recovery Strategy.

## Annex A. Core indicators (to be produced at district level also where possible)

### Local Landscape

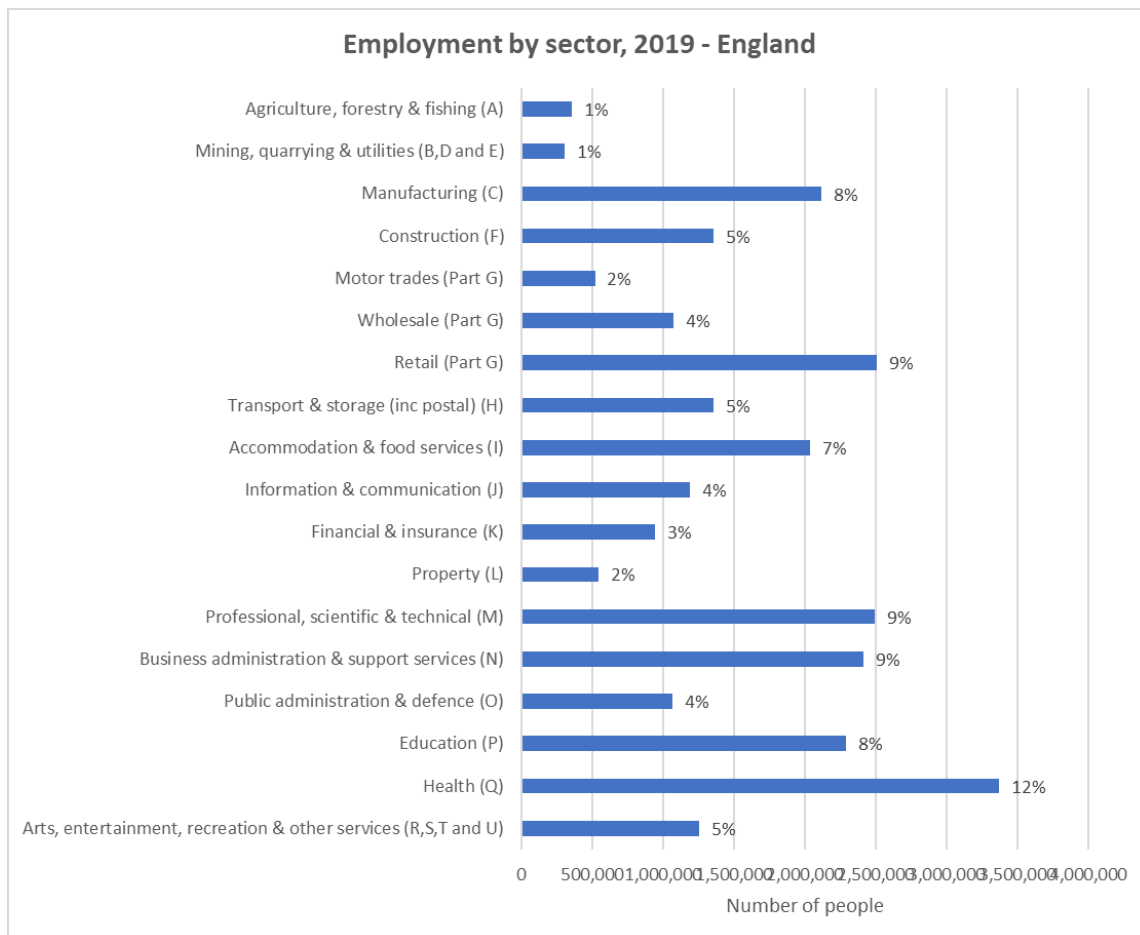
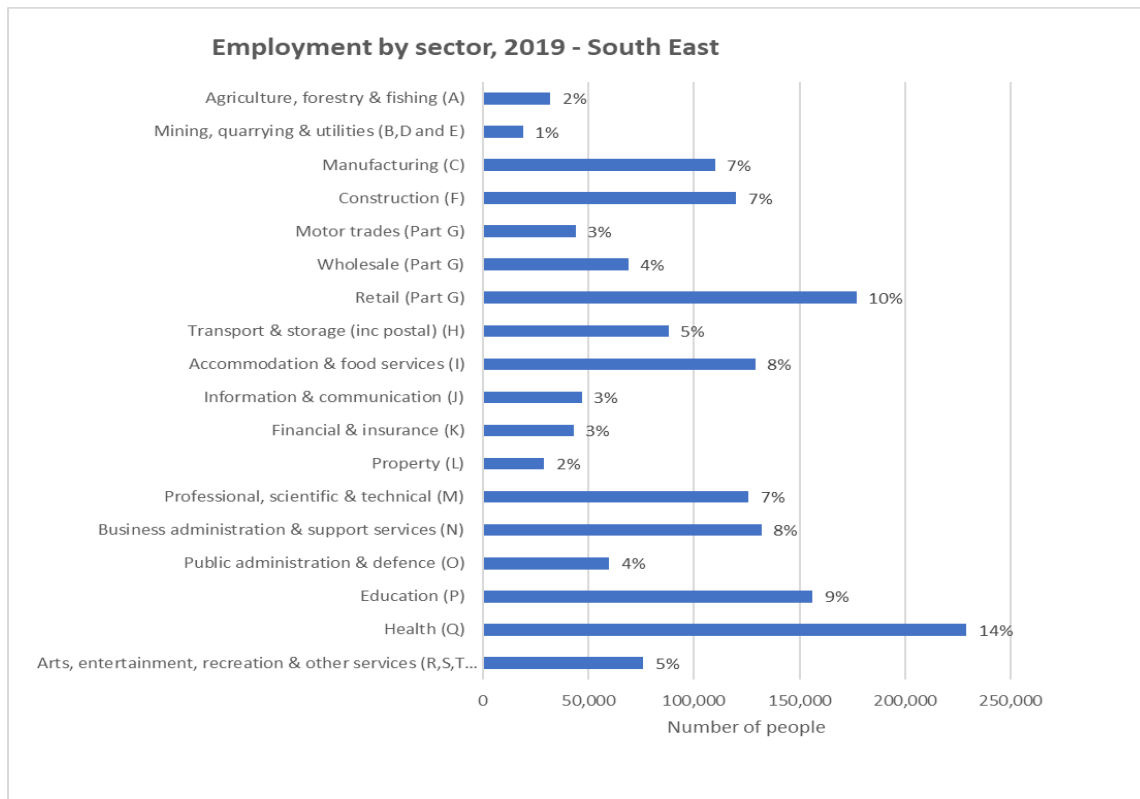
The following charts set out some of the key indicators in terms of employment sectors, business sizes, GVA, earnings, population and claimant counts. There is also a table setting out the proportion of areas within districts that are in the 10% most deprived nationally and which illustrates the commentary in chapter 3 regarding SELEP having some of the wealthiest and most deprived areas nationally.

This data correlates with local intelligence and other data and evidence gathered for the Skills Strategy. As per the commentary provided with the charts, the SELEP area is largely made up of small and micro businesses (98%). The sectors and occupations align with those set out in chapter 3 and where we know there are still skills shortages through vacancies and employer feedback.

Notably, some of the challenges such as high numbers of benefit claimants have been exacerbated by Covid-19, with numbers nearly double that of the same period the previous year. Clearly supporting people into work is a high priority and aligns with the ambitions in the action plan set out in chapter 3.

SELEP's population is also ageing and with a growing proportion of the population over 65 and higher than the national average. As is set out in chapter 3, this has clear implications for the growing health and care sector and skills shortages they are already experiencing. When looking at other LEP areas, it's useful to reflect on some key points:

- SELEP's construction sector is far bigger than any other LEP area, with 120,000 people employed compared to 40,000 in the North East and 46,000 in the Heart of the South West. Similarly, 110,000 are employed in manufacturing compared to 86,000 in the West Midlands and 34,000 in the West of England.
- At 20%, the SELEP area has below the average of professional occupations – compared to 23% nationally and 27% in Thames Valley Berkshire and in Enterprise M3.
- Although historical, SELEP's GVA per hour worked has failed to keep up with the national average (£32.40 compared to £35.00) and is below that of other LEP areas (e.g. Coast to Capital at £36.60, Enterprise M3 £40 and £47.30 in Thames Valley Berkshire). It is therefore important to support people into the sectors recruiting, as per the action plan in chapter 5.
- Similarly, weekly workplace earnings decreased from 2019-2020 and at £549.90 they are below the national average (£589.80) and other LEPs (e.g. £613.30 in Hertfordshire, £759.30 in London, £644.40 in Enterprise M3 and £692.10 in Thames Valley Berkshire).
- The SELEP area already has 21% of the population aged 65+ and which is set to increase. This compares with 17% in Hertfordshire, 17% in the West of England and 16% in Greater Manchester.
- Benefit claims across the SELEP area have seen a sharp increase and SELEP has the highest number of claimants in the country, with the exception of London. Although this is partly due to SELEP's size, at over 150,000 this represents an important issue to address and as a percentage (5.9%) SELEP is still in the top third of all LEPs nationally (e.g. Leicester and Leicestershire (5%), Cheshire and Warrington (4.8%), York, North Yorkshire and East Riding (3.7%) – figures from Nomis, January 2021).
- The Index of Multiple Deprivation table illustrates that parts of the SELEP area have considerable areas in the top 10% most deprived nationally and clearly helps to identify areas of need for funding. For the education, skills and training measure, 8% of areas in the SELEP geography are in the top 10% most deprived. There are LEP areas with far higher proportions (e.g. Sheffield City Region 24% and Liverpool City Region 20%) and also lower (e.g. London 0%, Thames Valley Berkshire 2%, Hertfordshire 1%). It should be noted that areas within SELEP are far higher (e.g. Basildon 19%, Hastings 19%, Swale 26%, Tendring 20% and Thanet 20%).

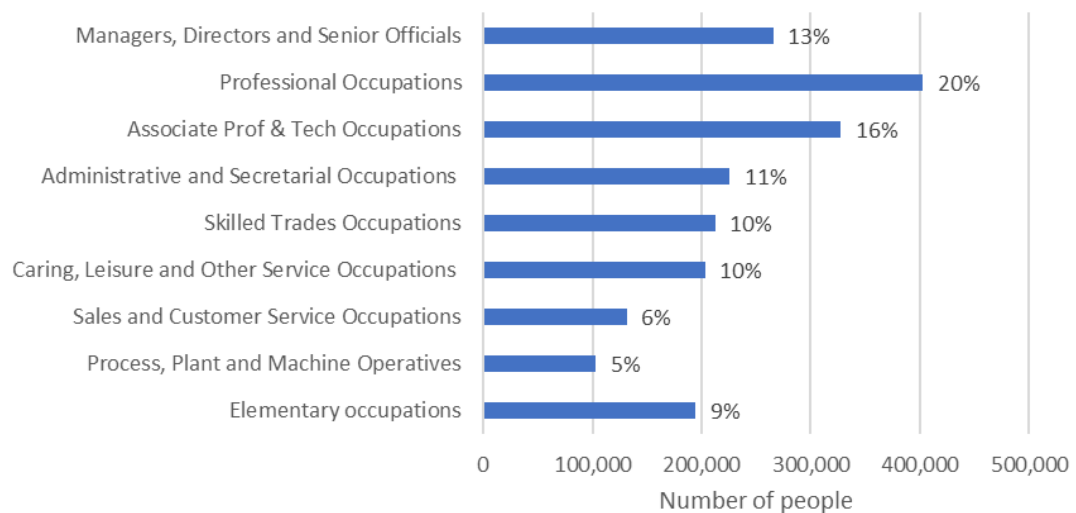


**Source:** [Business Register and Employment Survey, 2019 \(published 2020\), 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

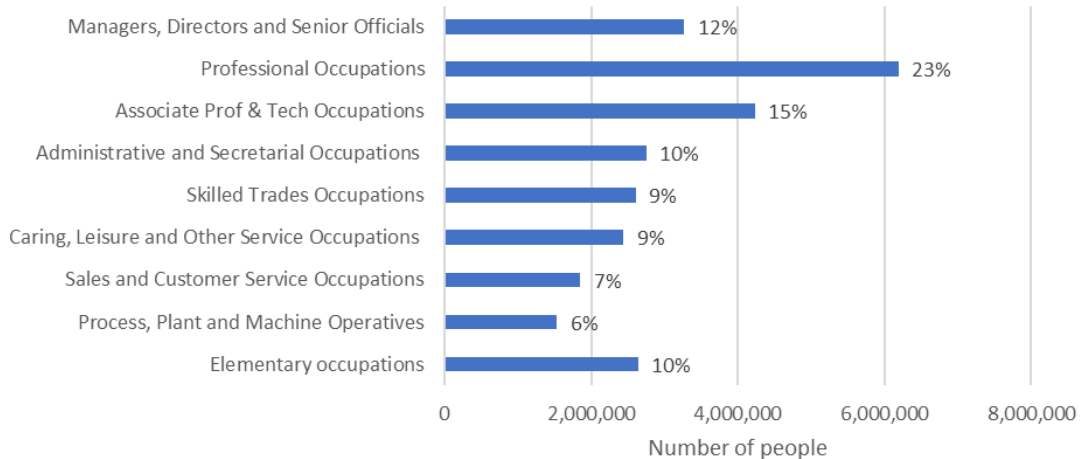
## Employment by Sector

The charts above illustrate the employment by sector in the South East LEP area as compared to England. As per the sector headlines provided in chapter 3, this illustrates a higher than average construction and manufacturing sector in the SELEP area and also in health, retail, education and logistics. Although the arts and entertainment sector is the same proportion as England, it's important to bear in mind that many people working in this sector are free-lancers. It is also important to acknowledge that sectors such as retail, arts and entertainment have been particularly impacted by Covid-19.

Employment by occupation, 2019/20 - South East



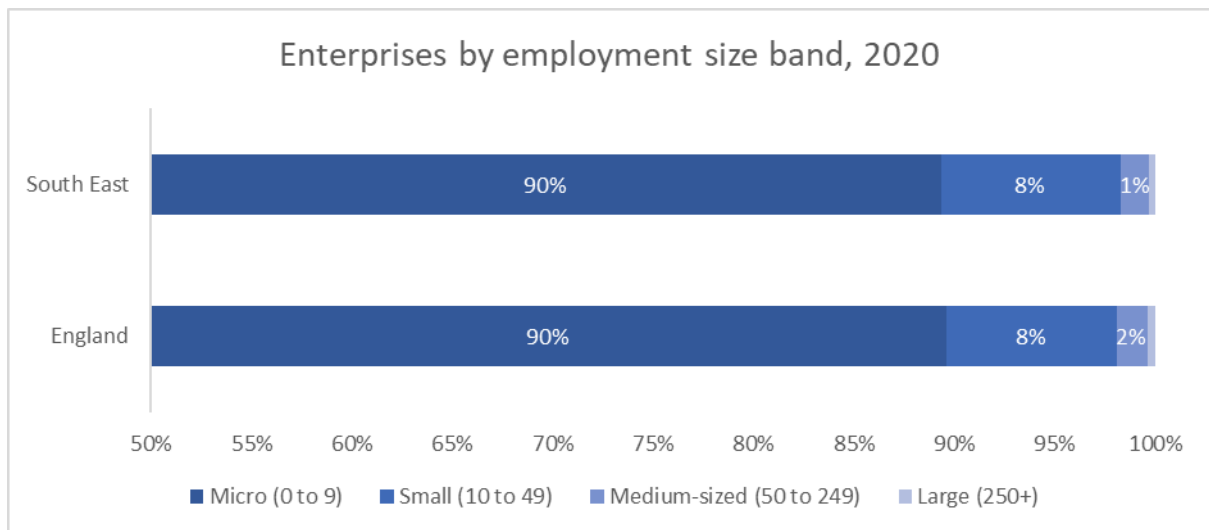
Employment by occupation, 2019/20 - England



Source: [Annual Population Survey, October 2019 – September 2020, 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

### Employment by Occupation

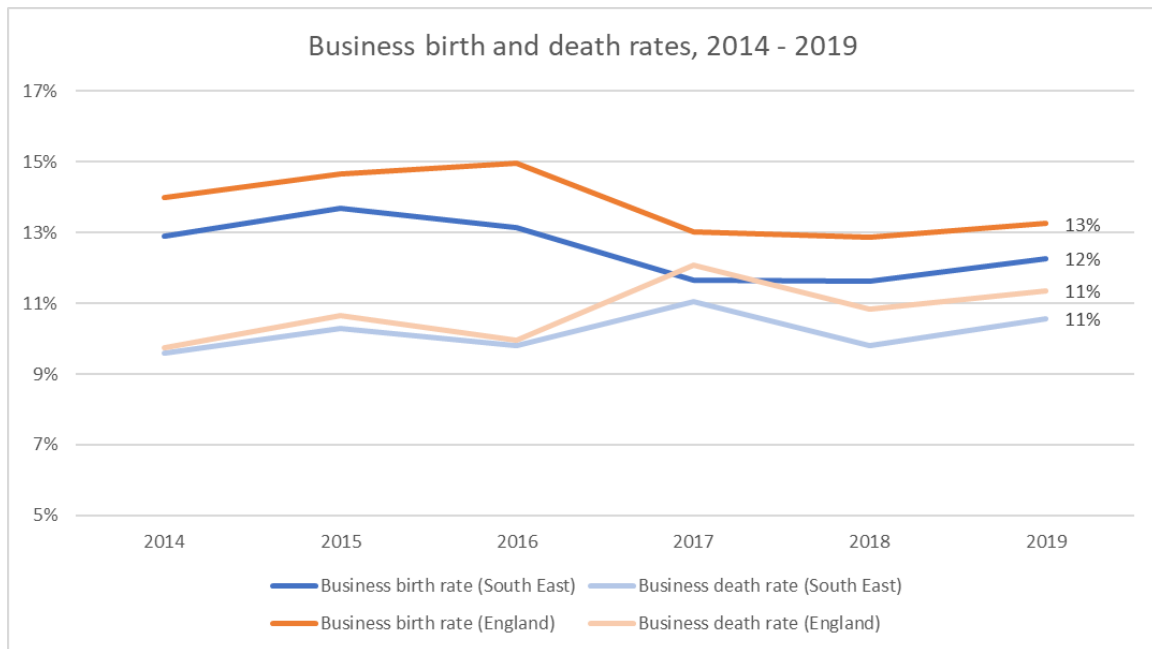
The charts above show employment by occupation in the SELEP area and England. At 20%, professional occupations make up the largest proportion within the SELEP area although below the England level of 22%. Occupation percentages follow broadly the same pattern as the national levels, with slightly higher proportions as Managers and Directors and in caring and leisure occupations. Vacancies illustrate a continued need for management and leadership skills across all sectors, as well as communication.



Source: [UK Business Counts, 2020, 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

### Enterprises by employment size band

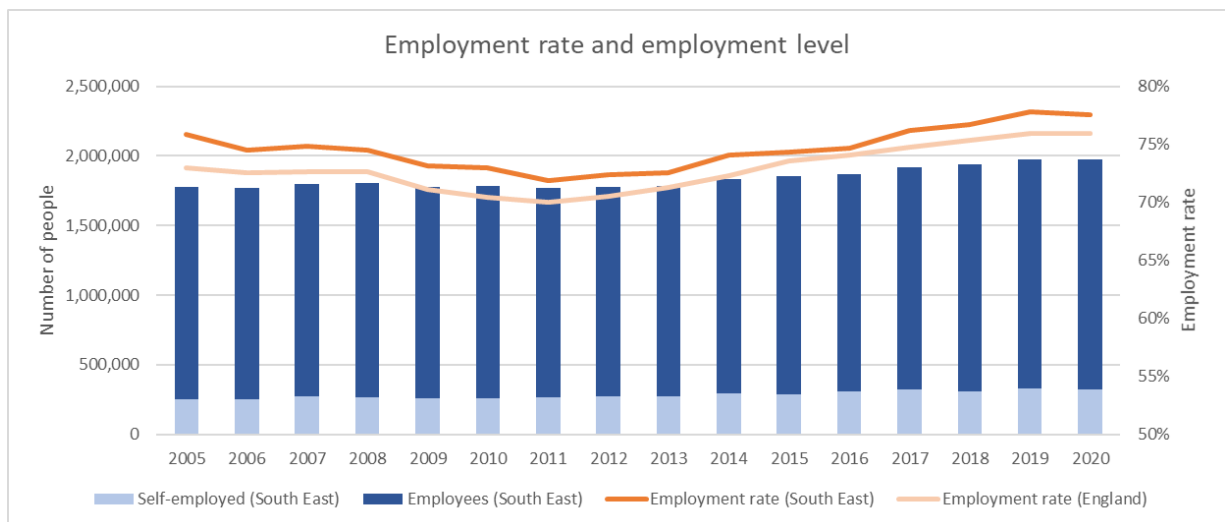
The chart above illustrates that SELEP's enterprise sizes follow broadly the same pattern as national percentages. However, there are even fewer medium sized companies (1% rather than 2% nationally) and the due to rounding the percentage for companies with over 250 people appears as 0%. The SELEP area has just 520 enterprises with over 250 employees and 159,475 are micro (1-9 employees). This illustrates the importance of working with local boards, business representative organisations and partners across SELEP to ensure engagement with SMEs. The SAP includes representation from Chambers of Commerce as does the main LEP Board and there is regular engagement also with the Federation of Small Businesses who also co-Chair SELEP's Digital Skills Partnership.



Source: [ONS Business Demography, 2014-2019 \(published 2020\)](#)

#### Business birth and death rates

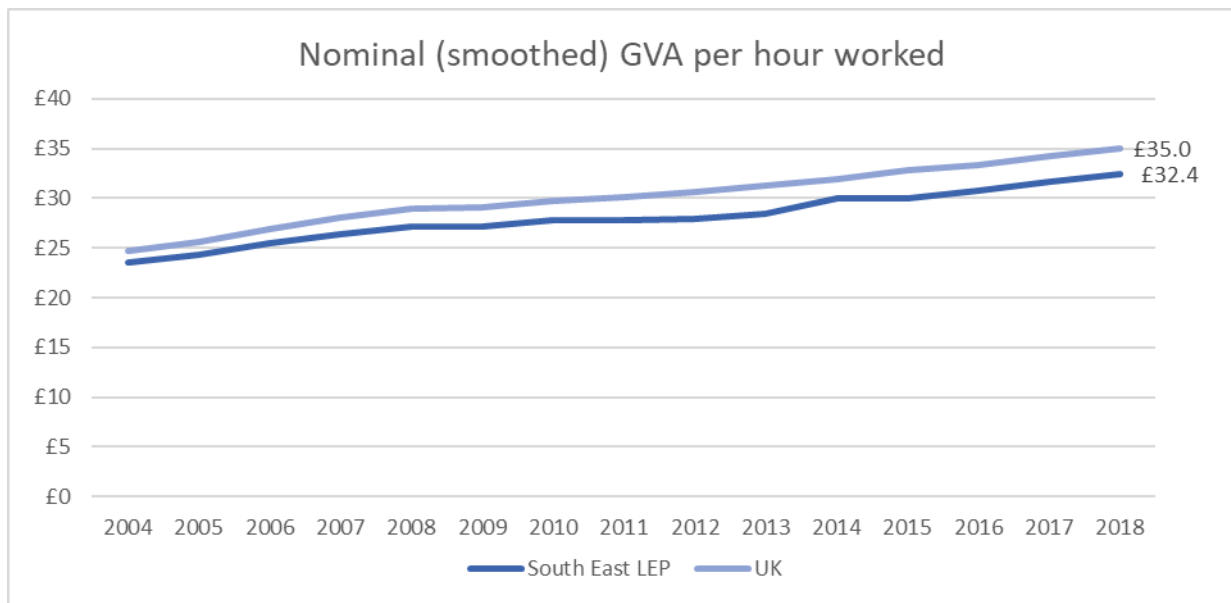
The chart shows that the business death rate has remained fairly static across SELEP and the birth rate has declined overall. As of 2018, SELEP had a slightly lower birth rate (12%) than England (13%) and the same death rate (11%).



Source: [Annual Population Survey, 2005 - 2020, 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

### Employment rate and employment level

The employment rate has steadily grown in SELEP in recent years and (at 78%) is slightly above the national level of 76%. Clearly this will have been impacted by Covid-19 and as per the benefit figures provided in chapter 3, unemployment has increased. The chart above also shows that the number of self-employed people has also increased, from 261,800 in 2010 to 323,200 in 2020. This correlates with the feedback locally.

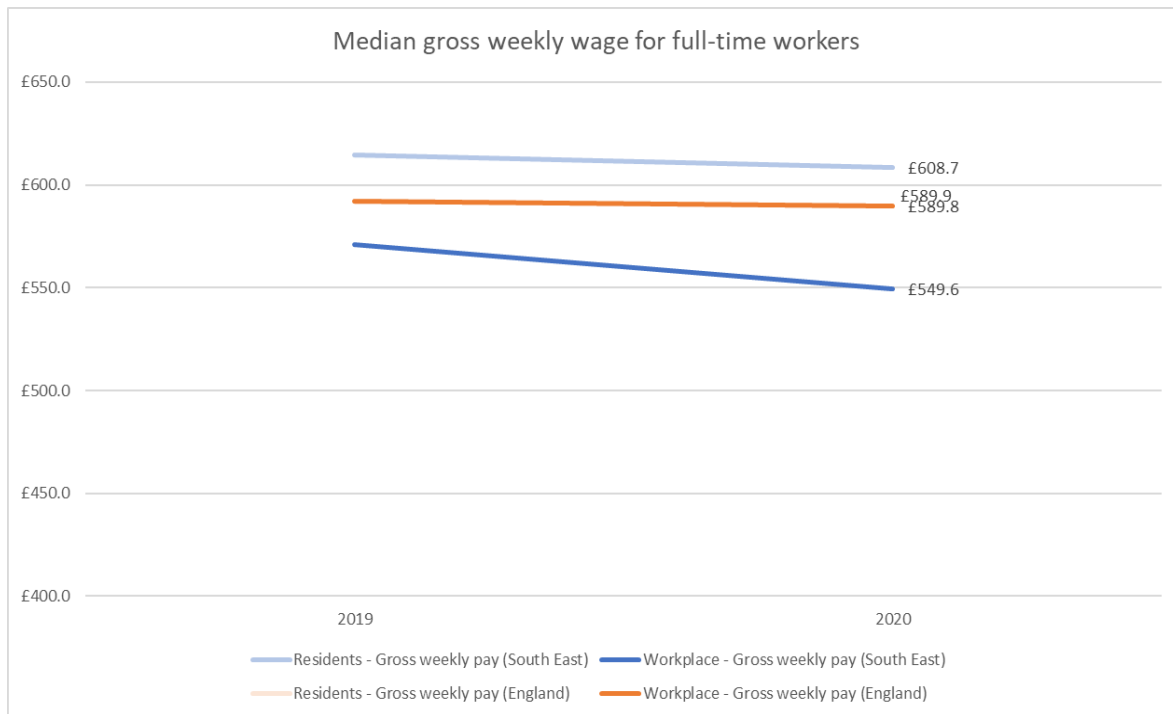


**Source:** [ONS Subregional Productivity, 2004 - 2018 \(published 2020\), 2018 LEP/MCA boundaries](#)

### GVA per hour worked

The graph above shows a slightly higher rate of GVA per hour worked nationally (£35.0) compared to the SELEP area (£32.40). This shows that although improving the SELEP is generally not as productive as the national average, or other LEP areas (as per the figures in the opening section) and which is also evidenced in the lower than average earnings. Out commuting to higher value jobs in locations such as London is likely to be a factor here however as is evidenced in higher residence-based earnings. It is also the case that certain sectors have generally higher wages than others.

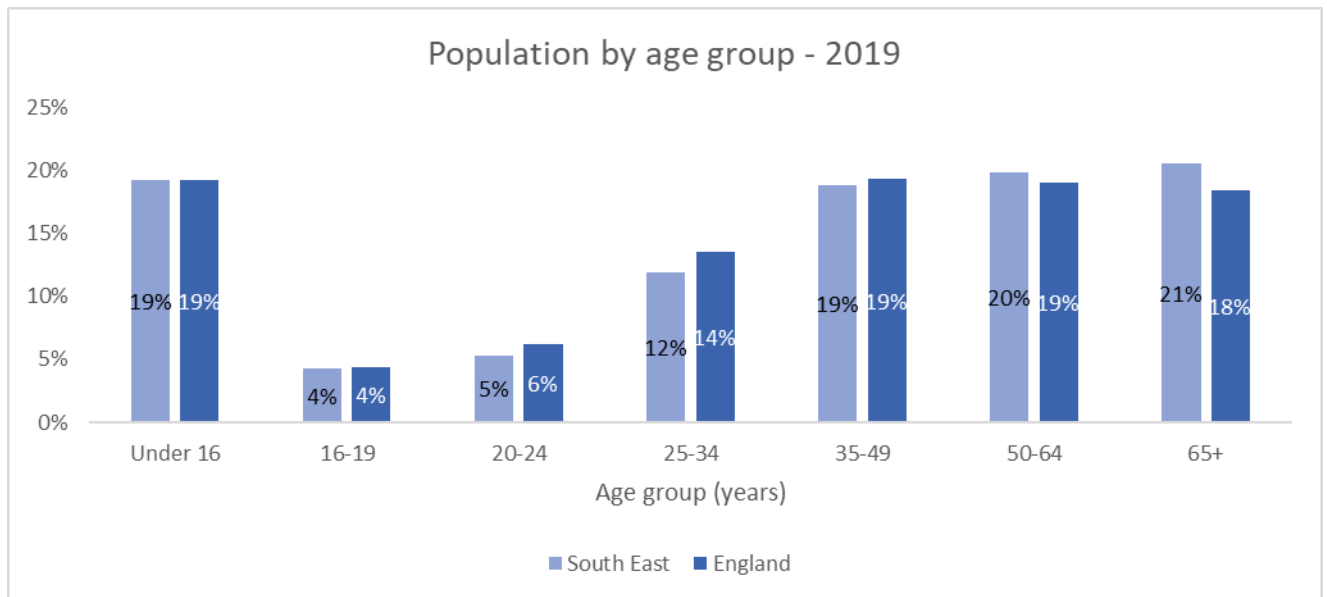




Source: [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2014 - 2020, 2020 LEP boundaries](#)

### Median Gross Weekly wage for full-time workers

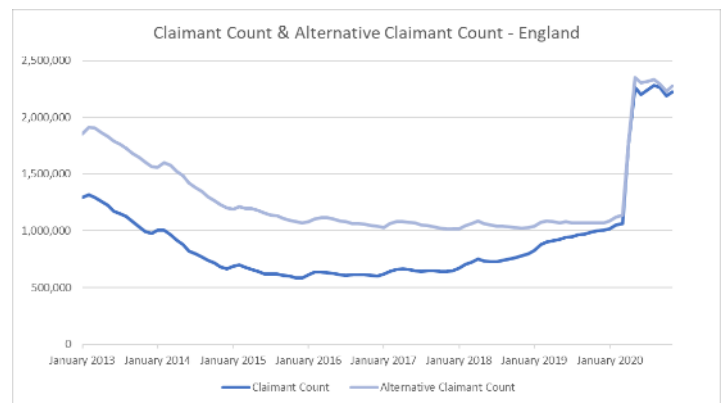
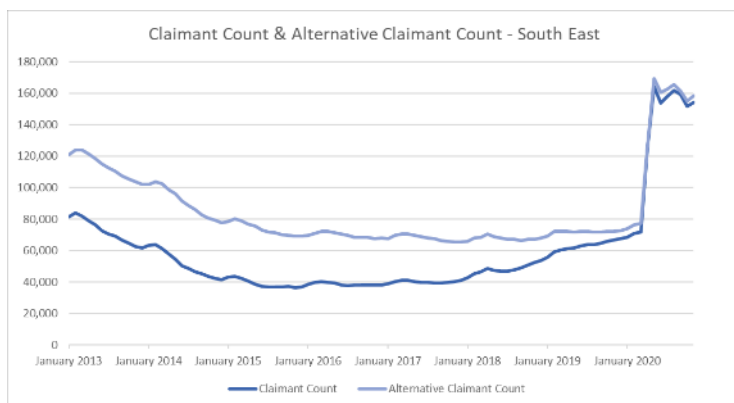
The graph above illustrates a decline from 2019 to 2020 in the SELEP area in weekly wages for both resident and workplace. This is in line with national patterns. Workplace earnings are below the national average whilst resident based are above which reflects out commuting to London where salaries are generally higher. Clearly ensuring skills shortages and job vacancies are filled within SELEP is important as unfilled vacancies represents lost productivity. As with other measures, there are great variations across the SELEP area, with some areas well above and others well below the SELEP and national average (e.g. workplace weekly pay is £652.3 in Brentwood, £510.3 in Castle Point, £444.20 in Hastings, £478.30 in Thanet and £652.20 in Gravesham).



**Source:** [ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2019, 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

#### Population by age group

SELEP's higher than average ageing population is clearly shown above and slightly lower than average younger population. As per chapters 3 and 4, this is impacting on some sectors which have an ageing workforce but also has implications for sectors such as health and care as the proportion of people aged 65+ is set to increase still further.



**Source:** [ONS claimant count](#) & [DWP Stat Xplore](#), January 2013 – November 2020, 2020 SAP boundaries

### **Claimant Count and alternative claimant count**

The graphs show broadly similar patterns in claimant counts for the SELEP area and nationally and with a steep increase in claimants at the height of the pandemic. Percentages among younger people are higher than those for the population as a whole. Clearly the increase is due to Covid-19 and as per chapters 3 and 4, SELEP has launched a Covid-19 Recovery fund to help retrain those made unemployed by the pandemic. SELEP will also continue signposting to the national government support available such as Kickstart and the forthcoming Restart programme.

As with other measures, certain parts of the SELEP area have seen particularly big increases with levels as high as 9.8% in Thanet, 8.9% in Hastings, 7.9% in Harlow and in Tendring.

*(‘Alternative claimant count’ is an official experimental statistic on the number of people claiming unemployment related benefits).*

Area Level	Area	Proportion of neighbourhoods in 10% most deprived nationally		
		Income	Employment	Education, Skills and training
<b>LEP (2017)</b>	South East	5%	5%	8%
<b>Local Authority District</b>	Ashford	4%	0%	9%
	Basildon	7%	7%	19%
	Braintree	0%	0%	5%
	Brentwood	0%	0%	0%
	Canterbury	0%	2%	8%
	Castle Point	5%	2%	14%
	Chelmsford	1%	1%	1%
	Colchester	1%	1%	6%
	Dartford	2%	2%	2%
	Dover	7%	7%	12%
	Eastbourne	5%	11%	10%
	Epping Forest	0%	0%	1%
	Folkestone and Hythe	6%	7%	7%
	Gravesham	3%	2%	8%
	Harlow	0%	0%	0%
	Hastings	26%	25%	19%
	Lewes	0%	0%	5%
	Maidstone	2%	1%	6%
	Maldon	0%	0%	0%
	Medway	9%	8%	11%
	Rochford	2%	0%	2%
	Rother	5%	5%	7%
	Sevenoaks	0%	1%	0%
	Southend-on-Sea	12%	12%	8%
	Swale	15%	18%	26%
	Tendring	15%	18%	20%
	Thanet	20%	25%	20%
	Thurrock	5%	2%	8%
	Tonbridge and Malling	0%	0%	4%
	Tunbridge Wells	0%	0%	4%
	Uttlesford	0%	0%	0%
	Wealden	0%	0%	4%

Source: [Index of Multiple Deprivation, MHCLG, 2019, 2017 LEP boundaries](#)

### Index of Multiple Deprivation

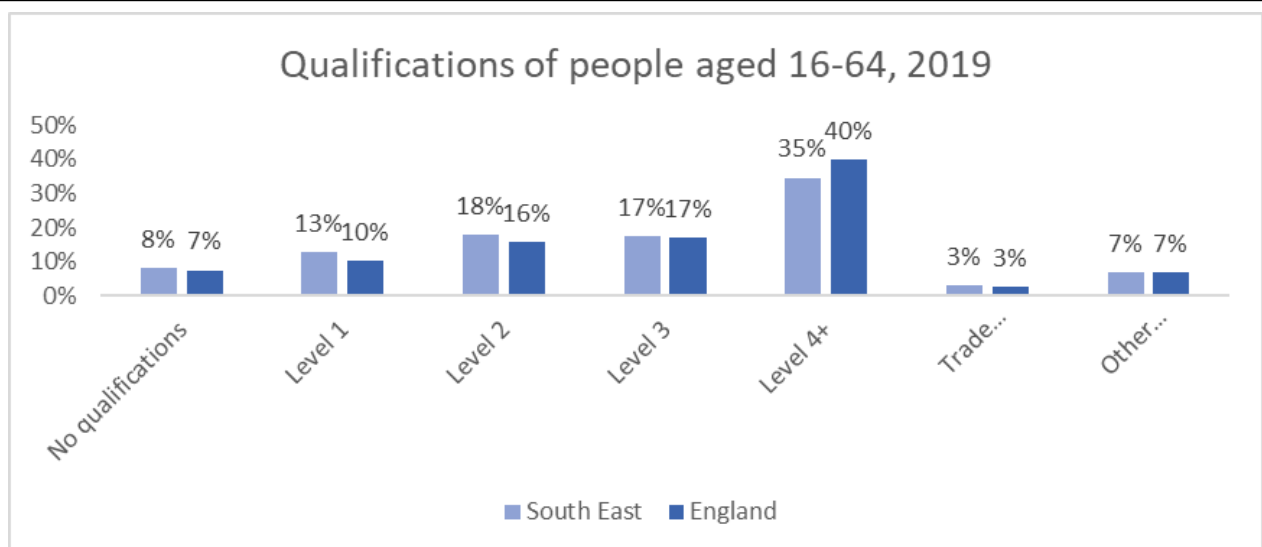
The table above illustrates by local authority areas within SELEP which proportion fall within the 10% most deprived nationally, looking at income, employment and skills metrics. This echoes the commentary in the early chapters noting that SELEP has some of the most deprived and most wealthy areas in the country. As the chart illustrates, areas such as Swale, Tendring, Thanet and Hastings have considerable proportions of their geography in the most deprived nationally. Looking at the education, skills and training measure specifically, Medway, Basildon and Castle Point also have fairly high percentages.

### Skills Supply – Summary

The following charts show the headlines for skills supply across the SELEP area exploring factors such as FE, HE and apprenticeship achievements.

Generally, skills levels across the SELEP have failed to keep up with the national average and that of other LEP areas. The gap has closed slightly but clearly it is still a key ambition to increase skills at all levels. To put this into context, SELEP has 35% of people at level 4+ compared to the national level of 40%. This compares with 48% in Thames Valley Berkshire, 44% in Hertfordshire, 48% in Coast to Capital and 49% in Enterprise M3.

The tables illustrate that greater alignment to SELEP's key sectors would be positive but that there is good alignment for some subject areas. As outlined in chapter 6, SELEP has invested in ensuring the correct facilities are available and in sharing information and intelligence as to industry need. Activity such as raising awareness of apprenticeships and industry need is clearly important as well as working with partners such as the Careers Enterprise Company to ensure information on employment opportunities and needs is shared.

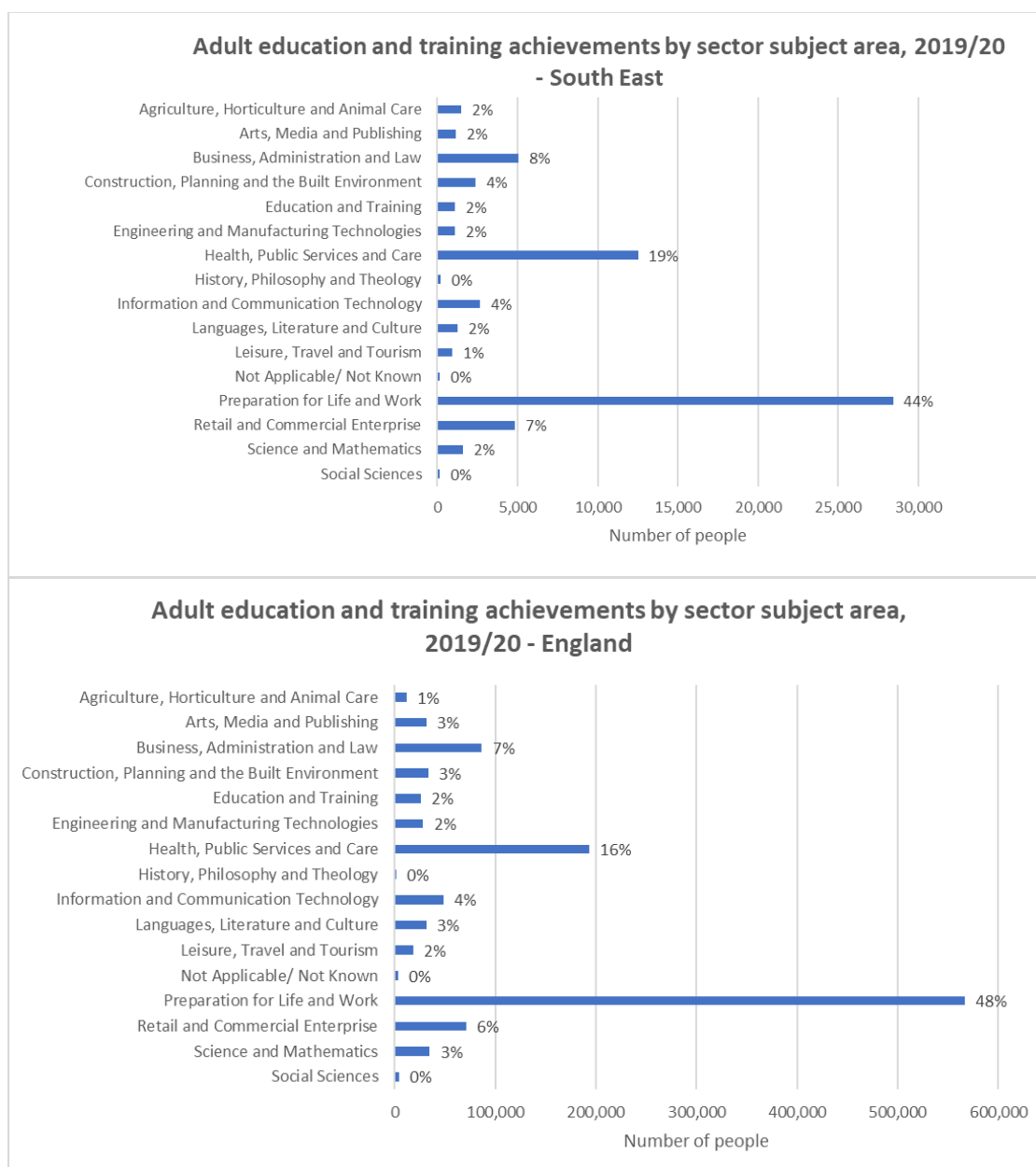


Source: [Annual Population Survey, January 2019 – December 2020, 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

## Qualification levels

As outlined in chapters 3 and 4, SELEP is below the national average for all skills levels when looking at the minimum skills level and above (e.g. 85% have level 1 skills and above). However, the trend has been for skills levels to increase and the gap between SELEP and the national average has narrowed slightly. The graph above presents these figures slightly differently and illustrates the gap closing but illustrates the still higher percentages of lower level skills in the SELEP area compared with nationally (e.g. 18% have level 1 only compared to 16% nationally). Additionally, there are significant numbers with no qualifications.

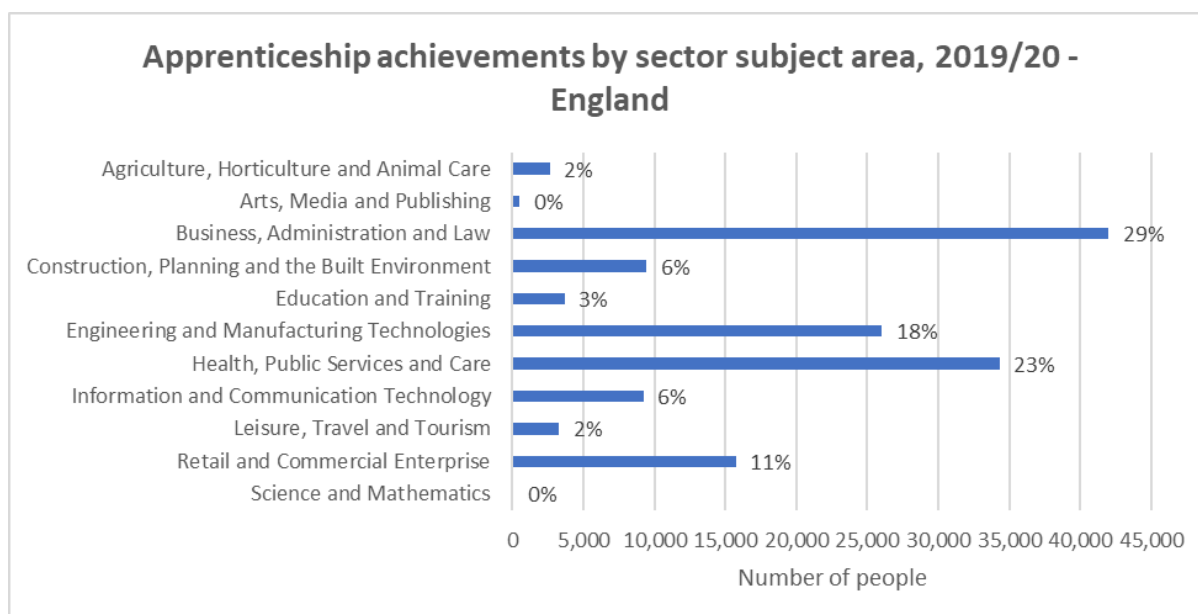
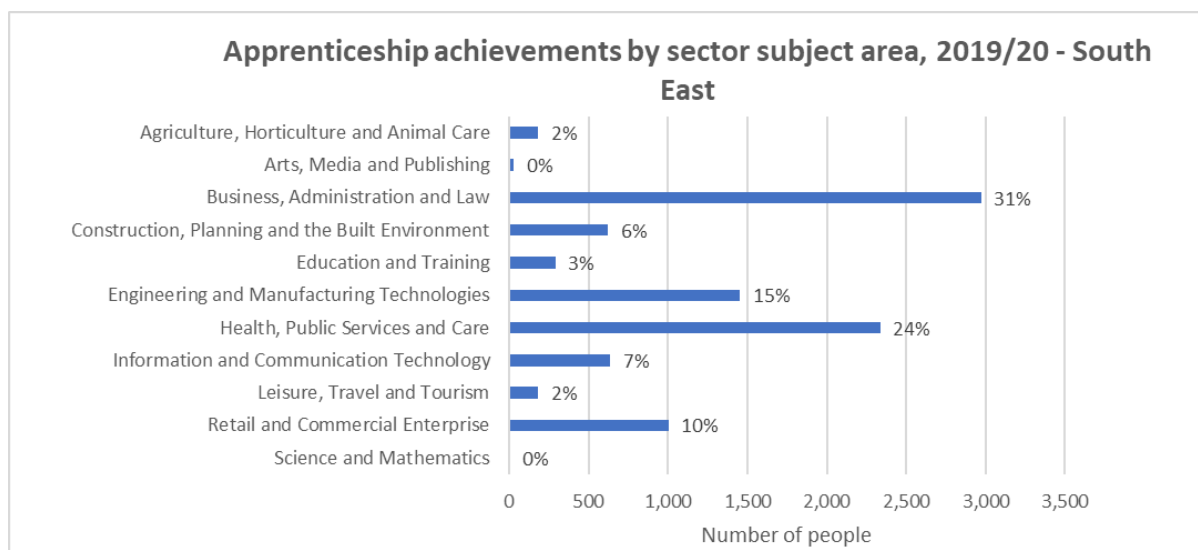
There are clear local variations with some parts of SELEP being above and others below the national average. For example, level 4 qualifications are at 22.2% in Castle Point, 23.1% in Thanet, 24.7% in Swale and 26.3% in Maldon. Furthermore, percentages with no qualifications are as high as 12.8% in Basildon and Gravesham and 12.2% in Hastings.



Source: [Further Education & Skills data, DfE, \(published 2020\), 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

## FE Education and Training Achievements

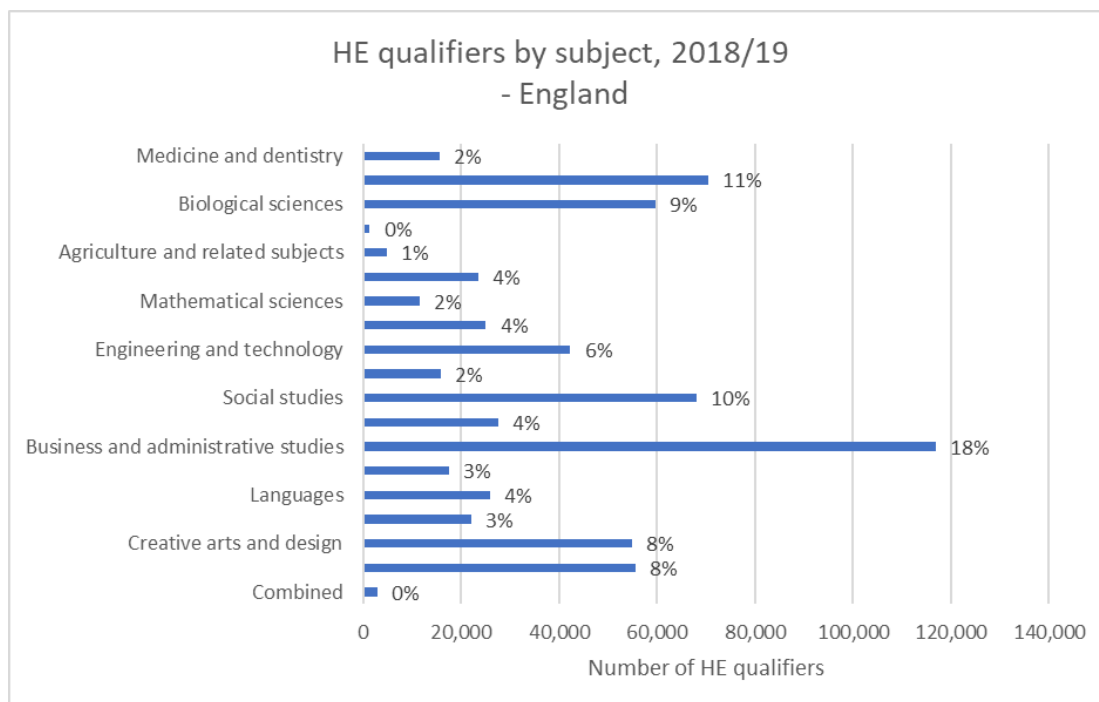
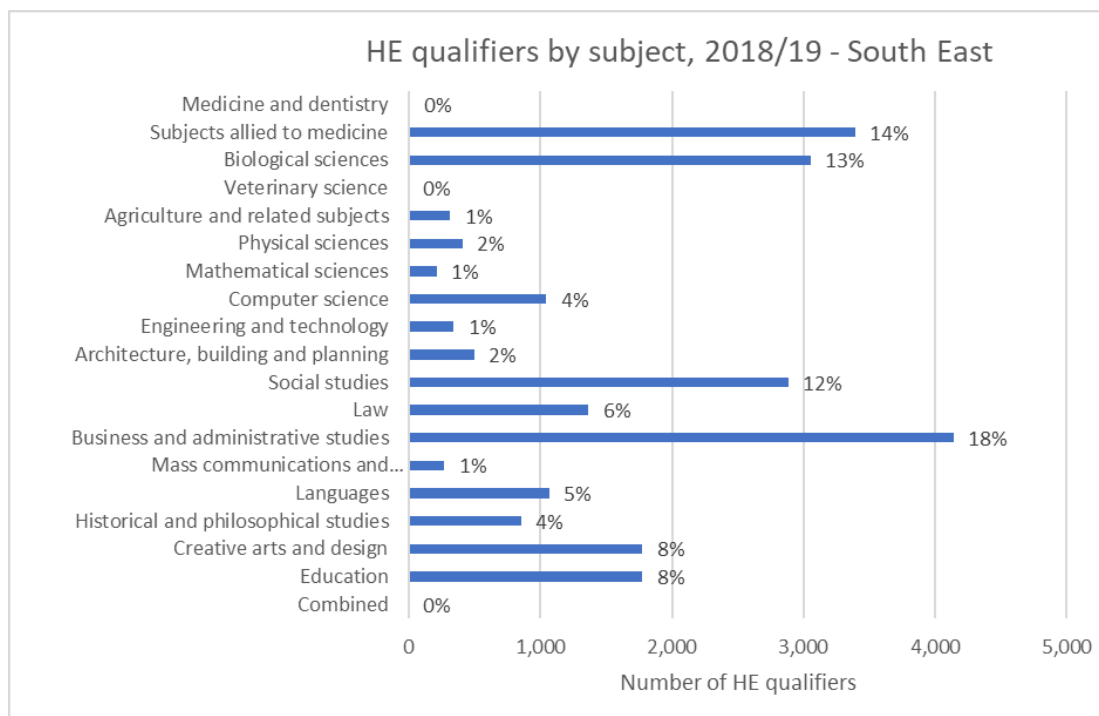
The charts above illustrate the 19+ training achievements by subject sector area which are broadly aligned with those at national level. There is a high proportion in health, public services and care (19% compared to 16% nationally) and very high proportions in 'preparation for life and work' at 44%. Percentages in construction (4%) and Information and Communication Technology are fairly low considering the need in these sectors set out in chapter 3.



Source: [Apprenticeships data, DfE, \(published 2020\), 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

### Apprenticeship Achievements:

Generally, apprenticeship sector subject areas in the SELEP area as similar to those nationally. There are slightly higher percentages in business, administration and law (31% compared to 29%) and health, public services and care (24% compared to 23%). Positively, 15% are in engineering and manufacturing which is a key sector for SELEP. Looking at sector needs as outlined in chapter 3, it would be positive to see higher percentages in arts, media and publishing and in construction.



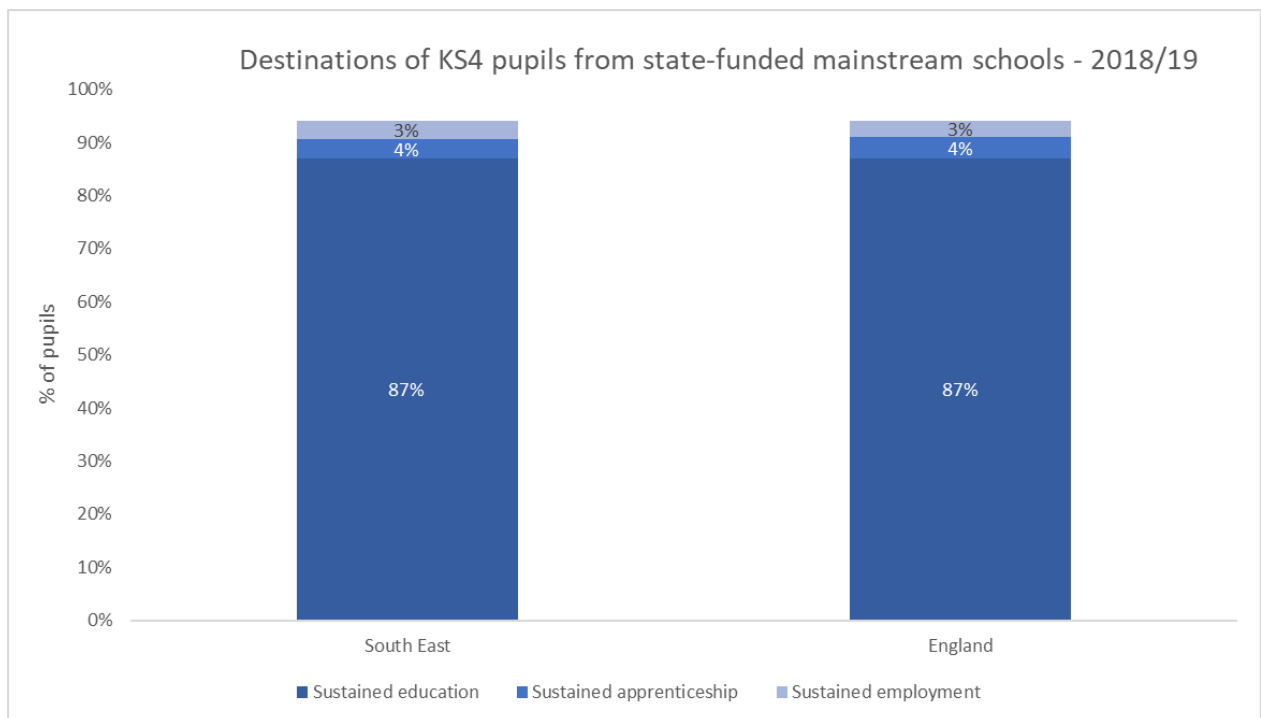
Source: [HESA, 2018/2019 qualifiers \(published 2020\), 2020 SAP boundaries](#)



### HE Qualifiers

The SELEP area has above the national average percentage of HE Qualifiers in subjects allied to medicine (14% compared to 11%) and in biological sciences (13% compared to 9%). Other subject areas broadly align to national percentages. At 1%, engineering is low compared to the national take up of 6% and considering that this is a key sector for SELEP. Similarly, architecture, building and planning is low at 2%. There is higher take up of creative arts and design however, at 8%.

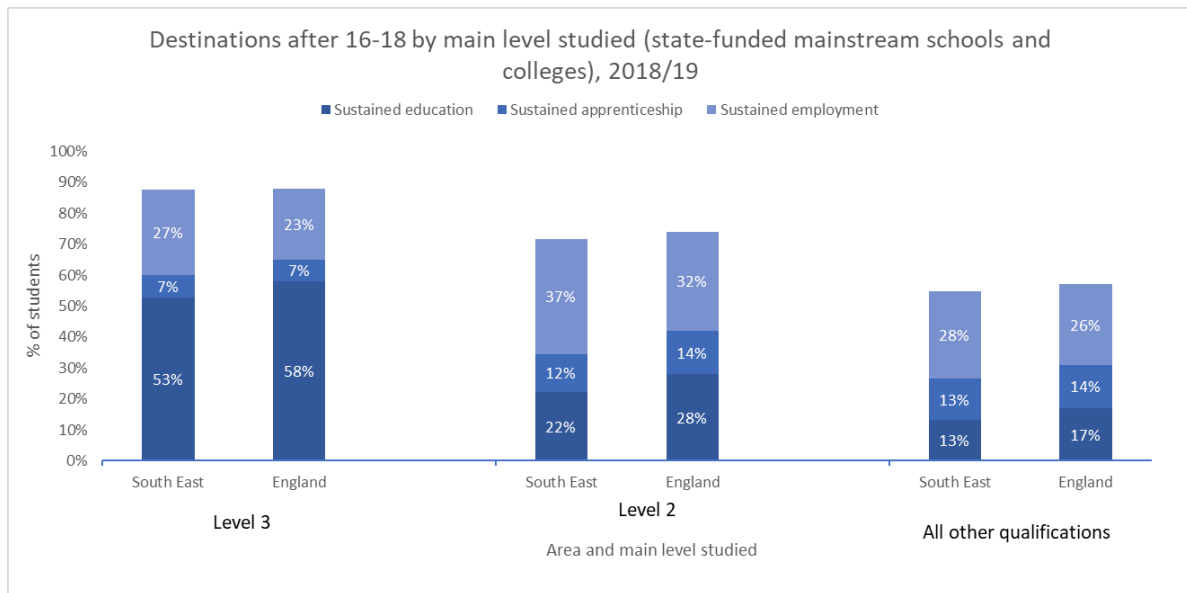
SELEP will soon produce an HE Destinations data report to explore this sort of data further.



Source: [KS4 & KS5 destinations of 2017/2018 leavers, DfE, \(published 2019\), 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

### KS4 Destinations

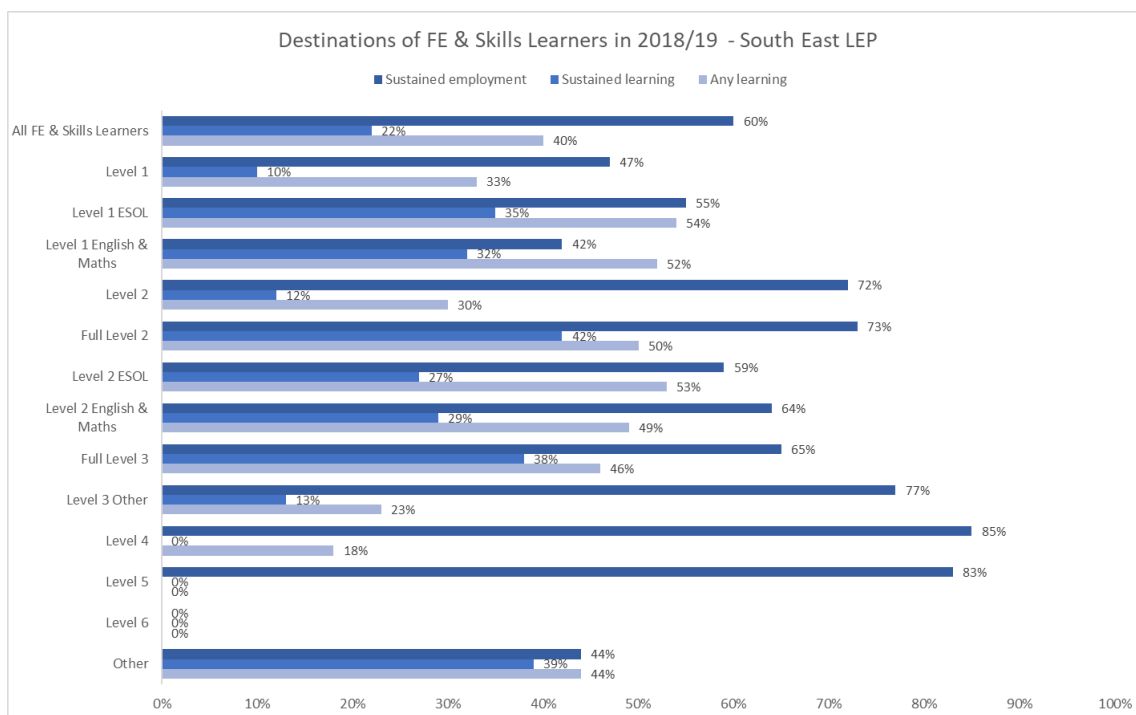
The destinations of KS4 (GCSE Level) leavers are exactly the same in percentages as the national level. 87% of leavers go into sustained education, 4% into a sustained apprenticeship and 3% into sustained employment. In the context of the ambition to increase apprenticeships across the SELEP area, it would be positive to see an increase in leavers moving to sustained apprenticeships. Clearly this may also happen beyond KS4, which the following table looks at.

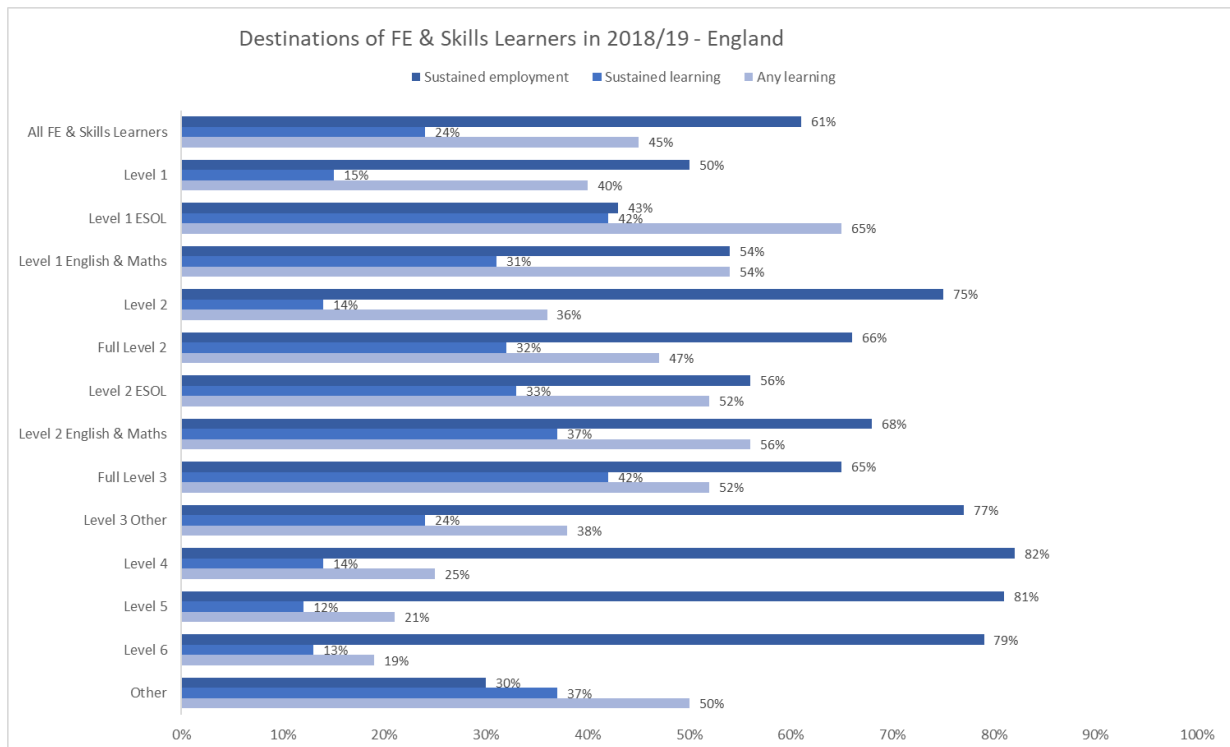


**Source:** [16-18 Destination Measures, DfE, 2018/19 \(published 2020\), 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

### KS5 Destinations

The destinations at key stage 5 (16-18) in the SELEP area shows a greater proportion going into apprenticeships. At level 3, 7% go into an apprenticeship which is the same as nationally. 27% go into sustained employed so it could be useful to explore whether any of these employment routes could be suitable for apprenticeships. At level 2, the SELEP area has higher proportions going into sustained employment 37% compared to 32% but lower percentages going into apprenticeships (12% compared to 14%). For all other qualifications, destinations to apprenticeships are lower in the south east (13%) than the national average.

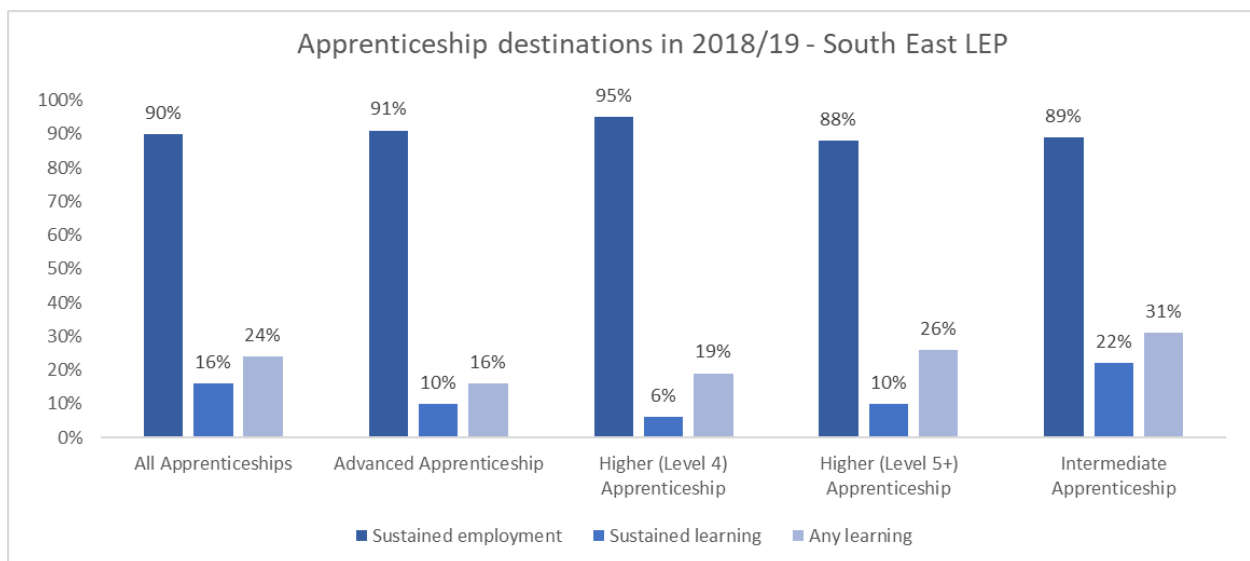


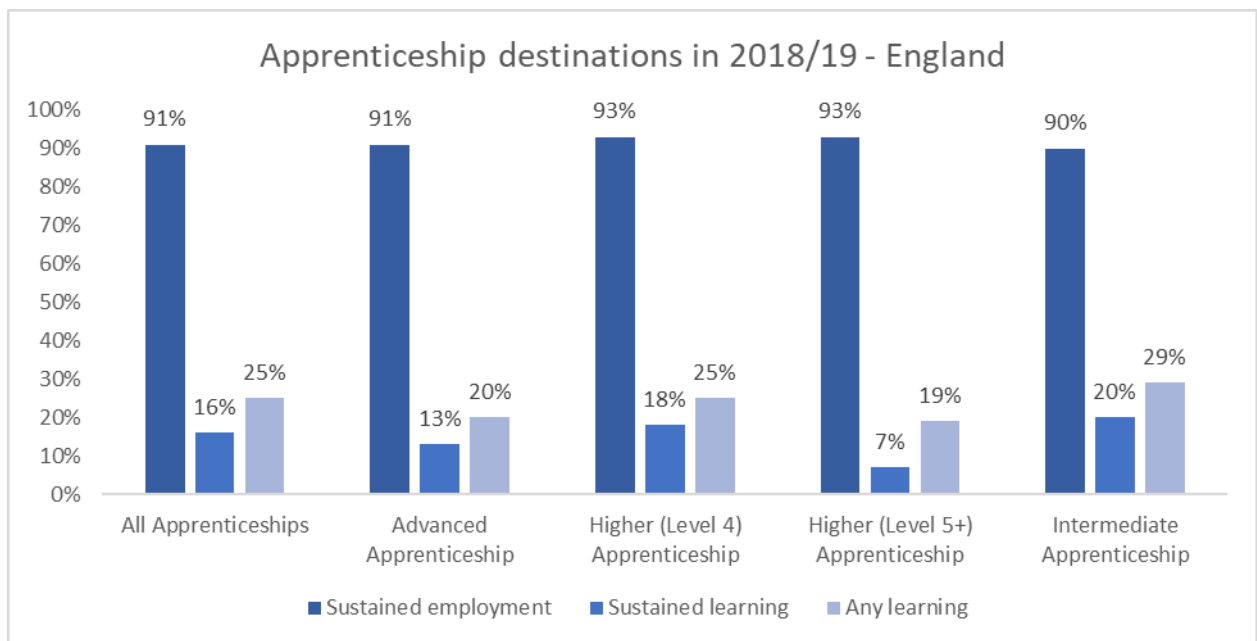


**Source:** [FE outcome based success measures, 2018/19 destinations, DfE, \(published 2020\), 2018 LEP boundaries](#)

#### FE and skills destinations:

The graph above illustrates that the most common destination across all adult FE and skills learners is sustained employment at 60%. This is broadly in line with the national level of 61%. 40% go into any learning, of which 22% is sustained learning. As the graphs illustrates, destinations to sustained employment are particularly high at level 4 (85%) and level 5 (83%) and also at level 2 (72%). Those undertaking levels 1 and 2 English & Maths and ESOL are most likely to progress into any learning although rates are below the national average for this.

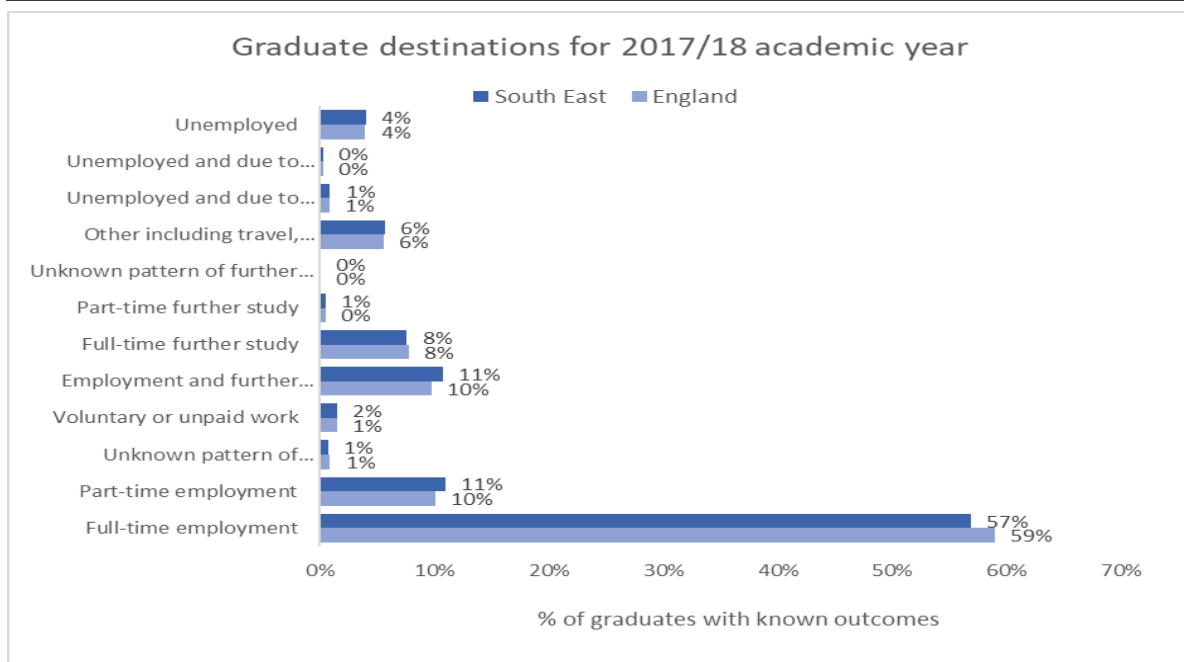




**Source:** [FE outcome based success measures, 2018/19 destinations, DfE, \(published 2020\), 2018 LEP boundaries](#)

### Apprenticeship Destinations

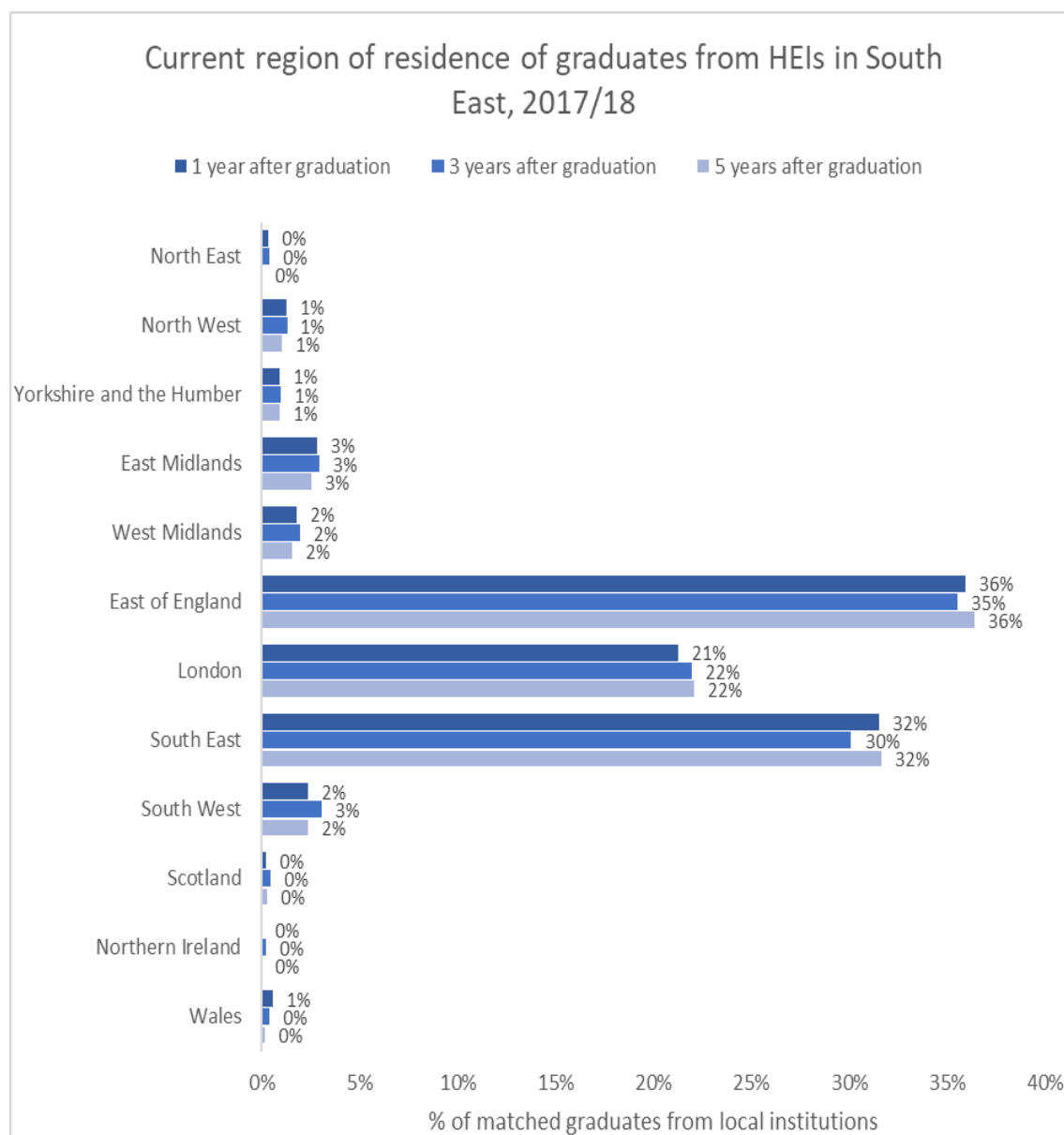
Looking at the apprenticeship destinations above, the primary destination across all apprenticeship is into sustained employed, at 90%. This broadly aligns with the national level of 91% .24% go into any learning (of which 16% is sustained learning). Note that learners may participate in employment and learning, so there can be overlap. Percentages moving into sustained employment is highest for higher (level 4) apprenticeships at 95% compared with 93% nationally.



**Source:** [HESA, 2017/18 graduates \(published 2020\), 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

### HE graduate destinations:

The highest proportion of graduate destinations are to full-time employment at 57% and which compares to 59% nationally. 11% of destinations are to part-time employment and 11% to employment and further study. Percentages going into further full-time study are in line with the national percentage at 8%. Positively, unemployed percentages are low at 4% and in line with the national average.

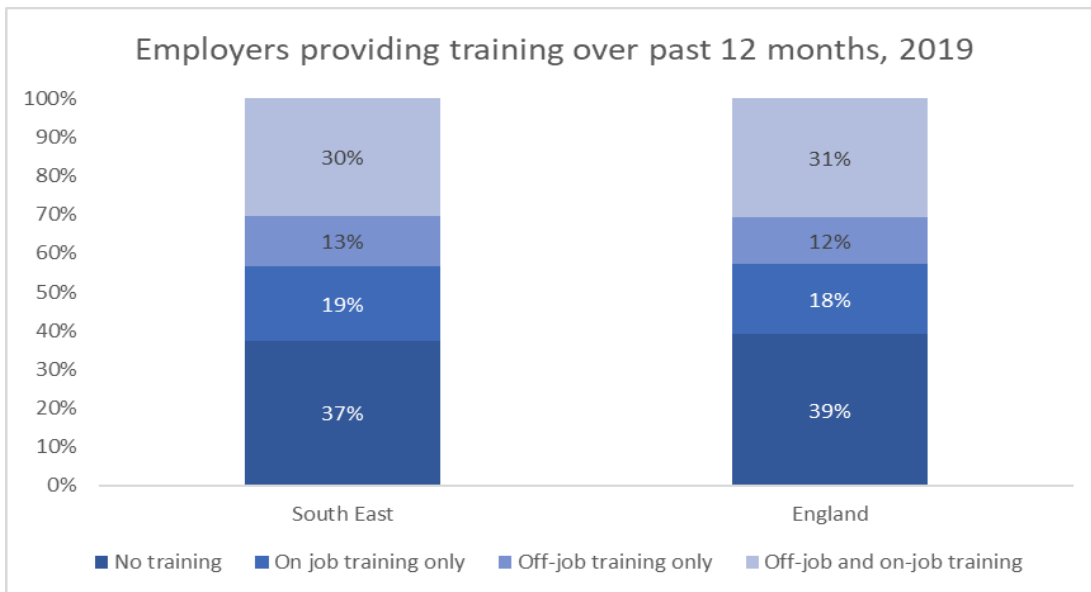


Source: [Graduate Outcomes in 2017/18, DfE, \(published 2020\), 2020 SAP boundaries](#)

### Graduate retention

The chart above looks at graduate retention geographically and where graduates are based after leaving SELEP based HEIs. As the chart looks at regions rather than LEPs, it should be noted that SELEP covers parts of both the East of England and South East regions. As the chart illustrates, retention in these areas is highest (36% and 32% after 5 years) and there isn't very much variation from years 1 to 3 from graduating. Therefore, around a third of graduates are remaining in the SELEP area. As would be expected, those based in London are also sizeable at 22% in year 3. Ensuring awareness of jobs in the SELEP area through the SAP is therefore important. Notably, 3% are also in the East Midlands.

Retaining graduates is an area of interest and SELEP is due to explore destination data further to understand these patterns. The figures in the table above are for students studying at providers in the local area, rather than students who are domiciled there. Further analysis will include those domiciled in the SELEP area also. Projects such as the EDGE Hub at Canterbury Christ Church University described in chapter 6 are an important part of this and ensuring graduate talent benefits local employers.



Source: [Employer Skills Survey, 2019 \(published 2020\), 2019 LEP boundaries](#)

### **Employer provided training**

As the chart above illustrates, 37% of employers in the SELEP area haven't provided training in the period shown, slightly below the national level of 39%. 19% have provided on the job training, 13% off the job and 30% a mixture of on and off the job training. Percentages are broadly in line with national levels. It's important to maintain awareness of training programmes for those in work such as ESF Programmes and free online and digital learning. Needs locally have been identified in areas such as management, leadership, mental health support and communication.

## **Skills Demand**

### **Skills Demand - Summary**

As is outlined in chapter 3, certain sectors have been identified as having the most skills shortages, job opportunities and growth. Factors such as the major projects set out in chapter 3 will clearly create jobs in sectors such as engineering, construction and the ageing population means that the focus on health and care remains valid. Through Covid-19, some of the key sectors (e.g. visitor and accommodation) have experienced a downturn and others (e.g. health, care, logistics) have seen increase. This has been echoed by the feedback from SAP members. Digital roles have been resilient through the Covid-19 period and the Digital Skills Partnership has been able to offer support. Clearly SELEP's Covid-19 Recovery Funding will be important in addressing current challenges as will government programmes of support such as the Retraining Scheme.

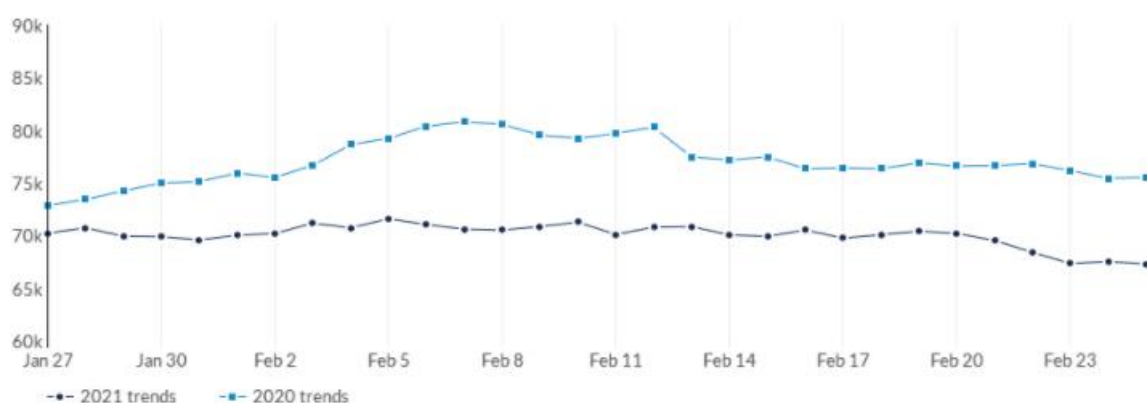
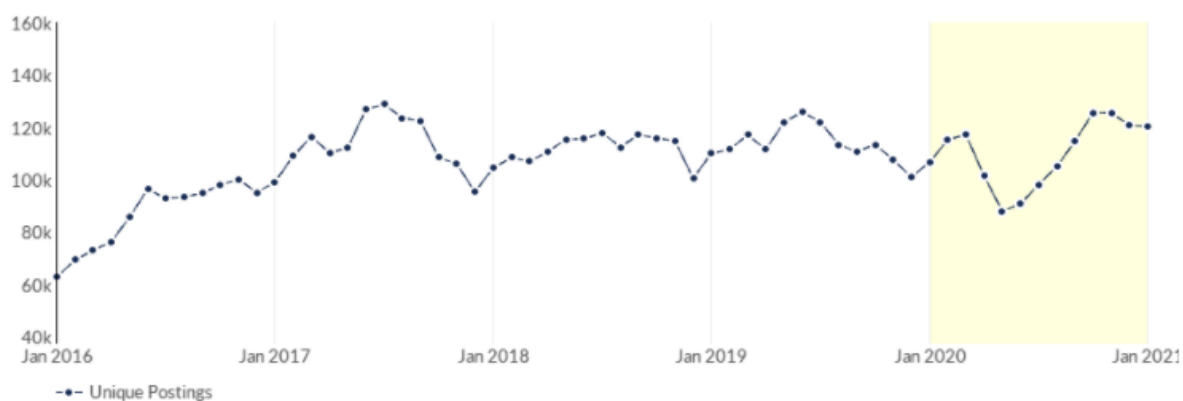
The sector trends and needs captured in chapter 3 are further evidenced in the vacancies as below and showing the highest numbers in SELEP's key sectors.

### **Online vacancies**

#### **Total number of vacancies over time:**

In the period January 2020 to January 2021, there were nearly 507,000 unique job vacancies posted. This shows an increase since the original SELEP skills strategy document cited nearly 400,000.

Top occupations advertised in this period include nurses, care workers, teaching professionals, drivers, cleaners, sales accounts, storage and bookkeepers. Job titles advertised include HGV Drivers, Family Support Workers, Teaching Assistants, Home Care social Workers, Personal Care Assistants, Teachers, Surveyors, Cleaners, Warehouse Assemblers and Nurses.



**Source:** EMSI Job Posting Analytics

### Job posting Analytics

The first graph above shows job postings on a monthly basis over time and illustrate the decline at the peak of Covid-19 from March 2020. However, it also illustrates that vacancies across the SELEP area have since increased and shown some levelling off in January 2020.

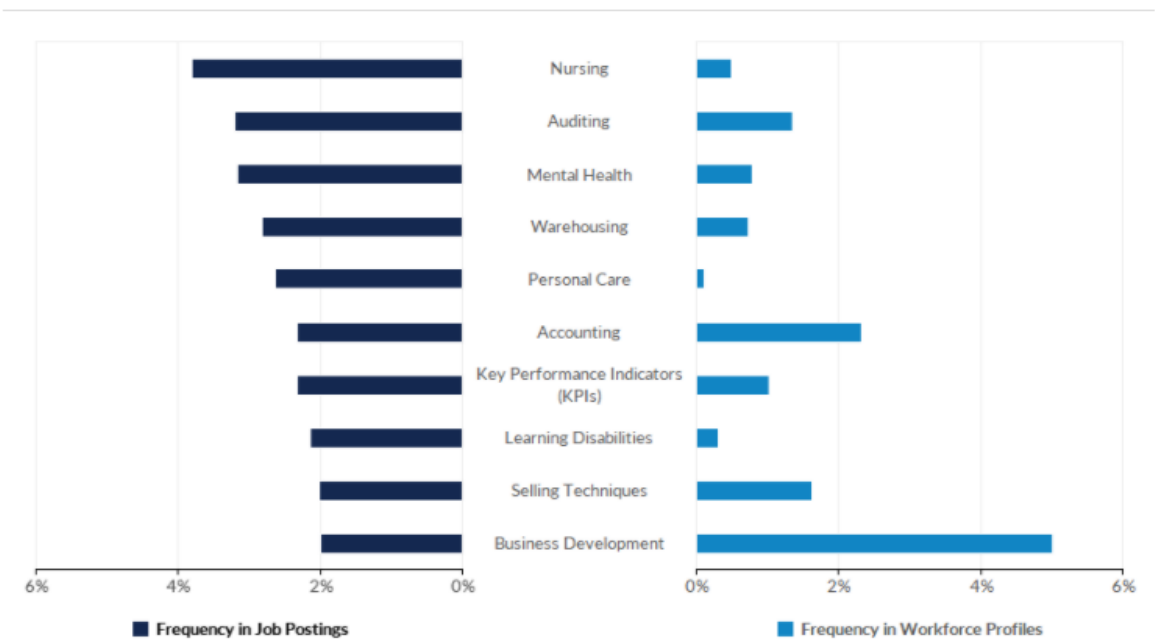
The second graph illustrates levels of vacancies through February 2021 compared to the same period last year and shows that numbers are still below that of last year.

The charts below capture the top in demand skills and looks at the supply and demand of relevant skills by comparing the frequency of skills present in job postings against skills present in today's workforce. Along with Emsi's job posting analytics, this comparison leverages Emsi's dataset of more than 100M online resumés and profiles. All resumés and profiles used in these comparisons have been updated within the last three years. *(The skills associated with workforce profiles represent workers of all education and experience levels.)*

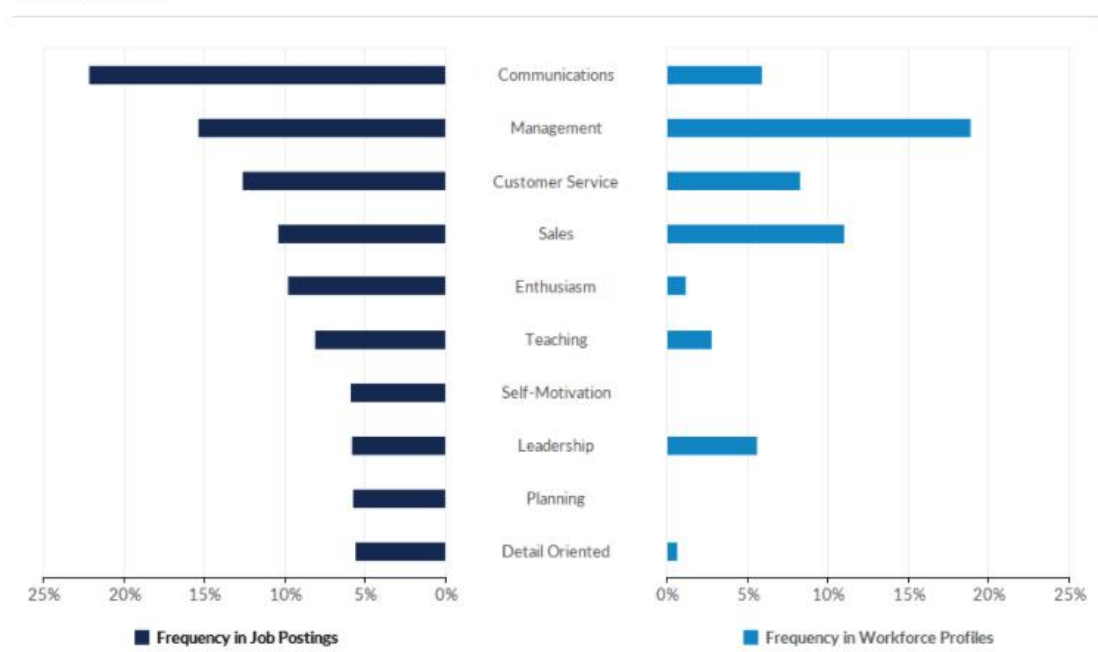
Common skills are captured in the second chart below and align to the other evidence contained in this report.



Top Hard Skills



Top Common Skills



Please note these forecasts were produced prior to COVID-19:

South East LEP	
Sectors with highest forecast growth (2017-2027)	Sectors with lowest forecast growth (2017-2027)
1) Arts and entertainment	1) Engineering
2) Health and social work	2) Rest of manufacturing
3) Water and sewerage	3) Agriculture
4) Real estate	4) Food drink and tobacco
5) Professional services	5) Finance and insurance

**Source:** [Working Futures, 2017-2027 \(published 2020\), 2017 LEP boundaries](#)

### Sector growth forecasts

The table above shows forecast growth is highest in the arts and entertainment sector. Although Covid-19 has since clearly impacted this sector, it is hoped that it will see recovery in the coming months and years and through initiatives such as Creative Estuary set out in chapter 3.

Health and social work growth is evidenced in other data also and Covid-19 has clearly increased the needs of these sectors. Although engineering and the rest of manufacturing is forecast the lowest growth, it should be noted that replacement jobs due to people retiring and moving are likely to remain high. It is surprising to see agriculture, food drink and tobacco with lowest forecast growth as they are important to the SELEP area and shown to be important through Covid-19 due to issues such as food security. It will be necessary to monitor these and review them against other data and intelligence.

Please note these forecasts were produced prior to COVID-19:

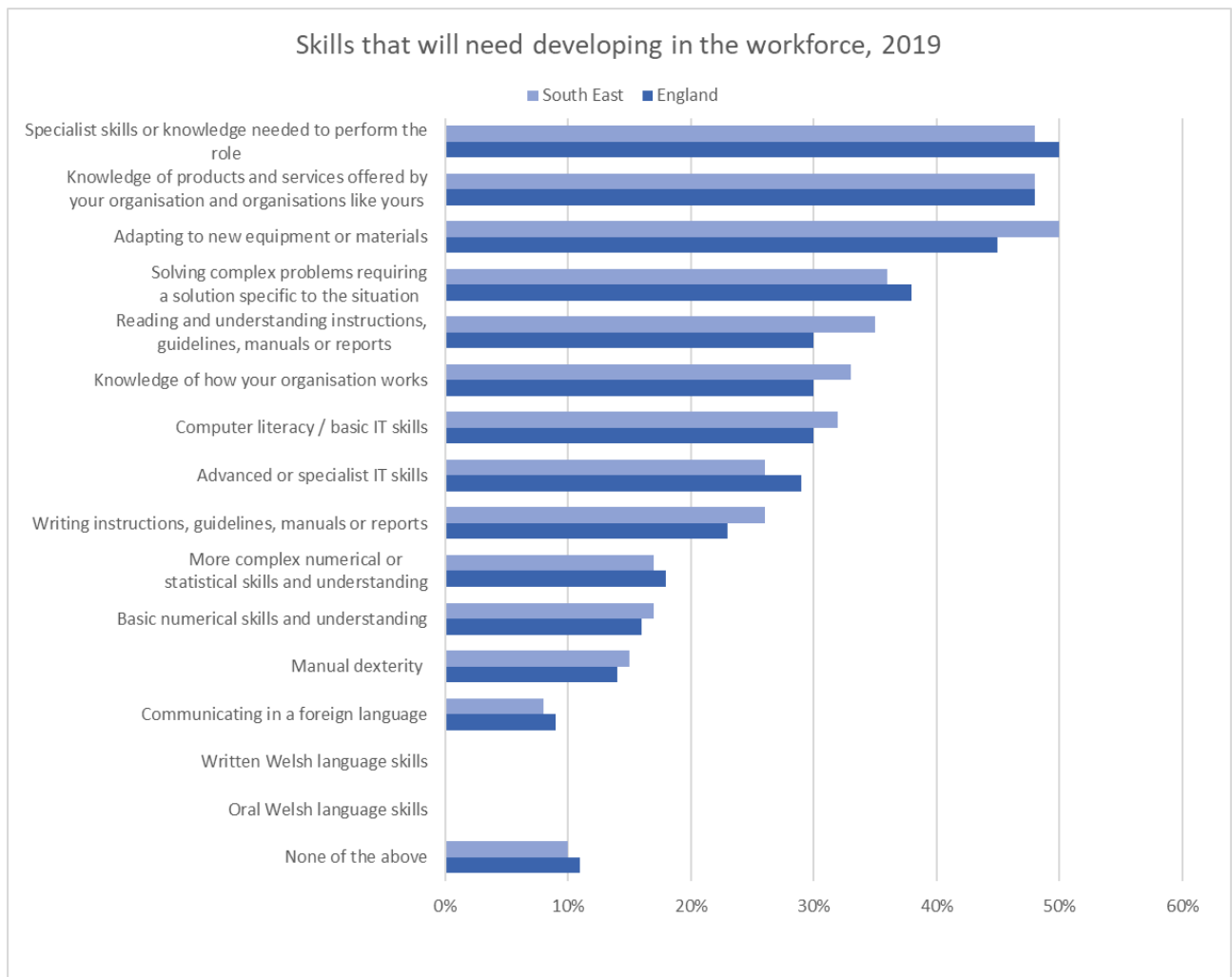
South East LEP	
Occupations with highest forecast growth (2017-2027)	Occupations with lowest forecast growth (2017-2027)
1) Caring personal service occupations	1) Secretarial and related occupations
2) Teaching and educational professionals	2) Process, plant and machine operatives
3) Health and social care associate professionals	3) Skilled metal, electrical and electronic trades
4) Health professionals	4) Textiles, printing and other skilled trades
5) Corporate managers and directors	5) Elementary trades and related occupations

**Source:** [Working Futures, 2017-2027 \(published 2020\), 2017 LEP boundaries](#)

### Occupation growth forecasts:

The occupation forecasts are in line with other data and show the prominence of health, care, education sectors. As has been noted through this report, there is a need for managerial and leadership roles and it is interesting to see this identified a growing occupation.

In the occupations with the lowest forecast growth, secretarial and related occupations are declining as digital advances have made them less in demand. Similarly, a decline in process, plant and machine operatives are likely to be due to a rise in automation and robotics. It is surprising to see a decline forecast in skilled metal, electrical and electronic trades given the potential need for these skills in infrastructure projects. It will be important to continue to monitor these.



Source: [Employer Skills Survey, 2019 \(published 2020\), 2019 LEP boundaries](#)

### Skills that need developing:

Skills that need developing in the workforce as identified by employers most frequently cited as in the chart above include specialist skills or knowledge needed to perform the role (50%), adopting to new products or services (45%) and adapting to new materials or equipment (45%). These are generally in line with the national average.

Computer and digital literacy is at 30% and we know that this is likely to have increased due to the increased need during Covid-19 and as fed back from organisations such as Skills for Care.

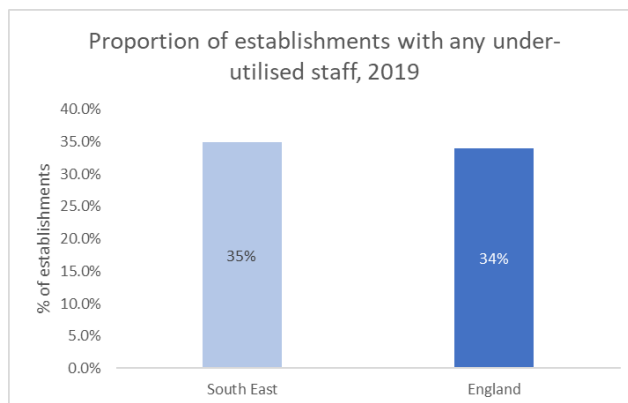
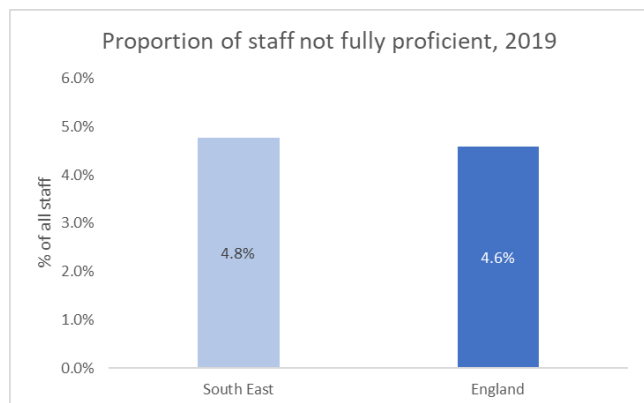
## Mapping Skills Supply and Demand

### Skills Supply and Demand - Summary

The following data and that above illustrates a continued need to align skills with demand locally and this will include delivering against the SAP and skills strategy vision and priorities to increase apprenticeships and industry relevant qualifications at all levels. The proportion of hard to fill vacancies illustrate skills shortages and continued vacancies further evidence this. Tackling these sorts of issues should also help address issues such as lower than average salaries and GVA.

Generally, local provision is well aligned to the economy and the investments made by SELEP and other partners have helped to ensure that this is the case. Some of the subject areas are less aligned to the local economy than needed and work needs to continue to showcase different sectors and to set out future growth and skills demands, such as that through the Major Projects across SELEP. Raising awareness in schools with partners such as the Enterprise Adviser Network and STEM Ambassadors remains important.

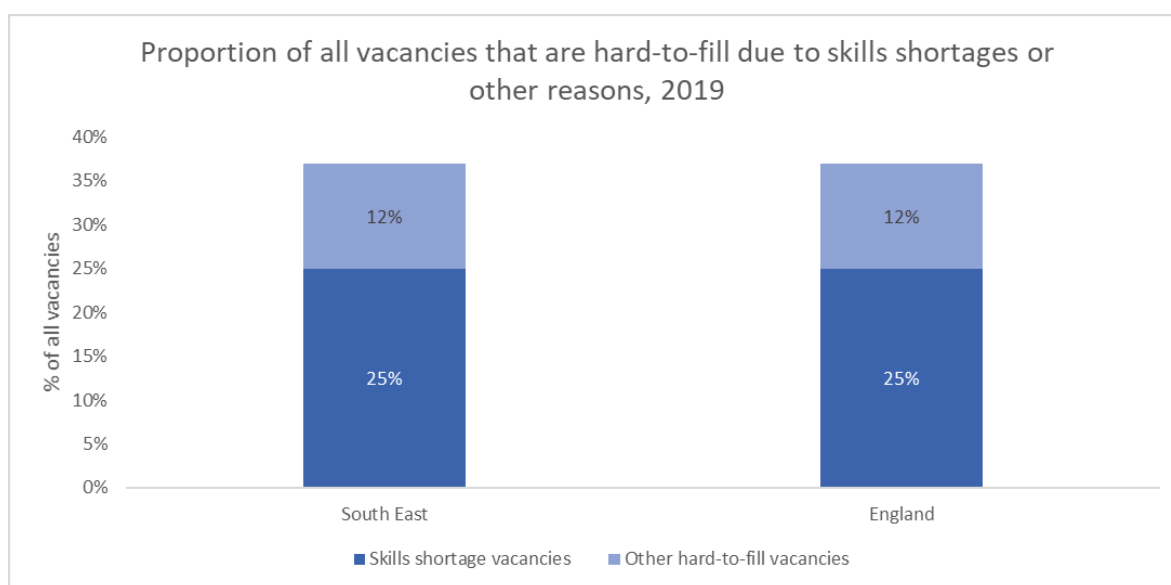
There is clear evidence also of cross cutting skills needs such as leadership, management and communication. Rightly the focus due to Covid-19 is currently on supporting people into work but in-work training is a continued area of need.



**Source:** [Employer Skills Survey, 2019 \(published 2020\)](#), 2019 LEP boundaries

### Proficiency of workforce

The charts above illustrate that 4.8% of staff in SELEP have been identified as not fully proficient, slightly above the national rate of 4.6%. Additionally, 35% of establishments are recorded as having any under utilised staff, compared to 34% nationally. This further reinforces the need for in work training and awareness of support that's already available as well as potentially flagging the potential for individuals to progress within their workplace to be fully utilised. Clearly Covid-19 may have impacted this picture also.



Source: [Employer Skills Survey, 2019 \(published 2020\), 2019 LEP boundaries](#)

### Hard-to-fill and skills shortage vacancies

In total, 38% of vacancies have been identified as hard to fill, compared to the national level of 36%. As the chart above illustrates, 25% of hard to fill vacancies in the SELEP area are due to skills shortages and 12% are other hard to fill vacancies. This is line with the national percentage but does highlight the need to ensure that skills are aligned to the needs of the economy. Clearly Covid-19 may have impacted this picture and so it will be important to continue monitoring.

## Annex B. Additional analysis and references

Further information is contained on the new [South East Skills website](#) which will be added to. This will include a district version of the information above, where this is available. A report to look at the collective needs of the Major Projects will also be produced in April 2021 and added to the site.

**Districts reports** are available at: <https://www.southeastskills.org.uk/labour-market-information/district-reports/>

District information is also available at <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/contents.aspx> (type in the name of the district)

**Sector reports** are available at: <https://www.southeastskills.org.uk/labour-market-information/sector-reports/>

**Sector factsheets** are available at: <https://www.southeastskills.org.uk/labour-market-information/sap-sector-factsheets/>

Information is also available via the **SELEP website** at <https://www.southeastlep.com/our-strategy/economic-data-and-intelligence/>