

# NEWS RELEASE SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS

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## ‘ACT NOW ON SKILLS AS 99% OF FUTURE JOBS NEED QUALIFICATIONS’ – SOUTH EAST COUNCILS

South East England Councils (SEEC) has called for action on skills as a new report shows that 99% of job opportunities will be closed to people without qualifications in the next 6 years.

SEEC has called for greater powers for local authorities to help address skills shortages after publishing a new report showing gaps in the supply of skills that employers need.

The report [Evidencing the South East's skills gaps and challenges](#), published by SEEC and research specialist Shared Intelligence, highlights:

- By 2024, only 1% of South East jobs are expected to be filled by workers with no qualifications, down from 8.8% of jobs in 2004.
- By 2024, 48.5% of jobs will need at least a foundation degree, up from 27.9% in 2004.

But while South East employers' demand for skills is rising, opportunities for high-level apprenticeships are limited and take up of other vocational training is falling. The report shows:

- Despite large, growing South East hi-tech and high-skill service sectors, only 8.5% of the South East's 47,000 apprenticeships offer degree-level qualifications.
- The proportion of South East residents training for NVQ level 2 qualifications has fallen by 57% since 2011-12.
- Almost a fifth of all job vacancies (18.5%) fall in the education or care sectors.
- Half the South East residents without qualifications (49%) are unemployed.

SEEC Chairman Cllr Roy Perry said: “The South East is the golden goose of the UK economy, contributing a net £154bn to the Treasury from 2000-16 – the UK's highest – and to sustain this we need skills. Local authorities can help deliver better skills but we need greater powers to do this – for example the ability to direct skills funding to meet local needs and to encourage students to take up engineering and science.”

SEEC Deputy Chairman Cllr Ralph Bagge added: “Councils can play an important role in making sure our residents are well-placed to take advantage of local job opportunities. We know skills will be increasingly important, so we would like to explore additional ways that councils could help incentivise people to gain qualifications that will get them into work.”

Ends

### NOTES TO EDITORS

#### 1. Contacts for further information

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#### 2. About SEEC

South East England Councils (SEEC) was established in 2009. It is a membership organisation representing all tiers of local authority. The SEEC area covers Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East and West Sussex, Hampshire, Kent, Oxfordshire and Surrey.

SEEC's objectives are:

- To strive for a fair funding deal for the South East
- To promote the South East's position as a leading global economy
- To act as single democratic voice for South East interests
- To monitor the pulse of the South East.

For more information visit [www.secouncils.gov.uk](http://www.secouncils.gov.uk)

### **3. The South East economy**

The South East has a proven track record as the most profitable economy in the UK, making the highest net contribution to the funds that Government uses for public spending UK-wide.

Latest figures show that from 2000-2016, the South East contributed £154bn more to Treasury than the area received in Government funding. This is £28bn more than London's net contribution in the same period. East of England was the only other area to make a net contribution (£47bn). All other areas received more in public spending than they contributed to the Treasury.

### **4. Evidencing the South East's Skills Gap and Challenges**

SEEC's new report on skills is now available [online](#). It has been prepared in conjunction with consultants Shared Intelligence.