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# Support for Swindon and Wiltshire LEP (SWLEP)

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Swindon and Wiltshire are a high growth region of the UK. The SWLEP secured a City Deal to support an ambitious 5-year programme which will lead to higher level up-skilling of 18,000 local people to address a sizeable and growing skills gap in the local economy. Through this initiative, SWLEP seeks to reverse the recent decline in part-time Higher Education (HE) participation and to offer both local Service Leavers and civilian employees the opportunity to extend their skills, gain a higher level qualification and, where relevant, access new employment opportunities.

20 Degrees had the task of establishing a pathfinder cohort of HE providers. A comprehensive mapping exercise of HE providers was undertaken against the SWLEP priority sectors of:

- Financial Services
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Digital Technologies
- Life Sciences

This long list was filtered down to a short list by the need for HE providers with demonstrable experience of working flexibly with Service Leavers and employers. Moreover the providers needed to demonstrate significant experience of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and a willingness to collaborate with employers and other providers to create the best outcomes for learners.

A transparent qualification exercise was run by 20 Degrees to create the pathfinder cohort of HE providers.

Isobel Brown, Director of the SWLEP commented, 'It has been a pleasure working with 20 Degrees. They have got on with the job with great professionalism and delivered exactly what we needed'.