

Demand and Supply Assessment

Executive Summary

1.0 Context and Welsh Government Brief

The Welsh Government tasked the three Regional Skills Partnerships (RSPs) in Wales with the completion of a demand and supply assessment for priority areas identified under the Regional Delivery Plan for Employment and Skills. The purpose of the assessment is to investigate the areas of vocational (work focused e.g. NVQ) delivery within the further education sector and apprenticeships for appropriateness in relation to the future requirements of the labour market in the region. The brief required the analysis of 3 to 4 identified areas defined as priorities in regards to the assessment. The assessment was split into the two economic areas of Swansea Bay City Region¹ and Growing Mid Wales².

To guide and support the work of the RLP team during the assessment process a task and finish group was established which included members from the further education and work-based learning sectors. The conclusions determined by this group were used to identify the sectors for detailed analysis and to identify areas of potential under or over provision within the identified sectors. The group was chaired by a representative from the FE sector, Sharron Lusher, Principal of Pembrokeshire College and the vice chair role undertaken by Arwyn Watkins, Chief Executive of Cambrian Training Ltd.

2.0 Process of Analysis

The assessment was supported by a 'desktop' review which included a number of different data sources. The 'demand' information included the use of regional projection data sourced from Cambridge Econometrics³ and included information on employment demand and occupational growth. This was supplemented by a range of secondary evidence sources including the UKCES Working Futures 2012-2022, Sector Skills Councils and trade and industry bodies. Information regarding the supply side was provided by the Welsh Government and included full time and part time vocational student numbers at regional further education institutions (FEIs) as well apprenticeship allocations for the current contracted period. This evidence was supported by the utilising 2013/14 apprenticeship enrolment figures via StatsWales.

Identification of the initial 4 sectors was undertaken through analysis of the combined demand information by the task and finish group. This included the identification of areas where there is a significant future employment requirement and sectoral expansion in relation to employment. This process identified the following sectors - Energy and the Environment, Financial and Professional Services, Tourism and Health and Social Care as having significant future employment demands. Further analysis of these sectors was undertaken and supply information was included for the task and finish group to analyse.

¹ Local Authority Areas of Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire

² Local Authority Areas of Ceredigion and Powys

³ Refer to annex 10

3.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The economic areas of the Swansea Bay City Region and Growing Mid Wales will face significant skills challenges caused by changing employment patterns and demographic changes. Additionally employment demand is multifaceted as there is a requirement to understand the full nature of factors such as replacement demand, which includes the replacement of those of retirement age as well as expansions demand created through growth and new opportunities alongside the changing nature of employment.

As a result it has been identified by the task and finish group that drawing appropriate conclusions through only utilising the vocational element of delivery is difficult as there are a number of different educational entry points to employment. However, it does not prevent the identification of the conclusions and recommendations below as it does highlight a number of clear requirements for providers to address vocational skills challenges.

Detailed below are the conclusions and recommendations of the demand and supply assessments, incorporating the recommendations for both the Growing Mid Wales and Swansea Bay City Region.

3.1 Energy and Environment

1. A need was identified to increase higher level full and part time provision within the Construction sector, furthermore the cyclical nature of the Energy and Environment sector has highlighted the demand for specialist Construction provision.
2. There is a clear lack of Marine Engineering provision across all forms of delivery, with increasing demands for off shore energy generation there is a need to create higher level apprenticeship and vocational provision.
3. The Civil Engineers occupational group is the fastest growing within the Construction broad group in Wales, evidence suggests that there is a need to increase apprenticeship provision at levels 2, 3 and 4.
4. Analysis indicates that there is a lack of provision within the Energy Efficiency sub-group, qualitative information highlights that there is a demand within this sector, indicating the need for the development of level 2 and 3 provision.

3.2 Financial and Professional Services

5. Evidence suggests that there is a need to increase lower level full time provision within the Accountancy sub-sector.
6. There is very little evidence to suggest an ample level of provision within the legal sector which will meet the future requirement for this sector. Provision should be developed within the legal secretary, legal practice and law sub-sectors.
7. Future demand for Finance and Business Professionals is high, with 10,897 job openings expected by 2022⁴, as a result there is a need to ensure that there is ample Business Administration provision offered at all levels to ensure clear progression routes.

⁴ Wales level - Working Futures 2012-2022

3.3 Tourism

8. A need was identified to separate activities under hospitality and catering as employer demand requires a greater level of specialisation, this is more acute amongst the higher level qualifications at 2, 3 and 4.
9. There is a lack of apprentices undertaking craft cuisine apprenticeships within the region in particular at the higher levels including level 3.
10. There is a significant over provision of learners undertaking a full time level 3 activity in Sports and Leisure across the region. This is most acute within the Swansea Bay City Region area.

3.4 Health and Social Care

11. There is a need for greater specialisation of provision within the Health and Social Care provision including specialised care provision for dementia and community care.
12. The statutory requirements of the sector require staff to be skilled to a level 2 therefore is a need to reduce the level 1 provision of Health and Social Care unless it is required as a progression route onto a level 2 activity.
13. There is a need to increase the number of vocational routes into the Public Health professions alongside those of Social care across the levels of 2, 3 and 4+.

4.0 Supporting Further Assessments

The demand and supply assessment was considered by those who participated in the process as an important exercise for identifying the appropriateness of provision within the chosen areas, despite the aforementioned limitations. As a result the task and finish group and RLP wish to work with the Welsh Government, partners, employer and wider stakeholders to review and build upon the process.

