



Department  
for Education

# **Local Skills Report**

**Guidance for Skills Advisory Panels**

**November 2020**

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## Summary

This publication provides non-statutory guidance on the creation of Local Skills Reports. It has been produced by Department for Education (DfE) Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs) programme team.

## Expiry or review date

This guidance will be reviewed in Summer 2021.

## Who is this guidance for?

- Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs)
- Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

## Key points

- SAPs are local partnerships that bring together skills providers and employers to help ensure local people are trained for jobs that are available. They help MCAs and LEPs understand current and future skills needs so that local skills provision better matches local employment opportunities and employers' needs.
- Local Skills Reports build on SAPs' evidence bases by reporting skills information in a consistent way across all SAPs. Reports will help to maximise SAPs' influence, engage local partners and feed intelligence into central government and the national-level Skills and Productivity Board (SPB).
- SAPs should produce Local Skills Reports by the end of March 2021. They are to be updated on an annual basis with a fuller refresh every two years.
- Local Skills Reports were informed by stakeholder engagement and research.
- Local Skills Reports set out each areas' unique skills landscape and skills needs. They also cover progress on skills-related activities and set out how local partners can support local skills plans.
- Local Skills Reports have an annex of core indicators to give readers a basic understanding of each area's core skills-related data.
- Prior to publication, reports should be signed off by the SAP Chair and by any other relevant parties in accordance with SAPs' local governance structures.

## Linked documents:

- Core Indicators User guide - not published, provided directly to SAPs

## Other relevant publications:

- Skills Advisory Panels: guidance on the role and governance. Available online here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-advisory-panels-saps-role-and-governance>
- Skills Advisory Panels: analytical toolkit. Available online here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-advisory-panels-analytical-toolkit>

# Introduction

## Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs)

SAPs are local partnerships that strengthen the link between public and private sector employers, local authorities, colleges, universities, and independent training providers. They operate at a local level through MCAs or LEPs to identify the current and future skills needs in their area, ensuring provision better matches local employment opportunities and local employers' needs.

SAPs adopt a local leadership role on skills and are expected to identify skills priorities for the area based on high-quality analysis. They should advise on and help implement funding and investment decisions for local skills provision. Additionally, SAPs are expected to uphold and support national governmental skills initiatives such as apprenticeships and T levels. More detailed information on the role, remit and governance of SAPs is available online: [Skills Advisory Panels - guidance on the role and governance](#).

Since being established, SAPs have developed, and continue to develop evidence bases in line with the [Skills Advisory Panels: analytical toolkit](#). To build on these evidence bases, Local Skills Reports aim to enhance SAPs' influence and aid collaboration by articulating the area's skills needs, plans and progress in a single accessible document for local stakeholders and central government.

## Purpose of the reports

Local Skills Reports will provide a clear and consistent view of local skills needs across areas in a relevant and engaging format for local partners. Reports will be a key source of local skills information that better enable cross-area comparison and help feed local intelligence to central government and the national-level Skills and Productivity Board (SPB). Local Skills Reports will help to maximise the influence of SAPs locally by:

**Acting as an engagement tool** – a vehicle through which SAPs can directly engage, influence and rally employers and providers in their areas to support the local skills agenda.

**Being a 'go-to' document for everything local-skills related** – bringing together existing and new skills information into a consistent format common to all SAPs.

**Clearly setting out key skills needs** – ensuring local skills needs are visible to local partners who can then engage with them.

**Offering valuable insight and evaluation** – detailing the progress made on current local skills initiatives and outlining future skills plans to plug key skills gaps.

**Feeding intelligence to the national SPB and central government** – a consistent output common to all SAPs that the SPB can use to understand the needs and priorities

of local areas and build a national picture of the supply and demand for skills. The SPB has been set a remit<sup>1</sup> of answering the following three questions over the next 12 months:

- Which areas of the economy face the most significant skills mismatches or present growing areas of skills need?
- Can the board identify the changing skills needs of several priority areas within the economy over the next 5-10 years?
- How can skills and the skills system promote productivity growth in areas of the country that are poorer performing economically?

## Research and engagement

### Designing the report

To inform the report's design, the SAPs programme team carried out interviews with 11 SAP areas (a mix of MCAs and LEPs) during Spring 2020.

Our findings showed that SAPs thought the report needed to be both a useful tool to report local skills information to the national SPB and central government, as well as a tool to use for local engagement with key partners. Additionally, SAPs wanted the report to showcase local successes and include less data so it could be easily differentiated from SAPs' existing evidence bases. Overall, SAPs indicated that the report should be accessible and interesting to maximise its appeal to local partners, including employers and skills providers.

The SAPs programme team carried out further stakeholder engagement on the report with other government departments and government agencies including Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Ofsted, and The Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Additionally, the SAPs programme team worked closely with other internal DfE policy teams and stakeholder interest groups, including representatives of small-medium enterprises (SMEs).

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<sup>1</sup> The Secretary of State for Education wrote to the Chair of the SPB Stephen van Rooyen on 11 November 2020 setting a clear remit for the Board:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/935023/SPB\\_letter\\_11th\\_November\\_2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/935023/SPB_letter_11th_November_2020.pdf)

## Intended audience

Local Skills Reports should attract a wide range of readers and users, but should be particularly relevant for:

- Local further education providers (colleges, independent training providers)
- Higher education institutes
- Local employers, including SMEs
- Prospective employers that might be considering investing in an area
- Local Authority leaders and skills officers
- Local councillors
- Third-sector businesses, economic and skills-focused entities
- Local and national business networks which have a skills interest (e.g. Federation of Small Businesses, Chambers of Commerce)
- Other local community groups (e.g. local start-up networks)
- The SPB
- Central government departments
- Academics and students with skills-related research interest
- Citizens with an interest in upskilling or reskilling

## Local partner engagement

We encourage SAPs to engage with each other as well as local businesses and providers when producing their Local Skills Reports. Early engagement with local partners is encouraged as it will help to ensure the report is well-known to these groups upon its release. Further, it will allow time for local partners to contribute to the report's content. This is particularly relevant to [Chapter 7-Case studies/positive impact stories](#).

We are aware that many SAPs will already have working relationships in place with local partners and that such engagement is likely to be ongoing, outside of the report's publication. We encourage SAPs to use these relationships as much as possible, as one of the main strengths of the report will be how it brings together local partners to focus on skills issues. We recommend SAPs include within their report 'acknowledgements', or a summary of those they have engaged with during the production process. SAPs may share their engagement plans with the SAPs programme team during the report feedback window (see [Feedback window](#)) if they wish.

## Contextualising the report

### Perspective and positioning

As a skills-focused report signed off by the SAP chair, the expectation is for most of the report to be written through a 'SAP lens'. However, due to the holistic nature of skills policy and varying approaches taken locally, it may be relevant, or necessary, for SAPs to draw on strategies and plans developed and produced by the LEP/MCA of which the SAP is part, or, by the Local Authorities (LAs) that comprise them. This may include, for

instance, where there is strong overlap to work on enhancing enterprise, employment, or productivity.

As the ambition for Local Skills Reports is to bring together work on skills into one document, reports may amalgamate or replace existing strategies or plans with a skills element (see [Incorporating other publications](#)). However, it is important to note that Local Skills Reports do not automatically take precedence over any other LA, LEP or MCA publications.

## **Local Industrial Strategies**

Many areas worked on developing Local Industrial Strategies and to date seven have been published. SAPs Local Skills Reports do not replace published Local Industrial Strategies and unlike Local Industrial Strategies, which were co-owned and signed off by central government, Local Skills Reports are owned entirely by SAPs for the purposes outlined in this guidance (see [Purpose of the reports](#)).

There are synergies between Local Skills Reports and the 'People chapter' of Local Industrial Strategies. Where useful and relevant, SAPs may incorporate material from their published Local Industrial Strategies (see [Incorporating other publications](#)).

## **Production and publication**

SAPs should use this guidance along with the Core Indicators User Guide (provided to SAPs by the SAPs programme team) to produce a report that is published on their MCA's or LEP's website by 31 March 2021. The SAPs programme team asks that SAPs share the link of the published report via email to: [SAP.PROGRAMME@education.gov.uk](mailto:SAP.PROGRAMME@education.gov.uk).

Reports should be clearly identifiable, stating 'Local Skills Report' in their title. Where SAPs wish to combine the report with additional content the title should read first as 'Local Skills Report', with any additional content listed in brackets.

Section page lengths listed in this guidance are approximates and may be flexed to suit SAPs' needs. However, SAPs should produce report sections mindful that the overall suggested length of the report is approximately 30 pages.

## **Incorporating other publications**

As part of the process of producing their Local Skills Report, we encourage SAPs to reflect on all existing skills related publications in circulation. Where appropriate and possible, existing publications may (with the agreement of any other relevant parties), be amalgamated into or replaced by the Local Skills Report. Where they cannot, SAPs should summarise the other relevant publication's content in a suitable report chapter and include a hyperlink to it. We recommend that any hyperlinks included in reports are listed as full URL addresses, so links are not lost if the document is shared in different

formats or digitally protected. Where possible, reports should also include a link to SAPs' evidence bases (see [Use of data](#)).

### **Internal sign off**

SAPs are expected to obtain SAP Chair sign off on reports as well as any other relevant internal sign offs in accordance with their local governance structure. Where a foreword is written by the SAP Chair and features their name (either printed or signature), this will suffice as Chair sign off. Where areas choose not to include a foreword by the SAP Chair, the Chair's name (either printed or signature) should be included in the opening or concluding pages of the report to indicate their approval and support of the report's content.

### **SAPs Programme Team 'Feedback window'**

The SAPs programme team will look at a copy of each SAPs' Local Skills Report prior to publication to offer support and advice. SAPs should provide a copy of their report (in as fuller state as possible) to the SAPs programme team around February 2021. The SAPs programme team will coordinate the flow of documents during this window to maximise efficiency.

Once SAPs' own internal sign off processes are complete, and any feedback from the SAPs programme team has been actioned, SAPs should publish reports on their MCA's or LEP's website by 31 March 2021.

### **Writing in the context of Covid-19**

Naturally, skills initiatives and skills related strategies, will form part of areas' Covid-19 plans for recovery and renewal. Whilst it is right the report captures some of this work as part of, or in addition to, an area's overarching skills plan and priorities, we do not see the report as having a specific Covid-19 focus.

We appreciate that Covid-19 may have impacted and altered SAPs' long-term skills strategies and priorities, but where SAPs' judge their previous analysis and priorities still hold relevance, they should be included in the reports.

More broadly, SAPs are asked to ensure that any plans for recovery and renewal post Covid-19 included within this report align with recovery and renewal plans or reporting already in circulation for the area. SAPs are not expected to detail new or different Covid-19 recovery and renewal plans in this report.

### **Using evidence**

SAPs are reminded that whilst they may draw conclusions from local research or intelligence in their reports, they should make the reader aware of the basis for any claims. It is important to highlight where evidence is anecdotal or based on a small sample, as findings may not be representative of all employers or providers. This will help readers understand the context and strength of the evidence. For example, reports could



state 'employers on our board tell us they struggle to fill x vacancies' to show that the feedback comes from a selected group and does not necessarily reflect the views of all employers.

## Use of data

### Annex A - Core indicators

Reports will include an annex of specified skills data indicators. This is to ensure readers can obtain a quick quantitative overview of the area's skills landscape without reviewing their evidence base in its entirety. This annex will facilitate comparative analysis locally and nationally by presenting the same data in the consistent format across all SAP Local Skills Reports.

The SAPs programme team will provide SAPs with the data and graphs for [Annex A – Core indicators](#) but expect areas to add narrative, local intelligence or supporting analysis to each core indicator. The Core Indicators User Guide (that has been circulated to SAPs) includes a draft Annex A with prompts where SAPs are expected to add narrative and bring in local intelligence.

### Additional data

We expect the structure and content of [Annex A- Core indicators](#) to be preserved so where SAPs wish to any additional data indicators, options to include this within the report are:

- i) Embedding the additional data in the supporting narrative for Annex A indicators:  
This is more appropriate where SAPs want to add in one or two additional data findings that are relatively concise and will not detract from the structure and flow of the core indicators (for example, referring to a further breakdown of the data presented in the core indicator or an additional year's data).

OR

- ii) Include as supplementary data under the relevant theme heading in 'Annex B – Additional analysis and references':  
This is more appropriate where SAPs wish to include a greater amount of additional data, or more detailed analysis of data, use additional visualisations, or explore data which is not closely aligned with any of the core indicators.

Where possible, SAPs are encouraged to provide a hyperlink to their evidence base, or key parts of it, at the start of [Annex B – Additional analysis and references](#) and/or, at a suitable point near the beginning of their report (e.g. in Chapter 3 on Skills strengths and needs, or as part of the introductory chapters).

## Embedding data in the main body of the report

When using evidence in the body of the report, SAPs should consider that the document will be used for engagement purposes and so should not be overly 'data heavy'.

SAPs may wish to draw on data from [Annex A - Core indicators](#) throughout the report. Where this is the case, a reference to the location of the data within Annex A should be included. In a similar way, where SAPs wish to draw on any data they have included in [Annex B – Additional analysis and references](#) or from their evidence base (if a link has been included in Annex B) a reference should accompany it. Following this referencing method will ensure any data used within the body of the report is traceable for the reader.

## Using sensitive information

We recognise that as part of reviewing progress, some sensitive information or data may be pivotal in contributing to reader understanding. However, SAPs are reminded to only include data they have permission to share publicly. Further government guidance on working with sensitive information is available online here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/709004/May-2018\\_Working-with-OFFICIAL.PDF](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/709004/May-2018_Working-with-OFFICIAL.PDF).

Additionally, advice on statistical disclosure control is available here:

Statistical Disclosure Control Handbook:

<https://securedatagroup.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/sdc-handbook-v1.0.pdf>

Disclosure control for tables produced from administrative sources:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/policy-store/gssqsr-disclosure-control-guidance-for-tables-produced-from-administrative-sources/>

Disclosure control for tables produced from surveys:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/policy-store/gssqsr-disclosure-control-guidance-for-tables-produced-from-surveys/>

## Content outline

The table below provides an overview of the Local Skills Report’s content with an accompanying description. Further information on each chapter can be found in the subsequent pages of this guidance.

Chapter	Content	Description
1	<b>Foreword</b>	An executive summary by the SAP Chair providing their personal reflections on the SAP’s progress and summarising the main points of the report.
2	<b>Skills Advisory Panels- Introduction</b>	An overview of the governance and geography of the specific SAP area alongside information about the SAP programme more broadly.
3	<b>Skills strengths and needs</b>	A summary of the SAP’s skills landscape, key skills needs and any unique geographic or socioeconomic features. A summary with an accompanying hyperlink can be used if this information is already published elsewhere.
4	<b>Skills strategy</b>	An outline of how the SAP intends to prioritise its skills needs. A summary with an accompanying hyperlink can be used if this information is already published elsewhere.
5	<b>Skills action plan</b>	An overview of the skills actions the SAP intends to take in the local area to address its skills priorities. A summary with an accompanying hyperlink can be used if this information is already published elsewhere.
6	<b>Assessment of progress</b>	A critical look at progress made against the SAP’s skills strategy and action plan. Includes a reflection on the key achievements of the SAP and any challenges they have faced.
7	<b>Case studies / positive impact stories</b>	An opportunity for the SAP to share local success stories, case studies that show how skills mismatches are being addressed and highlight examples of businesses being attracted to the area because of its current skills base and/or strategy for the future.
8	<b>Looking forward</b>	Draws together the thinking from across Chapters 4, 5 and 6 and provides a clear message for local providers and employers on how they can support the local skills agenda.
<b>Annex A</b>	<b>Core indicators</b>	Provided by the SAPs Programme Team, a selection of skills-related indicators for SAPs to supplement with supporting local analysis and intelligence.
<b>Annex B (optional)</b>	<b>Additional analysis and references</b>	Any additional relevant data that supports the report and a full list of sources referred to in the main body of the report.

**Table 1: Outline of Local Skills Report chapters**

## Chapter guide

### Chapter 1. Foreword

<b>Approximate length</b>	1-2 pages
<b>Content</b>	Created by SAPs

A foreword is advised to set the scene of the report and detail the work of each SAP more broadly. The foreword should be individual to each SAP and reflect their own ethos and style. We expect the foreword to cover the main points of the report and state what conclusions have been drawn. Ideally, the foreword will include some content that is broader than the Local Skills Report and offer an appropriate senior colleagues' personal perspective on the local area, the SAP's agenda, and skills improvement more widely.

The suggested author of the foreword is the Chair of SAP. However, where appropriate, and in line with each SAP governance structure, forewords may be written by another appropriate colleague. SAPs can include multiple forewords where desired.

SAPs are advised to ensure that the author(s) of the foreword indicate their approval of the report and its content by formally including their name (this can be a signature or printed name). Where the SAP Chair is not the author of the foreword, SAPs are advised to indicate the Chair's approval of the report by alternative means, for instance, through a short comment after the foreword, or standalone preface page (see [Production and publication](#) for more details).

### Chapter 2. Skills Advisory Panels- Introduction

<b>Approximate length</b>	1-2 pages
<b>Content</b>	Suggested content provided by SAPs programme team, supplementary area specific information provided by SAPs.

As the awareness of SAPs and their work is still growing, outlining the role and work of SAPs will be helpful for many readers.

SAPs programme team will provide an introductory statement about SAPs and the SAPs programme for this chapter. We strongly recommend areas include this statement, or a version of it, at the start of the report to ensure readers have a basic understanding of the work SAPs do.

SAPs are expected to supplement the information from the SAPs programme team for this chapter with specifics about their own SAP, including, but not limited to, who SAP panel members are, SAP meeting schedule and general coordination (i.e. where the SAP function is delivered by a local board with a different name this should be communicated here). We strongly recommend SAPs outline their specific geography in this chapter (e.g.

detail the LAs covered, include a highlighted map), so readers understand where later content (strategy, action plan) applies.

SAPs are encouraged to include contact information for any readers who may wish to find out more about the SAP’s work, the report’s contents or get engaged in the local skills agenda.

### Chapter 3. Skills strengths and needs

<b>Approximate length</b>	3-4 pages
<b>Content</b>	Created by SAPs

SAPs are expected to set out their local skills landscape in this chapter, focusing both on:

- Key skills strengths - where there is a strong supply of certain skills
- Skills needs - where there is a current gap or anticipated growth in demand

The chapter should provide a high-level narrative that builds on areas’ evidence bases and the summary boxes in [Annex A - Core indicators](#) signposting to these for underlying data or analysis. Skills strengths and needs may be categorised in a variety of ways including by sector and/or occupation, but should include accompanying timeframes (e.g. short-term, long-term) to make clear the distinction between what is current and what is anticipated. Wherever possible, SAPs should indicate the scale of the strength or need.

Where relevant to explaining the skills landscape, SAPs should mention any significant geographic and socio-economic features of the area (e.g. coastal, areas of rural population), major funding initiatives impacting skills (e.g. Towns Fund, Opportunity Areas, Freeports, Institutes of Technology) or ongoing targeted growth of particular sectors.

SAPs are strongly encouraged to include a summary box of the areas’ key skills strengths and needs in this chapter as a quick reference tool for readers.

SAPs should be aware that there is synergy between this chapter and the SPB’s focus on *“Which areas of the economy face the most significant skills mismatches or present growing areas of skills need?”*

### Chapter 4. Skills strategy

<b>Approximate length</b>	3-4 pages
<b>Content</b>	Created by SAPs. We encourage SAPs to include their skills strategy in full here where possible, but a summary with an accompanying hyperlink to an existing skills strategy publication is acceptable.

Building on the skills landscape outlined in Chapter 3, SAPs should explain here what their strategy is for prioritising skills needs locally – linking it to broader economic and productivity plans, including those for targeted growth of specific sectors (see table below).

SAPs may wish to draw on the skills priorities they developed as part of their evidence base, specifically, ‘Stage 5: conclusions’ as outlined in the [Skills Advisory Panels: analytical toolkit](#). SAPs are encouraged to consider the join-up and relevance between their chosen local skills priorities and the national skills priorities set out by government, including through the SPB or any future refresh of the Industrial Strategy.

SAPs are expected to detail their skills priorities using the following categories and similar formatting to the below expanding as necessary:

Skills priority category	Priorities and supporting rationale
Cross-cutting skills priorities (far-reaching, cross-sector)	
Covid-19 recovery and renewal skills priorities	
Sector priorities (or occupational priorities)	

## Chapter 5. Skills action plan

<b>Approximate length</b>	4-5 pages
<b>Content</b>	Created by SAPs. We encourage SAPs to include their action plan in full here if possible, but a summary with an accompanying hyperlink to an existing action plan is acceptable.

Having outlined the area’s skills needs in Chapter 3 and how the area is prioritising skills work accordingly in Chapter 4, this chapter focuses on the planned actions to create change locally. The plan presented in this chapter should be clearly aligned with the skills priorities set-out in [Chapter 4 Skills strategy](#) and may be presented in a written or visual format.

When listing actions SAPs should describe:

- The specific activity required
- The group(s) the action will target

- The organisations or bodies (if any) the action will be delivered through
- The responsibilities of the SAP, LEP/MCA, in delivering the action
- The overall and interim timeframes for delivery

When thinking about what actions fall within the remit of the SAPs ‘action plan’, SAPs should consider if the action supports one, or any, of the priorities identified in [Chapter 4- Skills strategy](#), including the action if it does. SAPs are encouraged to make specific references to national government skills initiatives including apprenticeships and T levels (as covered in the [Skills Advisory Panels - guidance on the role and governance](#)) highlighting where their local plans aim to support these. SAPs may also wish to draw on previous work developed as part of their evidence base, in particular, ‘Stage 5 Conclusions’ as per the [Skills Advisory Panels: analytical toolkit](#).

We recognise that in addition to SAPs’ main action plan, areas may have plans in place to manage the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. SAPs should include this work here, taking care to make it clear, where possible, if the work also supports the areas’ underlying skills priorities or is more recovery-specific in nature. SAPs are advised to balance the focus of the chapter to reflect Covid-19 recovery and renewal plans but still cover the area’s long-term skills plans.

## Chapter 6. Assessment of progress

<b>Approximate length</b>	4-5 pages
<b>Content</b>	Created by SAPs.

This chapter marks the move to the more reflective section of the Local Skills Report. The section should look back on the work the SAP has done and its progress delivering against its skills action plan (as outlined in the previous chapter). This section is in addition to, and builds on, SAPs’ regular dialogue with the SAPs programme team as part of ongoing monitoring.

SAPs should consider their progress against the following areas:

### Taking a local leadership role

- In what ways has your SAP become a local leader for skills work?*
- To what extent is your SAP working together with local partners including skills providers and employers? How has this changed over the time the SAP has been running? How has this changed since the Covid-19 pandemic?*

## Enhancing local knowledge

- a. *How far is your SAP in developing a clear understanding of current and future skills needs? How developed is your knowledge base? What still needs improving?*

## Impact on local skills provision

- a. *To what extent is your SAP influencing skills providers so that their offer better meets the skills and labour market needs in the area? This could include any provision you directly commission and/or any devolved budgets, functions or responsibilities (e.g. devolved AEB in MCA areas).*

## Covid-19 recovery and renewal plans

- a. *How has your SAP influenced priorities for Covid-19 recovery and renewal plans?*

We appreciate that SAPs are likely to already be involved in more extensive and detailed Covid-19 related planning and reporting some of which will be delivered through other bodies. SAPs are only expected to provide a high-level answer here signposting to other more comprehensive material as appropriate.

## Skills action plan

- a. *What are the most significant elements of your skills action plan that you have been able to fulfil? Equally, which of those unfulfilled actions need addressing most?*

Throughout this Chapter, SAPs may wish to reflect on how national government policies and programmes help to deliver the skills priorities in their areas. As part of this, SAPs may include any local intelligence on how such policies and programmes work on the ground, including the opportunities and challenges they may create.

## Chapter 7. Case studies/positive impact stories

<b>Approximate length</b>	Flexible, tailored to each SAPs' needs
<b>Content</b>	Created by SAPs

Chapter 7 builds on [Chapter 6 - Assessment of Progress](#), giving SAPs the opportunity to include more detail about skills-related successes in their area. SAPs are encouraged to do this by highlighting and championing examples of employers and providers helping to meet skills needs. We recognise that areas will be at different stages with documenting successes and therefore, we encourage SAPs to think about sharing success stories in the broadest sense. For example, stories could be shared due to their scale, their creativity or demonstration of particularly good collaborative working practices.



SAPs are encouraged to think about how the specific examples they have identified in this chapter will contribute to their longer-term skills strategy and how they might encourage other employers or providers to work in similar ways. In particular, SAPs should showcase here any employers (large and small) who have recently moved to the area, their rationale for doing so, how they are benefitting from the local skills strengths and/or how they are investing to help meet the area’s skills needs. This is with a view to encouraging prospective employers to do the same.

Case studies and or positive impact stories should be presented in a reader-friendly format. SAPs are encouraged to collaborate with local partners for this chapter and where appropriate, offer them the opportunity to contribute. For example, by providing supporting quotes, comments or through a short editorial piece. SAPs are encouraged to include some supporting content from their local employer representative groups, either who sit on the SAP or who operate in the area more broadly.

## Chapter 8. Looking forward

<b>Approximate length</b>	2-3 pages
<b>Content</b>	Created by SAPs.

In this chapter SAPs should draw together the thinking from across Chapters 4, 5 and 6 and provide a clear message for providers, employers and prospective employers on how they can support the local skills agenda.

SAPs should (as in [Chapter 4-Skills strategy](#)), reference here the join-up and relevance of their local skills priorities to the national skills priorities set out by government (including through the SPB or any future refresh of the Industrial Strategy).

SAPs may wish to consider using the same author for this chapter as the foreword and are encouraged to include SAP contact information for any readers who may wish to find out more about the SAP’s work or the report’s contents.

## Annex. A- Core indicators

<b>Approximate length</b>	15 pages +
<b>Content</b>	Core indicator data provided by SAPs Programme team accompanied by supporting narrative provided by SAPs.

The main body of Annex A (the data and accompanying graphs) will be provided by the SAPs Programme Team. To maximise the consistency of reports, SAPs are expected not to add additional data to Annex A – Core indicators. Instead, SAPs should add additional or more extensive data to [Annex B – Additional analysis and references](#) and may then

refer to it in the supporting narrative of Annex A. Any new data sources introduced should be included in the reference list in [Annex B – Additional analysis and references](#).

To ensure clarity for the reader, both Annex A – Core indicators and [Annex B – Additional analysis and references](#) should be structured around the following theme headings which align with the main stages of the [Skills Advisory Panels: analytical toolkit](#).

- Local Context
- Skills Supply
- Skills Demand
- Mapping Skills Supply and Demand

In Annex A - Core indicators, for each theme heading, we expect SAPs to provide some introductory summary points (see the Core Indicators User Guide for a worked example). These summary points can also be used to draw in relevant information from local intelligence or other data sources.

Additionally, alongside each indicator in Annex A – Core indicators, SAPs should provide supporting narrative to help readers understand the data in the context of the local area. The narrative provided may reference:

- Further comparisons or supplementary data from other areas (e.g. to neighbouring or similar SAPs, regional data)
- Further breakdowns of the data beyond those provided (e.g. looking at breakdowns by Local Authority, or using additional variables)
- Local intelligence (e.g. qualitative information from local stakeholders, supporting information from local business surveys)
- Other relevant analysis (e.g. from SAPs’ evidence bases)

Further details of the type of questions we expect SAPs to answer in their narrative can be found in the accompanying Core Indicators User Guide.

## **Annex. B- Additional analysis and references**

<b>Approximate length</b>	Determined by SAPs - please be mindful of the suggested length of the overall document length (30 pages)
<b>Content</b>	Created by SAPs where desired. Can be a series of relevant hyperlinks.

SAPs may use this section to link to other data and analysis they have produced, such as data dashboards and deep dive reports on relevant topics.

To aid reader comprehension, any additional data included in this Annex should be categorised using the same theme headings as [Annex A – Core indicators](#) and accompanied by supporting interpretation and narrative.

Under the 'References' section, SAPs should include full details (including any URL addresses) for other documents referenced throughout the report. This may include other LA, LEP or MCA publications.

## Glossary

Readers are advised to note the meaning of the following words and phrases used throughout this document:

**AEB:** Adult Education Budget.

**Evidence base:** The analytical output produced by SAPs providing insight into their local skills landscape. SAPs programme team supported areas to produce evidence bases using the [Skills Advisory Panels: analytical toolkit](#).

**LEPs:** Local Enterprise Partnerships.

**MCAs:** Mayoral Combined Authorities. For the purposes of this guidance, references to MCAs include the Greater London Authority (GLA).

**Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs):** SAPs are local partnerships that bring together skills providers and employers to help ensure local people are trained for jobs that are available. There are 36 SAPs across England. They are generally the main skills-related board in Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) – where they exist – or Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) otherwise. Where existing employment and skills boards functioned well, they absorbed the Skills Advisory Panel function (in addition to their other responsibilities). SAPs may, therefore, be fulfilled as a function of another skills related board or be a separate body.

Panels are comprised of local employers, providers and other key actors and are supported by local policy and analytical officers. The precise coordination of each panel and its work agenda varies locally.

SAPs help MCAs and LEPs understand current and future skills needs so that local skills provision better matches local employment opportunities and employers' needs. See [Skills Advisory Panels - guidance on the role and governance](#) for further information.

**Skills Advisory Panel 'SAPs' programme team:** The DfE team with responsibility for the policy and delivery of the SAPs programme.

**Skills and Productivity Board (SPB):** A new expert committee established by the DfE to provide the Government with independent advice and analysis on skills mismatches, and to help ensure that the skills system at a national level is aligned to employers' future needs. Further information on the SPB can be found online here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/skills-and-productivity-board>.



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