



Universities



Business, Professional and Financial Services

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Over the past 25-30 years, the business and professional services sector has been ascendant in the West Midlands. The sector represents one of our strongest assets, not only for the contribution it makes to the regional economy but also for the vital ecosystem that supports the growth of businesses in other sectors.”

Ian Barnes

International tax partner at Deloitte and sector lead representative for Business & Professional Services for the WMCA Productivity & Skills Commission.

Key Messages

The West Midlands has the largest regional financial and professional services hub in the UK.

An unparalleled strategic location at the heart of the UK's motorway and rail network, enabling a commute to the capital in under 75 minutes.

The BPFS sector - specifically in relation to financial services, law and accounting - has reached a critical mass with a full service offering that competes on the global stage.

Significantly lower business costs and overheads in the region compared to the capital, including prime rental costs up to 50% lower than the capital.

University Specialisms

Our universities maintain close links with industry partners by:

- Supporting SME growth by providing access to the latest business technology and thinking
- Strengthening the skills of BPFS professionals through world-class Executive Education programmes.

Universities advance our understanding of:

- Growth, innovation and productivity
- Ethical leadership
- The societal impact of business decisions
- Opportunities provided by big data
- Diversity in business
- Entrepreneurship.



Thriving Cities

Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton



A £92bn Economy

320,000 Jobs

BPFS provides employment for around 320,000 people



BPFS contributes over £25bn GVA to the West Midlands economy

34,000 Students

Studying business related subjects in the West Midlands each year



14,000 FinTech

Graduates each year

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West Midlands Growth Company

Key University Facilities/Projects



Aston University

Aston Degree Apprenticeships

- Aston pioneered degree apprenticeships in the UK. Designed specifically to fill skills gaps, degree apprenticeships can upskill existing staff and nurture new talent that brings fresh ideas to business and industry.

Enterprise Research Centre (ERC) (Aston Business School and Warwick Business School)

- The UK's leading centre of excellence for research into the growth, innovation and productivity of small and medium-sized enterprises. Its research helps shape better policies and practices that enable SMEs to thrive.

The Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses UK Programme

- The 10,000 Small Businesses UK programme addresses the support gap for growth-orientated small businesses, helping them to unlock their economic and job creation potential.

Research and Knowledge Exchange

- Operates at the commercial edge of the University's research and teaching, linking businesses to Aston's academic expertise.



Birmingham City University

Centre for Enterprise, Innovation and Growth

- A research centre dedicated to developing a stronger understanding of the foundations and process of growth, particularly in small to medium sized enterprises.
- CEIG works collaboratively with firms to provide guidance and analysis of their potential and capacity for development.

STEAMhouse

- STEAMhouse helps innovation happen. Enabling businesses to develop new products, services and skills.
- Created by Birmingham City University, in partnership with Eastside Projects and part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and Arts Council England, we're driving innovation and research for major long-term growth across the region.



Coventry University

CUE Business Solutions

- Provides 1-2-1 support, helping SMEs improve their capacity to innovate and assisting with new product development and testing.
- For new start-up business, the Business Solutions unit provides advice and guidance on business models, planning, finance and marketing.

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International Centre for Transformational Entrepreneurship (ICTE)

- Supports sustainable socio-economic transformation through systemic approaches to entrepreneurship in communities nationally and internationally.
- The Centre's research supports international economic development through entrepreneurial education engagement and consultancy.



University of Birmingham

Lloyds Banking Group Centre for Responsible Business

- Located within Birmingham Business School, and funded by the Lloyds Banking Group, the Centre champions responsible business.
- It develops new sustainable business models which deliver positive social, environmental and economic impact.

Centre for Women's Enterprise, Leadership, Economy & Diversity (WE-LEAD)

- The Centre engages with policy makers, academics, support providers and businesses to answer important social science questions about female enterprise.



University of Warwick

Innovation, Knowledge & Organisational Networks Research Unit

- Established in 1997, the IKON unit at Warwick Business School works with organisations such as the UK National Health Service to help the public and private sectors innovate by exploiting data and organisational knowledge.

University of Warwick Science Park

- Its Business Support Service provides an end-to-end service for innovation-led businesses, ranging from start-up support to on-going strategic consultancy for established firms.
- Services include incubation facilities, access to finance and professional route to market development.



University of Wolverhampton

SciTech Innovation Hub

- Provides the expertise to support businesses through the process of new product development, from idea generation to commercialisation.
- Located at University of Wolverhampton Science Park, the hub delivers market research and intellectual property review support, along with access to technical graduate placements.