

**Progress Monitoring Report
on the delivery of
SW Regional Skills Partnership Priorities**

Report to

South West RSP

June 2009

KEY POINTS

1. Leadership & Management Skills

The number of HEFCE funded students studying Business & Administrative studies programmes fell by 1.5% from 2006/07 to 2007/08, back to 2002/03 levels.

The proportion of all students studying these subjects actually rose during the last year, due to a larger fall in overall student numbers. Nationally the proportion studying these subjects has risen over this period.

Business & Administrative Students as a % of all students, 2002/03 to 2007/08

Institution	2002/03	2006/07	2007/08
South West	13.5%	12.3%	12.6%
National Total	10.6%	10.8%	13.5%

Most regional institutions saw a fall in numbers over the last year, with only Bath Spa, The Arts Institute at Bournemouth, Exeter, Plymouth and UWE experiencing an increase.

In terms of qualifications achieved, the number of management studies achievements has now fallen for three years in a row.

2. Enterprise Skills

Business Survival Rates

the South West was the best performing English region in 2004, with 68.9% of businesses surviving at least three years, consistently outperforming the national average (65.2% in 2004). The South West also has the greatest improvement in the survival rate of new businesses, which has increased by 3.9 percentage points between 2002 and 2004.

Expenditure on Research & Development

Regional R&D expenditure by businesses in 2007 amounted to £1,262 million. This was a 5.1% rise since 2005, a very slow rate of growth compared to the national growth rate of 18.3% over the same period.

R&D activity employs approximately 14,000 full-time equivalent workers in the South West, around 9.3% of the total for England.

3. Innovation & Creativity

HE STEM applications & acceptances

There was a slight fall in the number of STEM applications in 2008 (of just -0.7%), although this was less than the fall in applications for all subjects (-3.9%).

During the last year falls in applications were seen in several subjects, including Biological and Physical Sciences, Mathematical & Computer Sciences, Engineering and Combined Sciences. Over the longer-term (2002 to 2008) the only STEM subject to see a decline in applications is Mathematical and Computer Sciences.

However, the number of STEM subject acceptances has continued increasing, by 12% between 2007 and 2008, suggesting that increasing demand for STEM subject places in the longer-term (based on numbers of applications) has resulted in an increase in regional supply of STEM places.

4. Higher Level Skills

Overall Participation in HE

The last year has seen a fall in participation, both in terms of young people from the South West students going into HE anywhere in the UK, and also in the number of HE students at the region's HEIs.

The number of postgraduate and part-time students has fallen by 15% in just one year, with the University of Bristol seeing the biggest fall.

5. Sub-Priorities

Young people not in Education, employment or training (NEET)

5.7% of young people in the region were NEET in 2008, a figure lower than the England average (6.7%), although this is higher than in the previous year (5.5%). The proportion of all young people whose destinations were not known, and who are thought to be frequently NEET, fell from 3.3% in 2007 to 3.0% in 2008.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Context

The report provides an update on the indicators selected to monitor regional progress on the 4 main priorities and 3 'sub-priorities' identified by the Regional Skills Partnership (RSP).

It should be noted that this paper only reports on trends emerging from new data released in the last six months, since the release of the last report. This new data is mainly HEFCE data. It relates to a sub-set of the overall indicators selected by the RSP as suggestive of progress against the RSP priorities.

SW RSP Priorities

- Leadership & Management Skills;
- Enterprise Skills;
- Creativity and Innovation Skills, including Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths (STEM) skills;
- Ensuring skills needs of the regional economy, and in key sectors, are addressed at Level 3 and above.

Sub-Priorities

- Supporting strategies for the integration of migrant workers;
- Supporting the development of integrated information, advice and guidance service;
- Supporting strategies for the reduction of NEETS.

2 Leadership & Management Skills

2.1 Participation in Business & Administrative studies programmes at South West HEIs

Table 1 shows that regional participation in Business & Administrative programmes in 2007/08 was 1.5% lower than the previous year, with student numbers reverting back to 2002/03 levels. However, the proportion of Business and Administrative studies students as a percentage of all students rose from 12.3% to 12.6%, due to a decline in overall student numbers.

Table 1: Student Numbers in Business & Administrative studies at South West HEIs, 2002/03 to 2007/08

Year	Student Numbers	Business & Admin as % of all students
2002/03	18,800	13.5%
2003/04	19,920	13.5%
2004/05	18,655	12.6%
2005/06	19,090	12.5%
2006/07	19,105	12.3%
2007/08	18,825	12.6%
% change 02/03 – 07/08	0.1%	-0.9%
% change 06/07 – 07/08	-1.5%	0.3%

Source: HESA

The proportion of the student cohort that studied Business and Administrative Studies in 2007/08 was lower in the South West than nationally – 12.6% against 13.5%. In previous years, this percentage has been falling in the region. This trend has been reversed in the last year due to falling overall student numbers in the region, with greater falls in other subjects compared to that in Business and Administrative studies.

Table 2: Business & Administrative Students as a percentage of all students, South West & Nationally, 2002/03 to 2007/08

Area	2002/03	2006/07	2007/08	Change from 2002/03	Change from 2006/07
South West	13.5%	12.3%	12.6%	-0.9%	0.3%
National Total	10.6%	10.8%	13.5%	2.9%	2.7%

Source: HESA

Looking at the region's HEIs individually, there has been no consistent pattern of growth or decline in the past year or since 2002/3. The number of Business and Administrative Studies students declined in the last year at the Universities of Bath, Bristol, Falmouth, the Royal Agricultural College and the College of St Mark and St John.

Table 3: Student Numbers in Business & Administrative studies by South West HEI, 2002/03 to 2005/06

Institution	2006/07	2007/08	% change from 2006/07	% change from 2002/03
Bath Spa University	245	290	18.4%	0.0%
The University of Bath	2,335	1,940	-16.9%	11.5%
The Arts Institute at Bournemouth	75	85	13.3%	21.4%
Bournemouth University	4,760	4,720	-0.8%	0.7%
The University of Bristol	455	380	-16.5%	-11.6%
Dartington College of Arts	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
The University of Exeter	1,160	1,290	11.2%	48.3%
University College Falmouth	30	20	-33.3%	0.0%
University of Gloucestershire	1,995	1,945	-2.5%	-25.0%
The University of Plymouth	3,845	4,095	6.5%	41.5%
Royal Agricultural College	560	265	-52.7%	-13.1%
College of St Mark and St John	55	40	-27.3%	-95.3%
University of the West of England	3,590	3,755	4.6%	-7.4%
South West	19,105	18,825	-1.5%	0.1%
National Total	255,905	310,440	21.3%	34.1%

Source: HESA

Nationally the number of Business and Administrative Studies students grew by more than a third from 2002/03 to 2007/08 while the South West has experienced only 0.1% growth. In the last year the growth in Business & Administrative Studies student numbers was more than 20% nationally, compared to a 1.5% fall in the South West.

Table 4 shows that Business and Administrative studies are more significant in some South West HEIs than others, with Bournemouth University, the Universities of Bath and Gloucestershire and the Royal Agricultural College having the highest proportions of business students. Gains within some institutions, such as University of Bath, have been offset by decline at others, such as the Universities of Gloucestershire and Bournemouth, the Royal Agricultural College and the College of St Mark and St John.

Table 4: Business & Administrative Students as a percentage of all students, by South West HEI, 2002/03 to 2007/08

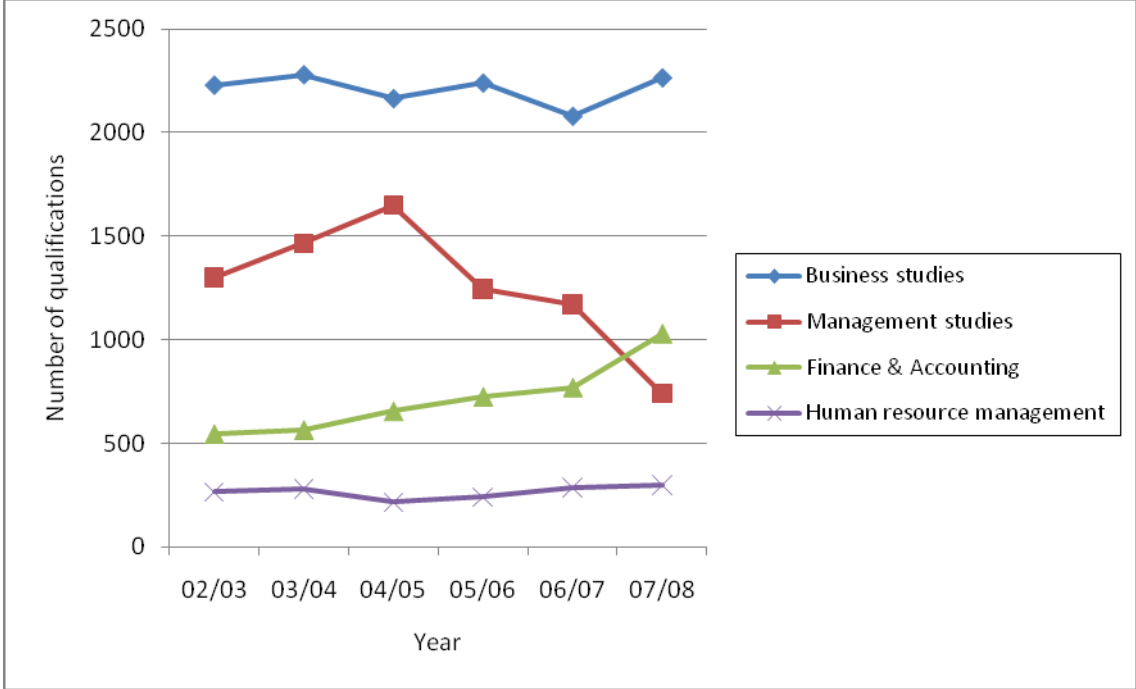
Institution	2002/03	2006/07	2007/08	Change from 2002/03	Change from 2007/08
Bath Spa University	6.2%	3.4%	3.9%	-2.3%	0.4%
The University of Bath	12.6%	16.4%	15.0%	2.3%	-1.4%
The Arts Institute at Bournemouth	5.7%	4.1%	4.3%	-1.4%	0.2%
Bournemouth University	31.4%	26.6%	26.4%	-5.0%	-0.2%
The University of Bristol	1.9%	2.0%	2.1%	0.2%	0.1%
Dartington College of Arts	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
The University of Exeter	6.6%	7.4%	8.8%	2.2%	1.4%
University College Falmouth	1.2%	1.4%	0.9%	-0.4%	-0.5%
University of Gloucestershire	28.2%	23.8%	22.8%	-5.3%	-1.0%
The University of Plymouth	10.7%	12.6%	13.9%	3.2%	1.4%
Royal Agricultural College	42.1%	62.2%	30.1%	-12.0%	-32.1%
College of St Mark and St John	17.8%	1.6%	1.1%	-16.8%	-0.5%
University of the West of England	16.0%	12.1%	11.8%	-4.2%	-0.3%
South West	13.5%	12.3%	12.6%	-1.0%	0.3%
National Total	10.6%	10.8%	13.5%	2.8%	2.6%

Source: HESA

2.2 Qualifications obtained from South West HEIs in business, management & related programmes in Higher Education

Figure 1 shows the number of qualifications achieved in business, management and related programmes. There has been gradual growth in numbers of Finance and Accounting qualifications delivered by SW HEIs. The number of management qualifications has now fallen for three consecutive years.

Figure 1: Achievement of HE qualifications in business, management and related programmes, 2002/03 to 2006/07



Source: HESA (HEIDI)

3 Enterprise Skills

3.1 Business Survival Rates

Business Survival Rates have been selected as another indicator of enterprise skills. Looking at the percentage of businesses that survive at least three years, Table 5 shows that the South West was the best performing English region in 2004, with 68.9% of businesses surviving at least three years, consistently outperforming the national average (65.2% in 2004). The South West also has the greatest improvement in the survival rate of new businesses, which has increased by 3.9 percentage points between 2002 and 2004.

Table 5: Three-year survival rates of VAT registered enterprises, by region, 2002-2004 (%)

Region	2002	2003	2004	Change 2002-2004
England	62.7	63.5	65.2	2.5
North East	62.0	62.5	64.4	2.4
North West	62.6	64.2	66.2	3.6
Yorkshire and the Humber	64.0	64.8	64.9	0.9
East Midlands	64.2	64.6	66.8	2.6
West Midlands	63.2	64.8	65.8	2.6
East	64.7	65.8	67.0	2.3
London	56.9	56.5	60.0	3.1
South East	66.1	66.3	66.9	0.8
South West	65.0	66.4	68.9	3.9

Source: BERR Business Demography 2007. Note: Year refers to the year of birth of the business

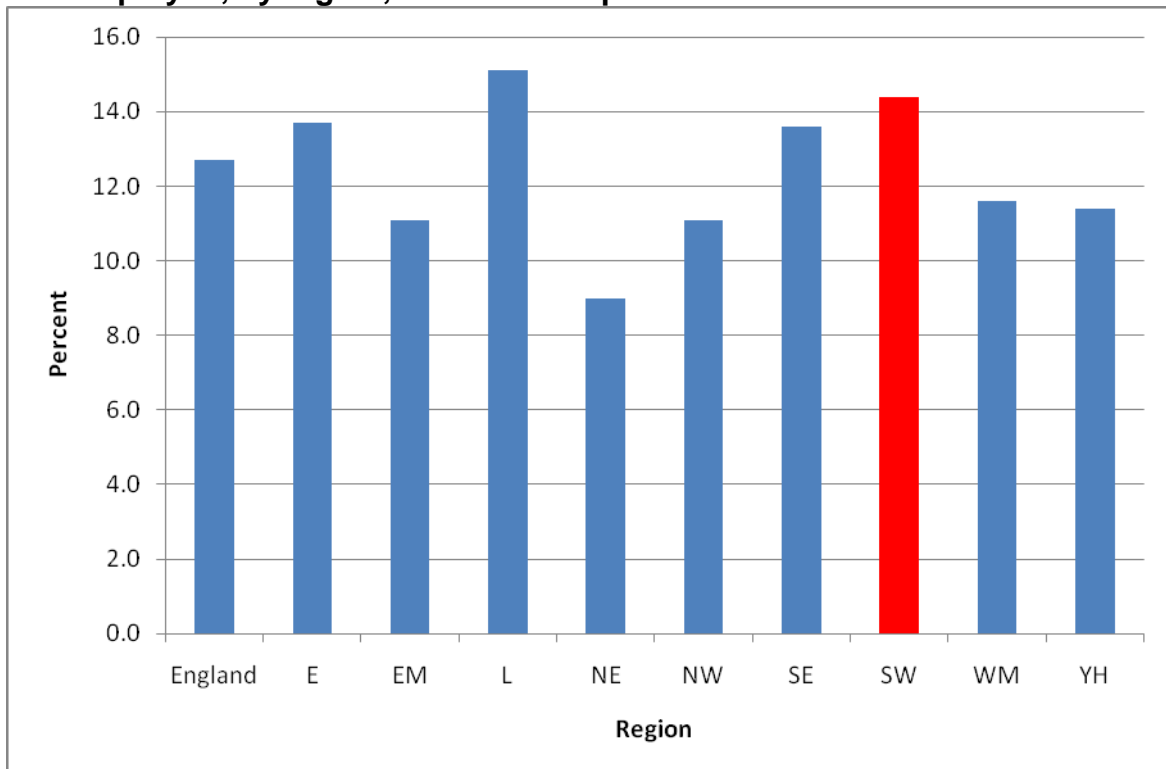
A similar trend is evident when looking at one year survival rates. Although there is little inter-regional difference, the South West is continually among the best performing regions on this measure, with 96.8% of businesses registering in 2006 surviving at least a year (national average = 96.5%).

Increases in short-term business survival rates in recent years may in part reflect the relative ease of obtaining credit while the economy was fairly buoyant. The recent credit crunch and subsequent recession may well have had a significant impact on survival rates that is yet to appear in the data.

3.2 Levels of self-employment

The best measure of overall levels of self-employment is from the Annual Population Survey. In September 2008, there were an estimated 346,600 self-employed people in the South West, accounting for 14.6% of the working age population in employment. This is higher than the national average of 12.7%, and is the second highest percentage of any English region.

Figure 2: Percentage of the working age population in employment who are self-employed, by region, Oct 2007 - September 2008



Source: Annual Population Survey

In recent years, the level of self-employment has increased slightly, from 13.8% in September 2006.

3.3 Expenditure on Research and Development

Another indicator of innovation activity is the level of expenditure on research and development by different sectors of the economy. In 2007, businesses spent some £1,262 million on R&D in the South West, around 8.3% of the total for England. Regional R&D expenditure grew by around 5.1%, from £1,201 million in 2005. This rate of growth is way below the national rate of 18.3% over the same period

Table 6: Expenditure on R&D performed in UK businesses, South West & UK, 2005-2007 (£ million)

Year	South West	UK	SW as % of England
2005	1,201	12,847	9.3%
2006	1,232	13,728	9.0%
2007	1,262	15,194	8.3%
% change 2005-07	5.1%	18.3%	-

Source: Business Enterprise Research & Development First Release - 2007

R&D activity employs approximately 14,000 full-time equivalent workers in the South West, around 9.3% of the total for England.

4. Innovation & Creativity

4.1 HE – Applications for STEM subject places HE

Using UCAS subject areas to define STEM subjects, the overall number of applications for STEM subject places at South West Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) has risen by 20.4% between 2002 and 2008, as shown in Table 7. There was a slight fall in the number of STEM applications in 2008 (of just -0.7%), although this was less than the fall in applications for all subjects (-3.9%).

During the last year falls in applications were seen in several subjects, including Biological and Physical Sciences, Mathematical & Computer Sciences, Engineering and Combined Sciences. The overall decline in STEM applications is offset somewhat by a 12% increase in subjects allied to medicine.

Over the longer-term (2002 to 2008) the only STEM subject to see a decline in applications is Mathematical and Computer Sciences.

Table 7: Applications for HE places in STEM subjects at South West HEIs, 2002-2008

Subject	2002	2007	2008	Change 2007-2008	% change 2007-2008	% change 2002-2008
Medicine & Dentistry	3,268	7,409	7,452	43	0.6%	128.0%
Subjects allied to Medicine	6,078	12,435	13,968	1,533	12.3%	129.8%
Biological Sciences	16,057	16,957	16,038	-919	-5.4%	-0.1%
Veterinary Science, Agriculture & related	3,507	3,420	3,661	241	7.0%	4.4%
Physical Sciences	8,902	10,216	9,517	-699	-6.8%	6.9%
Mathematical & Computer Sciences	12,552	10,062	9,912	-150	-1.5%	-21.0%
Engineering	9,365	10,199	9,669	-530	-5.2%	3.2%
Technologies	907	1,462	1,604	142	9.7%	76.8%
Architecture, Building & Planning	2,437	3,585	3,674	89	2.5%	50.8%
Combined sciences	3,262	3,732	3,429	-303	-8.1%	5.1%
Sciences combined w/ social sciences or arts	4,693	6,696	6,613	-83	-1.2%	40.9%
Total STEM entries	71,028	86,173	85,537	-636	-0.7%	20.4%
All subjects	170,469	199,717	191,846	-7,871	-3.9%	12.5%

Source: UCAS

Note: Chemistry falls under 'Physical Sciences'.

4.2 HE – Acceptances to STEM subjects at HE

The number of STEM subject acceptances has increased by almost a third in the South West between 2002 and 2008, slightly higher than the all subject average. The same trend is evident over the last year. This suggests that demand for STEM subject places in the region – reflecting a longer-term trend of increasing applications - has resulted in an increase in regional supply of STEM places.

The only subjects that showed a decline in acceptances in the last year were Physical and Combined Sciences, although the fall was relatively small in both subjects.

Table 8: Acceptances for HE places in STEM subjects at South West HEIs, 2002-2008

Subject	2002	2007	2008	Change 2007-2008	% change 2007-2008	% change 2002-2008
Medicine & Dentistry	448	591	602	11	1.9%	34.4%
Subjects allied to Medicine	1,084	1,768	2,962	1,194	67.5%	173.2%
Biological Sciences	2,389	2,951	3,020	69	2.3%	26.4%
Veterinary Science, Agriculture & related	680	674	811	137	20.3%	19.3%
Physical Sciences	1,491	1,794	1,764	-30	-1.7%	18.3%
Mathematical & Computer Sciences	2,186	1,855	1,977	122	6.6%	-9.6%
Engineering	1,510	1,548	1,634	86	5.6%	8.2%
Technologies	174	328	371	43	13.1%	113.2%
Architecture, Building & Planning	480	777	830	53	6.8%	72.9%
Combined sciences	650	768	760	-8	-1.0%	16.9%
Sciences combined with social sciences or arts	1,075	1,313	1,366	53	4.0%	27.1%
Total STEM entries	12,167	14,367	16,097	1,730	12.0%	32.3%
All subjects	28,549	33,613	36,662	3,049	9.1%	28.4%

Source: UCAS

Note: Chemistry falls under 'Physical Sciences'.

4.3 HE – Number of students studying STEM subjects

Data from HESA allows us to monitor the actual number of students studying STEM related subjects at HEIs within the South West. The subject listing in HESA is slightly different from UCAS data.

Table 9 shows that there were 63,560 students studying STEM subjects in the South West during 2007/08, a similar number to the previous year. The number of STEM students at SW HEIs has increased by 9.2% since 2002/03, a similar proportion to nationally.

This rate of growth in STEM student numbers is also slightly above the increase in the overall number of HE students in the region studying all subjects (7.9%). Again, the region mirrors the wider national trend.

In the last year growth has been concentrated in Architecture, Building and Planning and subjects allied to Medicine. There has been a decline in the number of students in Medicine & dentistry, Agriculture & related, Physical, Mathematical and Computer Sciences and Engineering.

Table 9: STEM students at South West HEIs by subject, 2002/03 to 2007/08

Subject	SW					UK
	2002/03	2006/07	2007/08	% change 06/07-07/08	% change 02/03-07/08	% change 02/03-07/08
Medicine & dentistry	2,160	3,335	3,220	-3.4%	49.1%	26.4%
Subjects allied to medicine	15,360	17,635	18,565	5.3%	20.9%	7.8%
Biological sciences	8,565	11,355	11,610	2.2%	35.6%	28.4%
Veterinary science	605	705	710	0.7%	17.4%	26.0%
Agriculture & related subjects	2,345	2,200	1,920	-12.7%	-18.1%	18.0%
Physical sciences (incl. chemistry)	6,225	6,910	6,430	-6.9%	3.3%	15.6%
Mathematical sciences	1,835	2,265	2,300	1.5%	25.3%	30.3%
Computer science	9,320	4,965	4,305	-13.3%	-53.8%	-28.7%
Engineering & technology	8,645	8,780	8,410	-4.2%	-2.7%	6.0%
Architecture, building & planning	3,160	5,445	6,090	11.8%	92.7%	37.7%
Total STEM Subjects	58,220	63,595	63,560	-0.1%	9.2%	9.1%
Total All Subjects	139,065	155,365	149,990	-3.5%	7.9%	6.0%

Source: HESA

Looking at individual institutions, Table 10 shows that the biggest providers of STEM subjects are the Universities of the West of England, Plymouth and Bristol, the first two of which had over 10,000 STEM students in 2007/08. Some providers have relatively few students.

Table 10: STEM students at South West HEIs, 2002/03 to 2007/08

HEI	2002/03	2006/07	2007/08	% change 06/07-07/08	% change 02/03-07/08
Bath Spa University	825	675	640	-5.2%	-22.4%
The University of Bath	7,470	7,755	7,325	-5.5%	-1.9%
The Arts Institute at Bournemouth	15	0	20	-	33.3%
Bournemouth University	6,165	6,695	6,940	3.7%	12.6%
The University of Bristol	10,470	10,735	9,685	-9.8%	-7.5%
The University of Exeter	3,420	4,665	4,805	3.0%	40.5%
University of Gloucestershire	2,905	2,050	1,910	-6.8%	-34.3%
University College Plymouth St Mark and St John	555	725	770	6.2%	38.7%
The University of Plymouth	13,735	14,455	14,190	-1.8%	3.3%
Royal Agricultural College	420	340	620	82.4%	47.6%
University of the West of England, Bristol	12,240	15,500	16,655	7.5%	36.1%
South West	58,220	63,595	63,560	-0.1%	9.2%

Source: HESA

Most of the region's HEIs have seen growth in STEM student numbers since 2002/3, the exceptions being Bath Spa University, and the Universities of Gloucestershire and Bristol.

In the last 12 months the number of STEM students fell by 35, although there were increases at the Universities of Bournemouth, Exeter, UWE and the Royal Agricultural College.

Table 11 looks at how STEM provision is concentrated at different SW HEIs. The University of Bath and UWE are the only two providers where STEM students account for more than half of all students. There is a significant range between the HEIs, down to under 10% of students at Bath Spa University. At 42.4%, the South West as a whole is comparable to the national average of 41.1%.

Table 11: STEM Students as a percentage of all students by South West HEIs, 2002/03 – 2007/08

HEI	2002/03	2006/07	2007/08	Change 06/07-07/08	Change 02/03-07/08
Bath Spa University	17.5%	9.5%	8.6%	-0.9%	-9.0%
The University of Bath	54.3%	54.4%	56.5%	2.1%	2.2%
The Arts Institute at Bournemouth	1.2%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%	-0.2%
Bournemouth University	41.3%	37.5%	38.8%	1.4%	-2.5%
The University of Bristol	47.2%	47.1%	54.4%	7.3%	7.2%
The University of Exeter	26.0%	29.7%	32.7%	3.0%	6.7%
University of Gloucestershire	31.5%	24.4%	22.4%	-2.0%	-9.1%
College of St Mark and St John	11.7%	21.0%	20.5%	-0.4%	8.8%
The University of Plymouth	50.8%	47.3%	48.3%	1.0%	-2.5%
Royal Agricultural College	57.9%	37.8%	70.1%	32.3%	12.1%
University of the West of England, Bristol	48.4%	52.4%	52.5%	0.2%	4.2%
South West Total	41.9%	40.9%	42.4%	1.4%	0.5%
UK	39.9%	41.3%	41.1%	-0.2%	1.1%

Source: HESA

The proportion of all students studying STEM subjects at SW HEIs increased slightly from 40.9% to 42.4% in the last year.

4.4 HE – Achievements in STEM subjects

Table 12 shows that the growth in overall STEM student numbers in the South West (9.2% from 2002/03 to 2007/08) flows through into growth in rates of achievement, which have risen by 34% over the same period. This regional increase of 34%, is significantly above the 24.5% national increase in achievements in STEM subjects in the same period.

Between 2006/07 and 2007/08 the number of STEM achievements rose by around 2,500. Clearly achievements, which primarily occur at the end of a period of study, lag behind changes in acceptances and numbers of students studying STEM subjects. We would hope and expect increases over the last year in numbers accepted onto STEM subjects and numbers studying STEM subjects to feed into achievements for at least the next two to three years.

Table 12: STEM Achievements at South West HEIs by subject, 2002/03 to 2007/08

Subject	SW					UK
	2002/03	2006/07	2007/08	change 06/07- 07/08	% change 02/03- 07/08	% change 02/03- 07/08
Medicine & dentistry	365	515	610	18.4%	67.1%	49.7%
Subjects allied to medicine	2,940	3,505	4,970	41.8%	69.0%	34.1%
Biological sciences	2,315	3,100	3,590	15.8%	55.1%	37.8%
Veterinary science	95	130	140	7.7%	47.4%	24.0%
Agriculture & related subjects	615	705	700	-0.7%	13.8%	6.3%
Physical sciences	1,560	1,635	1,860	13.8%	19.2%	14.6%
Mathematical sciences	490	595	600	0.8%	22.4%	31.5%
Computer science	1,840	1,480	1,410	-4.7%	-23.4%	-12.8%
Engineering & technology	1,935	1,985	2,060	3.8%	6.5%	19.9%
Architecture, building & planning	665	1,020	1,240	21.6%	86.5%	52.4%
Total	12,820	14,670	17,180	17.1%	34.0%	24.5%

Source: HESA

5. Higher Level Skills

5.1 Participation in higher education

Increasing participation in HE is one of the Government's PSA targets. Unfortunately, data from the Higher Education Initial Participation Rate (HEIPR) is only available at the national level, so in order to measure participation in the South West we can use two measures. On the one hand participation of the region's population in HE (regardless of where they actually study) is important as it reflects the efforts of public sector bodies to encourage individuals (particularly young people) to remain in education progress to higher skills levels. On the other hand, it is also helpful to measure participation at the region's HEIs, which can reflect their attractiveness to students and the quality of the provision they offer.

South West domiciled students

Table 13 shows that there were around 148,800 students from the South West in HE in 2007/08, around 1.3% higher than in 2002/03. However, there has been a fall in overall participation in the last year, caused by lower numbers of part-time postgraduates. There has been continued growth in the number of full-time students. Just under half (48%) of HE students from the South West were studying at a South West HEI.

Table 13: Participation in HE by South West domiciled students, by mode and level of study, 2002/03 – 2007/08

Year	FT	PT	PG	UG	Total
2002/03	85,620	61,320	27,855	119,085	146,940
2003/04	86,655	63,830	29,385	121,100	150,485
2004/05	88,250	63,380	30,585	121,045	151,630
2005/06	90,485	63,650	30,475	123,660	154,135
2006/07	91,125	62,090	30,925	122,290	153,215
2007/08	91,995	56,840	26,440	122,395	148,835
Change 06/07 - 07/08	870	-5,250	-4,485	105	-4,380
% change 06/07 - 07/08	1.0%	-8.5%	-14.5%	0.1%	-2.9%

Source: HESA

By region of study

Table 14 shows that there were over 133,000 students at South West HEIs in 2007/08, nearly 6% higher than in 2002/03. However, the consistent year on year growth from then until 2006/07 has turned to a decline in the last year. Year on year growth has continued at undergraduate level and for full-time students, while the number of postgraduate and part-time students has fallen by 15% in just one year.

Table 14: Participation at South West HEIs (total UK students), by mode and level of study, 2002/03 – 2007/08

Year	FT	PT	PG	UG	Total
2002/03	82,715	43,140	24,965	100,890	125,855
2003/04	86,465	45,425	26,105	105,785	131,890
2004/05	87,180	45,110	27,520	104,770	132,290
2005/06	90,500	45,205	27,260	108,445	135,705
2006/07	91,595	45,345	28,170	108,770	136,940
2007/08	94,905	38,440	23,935	109,410	133,345
Change 06/07 - 07/08	3,310	-6,905	-4,235	640	-3,595
% change 06/07 - 07/08	3.6%	-15.2%	-15.0%	0.6%	-2.6%

Source: HESA

However, this reversal of the overall trend has not been seen across all institutions. Table 15 shows that while there has been continued growth at UWE, Bath Spa and the arts institutions, while the entire decline across the region can be accounted for by the University of Bristol. Here, student numbers (both at undergraduate and postgraduate level) are down, by a total of over 4,000 (22%).

Table 15: Student Numbers by South West HEIs, 2006/07 – 2007/08

HEI	2006/07	2007/08	Change	% change
Bath Spa University	6,895	7,290	395	5.7%
The University of Bath	10,385	9,650	-735	-7.1%
The Arts Institute at Bournemouth	1,665	1,810	145	8.7%
Bournemouth University	15,785	15,845	60	0.4%
The University of Bristol	18,870	14,635	-4,235	-22.4%
Dartington College of Arts	615	590	-25	-4.1%
The University of Exeter	12,935	12,455	-480	-3.7%
University College Falmouth	2,100	2,200	100	4.8%
University of Gloucestershire	7,915	8,010	95	1.2%
College of St Mark and St John	3,310	3,520	210	6.3%
The University of Plymouth	28,565	27,465	-1,100	-3.9%
Royal Agricultural College	760	745	-15	-2.0%
University of the West of England, Bristol	27,140	29,130	1,990	7.3%
Total	136,940	133,345	-3,595	-2.6%

Source: HESA

6. Sub-Priorities

6.1 Young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs)

Data on the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) is published annually by the DCSF. Data for 2008 shows that 5.7% of 16-18 years olds in the South West were NEET. The number of NEETs is estimated to have risen by around 600 since 2007 when 8,590 (5.5%) young people were NEET.

The proportion of young people who are NEET in the South West remains below the national average of 6.7%, although the national rate did not increase in the last year. There are however significant variations in the level of NEETs across the region, with several of the region's urban areas having much higher levels of NEETs than average.

Table 16: NEETs by local authority, 2007-2008

Local Education Authority	2008		2007	% point change since 2007
	Estimated number	%	%	
Bournemouth	370	8.2%	8.4%	-0.2%
Dorset	700	6.2%	5.5%	0.7%
Poole	260	5.4%	5.8%	-0.4%
Cornwall & Isles of Scilly	1,040	6.1%	5.8%	0.3%
Devon	1,340	6.4%	5.9%	0.5%
Plymouth	690	7.4%	6.8%	0.6%
Torbay	260	4.8%	4.7%	0.1%
Gloucestershire	730	3.8%	4.0%	-0.2%
Somerset	610	3.8%	4.3%	-0.5%
Bath & North East Somerset	220	3.9%	3.9%	0.0%
Bristol	970	7.9%	7.3%	0.6%
North Somerset	230	4.2%	4.3%	-0.1%
South Gloucestershire	390	4.5%	4.3%	0.2%
Swindon	550	8.0%	6.2%	1.8%
Wiltshire	790	6.3%	5.8%	0.5%
South West	9,180	5.7%	5.5%	0.2%
England	110,560	6.7%	6.7%	0.0%

Source: DCSF via Connexions Partnerships

The proportion of young people in the South West whose destinations were not known, and who are thought to be frequently NEET, fell from 3.3% in 2007 to 3.0% in 2008.

6.2 Young people's participation in education

Table 17 shows that the participation of young people aged 16 and 17 in education and work-based learning (WBL) is – at 82% - comparable to most other English regions, which all lag some way behind London (90%). The proportion of young people in full-time education is relatively high compared to the midlands and northern

regions, while participation in WBL is lower than northern regions but higher than in London and the South East.

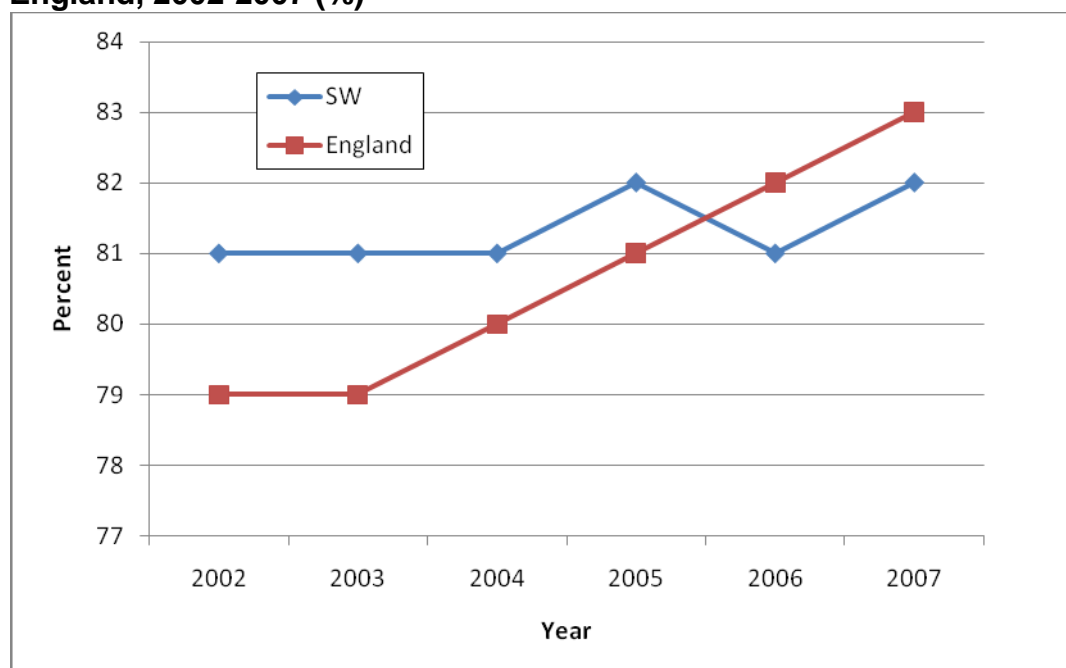
Table 17: Participation in education and WBL of 16 & 17 year olds by region, 2007 (%)

Region	Full-time education	WBL	Part-time education	Total Education and WBL
North East	67	11	5	84
North West	70	9	4	82
Yorkshire and the Humber	66	9	4	80
East Midlands	68	7	4	80
West Midlands	71	7	5	83
East of England	73	6	4	82
Greater London	84	3	3	90
South East	74	5	3	82
South West	71	7	4	82
England	72	7	4	83

Source: DCSF

The South West's limited progress on this measure should be of some concern. Figure 3 shows that the South West's levels of overall participation and in full-time education has barely moved at all between 2002 and 2007, which has seen the region fall behind the national average in this time.

Figure 3: Participation in education and WBL of 16 & 17 year olds, SW and England, 2002-2007 (%)



Source: DCSF