

Impact of Changes
in Provision on
People with
Learning Difficulties
and/or Disabilities
Post-19
Final Report

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For those with an interest and/or
involvement in the delivery of provision for
adults with learning difficulties and/or
disabilities

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Contents

	<i>paragraph number</i>
Executive Summary	-
1: Introduction	1
Background	2
Aims and objectives	4
Methodology	9
2: Changes in Provision	14
Reasons for changes in provision	21
Alternative arrangements following reductions in provision	37
Impact of changes in provision	44
Support for learners in the future	49
3: Regional and Local Organisation of Provision	50
Strategies for local provision	51
Partnerships, liaison and consultation	57
Planning and improving local provision	60
4: Participation in Learning	68
Current learning activity	73
Progression in learning	79
Choice of learning provider	82
Support for learning	91
Benefits of learning	100
5: Conclusions and Recommendations	102
Conclusions	103
Recommendations	113
Annexes	<i>page number</i>
A: Provision of Learning	54
B: Profile of Learners	63
C: Ipsos MORI Technical Report	71
D: Provider Telephone Survey	82
E: Learner Telephone Survey	94

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings from a research study undertaken during early 2008 on the extent and impact of any changes in further education (FE) provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities over the last 12-24 months. The research was commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), and carried out by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES). The three-stage research study comprised a survey of providers of LSC-funded learning, a survey of learners and the collection of case studies of FE providers, local authorities and regional and local LSCs.

Key findings

1 The majority of providers have not reduced their provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Nearly 80 per cent of FE providers have not reported a decline in their provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities overall over the past one to two years. More than a quarter (27 per cent) had actually increased their provision, mainly in response to increased demand from learners. A further 52 per cent report that the amount of provision is 'about the same' as it was one to two years ago.

2 A significant minority (19 per cent) of providers have reduced their provision.

3 Providers who have taken steps to reduce their provision claim that their actions were driven by reduced funding.

The reasons given by FE providers for cutting their provision were complex, but in the main providers reported that it was because of a reduction in their funding for adult learning.

The case studies revealed that, in some instances, a reduction in the overall funding for mainstream adult learning had led to a reduced offer in the types of courses that had attracted adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Other providers reported that they were managing reduced allocations to meet LSC priorities, which had meant that some provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities had been withdrawn where it did not fit these priorities.

The case study research revealed a lack of consensus about whether or not providers had reduced or withdrawn their provision because of cuts in LSC funding. The views of providers and LSCs diverged significantly on this issue.

Regional and local LSCs consulted in the case studies reported, in some instances, a reduction in overall funding to colleges for adult learning but said they had, at the same time, protected all funding for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities up to the age of 25 and that colleges needed to manage their allocation for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities more effectively. Evidence from the case studies suggested that some colleges had reduced their provision more quickly than they would have liked because of the LSC's restructuring of funding for adult learning.

4 Providers are also responding to the LSC's focus on funding learning that leads to progression and meets the required standards. This has led to benefits for learners.

Providers were increasingly making changes in their offer to ensure their provision met the LSC's focus on learning leading to progression. The result was a reduction in provision where providers were not able to show progression from their learning difficulties and/or disabilities provision. They were also stopping courses they considered to be of low quality and focusing instead on areas of strength within their curriculum, rather than opting for a very broad curriculum offer.

Where provision has been reorganised to focus on progression, the research uncovered examples of increased numbers of learners being able to follow accredited qualifications and make progress in their learning.

5 Where reductions in provision had been made, providers had not always been able to ensure that alternative arrangements for the learners affected were in place.

The evidence from the case studies suggested that providers who had reduced provision had been able to make only limited alternative arrangements for the learners affected. Some of this had been done as a result of collaboration between the provider, the local authority and the LSC and through work with voluntary organisations. The research uncovered examples of the effects of reductions in provision being offset, to a certain extent, by effective partnership working.

Providers reported that the greatest impact of any reduction in provision had been on learners and their parents and carers. Providers perceived that, for some learners, there had been an immediate loss of skills, or failure to maintain skills.

6 All providers work with local partner organisations to plan and assess future demand, but partnerships do not take a particularly strategic approach to meeting the needs of adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

All the FE providers in the research study worked with a wide range of organisations when planning and assessing future demand for their provision, including local Connexions partnerships, schools and NHS trusts.

Establishing good partnership and liaison arrangements between the key stakeholders should lead to better co-ordinated responses to gaps or changes in local provision. The evidence from the case studies suggested that while the level of consultation and collaboration between the local stakeholders was good overall, this did not lead to a strategic approach to the assessment of need, or well-co-ordinated responses. Although local authorities have a shared responsibility for provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, only around one in three providers that had reduced provision for these learners had consulted their local authority.

7 The lack of clarity around responsibility for provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, coupled with the short-term funding regime, create uncertainties and a desire for a stronger LSC regional strategy for this group of learners.

In terms of improving local provision, there was great uncertainty about which organisation (that is, the LSC or the local authority) is responsible for different aspects of the overall learning and care of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Providers felt that the situation was exacerbated further by the short-term funding regime of regional and local LSCs. They reported that this does not give them the ability to plan for the long term because, in terms of the funding they receive from the LSC, providers report that they only know their funding allocation one year in advance.

8 The majority of those in learning are satisfied with the choice of courses available to them, and feel their learning is having a positive impact on their lives.

The majority of learners surveyed were satisfied with the choice of courses that were available from providers. Most did not think there had been a decline in the choice of courses available to them, compared with the previous year.

The evidence suggests that a large proportion of learners had progressed in their learning, and were doing a course at a higher or more advanced level than they were doing the year before.

The majority of learners taking part in the survey indicated that they received all the help and support they needed from their college to take part in their learning. Around 3 in 10 of all learners surveyed would like more help or support from their college in relation to how they manage the course and their learning difficulty or disability, and also in relation to careers advice, transport and finance.

It was clear that the majority of learners had benefited from attending college, and that learning had had a positive effect on them. In particular, learners had developed their social skills, which had stimulated their appetite further for education. Many learners also believed that they had gained skills that they would be able to use in future employment.

Recommendations

The organisation of provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities involves complex and often sensitive decisions. The key recommendations arising from this study are as follows.

1 There is a need for clarity on what provision is planned and procured for this group of learners, and on the respective roles of LSCs, local authorities and learning providers in planning this provision.

The LSC needs to ensure that it provides clear guidance at national and regional level in order to support effective dialogue about high-quality provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at the local level.

The need for greater clarity and guidance is highlighted by the evidence from the case studies, which suggests there is not a consistent, clear approach across the regions with regard to provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities: practice varies considerably. At one end of the spectrum, some regional LSCs have set out a clear strategy that is expected to be implemented at local level. At the other end, there is a lack of clarity from other regional LSCs in terms of what action should be taken by local LSCs and the providers they fund. It seems clear that without a regional strategy there will be differential implementation of national policy at the local level.

2 There is also a need for stronger partnership working and consultation on the part of providers and LSCs, particularly with their counterparts in local authorities and social services departments.

This research has highlighted some good practice in partnership working with regard to provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

As the extent and nature of partnership working varied across the case study regions, a more consistent approach is required. One way of ensuring that this happens could be for the LSC to take a lead in gathering and disseminating examples of effective partnership working. This should include both the mechanics of how the partnerships are set up and managed, guidelines for good partnership working, and the positive impacts on provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

3 Where possible, the LSC at regional level should encourage greater consultation between local LSCs and providers with local authorities when planning reductions or changes in provision.

The evidence suggests that local authorities may not always be involved in the consultation process when provision is altered.

Greater collaboration between local partners may be one way to ensure that partners in a local area are better meeting the needs of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are unable to show progression.

4 Providers need to ensure that their adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (and other learners) are adequately supported in their learning activities, have regular discussions about their needs and effective signposting to appropriate sources of help and advice.

The research has found a degree of unmet support needs among adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities which requires attention in order to improve the quality of the learning experience. Whilst levels of learner satisfaction are generally high, there remain some students who require further help and support in relation to issues such as course content and design to meet specific needs, including advice and help with career choices, transport and finance.

1: Introduction

- 1 This report presents the full findings from research commissioned during early 2008 by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and carried out by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) on the impact of any recent changes in provision on adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Background

- 2 The LSC plays an important role, in partnership with a range of other organisations, in securing high-quality provision for young people and adults of all abilities. The LSC's commitment was demonstrated in the independent review that was carried out and published in November 2005, as *Through Inclusion to Excellence*¹. Following this review, the LSC published *Learning for Living and Work*² in October 2006, the framework for its vision of ensuring high-quality provision and opportunity for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In essence, the LSC's vision is that the goal of high-quality provision is just as important for this group of learners as it is for all other members of society.
- 3 Learners who self-declare a learning difficulty and/or disability form a significant and increasing proportion of all LSC-funded learners. The LSC has made it a priority to invest and develop more high-quality, learner-centred provision and increase the opportunities for such learners to access education, training and employment.³

Aims and objectives

- 4 In early 2008, the LSC commissioned independent research to provide evidence at the local level that would enable the LSC to understand what (if any) changes had been made to provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to explore the impact of these changes.

¹ LSC (November 2005) *Through Inclusion to Excellence: Report of the Steering Group for the Strategic Review of the LSC's Planning and Funding of Provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities across the Post-16 Learning and Skills Sector*. Coventry: LSC

² LSC (October 2006) *Learning for Living and Work: Improving Education and Training Opportunities for People with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities*. Coventry: LSC

³ LSC (October 2006) *Raising our Game: Annual Statement of Priorities*. Coventry: LSC

- 5 The primary aim of the research was to understand the extent and nature of any changes in provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Evidence of any changes was sought from a sample of both FE providers and adult learners. The research did not, however, seek to provide quantitative evidence of changes in the *total number* of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities participating in the FE system, as the research consulted with a sample of providers, rather than the total LSC-funded provider base.
- 6 The research had a number of objectives, which were to:
- provide evidence of any changes, in the form of cuts or increases in provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 19 or over, in the full range of FE providers
 - evaluate and measure the impact of any changes on the experiences of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the FE system, across the full range of providers
 - assess how providers are supporting the needs of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
 - assess how providers are ensuring that the needs of staff teaching learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are being met.
- 7 The research study comprised three stages:
- a survey of providers of LSC-funded provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
 - a survey of FE learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who started their learning in the academic years 2006/07 and 2007/08
 - case study qualitative interviews with representatives of FE colleges, local and regional LSCs and local authorities.
- 8 The results from the surveys of providers and learners are reported partially within the main body of the report. Readers are directed to Annexes A and B for a fuller description of the characteristics of providers and learners, and copies of the survey questionnaires.

Methodology

- 9 The survey of providers was intended to be a census of FE colleges and other organisations that made provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, with the aim of achieving a 60 per cent response rate. The target population comprised providers of LSC-funded learning for this group of learners. The sample, which was drawn by the LSC from the PIMS database, included 453 learning providers that fulfilled the criteria. The survey was conducted by telephone by Ipsos MORI and a total of 239 respondents across the broad range of FE providers were successfully interviewed.
- 10 The target population for the learner survey were FE learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 19 or over and who started their learning in the academic years 2006/07 or 2007/08. The sample was drawn from the Individual Learner Record (ILR) database. The target number of interviews was 2,000 learners, with 1,000 from each academic year. The telephone survey was conducted by researchers at Ipsos MORI during February and March 2008.
- 11 The detailed methodologies and sample criteria employed in the quantitative surveys are included in Annex C. Copies of the provider and learner survey questionnaires are contained in Annex D and E respectively.
- 12 The qualitative case study phase of the research was aimed at providing an in-depth assessment of the views of the key stakeholders - local authorities and regional and local LSCs, as well as FE providers identified and selected from the quantitative (telephone) survey - involved in the different aspects of provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A case study approach was adopted for this phase of the research, with a target of 15 completed case studies. Ultimately, case study interviews were conducted with respondents at 13 providers, 11 regional or local LSCs and 6 local authorities. Semi-structured discussion guides were designed for these interviews.

13 This report is structured as follows.

- Section 2 focuses on changes in the provision made by the providers, and the main reasons behind the changes.
- Section 3 examines the wider context of how provision is organised at local and regional level.
- Section 4 looks at the demand side, and describes participation in learning by adults post-19.
- Section 5 identifies the main conclusions arising from the study and makes some policy recommendations.

2: Changes in Provision

- 14 This section focuses on how the provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has changed among the providers surveyed, and the reasons behind those changes. It draws on evidence from the quantitative telephone survey of providers, and qualitative evidence from the follow-up case study interviews with a sample of providers who indicated they had either increased or decreased their provision over the previous 12-24 months.
- 15 The key question was to find out whether providers had cut or introduced additional courses for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the previous 12-24 months.
- 16 The survey results indicated that the majority of providers were providing the same level of courses as they had done in the previous 12-24 months. Table 1 shows that just over half of the respondent organisations (52 per cent) had not changed the range of courses or skills training they (currently) provided. Slightly more than a quarter (27 per cent) of providers were offering more courses or skills training than previously. However, around 1 in 5 of all providers (19 per cent) indicated they were providing fewer courses than before.

Table 1: Changes in the range of courses and skills training provided in the previous 12-24 months

	N	%
More courses or skills training now	65	27
Fewer courses or skills training now	45	19
About the same as now	124	52
Don't know	5	2
<i>Total</i>	<i>239</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 17 Providers that were providing **more** courses now were then asked what sort of changes to their provision they had made. As Table 2 shows, 9 out of 10 (89 per cent) indicated they had introduced new courses or provision.

Table2: Type of increase made in provision (multiple response)

	N	% of cases
Introduced new provision/courses	58	89
Increased the number of places on courses and skills training	25	38
Increased the number of hours	20	31
Other	7	11
<i>Total</i>	<i>65</i>	

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 18 Providers that were offering **fewer courses** compared with the last 12-24 months ago were, similarly, asked what kind of reductions they had made. Table 3 shows that the most common action taken was to cut the number of places on courses and skills training. However, almost two-fifths (38 per cent) had withdrawn from some courses altogether.

Table 3: Type of reduction in courses provided (multiple response)

	N	%
Cut the number of places on courses and skills training	21	47
Stopped completely, i.e. course withdrawn	17	38
Reduced the number of hours	10	22
Reorganised some courses	8	18
Other	9	20
<i>Total</i>	<i>45</i>	

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 19 Providers that had reduced their provision did not appear to have done so arbitrarily, and many reported that they had consulted extensively before making those changes. In particular, most providers that had reduced their provision said that they had sought the views of their local LSC and over half had sought the views of learners themselves, or their parents or carers.
- 20 Some providers consulted more widely and had also taken into account the views of other local partners, such as Connexions, local authorities, relevant community organisations and the strategic health authority. However, less than half the providers that had reduced their provision had undertaken wider consultation (Table 4).

Table 4: Views taken into account before reduction in courses (multiple response)

	N	% of cases
Local LSC	32	71
Learners with learning difficulties/disabilities	27	61
Parents/carers/guardians of learners	23	51
Relevant community organisations	22	49
Connexions partnerships	20	44
Local authority	16	36
Relevant charitable/voluntary organisations	15	33
Strategic health authority	10	22
None of the above	2	4
Other	4	9
Don't know	3	7
<i>Total</i>	<i>45</i>	

Source: IES survey, 2008

Reasons for changes in provision

21 An important aim of this study was to find out the reasons behind the changes that providers had made. This was done on two levels. The quantitative survey ascertained the broad reasons for the changes providers had made. The qualitative case study phase explored the reasons for the changes in greater depth through one-to-one interviews.

Increased provision

22 In the survey, providers who had **increased** the range of courses and skills training they were providing gave several reasons for having done so. By far the most frequently mentioned reason was an increase in demand from learners and their parents. Almost half of providers (48 per cent) cited this. However, 1 in 7 (16 per cent) claimed they had done so in direct response to changes in provision locally. The case study interviews indicated that some of these changes may have been related to increased demand as a result of other providers in the area cutting their places for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Table 5 sets out the responses.

Table 5: Reasons for increase in courses and skills training (multiple response)

	N	% of cases
Increased demand from learners and/or parents	31	48
As a response to changes in provision locally	10	16
Needed more specific/diverse range of courses	5	8
Improvement in learner achievement	4	6
Local LSC strategic reasons	3	5
More funding available	3	5
Moving learning difficulties and/or disabilities provision into mainstream	3	5
More courses accredited	2	3
More focus on employment skills	2	3
Progression	2	3
College policy	2	3
Staffing changes	2	3
National/government agenda	2	3
Request by other partner (eg Connexions)	2	3
In order to comply with requirements under the DDA	1	2
As a result of the modernisation of social services day services	1	2
Other	4	6
<i>Total</i>	65	

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 23 The case study interviews provided confirmation of the reasons behind the decision by some providers to increase their provision.

Case study 1

College A was responding to a sudden increase in demand, which resulted from reduced provision elsewhere at another local college.

Last year... we got an awful lot of late applicants because I think it was [named college] we heard had cut provision; and then at the last minute there was this extra demand for places from nowhere coming to us. They were saying [it's] because they've got nowhere else to go.

In this case, College A was able to accommodate the increase in demand because it had restructured its programme earlier to strengthen the provision. This has meant getting adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities on either a life skills course to increase their independent living skills, or to develop the academic abilities for more able students and look at having some form of progression.

Reduced provision

- 24 Providers who had **reduced** provision were asked why they were providing fewer courses or skills training for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, compared with 12-24 months previously. The main reason cited was **a reduction in their funding**. More than two-thirds of providers in this category (68 per cent) indicated that they could no longer afford to continue running those courses because their funding had been reduced. The survey itself did not specify exactly what funding had been reduced, but this was explored in more detail in the follow-up case studies.
- 25 Almost a quarter (24 per cent) attributed the change in their provision as a response to a change in the strategy of the local LSC. Perceived changes in strategy were explored in more detail in the case study interviews. About 1 in 8, however, were responding to a low demand for those courses, which meant they did not have sufficient numbers of learners to make them viable (Table 6).

Table6: Reasons for reduction in courses (multiple response)

	N	% of cases
Funding reduced/can no longer afford it	31	68
Local LSC strategy	10	24
Low demand for courses/insufficient learner numbers	5	12
Our priority is to get them into employment	3	7
Changing views on education and course structure	2	5
Courses not accredited	1	2
Lack of trained staff	1	2
Health and safety issues/legislation	1	2
Other	6	14
<i>Total</i>	45	

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 26 The reasons for the reduction in provision were explored more fully in the case study interviews. Although providers that had reduced provision comprised a minority of the surveyed sample, their significance should not be underestimated because of the number of learners affected, which ranged from 200 places at one college to 20 at another.

- 27 Although the reasons providers gave for having changed or reduced their provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were quite complex, the underlying factors cited in the majority of cases were linked to a change in their LSC funding, either actual or impending.
- 28 It was quite clear that in planning their provision, FE colleges in particular were increasingly taking into account the LSC's aim to focus its funding on key government priorities and, in particular, to ensure that learners were following courses leading to progression.
- 29 Providers understand that LSC funding is now geared more towards learning and progression to higher level learning, employment or independent living, rather than lateral courses at the same level. Most providers have interpreted this to mean progression from Entry Level, to Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3. At regional and local level, providers believe that LSC funding is strictly aimed at delivering these national priorities, which are also set out in *Learning for Living and Work*¹. The outcome is that some providers made changes to their provision where they were not able to show progression by their adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

¹ LSC (October 2006) *Learning for Living and Work: Improving Education and Training Opportunities for People with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities*. Coventry: LSC

Case study 2

College B has cut its roll by 20 places in the last 12 months because it could not show any progression. Adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were repeating their learning year after year, and at 19 and over could not keep on repeating the same course.

Like many other colleges, we understood the documents [Learning for Living and Work] to say 'stop recycling learners'. This is how we see it, but we can't go on with the student past 19 unless we can actually show that their learning is progressing. We must show progression and that's why we stopped people coming in and doing the same thing every year.

The local **LSC** recognises that much of its budget has to be targeted at approved qualifications at Levels 2-3 and Skills for Life. In this area, funding is being withdrawn from college certificated and other uncertificated (ie non-accredited) provision. Over the course of the last 24 months or so, this particular LSC has put pressure on providers to rationalise provision, and to use the resource for government priorities. The LSC believes colleges have now got courses that are, at the very least, RARPA¹-accredited and with clear learning aims, and that colleges have put in place systems that will move learners forward. The LSC acknowledges, however, that the number of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in colleges in the region has fallen.

- 30 Some FE colleges were increasingly taking the view that they needed to review their offer and focus on learning that was of better quality than that currently on offer.

¹ Recognising and Rewarding Progress and Achievement

Case study 3

College C has cut up to 80 places. The college has responded to *Learning for Living and Work*, and has realigned much of the curriculum in response to that document. It has drawn on LSC policy documents and its own view has also helped to form a judgement on the kind of programmes it thinks it would do well. There is recognition that the quality of some current provision is unsatisfactory, particularly because of the poor quality of staff and their lack of expertise to meet the needs of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

We took over a very broad provision, which was always seen as a strength that we have adults with mental health issues, young people with behavioural issues, a whole range of learning difficulties from severe to moderate. We also attracted learners with autistic spectrum disorders for discrete programmes... Internally, I think we recognised it as a weakness because if you have got that huge range of provision, you need the expertise to be able to ensure that it is done well, especially in this day and age; and we didn't have that. We didn't have sufficient expertise.

The college also acknowledges it has had to address the LSC's priorities not to fund inadequate provision.

The LSC has been very clear that they don't want to buy inadequate provision and they won't fund that inadequate provision. So in a college in our position, where we had aspects of our very broad curriculum working very well and aspects of our curriculum that weren't working very well, one of the drivers for making judgements and decisions that we made was, 'What do we do well, and let's focus on that; and what do we not do so well and are confident in being able to make it better in the very short term; and if not why should we be keeping it?'

The focus of provision has shifted so that it is more on progression and work outcomes.

- 31 For other colleges, the reduction in their provision has been prompted because some of the provision had been more about social care and less about education or learning. Case study 4 illustrates this point.

Case study 4

College D has adopted a very different model for the curriculum this year from that it had offered in previous years. The college has reduced provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by more than 50 places because people had been on courses that were not leading to a qualification or progression to higher levels of learning.

In previous years basically people used to turn up on a Wednesday, maybe were put into a class with people they got on with, and then the tutor would say, 'Well, what are we going to study this year?' And if they said 'knitting', then that's what they'd do. So we've completely overhauled that this year.

The college offered parents the opportunity to come to a meeting *en masse*, where staff explained what the college was going to do. Parents were then asked to go and think about what the students' aspirations were, and what sort of lifestyles they were leading, and what sort of skills they might need to develop to support that. From that, and subsequent interviews with the learners themselves, the college put together a curriculum offer of quite different options for them.

The college believes it has been driven by the need to refocus its effort on the provision of independent living skills, much of which has been driven by the LSC's agenda and funding.

We would probably have just carried on with what we were doing, tweaking it, making slight improvements, and I don't think it probably gave us the impetus to really think about what we were doing.

While the college found the new curriculum more difficult to implement, it is now more comfortable with it, and the way it is offering good-quality provision. The college does not intend to offer a mainstream model of curriculum for this group of learners, but remains convinced that the new curriculum is a good educational model in the FE context.

- 32 Almost all the providers in the case studies claimed there has been reduction in LSC funding to colleges for adult learning which, in turn, has shaped their current provision. The question to ask, at this stage, is whether FE colleges have reduced or withdrawn provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities because of the cuts in the LSC's *overall* adult funding. It is here that the views of colleges and the LSCs diverged significantly.

33 Although some LSCs agreed that in some instances there has been a significant reduction in their overall funding to colleges, they nevertheless stressed that at a regional level they have protected all funding for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities up to the age of 25, and that they are still prioritising these learners where provision is expected to lead to progression and/or is set within a qualifications framework. The view of the LSCs taking part in the case studies is that it is up to colleges to decide how they manage their allocation, and in particular to identify where they need to make changes to reflect the revised priorities for progression and accredited provision.

Case study 5

College E reduced its provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The views of individuals and providers in the town was that the college no longer offered the provision, and that was due to funding issues. The local newspaper reported that there was a £1 million cut in funding for this provision. The college reported that people believed that the local LSC had suddenly done this overnight, as reported by the newspaper.

The **LSC**, in its negotiations with **College E** in 2006, had discussions about the college's curriculum and offer. There were, undoubtedly, pressures to ensure that the LSC's funding was contributing to national targets, and that the curriculum was addressing those.

The local LSC reported in this case that it sought to protect funding for all learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities up to the age of 25 in the region. Similarly, in its funding calculations and discussions with colleges, the LSC had stressed that **all** learners in this group must be safeguarded in their allocations. That was intended as a clear commitment to, and protection of, provision for this group of learners. There was also protection of what were called 'discrete courses' in the colleges for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; in other words, there was identification of priority groups within that provision that were assured funding within the mix of provision the LSC had allocated to the colleges. The local LSC reported that **College E** then had a significant amount of funding ring-fenced for personal and community development learning (PCDL) as well; which although not purely provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is nevertheless aimed at priority groups. Thus, the LSC considered there was quite a lot done to safeguard provision for this group of learners, and it was not the case that all the provision in **College E** had to aim at Level 2 or Level 3.

While there was a significant reduction in funding to **College E**, the LSC left the decision of how to manage this reduction with the college.

The LSC's view is that **College E** may not have set out to cut provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but chose to target for reduction its non-accredited provision that had been recycling learners who were not progressing and not achieving accreditation. However, it so happened that the majority of these learners had learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Case study 6

College F had cut 30 places in its provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the previous 12 months.

The **LSC**'s policy is that there should be provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the home area where they live. As part of its funding and planning discussions with providers, the LSC has to look at how much the college has delivered in the past and each year make sure that the college still has that availability. The LSC would not expect the number of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities the college accommodates to be reduced, but would expect that number to at least be maintained year-on-year. While this does not, however, mean that the LSC gets involved in micro-management, it is obliged to become involved when there is an incident where a need cannot be met for whatever reason.

In the view of the LSC, it is not strictly correct for the college to say its funding has been cut. What the LSC had done instead is to reprioritise to prevent colleges from delivering what the LSC classes as over-provision, ie provision that does not fall within the LSC's four key priorities (ie, Level 2, Level 3, Skills for Life and learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities).

The **LSC** accepts furthermore that some adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities would need a more customised programme to meet their needs and that the prioritised provision (Level 2, Level 3, Skills for Life) might not be suitable for them; in which case non-accredited provision might better suit their needs.

- 34 The views of providers were very different from those of the LSCs. Set against the new climate of funding envisaged by the LSCs, providers reported that although in theory *Learning for Living and Work* is full of hope and vision about engaging learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in practice the reality is quite different. All the providers believed they had to react quickly to the LSC's decision to restructure its funding of programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities: that the LSC will fund only good-quality provision for this group by September 2008; and that a common funding approach developed as part of the agenda for change would be introduced across FE colleges in 2008/09.¹

¹ LSC (October 2006) *Learning for Living and Work: Improving Education and Training Opportunities for People with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities*. Coventry: LSC

35 It is perhaps a paradox that the LSC's decision to restructure funding appears to have driven colleges to make changes to their provision faster than they would have liked, or felt was necessary. Many providers interviewed believed that it was almost inevitable that if a student could not work at Entry Level, or if they were not able to progress, or if they had reached a cognitive ceiling, then they could not be offered a programme that was funded by the LSC. Providers felt that an alternative option for such learners would be a recreational course for which fees are charged.

Case study 7

For **College C**, the LSC policy documents were one of the big influences that shaped its provision. In the college's view, the main messages coming out of the LSC policy documents were that programmes that did not include work placements would not be funded after 2010.

So we've had to look at a number of our courses in those terms, to decide whether or not it's feasible to run programmes of that nature. We've done a lot of remodelling with existing provision in order to make sure it had that employment focus and some of that remodelling has required us to shed a number of learners because the learners didn't have an employment focus and, therefore, didn't have a place on that course if that's what the course was aiming to do. And we're also mindful of the LSC's insistence that any inadequate provision won't be funded and whilst overall – you know – the majority of our programmes are good and healthy, we did have programmes that I didn't think were up to scratch.

The college wanted to be seen to be responding quickly and promptly to the LSC timeframes, and did not want to wait and leave making changes in its provision until the last minute. It believed many other colleges to be taking similar action.

36 The issues appeared particularly sensitive for providers catering for some specific groups of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities:

- providers who had sets of adult learners who were attending from residential homes or local day-care centres, and who were more likely to be doing leisure-based activities
- providers who were offering part-time programmes for mature adults
- inclusive providers who included learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in their adult mainstream rather than discrete provision.

Case study 8

College G had cut 25 places over the previous 12 months. The college used to have much greater provision of almost four days a week for sets of learners from residential homes and day-care centres. Much of the provision for this group was leisure-based (eg cookery). Faced with reduced LSC funding, the college cut this provision because it did not fall within the LSC's priority provision. The key issue for the college is that it does not have a lot more to offer mature adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college does not expect to offer any leisure-based programmes next year, and believes disengaged people who want to take tiny steps back into college will not be able to do so easily anymore.

Case study 9

College H had reduced provision, with 50 places affected. The college had many adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, some in their early 60s, who were doing part-time programmes. Some of these adults had been attending the college for several years. The college has had to change its programme, reducing part-time provision for adults, and cites the reduction in LSC funding as the reason for its action.

I mean across the board, across the whole college because obviously when the funding changed for adults and the numbers had to be cut within colleges because of the way LSC were funding it, we as part of it reduced our part-time provision. So we have full-time provision for learners; so we've got targeted courses that might lead to Life Skills or Skills for Working Life or Essential Skills, but we've got very little in the way of part-time provision... If you're looking towards qualifications, people are operating at Entry Level and they're not actually going to get to Level 1 in any of them and so how many years can you operate at Entry Level? You know, so it's also the sort of qualifications thing.

Case study 10

College I had cut 100 places over the previous 12-24 months. The college disbanded all discrete provision for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in 1993, and has been an inclusive provider since. Disbanding discrete education did not stop people who were aged 19 or over and had learning difficulties and/or disabilities coming into education, so the college serves adults from the age of 19, as well as those moving back into the area after being in residential specialist schools. The college believes it provides people with real qualifications, even if they are 'tiny slivers' of them.

Because **College I** is an inclusive college, it funds support in mainstream provision, meaning that the LSC does not provide funding for specific courses for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college has always attracted a high level of Additional Learning Support (ALS) funding, which enabled it to maintain a budget to provide a support service across a broad range of learning. Importantly, this has provided the college with the flexibility to allow it to be more responsive.

What happened – the LSC stopped funding a lot of provision for people without learning difficulties over the age of 19, which automatically for us as a college, an inclusive college, meant many of the places we were infilling with students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities then ceased to exist because the LSC had cut provision for adults over the age of 19 – so pushing it more towards the employer rung – or self-funding rung. But that... wholesale reduction in 19-plus provision has meant that we have less of an offer; so in catering, for example, catering takes a lot of people, there are a lot of different levels within the industry to be able to work, so it's quite a good place for somebody with a learning difficulty. But again funding was cut so you've got less groups to infill into – so it just narrows the offer, it narrows the offer.

The college believes it is at the end of the unintended consequence of the LSC's reduction of funding with the mainstream in mind.

I don't think somebody's sat there and gone 'We need to get rid of people with learning difficulties out of the system'. I think that at every stage the fact that they have made some changes, they are always doing it with the mainstream in mind, but they forget that increasingly parents, adults, carers want their younger people, want their people with learning difficulties in the mainstream, and they're not confined to this channel that they think exists. It's not that clear any more.

Alternative arrangements following reductions in provision

37 The survey of providers found a variable picture in terms of the extent to which providers are able to make alternative arrangements for learners affected by any reduction in provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

- 38 Approximately half of the providers in the telephone survey who had reduced their provision indicated that they had made alternative arrangements for the learners who were affected. However, more than 2 out of 5 (19 providers) had not made any alternative arrangements at all. The range of alternative arrangements included:
- moving learners to other social care services (12 providers)
 - integrating learners into mainstream provision (8)
 - moving learners to vocational courses (8)
 - placing learners in employment (3).
- 39 It might be hoped that where providers were not able to make alternative arrangements for learners who had been affected by the reduction in provision, the needs of such learners would be met by other organisations. The extent of the alternative arrangements available to learners elsewhere was explored in greater detail in the case studies.
- 40 There was only a small amount of evidence in the case studies to suggest that where provision has been reduced by FE providers, some alternative arrangements had been put in place for those affected. In a few instances, some providers had initiated action of their own to cushion the impact and had put in place new or alternative provision, although not as direct replacement for provision that had been reduced or withdrawn.

Case study 11

College B set up a partnership group with the local special needs schools and with community services and other interested parties about a year or so ago to look at provision in the area for adult learners with complex needs and severe learning difficulties because it was aware that nobody was offering almost recreational activities for them when they reached the ceiling of their learning programme at the college. The college bid for £35,000 from the LSC, which it received. Some of that funding has been used for a research project to explore new avenues for adults aged 19 and over with complex needs. The college is also trying to set up some social enterprise activities that a partner could fund. The college is not certain whether or not this venture will be successful.

I have to say as of today it is very disappointing that we are having no support from external agencies; and if by the time this project finishes at the end of August and we present our findings, if we are in the same position as we are today actually we have achieved very little because nobody seems to want to come on board with us so that anything that we do will end up with us and private individuals wanting to give some of our students a chance in the job market. Because we have very little day care now here, it is nearly all gone, we felt this was a valid exercise to try and set up social enterprises but it doesn't seem as if we can find partners who are equally enthusiastic.

- 41 This was the exception, though, because in many cases providers had simply passed on the responsibility of making alternative provision straight to local authority social care services.

Case study 12

College H decided that if adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities had been at the college for more than five years, they were going to look at moving them on. The college provided social services with a list of people leaving to make sure provision was in place. The college admitted it did not give social services as much notice as it would like to have done. While some learners managed to get onto some interesting projects, there were others who could not take up some of the opportunities, particularly those whose families were not vociferous enough with social services to demand provision.

College C alerted the local authority to let it know it was cutting provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college put transition arrangements in place for learners to at least get some advice and guidance on alternative community provision, although the reality was that there was very little alternative community provision available.

- 42 In some cases, though, some organisations anticipated the reduction in provision, as a result of the reduction in LSC funding, and worked with the voluntary sector to put alternative arrangements in place for affected groups.

Case study 13

Local authority A could see the reduction in provision by a local college coming, and so took steps to plan for that eventuality. It worked with voluntary sector organisations that help groups of disabled people to set up a framework where people have a package of voluntary work as part of their progression route to employment. The voluntary organisations do the inductions and provide mentoring support; and some of them actually run groups where they have got expertise in a certain area.

For example we have got a bloke who used to be a chef and he had an accident at work so he couldn't practise as a chef anymore but he could teach people to cook, things that you would learn on a PCDL course. So he taught that and then over the years he has gradually developed his confidence in that area and he started training himself and he is now training to be an NVQ assessor to teach catering and he has got a job as well, so it was great for him and the learners didn't miss out because they still had good-quality provision.

- 43 In exceptional cases, there was some collaboration between the LSC and the local authority to make alternative provision. This was most likely to happen where there was already a good relationship between the two organisations.

Case study 14

Local authority B obtained some funding for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by special arrangement with the LSC. The LSC had used its discretion to make funds available because of the sudden collapse of provision by **College E**. The LSC is funding the provision, which is about a sixth of what the college had in place, for one year to get social services through the transition.

Impact of changes in provision

- 44 Although the quantitative survey revealed that the majority of providers **had not reduced provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**, an important objective of the research was to explore the impact of reductions in provision where they had occurred. The case study interviews therefore focused on the minority of providers that had reduced their provision and highlighted the impact of the changes in provision on learners, their parents and carers and on providers as well.

45 Feedback from providers indicated that the impact of a reduction in provision has been felt almost immediately on learners themselves, but also on their parents and carers. A lot of older students are affected directly, especially those who live in residential homes, and who no longer have their one day a week to come into college. For them, there is a decrease in the opportunity to participate in learning or some other form of education. Consequently, there has been an immediate loss of skills, or a failure to be able to maintain skills because, for some individuals, there is nothing to go into. For the individuals concerned, the impact is significant. The impact is also felt by families, and this indicates how changes in the provision of learning are issues not just for the LSC, but also for local authorities with responsibility for planning and organising day-care and social services.

46 Case study 15 illustrates these points.

Case study 15

We do know anecdotally what happened to [ex-learners] because we received a lot of letters of complaints; and there were local MPs fighting the case for those learners that had lost places. We responded as best we could, trying to explain the kind of pressures that we were operating under, and the influences on our decision.

There was also a negative impact on families:

A lot of families feel that they have now got their middle-aged daughter or son hanging around the house, with not enough to do in the day. And they want somewhere for them to go to, even if not necessarily learning.

47 For providers too, the changes meant that they were no longer able to provide the full range of courses that enabled people with profound and multiple learning difficulties to participate in the life of the college. This has changed the way that colleges measure their success. In effect, the way that colleges are funded is now on success, and that success is measured when somebody passes a full qualification within a timeframe.

48 However, there are also positive impacts of the changes in provision. In particular, there are more learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities on accredited programmes that they would not otherwise be doing. Some providers felt that some adult learners were experiencing progression in their learning for the first time, and were receiving some sort of accreditation or recognition for it. This point is illustrated in case study 16.

Case study 16

College C believes the overall impact of the changes is a positive one, especially for the progression of its adult learners.

Well the impact for me is that for the students, the distance that they've travelled has been greater in the time that they're with us. So, for example, the ones that have been with us a couple of years now have, in terms of their personal progression, they have travelled a far greater distance than they would have done with the previous internal system. There's documentary evidence that there are more students last year progressed into the wider college, and that never happened before. I'm hoping, I don't have the statistics but I'm hoping, that this year there'll be even more. We're not talking about massive numbers, but whereas there were none before, there were 7 last year, there might be 17 this year, and to me that's a real impact. And the achievement this year on basic skills compared to last year will be significantly higher.

Support for learners in the future

49 Looking ahead, at least in the next 12 months, the majority of providers in the survey indicated that they expect the level of support they provide for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to remain about the same or to increase. Few providers said they were anticipating reducing the level of support they provide to this group of learners (Table 7).

Table 7: Anticipated level of support for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the next 12 months

	N	%
Increase	85	36
Decrease	12	5
About the same	112	47
Don't know	30	12
<i>Total</i>	<i>239</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

3: Regional and Local Organisation of Provision

50 This section looks at how the provision of learning for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is organised at the local or regional level, and draws on evidence from the case study interviews. The emphasis is on the respective roles that regional and local LSCs and local authorities play in the supply and organisation of provision. Particular attention is given to the relationship that exists between them, and how this influences partnerships, liaison and consultation. The section concludes by looking at how partnerships affect the planning of local provision, and how local provision could be improved.

Strategies for local provision

51 LSCs and local authorities have different responsibilities for local provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

52 The key aspects of the overall strategy of regional and local LSCs in relation to this provision is the interpretation and implementation of national policies and initiatives in the light of local circumstances.

53 Providers in the case study interviews suggested that there was some confusion about who did what. Interviewees felt that a clear-cut or seamless demarcation of responsibility regarding the overall strategy for this provision and its implementation was often lacking.

54 Some local LSCs reported a lack of steer at the regional level. However, the absence of set responsibilities, paradoxically, seemed to provide local offices with some flexibility to formulate and implement bespoke strategies for their areas, often based on their own understanding and interpretation of national policies.

Case study 17

The strategy for provision for a **local LSC** was to keep more adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in their local communities by making appropriate learning opportunities available within travelling distance of their homes. Another part of the local LSC strategy was to encourage local FE colleges to create a safe haven within the college, where adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities could have a secure base, but also access to the full curriculum available in the college.

In the absence of a clear regional strategy, the local LSC is developing and implementing a local strategy, and has used its funding power to rationalise the allocation of resources. As part of that movement of resource, the LSC has sought to protect what it deems valued and valuable provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

- 55 The case studies also uncovered evidence of regional LSCs with clear strategies in place, with goals and responsibilities for the provision of adult learning in general set out in a statement of priorities, which in turn reflected national priorities.

Case study 18

The **regional LSC** has produced a document which sets out clearly what it is trying to achieve in terms of provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The document commits the LSC to make best endeavours to maintain the current volume when it is going through the funding round.

For the LSC, the top priority for the overall adult learning responsive budget is for Levels 2 and 3 and Skills for Life target-bearing qualifications. The next is priority learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The requirement is that, at the very least, the LSC protects the same level of learning involvement and student numbers. The aspiration is that the LSC would want to actually grow that. This covers learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across the full range of learning. It is not focused necessarily on designated specialist learning, but would be expected to cover people doing a whole range of courses and training alongside their peers.

- 56 Local authorities complete the triumvirate of stakeholders with responsibility for provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In terms of overall strategies for this provision, local authorities are becoming increasingly driven by the employment agenda, although they tend to make a distinction between learning and social care when planning their provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particularly because the two are funded from different sources. Pastoral support is funded through social care (an example would be travel training, which is a key part of helping people live independently). On the other hand, education provision is directly funded through the LSC, using traditional funding streams.

Partnerships, liaison and consultation

- 57 Given their respective roles in the organisation and delivery of provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, it was important to examine the relationships that exist between local authorities and local and regional LSCs.
- 58 The evidence from the case studies painted a mixed picture. On the one hand, the stakeholders in each of the regions talked to each other, and were represented on different partnership groups. Some of the discussions at meetings of such groups included aspects of delivery to learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. On the other hand, it was also evident that these relationships did not necessarily lead to the assessment of needs or co-ordination of provision. Discussions between partners appeared to be retrospective and to focus on past events, and were not used as a forum for the strategic planning of provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- 59 Notwithstanding a general lack of truly strategic dialogue between regional and local LSCs and other partners, other evidence from the case studies showed that where this did occur, effective partnerships were able to resolve issues about local provision before they developed into a serious problem.

Case study 19

The local **LSC** works with colleges and the local authority and while it is the colleges that determine their provision, the LSC will look at overall provision, and if it thinks there are gaps somewhere, will enter into dialogue with colleges and local authorities to see if anything can be done.

In one instance there have been changes to provision in one particular area of the region. Through discussions between the partners, the local authority decided to extend the age-range of a particular specialist school to make up for what was seen as a shortfall in provision.

Planning and improving local provision

- 60 It is clear that provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is influenced not only by national policies, but also by strategies that are dictated by local circumstances. However, in implementing national policies and local strategies, there is often uncertainty and a lack of clarity

about the planning of local provision for these adults. In particular, there are questions about who will take responsibility for each aspect of the learning experience. This uncertainty appears to affect what provision FE institutions are able to offer, and how it will be delivered. In particular, providers have to use their best judgement to interpret national policy documents. The evidence from the case studies indicates that some providers have difficulty in determining the import of the LSC's national policies in this way.

- 61 There is a further issue, reported by providers in the case study interviews, that LSC national policies require them to think about long-term plans when responding to local capacity needs. Providers feel that the regional LSCs themselves, as funding bodies, only plan their funding from one year to the next, with the result that colleges do not in effect have the ability to plan and make funding decisions for the long term. This is especially true when planning provision for adults with complex, profound or multiple learning difficulties, who are likely to need wraparound care. Providers claimed they often did not know what their allocation from the LSC would be from one year to the next, which made it difficult for them to plan ahead for the long term.
- 62 Some providers would also welcome more consultation with the local LSC on the potential flexibilities for delivering learning to adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This is further evidence of a need for stronger partnership working in order to meet the often complex needs of this group of learners.

63 The view of one college (Case study 20) is illustrative.

Case study 20 *I don't expect the LSC to throw money at us, what I expect is to have meaningful negotiations rather than just things being imposed without that discussion and I think that's the key thing for us. We don't expect surplus money to be given to us because we work with people with disabilities but we expect there to be... a consultation at least... I think we could provide excellent provision for learners with learning difficulties, but there has to be flexibility in the system.*

64 In terms of **improving** overall local provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, there was evidence that partnership working can bring about some positive results, as shown in case study 21.

Case study 21

The **local authority and LSC** have linked up with local community and charitable organisations to manage the transition for learners who have been affected by reduced provision at the local college. The local authority respondent described the results from the partnership working.

We have got [named charitable trust], and we have asked them to look at a course for the younger end of this group of learners who, when the college's courses are no longer available to them, literally disappear into their families. Some of those are learners whose needs weren't massive, but [they] still sort of deteriorated because of withdrawal of provision. So they run specialist 12-week courses for them, looking at the needs of that group. Although it started quite small, it is looking like such a big provision, and such a coherent provision – [more] than it was before.

In this case, the local LSC, in addition to the support it had already given the local authority to help with the scheme, provided additional funds to the charitable trust that supports the scheme to help manage this transition further.

65 However, such positive relationships did not exist in all areas. Issues and conflicts were detected in some areas, in particular in terms of responsibility for specific aspects of provision.

66 A lack of clarity around responsibilities not only affects relationships between the LSC, providers and local authorities, but also has an overall impact on provision. In one case study, for example, the LSC respondent emphasised that the legal responsibility to provide a service plan for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities rests with adult social services. According to this respondent, the local authority had failed to do that for many people and there was some evidence in the region to suggest that some young people moving to adult services did not get a proper service

plan because adult services could not afford to deliver it. On the other hand, responsibility for providing learning for this group rests with the LSC; and here, the LSC respondent believed the local LSC was fulfilling that responsibility through the courses it was supporting at the local colleges. The gap in provision here was for people who were unable to take up learning opportunities at local colleges and for whom adult social services had not drawn up a service plan.

- 67 There is no doubt that such problems need to be resolved if local provision is to be improved through effective partnership working. Indeed, it was evident from the case studies that the absence of effective relationships clearly leads to suspicions and mistrust, which also impact has a negative on provision.

4: Participation in Learning

- 68 This section looks at the participation in learning by adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 19 and over. The analysis is based on the survey of learners carried out as part of this evaluation. The survey focused in particular on:
- the extent to which learners felt they had a good choice of courses
 - the extent to which learners' support needs were being met by their providers
 - evidence around progression in learning
 - the impact of learning.
- 69 Two samples of adult learners were included in the survey:
- FE learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 19 and over who took part in the National Learner Satisfaction Survey (NLSS) in 2006/07, and who agreed to be re-contacted (83 per cent of these learners were aged 25 and over)
 - FE learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 19 and over who were included on the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) in the academic year 2007/08 (78 per cent of these learners were aged 25 and over).
- 70 Whilst learners were selected from the ILR because they had been flagged as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities, approximately 1 in 4 responding to the survey indicated that they did not have a disability. In each sample, 1 in 10 had a sensory impairment or disability affecting their mobility and an almost identical proportion had a medical condition, such as epilepsy, asthma or diabetes. The proportion of learners with mental ill-health was 1 in 12. The range of disabilities declared by learners taking part in the survey is set out in Table 8.
- 71 More than a third of the 2006/07 cohort (36 per cent) and a quarter of the 2007/08 cohort (27 per cent) indicated that they did not have a learning difficulty. Table 9 shows that across the samples as a whole, about 1 in 5 learners declared a moderate learning difficulty and 1 in 7 from each of the two samples were dyslexic. It is noticeable that 6 per cent of the 2006/07

cohort had a severe learning difficulty, as did 4 per cent of the 2007/08 cohort. Around 1 in 5 indicated they had other kinds of learning difficulties.

Table 8: Disabilities (from sample)

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Visual impairment	41	4	52	5
Hearing impairment	49	5	63	6
Disability affecting mobility	100	10	93	9
Other physical disability	37	4	53	5
Other medical condition (eg epilepsy, asthma, diabetes)	111	11	117	12
Emotional/behavioural difficulties	17	2	22	2
Mental ill-health	75	8	76	7
Temporary disability after illness (eg post-viral)	4	0	8	1
Profound complex disabilities	12	1	2	0
Multiple disabilities	55	6	60	6
Other	184	18	163	16
No disability	249	25	240	24
Not known/information not provided	66	7	51	5
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

Table 9: Learning difficulties (from sample)

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Moderate learning difficulty	214	21	188	19
Severe learning difficulty	61	6	36	4
Dyslexia	146	15	138	14
Dyscalculia	2	0	1	0
Other specific learning difficulty	33	3	24	2
Multiple learning difficulties	20	2	25	2
Other	180	18	170	17
No learning difficulty	267	27	361	36
Not known/information not provided	77	8	57	6
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

72 The section begins with an examination of current learning activity and progression among learners. It continues to then look at the choice of learning options, in terms of the centres learners chose to attend. We conclude by looking at the attitudes of learners towards the support available to them for learning, and the next steps in their learning journey.

Current learning activity

73 In order to assess the progress they had made in education in the recent past, learners taking part in the survey were asked about their current activity (ie their activity in 2008), and in particular whether they were at the same FE college they were known to be attending at the time they were recorded on the ILR. Approximately half of the 2006/07 cohort were still at the same college, compared with three-quarters of learners from the 2007/08 cohort (Table 10).

Table 10: Learners attending same college

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	505	50	756	76
No	495	50	242	24
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

74 Learners who were still at the same college were studying or undertaking a wide range of activities. The most popular courses for learners, with 10 per cent or more studying, were:

- Skills for Life (38 and 31 per cent for the 2006/07 and 2007/08 cohorts respectively)
- ICT (14 and 17 per cent for the 2006/07 and 2007/08 cohorts respectively)
- learning for life, eg basic skills (10 and 6 per cent for the 2006/07 and 2007/08 cohorts respectively)
- art, design and textiles (7 per cent in each cohort)
- catering/cookery (7 and 5 per cent for the 2006/07 and 2007/08 cohorts respectively).

The majority of learners were taking courses that would lead to an award or certificate (Table 11).

Table 11: Learning towards an award or certificate

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	423	84	603	80
No	46	9	78	10
Don't know	36	7	75	10
<i>Total</i>	<i>505</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>756</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

75 When they were questioned further, two-fifths of the learners in each cohort were not certain about the specific (type of) award they would get at the end of the course. Those who did, however, were more likely to cite:

- life skills/Entry to Employment/preparatory learning (including adult literacy and numeracy)
- national vocational qualification (NVQ)
- City and Guilds certificate
- ASDAN Entry Level, eg personal care, community, preparation for work
- GCSE in vocational subjects.

76 Learners who were no longer attending the college at which they were last known to be studying were asked whether or not they had finished the course they had been doing. Table 12 shows that learners in the 2006/07 cohort were more likely than their 2007/08 counterparts to have finished their course. More than two-thirds of the 2006/07 cohort (68 per cent) indicated that they had completed the course before leaving, compared with just over half of 2007/08 learners (53 per cent).

Table 12: Learners finishing course before leaving previous college

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	339	68	128	52
No	156	32	116	48
<i>Total</i>	<i>495</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>244</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

77 Those learners who had left their previous college without finishing their course were probed still further, first to find out the reasons why they had not finished the course, and, secondly, to find out what they were doing now. The most frequently cited reasons for leaving were associated with health or personal problems, either of learners themselves or a member of their family, including for example illness of a family member or bereavement. About 1 in 10 of the 2006/07 cohort (9 per cent) claimed they had left because the course was the wrong one for them. A similar proportion in both cohorts claimed that the course had been withdrawn by the college, which would seem to back up the findings from the provider survey.

78 As to what learners were doing now that they were no longer at their former college, their responses are set out in Table 13. For both cohorts, this sub-group of learners were more likely to be:

- out of work or unemployed
- in a full-time job (over 30 hours a week)
- studying at another college or with a private training provider
- in a part-time job (30 hours or fewer a week)
- looking after a family or home
- retired
- attending a day-care centre.

Table 13: Current activities of learners not finishing course at previous college

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Studying/further learning (eg at college/private training provider)	57	12	36	15
On a training course (work-related)	9	2	4	2
In a full-time job (over 30 hours a week)	84	17	39	16
In a part-time job (30 hours a week or fewer)	48	10	22	9
Working but not getting paid for it (eg voluntary work)	25	5	5	2
Out of work or unemployed	84	17	42	17
Looking after family or the home	47	10	19	8
Attending a day-care centre	27	5	5	2
Taking a break from study or work	23	5	14	6
Retired	38	8	17	7
Health reasons	17	3	15	6
Cannot work due to disability	6	1	2	1
Waiting to return to college/looking to do another course	2	0	2	1
Looking for work	2	0	6	2
Other	14	3	7	3
No particular reason/nothing	11	2	8	4
Don't know	1	0	2	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>495</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>245</i>	<i>100</i>

For 2006/07: unweighted base = 495; for 2007/08: unweighted base = 258

Source: IES survey, 2008

Progression in learning

79 In relation to their starting point and their progression, it was important to find out whether learners who were (still) studying in the 2007/08 academic year and who had been studying the year before were doing the same course or something different. It was particularly important to find out whether or not learners had progressed to a course at a higher or more advanced level than in the previous year.

80 The learners who indicated they were still studying at the time of the survey, and who had been in learning the year before, were asked whether they were doing the same courses as in the previous year. Table 14 shows that around half of the 2007/08 cohort were now studying a **different** course to the one they had undertaken in the previous year.

Table 14: Progression of learners

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Doing the same courses or subjects as you did last year	322	64	179	47
Doing different courses or subjects to last year	157	31	186	49
Don't know	26	5	13	3
<i>Total</i>	<i>505</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>377</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

81 Just under half of the 2006/07 cohort (47 per cent) and two-fifths of the 2007/08 cohort (41 per cent) also appeared to have made progress in terms of their level of learning (Table 15), and were learning at a higher level than they did in the previous year. However, nearly 1 in 5 of the 2007/08 learners (17 per cent) said they were learning at a lower level than in the previous year, indicating that a significant minority of this cohort of learners had not made as much progress. On the whole, progression is much higher for the 2006/07 than the 2007/08 cohort of learners.

Table 15: Level of progression of learners

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
The same level as the course as you did last year	170	34	121	32
A lower level than, or not as advanced as, the course you did last year	25	5	63	17
A higher level, or more advanced, as the course you did last year	237	47	154	41
Don't know	73	14	39	10
<i>Total</i>	<i>505</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>377</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

Choice of learning provider

82 One of the important research questions that needed to be answered to meet the objectives of this evaluation is why learners had chosen a particular provider for their learning. Although learners gave a wide range of reasons for choosing particular provider, there were a few common factors (Table 16).

83 By far the most important reason for choosing a college was its proximity to where learners lived. The second most important consideration was that the colleges offered the type of course or subject that learners wanted to do.

Although not a major influence on the choice of provider, some learners mentioned the good support that colleges offered for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Overall, there were no significant differences between the two cohorts in relation to the factors affecting their decision-making.

- 84 In order to ascertain whether or not they had noticed any changes in the range of courses offered by the provider in the previous year or so, the learners were asked to reflect on what they thought about the choice of courses available to them in the first place.

Table 16: Main reasons given by learners for attending their college (multiple response)

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	% of cases	N	% of cases
Convenient location/nearest to me	438	44	474	47
Offered course I wanted	259	26	251	25
Offers good support for people with learning difficulties or disabilities	66	7	72	7
Has best reputation (general)	45	4	69	7
Offered course at convenient times for me	36	4	41	4
Friends were going there/know people there	35	4	37	8
Recommended by friends or partner	23	2	32	3
Other	81	8	77	8
Don't know	30	3	25	2
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>		<i>1,000</i>	

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 85 The majority of learners were satisfied with the choice of courses available from providers. Indeed, more than half of the learners in both cohorts considered the choice of available courses to be really good, while just under a third thought the choice was adequate (Table 17).

Table 17: Learners' views on choice of courses available to them

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Really good	518	52	523	52
Adequate or OK	297	30	301	30
Not good enough - would like to have had more choice	105	10	102	10
Not good at all - had no choice	41	4	23	2
Don't know	38	4	50	5
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 86 In addition to their views on the choice of courses available to them most recently, learners were asked to reflect on the choice of courses available to them in this academic year compared with the previous year (for those who had been in learning over both academic years).
- 87 On the whole, learners did not consider there had been a decline in the choice of courses available to them now, compared with a year ago.
- 88 The majority of learners feel that the choice of learning available to them had either improved or remained the same, compared to the choice available one year previously (Table 18). Over two-fifths of learners in both cohorts (44 per cent in each case) thought there were about the same courses or choices available as a year previously. About a quarter of the 2006/07 cohort (24 per cent) and a fifth of the 2007/08 cohort (20 per cent) thought there were more courses available to them than a year previously.
- 89 It is noticeable, however, that a sizeable minority of learners thought the contrary, and believed there were fewer courses or choices available to them now than a year previously. For the 2006/07 cohort, 1 in 7 (14 per cent) expressed this view, compared with 1 in 6 of the 2007/08 cohort (16 per cent).

Table 18: Learners' views about changes in provision at colleges

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
There were fewer courses or choices available than a year ago	69	14	44	16
There were about the same courses or choices as a year ago	223	44	122	44
There were more courses or choices available than a year ago	119	24	56	20
Don't know	95	19	56	20
<i>Total</i>	<i>505</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>278</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

90 When the learners who had experienced reduced provision were asked to elaborate further, they indicated that overall, some courses had either been stopped completely, or that the number of places on courses had been cut. In this latter regard, the learners did not think there were enough places on the courses to meet everyone's needs.

Support for learning

91 The issue of the support offered by colleges to learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was an important consideration for this evaluation, and was explored from the point of view of the learners participating in the survey. To begin with, the learners were asked whether or not they needed extra support to allow them to do their course and to go to college (Table 19).

Table 19: Learners needing extra support to do their course or attend college

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	486	49	451	45
No	507	51	537	54
Don't know	5	0	12	1
Refused	1	0	-	-
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

92 As Table 19 illustrates, almost half of the 2006/07 cohort (49 per cent) indicated that they needed extra support to enable them attend college or to

allow them to do their course, as did more than two-fifths of the 2007/08 cohort (45 per cent).

93 As discussed in the early part of this section, learners had declared different disabilities and learning difficulties; and for which they indicated they needed extra support. The main ones included support for:

- visual impairment
- mobility
- dyslexia
- moderate and severe learning difficulty
- mental ill-health
- other specific learning difficulty
- other physical disability
- other medical condition (eg epilepsy, diabetes, asthma).

94 Table 20 sets out the range of people who had provided learners with support. On the whole, there appeared to be good support at colleges from a wide range of staff to help learners access the provision. By far the most common form of support learners received was from their college tutors, with 9 out of 10 of all learners citing this source. This was followed by college admissions staff, ICT staff, those providing facilities and amenities, and careers advisers. Also of considerable importance for their work in and out of the classroom were college communications support workers, care assistants and support assistants.

Table 20: Range of people providing help or support to learners (multiple response)

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	% of cases	N	% of cases
College tutor	903	90	891	89
College admissions staff	456	46	460	46
College careers adviser	194	19	197	20
College ICT staff	321	32	303	30
College facilities staff	252	25	272	27
College communications support worker/signer	193	19	183	18
College note-taker	99	10	122	12
College care assistant	166	17	149	15

Learning support assistant (LSA)	33	3	39	4
Friends/family	6	1	5	0
Other students	1	0	4	0
Other	53	5	48	5
None of these	34	3	40	4
Don't know	14	1	21	2
<i>Total</i>		<i>1,000</i>		<i>1,000</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

95 There was some consistency in the specific types of support the two cohorts of learners indicated they had received. By far the most frequently mentioned type of support was advice about course content, or how to manage the course, cited by three-quarters of learners in the survey (74 per cent for each cohort). The other types of support were mentioned by fewer than 1 in 6 respondents, but included:

- redesigning course content or study methods to make it easier for learners
- careers advice, and planning the next move
- providing flexible studying hours
- computer software and other ICT help
- help with transport to and from college
- help to move around college
- providing flexible locations for learners to study.

96 The majority of learners suggested that on the whole they got all the help and support they needed from their college to take part in their course. Nevertheless, and as can be seen from Table 21, a significant proportion of learners in both cohorts indicated that they would like more help and support to enable them to continue their course (over one quarter of learners reported this to be the case).

Table 21: Views on help received from college

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
I would like more help or support	307	31	282	28
I get all the help and support I need	517	52	541	54
I don't really need any support	149	15	146	15
Don't know	26	3	31	3
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 97 The additional help and support that learners would like centres on:
- advice about the content of their course, or managing their course work
 - redesigning the content of their course or their study methods so that it is easier to manage their learning difficulty or disability
 - careers advice, or advice to plan their next move
 - provision of flexible study hours
 - help with transport
 - financial assistance
 - additional computer software to help with their learning difficulty or disability.
- 98 As part of the evaluation, it was important to assess the extent to which learners believed they had received adequate support to enable them full access to the provision. They were, therefore, asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements which together encapsulated the availability of support and facilitation of access more generally at their provider. Their responses are set out in Table 22.

Table 22: Support at college

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
The college has supported me well in my education	789	79	821	82
I know where to go for help, advice and support	811	81	872	87
I have enough opportunities to discuss problems when they arise	797	80	848	85
I have a key person I can rely on for advice and support	745	74	805	80
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>		<i>1,000</i>	

Source: IES survey, 2008

99 On the whole, a clear majority of learners in each cohort tended to agree rather than disagree with the statements, confirming that they have enjoyed support that has enabled them full access to learning. It is noticeable that learners in the 2007/08 cohort were slightly more inclined to agree with all the statements than the 2006/07 learners.

Benefits of learning

100 Lastly, for the learners, it was important to access what they considered to be the benefits of being involved in learning. The survey explored the impact that learning had made by finding out how learners thought their most recent course had affected them.

101 On the whole, learning had had a positive impact on the learners (Table 23). Learning appears to have helped learners develop their social skills and has stimulated their appetite for education. At least 4 out of 5 learners had made new friends as a result and, importantly, were enjoying learning more now than they did when they started their course. The new-found skills had not only helped increase their sense of health and well-being, but had also equipped them with tools for future employment. At a personal level, studying had enabled them to cope better with daily life. These gains were in addition to the direct benefits of education and the achievement of qualifications.

Table 23: How courses have affected learners (% of learners agreeing)

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
It has given me skills I can use in a future job	701	70	745	74
I have made some new friends	826	83	859	86
I enjoy learning more now than I did when I started	789	79	804	80
It enables me to cope better with daily life	703	70	738	74
It has benefited my health and sense of well-being	731	73	747	75
Taking part in the course will help me move forward in my career	627	63	718	72
I now take a more active part in the community	568	57	602	60
It has given/will give me a higher level of qualification	661	66	705	70
It will help me live independently	574	57	644	64
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>		<i>1,000</i>	

Source: IES survey, 2008

5: Conclusions and Recommendations

102 In this section we highlight the main conclusions from the study and outline the main policy recommendations.

Conclusions

- 103 The research found that the majority of providers have **not** made any changes to their provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and indeed a significant proportion reported that they had actually increased their provision for this group of learners in recent years. A small, but important, number of providers (approximately 1 in 5) had reduced their provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities over the last 12-24 months.
- 104 The primary reason given by providers for making reductions in this provision was perceived cuts in funding from the LSC: most providers who had cut their provision reported that they had done so because their funding had been reduced or because they could no longer afford to run the provision.
- 105 Providers taking part in the case studies also reported that they made these reductions because of the need to more clearly steer provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities towards the LSC's priorities of learning that leads to progression and accreditation. Provision not aligned with these priorities was reported to be cut or refocused.
- 106 Some providers also reported taking steps to improve the quality of their learning offer for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This rationalisation means that, in some cases, more of these learners have opportunities to follow courses leading to progression within an accredited qualification framework. However, not all adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are able to follow an accredited learning route, and the research highlighted evidence of where this has had a negative effect on learners, their parents and carers.

- 107 Local LSCs have stressed during the research that they have not directed providers and colleges to reduce their provision for these learners *per se*, but rather that provision for this group of learners continues to be prioritised within the LSC's current statement of priorities. LSCs have not been directly involved in making decisions to cut (or increase) provision at provider level, although encouragingly, most providers who had reduced provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities had consulted with the LSC before making such changes.
- 108 Although local authorities share responsibility for this provision, only around 1 in 3 providers that had reduced their provision had consulted their local authority.
- 109 The research indicated that most adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities perceive that they have gained a range of soft and hard outcomes from learning including the acquisition of skills, a greater ability to cope and live independently.
- 110 The research also found that the learner experience of provision over recent years has been largely positive. Most adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities reported that they were studying towards some sort of award or accreditation, and many had gone progressed from one academic year to the next: over 40 per cent of learners who had been studying over two years reported that they went on to study at a higher level in their second year.
- 111 The majority (over 80 per cent) of learners taking part in the surveys felt that they had an adequate or 'really good' choice of courses available to them with significant proportions (over 60 per cent) of continuing learners believing that they had the same or more choice than in the previous 12 months. Some of these learners may have been affected by changes to the funding and organisation of adult learning, so it is a positive finding that the majority felt that their choice of learning had either remained the same or had improved over time.

- 112 The majority of learners were satisfied with the support they received from their providers and knew where to go for help and advice. However, around 1 in 3 learners reported unmet support needs, emphasising how important it is that providers make sure they have sufficient resources to meet the needs and expectations of this group of learners.

Recommendations

Clearer guidance

- 113 The organisation of provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities involves complex and often sensitive decisions. There is a need for clarity in the provision that is planned and procured for this group of learners, and around the role of LSCs and local authorities in planning this provision. LSC National Office needs to ensure that it provides clear guidance at a national and regional level to support effective dialogue about good-quality provision at the local level.
- 114 The need for greater clarity and guidance is highlighted by the evidence from the case studies, which suggests there is not a consistent, clear approach across the region with regard to provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and that practice varies considerably. At one end of the spectrum, some regional LSCs have set out a clear strategy that is expected to be implemented at the local level. At the other end of the spectrum, some local LSCs and providers perceive that there is lack of clarity from regional LSCs in terms of what action should be taken by local LSCs. It is likely that there will be differential implementation of national policy at the local level where clear guidance is not felt to exist.
- 115 A recommendation coming from this research is that the national LSC needs to give clear guidance to regional LSCs, and from there to local LSCs and providers, concerning provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This guidance should incorporate a clear steer on national priorities, for example advising on what constitutes good-quality provision and giving clear guidance to inform the decisions of local LSC partnership teams and providers.

Partnership working

- 116 This research has highlighted some good practice in partnership working in relation to provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is a need to gain further examples of effective working and to share these with providers, regional and local LSCs and local authorities.
- 117 We recommend that the LSC secures case study examples of how partner organisations have worked together to improve provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These examples should explore how partnerships have been established, what role each partner has assumed and the outcomes from partnership working including the benefits to adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other service users, and the partner organisations themselves. These examples should be disseminated widely, particularly to local LSCs and providers.
- 118 Stronger partnership working and consultation on the part of providers and LSCs, particularly with their counterparts in local authorities and social services departments, may be one way of ensuring that partners in a local area are meeting the needs of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are unable to show progression to higher levels of learning or employment. Many of these learners might best be served by alternative day provision, supported employment or leisure-related pursuits.
- 119 Multi-agency partnerships established at the local level, and supported by local and/or regional LSCs, might be expected to bring about improved end-to-end services for this group. We recommend that local and/or regional LSCs establish, encourage and support multi-agency partnerships to address these issues and ensure that provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities covers the range of needs presented.
- 120 In support of this proposed move towards stronger partnership working, it would also be helpful for the LSC to gather evidence of the extent to which such partnerships exist across the regions. This would enable the LSC to gain a better understanding of the current extent of partnership working,

and thus of the scale of the challenge in terms of encouraging and supporting stronger partnership working.

Providing support

- 121 Providers need to ensure that their adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (and other learners) are adequately supported in their learning activities, have regular discussions about their needs and receive effective signposting to appropriate sources of help and advice.

- 122 The last recommendation coming from this study is that effective links and referrals are made between guidance services at the provider level, through Connexions, Jobcentre Plus and the new Adult Advancement and Careers Service in the future, to ensure that the support needs of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are being met.

Annex A: Provision of Learning

- 1 This annex sets out some of the most important features of provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It draws on the results of the telephone survey of providers. A key aim of the provider survey was to gather evidence of any change in provision for this group of learners. It was proposed to conduct a census of FE colleges by telephone for this audience, with the aim of achieving an estimated 60 per cent response rate. This rate was achieved, and 239 respondents across the full range of providers were successfully interviewed.

Characteristics of providers

- 2 From the sample, almost 9 out of 10 of providers (209 out of the 239) were FE institutions, and the remainder were other providers including ACL providers and external institutions etc..

Table A1: FE providers, by type

	N	%
General FE college (including tertiary)	209	87
Adult and community learning provider (ACL)	15	6
Charitable	4	2
External institution	2	1
Local authority	1	1
Other	8	3
<i>Total</i>	<i>239</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 3 Table A2 shows that the providers were evenly spread across the nine LSC regions, albeit with more located in the North West, and fewer in the North East. Further analysis of the data also showed this was true for the distribution of both FE colleges and external institutions.

Table A2: Regional distribution of providers

	N	%
East of England	21	9
East Midlands	19	8
London	27	11
North East	15	6
North West	40	17
South East	30	13
South West	29	12
West Midlands	29	12
Yorkshire & the Humber	29	12
<i>Total</i>	<i>239</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

Student population

- 4 The majority of providers in the survey were relatively large educational establishments, with 1,000 or more learners. Indeed, over a quarter (27 per cent) were very large establishments, and had 10,000 or more students. At the other end of the spectrum, almost 30 per cent of the providers had fewer than 500 students (Table A3).

Table A3: Size of organisation, by number of students

Number of students	N	%
20-49	3	1
50-99	5	2
100-199	46	19
200-499	14	6
500-999	17	7
1,000-4,999	60	25
5,000-9,999	29	12
10,000 or more	65	27
<i>Total</i>	<i>239</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 5 It was not possible to obtain accurate figures for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who were attending all the institutions and organisations included in the survey. Around a quarter of the respondents (24 per cent) were not certain how many adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities they had in total in the preceding 12-24 months. Table A4, however, shows that the majority of the providers had at least 20 such learners attending.

Of these, 1 in 7 (15 per cent) had 500 or more adult learners who were self-certified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Table A4: Size distribution of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities attending establishments in total 12-24 months ago

Number of learners	Frequency	%
Fewer than 20	12	5
20-49	28	12
50-99	24	10
100-199	28	12
200-499	52	22
500 or more	36	15
Don't know	58	24
<i>Total</i>	<i>239</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 6 All the providers in the survey indicated they had provision in place for adults with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities (Table A5). Conditions ranged from psychological and other mental health difficulties to physical disabilities. More than three-quarters of the establishments (77 per cent) had learners with severe learning difficulties, and almost three-fifths (57 per cent) had learners with profound and multiple learning disabilities or severe learning difficulties. More than two-fifths (45 per cent) had learners they described as having other or hidden learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Table A5: Type of learners by learning difficulty and/or disability attending establishments (multiple response)

	N	% of cases
Mental health difficulty	233	97
Physical difficulty	231	97
Behavioural, emotional and social development needs	228	95
Hearing impairment	227	95
Speech, language and communication difficulties	225	94
Visual impairment	223	93
Autistic spectrum disorder	222	93
Severe learning difficulty	184	77
Profound and multiple learning disability	137	57
Other or hidden learning disability or difficulty	107	45
<i>Total</i>	239	

Source: IES survey, 2008

Curriculum offer

- 7 As might be expected, the providers offered their learners a wide range of courses and skills training (Table A6). The most prominent were Skills for Life, programmes at Entry Level aimed at tackling personal problems, learning for life, skills for employability and managing money. These are courses that might be expected to equip learners for independent living. Fewer organisations provided vocational-related courses/skills training for these learners.

Table A6: Courses and skills training provided (multiple response)

	N	% of cases
Skills for Life	225	94
Entry-level programme (eg self-esteem, tackling personal problems)	215	90
Learning for life (eg basic skills)	214	89
Skills for employability	200	83
Managing money	192	80
Rights and responsibilities	177	74
Health and safety	174	73
Personal presentation skills	174	73
IT for disabled/disadvantaged people	159	67
Health and social care	149	62
Land-based studies	102	43
Animal care	67	28
Catering	8	4
Performing arts (drama/music etc)	7	3
Arts and crafts (painting/drawing etc)	7	3
Business studies	4	2
Construction	3	1
Sports and recreation	2	1
Other	17	7
<i>Total</i>	239	

Source: IES survey, 2008

Support

- 8 In relation to the different groups attending their institutions and organisations, and the range of courses they offered, the providers in the survey indicated they had a wide range of support in place to help meet the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (Table A7).

Table A7: Type of support for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at establishments (multiple response)

Type of support	N	% of cases
Technology and equipment		
Enlarged keyboard/tracker balls	137	58
Large-screen monitors	137	57
Laptop computers	118	49
Dictaphones	110	46
Spell-checkers	103	43
Radio aids	89	37
Communication board or computer with speech synthesiser	88	37
Brailled scripts	80	34
Smart note writers	57	24
Staff support		
Learning support staff	184	77
One-to-one tutorials	139	58
In-class support workers (learning facilitators)	135	56
Reader/communications support worker	107	45
Personal care	98	41
Personal readers/note-takers	80	34
Welfare and counselling staff	80	33
Help to move around campus	72	30
Scribe	72	30
Pastoral support staff	55	23
Help with time management/study/organisation skills	55	23
Concessions (exams and assessment)		
Extra time for exam and assessments	44	18
Flexible deadlines for those with variable conditions	22	9
Modified language	20	8
Modified papers	21	9
Non-specific support		
Adaptive/specialist software	18	8
Specialist support for deaf/hard of hearing people	14	6
Smaller groups/classes	13	5
Adapted/special equipment (eg chairs/tables etc)	13	5
Special support for people with dyslexia	8	4
Specialist support for blind/partially sighted people	6	3
Help with access to areas of institution/every floor	5	2

Type of support	N	% of cases
Speech and language specialists	5	2
Specialist staff (unspecified)	4	2
Transport provision	3	1
Mental health specialists	3	1
Anger management	2	1
Behavioural support	2	1
Assessment process	2	1
Support provided when required	2	1
Mentoring staff	2	1
Other	32	14
None of these	1	0
<i>Total</i>	239	

Source: IES survey, 2008

Staff development and training

- 9 The evidence from the survey suggests that a significantly high proportion of the providers had teaching staff who had specific qualifications for teaching adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Table A8 shows that in almost two-fifths of establishments (37 per cent), all or most of their teaching staff were qualified. Approximately half of providers also indicated that some of their teaching staff were so qualified. Around 1 in 10 (8 per cent) indicated that none of their teaching staff had such formal qualifications, but had relevant work or life experience in teaching this group of learners. From this evidence it is possible to say that more than 8 out of 10 of the establishments (87 per cent) had at least some teaching staff who were qualified to teach adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Table A8: Teaching staff in establishments qualified to teach adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

	N	%
Yes, all or most teaching staff are qualified	88	37
Yes, some teaching staff are qualified	120	50
No teaching staff are formally qualified, but have relevant work or life experience	19	8
Don't know/not sure	12	5
<i>Total</i>	239	100

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 10 Evidence of how providers were meeting the support needs of teaching staff working with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was rather mixed. Providers relied mainly on initial assessment, observation and appraisal/performance management to assess the skills of their staff. There was only limited use of other measures of assessment; in particular, very few FE institutions provided regular or continuous training, or had a systematic process in place for workforce development. Only 1 in 10 collected regular workforce data that could be analysed to identify staff training needs (Table A9).

Table A9: Measures in place to assess skills and support needs of teaching staff

	N	% of cases
Mentoring, initial assessment and teacher observation	121	50
Staff appraisal/performance management	108	45
Using job description/specification framework to specify skills	44	18
On-ground intelligence from organisation's own self-assessment	36	15
Learner feedback on teaching and overall provision	36	15
Collecting and analysing regular workforce data	23	9
Systematic process for workforce development	23	10
Ensuring all staff are aware of relevant legislation	19	8
Provide regular/continuous training	15	6
Individual's own self-assessment of needs	15	6
Involving teachers in strategic business planning and decisions	14	6
Feedback from parents and carers of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	13	5
Carrying out surveys and research of staff and learners	12	5
Setting up team of specialist advisers to assess needs	12	5
Ofsted judgements on effectiveness of teaching	9	4
Lesson/classroom observation	8	3
Continuous professional development (CPD)	4	2
Audits	3	1
Workshops	2	1
One-to-one meetings	2	1
Other	23	10
None of these	6	2
Don't know	2	1
<i>Total</i>	239	

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 11 As we saw earlier, non-teaching staff play an important role in supporting learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities both inside and outside the classroom. The extent to which non-teaching staff have specific (relevant) qualifications was equally important for this evaluation. It was encouraging that more than two-fifths of providers (43 per cent) indicated that most of their non-teaching staff had specific qualifications to provide support for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (Table A10).

Table A10: Non-teaching staff with specific qualifications to provide support for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

	Frequency	%
Yes, all or most support staff are qualified	102	43
Yes, some support staff are qualified	101	42
No support staff are formally qualified, but they have relevant work or life experience	27	11
Don't know	10	4
<i>Total</i>	239	100

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 12 Finally, in terms of staff development, respondents were asked about the categories of staff who receive training in learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Table A11 shows that most providers ensured their key staff received training in relation to their duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). In particular, almost all providers provided such training for their academic and learning support staff. More than three-quarters extended DDA training to admissions tutors and office staff, as well as frontline staff and senior managers. Around two-thirds (67 per cent) indicated they also provided such training to their administrative and central services staff.

Table A11: Categories of staff receiving DDA training (multiple response)

	N	% of cases
Learning support staff	232	97
Academic staff	231	96
Admissions tutors and admissions office	187	78
Frontline staff	186	78
Senior managers	182	76
Administrative and central services staff	160	67
Caretakers/security staff/porters/cleaners and wardens	137	57
Technicians and lab assistants	133	56
Contract workers	79	33
None of these	1	0
Other	3	1
<i>Total</i>	239	

Source: IES survey, 2008

Annex B: Profile of Learners

- 1 Data from the ILR was analysed in order to provide a context for the research and better understand the profile of learners aged 19 and over with learning difficulties and/or disabilities participating over a three-year period from 2004 to 2007.
- 2 The figures in Table B1 includes a summary of all learners and these indicate that the number of students enrolled in FE provision declined in each successive year during this period. The total number of learners fell by a quarter (25 per cent), from about 4.5 million in 2004/05 to about 3.4 million in 2006/07. For the purposes of this analysis, the definition of disability covers visual and/or hearing impairment, disability affecting mobility, other physical disabilities, emotional/behavioural difficulties, mental ill-health, profound complex disabilities and multiple disabilities. We have excluded medical conditions such as asthma and epilepsy, temporary disabilities and 'other' (unspecified) disabilities. The coverage of learning difficulties includes severe learning difficulties, other specific learning difficulties and multiple learning difficulties. It excludes dyslexia, dyscalculia, moderate learning difficulties and 'other' (unspecified) difficulties.
- 3 Adult students self-declaring any *disability* comprised around 3 per cent of the total student population, and those with any *learning difficulty* around 1 per cent of the total. These proportions were similar for each of the years under consideration. The decline in the overall number of adult learners self-declaring at least one of the specific disabilities or learning difficulties listed above was lower than the decline in the total number of adult learners participating during this period. The number of adult learners declaring a disability declined by almost a fifth (18 per cent) during the same period, from 122,987 in 2004/05 to 100,285 in 2006/07; while those self-declaring a learning difficulty fell by more than a tenth (13 per cent), from 34,410 to 29,611 over the three-year period.

Table B1: Adult learners enrolled in FE colleges, 2004/05 to 2006/07 (including PCDL provision where delivered)

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Learners with disability	122,987	114,021	100,285
Learners with learning difficulty	34,410	32,832	29,611
<i>All learners</i>	<i>4,503,493</i>	<i>4,006,055</i>	<i>3,365,658</i>

Source: IES analysis of LSC's ILR data (FO5: 2004/05, 2005/06, 2006/07)

- 4 Tables B2-B9 detail the profile of adult learners who self-declared any one or more of the disabilities and learning difficulties listed on page 57. It is important to note that there may be other learners within the FE system who have a disability and/or learning difficulty but who choose not to declare this on the ILR.
- 5 Table B2 shows the gender distribution of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and shows that there were more females than males.

Table B2: Participation in learning, by gender

	2004/05	2006/07
Female	78,738	59,148
Male	69,141	56,257
<i>Total</i>	<i>147,879</i>	<i>115,405</i>

Source: IES analysis of LSC's ILR data

- 6 Table B3 shows that the majority of adult learners were over 25 years old. It is noticeable from the figures that a significantly greater number of learners (10 per cent) were 60 years or older.

Table B3: Participation of learning, by age

Age	2004/05	2006/07
19-20	8,710	9,957
21-24	12,616	12,055
25-59	100,859	78,818
60 and over	25,694	14,575
<i>Total</i>	<i>147,879</i>	<i>115,405</i>

Source: IES analysis of LSC's ILR data

- 7 Table B4 shows the type of disability declared by adult learners. People with sensory impairments, disabilities affecting mobility, and mental ill-health were predominant. The survey found that 1 in 10 adult learners had multiple disabilities, and a very small proportion had profound and complex disabilities.

Table B4: Participation in learning, by type of disability
Base: all learners with a disability or a learning difficulty and/or disability.

	2004/05	2006/07
Visual impairment	13,013	9,501
Hearing impairment	20,682	14,297
Disability affecting mobility	22,899	15,624
Other physical disability	11,556	8,084
Other medical condition (for example epilepsy, asthma, diabetes)	3,626	3,349
Emotional/behavioural difficulties	4,035	4,031
Mental ill-health	18,616	16,821
Temporary disability after illness (for example post-viral)	166	114
Profound complex disabilities	1,754	1,305
Multiple disabilities	14,071	10,706
Other	7,957	6,039
No disability	20,760	20,280
Not known/information not provided	8,744	5,254
<i>Total</i>	<i>147,879</i>	<i>115,405</i>

Source: IES analysis of LSC's ILR data

- 8 Table B5 shows that adult learners were more likely to declare they had a moderate learning difficulty than any other type of learning difficulty. A significant minority of adult learners had a severe learning difficulty; and a small proportion had multiple learning difficulties.

Table B5: Participation of learners, by type of learning difficulty
Base: all learners with a disability or a learning difficulty and/or disability.

	2004/05	2006/07
Moderate learning difficulty	36,889	32,835
Severe learning difficulty	12,733	9,542
Dyslexia	3,816	4,134
Dyscalculia	178	205
Other specific learning difficulty	7,232	5,245
Multiple learning difficulties	5,796	4,715
Other	9,816	6,994
No learning difficulty	57,108	42,770
Not known/information not provided	14,311	8,965
<i>Total</i>	<i>147,879</i>	<i>115,405</i>

Source: IES analysis of LSC's ILR data

- 9 The majority of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were attending FE provision on a part-time basis (Table B6). In 2004/05 around 1 in 8 (12 per cent) were attending full time (for the full year). By 2006/07, the proportion attending on this basis had increased to 1 in 6 (16 per cent).

Table B6: Participation of learners, by mode of attendance, 2004/05 and 2006/07

	2004/05	2006/07
Full-time full-year	18,002	17,036
Full-time part-year	4,622	3,977
Part-time - other (including e-learning)	92,747	71,210
Part-time - open	6,775	3,282
Part-time - distance learning	2,858	1,574
Part-time - evening	15,594	11,444
<i>Total</i>	<i>140,598</i>	<i>108,523</i>

Source: IES analysis of LSC's ILR data

- 10 The majority of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were studying courses other than those leading to GCSEs or equivalent qualifications (Table B7).

Table B7: Participation of learners, by type of course, 2004/05 and 2006/07

	2004/05	2006/07
GCE A/AS/A2 level	1,005	836
GCSE	1,214	1,037
GNVQ precursor	464	328
GNVQ/AVCE	491	37
NVQ	5,458	6,189
Access to HE	1,163	1,252
HNC/HND	517	508
OCN	5	6,478
Other	132,406	94,082
<i>Total</i>	<i>142,724</i>	<i>110,747</i>

Source: IES analysis of LSC's ILR data

- 11 Table B8 shows the specific level of qualification that adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were studying for. The majority were studying for qualifications at Level 1 and Entry Level. Three-fifths of learners (60 per cent) were engaged at these levels and 14 per cent were engaged at Level 2. By 2006/07 the proportion studying at Level 1 had fallen to 56 per cent. But there had been an almost similar rise in the proportion engaged at Level 2.

Table B8: Participation of learners, by NVQ level, 2004/05 and 2006/07

	2004/05	2006/07
Level 1 and Entry Level	89,439	61,794
Level 2	21,364	20,528
Level 3	10,449	10,012
Level 4, 5 or higher	1,766	2,267
Other	19,706	16,146
<i>Total</i>	<i>147,879</i>	<i>110,747</i>

Source: IES analysis of LSC's ILR data

- 12 The majority of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were in receipt of some form of LSC funding for their course. At least two-thirds were being supported with LSC-only funding. A significantly high proportion were being supported with LSC and ESF co-funding (Table B9).

Table B9: Participation of learners, by source of funding, 2004/05 and 2006/07

	2004/05	2006/07
No LSC funding for the learner	8,411	9,903
LSC-only funding for the learner	100,694	76,106
LSC & ESF co-financing funding for the learner	32,821	23,557
ESF co-financing only for the learner	798	1,181
<i>Total</i>	<i>142,724</i>	<i>110,747</i>

Source: IES analysis of LSC's ILR data

The survey of learners

Characteristics of learners

- 13 As can be seen from Table B10, there were slightly more females than males among both of the groups surveyed and females formed just over half the sample of both the 2006/07 and 2007/08 cohorts (53 per cent in each case).

Table B10: Gender of learners (from sample), 2006/07 and 2007/08 cohorts

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Male	473	47	472	47
Female	527	53	528	53
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 14 The majority of learners in each sample were aged 25 years old or more (Table B11). By far the largest were in the 25-59 age group. It is noticeable here too (as was found in the analysis of the ILR) that a significantly high proportion of the learners in the survey were aged 60 or over. Indeed, 1 in 6 of the 2006/07 learners (15 per cent), and 1 in 8 of the 2007/08 learners were in this category.

Table B11: Age of learners, 2006/07 and 2007/08 cohorts

Age	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
16-20	22	2	95	10
21-24	128	13	119	12
25-59	678	68	649	66
60+	149	15	116	12
Refused	17	2	12	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>994</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>991</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 15 Approximately 1 in 4 of the learners responding to the survey indicated that they did not have a disability, and 70 per cent declared they had a disability. Also, 1 in 10 of the learners in each sample had a sensory impairment or disability affecting their mobility. An almost identical proportion had a medical condition, such as epilepsy, asthma or diabetes, and 1 in 12 learners said they suffered mental ill-health. The range of disabilities declared by learners is set out in Table B12.
- 16 More than a third of the 2006/07 learners (36 per cent) and a quarter of the 2007/08 learners (27 per cent) indicated that they did not have a learning difficulty. Table B13 shows that across the samples as a whole, about 1 in 5 learners declared a moderate learning difficulty. In each of the two samples, 1 in 7 learners were dyslexic. It is noticeable that 6 per cent of 2006/07 learners had a severe learning difficulty, as did 4 per cent of the 2007/08 cohort. Around 1 in 5 learners also indicated they had other kinds of learning difficulties.

Table B12: Disabilities (from sample), 2006/07 and 2007/08 cohorts

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Visual impairment	41	4	52	5
Hearing impairment	49	5	63	6
Disability affecting mobility	100	10	93	9
Other physical disability	37	4	53	5
Other medical condition (eg epilepsy, asthma, diabetes)	111	11	117	12
Emotional/behavioural difficulties	17	2	22	2
Mental ill-health	75	8	76	8
Temporary disability after illness (eg post-viral)	4	0	8	1
Profound complex disabilities	12	1	2	0
Multiple disabilities	55	6	60	6
Other	184	18	163	16
No disability	249	25	240	24
Not known/information not provided	66	7	51	5
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

Table B13: Learning difficulties (from sample), 2006/07 and 2007/08 cohorts

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Moderate learning difficulty	214	21	188	19
Severe learning difficulty	61	6	36	4
Dyslexia	146	15	138	14
Dyscalculia	2	0	1	0
Other specific learning difficulty	33	3	24	2
Multiple learning difficulties	20	2	25	2
Other	180	18	170	17
No learning difficulty	267	27	361	36
Not known/information not provided	77	8	57	6
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

- 17 In terms of ethnicity, the large majority of learners in both samples were of White origin, predominantly White British. Ethnic minority groups were about evenly distributed in the two samples. Learners of South East Asian origin formed 6 per cent of the 2006/07 cohort, and those of Black origin about 5 per cent. Approximately 1 in 20 of the 2007/08 cohort were of either Asian or Black origin (Table B14).

Table B14: Ethnicity (from sample), 2006/07 and 2007/08 cohorts

	2006/07		2007/08	
	N	%	N	%
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	5	0	1	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	26	3	20	2
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	20	2	16	2
Asian or Asian British - Any other Asian background	12	1	15	2
Black or Black British - African	21	2	27	3
Black or Black British - Caribbean	21	2	22	2
Black or Black British - any other Black background	10	1	4	0
Chinese	4	0	4	0
Mixed - White and Asian	2	0	5	0
Mixed - White and Black African	5	0	1	0
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	5	0	8	1
Mixed - any other mixed background	4	0	6	1
White - British	797	80	784	78
White - Irish	9	1	7	1
White - Any other White background	20	2	37	4
Any other	9	1	21	2
Not known/not provided	30	3	22	2
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: IES survey, 2008

Annex C: Ipsos MORI Technical Report

- 1 This paper has been compiled by the Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute and contains the technical details of telephone surveys of providers and learners as part of the research on the impact of changes in provision on adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities post-19. The overall evaluation was conducted by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) and Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).
- 2 The paper contains details of:
 - sample design
 - questionnaire design
 - main fieldwork
 - weighting
 - data processing.

Provider survey: design and methodology

Target population

- 3 The target population comprises providers of LSC-funded learning for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- 4 The types of providers included are:
 - general FE colleges including tertiary colleges
 - sixth form colleges
 - special college/specialist designated colleges
 - charitable institutions
 - external institutions
 - higher education organisations
 - local authorities/local education authorities
 - work based learning provider
 - other public and voluntary organisations.

Main sample

- 5 The sample was drawn by the LSC from the PIMS database and 453 learning providers – including 381 FE providers and 72 external institutions – in England that fulfilled the criteria. A census was carried out with these learning providers.

Questionnaire design

- 6 The questionnaire was designed by the IES and Ipsos MORI in consultation with the LSC. The questionnaire content was based on findings from a desk review of existing literature and research relating to adult learning and the learning difficulties and/or disabilities agenda, and secondary data analysis of the Individual Learner Record (ILR).
- 7 The average duration of an interview was 15 minutes.

Main survey

- 8 A telephone survey was conducted by Ipsos MORI Telephone Surveys, which is a member of the Interviewer Quality Control Scheme (IQCS) and has Market Research Quality Standards Association (MRQSA) accreditation. In accordance with this, the field supervisor listened in to at least 10 per cent of the interviews and checked the data entry on-screen. All interviews were conducted using the computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system.
- 9 Ipsos MORI interviewed 236 learning providers between 18 February and 7 March 2008. A letter was sent in advance to providers notifying them of the survey. As the sample was not named, interviewers asked to speak to the head of supported learning or a member of staff responsible for provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- 10 Before starting fieldwork, interviewers were fully briefed in person by members of the Ipsos MORI project team. They also received full written instructions about the key aspects of the survey.

Response rates

- 11 To maximise the number of interviews achieved within the finite sample, supervisors at the telephone unit were asked to compile a list of invalid phone numbers during the course of fieldwork for electronic tracing.
- 12 The valid response rate was 63 per cent. A detailed breakdown of the response rate is presented in Table C1.

Table C1: Breakdown of leads

Final sample status	Total sample used (N)	Total sample used (%)	Valid sample (%)
Total sample	453	100%	
Valid sample			
Achieved interviews	236	52%	63%
Sample still live	15	3%	4%
Respondent quit interview	20	4%	5%
Refusal	8	2%	2%
Unable to take part (eg unavailable during fieldwork period)	21	5%	6%
Leads tried max. number of times	77	17%	20%
Total valid sample	377	83%	100%
Invalid sample			
Bad number	16	4%	
Respondent ineligible/screened out	60	13%	
Total invalid sample	76	17%	

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates that result is larger than 0% but smaller than 0.5%.

Outputs

13 The following outputs were produced:

- computer tabulations showing national data
- data in Excel and SPSS.

Learner survey: design and methodology

Target population

- 14 The target population were FE learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who started their courses in the academic years 2006/07 or 2007/08. The sample was drawn from the Individual Learner Record (ILR) database.
- 15 In order to be eligible for selection, learners had to:
- be aged 19 or over
 - have a learning difficulty and/or disability
 - be undertaking a qualification at Entry Level or Level 1
 - not be attending a specialist designated college or HE institution
 - have agreed to be contacted for research.
- 16 The target number of interviews was 2,000 learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (1,000 from each academic year).

Main sample

- 17 A requirement of the sample design was to enable robust analysis of FE and adult learning provider (ALP) learners.
- 18 FE providers include:
- general FE colleges including tertiary colleges
 - sixth form colleges
 - special colleges for agriculture and horticulture
 - special colleges for art, design and performing arts.
- 19 ALP providers include:
- charitable institutions
 - external institutions
 - local authorities/local education authorities
 - work based learning provider
 - other public organisation.
- 20 Table C2 gives a regional breakdown of eligible FE and ALP learners in the academic year 2006/07 and the associated number of interviews based on a *representative* sample.

Table C2: Representative sample for 2006/07 learners

Region	Population (N)			Representative sample		
	FE	ALP	Total	FE	ALP	Total
East of England	5,471	2,710	8,181	51	25	77
East Midlands	8,062	2,461	10,523	76	23	99
Greater London	10,920	4,212	15,132	103	40	142
North East	3,982	1,927	5,909	37	18	56
North West	11,425	2,160	13,585	107	20	128
South East	10,813	2,244	13,057	102	21	123
South West	9,475	2,841	12,316	89	27	116
West Midlands	14,789	2,252	17,041	139	21	160
Yorkshire & the Humber	8,244	2,407	10,651	77	23	100
Total	83,181	23,214	106,395	782	218	1,000

21 Table C3 shows the regional breakdown for learners in the academic year 2007/08.

Table C3: Representative sample for 2007/08 learners

Region	Population (N)			Representative sample		
	FE	ALP	Total	FE	ALP	Total
East of England	3,157	1,719	4,876	55	30	84
East Midlands	4,075	1,150	5,225	71	20	91
Greater London	6,880	2,457	9,337	119	43	162
North East	2,203	719	2,922	38	12	51
North West	6,400	1,000	7,400	111	17	128
South East	6,353	1,337	7,690	110	23	133
South West	3,995	1,242	5,237	69	22	91
West Midlands	7,913	1,012	8,925	137	18	155
Yorkshire & the Humber	4,278	1,834	6,112	74	32	106
Total	45,254	12,470	57,724	784	216	1,000

- 22 As can be seen from Tables C2 and C3, the representative sample sizes for some regions are smaller than 100 (we generally recommend a minimum sample size of at least 100 for sub-group analysis). To enable regional analysis, the sample sizes of smaller regions were boosted and those of the larger regions were reduced accordingly. Corrective weighting was applied at the analysis stage (please see the section on weighting below).
- 23 Table C4 shows the stratified sample structure, with roughly the same number of interviews per region, for learners in the academic years 2006/07 and 2007/08.

Table C4: Structured samples for learners in the academic years 2006/07 and 2007/08

Region	Structured sample 2006/07			Structured sample 2007/08		
	FE	ALP	Total	FE	ALP	Total
East of England	82	30	112	88	23	111
East Midlands	89	22	111	88	23	111
Greater London	83	28	111	83	28	111
North East	70	40	110	83	29	112
North West	91	20	111	94	17	111
South East	91	20	111	92	19	111
South West	79	33	112	83	28	111
West Midlands	91	20	111	96	15	111
Yorkshire & the Humber	84	27	111	75	36	111
Total	760	240	1,000	782	218	1,000

- 24 Quotas were also set for age and gender to ensure that the final achieved sample was representative of the profile of the learners on the ILR.

Weighting

- 25 Interlocking regional weights for FE and ALP (both 2006/07 and 2007/08 samples) and rim weights on gender (both 2006/07 and 2007/08 samples) and age (2007/08 sample only) were applied in the analysis so that the final data was representative of the population.
- 26 Tables C5 and C6 show the weighted and unweighted sample profiles followed by effective base sizes and margins of error. The weights applied have reduced the overall effective sample size for both samples:
- 2006/07 learner sample: effective sample size = 920 (weighting efficiency = 92%)
 - 2007/08 learner sample: effective sample size = 891 (weighting efficiency = 89.1%)

Table C5: Sample profile, effective base sizes and maximum error for the 2006/07 learner sample

	Unweighted N	Weighted N	Effective sample size N	+/- maximum error *
National (all)	1,000	1,000	920	3.2
Provision				
FE	760	782	699	3.7
ALP	240	218	221	6.6
Region				
East of England	112	76	103	9.6
East Midlands	111	99	102	9.7
Greater London	111	143	102	9.7
North East	110	55	101	9.7
North West	111	127	102	9.7
South East	111	123	102	9.7
South West	112	116	103	9.6
West Midlands	111	160	102	9.7
Yorkshire & the Humber	111	101	102	9.7
Gender				
Male	473	500	435	4.7
Female	527	500	485	4.4
Age				
19-20	79	79	73	11.4
21-24	111	113	102	9.7
25-59	681	680	627	3.9
60+	129	128	119	8.9

* Based on 95% confidence intervals for 50% of findings and finite universe size.

Table C6: Sample profile, effective base sizes and maximum error for the 2007/08 learner sample

	Unweighted N	Weighted N	Effective sample size N	+/- maximum error *
National (all)	1,000	1,000	891	3.3
Provision				
FE	782	784	697	3.7
ALP	218	215	194	7.0
Region				
East of England	111	85	99	9.7
East Midlands	111	91	99	9.8
Greater London	111	162	99	9.8
North East	112	50	100	9.6
North West	111	128	99	9.8
South East	111	133	99	9.8
South West	111	90	99	9.8
West Midlands	111	154	99	9.8
Yorkshire & the Humber	111	106	99	9.8
Gender				
Male	472	500	421	4.7
Female	528	500	470	4.5
Age				
19-20	102	108	91	10.2
21-24	122	132	109	9.3
25-59	677	645	603	4.0
60+	99	114	88	10.4

* Based on 95% confidence intervals for 50% of findings and finite universe size.

Questionnaire design

- 27 The questionnaire was designed by the IES and Ipsos MORI in consultation with the LSC. The content was based on findings from a desk review of existing literature and research relating to adult learning and the learning difficulties and/or disabilities agenda, and secondary data analysis of the Individual Learner Record (ILR). The questionnaires for the 2006/07 sample and 2007/08 sample were largely the same, though some questions were specific to a particular group of learners to reflect differences in timescale.
- 28 A small number of 2007/08 cohort had already finished the course recorded in the 2007/08 ILR file and started a new course. In those cases, the wordings of questions B10-B13 in the original questionnaire, which asked learners to compare their current course with the previous course, were not applicable. In such cases, interviewers were instructed to ask a different set of questions with appropriate wording instead. Only four learners were affected by this, making the impact on final results minimal.

Main survey

- 29 The telephone survey was conducted by Ipsos MORI Telephone Surveys, which is a member of the Interviewer Quality Control Scheme (IQCS) and has Market Research Quality Standards Association (MRQSA) accreditation. In accordance with this, the field supervisor listened in to at least 10 per cent of the interviews and checked the data entry on screen. All interviews were conducted using the computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system. We also sent a letter in advance to inform potential respondents of the survey, explain why it was being conducted and to assure them that their confidentiality would be protected.
- 30 Ipsos MORI interviewed 2,000 learners between 5 March and 7 April 2008. Before starting fieldwork, interviewers were fully briefed by members of the Ipsos MORI project team. They also received full written instructions about key aspects of the survey. Extra interviewers' notes and showcards were provided to assist interviewers with recruitment and asking questions with a long answer list.

Response rates

- 31 The valid response rate for the 2006/07 learner sample was 42 per cent. Table C7 shows a detailed breakdown of the outcome of sample leads.

Table C7: Breakdown of leads loaded for 2006/07 learner sample

Final sample status	Total sample used (N)	Total sample used (%)	Valid sample (%)
Total sample	3,520	100	
Valid sample			
Achieved interviews	1,000	28	42
Sample still live	582	17	25
Respondent quit interview	114	3	5
Refusal	474	13	20
Unable to take part (eg unavailable during fieldwork period)	28	1	1
Leads tried max. number of times	155	4	7
Total valid sample	2,353	67	100
Invalid sample			
Bad number	854	24	
Respondent no longer at address	104	3	
Over quota	2	*	
Respondent was ineligible/screened out	207	6	
Total invalid sample	1167	33	

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates that result is larger than 0% but smaller than 0.5%.

32 The valid response rate for the 2007/08 learner sample was 44 per cent. Table C8 shows a detailed breakdown of the outcome of sample leads.

Table C8: Breakdown of leads loaded for 2007/08 learner sample

Final sample status	Total sample used (N)	Total sample used (%)	Valid sample (%)
Total sample	3,008	100	
Valid sample			
Achieved interviews	1,000	33	44
Sample still live	807	27	36
Respondent quit interview	116	4	5
Refusal	281	9	12
Unable to take part	33	1	1
Leads tried max. number of times	19	1	1
Total valid sample	2,256	75	100
Invalid sample			
Bad number	547	18	
Respondent no longer at address	57	2	
Over quota	0	0	
Respondent was ineligible/screened out	148	5	
Total invalid sample	752	25	

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates that result is larger than 0% but smaller than 0.5%.

Outputs

33 The following outputs were produced:

- computer tabulations showing national data for both 2006/07 and 2007/08 samples
- data in Excel and SPSS.

Annex D: Provider Telephone Survey

Intro Good morning/afternoon, my name is and I am calling from Ipsos MORI, an independent research organisation. We are currently conducting some research on supported learning for the Learning and Skills Council.

Can I speak to <TEXT SUB: PLEASE INSERT COLUMN G> the Head of Supported Learning for adult learners with disability or learning difficulties in your organisation please?

WHEN YOU ARE TRANSFERRED TO THE NAMED CONTACT OF THE HEAD OF SUPPORTED LEARNING IN THE ORGANISATION, PLEASE PROCEED WITH INTERVIEW.

INTRODUCTION WHEN SPEAKING TO THE HEAD OF SUPPORTED LEARNING:

Good morning/afternoon, my name isand I am calling from Ipsos MORI, an independent research organisation. We are currently conducting a survey on supported learning for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council. The LSC sent you a letter about this project about a week ago. Ipsos MORI are working with another independent research organisation called the Institute for Employment Studies.

The survey involves a short telephone interview which usually takes about 15 minutes to complete. The survey is completely confidential, and no information about you or your establishment will be passed to the LSC or anyone else. The aim is to find out about both your current and future provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. **This provision will mainly be at Entry level or Level 1, although some may be at a higher level.**

Firstly, can I check, as part of your job, are you involved in the provision of learning for adults aged 19 or above with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?

IF “YES”, PROCEED. IF “NO” ASK TO BE PUT THROUGH TO THE APPROPRIATE PERSON IN THEIR ORGANISATION

EXTRA INTERVIEWERS’ NOTES (PRINTED A SEPARATE SHEET):

- Survey participation is voluntary, although we are keen to ensure a comprehensive picture of providers’ views and experiences to feed into our report to the LSC.
- Establishments have been chosen from LSC database.
- We would be happy to call back at a more convenient time to conduct the interview.
- Confidentiality — re-emphasise that no identifiable information about the establishment or the respondent will be passed on to anybody outside the research team.

If the respondent wants reassurance about the legitimacy of the survey, they can contact **Charlotte Beckford** from the LSC on **024 7682 5725**.

Q No.		Q TYPE	Routing (go to)
A	BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE ORGANISATION		
A1	Before we begin the interview, can you confirm if your organisation is: READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY	S	A2
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 General further education college (including tertiary) 2 Adult and community learning provider (ACL) 3 Charitable 4 External institution 5 Local authority/LEA 6 Organisation in business on its own, ie work-based learning [provider] 7 Voluntary organisation 8 Other (please specify) 		
A2	Can you confirm the LSC region you are based in? CODE ONE REGION ONLY	S	A3
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 East of England 2 East Midlands 3 London 4 North East 5 North West 		

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6 South East 7 South West 8 West Midlands 9 Yorkshire and the Humber 		
A4	Can you confirm your job title? READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY	S	A5
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Head of Supported Learning 2 Learning Support Co-ordinator 3 Other (please specify) 		
B	PROVISION FOR ADULT LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES		
B1A	Approximately, how many learners does your organisation have in total, at all its sites? IF NECESSARY: Please give us your best estimate. _____ (code number)	NUM	B2
	Don't know		B1 B
B1B	IF B1A = DK, ASK Is it . . . ?	S	B2
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Fewer than 20 adult learners? 2 20 to 49 adult learners? 3 50 to 99 adult learners? 4 100 to 199 adult learners? 		

	<p>5 200 to 499 adult learners?</p> <p>6 500 or more adult learners?</p> <p>7 Don't know</p>		
B2A	<p>Could you tell me approximately how many adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities your organisation had in total 12-24 months ago?</p> <p>IF NECESSARY: Please give us your best estimate.</p> <p>_____ (code number) – LOGIC CHECK. THERE CANNOT BE MORE ADULT LEARNERS (AT B2A) THAN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF LEARNERS AT B1A. YOU WILL NOW BE TAKEN BACK TO RE-DO B2A.</p> <p>Don't know</p>	NUM	B3
B2B	<p>IF B2A = DK, ASK</p> <p>How has the total number of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities changed over the past 12-24 months?</p> <p>READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.</p> <p>1 Number of adult learners [with learning difficulties and/or disabilities] has increased</p> <p>2 Number of adult learners [with learning difficulties and/or disabilities]has decreased</p> <p>3 Number of adult learners [with learning difficulties and/or disabilities]has stayed about the same</p> <p>4 Don't know</p>	S	
B3	<p>Which of the following groups of learners attend your organisation?</p> <p>READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.</p> <p>Learners with...</p> <p>1 Autistic spectrum disorders (eg autism, Asperger's</p>	M	B4

	<p>syndrome)</p> <p>2 Behavioural, emotional and social development needs (BEDS)</p> <p>3 Profound and multiple learning disability</p> <p>4 Severe learning difficulty</p> <p>5 Mental health difficulty</p> <p>6 Speech, language and communications difficulty</p> <p>7 Visual impairment</p> <p>8 Hearing impairment</p> <p>9 Physical disability</p> <p>10Other or hidden learning difficulty or disability</p>		
B4	<p>What courses or skills training do you currently provide for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?</p> <p>READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.</p> <p>1 Learning for life (eg basic skills)</p> <p>2 Skills for life</p> <p>3 Skills for employability</p> <p>4 IT for disabled/disadvantaged people</p> <p>5 Entry-level programme (self-esteem; tackling personal problems)</p> <p>6 Health and safety</p> <p>7 Health and social care</p> <p>8 Personal presentation skills</p>	M	B8

	9 Managing money		
	10 Rights and responsibilities		
	11 Land-based studies		
	12 Animal care		
	13 None of these		
	14 Other (please specify)		
B8	In the last 12-24 months, has the range of courses or skills training you currently provide for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities changed?	S	
	READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.		
	1 Yes - more courses or skills training now		B9
	2 Yes - fewer courses or skills training now		B1 1
	3 No - about the same as now		B2 0
	4 Don't know		B2 0
B9	You said that you are now providing more courses or skills training for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Which of the following measures have you taken?	M	B1 0
	READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.		
	1 Increased the number of places on courses and skills training		
	2 Increased the number of hours		
	3 Introduced new provision/courses		

	4 Other (please specify)		
B10	Why are you providing more courses for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities now, compared with 12-24 months ago?	M	B2 0
	DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.		
	1 Local LSC strategic reasons		
	2 More funding available		
	3 Increase in demand from learners and/or parents		
	4 Request by other partners, eg Connexions		
	5 In order to comply with requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act		
	6 More courses accredited		
	7 Improvement in learner achievement		
	8 As a response to changes in provision locally		
	9 As a result of the modernisation of Social Services day services		
	10 Other (please specify)		
B11	You said that you are now providing fewer courses or skills training for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Which of the following measures have you taken?	M	B1 2
	READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.		
	1 Cut the number of places on courses and skills training		
	2 Reduced the number of hours		
	3 Stopped completely, ie withdrawn		

	4 Other (please specify)		
B12	Why are you providing fewer courses for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities now, compared with 12-24 months ago?	M	B1 3
	DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY		
	1 Courses not sufficiently focused on learning		
	2 Courses not accredited		
	3 Poor learner achievement		
	4 Learners not progressing sufficiently or no clear exit strategies		
	5 Low demand for courses/insufficient learner numbers		
	6 Local LSC strategic reasons		
	7 Courses were felt to be of poor quality		
	8 Funding reduced/can no longer afford it		
	9 Lack of trained staff		
	10 Health and safety issues/legislation		
	11 Other (please specify)		
B13	Were the views of any of the following taken into account when deciding on providing fewer courses or skills training?	M	B1 4
	READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY		
	1 Local LSC		
	2 Local authority		

	3 Health authority (NHS trust)		
	4 Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities		
	5 Parents/carers/guardians of learners		
	6 Connexions partnerships		
	7 Relevant charitable/voluntary organisations		
	8 Relevant community organisations		
	9 Other (please specify)		
	10 Don't know		
	11 None of the above		
B14	Did your organisation make alternative arrangements for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who were affected by the reduction in courses and skills training in the last 12-24 months?	S	
	1 Yes		B1 5
	2 No		B2 0
	3 Don't know/can't say		B2 0
B15	Which of the following best describes the alternative arrangements you made for adult learners affected by the reduction in courses and skills training in the last 12-24 months?	M	B1 6
	READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY		
	1 Moved to vocation-related courses		
	2 Placed in employment		

3 Moved to other social care services

4 Integrated into mainstream provision

5 Other (please specify)

B16 Were the views of any of the following taken into account when deciding on the alternative arrangements you made for those affected by the reduction in courses and skills training? M B1
7

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1 Local LSC

2 Local authority

3 Health authority (NHS trust)

4 Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

5 Parents/carers/guardians of learners

6 Connexions partnerships

7 Relevant charitable/voluntary organisations

8 Relevant community organisations

9 None of these

10 Don't know

11 Other (please specify)

B17 A Do you know how many adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in total were affected by the reduction in courses and skills training? NUM B1
8

IF NECESSARY: Please give us your best estimate

_____ (code number)

Don't know

B17 B IF B17A = DK S
Is it,

1 Fewer than 20 adult learners?

2 20 to 49 adult learners?

3 50 to 99 adult learners?

4 100 or more adult learners?

5 Don't know/can't say

B18 Which of the following categories of adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were affected by the reduction in courses and skills training? M B1
9

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1 Autistic spectrum disorders (eg autism, Asperger's syndrome)

2 Behavioural, emotional and social development needs (BEDS)

3 Profound and multiple learning disability

4 Severe learning difficulty

5 Mental health difficulty

6 Speech, language and communications difficulty

7 Visual impairment

	8 Hearing impairment		
	9 Physical disability		
	10 Other or hidden learning difficulty or disability		
B19 A	Can you say what levels of learners have been affected overall by the reduction of courses and skills training?	M	B2 0
	READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY		
	1 Level 1 or below		
	2 Level 2		
	3 Level 3		
	4 Other (please specify)		
	5 Don't know		
B19 B	IF Q19A = NOT DK And what was the average length of the course or programme that was affected? Number of hours: _____ Don't know	NUM	
B20	Looking ahead to the future, in the next 12 months, which, if any, of the following actions do you anticipate that you are likely to take with regard to your provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?	M	
	READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY		
	1 Cut the number of places on courses and skills training		B2 1
	2 Reduce the number of hours		B2 1
	3 Stop courses completely, ie withdraw		B2

	4 Increase the number of places on courses and skills training		1 B2 4
	5 Increase the number of hours		B2 4
	6 Introduce new provision/courses		B2 4
	7 None of these		B2 4
	8 Don't know		C1 C1
B21	DP: If CODE = 1, 2, or 3 in B20 , ask: You mentioned that you anticipate a reduction in courses and skills training in the next 12 months. Why did you say that? ANSWERS GIVEN AT Q20: <INSERT CODES 1-3 IF GIVEN> DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.	M	B2 2
	1 Courses not sufficiently focused on learning		
	2 Courses not accredited		
	3 Poor learner achievement		
	4 Learners not progressing sufficiently or no clear exit strategies		
	5 Low demand for courses/insufficient learner numbers		
	6 Local LSC strategic reasons		
	7 Courses were felt to be of poor quality		
	8 Funding reduced/can no longer afford it		

9 Lack of trained staff

10 Health and safety issues/legislation

11 Other (please specify)

12 Don't know

B22 A How many adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in total do you anticipate will be affected by the cut, or reduction, or withdrawal of courses and skills training in the next 12 months? NUM B2
3

IF NECESSARY: Please give us your best estimate

_____ (code number)

Don't know

B22 B IF B22A = DK, ASK S

Is it:

1 Fewer than 20 adult learners?

2 20 to 49 adult learners?

3 50 to 99 adult learners?

4 100 or more adult learners?

5 Don't know/can't say

B23 Which of the following, if any, best describes the alternative arrangements you anticipate will be made for adult learners affected by the cut, or reduction, or withdrawal of courses and skills training in the next 12 months? M C1

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1 Move to vocation-related courses

2 Place in employment

3 Move to other social care services

4 Integrate into mainstream provision

5 Other (please specify)

B24 If CODE = 4, 5, or 6 in **B20**, ask: M C1

You mentioned that you anticipate an increase in courses and skills training in the last 12 months. Why did you say that?

ANSWERS GIVEN AT Q20: <INSERT CODES 4-6 IF GIVEN AT Q20)

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1 Local LSC strategic reasons

2 More funding available

3 Increase in demand from learners and/or parents

4 Request by other partners – eg Connexions

5 In order to comply with requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act

6 More courses accredited

7 Improvement in learner achievement

8 As a response to changes in provision locally

9 As a result of the modernisation of Social Services day services

10 Other (please specify)

11 Don't know

C SUPPORT FOR ADULT LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES

C What type(s) of support do you have in place now for adult M C
1 learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities? 2

INTERVIEWERS PLEASE REFER TO SHOWCARD. READ OUT ONLY IF NECESSARY. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Technology and equipment

- 1 Laptop computers
- 2 Enlarged keyboards/tracker balls
- 3 Large-screen monitors
- 4 Communication board or computer with speech synthesiser
- 5 Smart note-writers
- 6 Spell checkers
- 7 Dictaphones
- 8 Radio aids
- 9 Brailled scripts
- 10 Other (please specify)

Staff support

- 11 Learning support staff
- 12 Pastoral support staff
- 13 Personal care
- 14 Welfare and counselling staff

15 In-class support workers (learning facilitators)

16 Personal readers/note-takers

17 Reader/communications support worker

18 Scribe

19 Help to move around campus

20 One-to-one tutorials

21 Help with time management/study/organisational skills

22 Other (please specify)

Concessions (exams and assessment)

23 Extra time for exams and assessment

24 Flexible deadlines for those with variable conditions

25 Modified language

26 Modified papers

27 Other (please specify)

28 None of these

C Looking ahead to the future, in the next 12 months, do you think S
2 the level of support you provide for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will increase, decrease or stay the same?

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY

1 Increase D
1

2 Decrease C
3

	3 About the same		D 1
	4 Don't know		D 1

C 3	Why do you anticipate a reduction in the support provided in the next 12 months?	M	D 1
--------	--	---	--------

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

- 1** Part of planned restructuring of local provision by this organisation
- 2** Strategic re-examination of local commissioning by the LSC
- 3** More focus on learning
- 4** Less focus on respite care
- 5** Lack of funding/can't afford it
- 6** Lack of trained staff
- 7** Lack of demand for such support services
- 8** Other (please specify)

D STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

D 1	Do any of your teaching staff have specific qualifications for teaching adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?	S	D 2
--------	--	---	--------

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

- 1** Yes, all or most teaching staff are qualified
- 2** Yes, some teaching staff are qualified

	3 No support staff are formally qualified, but they have relevant work or life experience		
	4 Don't know/not sure		

D 2	What measures, if any, do you have in place to assess the skills of staff who are teaching adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?	M	D 3
--------	---	---	--------

READ OUT ONLY IF NECESSARY. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

- 1** Collecting and analysing regular workforce data
- 2** On-ground intelligence from organisation's own self-assessment, consultation and monitoring
- 3** Individuals' own self-assessment of needs
- 4** Involving teachers in strategic business planning and decision-making
- 5** Carrying out surveys and research of staff and learners
- 6** Systematic processes for workforce development
- 7** Staff appraisal and performance management
- 8** Ofsted's judgement on effectiveness of teaching
- 9** Learner feedback on teaching and overall provision
- 10** Feedback from parents and carers of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- 11** Using job descriptions/qualification framework to specify skills and knowledge required to do the job
- 12** Ensuring all staff are aware of relevant legislation – eg Disability Discrimination Act
- 13** Mentoring, initial assessment and teacher observation

14 Setting up team of specialist advisers to assess needs

15 Other (please specify)

16 None of these

D 3 Do any of your **non-teaching** staff have specific qualifications to provide support for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities? S D 5

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY

1 Yes, all or most support staff are qualified

2 Yes, some support staff are qualified

3 No support staff are formally qualified, but they have relevant work or life experience

4 Don't know

D 5 Can I just check which, if any, of the following categories of staff receive training on learning difficulties and/or disabilities – eg in relation to their duties under the Disability Discrimination Act? M E 1

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

1 Senior managers

2 Academic staff

3 Learning support staff

4 Technicians and lab assistants

5 Caretakers, security staff, porters, cleaners and wardens

6 Frontline staff

7 Admissions tutors and admission officers

8 Administrative and central services staff

9 Contract workers

10 Other (please specify)

11 None of these

E FUNDING OF PROVISION FOR ADULT LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES

E 1 Do you currently receive funding from the LSC for your provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities? S

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY

1 Yes, all provision is funded by LSC F 1

2 Yes, but only part of the provision is funded by LSC E 2

3 None of the provision is funded by LSC E 2

4 Don't know E 3

E 2 IF CODE = 2 or 3 at E1, ask M E 3
What sources are you currently using to either partly or fully fund your provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities? Are you using

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1 Social services (local authorities)

2 Voluntary or charitable organisations

3 Community organisations

4 Local employers

5 Central government programmes

6 Other (please specify)

7 None of these

E 3	Are you currently using or planning to use personal and community development learning (PCDL) or adult and community learning (ACL) funds for courses for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?	S	
	READ OUT ONLY IF NECESSARY. CODE ONE ONLY.		
	1 Yes, we are currently using PCDL/ACL		E 4
	2 Yes, we are planning to use PCDL/ACL		E 4
	3 No		E 5
	4 Don't know		F 1

E 4	What provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are you <TEXT SUB: funding (IF CODE 1 AT E3) or planning to fund (IF CODE 2 AT E3)> with PCDL or ACL?	OPEN NOW BUT MULTI LATER	F 1
	WRITE IN		
	DP – WE WILL INSERT CODE FRAME AFTER FIRST 20.		
	Not sure/don't know		
		
		
		

E 5	Why are you currently not using or planning to use PCDL or ACL funds for courses for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?	OPEN NOW BUT MULTI LATER	F 1
	WRITE IN		
	DP – WE WILL INSERT CODE FRAME AFTER FIRST 20.		
	Not sure/don't know		
		

.....
.....

F OTHER ISSUES AND CLOSE

F1	Are there any other comments or points you would like to make regarding provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?	OPEN
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	

RECO N	Ipsos MORI and the Institute for Employment Studies may want to conduct a small number of follow-up interviews in connection with this study. Would it be OK for us to contact you again in connection with this?	S
	1 Yes	
	2 No	

CLOSE WITH THANKS.

Annex E: Learner Telephone Survey

Intro Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is ... from Ipsos MORI, a research organisation. May I speak to [NAMED CONTACT] please?

WHEN SPEAKING TO THE NAMED CONTACT OR PROXY: I would like to speak to you about your course and the support available while studying at [NAME OF COLLEGE] recently.

INTERVIEWER NOTE: RESPONDENT MAY NOT BE ABLE TO RECALL THE NAME OF THEIR PROVIDER, ESPECIALLY IF THEIR PROVIDER IS A LOCAL AUTHORITY, LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY. IF THIS IS THE CASE, PLEASE CHECK IF THEY HAVE ATTENDED A COURSE IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR <06/07 OR 07/08 (text sub depending on sample type)>. IF THEY HAVE, PLEASE WRITE DOWN THE NAME OF THEIR COLLEGE AND PROCEED WITH INTERVIEW.

This survey is being conducted for the Learning and Skills Council. They would like to know the views and experiences of students and ex-students like you to find out about the courses you followed, and the support and facilities available to you at your college.

The survey involves a short telephone interview which usually takes about 15 minutes. All your answers are confidential; the information you provide will be reported back to the LSC, but not with names attached.

Extra interviewer notes (provided to interviewers as a separate document):

Stress, as necessary that:

- *Survey participation is voluntary, although we are keen to ensure a comprehensive picture of learners' views and*

experiences, to feed into our report to the Learning and Skills Council.

- *People have been chosen from the Learning and Skills Council's database. Names have not been passed on by colleges.*
- *We would be happy to call back at a more convenient time to conduct the interview.*
- *Confidentiality — re-emphasise that no identifiable information about the establishment or the respondent will be passed on to any other body,*
- *If the respondent wants reassurance about the legitimacy of the survey, they can contact **Charlotte Beckford** at the Learning and Skills Council on **024 7682 5725**.*
- *Even if respondent has left/completed course, we still want to interview them.*

COL 1 INTERVIEWER TO CODE IF RESPONDENT RECOGNISES THE NAME OF COLLEGE IN SAMPLE

Yes

Qlang2

No

COL2

COL 2 INTERVIEWER TO TYPE IN THE NAME OF COLLEGE RESPONDENT ATTENDED IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR <06/07 OR 07/08> (text sub depending on sample type). IF RESPONDENT CAN NOT RECALL THE EXACT NAME OF COLLEGE, PLEASE TYPE IN 'COLLEGE'.

OPEN-ENDED

DP: PLEASE USE THE ANSWER GIVEN AT COL2 AS TEXT SUB FOR 'NAME OF COLLEGE' FOR THE REST OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

Qlang 1	INTERVIEWER NOTE: IS RESPONDENT UNABLE TO TAKE PART DUE TO LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES?	
	Yes	Qlang2
	No	Qimpa

Qlang 2	What language do you speak? DO NOT READ OUT. AIMS TO FIND OUT RESPONDENT'S NATIVE LANGUAGE.	Go to Qinter
	Polish	
	Arabic	
	Farsi	
	Kurdish	
	Somali	
	French	
	Urdu	
	Spanish	
	Portuguese	
	Chinese – Mandarin	
	Chinese – Cantonese	
	Russian	
	Other, please specify	
	Don't know	

Qinter	Is there someone who would be able to interpret for you? Yes – arrange to call back. (DP: GO TO APPOINTMENT) No – we will pass your details to a member of the research team to see if they can arrange for someone to help you take part in the survey. – DP: PLEASE CREATE AN EXTRA TIPCODE FOR THIS.	
--------	--	--

Qimpa	INTERVIEWER NOTE: IS RESPONDENT UNABLE TO TAKE PART DUE TO HEARING IMPAIRMENT OR OTHER DISABILITY?	
	Yes	Qsup1
	No	A1

Qsup1	What support do you need to take part in the survey? WRITE IN	Qsup2
-------	---	-------

Qsup2	Is there someone who would be able to help you to take part by telephone? Yes – ARRANGE DATE AND TIME TO CALL BACK. No – we will pass your details to a member of the research team to see if they can arrange for someone to help you take part in the survey. DP: PLEASE CREATE AN EXTRA TIPCODE FOR THIS.	
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Q No.		Routing (go to)
A	SCREENING QUESTION	
A1	Would it be convenient to talk to you now?	
	1 Yes	B1
	2 No - call back later. (NOTE: ARRANGE TIME AND DATE TO CALL BACK.)	END

3 No – refused

END

4 Other – cannot continue

B CURRENT ACTIVITY

B1 First of all, I would like to ask you some questions about what learning you are doing now.

Are you still going to [NAME OF COLLEGE] at the moment?

1 Yes

B2

2 No

B5

3 Don't know

B5

B2 What do you currently do or study at college?

B3

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE, ASK: What type of things do you mainly do or learn when you are at college?

SHOWCARD A

1 Horticulture

2 Construction

3 Engineering, technology and manufacturing

4 Information and communications technology

5 Business and retail

6 Sports and recreation

7 Catering/cookery

8 Hairdressing and beauty therapy/aromatherapy

9 Health and social care

10 Music and movement/singing and rhythm

11 Art, design and textiles

12 Sculpture

13 Photography, camera and video

14 Housekeeping

15 Learning for life (eg basic skills)

16 Skills for life (literacy, numeracy)

17 Skills for work

18 IT for disabled/disadvantaged people

19 Self-esteem; tackling personal problems

20 First aid and accident prevention

21 Personal presentation skills

22 Managing money

23 Rights and responsibilities

24 Animal care

	25 Other (please specify)	
	26 Don't know	
	27 Refused	

B3	Will you get any award, certificate or qualification at the end of your course(s)?	
	1 Yes	B4
	2 No	B8/B10
	3 Don't know	B8/B10

B4	Do you know what this award or qualification might be? DO NOT READ OUT. MULTICODE. CODE NULL FOR 'NO NAME OF COURSE/QUALIFICATION'	B8/B10
	1 ASDAN Entry Level (Personal care; Community; Citizenship; Home management; Preparation for working life)	
	2 Life skills/E2E/Preparatory learning (includes adult Literacy, adult numeracy, ESOL, ICT)	
	3 GCSE/GCSE in vocational subjects (replace part 1 of the GNVQ)	
	4 GNVQ	
	5 NVQ	
	6 Apprenticeship (foundation)	
	7 Advanced apprenticeship	

	8 Open College Network (OCN) accredited courses	
	9 OCR/ BTEC nationals	
	10 Other (specify full name of qualification)	
	11 Don't know	
	12 No name of course/qualification	
	13 Refused	

B5	If no longer studying at [NAME OF COLLEGE], or don't know (Code 2 or 3 at B1) Did you finish your course at [NAME OF COLLEGE]?	
	1 Yes	B6
	2 No	B6
	3 Don't know	END
	INTERVIEWER NOTE: END INTERVIEW HERE IF CODE 3 (DON'T KNOW) – (DP: PLEASE DO NOT COUNT AS SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWS)	

B6	Now that you are no longer doing your course, what are you doing now?	B8/B10/C1
	PROMPT IF NECESSARY. SINGLE CODE. CODE NULL IF 'NO PARTICULAR REASONS'	
	INTERVIEWER NOTE: MAIN ACTIVITY IS THE THING THAT RESPONDENT SPENDS THE MOST TIME ON, AND / OR IS CENTRAL TO THEIR LIFE.	
	1 Studying/doing further learning (eg at college, private training provider)	

-
- 2** On an Apprenticeship (foundation/advanced) or other
 - 3** On a training course (work-related)
 - 4** In a full-time job (over 30 hours a week)
 - 5** In a part-time job (30 hours a week or less)
 - 6** Working but not getting paid for it (eg voluntary work)
 - 7** Out of work or unemployed
 - 8** Looking after family or the home
 - 9** Attending a day-care centre
 - 10** Taking a break from study or work
 - 11** Other (specify)
 - 12** Don't know
-

B7 ASK IF B5=NO

B8/C1

You said that you did not complete (or finish) your course.
What were the main reasons why you did not finish it?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY, AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

INTERVIEWER NOTE: WE ARE LOOKING FOR YOUR
THREE MOST IMPORTANT REASONS FOR LEAVING
EARLY

SHOWCARD B.

- 1** Wrong course for me
 - 2** Found a course that suited me better
-

-
- 3** Teacher/tutor said that I should change
 - 4** Tutor poor/problems with teaching quality
 - 5** Tutors kept changing
 - 6** College/provider badly run/organised
 - 7** Too much work
 - 8** Difficult to combine course with work commitments
 - 9** Difficult to combine course with family or other commitments
 - 10** Course too difficult
 - 11** Health reasons
 - 12** Financial reasons (including cost of travel)
 - 13** Travel difficulties (other than cost)
 - 14** Got a job
 - 15** Changed jobs
 - 16** Lack of support from work/problems at work
 - 17** Personal issues (illness of a family member/bereavement)
 - 18** Didn't get on with other students
 - 19** The course was withdrawn/not available anymore
-

	20 No particular reasons	
	21 Other (specify)	
	22 Don't know	
B8	IF 06/07 LEARNER AND B1=YES OR IF 06/07 LEARNER AND B6= CODES 1-3 Are you ... READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.	B9
	1 Doing the same courses or subjects as you did last year?	
	2 Doing different courses or subjects to last year?	
	3 Don't know	
B9	FILTER SAME AS B8 ABOVE Is the course that you are doing this year... READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.	C1
	1 The same level as the course you did last year?	
	2 A lower level than, or not as advanced as, the course you did last year?	
	3 A higher level, or more advanced, as the course you did last year?	
	4 Don't know	
B10	ASK ALL 07/08 LEARNER What were you doing last year; ie before you started the course that you are currently doing?	

	PROMPT IF NECESSARY. SINGLE CODE	
	INTERVIEWER NOTE: MAIN ACTIVITY IS THE THING THAT RESPONDENT SPENT THE MOST TIME ON, AND / OR WAS CENTRAL TO THEIR LIFE.	B11
	1 At college	C1
	2 At school	C1
	3 On an Apprenticeship (foundation/advanced) or other	C1
	4 On a training course (work-related)	C1
	5 In a full-time job (over 30 hours a week)	C1
	6 In a part-time job (30 hours a week or less)	C1
	7 Working but not getting paid for it (eg voluntary work)	C1
	8 Out of work or unemployed	C1
	9 Looking after family or the home	C1
	10 Attending a day-care centre	
	11 Taking a break from study or work	
	12 Other (specify)	
	13 Don't know	
B11	IF CODE 1 AT B10 (STUDYING AT COLLEGE) Did you also go to this college last year?	B12
	1 Yes	B12

2 No

C1

3 Can't remember/not sure

B1
2 Are you ...

B13

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

1 Doing **the same** courses or subjects as you did last year?

2 Doing **different** courses or subjects to last year?

3 Don't know

B1
3 Is the course that you are doing this year...

C1

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

1 The same level as the course you did last year?

2 A lower level than, or not as advanced as, the course you did last year?

3 A higher level, or more advanced, as the course you did last year?

4 Don't know

C CHOICE OF PLACE OR COLLEGE TO STUDY

C
1 Thinking about the course you are currently doing/have recently undertaken at [NAME OF COLLEGE], can you tell me why you decided to study there?

C2

IF NECESSARY: What were your main reasons for attending [NAME OF COLLEGE]?

DO NOT READ OUT, BUT CODE ALL THAT APPLY. PROBE.

SHOWCARD C

1 Convenient location/nearest to me

2 Offered course I wanted

3 Offered course at convenient times for me

4 Has best reputation (general)

5 Has best reputation for pass rates

6 Has best reputation for my course

7 Offers good support for people with learning difficulties or disabilities

8 Friends were going there/know people there

9 Recommended by parents/carers

10 Recommended by someone else in the family

11 Recommended by friends or partner (boyfriend/girlfriend)

12 Recommended by Connexions adviser/learn direct adviser/nextstep adviser/other careers adviser

13 Recommended by disability employment adviser at Jobcentre Plus

14 Recommended by other Jobcentre Plus adviser

15 Recommended by social worker/social services

16 Recommended by learning disability worker

-
- 17** Recommended by psychiatric services
 - 18** Had no choice – only one that accepted me
 - 19** Had no choice – no other colleges/providers in the area
 - 20** Had no choice – only college that had the facilities/special equipment to accommodate my learning difficulty/disability
 - 21** Had no choice – only college that had the trained staff/support staff to accommodate my learning difficulty/disability
 - 22** Other (specify)
 - 23** Don't know

C And looking back now, what do you think about the choice of C3/D1
 2 courses available to you? Do you think that the choice of courses A
 or options available to you was:

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

- 1** Really good
- 2** Adequate or OK
- 3** Not good enough – you would like to have had more choice
- 4** Not good at all – you had no choice
- 5** Don't know

C (IF O6/07 LEARNER AND B1=YES) OR (IF B11=1)
 3 Thinking about when you were choosing your course or college
 this year, do you think that:
 READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

-
- 1** There were fewer courses or choices available than a year ago C4
 - 2** There were about the same courses or choices as a year ago
 - 3** There were more courses or choices available than a year ago D1
 - 4** Don't know D1

C Why do you say there are fewer choices than a year ago? D1
 4 DO NOT READ OUT. BUT CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

- 1** Number of places on courses have been cut
 - 2** There are not enough places to meet everyone's needs
 - 3** Some courses have been stopped completely
 - 4** Other (specify)
 - 5** Don't know/can't say
-

D PERSONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

D1 I will now like to ask you a few questions about yourself. Can you
 A tell me your age? D2

Write in _____ D1
 Don't know B
 Refused B

D1 B	Can you tell me if you are aged 25 years or over?	D2
	1 25 and over	
	2 Under 25	
	3 Refused	
D2	Do you/did you need any extra support to allow you to do your course and go to college?	D3
	1 Yes	E1
	2 No	E1
	3 Don't know	E1
	4 Refused	
D3	Why do you say you need/needed extra support? DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY. SHOWCARD D	E1
	Physical disabilities	
	1 Visual impairment	
	2 Hearing impairment	
	3 Disability affecting mobility	
	4 Other physical disability	
	5 Other medical condition (for example: epilepsy, asthma, diabetes)	
	6 Emotional/behavioural difficulties	

-
- 7 Mental ill-health
 - 8 Temporary disability after illness (for example post-viral) or accident
 - 9 Profound complex disabilities
 - 10 Multiple disabilities
- Learning difficulty**
- 11 Moderate learning difficulty
 - 12 Severe learning difficulty
 - 13 Dyslexia
 - 14 Dyspraxia
 - 15 Dyscalculia
 - 16 Other specific learning difficulty
 - 17 Multiple learning difficulties
 - 18 Other, please specify
 - 19 Don't know
 - 20 Refused

E SUPPORT IN YOUR CURRENT STUDIES

E Which, if any, of the following people have given you help or
1 support while you've been studying at [NAME OF COLLEGE]?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY. PROBE.

- | | |
|--|----|
| 1 College tutor | E2 |
| 2 College admissions staff | E2 |
| 3 College careers adviser | E2 |
| 4 College ICT staff (INTERVIEWER NOTE eg providing specialist software/other ICT adaptations) | E2 |
| 5 College facilities staff (INTERVIEWER NOTE eg providing specialist equipment, adaptations to the room or furnishings) | E2 |
| 6 College communications support worker/signer (INTERVIEWER NOTE, eg for hearing impaired) | E2 |
| 7 College note-taker (INTERVIEWER NOTE eg for visually impaired) | E2 |
| 8 College care assistant (INTERVIEWER NOTE eg for assisting during break times) | E2 |
| 9 Other (specify) | E3 |
| 10 Don't know | E3 |

None of these

E Thinking about the people who have helped you at college, what
2 help or support have they given you? E3

PROMPT IF NECESSARY. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

SHOWCARD E

- 1** Advice about the content of my course, managing the course work
 - 2** Careers advice/advice to plan my next move
 - 3** Advice about finances
 - 4** Advice about childcare
 - 5** Advice about transport
 - 6** Help with transport to/from college
 - 7** Providing flexible studying hours
 - 8** Re-designing course content/study methods so that it was easier for me to manage my learning difficulty/disability
 - 9** Providing flexible location for me to study
 - 10** Financial assistance
 - 11** Computer software or other ICT help that I needed because of my learning difficulty/disability
 - 12** Other specialist equipment that I needed because of my learning difficulty/disability
 - 13** Adaptations to room or furniture that I needed because of my learning difficulty/disability
 - 14** Signing
 - 15** Note-taking
-

16 Help to move around college

17 Partnering me with a non-disabled person or mentor

18 Other (specify)

19 Don't know

E 3 Would you like more help and support from your college to take part in your course?

READ OUT. CODE ONLY.

1 I would like more help or support

E4

2 I get all the help and support I need

E5

3 I don't really need any support

E5

4 Don't know

E5

E 4 What other help or support would you like?

E5

PROMPT IF NECESSARY. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

SHOWCARD E

1 Advice about the content of my course, managing the course work

2 Careers advice/advice to plan my next move

3 Advice about finances

4 Advice about childcare

5 Advice about transport

6 Help with transport to/from college

7 Providing flexible studying hours

8 Re-designing course content/study methods so that it was easier for me to manage my learning difficulty/disability/

9 Providing flexible location for me to study

10 Financial assistance

11 Computer software or other ICT help that I needed because of my learning difficulty/disability

12 Other specialist equipment that I needed because of my learning difficulty/disability

13 Adaptations to room or furniture that I needed because of my learning difficulty/disability

14 Signing

15 Note-taking

16 Help to move around college

17 Partnering me with a non-disabled person or mentor

18 Other (specify)

19 Don't know

E 5 Thinking about the help and support generally, please say whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. F1/E 6

DP: PLEASE ROTATE STATEMENT.

a. The college has supported me well in my education, training and/or career decisions

- b. I know where to go for help, advice and support at college
- c. I have enough opportunities to discuss problems when they arise at college
- d. I have a key person at college (other than friends or other students) who I can rely on for help, advice and support

INTERVIEWER NOTE: A KEY PERSON IS 'THE MAIN PERSON WHO HELPS YOU MAKE DECISIONS AND ORGANISE THINGS'.

- 1** Agree
- 2** Disagree
- 3** Don't know

E (IF O6/07 LEARNER AND B1=YES) OR (IF B11=1)

6 Would you say your college is now offering you:

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

- 1** More help or support than it did last year
- 2** The same amount of help or support as last year
- 3** Not as much help or support as last year
- 4** Don't know

F IMPACT OF LEARNING AND THE FUTURE

F I would like you to think about how your most recent course at [NAME OF COLLEGE] has affected you. I am going to read out a few statements about what effect your course may have had on you. Could you tell me whether you agree or disagree with each? F2

DP: ROTATE STATEMENT.

- a. It has given me skills I can use in a future job
- b. I have made some new friends
- c. I enjoy learning more now than I did when I started
- d. It enables me to cope better with daily life
- e. It has benefited my health and sense of well-being
- f. Taking part in this course will help me move forward in my career
- g. I now take a more active part in the community
- h. It has given/will give me a higher level of qualification
- i. It will help me to live independently

- 1** Agree
- 2** Disagree
- 3** Don't know

F Thinking about the future, what is the main thing that you want to do next? 2

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

- 1** Stay at this college F4
- 2** Go to another college G 1
- 3** Do work experience G 1

	4 Start/continue work	1
	5 Change jobs	G 1
	6 Go to university/HE institution	G 1
	7 Take a year out/go travelling	G 1
	8 Look after my family	G 1
	9 Stay at home with my family/friends	G 1
	10 Other (specify)	G 1
	11 Don't know	G 1
<hr/>		
F 4	ONLY ASK F4 IF CODE 1 AT F2 (Stay at this college) So you would like to stay at this college. What do you think about the choice of courses available to you in the future at [NAME OF COLLEGE]? Do you think that the choice of courses or options available to you is: READ OUT. SINGLE CODE	G 1
	1 Really good	
	2 Adequate or OK	
	3 Not good enough – you would like to have more choice	
	4 Not good at all – you have no choice	

G OTHER INFORMATION

<hr/>		
PERMISSION TO RECONTACT		
<hr/>		
G 1	Finally, Ipsos MORI and the Institute for Employment Studies may be carrying out further research about learner involvement this year. Can we contact you again in relation to this research?	
SINGLE CODE		
	Yes	
	No	G 2
<hr/>		
G 2	Do you have a fixed line telephone at home which you use for incoming and outgoing voice calls?	
	Yes	G 3
	No	
	Don't know/refused	G 4
<hr/>		
G 3	Is that telephone number the same as the one we are calling you on today?	G 4
	Yes	
	No – DP: COLLECT NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER	
	Don't know/Refused	

G	Can I just check, do you have mobile phone number?	G
4	Yes – willing to give number – DP: COLLECT MOBILE NUMBER	5
	Not willing to give number	
	Don't know	

G	If we were repeating this research in a year's time and were not able	H
5	to find you, is there anybody who would know where you are?	1
	Yes - DP: COLLECT FULL NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF CONTACT	
	No – THANK AND CLOSE	

H	TYPE OF INTERVIEW
H1	INTERVIEW TO CODE WHO WAS INTERVIEWED
	Respondent only, who is 25 or over
	Respondent only, who is under 25
	A proxy (eg parent/carer)
	Both the respondent and a proxy

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