# Introduction

This paper outlines three projects developed by Semta which support strategic economic skills delivery. Semta believe these closely align with the interests of the Lancashire Provider Network and welcome the opportunity to provide more information at the board meeting in June.

## 1. The STEM Exchange and STEM Experience

Over the past 18 months Semta has been working in conjunction with the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) on an umbrella project called “The STEM Alliance”. The overarching aim of this project is to increase the capacity and capability of STEM related teaching in the further Education (FE) sector. As part of this project two digital resources were developed.

### The STEM Exchange

The aim of The STEM Exchange is to provide continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities to the FE sector. Semta has pulled together over 1,500 employers large and small across a range of STEM related industries who have agreed to offer learning and development opportunities free of charge to FE tutors, teachers and assessors.The system allows the education provider to search for opportunities local to them by sector, geography and upcoming events.

### The STEM Experience

Off the back of The STEM Exchange, The STEM Experience was a natural extension. Many of the employers who agreed to provide CPD opportunities also offered work experience placements to local schools and those on employability programmes. The STEM Experience provides a portal for employers to more widely publicise the opportunities and support they offer.

### Benefits

* Provide data on employers registered with the region
* Opportunities undertaken
* New registrations to the site
* Branding of the site and related communications indicating the support of the network
* Provides engagement opportunities for both large and small businesses
* Encourage schools and colleges to promote STEM careers and opportunities
* Provides quality assured resources to providers
* The technology could be replicated for other sectors

## 2. Apprenticeship Vacancy Generation and Matching Service / Clearing House

As the overarching programme management body and contract holder for the Automotive Industrial Partnership, Semta has worked in conjunction with [www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk](http://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk) (GMFJ) on the development of an Automotive Industrial Clearing House.

The aim of the clearing house is to:

1. Generate more higher level apprenticeship vacancies
2. Use the over-subscribed Original Engineering Manufacturer apprenticeship programmes to fill vacancies in the supply chain businesses

This approach is also being actively considered by both aerospace and construction industries. However the knock on benefits of this partnership reach far more widely than these specific sectors. Through their unique approach to proactive vacancy matching [www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk](http://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk) have filled over 15,000 vacancies in the past 12 months and have over 220,000 young people registered their platform.

**Benefits**

* The identification of more higher level apprenticeship vacancies in the region
* A guaranteed increase in the conversion rate of vacancies filled for any provider actively using the system
* Insight and data on:
	+ All vacancies posted on the system within any the region
	+ The industry areas young people are most interested in
	+ Conversion rates, fill times and destinations
	+ Careers advisor interactions and impact
	+ Heat maps of vacancies and applicants
	+ Tailored data and reporting

## 3. Training and Organisational Needs Analysis

As part of its role as a Sector Skills Council, Semta had previously been in a position to support the Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing sector by providing a national resource to support employers in developing their ongoing economic stability.

These included carrying out skills audits, business improvement technique training and advice on funding availability. Following the withdrawal of funding from SSCs Semta has been unable to provide this dedicated resource, but the needs of employers and stakeholders remain.

To meet this demand Semta are investing circa £25k in the development and build of a digital training and organisational needs analysis tool. The aim of the tool is to provide the volume generic advice and guidance required and to better identify organisations who would most benefit from the more limited one-to-one support now available.

The tool will be arranged into a series of subject matter areas, such as people, process, equipment etc. each with a number of simple yes no type answers followed by a short narrative section. Completion of each section will provide immediate feedback on the organisations relative position in the subject areas and depending on their relative benchmarking, suggested actions on how they can progress to improve their business, or indeed support in improving others.

### Benefits

* Improve performance and profitability of local businesses (particularly SMEs)
* Improving performance and profitability: Reviewing the personalised business output report will show how a business is performing in relation to competitors and what it can do to elevate Structured decision making
* Achieving business goals: Measure progression towards achieving businesses aims and aspirations and keep a business on track
* Structured decision making
* Signpost businesses to the best providers who can meet their needs
* Help shape future skills commissioning for the region
* Identify further support/funding available in the region

### Next Steps

Semta would like to work with Lancashire on the further development and communication of these tools to support employers and providers in the region.