

SEMLEP Business Survey 2019

Good morning/afternoon, my name is XXX and I am calling from Public Perspectives, an independent research organisation, on behalf of your local Council and SEMLEP (South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership).

Can I just check, is this [Company Name]?

Note to interviewer:

Yes – CONTINUE

No – ASK FOR CORRECT COMPANY NAME, RECORD, AND CONTINUE.

Your Council and SEMLEP conducts a survey of local businesses to find out what you think about local economic and business issues, help inform the support provided to local businesses in the future and help grow the local economy.

Note to interviewer: ASK TO SPEAK TO NAMED CONTACT OR A SENIOR PERSON INVOLVED IN THE DAY TO DAY CONTROL OF THE BUSINESS AT THIS SITE.

Can I just check that you are an appropriate senior person at this site to discuss this survey within the organisation?

Note to interviewer: IF NECESSARY: You should be able to answer detailed questions about the organisation and its operations, and provide information on recent and future trends in employment and trading activity.

Yes – CONTINUE

No – ASK WHO IS AND ATTEMPT TO CONTACT THIS INDIVIDUAL INSTEAD

The interview will take on average 20 minutes, depending on the answers given. Would it be convenient to conduct the interview now?

Yes – CONTINUE

No – MAKE APPOINTMENT OR CODE OUTCOME OF CALL

Note to interviewer: Stress that all information collected will be treated in the strictest confidence and anonymously. Responses will not be attributed to any individual or company. All data will be managed securely in line with data protection laws.

Note to interviewer: ADD IF NECESSARY if need to persuade or reassure participants:

- Your co-operation will ensure that the views expressed are representative of all employers.
- Completing the survey will help your Council / SEMLEP support local businesses and economic growth.
- By participating you will be told about, and will have the opportunity to access, business support services
- Over 1500 businesses have been selected at random to take part.
- All information collected will be treated in the strictest confidence. Responses will not be attributed to any individual or company.
- We work strictly within the Market Research Society Code of Conduct and data protection legislation.
- More information on the survey can be found at: **TBC**

Q0a1 Before we start, could I just take your name and job function:

Name:

Job function:

Q0b1 Note to interviewer: Record Local Authority area from database (this is essential information to ensure that the correct questions are asked to each respondent):

- Aylesbury Vale
- Bedford
- Central Bedfordshire
- Corby
- Daventry
- East Northamptonshire
- Kettering
- Luton
- Milton Keynes
- Northampton
- South Northamptonshire
- Wellingborough

Section A: Business details

Read out: I would like to begin by asking you some general questions about this business or site. By site I mean this single location, even if it encompasses more than one building.

Q1 Ask all: Are you . . . ? Note to interviewer: Read out. Single Code.

- A private business - CONTINUE
- A social enterprise organisation – CONTINUE
- A voluntary or public sector organisation – THANK AND CLOSE (Thank you but we need to gather the views of businesses in the private sector or social enterprises)

Q2 Ask all: Including you and any working proprietors/owners, how many people are on the payroll at this location?

Note to interviewer: Single code.

- 1-4
- 5-9
- 10-24
- 25-49

- 50-99
- 100-249
- 250+
- Don't know/refused – Note to interviewer: take from database

Q3 Ask all: Including you and any working proprietors/owners, how many, if any, contractor or agency staff or self-employed do you have working for you right now that are not on the payroll?

Note to interviewer: PROMPT AND SINGLE CODE BELOW

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11+
- Don't know/refused

Q4 Ask all: I have [SIC 2007 description from database] as a general classification for your business. Does this sound about right? Note to interviewer: Single code.

- Yes
- No

If 'No' to Q4, please continue, otherwise please go to Q6 - this is automated on-line

Q5 What is the main business activity at this site?

PROBE FOR DETAIL

IF NECESSARY: What is the main product or service of this business? What exactly is made or done at this site? What material or machinery does that involved using?

WRITE IN:

Q5a Daventry only: Is your business based in a rural location? Note to interviewer: Please select one answer only.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q6 Ask all: How would you describe your company status? Note to interviewer: Prompt from list below and Single code.

- Sole Trader
- Partnership
- Private Limited Company (LTD) (by guarantee)

Availability of appropriately skilled Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local support available to businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of utilities (such as energy and water)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of suitable premises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Affordability of business premises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Affordable housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good quality Schools/Colleges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proximity to complementary businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proximity to Universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attractive surroundings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of local services (such as retail and leisure)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your local town centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Road network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rail network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Airport access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walking/cycling routes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ease of transportation of freight	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q9t

ASK IF LUTON: Do you buy from local suppliers that are within a 5 mile radius? Note to interviewer: Select one answer only.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q9u

ASK IF LUTON 'YES' to previous question: Which, if any, of the following aspects of the local supply chain do you feel need improving? Note to interviewer: READ OUT AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Reliability of local suppliers
- Cost of local suppliers
- Customer service provided
- Ability to meet quality standards
- Other
- Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:

Q9w

ASK IF LUTON 'NO' to previous question: Which of the following aspects of the local supply chain explain your reasons for choosing not to buy locally? Note to interviewer: READ OUT AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Reliability of local suppliers
- Cost of local suppliers
- Customer service provided
- Lack of ability to meet quality standards
- Other
- Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:

Q9y

Ask for Central Bedfordshire Only: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council provides value for money, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree?

Note to interviewer: SINGLE CODE ONLY.

- 1- Strongly disagree
- 2- Tend to disagree
- 3- Neither agree nor disagree

- 4- Tend to agree
- 5- Strongly agree
- Don't know

Section C: Business engagement

Q10 Ask all: Have you used any of the following for business advice or support in the past 12 months? Note to interviewer: READ OUT. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Private sector professional (E.G.: Solicitor, Accountant, Bank etc.)
- Central Government department or Government body (e.g. HMRC, Job Centre Plus, Department for International Trade, Innovate UK)
- SEMLEP's Growth Hub
- Velocity Growth Hub
- Your local Council
- Your local business improvement district
- Chamber of Commerce
- Trade Association
- Family/ Friends
- Other Business Owners
- University / College
- Web based business advice
- Recruitment Agency
- Marketing Agency
- National Apprenticeship Service
- BeCentralBedfordshire web portal (CBC only)
- Central Bedfordshire's business support team (CBC only)
- Northamptonshire Growth Hub – Northamptonshire based LA's only
- Buckinghamshire Business First – Aylesbury Vale only
- Other
- None of the above

If "Web based business advice" or "Other", please specify:

Q11a Had you heard of any of the following before today?
Note to interviewer: READ OUT AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- SEMLEP's Growth Hub
- Velocity Growth Hub
- Northamptonshire Growth Hub
- None of the above

- Q11b If you were aware of any of the above (automated on-line), were you also aware that Velocity Growth Hub and Northamptonshire Growth Hub have re-branded or merged into SEMLEP Growth Hub? Note to interviewer: Select one answer only
- Yes
 - No

Section D: Business Performance

- Q12 Ask all: Would you say that overall, your business performance in the past 12 months has improved, remained stable or deteriorated? Note to interviewer: SINGLE CODE ONLY.
- Improved
 - Remained stable
 - Deteriorated
- Q13 Ask all: Over the next 12 months do you expect your business performance to generally improve, remain stable, or deteriorate? Note to interviewer: SINGLE CODE ONLY.
- Improve
 - Remain stable
 - Deteriorate
- Q14 Ask all: What do you consider to be constraints on your business growth? Note to interviewer: PROBE and SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.
- Lack of skilled labour
 - High cost of labour
 - Lack of training available locally
 - Increasing competition
 - Transport infrastructure (road, rail and sea)
 - Transport costs e.g. fuel etc
 - Access to public transport
 - Constraints with current premises or location
 - Lack of suitable premises to relocate to
 - Difficulties with obtaining planning permission
 - IT infrastructure/lack of high speed Broadband
 - Attracting or retaining customers
 - Interest rates/cost of finance
 - Access to finance
 - Cash flow
 - High cost of energy
 - Over regulation/red tape
 - Business rates

- Lack of appropriate business support
- The general economic climate
- Uncertainty about Brexit
- Reduction in public sector expenditure
- Other
- None of the above
- Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:

Q15 Ask all: Overall, what do you think will be the impact on your business, if any, of leaving the European Union? Note to interviewer:

SINGLE CODE

- Positive impact
- Negative impact
- No notable impact
- Unsure/don't know

Q16a Ask all: What are your main concerns, if any, about the UK leaving the EU and its impact on your business? Note to interviewer: Do not read out but probe if necessary. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Labour availability
- Skills availability
- EU funding availability
- Problems importing from the EU (e.g. sourcing materials and goods/increased costs of doing business)
- Problems exporting to the EU (e.g. loss of business/increased costs of doing business)
- Trade tariffs
- Loss of business
- Increased cost of business
- None of the above
- Other

If 'Other', please specify:

Q16b Only ask, if respondent raised a concern at Q16a: How do you plan to/are you mitigating against these issues? Note to interviewer: Probe and summarise/paraphrase points below:

Q16c Only ask, if respondent raised a concern at Q16a: What information would be useful to help your business prepare for an EU Exit?
Note to interviewer: Probe and summarise/paraphrase points below:

Q16d Ask all: Specifically thinking about a 'No Deal' EU exit, how prepared is your businesses for a 'No Deal' EU exit? Note to interviewer:
Read out options. SELECT ONE RESPONSE ONLY.

- Very prepared
- Quite prepared
- Not that prepared
- Not prepared at all
- N/A – Our business is not affected by leaving the EU and so we have not made or do not need to make any preparations
- Don't know

Q16e Ask all: Will the impact of leaving the EU without a deal be greater on your business than if it left with a deal? Note to interviewer:
SELECT ONE RESPONSE ONLY.

- Yes
- Maybe
- No
- Don't know

Q16f Ask all: What are your main concerns, if any, about the UK leaving the EU without a deal and its impact on your business? Note to interviewer: Probe and summarise/paraphrase points below:

Q17 Ask all: What are the 3 most important things your local Council and other support organisations should do to help you grow your business? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE and SELECT UP TO 3 RESPONSES.

- Lower business rates
- Use local businesses for jobs/ employ local people
- More financial support
- More business support/ advice
- Reduce red tape/ paperwork

- Easier planning permission
- Better communication with businesses/ listen more to businesses
- Better/ more / cheaper parking facilities
- Help small businesses
- Help with advertising
- Offer more/ free training
- Regenerate the area/ more investment in the area
- Improve transport infrastructure/ links
- Improve other infrastructure such as broadband
- Encourage new business to start up
- More shops/ local amenities (inc fill empty shops)
- Help with marketing and promotion
- Assist / provide suitable premises
- Help you to engage with training and education providers to identify new talent
- Networking and events
- Local supply chains
- Support with planning advice
- Business growth support
- Support with bidding for public sector tenders
- Support to increase your business' energy efficiency/transition to low carbon
- Other
- Nothing
- Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:

Q18 Ask all: Are you thinking of relocating your business? Note to interviewer: Probe and SINGLE CODE

- Yes, within the Local Authority Area
- Yes, within the SEMLEP area
- Yes, outside the SEMLEP area
- No
- Don't know

If 'Yes' at Q18, please continue, otherwise please go to Q21 - this is automated on-line.

Q19 Why are you thinking of re-locating? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Lower cost
- Larger premises
- Smaller premises
- Higher specification

- Access to ICT
- Access to energy (electricity, heating etc.)
- Improved parking
- Closer to transport links
- Closer to town centres
- Move to more energy efficient/lower carbon emitting premises
- Other
- Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:

Q20

When searching for new premises, what, if any, problems have you experienced with premises on the market? PROBE AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY:

- Unaffordable price / rent
- Premises are too large
- Premises are too small
- Low quality or specification of premises
- Premises unsuitable for the business' machinery / technology
- Lack of specialised testing facilities, either on-site or nearby
- Lack of full fibre broadband
- Lack of energy available
- Premises have poor access to town centres / urban areas
- Lack of good public transport near premises
- Lack of good quality labour available near premises
- Lack of premises that are energy efficient/low carbon
- Other
- No problems with premises on the market
- Don't know
- Not began our search yet

If 'Other', please specify:

Section E: Employment, Skills and Training

Q21 Ask all: Have you had any vacancies in the last 12 months? Note to interviewer: Single code.

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes' at Q21, please continue, otherwise please go to Q28 - this is automated on-line.

Q22 How do you advertise or promote your vacancies?

Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Through an agency
- Through free websites
- Through paid for websites
- Through business network groups
- Through word of mouth
- Through SEMLEP's website
- Through LinkedIn
- Through other social media
- Through the Job Centre
- Other

If 'Other', please specify:

Q23 Have you had any vacancies in the last 12 months that you have found hard to fill? Note to interviewer: Single code.

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes', please continue, otherwise go to Q28 - this is automated on-line.

Q24 Which specific occupations have you found hard to fill? Note to interviewer: ask unprompted and select all relevant occupations. If uncertain, check with respondent that you are allocating the response to the correct code.

- Managerial
- Plant and Machine Operatives
- Metal Forming, Welding and Related Trades
- Construction and Building Trades

- Housekeeping and Related Services
- Road Transport Drivers
- Business, Research and Administrative Occupations
- Sales Assistants and Retail Cashiers
- Draughtspersons and Related Architectural Occupations
- Design Occupations
- Sales, Marketing and Related Associated Occupations
- Science, Engineering and Production Technicians
- Metal Machining, Fitting and Instrument Making
- Information Technology and Telecommunication
- Business, Finance and Related Associated Occupations
- Other Administrative Occupations
- Vehicle Trades
- Childcare and Related Personal Services
- Elementary Agricultural Occupations
- Elementary Cleaning Occupations
- Other Elementary Service Occupations
- Production Managers and Directors
- Electrical and Electronic Trades
- Food Preparation and Hospitality Trades

Q25

What have been the main causes of having hard to fill vacancies? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Low number of applicants with the required skills
- Lack of qualifications the company demands
- Lack of work experience the company demands
- Low number of applicants with the required attitude, motivation or personality
- Low number of applicants generally
- Poor terms and conditions (e.g. pay) offered for post
- The growth of the business / increase in workload
- Too much competition from other employers
- Remote location/poor public transport
- Poor career progression / lack of prospects
- Job entails shift work/unsociable hours
- Seasonal work
- Other
- No particular reason
- Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:

Q26 Ask if 'Yes' at Q21 - automated on-line: Have you found any skills difficult to obtain when recruiting staff in the last 12 months, if so which ones? Note to interviewer: PROBE and CHECK THAT ALLOCATING TO CORRECT ANSWERS. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Digital skills
- Managerial Skills
- Technical or practical skills
- Communication skills
- Customer Service skills
- Sales and Marketing
- Foreign Languages
- Knowledge of English among non-native speakers
- Team working skills
- Problem solving skills
- Planning and organisational skills
- Job specific skills
- General employability
- Other
- None

If 'Other', please specify:



If selected a skill above, please continue, otherwise go to Q28 - this is automated on-line.

Q27 Why have you found these skills difficult to obtain? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Lack of work ready school leavers
- Lack of work ready college/further education leavers
- Lack of work ready university higher education leavers
- Poor quality applicants generally
- Low quantity of applicants available
- People applying for jobs they are not suited to
- General lack of skills in available workforce
- High and unaffordable salary expectations
- Other
- Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:



Q28 Ask all: Do you have skills gaps in your *existing* workforce, if so, in which areas? Note to interviewer: PROBE and CHECK THAT ALLOCATING TO CORRECT ANSWERS. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Digital skills
- Managerial Skills
- Technical or practical skills
- Communication skills
- Customer Service skills
- Sales and Marketing
- Foreign Languages
- Knowledge of English among non-native speakers
- Team working skills
- Problem solving skills
- Planning and organisational skills
- Job specific skills
- General employability
- Other
- None

If 'Other', please specify:

If Skills gaps in existing workforce, please continue, otherwise please go to Q31 - this is automated on-line.

Q29 Why do you think there are skills gaps amongst your existing workforce? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Lack of appropriate training or courses
- Inflexible times/durations for training or courses
- Not prepared/able to release staff during work hours
- Staff judged not capable of progression
- Lack of investment in staff training and development
- Insufficient budget to provide training courses
- Existing staff not seeking upskilling
- No workforce development plan
- Staff leaving due to the UK leaving the EU
- Other
- Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:

Q30

Ask if responded 'Digital skills' to Q26 and/or Q28 - automated on-line: Which digital skills have you found difficult to obtain? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Microsoft Office (Excel, Word, Powerpoint)
- Systems design and management (e.g. in Sharepoint)
- Programming / coding
- Computer/network support
- Data analysis
- Digital design
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
- Digital marketing (including social media)
- Computer-Aided Design (CAD)
- Computer Numerical Control (CNC)
- Cyber security
- Proficiency in a specific software program
- Other

If 'Other', please specify:

Q31

Ask all: What actions have you taken to increase skills? Note to interviewer: Probe and Select all that apply.

- Engaging with schools (e.g. Careers Enterprise Company)
- Engaging with colleges
- Engaging with universities
- Investing in apprenticeships
- Offering in-house training & development
- Outsourcing training & development / working with independent training providers
- Relying on agencies to recruit skilled people
- Working with job centre plus
- Other
- Not doing anything
- Not applicable - no skills gaps

If 'Other', please specify:

Q32

Ask all: What level of qualifications do your staff hold? Note to interviewer: READ OUT. Select all relevant answers.

- No qualifications
- Level 1 qualifications

- Level 2 qualifications (GCSE A*-C)
- Level 3 qualifications (A Level A-E)
- Level 4 qualifications (HNC)
- Level 5 qualifications (HND, Foundation Degree)
- Level 6 qualifications (Degree)
- Level 7 qualifications (Masters)
- Other
- Don't know

Q33 Ask all: I would now like to ask you a few questions about apprenticeships. By “apprenticeships” I mean an apprenticeship scheme that follows a formal framework and leads to a nationally recognised qualification.

Do you employ anyone on an apprenticeship programme currently? Note to interviewer: SINGLE CODE ONLY.

- Yes
- No

If 'No', please continue, otherwise please go to Q36 - this is automated on-line.

Q34 Do you or would you consider taking on an apprentice? Note to interviewer: SINGLE CODE ONLY.

- Yes
- No

If 'No', please continue, otherwise please go to Q36 - this is automated on-line.

Q35 Ask if responded 'No' to previous: Why would you not consider employing apprentices? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- No current business need / not recruiting
- Cost
- Poor experience of apprenticeships
- Cannot find suitable candidates
- Apprentices don't have the necessary skills / experience / qualifications / we want to employ people that are ready to do the job
- Over complex process
- Size of business is too small
- Business / type of work is unsuitable for apprentices
- Other
- Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:

Q36 Ask all: In 2017 the Government introduced a requirement for all businesses with a wage bill of £3 million per annum or higher to pay an “Apprenticeship Levy”.

Is your business currently an Apprenticeship Levy payer? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY.

- No, we are not a levy payer [i.e. wage bill less than £3 million per annum]
- Yes
- Don't know / not applicable

Q37 Ask if answered 'Yes' to previous question - this is automated on-line: How do you use, or plan to use, the Levy? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. Select all relevant answers.

- To take on new apprentices
- To develop existing employees
- By transferring the levy to other businesses
- We do not use the levy yet, but have plans to in the future
- We do not use the levy and have no plans to
- Don't know
- Other

If 'Other', please specify:

Q38 Ask all: Which groups, or in what ways, do you actively offer work experience and/or employer engagement? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. Select all relevant answers.

- Primary school students
- School student age 11-13 (Year 7 to 9)
- School students age 14-16 (Year 10 to 12)
- School/College students age 17-19
- Further or Higher Education Students age 19-24
- Traineeships
- Internships
- Adult schemes
- Other
- No engagement conducted
- Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:

If 'No engagement conducted', please continue, otherwise go to Q40 - this is automated on-line.

Q39 Why do you not engage with schools, colleges, universities, adult education schemes or conduct employer engagement? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. Select all relevant answers.

- Lack of time
- Lack of opportunities
- Do not see value
- Do not know how to arrange
- Red tape/bureaucracy
- Concerns about the safety of students
- Other

If 'Other', please specify:

Q39b Luton only: Has your business participated/engaged with any schools in Luton regarding the following activities? Interviewer instruction: Read out and select one answer only

- 16 x 16 programme
- Offered work experience
- Offered a talk in assembly
- Offered a work place site visit
- Attended the school to Participate in employment related activities (Mock Interviews, careers talks etc.)
- None of the above

Q39c Luton only: If none of the above, would you like more information regarding how you can get involved in these activities? Interviewer instruction: Select one answer only. If say 'Yes', please record details at end of questionnaire.

- Yes
- No

Section F: Innovation

Q40 Ask all: Does your business have any links with universities or colleges for research and development purposes? (If unsure, define R&D as: creative work undertaken within your business that increases knowledge for developing new and improved goods, services and/or processes)
Note to interviewer: SINGLE CODE ONLY.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q41 Ask all: Has your business introduced any new products, services, patents or processes in the past 12 months?
Note to interviewer: PROBE FOR DETAIL AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- New Products
- New Services
- New Processes
- New Patents
- No
- Don't know

Q42 Ask all: Has your business been involved in a collaborative research and development project in the past 12 months and with what type of partner?
Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE FOR DETAIL AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Yes, with a university/college
- Yes, with another business/enterprise group in the same sector
- Yes, with another business/enterprise group in a different sector
- Yes, with some other partner
- No
- Don't know

Q43 Ask all: To what extent are have each of the following restricted your business from introducing new products, services or internal processes? Could you please indicate by using a scale of 1 - 5, where 1 is not a restriction and 5 is a major restriction.
 Note to interviewer: READ OUT EACH ASPECT. SINGLE CODE PER ASPECT.

	1 – no constraint	2	3	4	5 - high constraint	Don't know / not applicable
The general economic climate / risk of investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of introducing new products, services or processes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of suitable partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understanding of technologies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understanding of markets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Market demand for new products/services in your industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regulatory environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section G: SEMLEP

Q44 Ask all: Before today, had you heard of any of the following? Note to interviewer: Read out and select all that apply.

- SEMLEP
- Local Growth Fund
- Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN)
- SEMLEP's Inward Investment service
- SEMLEP's Growth Hub
- Midlands Engine Investment Fund (MEIF)
- None of the above

If selected one of the above, please continue, otherwise go to Q46 - this is automated on-line

Q45 How had you heard of any of the above? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Press/Media
- Social media (Twitter, LinkedIn etc.)
- Networking with other businesses
- Communications from my Local Authority
- Communications from SEMLEP direct
- Other
- Can't recall

If 'Other', please specify:

Q46 Ask all - READ OUT: "SEMLEP is a Local Enterprise Partnership which aims to create the right environment for businesses to grow locally."

What do you think SEMLEP should focus on to help businesses and the local economy grow? Note to interviewer: DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Delivering **infrastructure** improvements to encourage business and economic growth e.g. improved travel and transport network, improvements to broadband
- Attracting new businesses** in to the area i.e. inward investment
- Helping to ensure an appropriate **supply of skilled labour** is available to meet business demand
- Securing **funding** to support new investment/projects
- Communicate local business needs to Central Government** to the benefit of local businesses and the local economy
- Providing **support to businesses** (e.g. through business advice services)
- Other
- Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:

Section H: Support for you more business

Q47a Ask all: Would you be interested in finding out more about the following? [Inform respondent that we will pass their details on to the appropriate organisation] Note to interviewer: READ OUT. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- Funding opportunities
- SEMLEP's Growth Hub - which is a FREE business support programme that has been set up to make it easier for businesses to maximise their growth potential.
- Support for business scale-up and pre-scale-up
- Employer-led skills programmes / initiatives
- Opportunities for employer engagement with schools, colleges, universities and adults
- Commercial premises
- SEMLEP's Newsletter – which features a range of updates on local programmes and growth opportunities.
- Apprenticeships
- Apprenticeship levy information
- Local staff training opportunities
- Support to increase your business' energy efficiency/transition to low carbon

Q47b CBC only: In which of the following ways would you like to engage with the Council to receive support and information for your business? Read out and select all relevant answers.

- Let's Talk Business e-newsletter
- Support with planning advice
- Support with recruitment and training
- Support with bidding for public sector tenders
- By an individual visit to your company
- Invitation to business events hosted by the Council and its partners
- Land and premises information and support
- Support engaging with schools

Q47c CBC only: Would you be happy for Central Bedfordshire Council to contact you about any of the options you selected in the question above? Select one answer only.

- Yes

No

Q47d CBC only: Would you be happy for Central Bedfordshire Council to add you to their Let's Talk Business e-newsletter? Select one answer only.

Yes

No

Q47e Could you confirm your name, contact number and e-mail address? Note to interviewer: This only comes up if the respondent has selected a positive answer to Q47a, Q47b, Q47c or Q47d and Q39c – this is automated on-line. Interviewer record:

Name:

Business:

Contact number:

E-mail:

Q48 Do you have any other comments or points you would like to make about the issues discussed in this survey? Note to interviewer: If the respondent has any additional comments or points to raise, please record here. Only ask this if the respondent has time.

That is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for all your help. The findings of the survey will be published on SEMLEP's website later in the year.