



The Value of Further Education at SERC

Is education an expenditure or investment?

What is Further Education?

Further Education has a long and rich history in the landscape of the Northern Ireland economy and community. Its heritage is firmly rooted in delivering the technical and professional skills required by industry, and it remains the primary delivery arm for government to ensure that the Northern Ireland workforce has the skills to build a successful economy.

Who is SERC?

South Eastern Regional College is a top 30 UK College with 1200 members of staff and over 30,000 full and part-time enrolments each year. We work with over 1,000 business clients to help them grow their companies and to become more innovative.

SERC delivers on the Programme for Government through a Culture of Excellence meaning that we invest in the very best learning environment, demonstrated through our £80 million investment in new campuses; the teaching experience including a £2.75 million IT investment and an ethos of continuous improvement driven by pioneering quality enhancement and measurement practices. Our strategic focus is on:

- ▶ Helping People Overcome Educational Disadvantage
- ▶ Building a Hub for Scientific and Technological Capabilities
- ▶ Professionalising the Workforce
- ▶ Encouraging Innovation, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship
- ▶ Supporting and Developing Careers

Further Education as an Investment

We are funded through public money and so it is important for us to show you the impact of this investment.

For individuals this means delivering the skills, knowledge and qualifications to ensure they can build successful careers and lives. For businesses we supply a skilled workforce to help them effectively compete and create success.

This investment ultimately contributes to the economy and allows Northern Ireland to compete on a global basis. Our communities also benefit from this with improved levels of employment and higher levels of social cohesion.

The impact of the investment in SERC can be shown in 3 ways:

1. Contribution to the Economy
2. Return on Investment for:
 - ▶ The public purse
 - ▶ Individuals
 - ▶ Businesses
 - ▶ Schools

3. Social Contribution

This document provides an insight into the economic and social impact that South Eastern Regional College has, not only in the immediate locale but across NI.

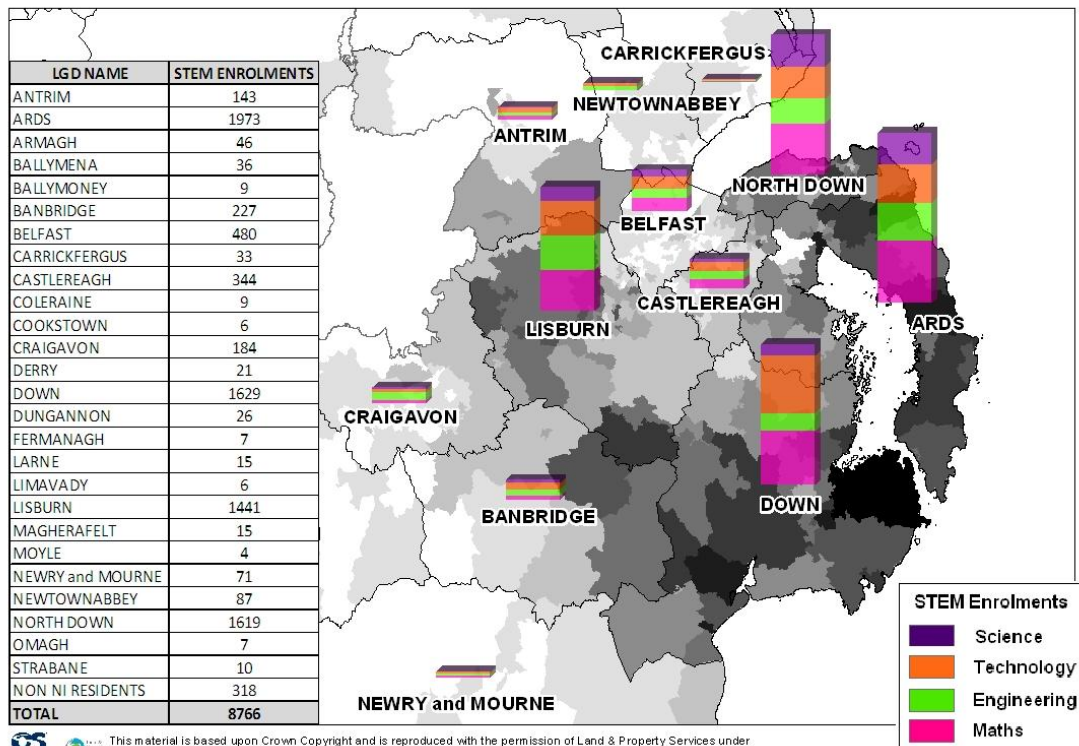


1. Contribution to the Economy

The wider economic impact of South Eastern Regional College goes beyond the number of students taught.

- ▶ SERC staff earnings and college operations spending increases local income by £35.3 million each year
- ▶ Productivity effects of SERC learners in last 5 years will contribute in the region of £12.8 million to the Northern Ireland economy
- ▶ SERC provides 520 full-time jobs and 617 part-time which then impacts on consumer spending. It also supports thousands of jobs through the supply chain
- ▶ The building of new and extended SERC campuses has contributed an £80 million capital investment in the local economy and provided well over 500 construction jobs
- ▶ SERC is increasing the number of learners studying in critical skills areas which have been deemed as the basis for the future growth and success of the NI economy. This includes STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths).

STEM Enrolments 2009/10



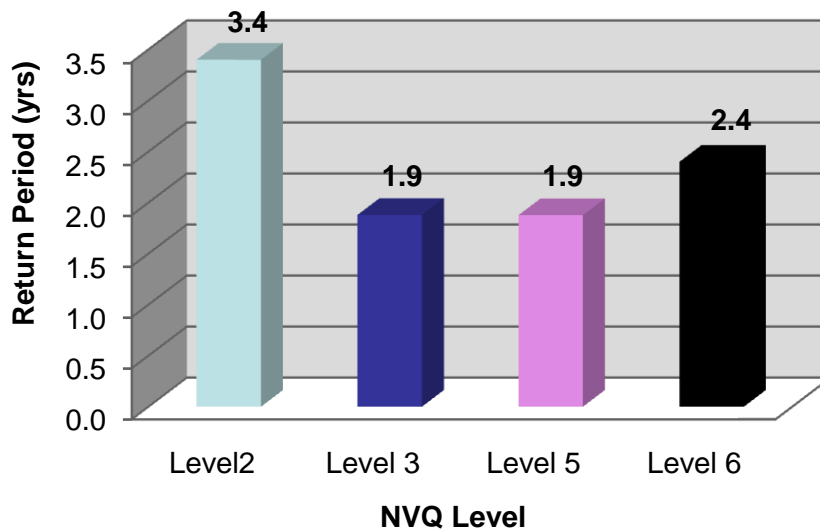
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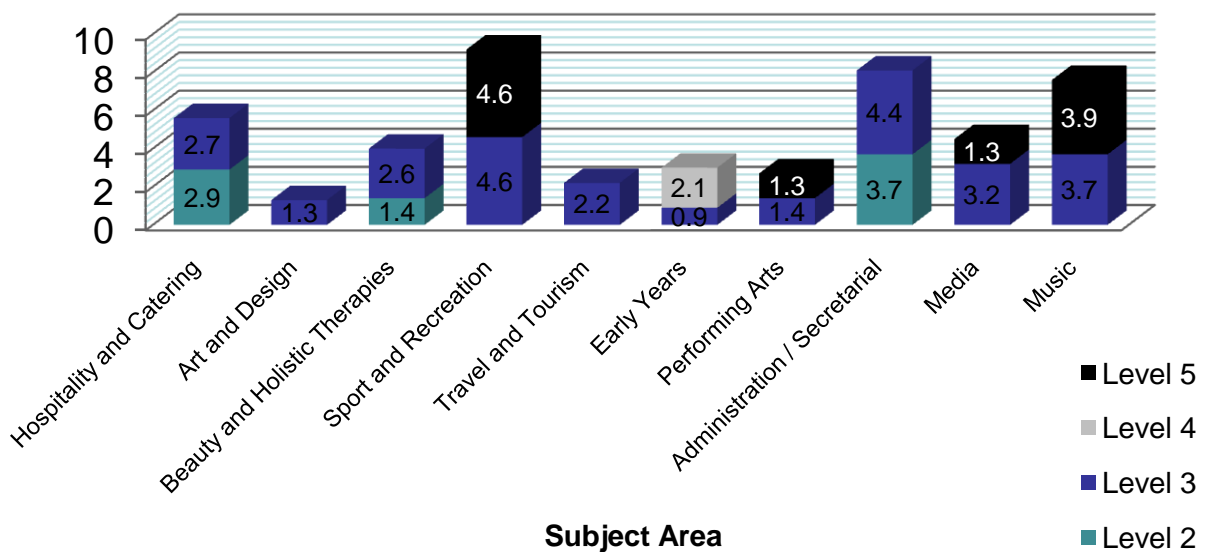
2. Return on Investment

Return on Investment for Public Purse

- On average a student studying a STEM subject (science, technology, engineering and maths) at SERC at level 2 will return the public investment in 3.4 years, at level 3 in 1.9 years, at level 5 in 1.9 years and 2.4 years at level 6.



- On average a student studying a non STEM subject (catering, sports, business etc) at SERC at level 2 will return the public investment in 2.7 years, at level 3 in 2.7 years, at level 4 in 2.1 years and in 2.8 years at level 6.





- SERC EXTRA, a service helping students in danger of dropping out of education, has saved the public purse over £500,000 in 4 months.
- Compared to those with no qualifications, workers with higher levels of education have increased job satisfaction, better health and lower rates of unemployment, imprisonment and reliance on social assistance. This saves millions of pounds in government spending on the NHS, benefits system and law enforcement. These social savings benefit not just learners, but homeowners, businesses and taxpayers.

Return on Investment for Individuals



A student studying on a STEM (science, technology, engineering or maths) oriented course can make their money back in 1 month.

A student studying on a non STEM oriented course can make their money back in 2 weeks.

Compared with someone with no qualifications in NI, a student with a level 3 qualification will increase their earnings by £235,517 over their working lifetime.

Level 3 Apprenticeship can increase average earnings by up to 22% compared to a Level 2 apprenticeship.

Return on Investment for Schools

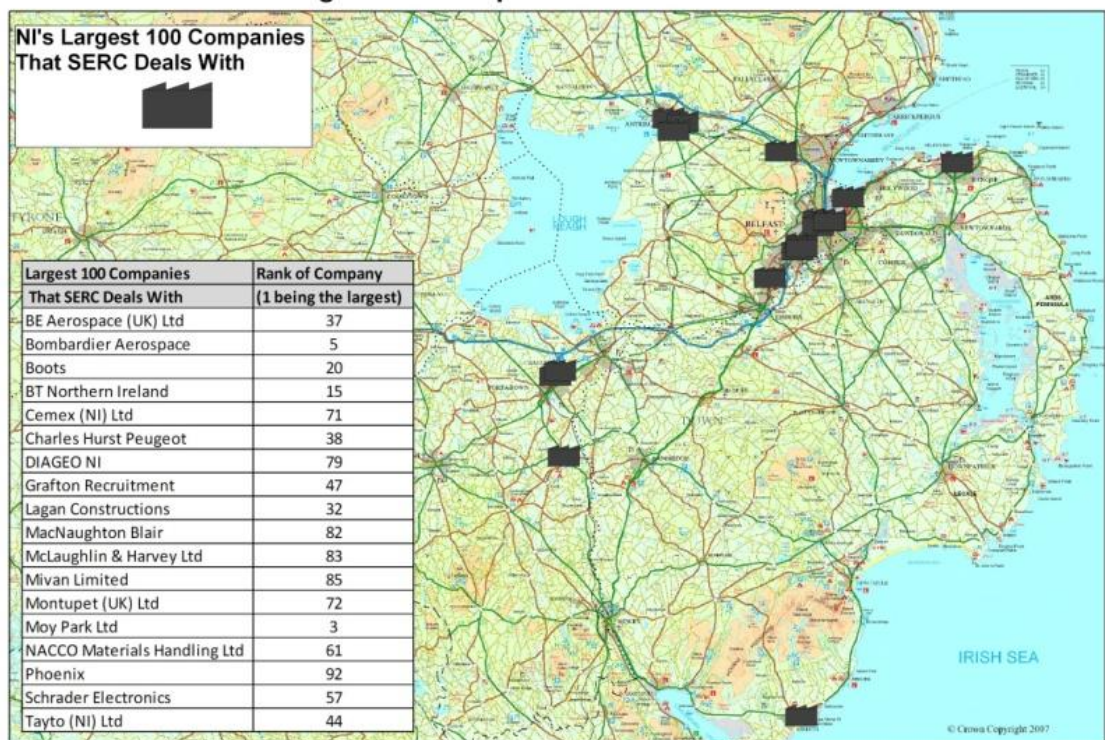
- 1341 school children attend SERC in 2009/10 to study vocational programmes as part of the Entitlement framework from 36 schools.
- 15% school partnerships students in 2007/08 progressed to a level 2 and above course, non-school partnership programme in 2008/09 at SERC.
- 16% school partnership of students in 2008/09 progressed to a level 2 and above course, non-school partnership programme in 2009/10.



Return on Investment for Businesses

- SERC has provided £860,697 worth of funding to businesses over the last 2 years, hence saving these companies this expenditure.
- SERC works with over 1,000 companies including 20% of the top 100 NI providing training to improve employee's skills, product development services to help businesses grow and consultancy to support innovation.

NI's Largest 100 Companies That SERC Deals With



- It is estimated that the current Northern Ireland workforce has over 67,997 people who have gained qualifications at SERC. These people are helping NI businesses to be productive, profitable and innovative.



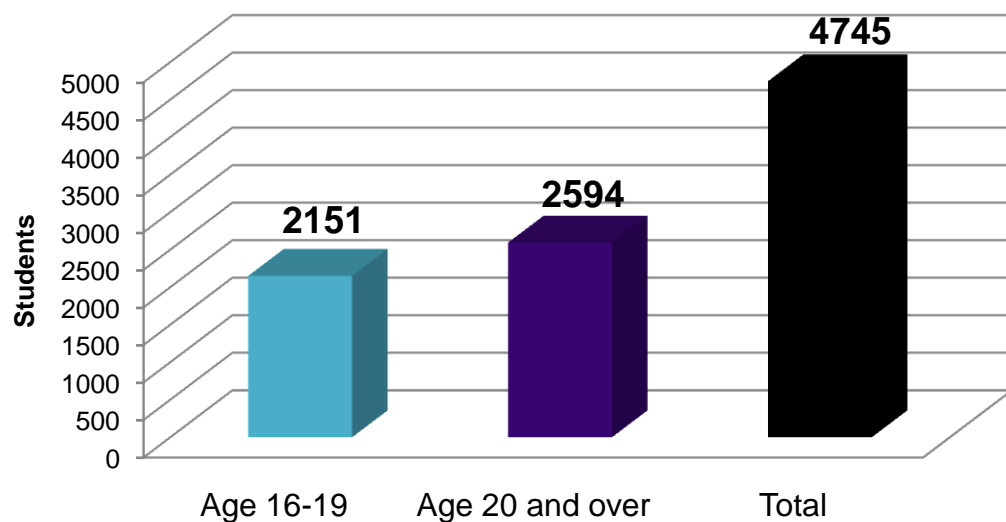
Social Contribution – Reducing Social Costs

- ▶ Compared to those with no qualifications, workers with higher levels of education have increased job satisfaction and lower rates of unemployment, imprisonment and reliance on social assistance. This contributes to more successful communities.
- ▶ It has been proven that education does improve lifestyle, for instance lower levels of smoking, obesity and mental illness, leading to improved health.
- ▶ The fact that students can get higher salaries from securing qualifications at SERC reduces the burden on the taxpayer.

Social Contribution – Tackling the Barriers to Education

- ▶ 5742 people are studying Essential Skills at SERC. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are all key employment and social skills.
- ▶ An average of 32% of part-time Essential Skills students progressed to a higher level course immediately upon completion in the last 2 years.

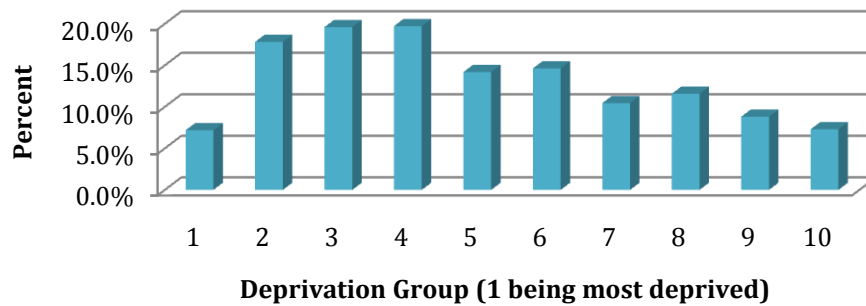
Essential Skill Students 2009/10





Essential Skills students come from all backgrounds. The charts below show that students coming from wealthier backgrounds still require Essential Skills.

Percent of Population Age 16-19 that are Essential Skill Students in SERC's Catchment by Deprivation



Percentage of Population Age 20 and Over that are Essential Skill Students in SERC's Catchment by Deprivation

