

# Training is key, warns skills group

BUSINESSES in Suffolk are lagging behind those in the rest of the region in providing training for their staff, according to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

The claim came after it emerged just seven per cent of employers in the east of England who have signed up to the Train to Gain initiative are based in Suffolk.

The National Audit Office found skills gaps cost a typical 50-employee business £165,000 in lost revenue each year.

In addition, it is estimated one in six employers in England are experiencing skills gaps in their workforce and of those, nearly eight in ten say it has had an impact on their business.

Paul Storey, skills development director at the LSC East of England, said: "Suffolk does have a thriving business community, but we are concerned perceived barriers to training could be costing businesses much more than they think in terms of competitiveness and lost revenue."

Train to Gain is a free advisory service that helps businesses identify what training they need to improve their business. Mr Storey said: "Just over 500 businesses in Suffolk have signed up to Train to Gain since April 2006, which is one of the lowest rates in the region."

For more information visit [www.traintogain.gov.uk](http://www.traintogain.gov.uk) or call 0800 387326.