



Skills Funding
Agency

Learner Satisfaction Community Learning Survey 2014 to 2015 Report

This report was undertaken by Ipsos MORI and RCU on behalf of the Skills Funding Agency

October 2015

Of interest to colleges and training organisations

Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI, part of the Ipsos Group, is a leading research company with global reach.

Ipsos MORI Social Research is a team of methodological and public policy experts based in London, Edinburgh, Belfast and Manchester. We bridge the gap between government and the public, providing robust research and analysis to help determine what works. We cover broad issues that shape the delivery of public services in modern society and how to engage the public in the policy-making process.

To find out more about the work of Ipsos MORI telephone 0207 347 3000,
Email ukinfo@ipsos.com or visit <http://www.ipsos-mori.com>



RCU is a specialist research and consultancy company working with public sector clients all over the UK. Its mission is to develop practical and relevant research and consultancy solutions for clients through innovation, professionalism and market expertise.

RCU provides strategic consultancy, customised market research, interactive planning tools and research skills training for a wide range of clients and has been serving the learning and skills sector since 1987. RCU's unique business model features equal ownership rights for all staff. We aim to be a community of professionals, interacting within innovative teams and delivering strategically important research and consultancy that influences national learning and skills policy.

To find out more about the work of RCU telephone 01772 734855
Email enquiries@rcu.co.uk or visit www.rcu.co.uk

Contents

Section 1: Introduction and Methodology	3
Section 2: Analysis of Responses	4
Survey responses summary	4
Statistical significance	4
Profile of respondents	6
Survey responses	8
Section 3: Summary of Findings	23

Appendices

Appendix 1: Technical Summary of Research Methodology	25
Appendix 2: Learner Satisfaction Survey Instrument	27
Appendix 3: Survey Report Example	29
Appendix 4: Quality Tests for Survey Samples	36

Section 1: Introduction and Methodology

This report provides a summary of the findings for the 2014 to 2015 Learner Satisfaction Survey for Community Learning. The survey ran at the same time as the main FE Choices Learner Satisfaction Survey (Version 7).

Learner Satisfaction pilots for Community Learning took place in 2011 to 2012 and 2012 to 2013. In 2013 to 2014 [an extended trial](#) for Community Learning took place, with all colleges and other training organisations delivering this type of provision encouraged to take part.

The Community Learning survey was open from 3 November 2014 to 29 March 2015, although the survey closed for paper responses on 9 March due to the extra processing required compared with the online survey. Learners from a total of 185 colleges and other training organisations took part in the survey, with most completing the questionnaire online. The questionnaire was unchanged from that used for the Community Learning survey in the academic year 2013 to 2014. A copy of the survey questionnaire is included in Appendix 2.

Quality tests to check the robustness of each provider's returned sample were used to establish if a valid score could be awarded, details of which are shown in Appendix 4. The tests included an assessment on sample skew and calculation confidence interval, similar to those used for the mainstream Learner Satisfaction Survey. The final score calculation included a weighting factor, to counter any imbalance in the sample based on the age and gender of learners when compared to each provider's Community Learning population as a whole.

All colleges and other training organisations that took part in the survey received a detailed report on the results (Appendix 3). This report analyses the results of the survey and, where applicable, includes comparisons with the mainstream survey results (2014 to 2015) and the results of last year's extended trial for Community Learning (2013 to 2014).

Section 2: Analysis of Responses

Survey responses summary

Table 1 summarises the total number of participating colleges and other training organisations and responses by learners during the survey window (following the removal of invalid responses).

Table 1: Summary of Survey Respondents

	All Responses
Number of providers participating	170
Total number of survey responses	32,315
Total number of paper based questionnaire responses	12,372
Percentage of responses which were paper based questionnaires	38%
Total number of learners who responded given help	3,593

The survey questionnaire asked respondents if they were completing the survey themselves or were receiving help from someone else. Of the 32,315 valid responses, 3,593 (11%) said they were receiving help. This percentage is slightly lower in comparison to the 2013 to 2014 Community Learning survey (13%) but still considerably higher than the equivalent figure for the 2014 to 2015 mainstream survey (6.9%).

Statistical significance

Each college or other training organisation's survey sample underwent two quality tests to check for statistical robustness. The first was a confidence interval test for minimum sample size. The latest available Individualised Learner Record (ILR) datasets were used to calculate the number of eligible learners attending each provider in the survey period (3 November 2014 to 29 March 2015). This figure was then used to calculate the minimum returned sample size that would generate 95% confidence that the measured results were within 5% of the estimated true value. Samples representing at least 70% of

all eligible learners were also deemed to be sufficiently robust. In addition to the confidence interval test, the skew test was used to ensure that the degree of bias within the sample submitted by individual providers was within acceptable parameters. Details of how we calculated both quality thresholds are available in Appendix 4.

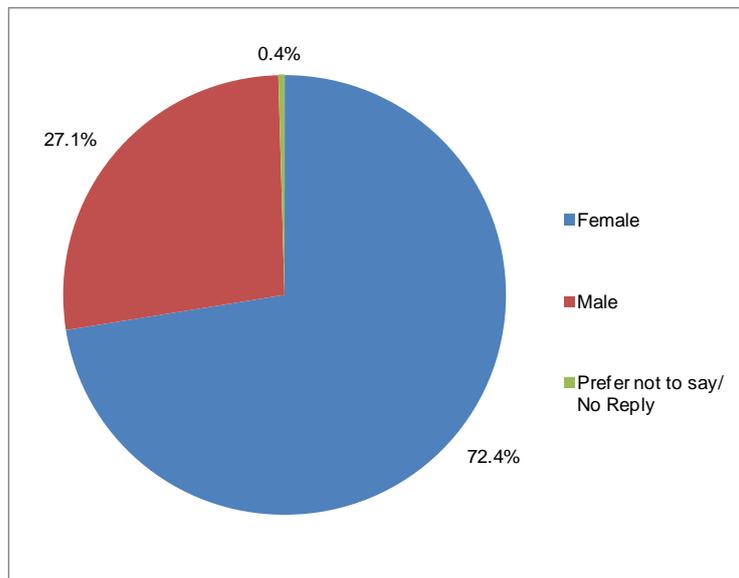
All colleges and other training organisations taking part in the Community Learning survey were given detailed feedback on their results. The survey reports issued to individual providers showed the response by learners to each individual question. The results were broken down by a range of learner characteristics and also by subject area and delivery location.

For the mainstream Learner Satisfaction Survey, colleges and other training organisations meeting the required survey sample quality tests are awarded an overall score which is the mean of the scoring questions. Of the 170 colleges and other training organisations that returned valid responses to the survey, 72 (42%) achieved a sufficiently robust sample to pass the confidence interval and skew quality tests. Therefore, they were given an overall score in addition to the score for each question. This was an improvement from the 2013 to 2014 survey when 32% of colleges and other training organisations taking part in the survey received an overall score.

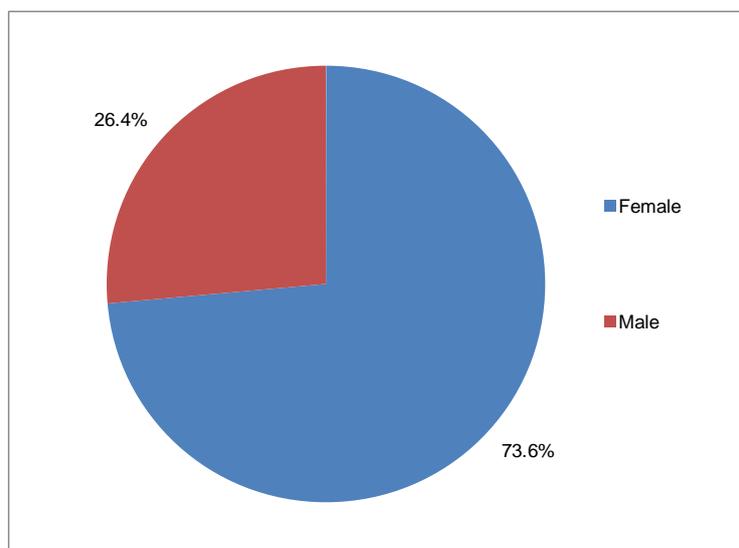
Profile of respondents

Figure 1 shows the gender profile of learners who responded to the survey and compares it with the national population of Community Learning learners. (The Community Learning population is defined as all learners taking courses and activities funded through the Community Learning budget within the survey window (3 November 2014 to 29 March 2015)).

Figure 1: Gender Profile of Survey Respondents compared to SFA-funded Community Learning Total Population



Survey Sample (Base = 32,315)



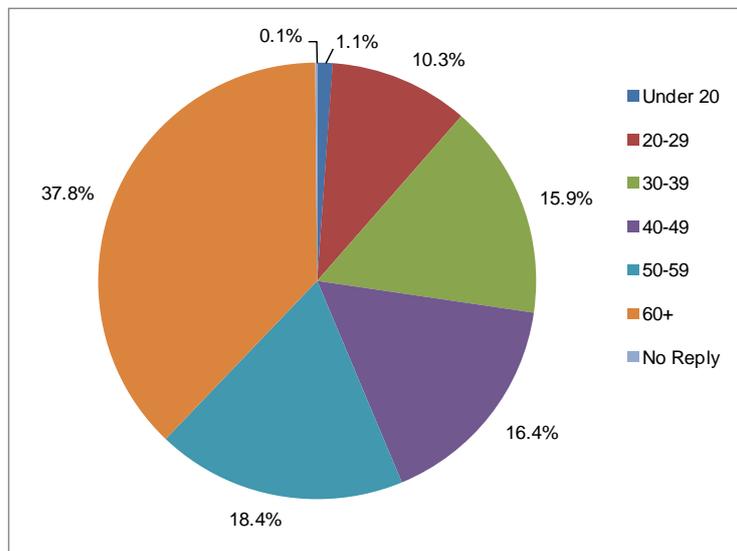
Community Learning Total Population (Base = 274,935)

Source: ILR R06 2014 to 2015

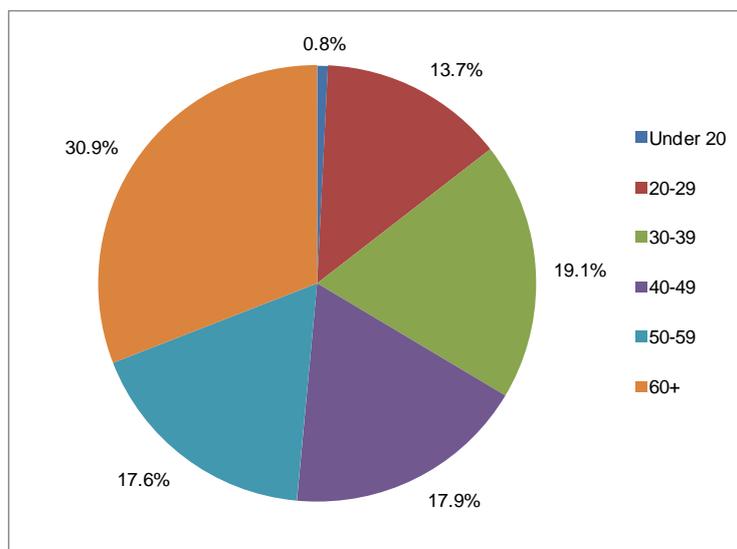
The survey sample gender profile was very close to the Community Learning population as a whole which shows that almost three-quarters of learners on this type of provision are female.

Figure 2 shows the age profile of learners who responded to the survey and compares it with the national population of Community Learning learners.

Figure 2: Age Profile of Survey Respondents compared to SFA-funded Community Learning Total Population



Survey Sample (Base = 32,315)



Community Learning Total Population (Base = 274,935)

Source: ILR R06 2014 to 2015

The charts show that there was a relatively close match between the age profile of the sample and the overall Community Learning population. However, as was the case for last year's survey, learners aged 60 years and over tended to be over-represented in the sample and those aged 30 years and under were slightly under-represented. The overall age profile of this year's survey sample was very similar to the age profile of the 2013 to 2014 survey sample.

Survey responses

The survey questionnaire retained the same 15 questions that were used for the 2013 to 2014 survey (see Appendix 2 for a copy of the questionnaire). Firstly, learners were asked to give their reasons for taking the course and also identify the main reason. They were then asked to rate various aspects of their course or activity on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 equals "very bad" and 10 equals "very good". Responses to these questions were used to calculate the overall satisfaction score for each college or other training organisation. Learners were then asked to say how likely it was that they would recommend their course or activity to friends or family on a five-point scale running from "extremely likely" to "extremely unlikely". The final two questions asked learners about the impact of their learning and the main outcome from taking the course.

Table 2 below shows the response to the 10 scoring questions (Q3 to Q12) and the average satisfaction scores given by learners to each question. Where possible, comparisons are made with overall scores and adult subgroup scores for equivalent questions from the mainstream FE Choices Learner Satisfaction Survey (Version 7).

**Table 2: Responses to the 10 Satisfaction Scoring Questions
(Including Comparison with FE Choices Learner Satisfaction Version 7)**

Community Learning Survey			Mainstream FE Choices Survey		
Question	Responses	Overall Average Score	Overall Average Score	Adults Average Score	Adults at Local Authorities Average
Q3. How good or bad was the information you were given when you were choosing your course or activity?	30407	8.6	8.2	8.5	8.7
Q4. How good or bad was the help staff gave you in the first few weeks of your course or activity?	32069	9.1	8.4	8.8	9.0
Q5. How good or bad is the teaching on your course or activity?	32196	9.4	8.5	8.9	9.3
Q6. How good or bad is the respect staff show to you?	32117	9.6	8.8	9.3	9.5
Q7. How good or bad is the advice you have been given about what you can do after this course or activity?	24017	8.8	8.0	8.5	8.6
Q8. How good or bad is the support you get on this course or activity?	30575	9.4	8.5	9.0	9.2
Q9. How good or bad are the staff at listening to views of learners?	30360	9.3	8.2	8.8	9.0
Q10. How good or bad are the staff at acting on the views of learners ?	29150	9.2	8.0	8.7	8.9
Q11. How good or bad has the course or activity been at meeting your expectations?	32161	9.1	8.2	8.7	9.0
Q12. Overall, how good or bad do you think the organisation that provides your learning is?	32111	9.1	8.4	8.9	9.1
Overall		9.2	8.3	8.8	9.1

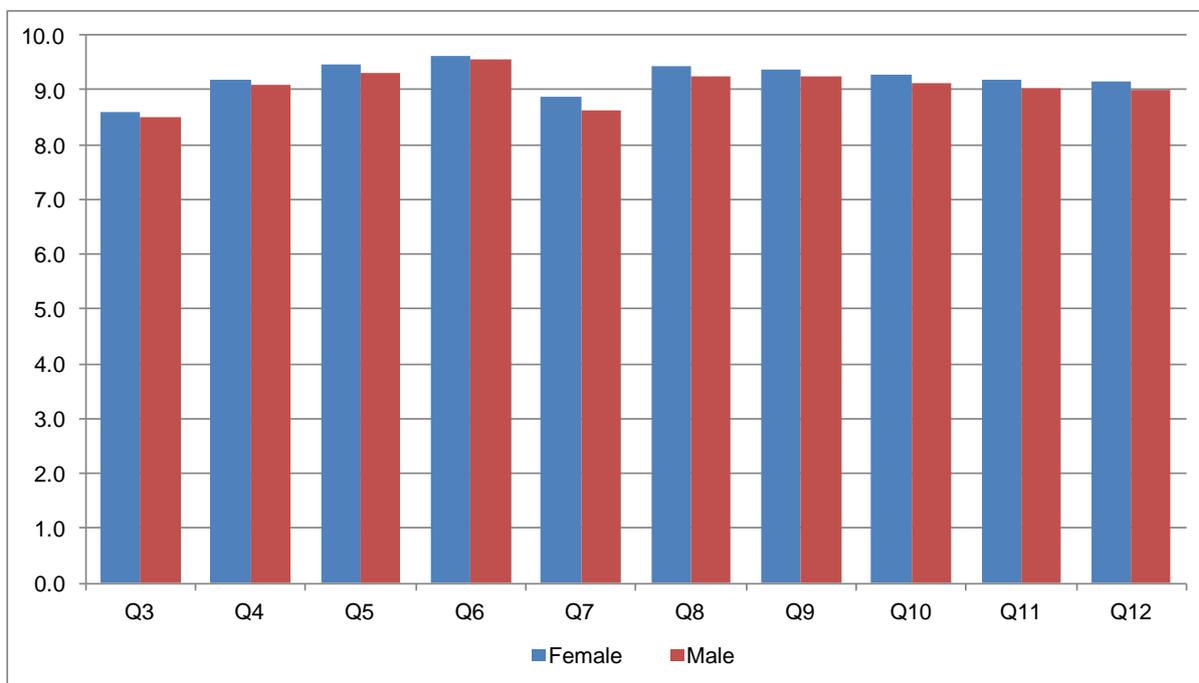
The average satisfaction scores given by Community Learning learners were consistently higher than the scores given by learners who participated in the mainstream Learner Satisfaction Survey. This was true even when the results from the Community Learning learners were compared to the results from the cohort of learners studying at Local Authorities, which are the most comparable group of training providers to those which deliver Community Learning.

Community Learning learners gave their most positive responses to the questions on the quality of teaching (Q5), support they received on the course (Q8) and the respect shown to them by staff (Q6). The least positive responses were to the questions on the quality of information they were given when choosing their course (Q3) and the advice they were given on what to do after completing their (Q7).

The following charts show how satisfaction scores differed when broken down by gender and age. The overall final score calculation included a weighting factor to counter any age and/or gender imbalance within a college or other training organisation's survey sample.

Figure 3 shows the average survey scores for each of the satisfaction rating questions broken down by gender.

Figure 3: Survey Responses by Gender (Average Score)



Gender	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12
Female	8.59	9.17	9.46	9.61	8.86	9.42	9.38	9.26	9.18	9.16
Male	8.51	9.08	9.31	9.54	8.63	9.24	9.26	9.13	9.02	8.99

Historically, both the mainstream Learner Satisfaction survey and Community Learning survey have shown consistently higher levels of satisfaction scores among female learners and the same pattern is repeated again this year. The chart shows that, on average, females gave slightly higher satisfaction scores for all 10 questions, but the greatest difference was on the issue of advice given to learners on what to do after their course or activity (Q7).

The question with the smallest difference in scores between females and males was about the respect shown to learners (Q6) which received the highest rating overall from both genders.

Figure 4 shows the average survey scores for each of the satisfaction rating questions broken down by age group. Within each column, the colour scale runs from red for the highest scores through to orange, yellow and then to green for the lowest scores.

Figure 4: Survey Responses by Age (Average Score)

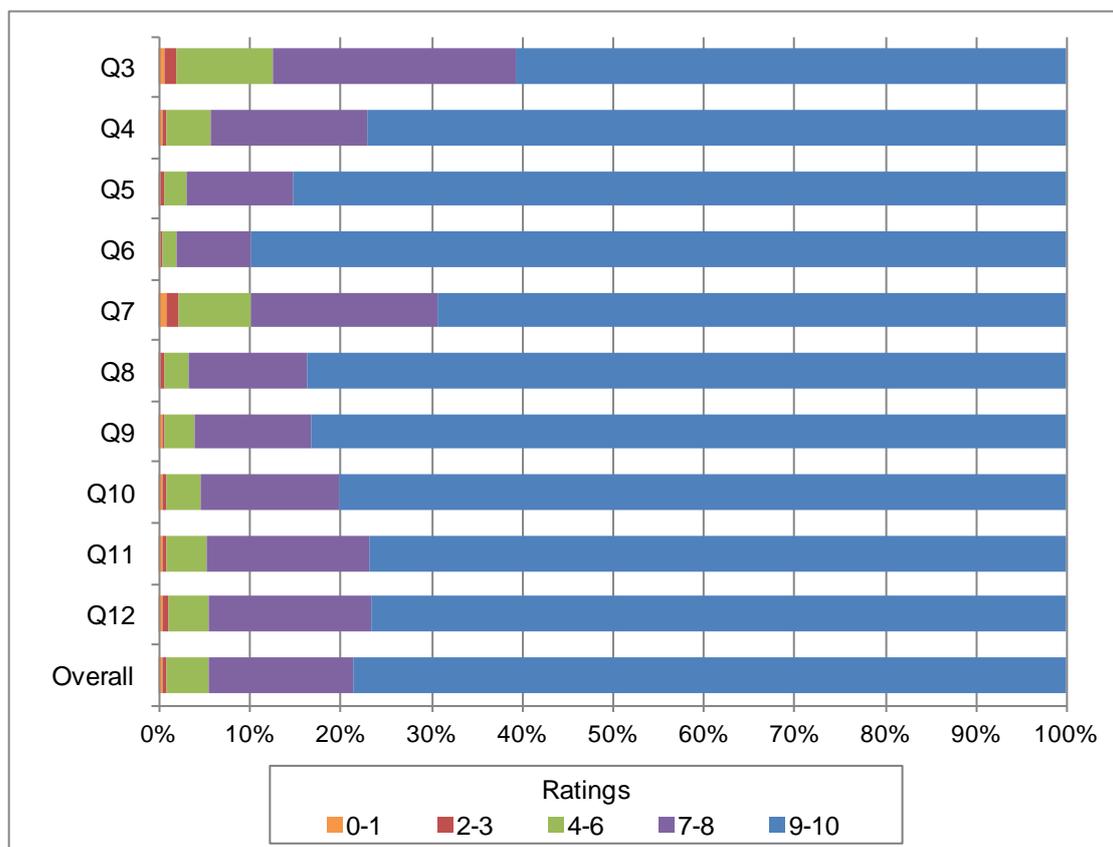
Age	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12
Under 20	8.21	8.73	8.91	9.11	8.38	8.97	8.91	8.79	8.75	8.57
20-29	8.56	9.15	9.37	9.57	8.79	9.33	9.35	9.26	9.16	9.16
30-39	8.59	9.15	9.39	9.57	8.84	9.34	9.36	9.30	9.18	9.16
40-49	8.53	9.12	9.40	9.56	8.78	9.33	9.34	9.24	9.16	9.12
50-59	8.43	9.07	9.40	9.58	8.71	9.33	9.29	9.18	9.11	9.07
60 and over	8.65	9.20	9.49	9.65	8.86	9.46	9.37	9.22	9.12	9.12

Q3. How good or bad was the information you were given when you were choosing your course or activity?
Q4. How good or bad was the help staff gave you in the first few weeks of your course or activity?
Q5. How good or bad is the teaching on your course or activity?
Q6. How good or bad is the respect staff show to you?
Q7. How good or bad is the advice you have been given about what you can do after this course or activity?
Q8. How good or bad is the support you get on this course or activity?
Q9. How good or bad are the staff at listening to views of learners?
Q10. How good or bad are the staff at acting on the views of learners?
Q11. How good or bad has the course or activity been at meeting your expectations?
Q12. Overall, how good or bad do you think the organisation that provides your learning is?

Learners aged 60 and over were generally the most positive group giving the highest score for seven of the 10 questions. They were particularly positive about the teaching and support they had received on their course. Learners aged under 20 tended to give lower satisfaction ratings compared with other groups, although the number of respondents was comparatively low because this cohort of learners covered only 19 year olds. (Community Learning is for adults aged 19 years and older.) This mirrored the findings from the mainstream FE Choices Learner Satisfaction Survey which have shown that young people tend to be less positive than older age groups when responding to learner satisfaction surveys.

Figure 5 shows the percentage ratings given by learners to each of the 10 scoring questions, where 0 = very bad and 10 = very good.

Figure 5: Spread of Responses



Response	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Overall
0-1	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2-3	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
4-6	11%	5%	2%	2%	8%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%
7-8	27%	17%	12%	8%	21%	13%	13%	15%	18%	18%	16%
9-10	61%	77%	85%	90%	69%	84%	83%	80%	77%	77%	79%

For most questions, well over three quarters of respondents gave scores of 9 or 10. The vast majority of learners (90%) gave a score of 9 or 10 for respect shown by staff (Q6) and 85% rated the quality of teaching on their course (Q5) as 9 or 10. Only 2% of learners gave scores of 6 or less for both these questions. In total, five of the ten scoring questions were given average ratings of 9 or higher by at least four-fifths of learners. The questions least likely to receive satisfaction ratings of 9 or 10 were Q3 (How good or bad was the information you were given when you were choosing your course or activity?) and Q7 (How good or bad is the advice you have been given about what you can do after this course or activity?).

Table 3 shows the response to the 10 scoring questions from this year's survey compared to the results obtained from the 2013 to 2014 Community Learning survey.

**Table 3: Responses to the 10 Scoring Questions
(2014 to 2015 Survey Results Compared to 2013 to 2014 Survey Results)**

Question	2014 to 2015 Survey		2013 to 2014 Survey	
	Responses	Overall Average Score	Responses	Overall Average Score
Q3. How good or bad was the information you were given when you were choosing your course or activity?	30407	8.6	24458	8.5
Q4. How good or bad was the help staff gave you in the first few weeks of your course or activity?	32069	9.1	25911	9.1
Q5. How good or bad is the teaching on your course or activity?	32196	9.4	25993	9.4
Q6. How good or bad is the respect staff show to you?	32117	9.6	25965	9.6
Q7. How good or bad is the advice you have been given about what you can do after this course or activity?	24017	8.8	19448	8.7
Q8. How good or bad is the support you get on this course or activity?	30575	9.4	24656	9.4
Q9. How good or bad are the staff at listening to views of learners?	30360	9.3	24158	9.3
Q10. How good or bad are the staff at acting on the views of learners ?	29150	9.2	23256	9.2
Q11. How good or bad has the course or activity been at meeting your expectations?	32161	9.1	21239	9.1
Q12. Overall, how good or bad do you think the organisation that provides your learning is?	32111	9.1	25903	9.1
Overall		9.2		9.1

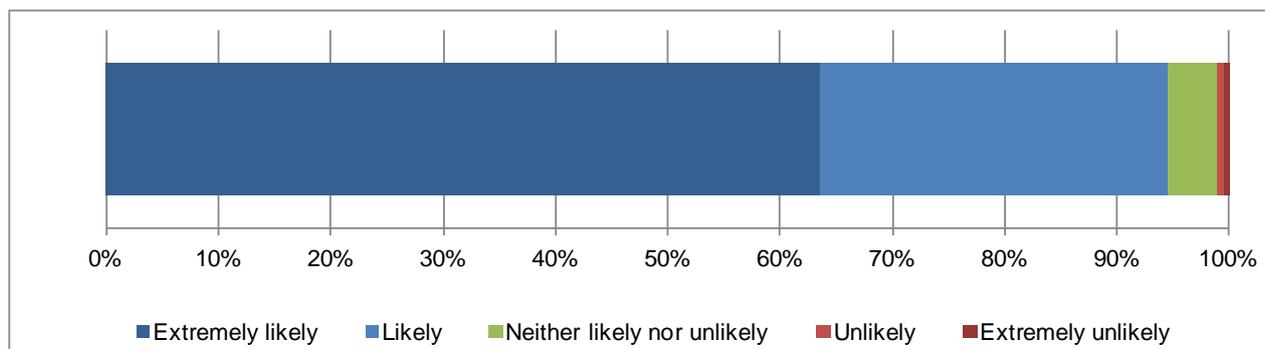
The results from this year's survey were very similar to [last year](#), most scores were maintained and there was a small 0.1, but statistically significant, increase in the score

for the quality of pre-course information (Q3) and the advice on what to do after completing the course (Q7). This shows very encouraging progress in two areas that have tended to attract the least positive responses from learners in previous surveys.

The overall average score for all ten questions was also slightly higher this year compared to last year and again the difference was statistically significant.

The chart below shows how likely Community Learning survey respondents were to recommend their course or actively to friends or family.

Figure 6: Likelihood of recommending the course or activity



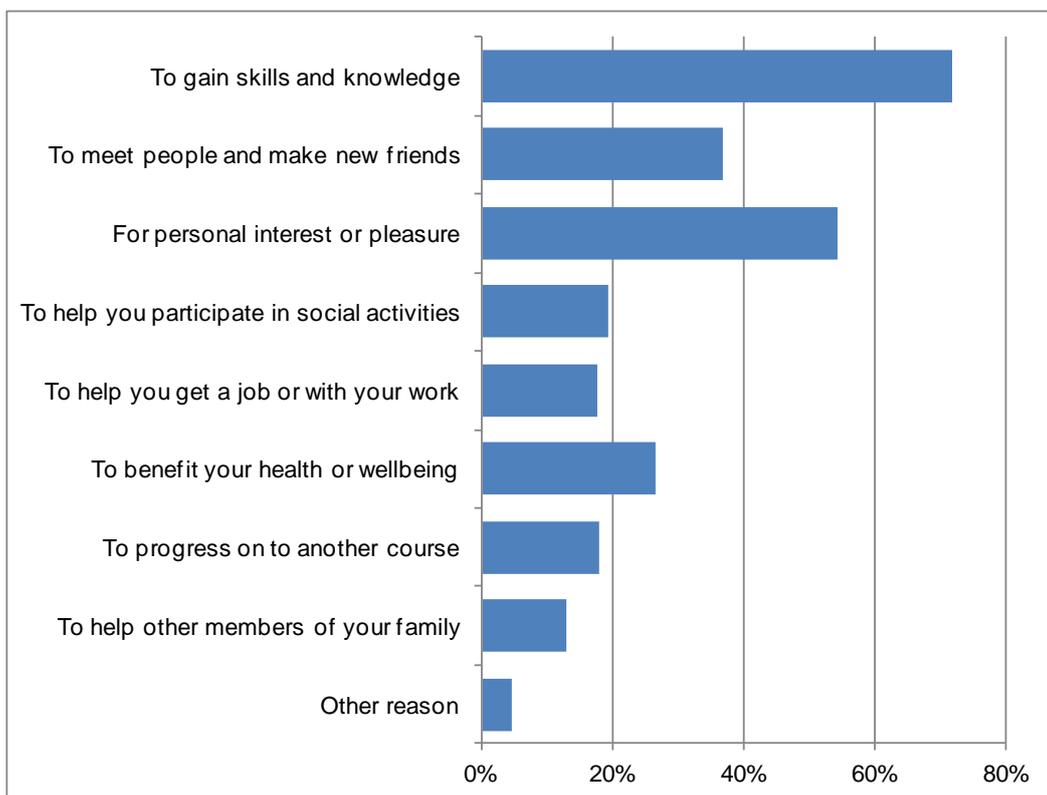
How likely is it that you would recommend the organisation that provides your learning to friends or family?	Community Learning Survey
Extremely likely	63%
Likely	31%
Neither likely nor unlikely	4%
Unlikely	1%
Extremely unlikely	1%
Does not apply / No response	1%

Base = 32,315

The likelihood of recommendation by learners was extremely high with 94% saying it was likely or extremely likely that they would recommend their course or activity to friends or family. This figure was slightly higher than the results from the previous Community Learning survey (2013 to 2014) when the likelihood of recommendation was 93%. The recommendation rate was also considerably higher than the equivalent figure for the 2014 to 2015 mainstream Learner Satisfaction survey which was 83% (with 37% of learners extremely likely to recommend their course).

The following set of charts show the survey responses to the questions on the main reasons for taking the course or activity and the self-reported impacts of their learning. Figure 7 shows all the reasons identified by learners.

Figure 7: Reasons for taking the course or activity



All Reasons	Count	Percent	Female	Male	Under 40	40 and over
To gain skills and knowledge	23121	71.5%	71.5%	71.8%	74.1%	70.6%
To meet people and make new friends	11903	36.8%	39.3%	30.0%	36.2%	37.1%
For personal interest or pleasure	17543	54.3%	55.2%	51.9%	42.8%	58.6%
To help you participate in social activities	6173	19.1%	18.9%	19.4%	21.5%	18.2%
To help you get a job or with your work	5677	17.6%	17.0%	18.8%	33.1%	11.7%
To benefit your health or wellbeing	8589	26.6%	28.2%	22.0%	19.7%	29.2%
To progress on to another course	5756	17.8%	17.6%	18.4%	24.1%	15.5%
To help other members of your family	4182	12.9%	14.4%	8.8%	23.0%	9.2%
Other reason	1488	4.6%	4.4%	5.1%	5.3%	4.3%

Base = 32,315

Almost three-quarters of respondents said that they had taken their course to gain new skills or knowledge and those aged under 40 years old were more likely than older respondents to give this reason. However, personal interest or pleasure were much

more likely to feature in the list of reasons why respondents aged 40 years and over had chosen their course or actively, compared to those younger than this.

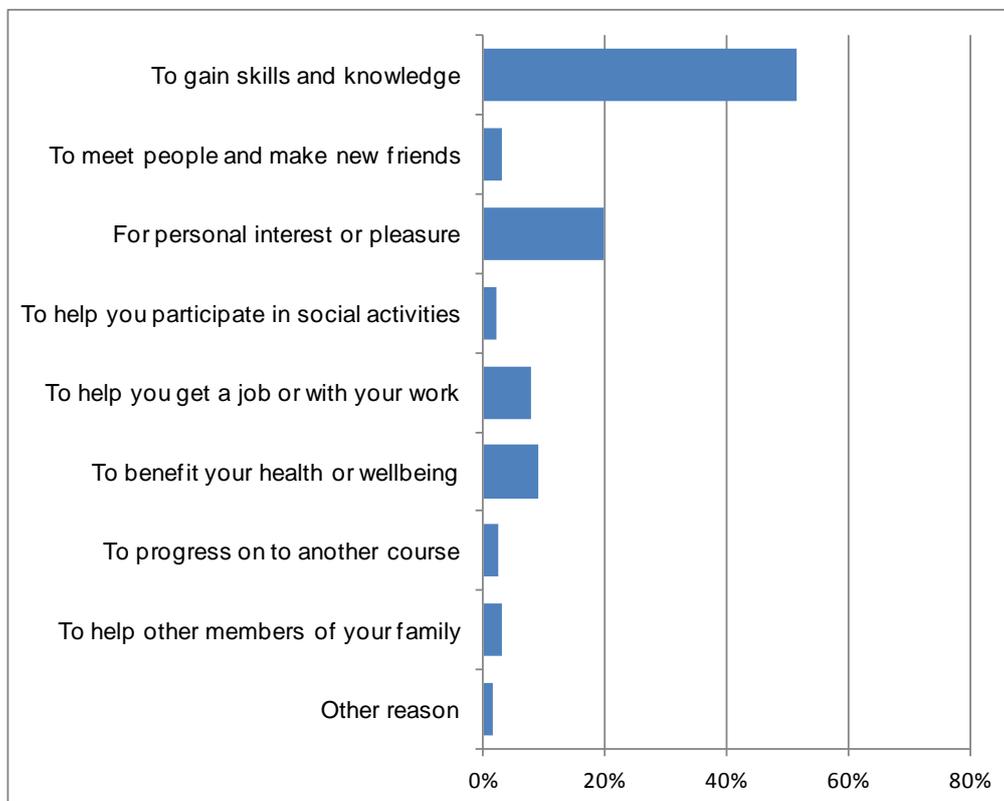
The chance to meet people and make new friends through their learning had motivated well over a third of respondents to take their course although females (39%) were more likely than males (30%) to cite this reason.

A quarter of Community Learning learners had taken the course to improve their health or wellbeing, with females and those aged 40 years and over more likely to give this reason.

Respondents aged under 40 years old were almost three times as likely as older learners to be taking the course or actively to improve their employment prospects, with a third of younger learners giving this reason. These learners were also much more likely than people over 40 years old to be taking the course in order to progress into further learning.

The respondents were asked to identify the main reason for taking their course or activity. The chart and table below show the results.

Figure 8: Main reason for taking the course or activity



Main Reason	Count	Percent	Female	Male	Under 40	40 and over
To gain skills and knowledge	14198	51.3%	50.1%	54.4%	50.5%	51.6%
To meet people and make new friends	846	3.1%	2.9%	3.3%	3.7%	2.8%
For personal interest or pleasure	5447	19.7%	19.9%	19.1%	11.5%	22.8%
To help you participate in social activities	564	2.0%	1.9%	2.4%	2.3%	1.9%
To help you get a job or with your work	2180	7.9%	7.1%	10.0%	14.6%	5.3%
To benefit your health or wellbeing	2502	9.0%	10.2%	5.8%	4.4%	10.8%
To progress on to another course	664	2.4%	2.6%	1.9%	4.5%	1.6%
To help other members of your family	851	3.1%	3.7%	1.4%	6.8%	1.7%
Other reason	436	1.6%	1.5%	1.8%	1.8%	1.5%

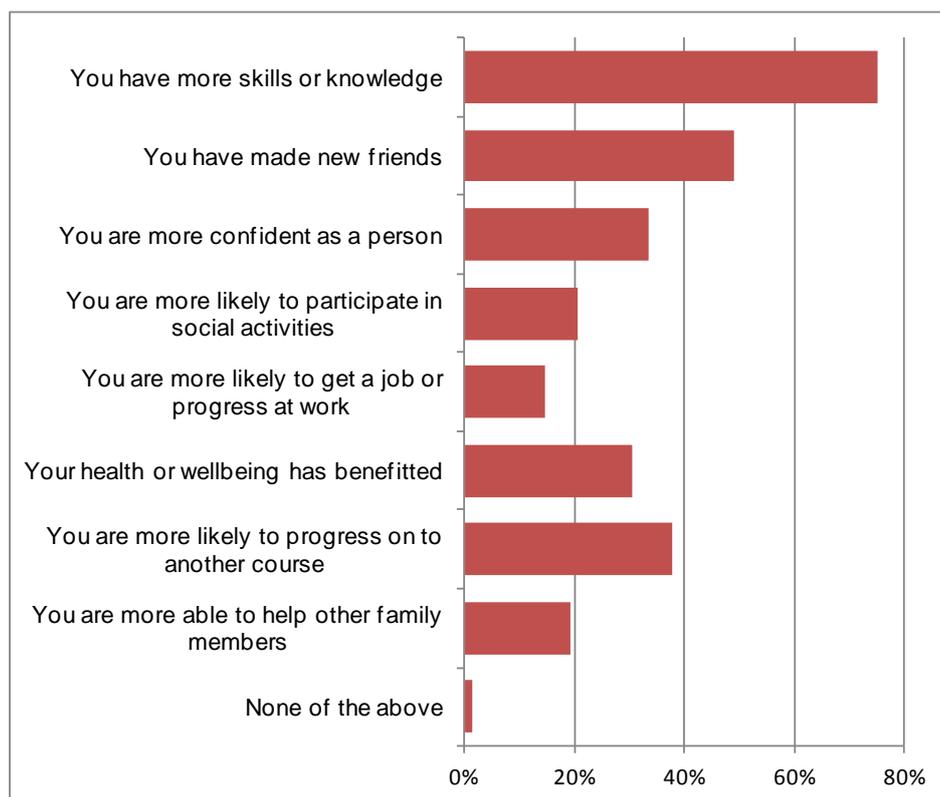
Base = 32,315

Over half of the respondents said the main reason for taking their course or activity was to gain skills and knowledge with males (54%) slightly more likely than females (50%) to state this reason. The second most frequently cited reason was personal interest or pleasure, identified by a fifth of respondents.

Almost one in ten learners said their most important reason for taking their course was to benefit their health and well-being although respondents aged 40 years old and over were more than twice as likely as younger learners to have done so.

Figure 9 shows respondents' perceived outcomes from their learning.

Figure 9: Outcomes of taking the course or activity



All Outcomes	Count	Percent	Female	Male	Under 40	40 and over
You have more skills or knowledge	24228	75.0%	75.0%	75.0%	73.8%	75.5%
You have made new friends	15814	48.9%	51.0%	43.4%	44.9%	50.5%
You are more confident as a person	10872	33.6%	34.7%	30.8%	40.9%	30.9%
You are more likely to participate in social activities	6707	20.8%	20.9%	20.4%	26.2%	18.7%
You are more likely to get a job or progress at work	4717	14.6%	14.0%	16.1%	27.7%	9.6%
Your health or wellbeing has benefitted	9911	30.7%	32.4%	26.0%	22.9%	33.6%
You are more likely to progress on to another course	12251	37.9%	37.9%	38.0%	40.2%	37.1%
You are more able to help other family members	6195	19.2%	20.6%	15.2%	29.0%	15.5%
None of the above	479	1.5%	1.4%	1.6%	1.6%	1.4%

Base = 32,315

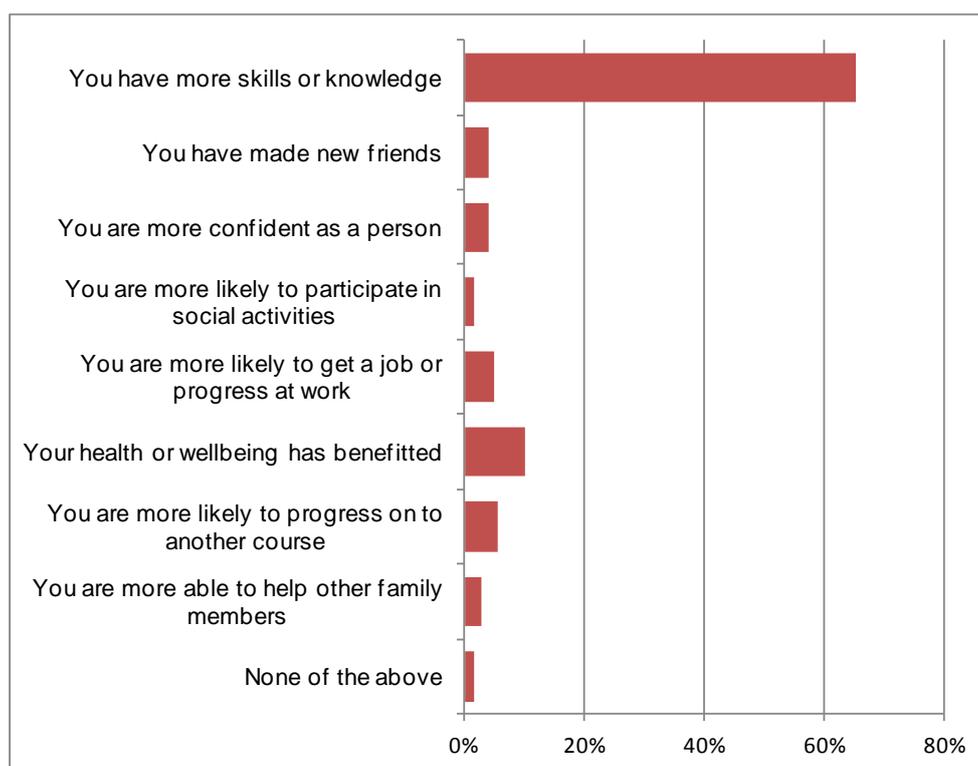
As a result of taking a Community Learning course, three-quarters of learners said that they had acquired new knowledge and skills and almost half felt that they had made new friends. Approaching 40% of learners said that they were more likely to progress to another course.

A third of respondents said they had gained more confidence, this figure rose to over 40% among those aged 40 and under. Well over a quarter of the respondents aged under 40 years said they were more likely to get a job or progress at work as a result of taking their course.

Taking a Community Learning course had also benefitted the health and wellbeing of a third of female respondents and a third of those aged over 40 years old.

The chart and table below show respondents' views on the single main outcome of their learning.

Figure 10: Main outcome of taking the course or activity



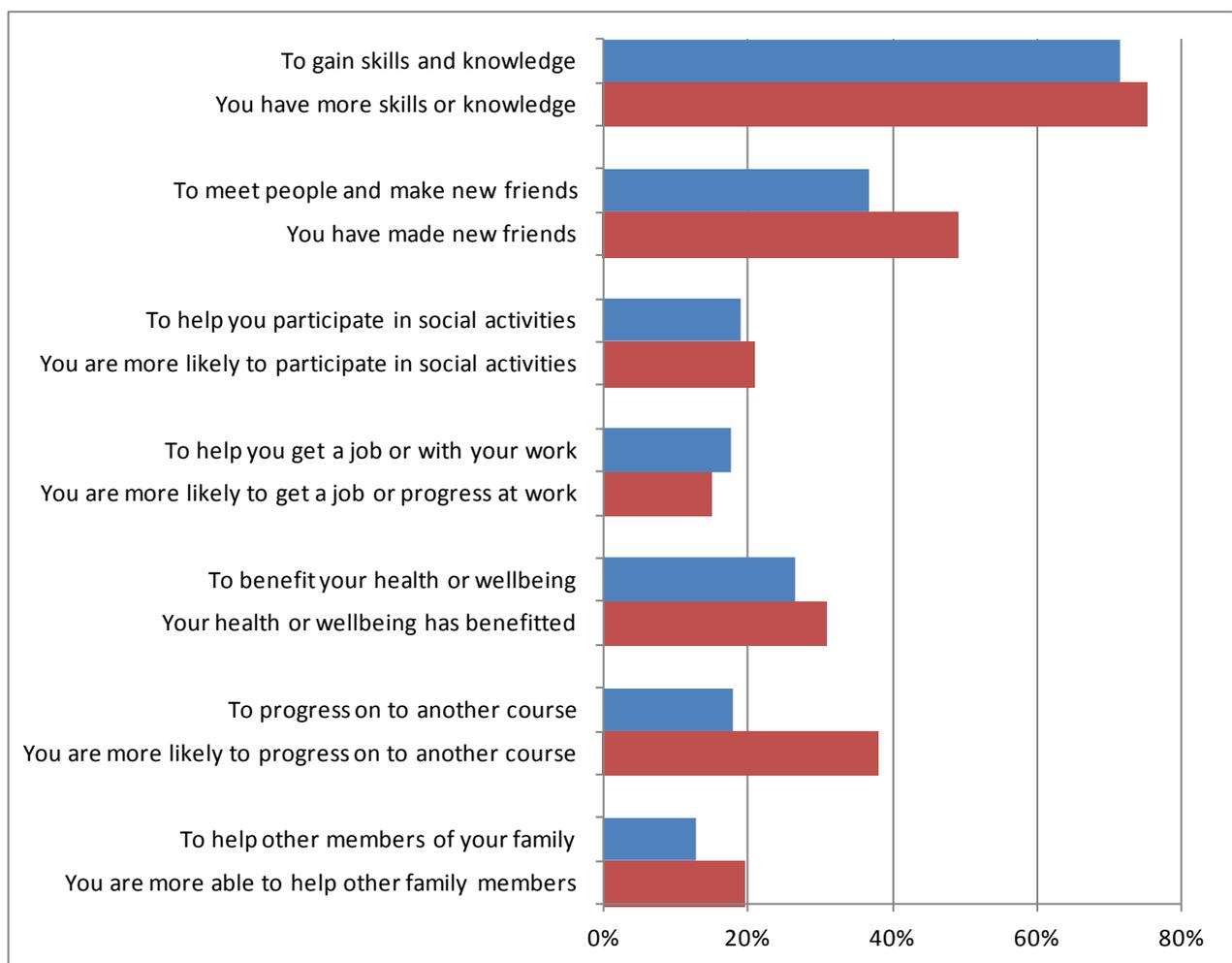
Main Outcome	Count	Percent	Female	Male	Under 40	40 and over
You have more skills or knowledge	12982	64.1%	62.6%	68.6%	58.6%	66.3%
You have made new friends	713	3.5%	3.4%	3.8%	3.9%	3.4%
You are more confident as a person	767	3.8%	3.7%	3.9%	5.7%	3.0%
You are more likely to participate in social activities	385	1.9%	1.7%	2.4%	2.4%	1.6%
You are more likely to get a job or progress at work	1004	5.0%	4.6%	6.0%	9.0%	3.4%
Your health or wellbeing has benefitted	2350	11.6%	13.3%	6.8%	5.2%	14.1%
You are more likely to progress on to another course	1042	5.1%	5.1%	5.2%	6.5%	4.6%
You are more able to help other family members	723	3.6%	4.1%	2.0%	7.2%	2.1%
None of the above	290	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%

Base = 32,315

The main outcome of taking the course or activity for most learners was that they had gained more skills or knowledge (64%). Learners aged over 40 (66%) were more likely than younger learners (59%) to state this as the single main outcome. For those aged over 40 the second most frequently cited outcome was an improvement in health and wellbeing whereas those under 40 years old were more likely to identify progression on to another course.

The chart below shows the respondents answers to two questions: their reasons for taking the course or activity and the outcomes they reported after completing the course or activity.

Figure 10: Reasons for taking the course or activity and outcomes



Base = 32,315

The percentage of respondents identifying a particular outcome from their learning tended to far exceed the percentage giving the matching reason for taking the course.

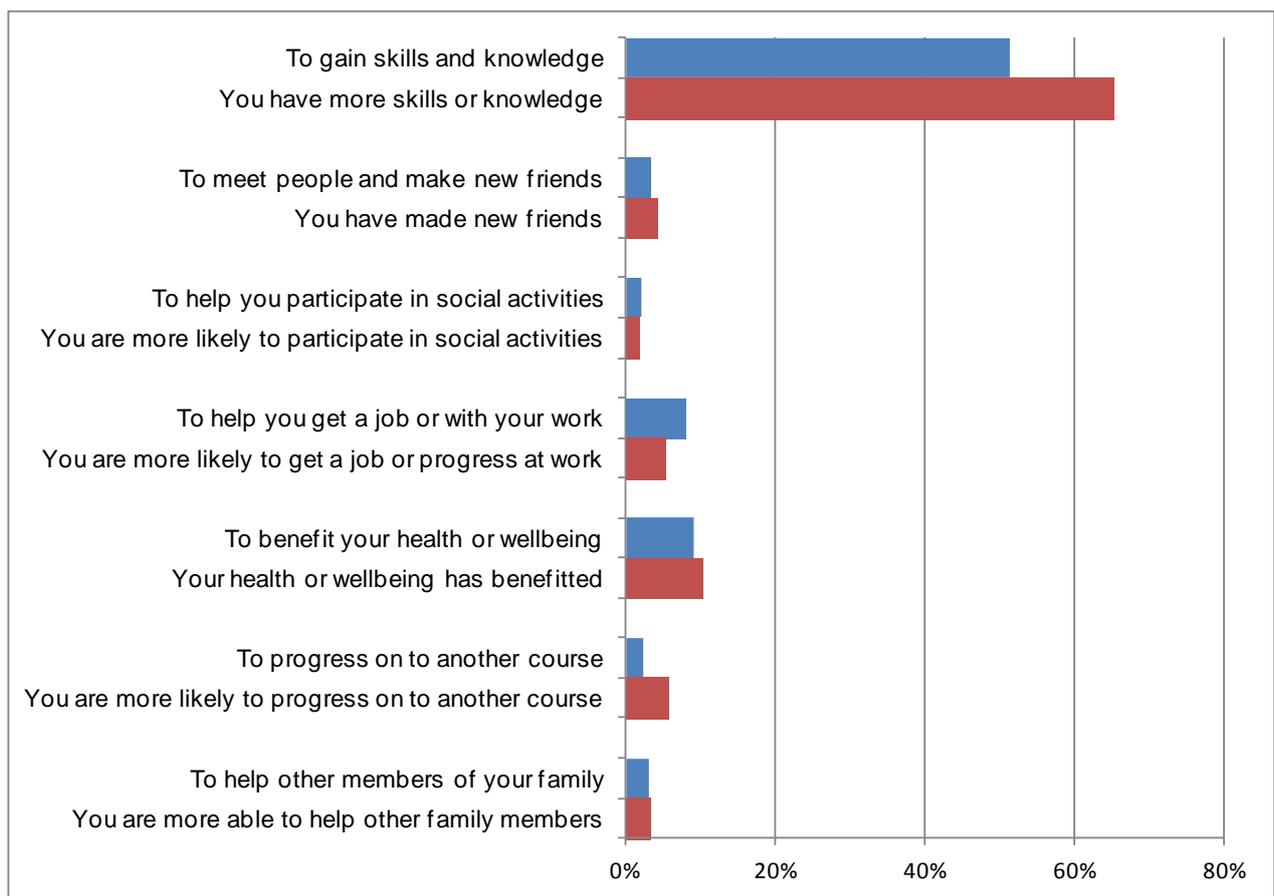
This suggests learners had experienced a greater number of beneficial outcomes from their learning than they had anticipated.

As was the case last year, fewer learners identified finding a job or helping with work as a main outcome of their learning.

Almost 40% of respondents said the learning had encouraged them to progress on to a further course, although for half these, further learning had not been among their initial reasons for taking the course.

Figure 11 below shows the main reason for taking the course against the main outcome.

Figure 11: Main reason for taking the course or activity and main outcome



Base = 32,315

Almost two-thirds of learners identified gaining skills and knowledge as the main outcome of taking their course although only just over half said this had been their main reason for starting.

Section 3: Summary of findings

The Community Learning Learner Satisfaction Survey 2014 to 2015 received a good response with over 32,300 learners taking part from 170 colleges and other training organisations. This was an increase of 24% in learner numbers compared to the 2013 to 2014 survey.

The overall sample appeared to be a good representation of the Community Learning population as a whole during the survey period and closely matched the learner profile in terms of age and gender.

This year's survey continued the pattern of extremely positive results from the Community Learning Learner Satisfaction survey, with the average scores for all responses higher than equivalent scores for the 2014 to 2015 Version 6 mainstream survey.

The average scores given by respondents to all questions equalled or exceeded the very high scores resulting from the 2013 to 2014 Community Learning survey. Satisfaction ratings were particularly high for the quality of teaching and the respect shown to learners by provider staff.

There appears to have been encouraging progress over the last year in two areas that attracted the least positive responses from learners last year. These are the quality of pre-course information and the advice given to learners on what to do after completing the course.

Almost all learners (94%) thought it likely that they would recommend their course or activity to a friend or relative, with almost two-thirds saying it was extremely likely that they would do so.

The most likely reasons for taking Community Learning courses were to "gain new skills and knowledge" and for "personal interest or pleasure" but many had discovered

additional benefits from their learning such as improved health and wellbeing and the ability to help other family members.

As a result of taking a Community Learning course, three-quarters of learners said that they had acquired new knowledge and skills and almost half felt that they had made new friends. For many learners, the course or activity had encouraged them to participate in further learning, which they had not anticipated before taking the course.

Appendix 1: Technical Summary of Research Methodology

Governing Research Principles

All RCU's research and consultancy work is governed by a rigorous quality assurance system that is accredited under the market research industry kitemark ISO 20252, the policies and guidelines of the Market Research Society and relevant Data Protection Legislation. For more details of ISO 20252 and the Market Research Society codes of conduct see www.mrs.org.uk.

Overview of Methodology

The Skills Funding Agency commissioned Ipsos MORI and RCU to undertake the Learner Satisfaction Survey for learners taking Community Learning courses. The survey took place between 3 November 2014 and 29 March 2015. 62% of survey responses were online and 38% were paper questionnaire submissions.

Key Quantitative Research Elements

- Description: Testing of the Community Learning Learner Satisfaction Survey with a sample of learners undertaking Community Learning.
- Target Population: Community Learning learners.
- Sampling: Community Learning providers selected learners to take part in the survey.
- Data quality checks: Overall, learners from 170 providers had valid learner responses to the survey. In the process of matching responses to the ILR, 31 providers were identified as having learners who responded to the survey using mainstream survey questionnaires only. A small number of Community Learning learners responded on the mainstream questionnaire. To ensure their responses were counted they were transferred to be included in the analysis of the Community Learning Survey.

- **Broad Topic Areas:** The survey comprised an introductory page, questions mirroring the mainstream national Learner Satisfaction Survey and specific questions on the social impact of Community Learning. The online and paper-based questionnaires contained identical questions and both were made available to providers. A copy of the questionnaire is available in Appendix 2.
- **Storage of Raw Data:** As part of our quality assurance arrangements we will keep evidence of individual survey responses for 18 months after the closure of the project and we will then securely destroy it.

Appendix 2: Learner Satisfaction Survey Instrument for Community Learning



Skills Funding Agency

Community Learner Satisfaction Survey 2014 to 2015

Community Learner

Q13. How likely is it that you would recommend the organisation that provides your learning to friends or family?

- Extremely likely
- Likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Unlikely
- Extremely unlikely
- Does not apply

Q14. As a result of taking the course or activity would you say that:
(Tick ALL that apply)

- You have more skills or knowledge
- You have made new friends
- You are more confident as a person
- You are more likely to participate in social activities
- You are more likely to get a job or progress at work
- Your health or wellbeing has benefited
- You are more likely to progress on to another course
- You are more able to help other family members
- None of the above

Q15. The main outcome of taking the course or activity was:
(Tick ONE only)

- You have more skills or knowledge
- You have made new friends
- You are more confident as a person
- You are more likely to participate in social activities
- You are more likely to get a job or progress at work
- Your health or wellbeing has benefited
- You are more likely to progress on to another course
- You are more able to help other family members
- None of the above

Thank you very much for your time.



Welcome to this short Learner Satisfaction Survey. Learners all over England are answering these questions. Your answers are very important. The Skills Funding Agency will use your answers to tell future learners what different organisations that provide learning are like.

Your completed survey will go to two survey companies - Ipsos MORI and RCU. Ipsos MORI and RCU will add your answers to the answers from other learners. They will send us, the Skills Funding Agency, the results. None of your lecturers, trainers or supervisors will see your answers.

The survey follows the rules of the Market Research Society. If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact the research company, Ipsos MORI at <http://fechoices.ipsos-mori.com/contactus>.

Ipsos MORI and RCU will keep your survey for no more than 18 months. If you want us to destroy your answers before then, please email us at servicesdesk@sfa.bis.gov.uk.

If you are happy to take part in the survey, please carry on.

(a) What is your personal learner number?

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

(b) First name

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

(c) Surname or family name

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

(d) Date of birth (dd/mm/yy for example, 15/02/82)

d	m	mm	/	y	yy

(e) Are you writing in the answers yourself?

- Yes
- Yes, with someone helping me
- No, someone is writing in my answers for me

(f) How old are you?

- Under 20
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70 or over

(g) Are you:

- Female?
- Male?
- Prefer not to answer

Q1 What were your reasons for taking the course or activity?

(Tick ALL that apply)

- To gain skills and knowledge
- To meet people and make new friends
- For personal interest or pleasure
- To help you participate in social activities
- To help you get a job or with your work
- To benefit your health or wellbeing
- To progress on to another course
- To help other members of your family
- Other reason

Q2 The main reason for taking the course or activity was:

(Tick ONE only)

- To gain skills and knowledge
- To meet people and make new friends
- For personal interest or pleasure
- To help you participate in social activities
- To help you get a job or with your work
- To benefit your health or wellbeing
- To progress on to another course
- To help other members of your family
- Other reason

Provider Code

5	1	0	0
---	---	---	---

To answer the following questions please give each a score out of 10. "0" will mean "very bad". "10" will mean "very good".

Try to answer every question, but if a question does not apply to you at all, please choose "Does not apply".

	Very Bad										Very Good										Does not apply		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Q3 How good or bad was the information you were given when you were choosing your course or activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Q4 How good or bad was the help staff gave you in the first few weeks of your course or activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Q5 How good or bad is the teaching on your course or activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Q6 How good or bad is the respect staff show to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Q7 How good or bad is the advice you have been given about what you can do after this course or activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Q8 How good or bad is the support you get on this course or activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Q9 How good or bad are the staff at listening to views of learners?	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Q10 How good or bad are the staff at acting on the views of learners?	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Q11 How good or bad has the course or activity been at meeting your expectations?	<input type="checkbox"/>																						
Q12 Overall, how good or bad do you think the organisation that provides your learning is?	<input type="checkbox"/>																						



Appendix 3: Survey report example

Screenshots



Skills Funding
Agency

FE Choices Learner Satisfaction Survey 2014 to 15 Community Learning
Example Provider (UKPRN: 99999999)

Scores by Learner Characteristics	Scores by Subject	Scores by Delivery Location	Course/Activity Reasons	Course/Activity Outcomes	Reasons Vs Outcomes	Information & Overall Score
<p>Your Overall Community Learning Learner Satisfaction score is</p>						<p>9.4</p>
<p>This is the end of survey report from the FE Choices Learner Satisfaction Community Learning Trial.</p> <p>Guidance to take you through your report can be accessed from the same section on the Provider Extranet where you opened this report.</p> <p>We recommend that the Guidance is read alongside this report.</p> <p>Your organisation's data presented in the report is weighted for age and sex. The learner breakdown has been established from your learner's responses. Return 6 (R06) for the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) has been used to check your learner's selections of their age and sex.</p> <p>If you have further questions about your report please contact us by emailing servicedesk@sfa.bis.gov.uk.</p>						
Profile of Respondents		Estimated number of eligible learners	Number of Responses	Estimated % of eligible learners responding	% share of all your valid responses	
Under 40	Female	715	60	8%	7%	
	Male	211	23	11%	3%	
40+	Female	2,983	586	20%	69%	
	Male	835	182	22%	21%	
Unknown			0		0%	
Total		4,744	851	18%	100%	

Scores by Learner Characteristics

Scores by Subject

Scores by Delivery Location

Course/Activity Reasons

Course/Activity Outcomes

Reasons Vs Outcomes

Information & Overall Score

Age Band

All Ages

Under 20

20-29

30-39

40-49

50-59

60+

Unknown

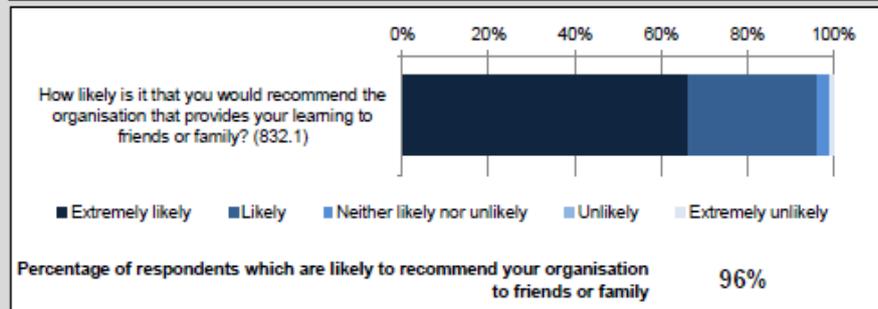
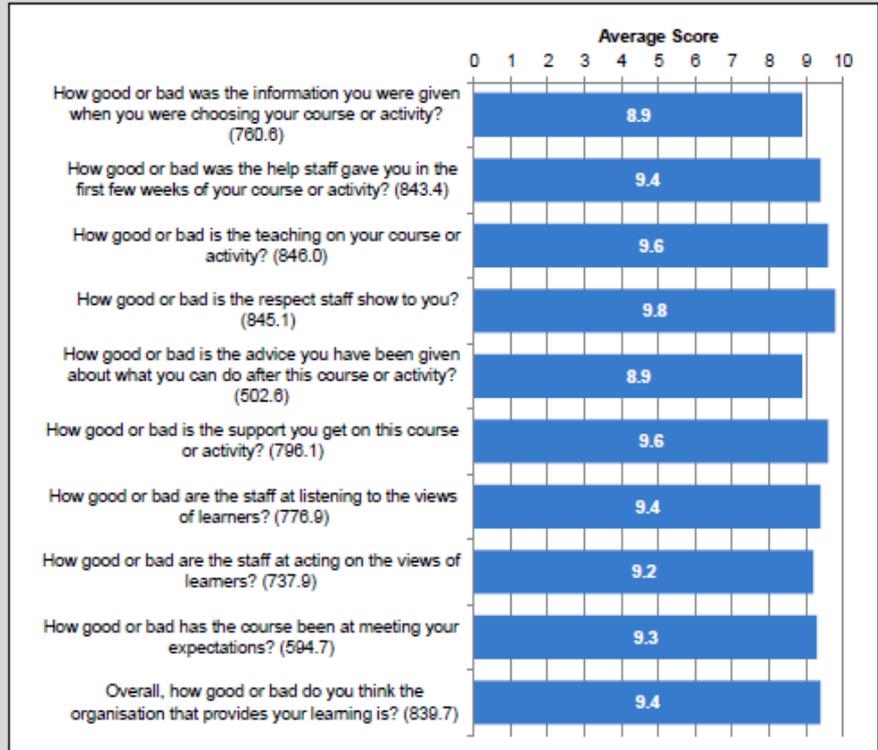
Sex

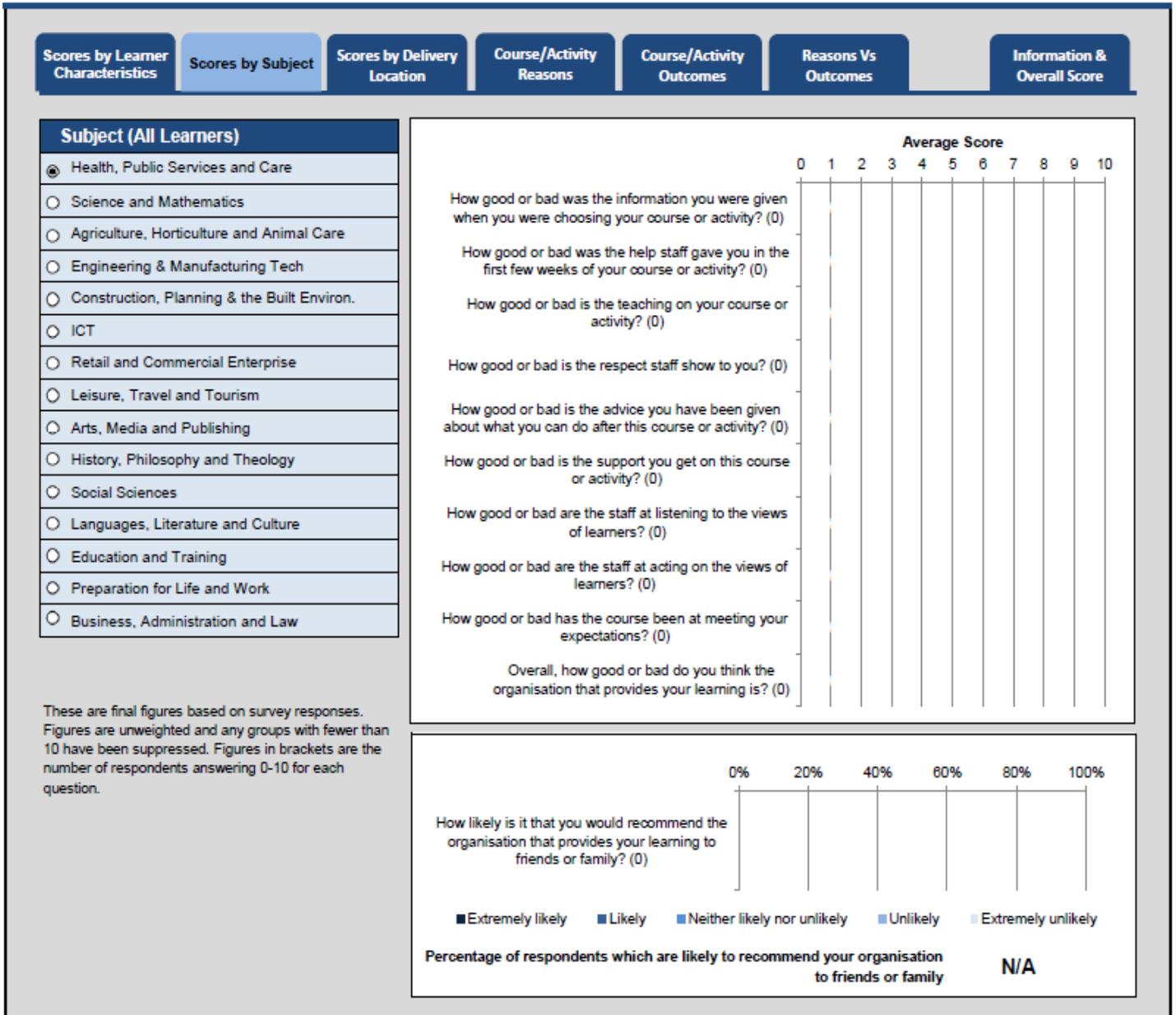
Female

Male

Prefer Not to Say/Unknown

These are final figures based on survey responses. Figures are weighted. Figures in brackets are the number of respondents answering 0-10 for each question. A star in the brackets indicates suppression has been applied to the results to protect respondents' confidentiality.





Scores by Learner Characteristics

Scores by Subject

Scores by Delivery Location

Course/Activity Reasons

Course/Activity Outcomes

Reasons Vs Outcomes

Information & Overall Score

Delivery Location

S40 2TF

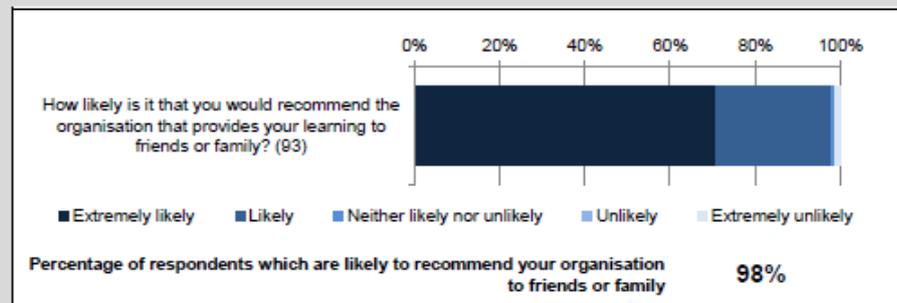
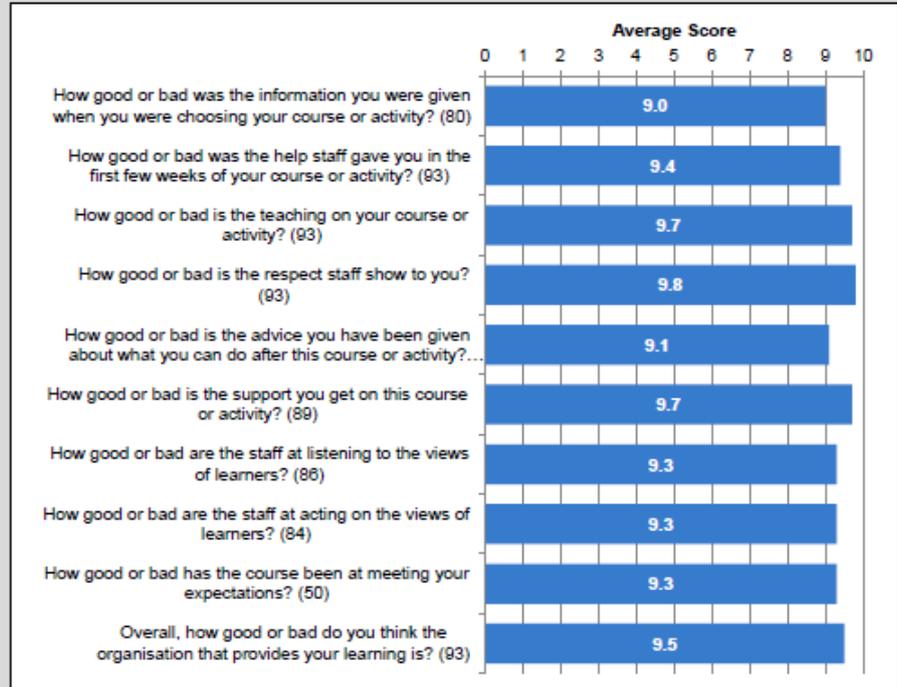
DE55 7BD

SK22 4AZ

S45 9JE

DE5 9QF

These are final figures based on survey responses. Figures are unweighted and any groups with fewer than 10 have been suppressed. Figures in brackets are the number of respondents answering 0-10 for each question.



Scores by Learner Characteristics

Scores by Subject

Scores by Delivery Location

Course/Activity Reasons

Course/Activity Outcomes

Reasons Vs Outcomes

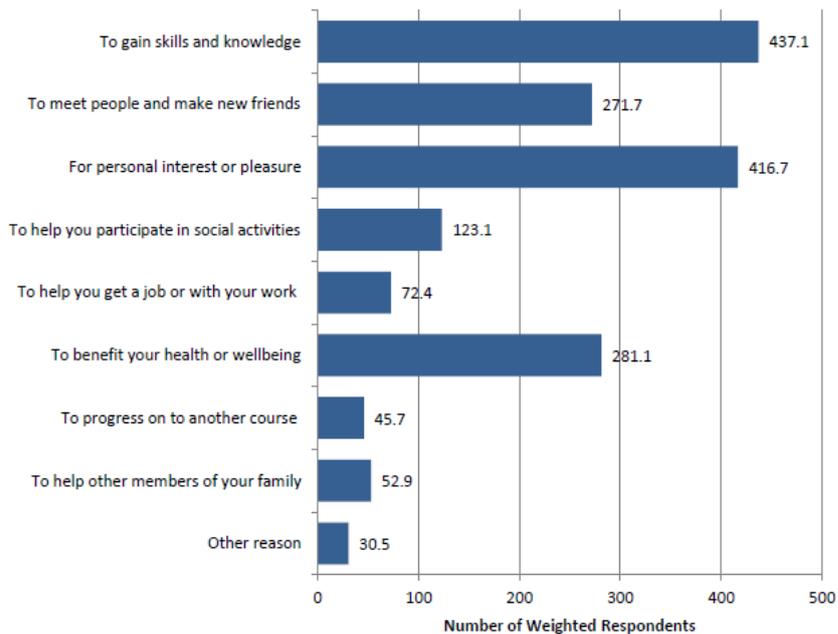
Information & Overall Score

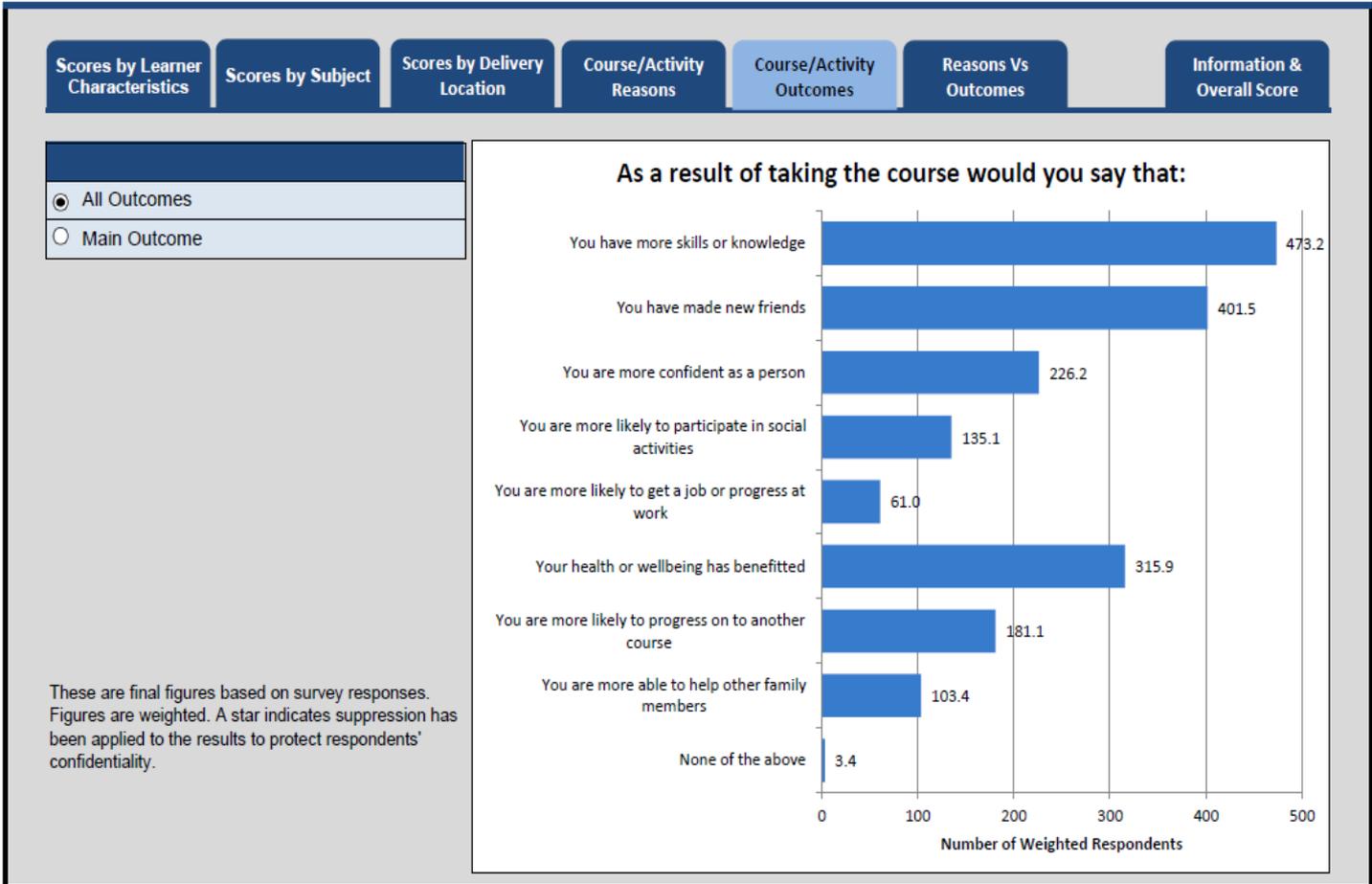
All Reasons

Main Reason

These are final figures based on survey responses. Figures are weighted. A star indicates suppression has been applied to the results to protect respondents' confidentiality.

What were your reasons for taking the course or activity?





Scores by Learner Characteristics

Scores by Subject

Scores by Delivery Location

Course/Activity Reasons

Course/Activity Outcomes

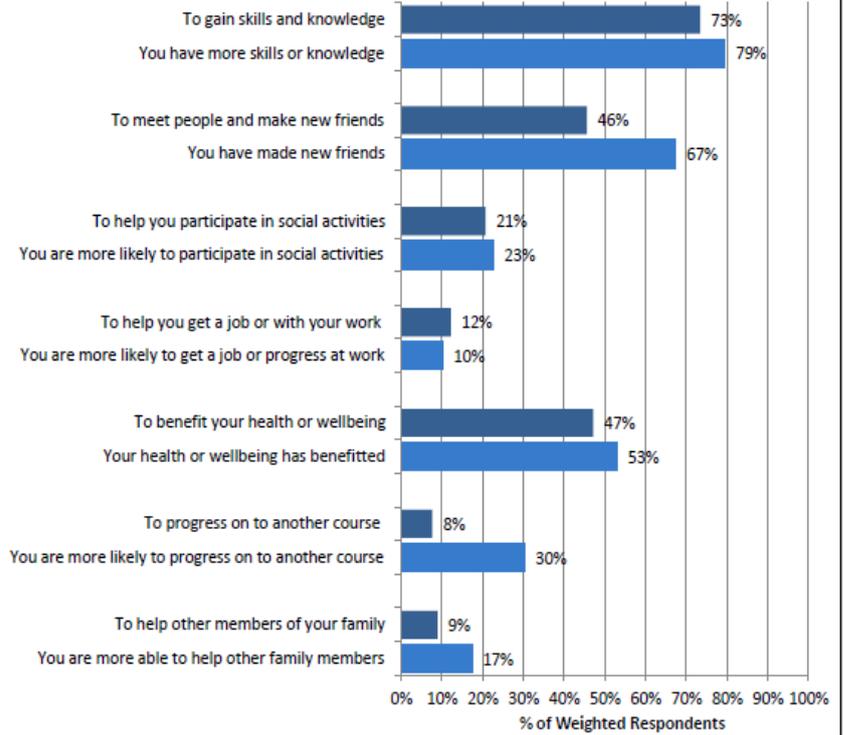
Reasons vs Outcomes

Information & Overall Score

All Reasons

Main Reason

Comparison between reasons for taking course and outcome after taking course



These are final figures based on survey responses. Figures are weighted. A star indicates suppression has been applied to the results to protect respondents' confidentiality.

Appendix 4: Quality Tests for Survey samples

Confidence interval test for minimum sample size

Confidence interval calculation

Sample Size Calculation (as used in the Sample Size Calculator)

$$\text{Sample Size} = \frac{Z^2 \times p \times (1 - p)}{c^2}$$

Correction for Finite Population (for known population size)

$$\text{Adjusted sample size} = \frac{\text{Sample Size}}{1 + \frac{\text{Sample Size} - 1}{N}}$$

Confidence interval of a returned sample

$$\text{Confidence Interval} = Z \times \sqrt{\frac{px(1 - p)}{n}} \times \sqrt{\frac{N - n}{N - 1}}$$

Where:

Z = Z value (for example 1.96 for 95% confidence level)

p = Assumed / observed % expressed as a decimal (for example 84% satisfied = 0.85)

c = Confidence interval, expressed as decimal (for example $\pm 5\%$ = 0.05)

N = Number of eligible learners on provider's ILR

n = Number of valid responses

Sample skew test

We used the skew test to ensure that the degree of bias within the sample submitted by individual providers was within acceptable parameters. Analysis of ILR data for the population produced a profile of learners for each individual provider, based on the following four learner categories:

1. Females aged under 40
2. Males aged under 40
3. Females aged 40 and over
4. Males aged 40 and over

We derived the measure for skew by comparing the spread of a provider's returned sample across these categories to its population profile based on the ILR. In a perfectly representative sample, the percentage of learners within each of the four categories would be exactly the same as the percentage of learners within each category based on the ILR data. The skew factor was defined as the sum total percentage of respondents within each category that were above or below the required percentage for a perfectly representative sample. Skew factors up to 40% were defined as correctable with the application of appropriate weighting; skew factors above 40% were regarded as not correctable.

Skew formulas

Skew calculation:

$$Skew = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^4 |r_i - s_i|}{2}$$

Where:

i = Each individual learner category, ranging from one to four

r = Percentage of learners on the provider's ILR in the i^{th} category

s = Percentage of learners in the sample in the i^{th} category

$||$ = Absolute value



© Crown copyright 2015

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence.

To view this licence,
visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/>
or e-mail: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This document is also available from our website gov.uk/sfa.

If you have any enquiries regarding this publication or require an alternative format, please contact us info@sfa.bis.gov.uk