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Train to Gain Employer Evaluation: Sweep 4 Research Report

June 2009

Of interest to everyone involved in improving skills
and learning opportunities in the workforce across
England

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Executive Summary

Background and objectives

Train to Gain is one of the most important developments in skills policy in recent years. Introduced in April 2006, and fully rolled out in August of that year, Train to Gain is a national service for businesses that provides help for them in identifying and sourcing such training as will improve the skills of their workforce and their business performance. It aims to encourage employers to invest in the development of the skills and qualifications of their employees.

Among the key guiding principles of the Train to Gain service is the idea that training provision and skills development should be individually tailored to the needs of the employer. To ensure that these objectives are met, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) initiated an ongoing employer evaluation of the Train to Gain service. The employer evaluation has been conducted by IFF Research on a twice yearly basis since 2007.

This document reports the findings from the latest new user 'sweep' of this employer evaluation (Sweep 4), conducted by IFF Research between January and March 2009. This consisted of a structured telephone survey to obtain the views of 3,750 employers who were initially in contact with a Train to Gain skills broker between May and October 2008. This initial contact could have been a simple telephone call to the employer, a full training needs analysis conducted by the skills broker, all the way through to the employer taking up training. All employer contacts covered by this evaluation had been generated by skills brokers.

Central to the evaluation has been a longitudinal element, designed to allow more effective tracking of how Train to Gain has evolved over time. This report includes discussion of the findings from the second longitudinal survey element of the employer evaluation, which looked at employer experiences of the service and the impact of Train to Gain between 13 and 20 months after the employer's initial contact with the skills brokerage service (in May to October 2007). A total of 1,906 employers were followed up between January and March 2009.

Throughout the report, time series comparisons are made between the current situation, as measured at Sweep 4, and the trends evident across earlier sweeps of the employer evaluation.

The key issues covered by the employer evaluation relate to:

- how employers first heard of, and became involved with, Train to Gain, and their expectations and motivations in becoming involved;
- the extent to which they found their skills broker to be responsive and accessible;
- employer views on the impartiality and relevance of advice given, and the skills brokers' knowledge of potential training and funding opportunities;
- the impact Train to Gain has had on the ability and willingness of employers to engage with training and on the numbers of employees trained;
- employer satisfaction with the training provision accessed through Train to Gain, and with the training providers responsible for delivery;
- the benefits of involvement with the skills broker and of any training conducted under Train to Gain; and
- the likelihood of future involvement with Train to Gain.

The profile of employers in contact with the Train to Gain skills brokerage service

The majority of employers in contact with the skills brokerage service between January 2007 and October 2008 had fewer than 50 employees at their site (84 per cent). There has been a slight increase in involvement among the very smallest employers (those with fewer than five staff) – from 17 per cent at Sweep 1 to 22 per cent at Sweep 4.

The Public Administration, Health and Education sector is heavily over-represented among employers using Train to Gain: across the employer evaluation, a third (35 per cent) of employers in contact with the skills brokerage

service were from this sector, despite the fact that they account for only 13 per cent of the business population.

The proportion of employers drawn from the Public Administration, Health and Education sector has been decreasing, however – from 38 per cent in Sweep 1 (January to April 2007) to 33 per cent in Sweep 4 (May to October 2008).

Conversely, the proportion of users from the Financial and Business Services sector has increased in each of the four sweeps: from 13 per cent in Sweep 1 to 19 per cent in Sweep 4. Indeed, over the four sweeps of the evaluation, the profile of employers using the skills brokerage service has become closer to the general distribution of employers across sectors in England.

Triggers for employer involvement with Train to Gain

Employers covered by the Sweep 4 survey were those that had got involved with Train to Gain through the skills brokerage service between May and October 2008. There were various means by which these employers first became aware of Train to Gain, the most common of which were being contacted by a skills brokerage organisation (24 per cent), through advertisements or promotions on radio and television, online or in the print media (16 per cent) and through Business Link (15 per cent).

A key trend that has emerged is an increase over time in the proportion of new users reporting that they had first heard of Train to Gain through advertisements or promotions on television, on radio, online or in the press (from 5 per cent at Sweep 1 to 16 per cent at Sweep 4).

A central element of Train to Gain is that it is intended to be demand led, offering an objective service that diagnoses employer requirements rather than ‘pushing’ or selling current training supply. The service has been successful in this respect. Among Sweep 4 employers new to the service, four in five (80 per cent) considered their skills broker to be independent of the training providers, and only one in 12 (8 per cent) thought otherwise.

Given that one of the objectives of Train to Gain is to encourage employer investment in training activity, it is encouraging that, over the course of the

research, a greater proportion of employers have been focused on the opportunities to access training through Train to Gain rather than on the subsidies available to support this training. While access to training opportunities remains the most frequently cited motivation for employer involvement in Train to Gain, the figures in this latest sweep suggest a slight upturn in the overall proportion of employers who are motivated by subsidised training or a contribution to wage costs – perhaps reflecting the effects of the economic downturn on employer priorities.

More than a third (36 per cent) of all small employers eligible for a contribution to wage costs were not aware that this formed part of the Train to Gain offer when they decided to use the Train to Gain service. Indeed, awareness of the contribution to wage costs has decreased over the course of the evaluation. It may be, however, that employers were informed about the possibility of accessing contributions to wage costs at a later point, and went on to make a claim for a contribution following training.

Employer engagement with the Train to Gain skills brokerage service

There has been a significant increase between Sweep 1 (27 per cent) and Sweep 4 (31 per cent) in the proportion of employers who proactively contacted the skills brokerage service to make an enquiry, rather than being approached by the skills broker.

Just over one in five (22 per cent) said that they still had ongoing contact with the skills broker a few months after the initial contact, though this dropped to one in 10 (11 per cent) in the longer term – 13 to 20 months after the initial approach. However, a considerable proportion said that they did feel able to re-engage with the service, should the need arise.

There was a clear effect of employer size on the nature of the relationship between the employer and the skills broker in the short term and on how the employer envisaged this working in the future. Small employers (with fewer than five staff) were significantly more likely to say that they did not anticipate further dealings with the service in the future (31 per cent, compared with 22 per cent

overall) and less likely to report ongoing contact after the first few months of contact (17 per cent, compared with 22 per cent overall). This indicates that the skills brokerage service needs to work harder to meet the needs of the smallest employers and to maintain an effective customer relationship and dialogue about employer needs and potential solutions.

Most employers who had undergone an organisational needs analysis (79 per cent) said that the skills broker had left them with a clear understanding of the follow-up action that would be taken following the meeting, and in seven cases in ten (70 per cent), where follow-up action had been agreed, a timeframe had been set out in which this would be achieved. Where a timetable had been agreed, the vast majority of employers reported that it had been adhered to (80 per cent).

Around a quarter (24 per cent) of those who had had no contact with the skills broker in the long term would have liked to have had the skills brokerage service made available to them during this time.

Employer satisfaction with the Train to Gain skills brokerage service

More than three-quarters of Sweep 4 employers (78 per cent) were satisfied overall with the skills brokerage service, and three-fifths (61 per cent) were very satisfied. One employer in eight (13 per cent) was dissatisfied. The reasons for dissatisfaction centred on a lack of contact (33 per cent) or follow-up action (16 per cent) on the part of the skills broker following the initial dealings.

The highest levels of satisfaction were recorded in the earliest phase of the evaluation, with satisfaction falling for the next two sweeps, before increasing in this latest sweep (May to October 2008) to levels approaching those recorded in Sweep 1.

The most important service elements for Sweep 4 employers are the knowledge of skills brokers in relation to identifying potential sources of funding to support training activity (mean importance score of 8.79 out of 10) and their ability to identify training solutions within Train to Gain (8.44), their training expertise generally (8.64), and their ability to understand the specific business and training

needs of the employer (8.21) and to translate these into action (8.19). These, together with the speed with which skills brokers carry out agreed follow-up actions, are key to satisfaction with the service. These factors have been the most important to employers throughout the evaluation.

The highest levels of satisfaction with elements of the skills brokerage service are seen in relation to the impartiality of advice (76 per cent satisfied at Sweep 4), the general knowledge and expertise of the skills broker in providing advice and guidance on training (78 per cent), and the ease with which the employer is able to get a response from the skills broker (69 per cent).

Specific areas where the skills brokers have performed consistently less well (relatively speaking) lie in their ability to signpost employers to a range of providers, their ability to translate the employer's needs into an action plan, and the speed with which any agreed or required follow-up action is undertaken.

By contrast with Longitudinal Survey 1, which showed a significant decrease over time in employer satisfaction with the skills brokerage service, the findings from Longitudinal Survey 2 show no significant difference between employer satisfaction at the time of the initial survey (a few months after the initial contact) and when this was followed up a year later (13 to 20 months after the initial contact).

Reflecting the high levels of satisfaction with the skills brokerage service, four in five (80 per cent) of the Sweep 4 employers reported that they would be likely to recommend the Train to Gain service to a business colleague outside their organisation, and half (50 per cent) were very likely to do so.

The impact of Train to Gain on employer training activity

Throughout the employer evaluation, there has been evidence that the skills brokerage intervention leads to a considerable degree of take-up of training solutions.

A few months after the initial contact with the skills broker, 42 per cent of employers had taken up some training through Train to Gain (in three-quarters of these cases, this training was to Level 2 or above), and overall three-fifths (61 per

cent) had committed to training as a result of contact with the skills broker (that is, had either undertaken training or had it scheduled). One in eight of the Sweep 4 employers (12 per cent) reported that some of their management staff had received some leadership and management training, coaching or mentoring following the initial contact with the Train to Gain skills broker.

By far the most common delivery formats for Train to Gain training were taught courses delivered on site (64 per cent) or training delivered off site (50 per cent) by an external training provider or college. More than two-fifths of employers who accessed training through Train to Gain made some contribution to the costs of this training. The likelihood of employers making at least some contribution to the costs of training increased markedly with employer size, indicating that subsidies for training are being preferentially channelled to small employers through the Train to Gain system.

There is evidence of sustained activity, with a third of those employers that had taken up training a few months after their initial contact with the skills broker arranging additional training through Train to Gain within the subsequent 12 months. In addition, one in six of those employers that had not committed to training through Train to Gain in the first couple of months after the initial contact with the skills broker went on to access Train to Gain training in the subsequent 12 months.

The proportion of employers who have had employees training at Level 3 has increased significantly over the course of the evaluation: from 33 per cent at Sweep 1 to 38 per cent at Sweep 4. This would indicate an increasing focus both on stimulating demand for Level 3 training (including through the roll-out of funding for qualifications at this level from the initial Level 3 pilot regions) and on progression of Train to Gain learners from Level 2.

The additional impact and value of Train to Gain in influencing employer training activity

Two-thirds of Sweep 4 employers (initially in contact with a skills broker between May and October 2008) had trained staff in the 12 months before the contact with

the skills broker, and a quarter of employers (25 per cent) had already arranged some training in the previous 12 months at Level 2 or above.

These findings indicate that a significant minority (25 per cent) of employers using the skills brokerage service already had the information and resources required to access training at Level 2. This might suggest that there is some potential for better targeting of employers who are furthest away from the point of being willing or able to access training at this level – that is, those who have not previously arranged training for staff at Level 2 or above.

Among those training as a result of dealings with a skills broker but who also trained in the previous year, 70 per cent had accessed training for staff who had not previously benefited from training, 69 per cent had trained more staff than they would otherwise have done because of Train to Gain, and 41 per cent had extended the offer of training to employees in occupational groups that would not have had the opportunity otherwise. Clearly, these results indicate high levels of additionality.

Overall, the results indicate that Train to Gain has been successful in encouraging nearly half (47 per cent) of those employers using the skills brokerage service to undertake training for the first time (pure additionality) or to add to existing training (quantitative or qualitative additionality).

Employer satisfaction with training provision accessed through Train to Gain

Satisfaction with the training accessed through Train to Gain is high: more than nine in 10 (91 per cent) of the employers who accessed Train to Gain training were satisfied with the course and with the training provider.

As for specific aspects of the training, satisfaction was highest for the location and the timing of the courses, and lowest for the speed with which the training provider carried out agreed follow-up actions.

Just 3 per cent of Sweep 4 new user employers who had completed or were undertaking Train to Gain training were dissatisfied with the service they received from their training provider. The main causes of dissatisfaction were: lack of

contact from the training provider, the content of the training being irrelevant or not what the employer had requested, and the training being too simple or generic.

The impact of Train to Gain on employer performance

Employer involvement with the Train to Gain skills brokerage service has had a range of impacts: two-thirds of employers agreed that it had led to a better understanding of local training provision, and three in five believed it had helped them to identify current (56 per cent) and future (55 per cent) skills requirements. Three-fifths (60 per cent) also felt it had raised the profile of training and workforce development within management.

Even in the short term, just a few months after the initial contact with the skills brokerage service, Sweep 4 employers reported considerable benefit from staff participation in Train to Gain training, such as improvements in employee self-confidence (80 per cent, slightly down from the 84 per cent average across Sweeps 1 to 3) and in job-related skills and performance in their work role (74 per cent – consistent over time). Two-thirds of employers (66 per cent), even soon after accessing Train to Gain training, considered the training to have contributed to improved long-term competitiveness. There has been no significant change in this finding over the course of the evaluation.

In the case of those employers who had taken up training by the time of the first interview (a few months after contact with their skills broker), it is encouraging that, when they were re-interviewed some 12 months later (for Longitudinal Survey 2), four in five (80 per cent) reported improved quality standards, three in five (61 per cent) improved productivity, and half improved staff retention (53 per cent). This pattern is very similar to that seen in Longitudinal Survey 1.

While around half (52 per cent) of those Sweep 4 employers who had taken up training reported a positive impact on staff productivity, this had yet to carry over in all cases to increases in sales and turnover (reported by 19 per cent of employers training) or profit margins (17 per cent).

Future demand for Train to Gain services

Over three-quarters of Sweep 4 new user employers (78 per cent) would be likely or very likely to use the Train to Gain service again in the future. Most of these expected to engage in Train to Gain training (76 per cent) and/or to be in contact with their skills broker to assess further (or reassess) the organisation's skills and training needs (75 per cent).

Around one in six (17 per cent) of those employers who had had some contact with the skills brokerage service said that they were unlikely to use the Train to Gain service again in the future. In two-fifths of cases, the reasons focused on issues to do with the skills brokerage service, while in a quarter of case it related to negative views of the training suggested or provided (for example, it was not felt to be relevant).

The demand for Level 2 or equivalent qualifications among those new users who reported that they would be likely to use the service again has fallen significantly since Sweep 1 (from 68 per cent at Sweep 1 to 60 per cent at Sweep 4). This might indicate a certain saturation of the market, with skills brokers finding it harder over time to identify employers who have an ongoing demand for training at Level 2.

Just over two-fifths (41 per cent) of all employers interviewed for Sweep 4 anticipated that expenditure on training for employees would increase over the next two years. Furthermore, a similar proportion (43 per cent) expected no change in the level of spend on training. The high proportion of employers who expected to maintain or increase their training expenditure over the coming years may be taken as a positive indicator of the perceived value they place on continued training and development of staff, even in times of economic difficulty. It is evident, however, that not all are buffered from the limitations imposed by a recession. One employer in 14 (7 per cent) anticipated a fall in expenditure on training, with over four-fifths of those (81 per cent, 6 per cent of employers overall) attributing this anticipated decrease either totally or partially to the effects of the economic downturn.

Conclusions and key messages

In summarising the findings of the employer evaluation, the key message – one that should not be understated – is the very positive experience that employers report of their involvement with the skills brokerage service. Eight in 10 of the employers using the skills brokerage service were satisfied with the service they had received, and two-thirds were very satisfied (that is, they gave a score of at least 8 out of 10 for satisfaction). Skills brokers are rated highly by employers on factors such as their knowledge of potential training solutions, impartiality of advice, and their ability to help employers navigate the training and accreditation landscape. Across all the areas of skills broker performance rated by employers, in no case did the mean satisfaction score fall below 7 out of 10.

There are a number of key messages to emerge from the employer evaluation, and these have implications for the delivery of Train to Gain in the future. While the overall reaction to the service among employers has been very positive, and while there is evidence of extensive benefits arising from employer involvement with Train to Gain, it is clear that there are opportunities for Train to Gain to have an even greater impact on employers and on the skills of the workforce as a whole.

Areas to focus on to improve the service and its reach include:

- the relevance and quality of the advice and solutions that skills brokers provide, so that the service remains truly demand led;
- the timing and effectiveness of follow-up communications with employers, since it is through this follow-up that initial engagement and a commitment to training **activity** can become training **strategy**. More fundamentally, a lack of follow-up can even mean that commitments to activity fall by the wayside: in the longitudinal survey, in up to two-fifths of cases where the employer reported that they had training scheduled through Train to Gain or where they were waiting for confirmation of training, the training did not actually end up going ahead;

- greater clarity of communication in terms of the financial support options available. This means both being clear not to over-promise in terms of what support might be available and also making sure that those employers who are eligible for support are aware of the fact (for example, if we take the contribution to wage costs among the smallest employers, as many as a third of eligible employers were unaware that this was available through Train to Gain when they decided to use the service); and
- more effective targeting of the skills brokerage service and funding available, in order to reduce the amount of duplication and substitution of activity within Train to Gain. There has been a persistent minority of employers in each sweep of the evaluation (12 per cent to 14 per cent) who do not report any additional impact from Train to Gain, despite having accessed training – in many cases on a subsidised basis.

On a positive note, there is no clear evidence from the latest sweep of the employer evaluation to suggest that the economic downturn is having a widespread negative effect on employer training activity. Only a small minority of employers reported a decrease in training expenditure over the previous six months or an anticipated decrease over the coming two years (although it should be noted that, in some cases, training expenditure is anyway at a low level).

While there is some tentative evidence that employers affected by the downturn are less likely to have taken up training through Train to Gain, it is clear that they are seeking to use the Train to Gain service in the future. In order to encourage employers to maintain their training and development activity during the economic downturn, it will be important to communicate the support available to employers, and to promote the business case for engagement with Train to Gain that has been revealed by the employer evaluation.

Introduction

- 1 If the ambitions set out in the Leitch Review (HM Treasury, 2006) are to be achieved, then there must be a step change in the way the vocational education and training (VET) system operates. As far as Leitch was concerned, the VET system was not sufficiently demand oriented: that is, not sufficiently responsive to employer demands and skills needs. The Leitch Review highlights the fact that there is a need for vocational training provision to be based around skills needs, and that this should be both at the individual employer level and, collectively, for employers operating in a particular industry sector. As the Review says:

previous approaches to delivering skills have been too ‘supply driven’, based on the Government planning supply to meet ineffectively articulated employer demand.

HM Treasury (2006), p12

- 2 By placing training in the context of an employer’s wider business needs – while remaining mindful of the need to provide individual employees with portable skills – Train to Gain is designed to ensure that the skills and qualifications it delivers are of value to both employer and employee. A key element of Train to Gain – discussed in greater detail below – is its built-in flexibility, ensuring that the training it funds and delivers meets the needs of the economy.
- 3 The weaknesses in the VET system that Leitch identified are of long standing. Commentators on the UK’s skills system have pointed to the existence of a low-skill equilibrium ‘...in which the majority of enterprises staffed by poorly trained managers and workers produce low quality goods and services’ (Finegold and Soskice, 1988). This has consequences for the supply of (and the demand for) skills. Where a low-skill equilibrium exists, because employer demand for skills is relatively low (either the level or the volume of skills required), training providers have adapted their supply accordingly. This

- means there is the potential for a vicious spiral, where the demand for (and the supply of) skills is driven down (Wilson and Hogarth, 2003).
- 4 International comparative skills research has tended to show that the level of investment in skills in the UK has been less than desirable, and that this has contributed to differences in performance between employers in this country and those in its competitors. For example, the matched plant studies, conducted by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) over more than two decades, have provided consistent evidence that, on average, UK producers tend to produce lower-quality goods and to be less productive than their counterparts in countries such as France, Germany and the Netherlands (Mason, van Ark and Wagner, 1994; Finegold and Mason, 1997). While the relative skill levels of organisations in these countries explains part of the difference in productivity between them and their UK counterparts, the evidence also points to more fundamental, strategic factors.
 - 5 Skill is ultimately a derived demand, which stems from the product market strategy an organisation has adopted. The research evidence demonstrates that, where organisations have adopted a relatively high value-added product market strategy, this is associated with relatively good organisational performance and higher skill levels in the workforce (Mason, 2005; Mason, O'Leary and Vecchi, 2007). While the economy in this country contains many organisations that have successfully adopted a high-value, high-skill product market strategy, there are many that have not (Jagger, Nesta, Gerova and Patel, 2005).
 - 6 In part, this stems from the fact that they face relatively little competition to their current product market position, and hence have little demand for training. An investigation by the former Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) into the low-skill equilibrium revealed that organisations operating in the low-skill, low-value segment of the market often failed to realise the need to raise their game – and the skills of their workforce – until it was too late (Wilson and Hogarth, 2003). That is, the point had been reached when their product market position

- was already under threat from either increased competition or substitution by new goods and services.
- 7 From a policy perspective, the DTI study revealed the difficulty of persuading companies that were pursuing a low-skill, low-value business strategy of the need to move up market at a time when they were currently still making a profit. A key barrier to any training taking place is recognition of the **need** for training. The National Employers Skills Survey, for example, has repeatedly found that the main reason employers do not train is a lack of demand, stemming from their perception that all staff are proficient enough to carry out their current jobs (cited by 64 per cent of those employers that had not arranged training for their staff in the previous 12 months (IFF Research, 2007)).
 - 8 It was against this background that Train to Gain was born, initially in the guise of the Employer Training Pilots (ETPs), which were introduced in England in September 2002 with the aim of persuading employers and employees who did not typically engage in qualification-based training to do so. The ETPs provided work-based training to national vocational qualification (NVQ) Level 2 (or equivalent) or in basic skills for those employees not already qualified to Level 2. From the employer perspective, the ETPs offered subsidised training with a registered training provider, a contribution to wage costs for the time the employee spent training, and information, advice and guidance (IAG) linking skills development to business needs. What was perhaps unique about the ETPs, and subsequently Train to Gain, was the emphasis on the demand side: the training needs diagnosed by the skills broker were to be very much driven by the needs of the business. The principle is that focusing on meeting employer demand will lead to a concurrent increase in the supply of relevant, beneficial training, which reverses the poor-quality skills of the workforce and poor performance of the business, and leads to a further increase in demand for skills development.
 - 9 Employers' experiences of the ETPs at the time (see Hillage, Loukas, Newton and Tamkin, 2006) were largely favourable, and revealed that:

- employers displayed generally favourable attitudes towards training;
 - around 10–15 per cent of the training that took place would not have been provided in the absence of the ETPs;
 - the offer of free and flexible training attracted employers to the programme more than a contribution to wage costs;
 - the impact of ETP training for employers was to increase the quality of product and service delivery and to improve the promotion pool;
 - employers, following their participation in the ETPs, were more inclined to train low-skilled employees; and
 - harder-to-reach employers who were engaged appeared to have been particularly attracted by the skills brokerage service and the help provided in identifying their training needs. Over half (52 per cent) of hard-to-reach employers were attracted to the ETP service because of the help it offered in identifying training needs (compared with 46 per cent of ‘easy to reach’ employers). Similarly, they were more likely to be attracted by the offer of help in linking training to business needs (63 per cent, compared with 55 per cent of easy-to-reach employers).
- 10 More generally, the evidence was mixed as to the extent to which harder-to-reach employers were engaged. One of the main conclusions from the ETP evaluation was that, if ‘additionality’ was to be higher and deadweight lower, harder-to-reach employers had to be reached in greater numbers. As things stood, the econometric evaluation could find no statistically significant impact of the ETPs on the incidence of training (Abramovsky, Battistin, Fitzsimons, Goodman and Simpson, 2005).
- 11 The lessons learnt from the evaluation of ETPs were incorporated into the design of Train to Gain. To date, evidence from the employer evaluation of Train to Gain (IFF Research, 2009; Ofsted, 2008) suggests a generally favourable outcome, with:

- employers, over time, being increasingly attracted to Train to Gain by the prospect of obtaining training, skills and qualifications;
 - increasing take-up among the smallest employers;
 - very high levels of satisfaction with the skills brokerage service;
 - evidence that Train to Gain has increased the incidence of training by obtaining the involvement of those employers that had not previously trained their lower-skilled employees;
 - recognition from employers of the business benefits from training staff; and
 - a willingness to continue to train through Train to Gain, and to recommend the service to others.
- 12 Since the employer evaluation of Train to Gain was initiated, the LSC's *Train to Gain – A Plan for Growth: November 2007–July 2011* (LSC, 2007) has outlined plans to achieve growth through the provision of 'new flexibilities', designed to make the programme more attractive and economically valuable to employers, and extending the scope of the training that falls within its ambit.
- 13 The *Plan for Growth* highlighted a number of important changes.
- There will be a **new offer** to employers, based around the Skills Pledge, to engage more employers in training, with key partners playing a role in promoting and supporting the pledge. The National Employer Service is also increasingly expected to engage with large companies. Sector skills councils (SSCs) will also be expected to support participation by: agreeing a model and offer for their sector; agreeing participation targets for their sector; assisting training providers to develop sector knowledge; and developing pathways for those out of work to gain employment in their sector. The role of sector compacts will be important in this context, as they will help in devising a plan to drive up demand for Train to Gain in their sector (see <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-sectorcompact-QandA-v2-MasterFeb09.pdf>).

- **A stronger network** of Train to Gain providers will be built, to ensure that ‘the prevailing view of the business world [is] that colleges and training providers know what they need and that they can deliver’ (LSC, 2007, p10). To this end, support will be provided to training providers – for example in the adoption of proven business models – so that they are fully aware of how the demand-led system currently being established will affect them.
 - Some of the larger regions have underperformed in relation to Train to Gain, so there is a need to **lift performance and ensure consistency across LSC regions**. To this end, special emphasis will be placed on improving performance in London, because of its importance as a driver of economic growth and so that it is in the vanguard of the expansion plans (LSC, 2007, p30). In addition, there will be improvement plans for each of the nine regions.
 - In order to ensure clearer **communication of why employers need to participate in Train to Gain**, SSCs, intermediaries and providers will be briefed through a series of events and publications about what the initiative can offer employers. In this way employers will be made better aware of what Train to Gain has to provide. In particular, there will be a need to communicate the fact that Train to Gain can meet skills needs at all levels, not just at Level 2.
- 14 Since the *Plan for Growth* was published in 2007, a number of further changes have been made to Train to Gain (see <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-smeflexibilitiesvers6prepubvers2-apr09.pdf>).
- **There has been an expansion in the qualifications funded by Train to Gain**. Initially, Train to Gain was associated with National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 2 qualifications, but the intention now is more clearly to use the programme to raise skill levels among the adult population more generally. Initially, only a first qualification was funded, but the definition of ‘firstness’ has now been relaxed, so that some repeat or second Level 2 or Level 3 qualifications may be funded, so long as the qualifications

are recognised by the relevant SSC in their sector qualification strategies and/or identified in the emerging sector compacts.

- **Basic skills improvement** is a key part of the Government's Skills Strategy. To assist people to acquire the level of functional literacy and numeracy set out in the Leitch Review (and regarded as necessary for people to function at work and in society), Train to Gain tackles basic skills needs. To assist employers in ensuring that their employees possess the suitable level of functional literacy and numeracy, adult basic skills qualifications are available through Train to Gain on the same basis as adult basic skills delivered through mainstream further education. This encompasses literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages at all levels.
- **Additional flexibilities to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)** – defined as companies with fewer than 250 full-time equivalent employees in the private or third sectors – have been built into Train to Gain. The most important of these is that of allowing SMEs to access funding for 'bite-sized chunks' (small units or modules of qualifications) in subjects known to be important to them (such as business improvement, customer service, marketing and sales, product design, IT and finance). The new flexibilities for SMEs will also provide assistance to allow them to share resources to support training, and will give employers with 5–10 employees the opportunity to benefit from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) leadership and management programme (see www.dius.gov.uk/news_and_speeches/press_releases/sme.aspx).
- The programme is being extended into parts of the **public sector**, using public service compacts to increase the take-up of Train to Gain. Government is in the process of clarifying the definition with respect to those parts of the public sector that are eligible for Train to Gain support.
- From April 2009, **Train to Gain skills brokers have been integrated with Business Link brokers** in a new service under the Business Link brand.

The new integrated service is intended to place discussions about skills needs more firmly within the context of wider business needs. This is part of the Government's aim of streamlining the services it provides to business, in order to provide more effective support. This may be regarded as especially important in the context of the economic downturn.

- 15 Train to Gain has also assumed an important position in the Government's plans to ensure that the workforce is well prepared to take advantage of the recovery when it comes. Available evidence suggests that economic downturns tend to drive down employers' investments in training over the short term; over the longer term they slow the process of skills accumulation (Felstead and Green, 1994). Evidence from the economic downturns of the 1970s and 1980s indicates that recovery was hampered by skills shortages, which occurred, in part, as a consequence of employers cutting back on training and employees losing their jobs (Blake, Dods and Griffiths, 2000).
- 16 The latest survey evidence from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD, 2009) suggests that many employers are seeking to reduce their expenditure on training over the short term, although this does not necessarily mean that the volume of training will decrease, because employers often try to increase the value for money they obtain from the training. In other words, a reduction in training expenditure does not necessarily result in a reduction in the **amount** of training undertaken. Nevertheless, the 2009 recession is imposing cost-cutting regimes on many organisations. Programmes such as Train to Gain, which provide subsidised training to employers, may be regarded as providing an all-important bridge to employers over the recessionary period, insofar as they attenuate financial factors that would otherwise lead to a reduction in the volume of training carried out. The programme is thus central to government policy of ensuring that skills shortages do not inhibit recovery this time around.

Employer Evaluation: Objectives and Methodology

Introduction

- 17 Throughout Train to Gain's existence, research has been conducted with employers to gauge their views on the service.
- 18 Central to this research has been an in-depth evaluation of employer experiences of the Train to Gain programme, conducted by IFF Research twice a year since 2007. This report details findings from the fourth sweep, and also highlights trends across all four sweeps. The evaluation has covered issues such as:
- how employers first heard of and became involved with Train to Gain, and their expectations and motivations for becoming involved;
 - the extent to which they found their skills broker to be responsive and accessible;
 - employer views on the impartiality and relevance of advice given, and the skills brokers' knowledge of potential training and funding opportunities;
 - the impact Train to Gain has had on the ability and willingness of employers to engage with training and on the numbers of employees trained;
 - employer satisfaction with the training provision accessed through Train to Gain, and with the training providers responsible for delivery;
 - the benefits of involvement with the skills broker and of any training conducted under Train to Gain; and
 - the likelihood of future involvement with Train to Gain.
- 19 Central to the evaluation has been a longitudinal element, designed to allow more effective tracking of how Train to Gain has evolved over time.

Outline methodology

- 20 The employer evaluation has consisted of survey 'sweeps' at regular intervals, each involving a structured telephone survey of employers who have had contact with a skills broker.
- 21 Four 'new user' sweeps have been conducted, which have involved contacting employers a few months after they had their initial contact with the Train to Gain skills brokerage service (see Annex C for reference details of the first three new user sweeps). The first of these new user sweeps was conducted in summer 2007, and focused on employers who had had initial contact with the skills brokerage service between January and April of that year. The latest new user sweep (Sweep 4) took place in early 2009, and focused on those employers who had had their initial contact with the skills brokerage service between May and October 2008. The data from Sweep 4 is presented for the first time in this report.
- 22 The employer evaluation also included a longitudinal element, whereby a follow-up contact was attempted for those employers that had already been interviewed. These interviews were conducted a year after the initial new user survey in which those employers had been included – equivalent to between 13 and 20 months after the initial contact with the skills brokerage service. The first of these recontact surveys (Longitudinal Survey 1) took place between June and August 2008, and focused on employers who had previously taken part in new user Sweep 1 (see Annex C for details of the report). The second such survey (Longitudinal Survey 2) was undertaken between January and March 2009, and involved employers originally surveyed in new user Sweep 2.
- 23 Table 1 shows, for each element of the employer evaluation, when the employers interviewed were initially in contact with the skills brokerage service, when the interviewing was conducted, and the number of employers surveyed.

Table 1: Structure of the employer evaluation

	Period of initial contact with Train to Gain	Fieldwork Period	Number of employers interviewed
Evaluation element			
New User Sweep 1	January to April 2007	June to July 2007	3,759
New User Sweep 2	May to October 2007	January to March 2008	3,976
New User Sweep 3	November 2007 to April 2008	June to August 2008	3,753
New User Sweep 4*	May to October 2008	January to March 2009	3,750
Longitudinal Survey 1	January to April 2007	June to August 2008	1,685
Longitudinal Survey 2*	May to October 2007	January to March 2009	1,906

* New data presented for the first time in this report.

- 24 Employer contact details were supplied by Train to Gain skills brokerage organisations on a monthly basis, and consisted of those employers in contact with a skills broker with regard to Train to Gain in the preceding month. This contact could range from just a telephone call to the employer, through to the skills broker having conducted a full training needs analysis, or the employer going on to take up training through Train to Gain. Skills brokerage organisations were asked to provide full lists of contacts, meaning that a complete population of all employers who had had contact with the skills brokerage service in this period was obtained. It should be noted that all the employers surveyed in the employer evaluation had had at least some contact with a skills broker, and therefore those employers who had experienced a purely provider-driven engagement with Train to Gain are excluded.
- 25 Interviews were conducted by IFF Research using computer-aided telephone interviewing. For the new user sweeps, quotas were set in order to ensure a proportional spread of interviews by region. IFF also monitored the number of interviews completed by month of first contact with the Train to Gain skills broker and by skills brokerage organisation, in order to ensure a good spread of interviews. At the analysis stage, regional weights were applied to the data to ensure that the results reflected the regional sample populations.

- 26 For the longitudinal surveys, the aim was to recontact as many as possible of the employers who had previously participated in New User Sweeps 1 and 2, and thus no quota targets were applied. At the analysis stage, regional weights were applied to the data to reflect the regional profile of the population of employers initially in touch with the skills brokerage service during the relevant period (January to April 2007 and May to October 2007 for Longitudinal Surveys 1 and 2, respectively).
- 27 Further details on the sampling of employers and the weighting of data can be found in Annex B.
- 28 All findings presented in this report are based on weighted data, unless otherwise specified. The exception is where base sizes are shown on figures and tables. Here, the unweighted sample sizes that the findings are based on are presented, in order to indicate the reliability of the data.

The Profile of Employers in Contact with the Train to Gain Skills Brokerage Service

Key findings

- 29 The Public Administration, Health and Education sector is heavily over-represented among employers using Train to Gain: across the employer evaluation (that is, across all four new user sweeps combined), a third (35 per cent) of employers in contact with the skills brokerage service were from this sector, despite the fact that they account for only 13 per cent of the business population.
- 30 The proportion of employers drawn from the Public Administration, Health and Education sector has been decreasing, however: from 38 per cent in Sweep 1 (January to April 2007) to 33 per cent in Sweep 4 (May to October 2008). Over the four sweeps of the evaluation, the profile of employers who used the skills brokerage service has become closer to the general distribution of employers across sectors in England.
- 31 The majority (84 per cent) of employers in contact with the skills brokerage service between January 2007 and October 2008 had fewer than 50 employees at their site. There has been a statistically significant increase in the involvement of the very smallest employers (with fewer than five staff) – from 17 per cent at Sweep 1 to 22 per cent at Sweep 4.

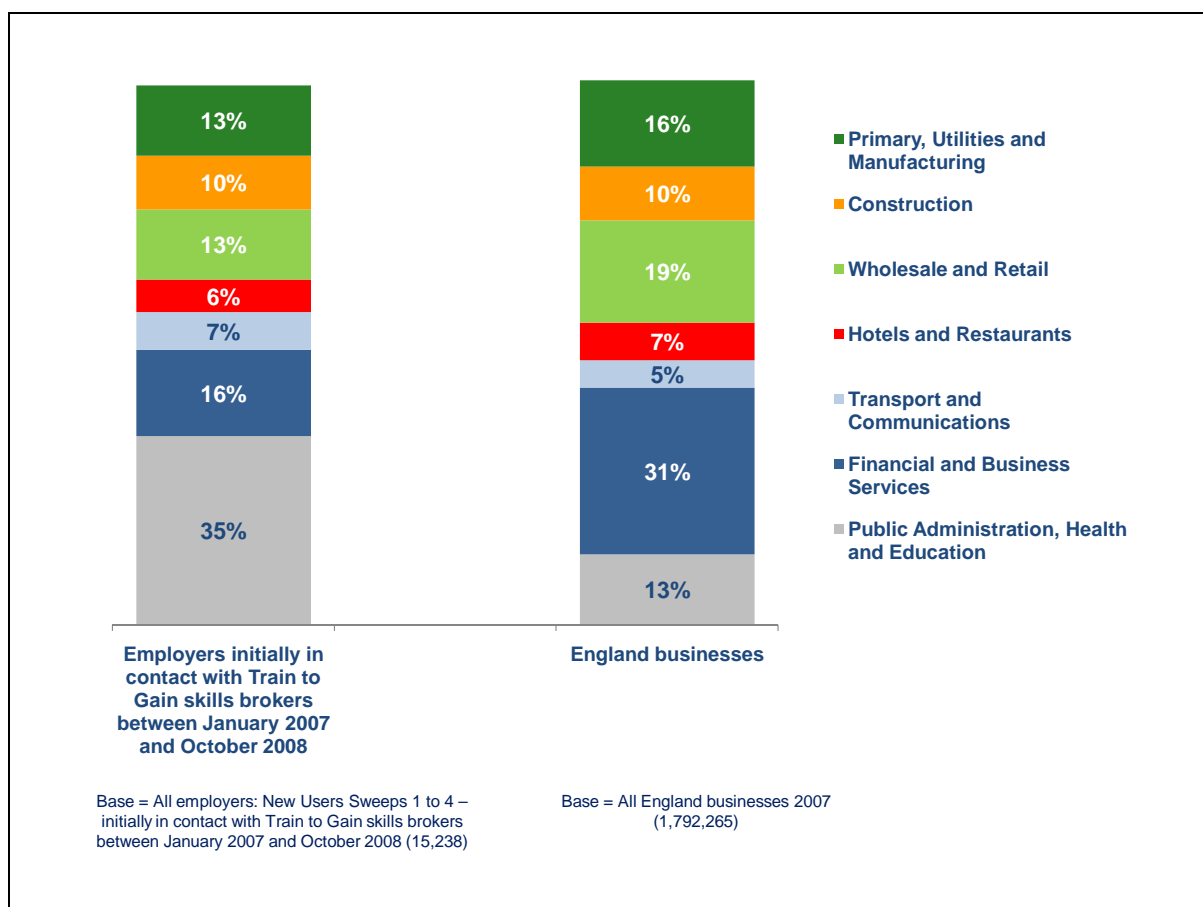
Introduction

- 32 The employer evaluation has sought to understand the types of employers that have become involved with Train to Gain through the skills brokerage channel, including any salient changes over time in the profile of this group. This initial section examines the profile of employers for the entire period covered by the evaluation to date: that is, those employers who were initially in contact with a Train to Gain skills broker between January 2007 (around six months after the launch of the service) and October 2008. The change in the profile of employers over this period is also discussed.

Employer sector

- 33 Figure 1 shows both the sector profile of the business population in England and the profile of those employers using the Train to Gain skills brokerage service. The business population figures are for all businesses that were registered in England in 2007. It should be noted that this does not match exactly the period in which the employers surveyed were making their initial contact with the skills brokerage service (January 2007 to October 2008), and therefore it is not possible to make a completely accurate comparison with the population of businesses available to the skills brokerage service during this time. The population profile differs very little from one year to the next, however, and so we may be confident that these comparisons are valid.
- 34 The key finding is that employers from the Public Administration, Health and Education sector are very over-represented: this sector accounts for a third (35 per cent) of employers in contact with the skills brokerage service, compared with 13 per cent of the business population (derived from the Inter-Departmental Business Register for 2007, for local units in VAT-based enterprises in England).

Figure 1: The sector profile of employers in contact with the Train to Gain skills brokerage service, compared with the business population in England



Note: Figures for 'England businesses' sum to more than 100 per cent because of rounding.

35 Figure 1 also shows the following sectors as being particularly under-represented:

- Financial and Business Services (16 per cent of skills brokerage contacts, compared with 31 per cent of England businesses); and
- Wholesale and Retail (13 per cent, compared with 19 per cent).

36 Though still well below the level in the business population as a whole, the proportion of skills brokerage contacts with employers in the Financial and Business Services sector has increased over time. The Financial and Business Services sector accounted for 13 per cent of employers initially in contact with the skills brokerage service between January and April 2007, but 19 per cent of contacts made from May to October 2008 (Table 2). Conversely, the proportion of skills brokerage contacts accounted for by the Wholesale and

Retail sector has declined over time (from 15 per cent for the period from January to April 2007 to 11 per cent between May and October 2008).

Although the Public Administration, Health and Education sector still forms the largest group of employers accessing the skills brokerage service, the overall proportion accounted for by this sector has declined significantly – from 38 per cent for the period January to April 2007 to 33 per cent between May and October 2008.

Table 2: Change in the sector profile of employers who had initial contact with the Train to Gain skills brokerage service between January 2007 and October 2008

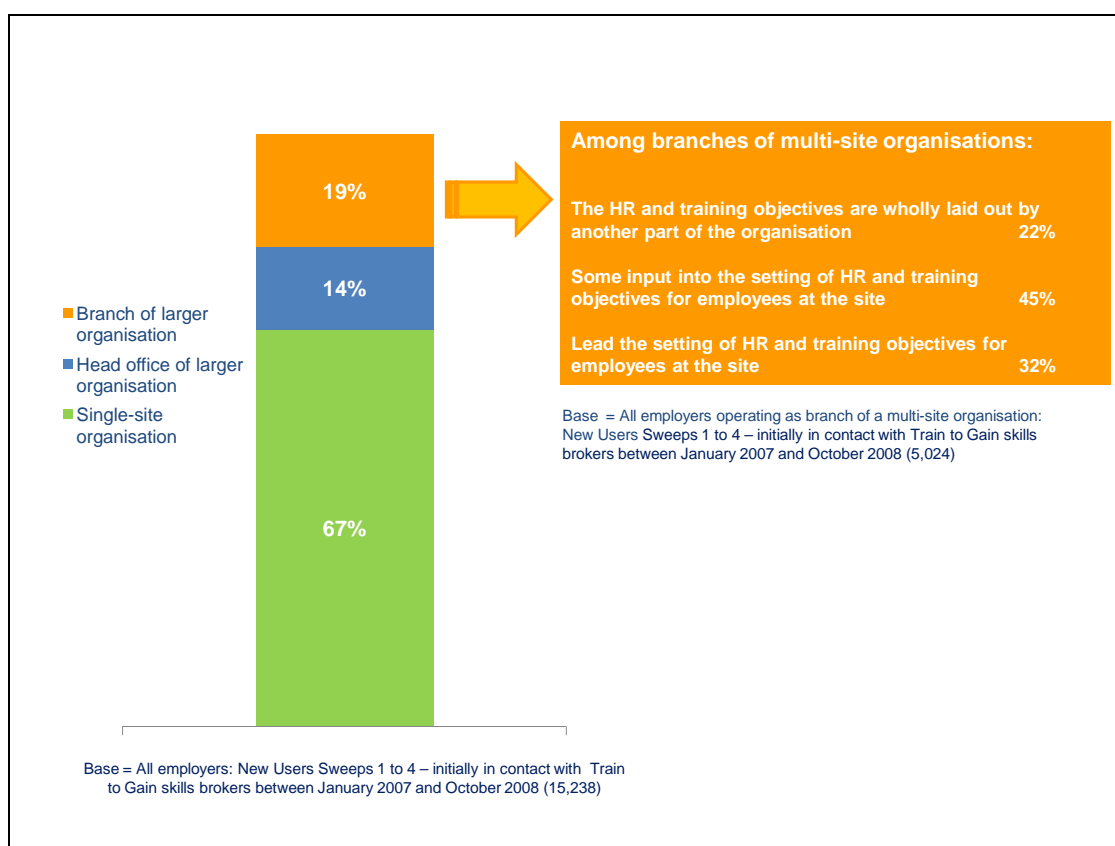
	New User Research Sweep				Overall	Change sweep 1 to 4
	1 (Jan–Apr 07)	2 (May–Oct 08)	3 (Nov 07–Apr 08)	4 (May–Oct 08)		
Base: All Employers	3,759	3,976	3,753	3,750	15,238	
Employer Sector	%	%	%	%	%	% points
Public Administration, Health and Education	38	36	33	33	35	-5*
Financial and Business Services	13	15	18	19	16	+6*
Wholesale and Retail	15	12	13	11	13	-4*
Primary, Utilities and Manufacturing	13	13	13	14	13	+1
Construction	9	11	10	10	10	+1
Transport and Communications	7	9	8	5	7	-2*
Hotels and Restaurants	5	5	5	7	6	+2*

* Differences in the Sweep 1 and Sweep 4 figures are statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level.

Organisational structure and autonomy in setting of human resources and training objectives

- 37 In assessing the type of employer using the skills brokerage service, it is useful to note the extent to which these organisations operate independently, and would therefore have the power to change their training and development strategy as a result of guidance and the training opportunities available through Train to Gain. The information presented here also provides some useful context for discussions that will follow in later sections of the report and that focus on the additional value of the Train to Gain service, and the impact of the skills brokerage service in changing employer attitudes and approaches to employee training.
- 38 Most of the employers initially in contact with the skills brokerage service between January 2007 and October 2008 are autonomous, to the extent that they are either single-site organisations (67 per cent), or operate as the head office for a multi-site organisation (14 per cent).

Figure 2: Organisational structure and autonomy in the setting of human resources and training objectives among employers in contact with the skills brokerage service



39 Figure 2 shows that, where an employer is operating as a branch of a larger organisation, just over a fifth (22 per cent) have no input into the human resources (HR) and training objectives for employees at the site, as these are wholly dictated by another part of the organisation. This is equivalent to just one in 25 (4 per cent) of all those employers who had initial contact with the skills brokerage service from January 2007 to October 2008 having no input into the training objectives for the site.

40 When initially surveyed as new users, around half of all employers in contact with the skills brokerage service (53 per cent) reported that they had in place a training plan that specified in advance the level and type of training needed for employees in the coming year. A slightly lower proportion (47 per cent) had a formal budget for training expenditure. Both of these figures are higher than those found for English businesses as a whole in the National Employer Skills

Survey 2007 (IFF Research, 2008). This research revealed that just under half of employers have a training plan (48 per cent), and just over a third (35 per cent) have a training budget.

- 41 An employer's engagement with the Investors in People standard represents an advanced level of strategic planning for training and development. Questions about the Investors in People status of employers were introduced in New User Sweep 2, and since then a fifth of all employers in contact with the skills brokerage service have reported being recognised as Investors in People (22 per cent), with a further one employer in eight (13 per cent) working towards achieving the standard. It should be noted that employers in the Public Administration, Health and Education sector make up more than half (52 per cent) of all the Train to Gain contacts that are recognised as Investors in People.
- 42 Taken together, these findings on training planning and budgeting and involvement with the Investors in People standard suggest that many of the employers accessing the skills brokerage service could be considered to have had a reasonably well-developed training culture before they became involved with Train to Gain. While this may raise concerns about whether these employers are those most in need of the services provided by Train to Gain, findings on the impact of the service for these employers (discussed later) suggest that, in the majority of cases, the service does bring the employer additional value.

Size of employer

- 43 The majority of employers who were in contact with the skills brokerage service between January 2007 and October 2008 had fewer than 50 employees at their site (84 per cent). Over time, there has been a significant increase in the involvement of small employers (those with fewer than five staff): from 17 per cent at Sweep 1 to 22 per cent at Sweep 4.

Table 3: Change in the size profile of employers using the skills brokerage service, January 2007 to October 2008

	Research Sweep (Initial contact with Train to Gain)				Overall	Change sweep 1 to 4
	1 (Jan–Apr 07)	2 (May–Oct 07)	3 (Nov 07–Apr 08)	4 (May–Oct 08)		
Base: All Employers	3,759	3,976	3,753	3,750	15,238	
	%	%	%	%	%	% points
1 to 4 employees	17	17	20	22	19	+5*
5 to 9 employees	18	19	20	21	19	+3*
10 to 49 employees	46	47	45	43	45	-3*
50 to 249 employees	15	14	13	12	13	-3*
250+ employees	3	3	3	3	3	0

* Differences in the Sweep 1 and Sweep 4 figures are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

- 44 Most of the small employers with fewer than five employees operate as a single-site business (87 per cent). Only 2 per cent are part of a larger organisation and have the HR and training objectives for employees at their site entirely controlled by another part of the organisation. Therefore, most of the very small employers being served by the skills brokerage service are independent businesses or organisations with the power to determine their own training strategy.
- 45 The smallest employers are particularly likely to be drawn from the following sectors:
- Financial and Business Services (25 per cent of these employers operate in this sector, compared with 16 per cent of employers overall);
 - Construction (17 per cent, compared with 10 per cent overall); and
 - Wholesale and Retail (17 per cent, compared with 13 per cent overall).

- 46 There has also been a steady (and statistically significant) increase between January 2007 and October 2008 in the proportion of employers with between five and nine employees getting involved with Train to Gain through the skills brokerage channel (from 18 per cent at Sweep 1 to 21 per cent at Sweep 4).
- 47 Across the whole evaluation, 3 per cent of new users have been large employers, employing 250 people or more. This group is more likely than average to be operating in the Primary, Utilities and Manufacturing sector: over a fifth (22 per cent) of those employing upwards of 250 individuals operate in this sector, compared with 13 per cent of employers overall. There is also a higher incidence of employers from the Public Administration, Health and Education sector in this category (41 per cent, compared with 35 per cent overall). These include organisations such as local authorities, hospitals, primary care trusts, police forces and universities.

Triggers for Employer Involvement with Train to Gain

Key findings

- 48 The employers covered by the survey were those that had got involved with Train to Gain via the skills brokerage service. The most recent Sweep 4 data shows that there were various means by which employers first became aware of Train to Gain – most commonly when contacted by a skills brokerage organisation (24 per cent), through advertisements or promotions on radio and television, online or in the print media (16 per cent) or through Business Link (15 per cent).
- 49 A key trend that has emerged is an increase over time in the proportion of new users reporting that they first heard of Train to Gain through advertisements or promotions on television, on radio, online or in the press (from 5 per cent at Sweep 1 to 16 per cent at Sweep 4).
- 50 A central element of Train to Gain is that it is intended to be demand led, offering an objective service that diagnoses employer requirements, rather than ‘pushing’ or selling current training supply. The most recent survey results (Sweep 4) suggest that the service has been successful in this respect. Among employers new to the service, four in five (80 per cent) considered their skills broker to be independent of training providers, and only one in 12 (8 per cent) thought otherwise.
- 51 While access to training opportunities remains the most frequently cited motivation for employer involvement in Train to Gain (cited by 48 per cent), access to financial support for training is also important to employers, and has become more prominent as a motivator in this latest sweep of the research (among employers who initially became involved with Train to Gain in the second half of 2008) than it was in previous sweeps (41 per cent at Sweep 4, compared with, for example, 35 per cent at Sweep 1).
- 52 More than a third of all employers eligible for a contribution to wage costs (36 per cent) were not aware that this forms part of the Train to Gain offer; indeed,

awareness of the contribution to wage costs has decreased over the course of the evaluation.

Introduction

53 There are various channels by which employers first become aware of Train to Gain, and also substantial differences in their motivations for accessing the service. This section looks specifically at the different organisations or promotions that drive awareness of Train to Gain, and also at which aspects of Train to Gain are motivating employers to use the service. Here, as elsewhere, the focus is principally on the latest new user sweep of the employer evaluation (employers initially in contact with the skills brokerage service between May and October 2008), although the analysis also seeks to pick out key trends over time.

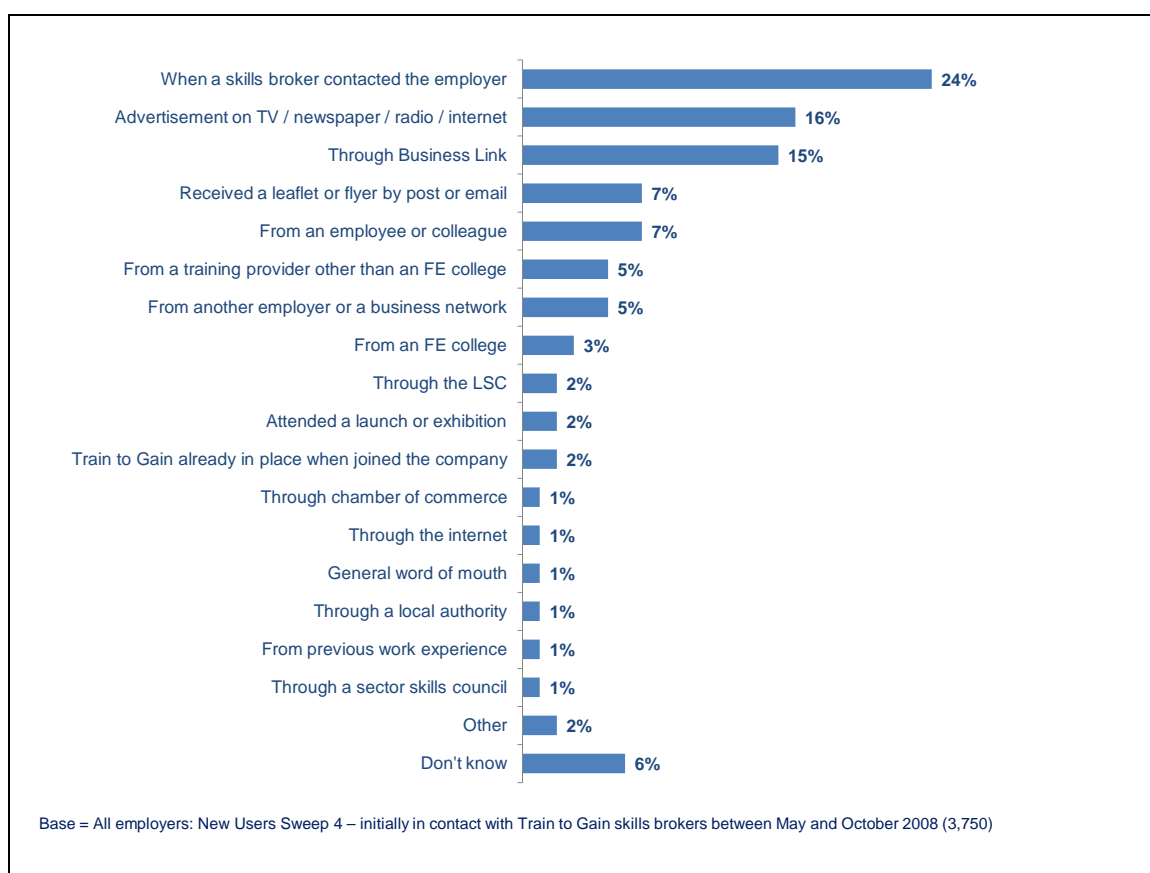
Initial exposure to Train to Gain

54 Employers were asked (as an unprompted question) how they had first heard of (or became aware of) the Train to Gain service. Figure 3 shows the proportion of new users who mentioned each channel. Various scenarios were mentioned by employers, the most frequent being:

- the employer first became aware of Train to Gain only when contacted by a skills brokerage organisation (24 per cent of employers);
- the employer first encountered Train to Gain through advertisements or promotions on radio or television, online or in the print media (16 per cent); and
- the employer first became aware of Train to Gain through Business Link (15 per cent).

55 It should be noted that, although the employers surveyed **first became aware** of Train to Gain through an assortment of channels, all of them had had some contact with a Train to Gain skills broker at some stage.

Figure 3: Channels through which employers first heard of the Train to Gain service



56 A key trend that has emerged is an increase over time in the proportion of new users reporting that they first heard of Train to Gain through advertisements or promotions on television, on radio, online or in the press. Of those employers whose initial contact with the skills brokerage service was made in early 2007 (January to April), only one in 20 (5 per cent) reported that they had first become aware of Train to Gain through such a promotion. Following the Train to Gain advertising undertaken as part of the first phase of the LSC’s skills campaign in July 2007, this figure increased to 13 per cent of those employers who came into contact with the skills brokerage service between May and October 2007. In Sweeps 3 and 4 (focusing on employers initially in contact with a skills broker between November 2007 and April 2008 and May and October 2008, respectively), the proportion of employers who stated that they had first heard of Train to Gain through an advertisement stood at 12 per cent

and 16 per cent, respectively. The promotional activity undertaken during this period included the second phase of the LSC skills campaign, which involved a three-week run of the Train to Gain television advertising campaign in January 2008. This was complemented by follow-up marketing activity on a regional and sector-specific basis.

The role of training providers in skills broker-led contacts

- 57 As the employer evaluation included only those employers that had become involved with Train to Gain through the skills brokerage service (and therefore excluded purely provider-led employer contacts), the focus of the evaluation has been on employer experiences of the skills brokerage service, and the full extent of the role of training providers in engaging employers cannot be assessed. It has been possible, however, to assess whether employers received any information on Train to Gain from training providers around the time of engagement, and also to look at whether employers view the skills brokerage service as being separate and independent from training provider organisations.
- 58 Around a quarter of employers contacted by a skills broker (24 per cent) had already spoken to a training provider about Train to Gain before they were contacted by the skills broker. This provider contact could involve the employer making an enquiry to the provider, but could also be more passive receipt of contact or marketing materials from the provider. Employers who had engaged with training outside Train to Gain in the year prior to the skills brokerage intervention were significantly more likely than those who had not conducted recent training to have been in contact with a provider with regard to Train to Gain (17 per cent, compared with 11 per cent). There was also a clear effect by employer size, with a fifth of employers with more than 50 staff (21 per cent) having had some Train to Gain-related contact with a training provider before their skills brokerage contact, compared with just one employer in 10 with fewer than 10 employees (11 per cent).

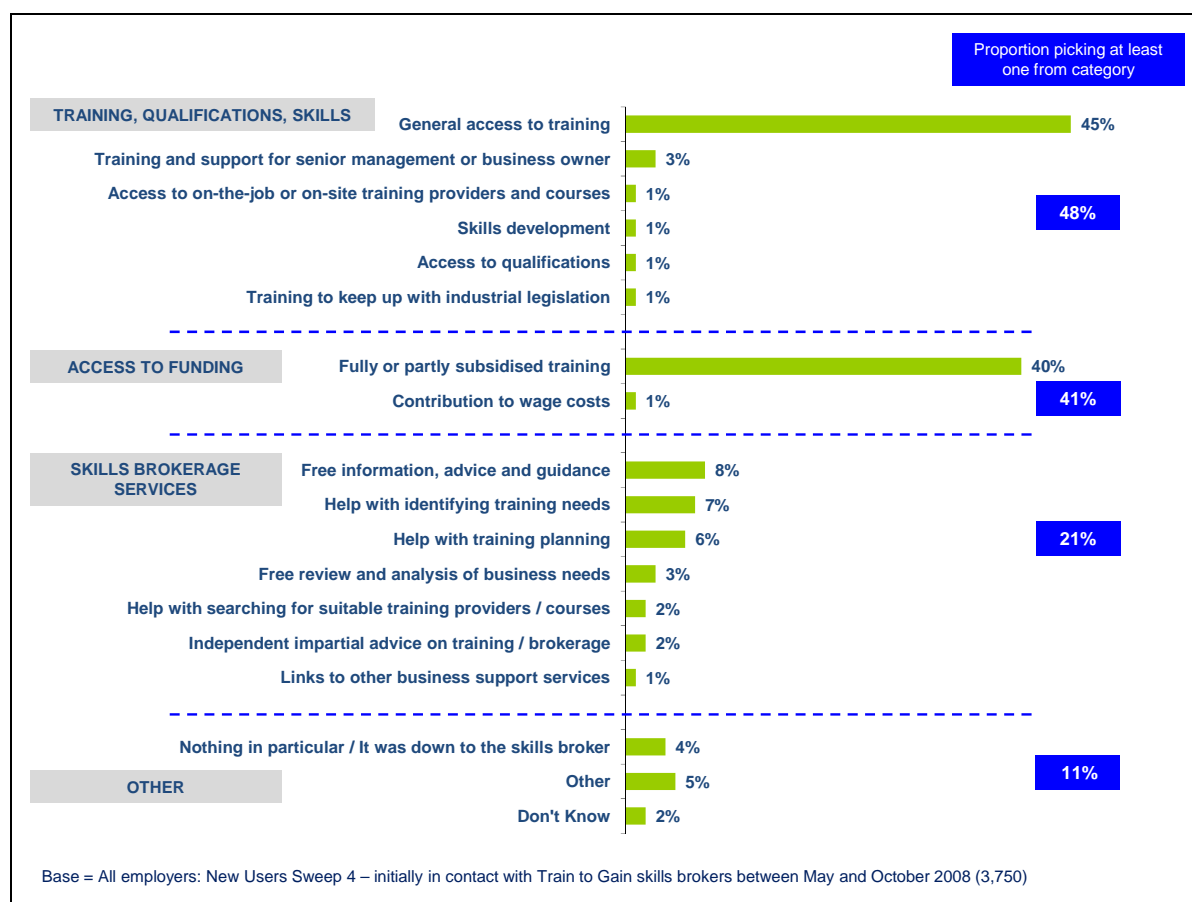
Employer understanding and perceptions of Train to Gain

- 59 An important element of Train to Gain is that it represents an objective service, focused on diagnosing employer needs and identifying potential qualifications and courses that meet those specific needs. There is the possibility that, if the skills brokerage service is not positioned appropriately, employers may see the service as operating as a sales force for training provision. The evidence would suggest, however, that the skills brokerage service is seen by employers who have used it as an independent entity, separate from training providers. Of all new user employers, eight in 10 (80 per cent) considered their skills broker to be independent of the training providers. One in 12 (8 per cent) reported that they did not consider the skills broker to be working independently of the providers, while the rest said they were unsure (12 per cent). It might be expected that, where employers had had contact regarding Train to Gain from both skills brokers and training providers, there would be more confusion on this issue. In fact, the opposite is the case, with those who had had previous contact with training providers before the skills brokerage intervention more likely to appreciate the independence of the two parties (83 per cent thought the skills broker was independent, compared with 80 per cent overall).
- 60 In order to assess how well the Train to Gain offer is explained and positioned when employers first become involved with the skills brokerage service, new users were asked to assess their own levels of understanding of the Train to Gain service at the time of survey, a few months following the initial contact. Half of all employers stated that they had either a fairly detailed (41 per cent) or a very detailed (10 per cent) understanding of the Train to Gain service. Overall, nine in 10 (91 per cent) felt that they had had at least some understanding, leaving only one in 10 (9 per cent) who said that they had only really heard the name 'Train to Gain', without knowing what the service was about.

Motivators for employer involvement with Train to Gain

- 61 The reasons given by employers for being attracted to the Train to Gain service can be grouped into three broad categories.
- The employer sees Train to Gain as a route for accessing training, qualifications and skills development for their employees (cited by 48 per cent of employers in Sweep 4).
 - The employer is interested in accessing financial support for workforce training through Train to Gain (41 per cent).
 - The employer is interested in accessing the skills brokerage service for analysis, information and advice on skills and training issues (21 per cent).
- 62 Details of the component factors in these categories are shown in Figure 4, which gives the proportion of employers citing each as a motivating factor in their decision to get involved with Train to Gain. This data was collected on an unprompted basis, and more than one response could be given by the employers.

Figure 4: Factors attracting employers to the Train to Gain service



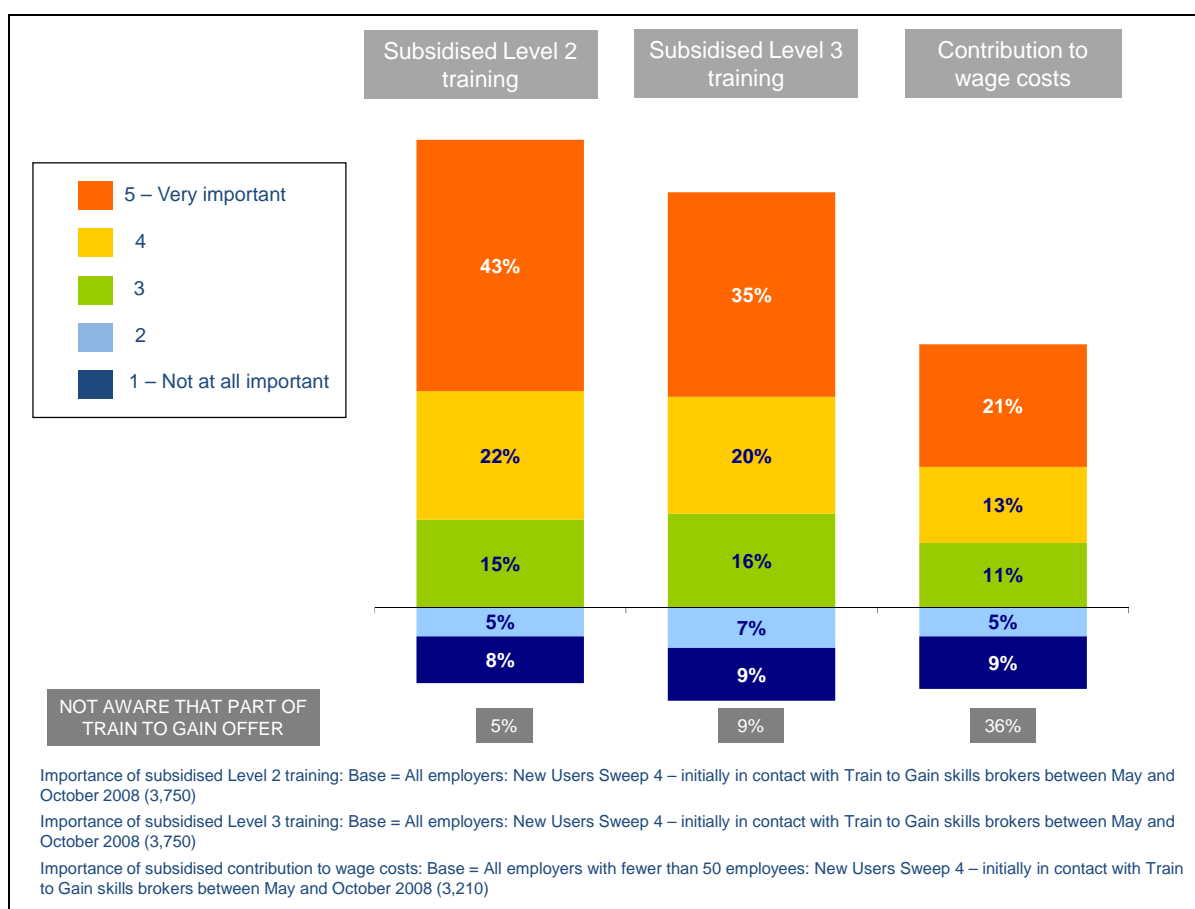
63 Given that one of the objectives of Train to Gain is to encourage employer investment in training activity, it is encouraging that, over the course of the research, a greater proportion of employers have been focused on the opportunities for accessing training through Train to Gain (citing factors in the ‘Training, qualifications and skills’ category in Figure 4) rather than on the subsidies available to support this training (factors in the ‘Access to funding’ category). This relationship between training and funding as motivating factors has been maintained since Sweep 2 of the evaluation, where there was a reversal from the pattern seen in Sweep 1: in Sweep 1, only a third (35 per cent) of employers mentioned factors in the ‘Training, qualifications and skills’ category, compared with two-fifths (41 per cent) citing access to financial support (‘Access to funding’) as a motivator.

64 However, it should be noted that the figures in this latest sweep provide evidence of an upturn in the overall proportion of employers motivated by

subsidised training or contribution to wage costs (41 per cent, compared with 38 per cent in Sweep 3), perhaps reflecting the effects of the economic downturn on employer priorities. As will be discussed later, when interviewed in early 2009, just over one Sweep 4 employer in 20 (6 per cent) reported that expenditure on training had decreased in the previous six months, and that this decrease was due to the economic downturn. These employers were significantly more likely than average to say that they were attracted to Train to Gain because of the opportunity to access subsidised training or contribution to wage costs (48 per cent, compared with 41 per cent among Sweep 4 employers overall).

- 65 In order to explore employer attitudes to financial support more fully, employers were asked on a prompted basis how important contributions to wage costs and subsidies for Level 2 and Level 3 training had been to their decision to engage with Train to Gain. The results are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Importance of subsidised Level 2 and Level 3 training and contribution to wage costs to decision to get involved with Train to Gain



66 The importance of subsidies for Level 2 training to those employers who get involved with Train to Gain is clear from Figure 5: in Sweep 4, over two-fifths (43 per cent) of new users said that the prospect of accessing financial support for Level 2 training was very important to their decision to get involved with Train to Gain. Fewer employers said that they had been seeking to access subsidised Level 3 training when they became involved with Train to Gain (although still a third (35 per cent) said this was very important). Employers in the Public Administration, Health and Education sector were the most likely to rate as ‘very important’ access to subsidised Level 2 provision (52 per cent, compared with 44 per cent overall) and Level 3 training (42 per cent, compared with 33 per cent overall).

- 67 A later section will discuss the training and funding accessed by those employers for whom subsidised Level 2 and/or Level 3 training was an important reason for getting involved with Train to Gain.
- 68 When prompted, just over a fifth (21 per cent) of eligible employers (that is, those with fewer than 50 staff) stated that the opportunity to access a contribution to wage costs had been very important in their decision to use the Train to Gain service. More than a third of those eligible (36 per cent) were not aware that this was part of the Train to Gain offer when they took the decision to become involved with Train to Gain. Given the current focus within Train to Gain on supporting SMEs, the existence of these additional services that are available to small employers is clearly an area where skills brokers and Train to Gain marketing could place more emphasis. Indeed, the proportion of SMEs unaware of this type of support at the time of initial contact with the service has increased over time (from 32 per cent in Sweep 1 to 36 per cent in Sweep 4).
- 69 It should be noted, however, that the employer evaluation did not ask employers whether they had been informed of the possibility of accessing contributions to wage costs at a later point in their skills broker contact, or whether they went on to make a claim for a contribution following training. There is no real evidence to suggest that this initial lack of awareness of the opportunity to access contributions to wage costs had a detrimental effect on take-up rates: those employers that were initially unaware of the offer were as likely to have taken up training through Train to Gain as the overall average (39 per cent, compared with 42 per cent overall). Of those employers that did take up training, a third (35 per cent) said they had not been aware of the contribution to wage costs on offer when they first got involved with Train to Gain.

Employer Engagement with the Train to Gain Skills Brokerage Service

Key findings

- 70 There has been a significant increase from Sweep 1 (27 per cent) to Sweep 4 (31 per cent) in the proportion of employers who proactively contacted the skills brokerage service to make an enquiry, rather than being approached by the skills broker.
- 71 Just over one in five (22 per cent) said that they still had ongoing contact with the skills broker a few months after the initial contact, though this dropped to one in 10 (11 per cent) in the longer term – 13 to 20 months after the initial approach. However, a considerable proportion said that they did feel able to re-engage with the service, should the need arise.
- 72 There was a clear effect of employer size on the nature of the relationship the employer had with the skills broker in the short term and on how the employer envisaged this working in the future. Small employers (with fewer than five members of staff) were significantly more likely to say that they did not anticipate further dealings with the service in the future (31 per cent, compared with 22 per cent overall), and less likely to report ongoing contact after the first few months of contact (17 per cent, compared with 22 per cent overall).
- 73 Most employers who had undergone an organisational needs analysis (ONA) (79 per cent) said that the skills broker had left them with a clear understanding of the follow-up action that would be taken following the meeting; and in seven cases in 10 (70 per cent), where follow-up action had been agreed, a timeframe had been set out in which this would be achieved. Where a timetable had been agreed, the vast majority of employers reported that this had been adhered to (80 per cent).
- 74 Around a quarter (24 per cent) of those who had had no contact with the skills broker in the long term would have liked to have had the skills brokerage service available to them during this time.

Introduction

75 This section examines the extent to which Train to Gain skills brokers are forming effective relationships with employers in order to support them in assessing and resolving their skills and training issues. Patterns of interaction between skills brokers and employers are tracked from the initial contact and then over the next 13 to 20 months (when employers were re-interviewed in the course of the longitudinal surveys). Employer **satisfaction** with the service they have received from skills brokers is covered in the next section. The focus here is on new users from Sweep 4 (initial contact with the skills brokerage service between May and October 2008), but in order to track effects in the long term, reference is made to the employer cohort followed up in early 2009, who initially were interviewed as part of New User Sweep 2.

Initial contact with the skills brokerage service

76 Employers were asked how they had first come to be in contact with the skills brokerage service. Overall, in three cases in 10 (31 per cent), the employer had actively contacted the skills broker to enquire about the service. This represents a significant increase over time in the proportion of employers who had initiated contact (from 27 per cent in Sweep 1), perhaps reflecting a greater level of awareness and interest in Train to Gain as a result of the publicity campaigns.

77 In most other cases (63 per cent of all contacts), the skills brokerage organisation had initiated contact with the employer. For the remainder, the employer had either forgotten who had made the initial contact (6 per cent), or the contact had been arranged through a training provider or other advisory organisation, such as Business Link (1 per cent).

Employer experiences of the skills brokerage service in the short term

78 At the time of the new user interviews – conducted a few months after the employer's initial contact with the skills brokerage service – over two-fifths of employers (42 per cent) had already accessed training through Train to Gain (covered in more detail in a later section). Aside from these employers, a fifth

(22 per cent) had plans to take up training, and a further fifth (21 per cent) had got to the point of undergoing a formal ONA through the skills brokerage service. The remainder had either had a less formal discussion about their organisation's training requirements (13 per cent of employers overall) or had had initial contact with the skills broker and had plans to take that contact further or get more information (1 per cent).

- 79 Following the initial contact with the skills brokerage service, the majority of employers (86 per cent) had had further interaction with the skills broker face to face, over the telephone or by email. In most cases, the employer and skills broker had been in touch on between one and five occasions, not including the initial contact (55 per cent), but one in 10 employers (11 per cent) had had more than 10 interactions with the skills broker following the initial contact. Employers dealing with the skills brokerage service in the South West (20 per cent) and the East of England (14 per cent) were more likely than those in other regions to have had a greater frequency of contact – that is, more than 10 times following the initial approach. There has been no real change in the frequency of contact over time, and the proportions having had more than 10 contacts or fewer than 10 contacts have remained essentially static over the four new user sweeps.
- 80 Where employers had undergone an ONA, they were asked about the extent to which this had left them with a clear idea of how they could move forward within the context of the Train to Gain service. Most employers who had had an ONA (79 per cent) said that the skills broker had left them with a clear understanding of the follow-up action that would be taken after the meeting, and in seven cases in 10 (70 per cent), where follow-up action was agreed, a timeframe had been set out in which this would be achieved. This still leaves three cases in 10 where a set of follow-up actions had been agreed but no timetable had been set for their achievement. Where a timetable had been agreed, the vast majority of employers reported that this had been adhered to (80 per cent).

- 81 As a further measure of the responsiveness of the skills brokerage service, employers were asked for their opinion on whether the process of accessing advice and training through Train to Gain had taken longer than they had anticipated, or had been quicker than they had expected. Just over half (54 per cent) said the process had taken about as long as they had expected, with equal proportions saying that it had been achieved in a shorter (18 per cent) or longer (19 per cent) timeframe than they had anticipated. Since this question was introduced into the employer evaluation at Sweep 2, there has been no significant change in the profile of response, with the same proportion of employers reporting that the process had taken longer than expected in each of Sweeps 2, 3 and 4 (19 per cent). The proportion who felt that the process had been achieved more quickly than expected has also shown no significant change over time, standing at 19 per cent at Sweep 2 and 18 per cent at both Sweep 3 and Sweep 4.
- 82 There were two regions where a significantly greater proportion of employers reported that the skills brokerage service had not responded quickly enough to their needs: London and Yorkshire and the Humber (where 30 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively, said the process had taken longer than they had expected, compared with 19 per cent overall).
- 83 Table 4 shows the level of relationship employers reported having with the skills broker at the time of the new user interview, a few months after the initial contact. Overall, just over one in five (22 per cent) reported having an active relationship, in which there was ongoing dialogue with the skills broker about the organisation's needs and how they could be met. In two-fifths of cases (42 per cent), there had been no recent contact, but the employer felt confident about recontacting the skills broker to discuss future training requirements.

Table 4: Employer relationship with the skills brokerage service in the short term, by employer size

	Employer size (number of employees)					Overall
	1 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 49	50 to 249	250+	
Base: All employers: New User Sweep 4	796	786	1,628	433	102	3,750
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Ongoing contact with skills broker so that they can ensure that the employer's training needs are met	17	20	23	29	35	22
Limited recent contact but will recontact the skills broker where a training need arises in the future	36	42	45	47	35	42
Employer is waiting or expecting the skills broker to come back to them regarding training opportunities discussed	16	15	12	9	10	13
Do not envisage further dealings with the skills broker	31	23	19	13	17	22

84 A fifth of employers (22 per cent) were not anticipating further involvement with the skills brokerage service. As Table 4 shows, there was a clear effect of employer size on the nature of the relationship that the employer had with the skills broker in the short term and how they envisaged this working in the future. Small employers (those with fewer than five members of staff) were significantly more likely to say that they did not anticipate further dealings with the service in the future (31 per cent, compared with 22 per cent overall), and less likely to report ongoing contact after the first few months of contact (17 per cent, compared with 22 per cent overall). This indicates that the skills brokerage service needs to work harder to meet the needs of the smallest employers and to maintain an effective customer relationship and dialogue about employer needs and potential solutions.

Employer experiences of the skills brokerage service in the longer term

- 85 Following on from this involvement, around two-fifths of employers (44 per cent) went on to have some contact with the skills brokerage service in the year following the initial new user interview. As Table 5 shows, this contact was most likely to consist of the skills broker and the employer speaking on the telephone (86 per cent) or the employer receiving information from the skills broker through the post or by email (79 per cent). Two-thirds (66 per cent) underwent an ONA in the year following the initial survey, and a similar proportion (67 per cent) approached the skills broker during this time for advice and guidance on training.

Table 5: Contact with the skills brokerage service in the longer term

	% all employers	% employers in contact with skills broker in the past year
Base: Longitudinal Survey 2 employers	1,685	740
	%	%
Had contact with skills broker in past year	44	100
Had a conversation on the telephone	38	86
Received information through the post/ by email	34	79
Answered a query regarding training	32	74
Helped find solutions to training needs that the employer had already identified	29	67
Had an organisational needs analysis	29	66
No contact with skills broker in past year	53	–
Don't know	3	–

- 86 Where employers did not have any contact with the skills brokerage service in the year following the first interview, a quarter (24 per cent) would have liked to be in touch with the skills broker to discuss their training requirements and what Train to Gain could offer. Where employers had had contact with the skills brokerage service during this period, one in eight (12 per cent) said that

there had been too little proactive follow-up by the skills broker. These findings suggest that there is scope for more effective follow-up and relationship management on the part of skills brokers.

- 87 Table 6 shows the nature of the relationship employers had with the skills brokerage service when re-interviewed 13 to 20 months after the initial contact with the service.

Table 6: Employer relationship with the skills brokerage service in the longer term

	% all employers	% employers in contact with skills broker in the past year
Base: Longitudinal Survey 2 employers	1,685	740
	%	%
Had contact with skills broker in past year	44	100
We have regular ongoing contact	11	25
We are in touch occasionally	12	27
We have had limited recent contact but we will recontact them where a training need arises in the future	15	34
We do not currently have a relationship with a skills broker	6	13

- 88 Where employers had had some contact in the previous year, around half (52 per cent) had regular or occasional contact with the skills brokerage organisation at the time of the second interview. A third (34 per cent) had had limited recent contact with the skills broker, but felt able to recontact them to discuss training requirements, as they arose. A small minority (13 per cent) said that, although they had had some communication with the skills broker in the 13 to 20 months following the initial contact, they did not have an active working relationship with them when they were re-interviewed.

Employer Satisfaction with the Train to Gain Skills Brokerage Service

Key findings

- 89 More than three-quarters of Sweep 4 employers (78 per cent) were satisfied overall with the skills brokerage service, and three-fifths (61 per cent) were very satisfied. One employer in eight (13 per cent) was dissatisfied. The reasons for this centred on a lack of contact (33 per cent) or follow-up action (16 per cent) from the skills broker following the initial dealings.
- 90 In terms of trends over time, satisfaction was highest at Sweep 1 (early 2007), fell for the next two waves, but increased in Sweep 4 (May to October 2008) to levels approaching those seen in Sweep 1.
- 91 Reflecting the high levels of satisfaction with the skills brokerage service, four Sweep 4 new user employers in five (80 per cent) reported that they would be likely to recommend the Train to Gain service to a business colleague outside their organisation, and half (50 per cent) were very likely to do so.
- 92 The most important service elements for Sweep 4 employers are the skills brokers' knowledge of potential sources of funding to support training activity (a mean importance score of 8.79) and their ability to identify training solutions within Train to Gain (8.44), their training expertise generally (8.64), and their ability to understand the specific business and training needs of the employer (8.21) and to translate these into action (8.19). These, together with the speed with which skills brokers carry out agreed follow-up actions, are key to determining satisfaction with the service.
- 93 Specific areas where the skills brokers have performed consistently less well (relatively speaking) lie in their ability to signpost an employer to a range of providers, their ability to translate the employer's needs into an action plan, and the speed with which any agreed or required follow-up action is undertaken.
- 94 By contrast with Longitudinal Survey 1, which showed a significant decrease over time in employer satisfaction with the skills brokerage service, the findings

from Longitudinal Survey 2 show no significant difference between employer satisfaction at the initial survey (a few months after the initial contact) and when employers were followed up a year later (13 to 20 months after the initial contact).

Introduction

95 In an effort to understand employer perceptions of the skills brokerage service and Train to Gain as a whole, this section will report on employer ratings of how important the various elements of the skills brokerage service are, as well as employer satisfaction with the service received from the skills broker. Scores from across the evaluation are compared to show any shifts over time in the ratings for importance or satisfaction.

Aspects of the skills brokerage service valued by employers

96 New users taking part in Sweep 4 were asked to rate the importance of 10 key elements of the skills brokerage service. Ratings were provided on a scale of 1 to 10, where a score of 1 indicated that the employer felt this element to be unimportant and 10 where it was highly important. The specific service elements presented to employers can be grouped into three overarching areas:

- the **knowledge and expertise** of the skills broker with regard to translating employer needs into viable action plans, based on sound knowledge of the local provision market;
- the **employer focus** of the advice and provider signposting service offered by the skills broker, and the degree to which skills brokers appreciate and understand the needs of employers; and
- the **responsiveness** of the skills brokers in terms of communicating with the employer and providing helpful advice on up-skilling.

97 All service elements are seen as important by employers, with mean importance scores for all 10 elements ranging from 8.02 to 8.79 out of 10, as Figure 6 shows.

Figure 6: Mean importance scores for key measures of the skills brokerage service



98 The aspects of the skills brokerage service considered to be most important by new user employers have remained constant throughout the evaluation. These are:

- the skills broker’s ability to identify potential funding to support training activity (mean importance 8.79 in Sweep 4, up from 8.66 in Sweep 3);
- the expertise and knowledge of the skills broker (8.64 in Sweep 4, not significantly different from the 8.59 mean at Sweep 3); and
- the skills broker’s knowledge regarding training solutions within Train to Gain (8.44 in Sweep 4, again not significantly different from the Sweep 3 score of 8.38).

99 Therefore, the three most important factors relate to the knowledge and expertise of the skills broker. The skills broker’s ability to understand the

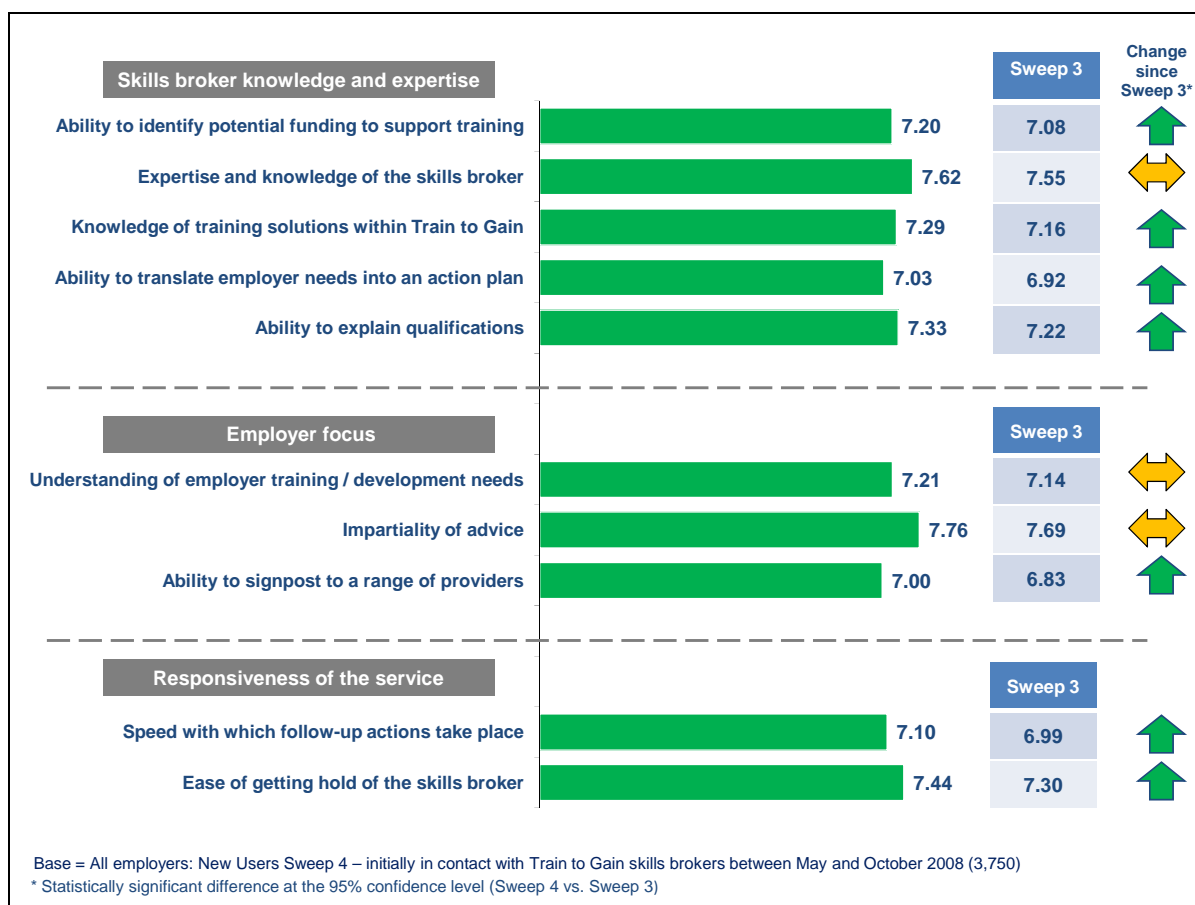
specific business training and development needs of the employer (a measure of employer focus) has, throughout the research, consistently been rated as the next most important element of the skills brokerage service.

- 100 Elements considered to be less of a priority by employers include the ability of the skills broker to explain qualification and accreditation frameworks (8.04), and the ease with which the employer is able to contact the skills broker (8.02).

Satisfaction with key aspects of the skills brokerage service

- 101 On the same measures for which importance ratings were given, employers were also asked to give **satisfaction** ratings on a scale of 1 to 10, where a score of 1 indicated that the employer was highly dissatisfied and 10 that they were highly satisfied. Mean satisfaction scores are shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Mean satisfaction scores for key elements of the skills brokerage service



102 Satisfaction with these elements of the service has remained high across the sweeps of the evaluation, with mean scores all above the 6 out of 10 threshold taken to indicate satisfaction in this evaluation. The highest levels of satisfaction are seen in relation to:

- the impartiality of advice offered by the skills broker (mean score 7.76);
- the expertise and knowledge of the skills broker regarding the local provision market (7.62); and
- the general accessibility of the skills brokerage service, in terms of the ease with which employers are able to get in touch with their skills broker (7.44).

103 Specific areas where the Sweep 4 employers rate skills brokers as having performed less well (relatively speaking) include:

- their ability to signpost to a range of providers (7.00);

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- their ability to translate the employer's needs into an action plan (7.03); and
- the speed with which any agreed or required follow-up action is undertaken (7.10).

104 The areas where there is the biggest shortfall between the importance attached to that service aspect and employer satisfaction are in:

- the ability of the skills broker to identify potential funding to support training (mean importance of 8.79, mean satisfaction of 7.20);
- the ability of the skills broker to translate the employer's needs into an effective action plan (mean importance of 8.19, mean satisfaction of 7.03); and
- the skills broker's knowledge of training solutions within Train to Gain (mean importance of 8.44, mean satisfaction of 7.29).

105 Table 7 shows the patterns of results across the evaluation, indicating the mean satisfaction ratings for each element given by new users. Employer satisfaction with all elements was significantly higher among the Sweep 1 cohort, who had their first contact with the skills brokerage service early on in the service cycle, in early 2007. This perhaps reflects the higher level of service that the skills brokers were able to deliver at this point, when awareness and demand for the service was relatively low, and they therefore had more resources available to devote to each employer. Satisfaction in all areas declined between Sweep 1 and Sweep 3, but there does seem to be evidence of a relative upturn among the Sweep 4 new user cohort. This does suggest that service improvements implemented in 2008 have been effective, but it should be noted that employer satisfaction is still not back to the levels seen among Sweep 1 employers.

Table 7: Mean satisfaction scores for key elements of the skills brokerage service – time series comparison

	New User Sweep			
	1 (Jan–Apr 07)	2 (May–Oct 07)	3 (Nov 07– Apr 08)	4 (May–Oct 08)
Base: All employers	3,759	3,976	3,753	3,750
Skills broker's knowledge and expertise				
Ability to identify potential funding to support training	7.44+	7.16	7.08*	7.20
Expertise and knowledge of the skills broker	7.89+	7.62	7.55*	7.62
Knowledge of training solutions within Train to Gain	7.50+	7.29	7.16*	7.29
Ability to translate employer needs into an action plan	7.28+	7.00	6.91*	7.03
Ability to explain qualifications and accreditation	7.59+	7.26*	7.22*	7.33
Employer focus				
Understanding of employer training and development needs	7.30+	7.17	7.14*	7.21
Impartiality of advice	8.01+	7.74	7.69*	7.76
Ability to signpost to a range of providers	7.19+	7.02	6.85*	7.00
Responsiveness of the service				
Speed with which follow-up actions take place	7.31+	7.09	6.99*	7.10
Ease of getting hold of the skills broker	7.66+	7.37	7.30*	7.44

Notes:

+ Score is significantly higher than the overall mean score – statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level.

* Score is significantly lower than the overall mean score – statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level.

Overall satisfaction with the skills brokerage service

- 106 Once they had given importance and satisfaction ratings for the individual measures of service quality, employers were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the skills brokerage service. Ratings were again provided on a scale of 1 to 10, with a score of 1 to 4 taken to indicate dissatisfaction, and a score of 6 to 10 to represent satisfaction.
- 107 Eight Sweep 4 employers in 10 (78 per cent) were satisfied overall with the skills brokerage service at the first interview, a few months after their initial contact with the service. Three-fifths of employers were very satisfied (61 per cent) – that is, they gave a score of at least 8 out of 10.
- 108 As Table 8 shows, the proportion of employers satisfied with the skills brokerage service overall decreased slightly from Sweep 1 to Sweep 2, but has remained relatively constant since then.

Table 8: Overall satisfaction with the skills brokerage service – time series analysis

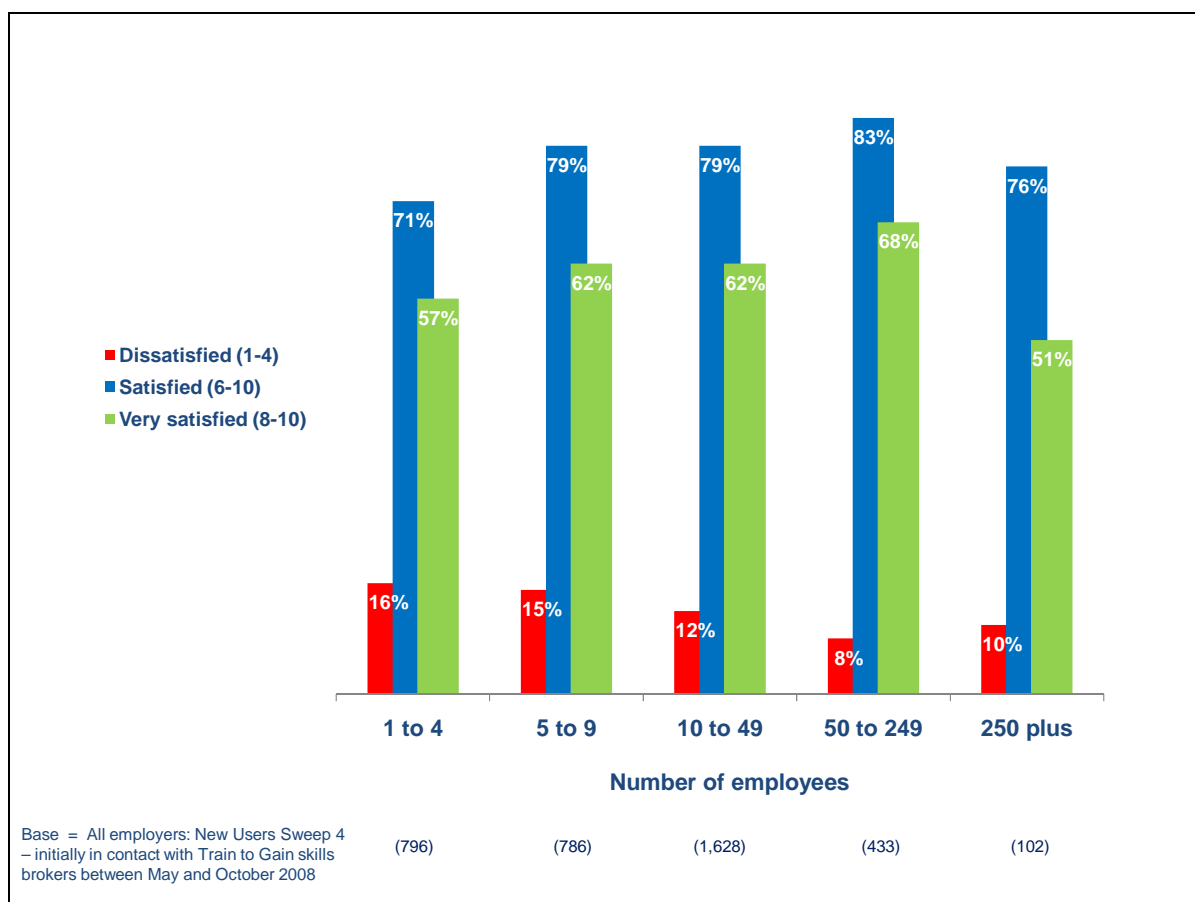
	New User Sweep			
	1 (Jan–Apr 07)	2 (May–Oct 07)	3 (Nov 07–Apr 08)	4 (May–Oct 08)
Base: All employers	3,759	3,976	3,753	3,750
‘Satisfied’ – Proportion of employers giving overall satisfaction score of between 6 and 10	80%	78%	77%	78%
‘Very satisfied’ – Proportion of employers giving overall satisfaction score of between 8 and 10	63%	61%	60%	61%
‘Dissatisfied’ – Proportion of employers giving overall satisfaction score of between 1 and 4	11%	13%	13%	13%

- 109 For the Sweep 4 new users, significant differences in overall satisfaction levels are evident by employer sector. Employers in the Public Administration, Health and Education (81 per cent) and the Hotels and Restaurants (81 per cent) sectors were the most satisfied. Satisfaction levels were significantly lower in

the Construction (75 per cent) and the Financial and Business Services (74 per cent) sectors.

- 110 Smaller employees are less likely to rate themselves as satisfied with the skills brokerage service. Almost three-quarters (71 per cent) of companies with 1–4 employees were satisfied with their designated skills broker – a significantly lower proportion than the average across all employers (78 per cent). Figure 8 shows the effect of employer size on overall satisfaction. While the proportion of employers who were very satisfied increases with employer size among SMEs (employers with fewer than 250 employees), it drops off considerably and significantly among the largest employers – those with 250 employees or more (51 per cent very satisfied – considerably lower than among even the smallest employers). One in 10 (10 per cent) of those employers with 250 employees or more gave a score of between 1 and 4 (indicating dissatisfaction). This may be linked to the slight drop in take-up of Train to Gain training that is seen among the largest employers (discussed below). It is the case that those employers who, at the time of the first interview, had taken up training as a result of contact with the skills brokerage service were significantly more likely to be satisfied overall than those who had not taken up training by that time (90 per cent, compared with 68 per cent).

Figure 8: Overall satisfaction with the skills brokerage service – by employer size

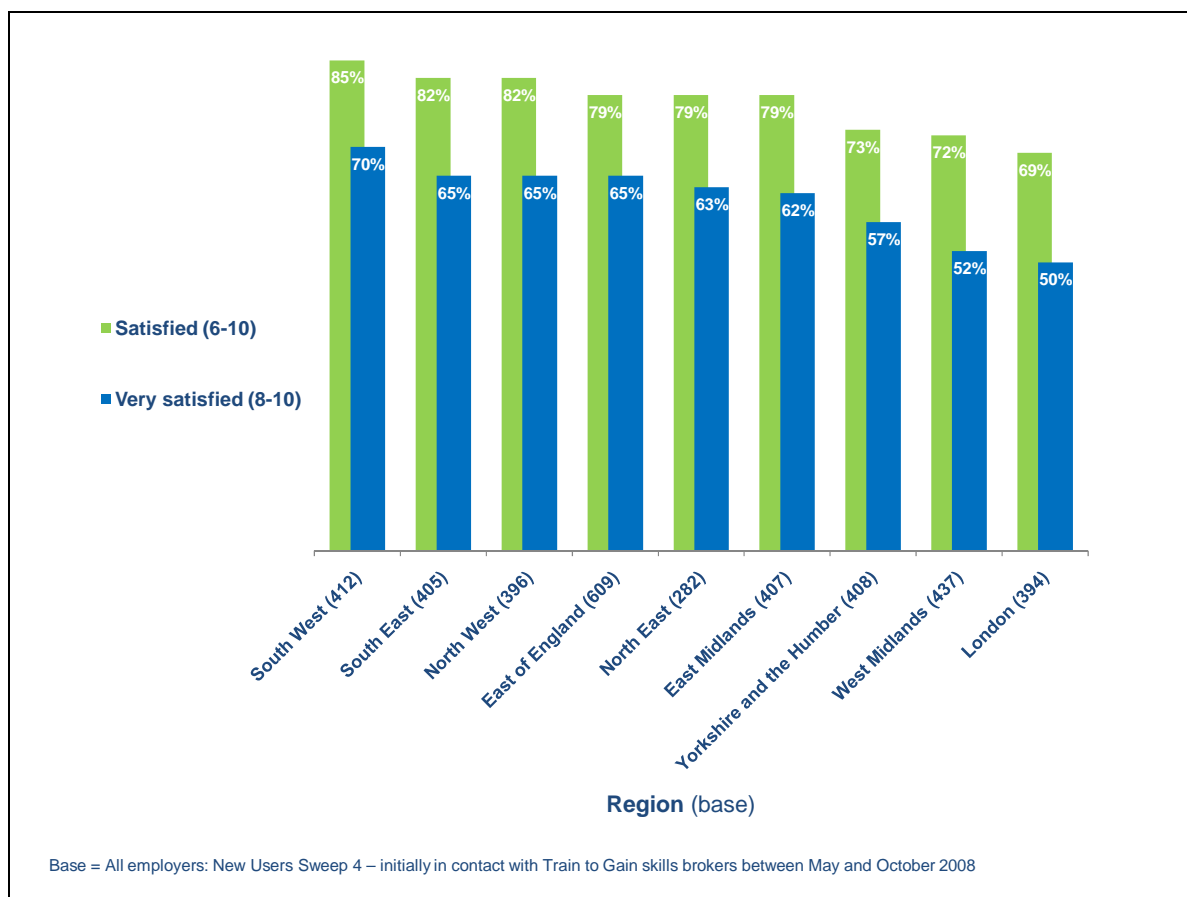


111 As Figure 9 shows, employers covered by the South West region skills brokerage service are the most likely to be satisfied (85 per cent), while employers using the service in London are the least satisfied (69 per cent). Satisfaction ratings within particular regions have changed significantly over the course of New User Sweeps 1 to 4, as follows.

- Among employers using the **North East** region skills brokerage service, there has been a steady decline – from 85 per cent satisfied at Sweep 1 to 79 per cent satisfied at Sweep 4.
- Satisfaction with the skills brokerage service in the region covering **Yorkshire and the Humber** dropped off steeply from the level seen at Sweep 1 (83 per cent) to 73 per cent at Sweep 2; it has remained static at this lower level ever since.

- In Sweep 3 there was a peak in satisfaction levels (88 per cent) among employers using the **South East** region service (referring to employer contacts from November 2007 to April 2008). At Sweep 4, the proportion of employers satisfied then fell back to the previous lower levels (82 per cent).

Figure 9: Overall satisfaction with the skills brokerage service – by Train to Gain region



Reasons for dissatisfaction with the skills brokerage service

112 One Sweep 4 employer in eight (13 per cent) was dissatisfied with the skills brokerage service (giving a score of 4 or less out of 10). A range of factors were mentioned by employers as reasons for their dissatisfaction with the skills brokerage service, chief of which were the lack of contact (33 per cent) and follow-up action (16 per cent) from the skills broker following the initial contact with the employer. This clearly represents a missed opportunity to convert initial interest on the part of employers in the service into a full engagement. There is, however, evidence that these factors have become less of an issue

over time, with, for instance, the proportion of employers citing a lack of contact with the skills broker as a reason for their dissatisfaction falling from two-fifths (42 per cent) at Sweep 1 to a third (33 per cent) at Sweep 4. The proportion of dissatisfied employers citing lack of follow-up has decreased from Sweep 3 to Sweep 4 (from 22 per cent to 16 per cent), as has the proportion of employers stating that the advice received from the skills broker was irrelevant to them (from 18 per cent at Sweep 3 to 10 per cent at Sweep 4). Table 9 shows these and other reasons given for dissatisfaction with the skills brokerage service by Sweep 4 new users.

Table 9: Reasons for dissatisfaction with the skills brokerage service

Reason for dissatisfaction	Proportion of employers
Base: All employers dissatisfied with the skills brokerage service: New User Sweep 4	479
	%
Lack of contact with the skills broker since the first meeting	33
Complete lack of follow-up from the skills broker	16
The advice was irrelevant or not what the employer wanted	10
The training was irrelevant or not what the employer wanted	10
The skills broker lacked knowledge or understanding of the business or industry	7
No funding was available or the training was too expensive	6
Employer felt that they did not need the skills brokerage service – ‘could do the job themselves’	6
Process of accessing the service has taken too long / took too long	5
The skills broker lacked knowledge or didn’t explain things	4
Employer felt the skills broker was ‘all talk and no action’	4
Lack of professionalism on the part of the skills broker	3
Felt misled or misinformed by the skills broker, especially in relation to funding	2
Skills broker was not able to source local training provision for the employer	2
Process of accessing the service was too complex, bureaucratic or involved too much paperwork	1
Advice was not impartial	1
Funding was not explained properly	1
Problems arising from having multiple skills broker contacts	1
Other	6
Don’t know	1

Key drivers of overall satisfaction with the skills brokerage service

- 113 In order to assess the key factors affecting employer satisfaction with the skills brokerage service, multivariate analysis was conducted to look at the relative impact of the specific aspects of the skills brokerage discussed above.
- 114 In this analysis, the dependent variable was the employer's overall satisfaction and the explanatory variables were the employer's satisfaction with the 10 aspects of the skills brokerage service. For the purposes of this analysis, scores were converted into binary variables – satisfied (6–10) or not satisfied (1–5) – and weighted by their importance to the employer. This analysis also took account of the relative importance attached by employers to each of the individual service aspects.
- 115 In order to maximise the robustness of this multivariate analysis, it was conducted using the combined data from all four new user sweeps. This combined analysis indicates that the probability of overall satisfaction with the Train to Gain skills brokerage service is greater when respondents indicate satisfaction with particular aspects of the service. The factors that are most likely to determine overall satisfaction with the service are, in order of significance:
- the skills broker's understanding of the employer's training and development needs;
 - the speed with which the skills broker carries out agreed follow-up actions;
 - the expertise and knowledge of the skills broker; and
 - the skills broker's ability to translate company needs into an action plan.
- 116 Certain other elements also have an impact on overall satisfaction, but to a lesser degree. Where employers were satisfied with these factors (again presented in order of significance below), overall satisfaction was raised well above the base level:

- the skills broker's ability to identify potential funding to support training activities;
- the skills broker's ability to signpost a range of provider options to the employer;
- the skills broker's knowledge of training solutions and training providers within Train to Gain; and
- the ease with which the employer can get hold of their skills broker contact.

117 The impartiality of the skills broker's advice and their ability to explain types of accreditation and qualifications were not significant determinants of overall satisfaction in any of the survey waves (apart from impartiality of advice in Sweep 3) and, correspondingly were not significant for the sample as a whole.

118 This ranking of components of the skills brokerage service was similar, but not identical, across all four surveys (with Sweep 3 being, perhaps, the least typical of the overall findings). In overall terms, employer satisfaction with the skills brokerage service is mainly determined by the skills broker's ability to identify the particular needs of the employer's business and their ability to act in a swift and appropriate way to help the employer put in place the training and development required. General knowledge and expertise on the part of the skills broker appear to be of much less significance to employers.

Employer satisfaction with the skills brokerage service in the longer term

119 Those employers who had been in touch with their skills broker in the year before they were recontacted for the longitudinal surveys were again asked to rate their satisfaction with various elements of the service, focusing on the responsiveness, expertise and knowledge of the skills broker, and on their ability to understand and react to the employer's needs. Satisfaction ratings were given on a scale of 1 to 10, where a score of 1 indicated that the employer was highly dissatisfied and 10 that they were highly satisfied. The mean satisfaction scores given in both longitudinal surveys are shown in Figures 10 and 11, alongside the mean scores these employers gave at

Sweep 1 or Sweep 2, a few months after the original contact with Train to Gain.

120 As Figures 10 and 11 show, the mean satisfaction score in both longitudinal surveys for all elements range from 7.03 to 8.18, indicating that, when they were recontacted, employers were generally satisfied with all aspects of the service measured. Consistently, in both longitudinal surveys, employers were most satisfied with:

- the impartiality of information and advice provided by the skills broker;
- the general expertise and knowledge of the skills broker in providing information, advice and guidance (IAG); and
- the skills broker’s knowledge of training solutions within Train to Gain, and of training providers in the employer’s local area.

Figure 10: Employer satisfaction with the skills brokerage service – Longitudinal Survey 1

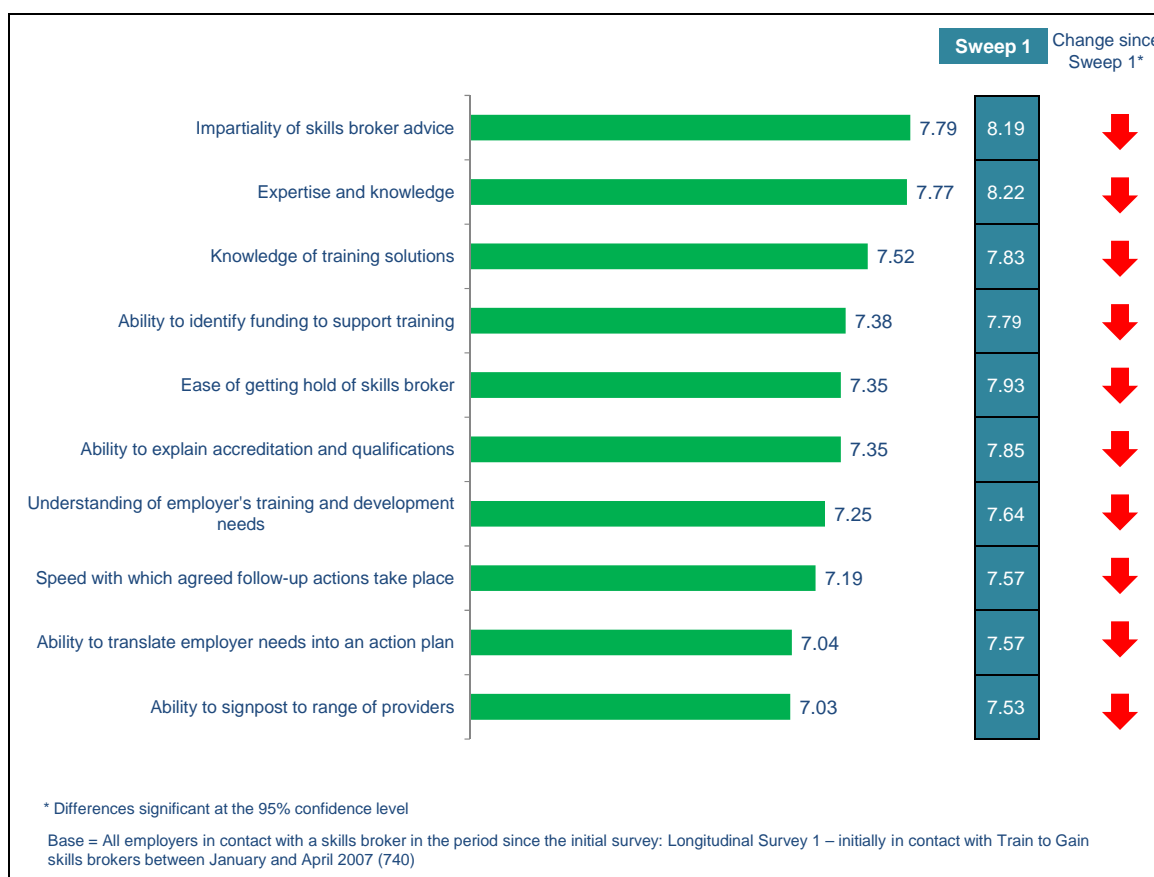


Figure 11: Employer satisfaction with the skills brokerage service – Longitudinal Survey 2



121 There were significant decreases in employer satisfaction for all measures between Sweep 1 and the first longitudinal survey conducted a year down the line. By contrast, between Sweep 2 and the second longitudinal survey, satisfaction scores had only decreased significantly for the following measures:

- ability to signpost to a range of providers; and
- the ability to translate a company's needs into an action plan.

122 These patterns in the satisfaction scores are mirrored in employers' **overall** ratings of satisfaction with the skills brokerage service. Again, those who, when they were recontacted, reported contact with the skills broker in the previous year were asked to give a satisfaction rating on a 10-point scale. Table 10 shows the proportion of those employers who awarded scores of at least 6 and at least 8 out of 10, and also the proportion taken to be dissatisfied – that is, those who gave a score of between 1 and 4.

Table 10: Employer satisfaction with the skills brokerage service – time series comparison

	Survey point			
	New User Sweep 1	Longitudinal Survey 1	New User Sweep 2	Longitudinal Survey 2
Base: All employers having contact with skills broker in past year	740	740	752	752
'Satisfied' – Proportion of employers giving satisfaction score of between 6 and 10	85%	83%	84%	85%
'Very satisfied' – Proportion of employers giving satisfaction score of between 8 and 10	69%	61%*	68%	69%
'Dissatisfied' – Proportion of employers giving satisfaction score of between 1 and 4	6%	10%*	8%	9%
Mean overall satisfaction with the skills brokerage service	7.98	7.50*	7.91	7.82

* Significant difference between new user survey and longitudinal survey at the 95 per cent confidence level.

- 123 In the first longitudinal survey, there was a small but nevertheless statistically significant decrease in the mean overall satisfaction scores over time – from 7.98 at the first point of survey to 7.50 a year later. Moreover, employers were less likely to give an overall satisfaction rating of 8 or more, and were more likely to be dissatisfied with the service. In keeping with this decline in average satisfaction scores over time, far more employers gave a lower score than previously (46 per cent), compared with the proportion giving a higher score (24 per cent – see Table 11). By contrast, in Longitudinal Survey 2, there was no significant difference between overall employer satisfaction between the initial sweep of interviewing (a few months after contact was initiated) and the recontact survey. The net change in overall satisfaction between Sweep 2 and Longitudinal Survey 2 for the group in contact with a skills broker in the interim was 0.3 points per employer.

Table 11: Change in overall satisfaction with the skills brokerage service in the long term

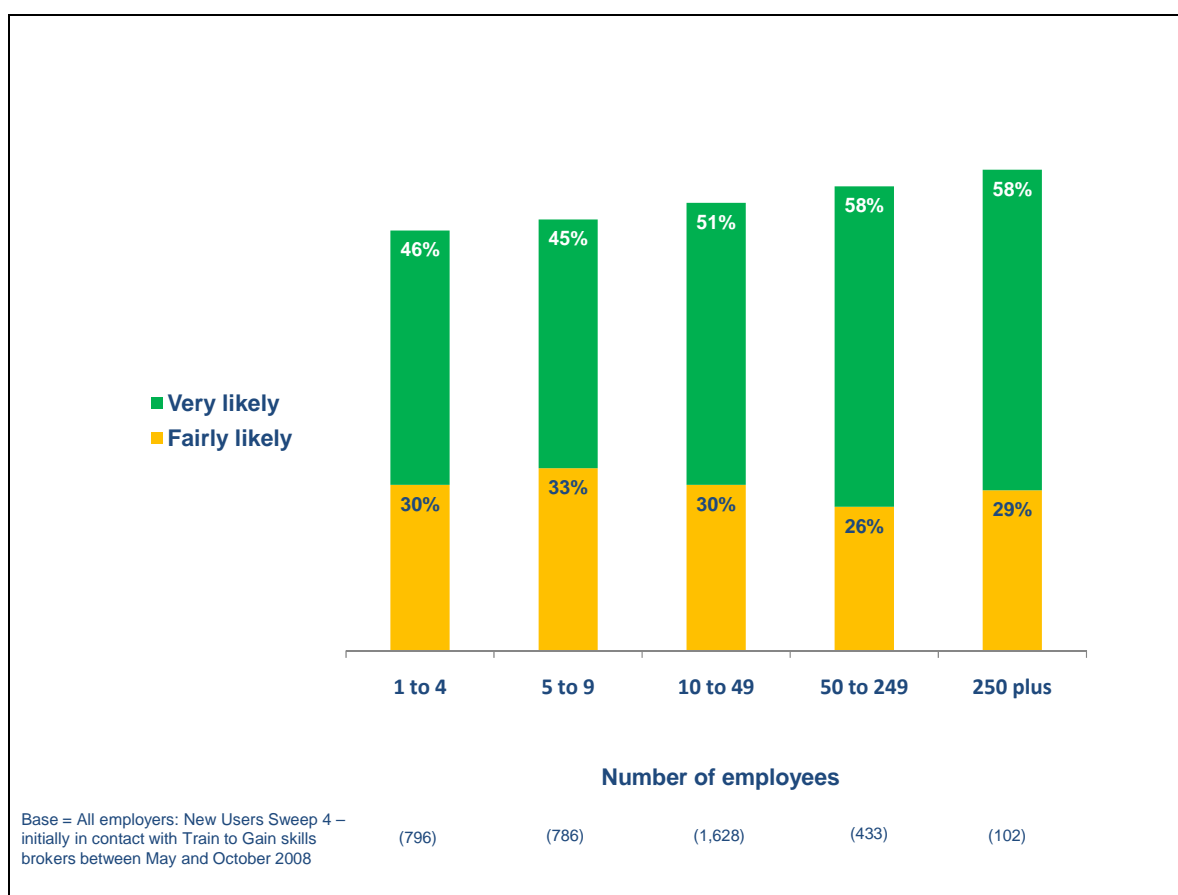
	New User Sweep 1 to Longitudinal Survey 1	New User Sweep 2 to Longitudinal Survey 2
Base: All employers having contact with skills broker in past year	740	752
	%	%
Increased	24	30
Stayed the same	27	30
Decreased	46	37
Don't know (at either new user sweep or at time of recontact)	3	3

- 124 A significantly smaller proportion of employers recontacted for the second longitudinal survey reported a lower satisfaction score than at the initial interview (37 per cent) than in Longitudinal Survey 1 (46 per cent).
- 125 Employer satisfaction with the skills brokerage service is more likely to have increased in the long term if:
- the employer has regular ongoing contact with the skills broker (37 per cent, compared with 30 per cent of all employers re-interviewed); or
 - the employer states that the skills broker has helped them identify training solutions to their skills needs (35 per cent).
- 126 These findings are consistent with those of the previous longitudinal survey.
- 127 Small employers were the least likely to be satisfied with the skills brokerage service in the long term, compared with other larger employers who had also had contact with their skills broker over the previous year. Some 74 per cent of employers with fewer than 10 employees were satisfied overall, compared with 89 per cent of those who employed between 10 and 249 people, and 92 per cent of those employing upwards of 250 people.

Recommending Train to Gain to other employers

- 128 Reflecting the high levels of satisfaction with the skills brokerage service, four Sweep 4 employers in five (80 per cent) reported that they would be likely to recommend the Train to Gain service to a business colleague outside their organisation, and half (50 per cent) were very likely to do so. There has been no significant variation in the rates of advocacy across the evaluation. Employers who gave a high satisfaction rating (at least 8 out of 10) for the skills broker were more likely to recommend the service (92 per cent), and those who were dissatisfied with the service were much less likely to advocate Train to Gain (34 per cent).
- 129 Figure 12 shows that rates of advocacy for the Train to Gain service increase with the size of the employer. Close to nine in 10 (87 per cent) of the largest employers (with 250 staff or more) would be likely to recommend the Train to Gain service to others, compared with around three-quarters (76 per cent) of those with fewer than five employees.

Figure 12: Likelihood of employer recommending Train to Gain to a colleague outside the organisation, by employer size



- 130 Employers using the skills brokerage service in the South West and the East of England were the most likely to recommend the service to others (88 per cent and 86 per cent, respectively), while employers using the West Midlands and the London services were significantly less likely (69 per cent and 74 per cent, respectively).
- 131 With regards to the longitudinal research, eight in 10 of those employers recontacted for the second longitudinal survey (81 per cent) were likely to recommend the Train to Gain service to a business colleague outside their organisation, and between half and two-fifths (46 per cent) very likely to do so. The likelihood of recommendation among the same employers a year previously was significantly higher (85 per cent). This mirrored the pattern seen for the first longitudinal survey, when significantly fewer employers were likely to recommend Train to Gain than 12 months previously, and where one

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in seven (15 per cent) of those employers who said at the initial interview that they would be likely to recommend the service was no longer willing to do so .

The Impact of Train to Gain on Employer Training Activity

Key findings

- 132 Throughout the employer evaluation, there has been evidence that the skills brokerage intervention leads to a considerable degree of take-up of training solutions.
- 133 A few months after the initial contact with the skills broker, 42 per cent of Sweep 4 employers had taken up some training through Train to Gain (in three-quarters of these cases, this training was to Level 2 or above), and overall three-fifths (61 per cent) had committed to training as a result of contact with the skills broker (had either undertaken training or had it scheduled).
- 134 More than two-fifths of those Sweep 4 employers who had accessed training through Train to Gain made some contribution to the cost of this training. The likelihood of employers making at least some contribution to the cost of training increased markedly with employer size, indicating that subsidies for training are being preferentially channelled to small employers through the Train to Gain system.
- 135 There is evidence of sustained activity, with a third of those employers that had taken up training a few months after their initial contact with the skills broker arranging additional training through Train to Gain within the subsequent 12 months. In addition, one in six of those employers that had not committed to training through Train to Gain in the first couple of months after the initial contact with the skills broker went on to access Train to Gain training in the subsequent 12 months.
- 136 The proportion of employers who have had employees training at Level 3 has increased significantly over the course of the evaluation – from 33 per cent at Sweep 1 to 38 per cent at Sweep 4. This would indicate an increasing focus both on stimulating demand for Level 3 training (including through the roll-out of funding for qualifications at this level from the initial Level 3 pilot regions) and on the progression of Train to Gain learners from Level 2.

Introduction

137 A key aim of the skills brokerage service is to encourage employers to undertake relevant, demand-led training and to invest in training activity that will benefit both employees and the organisation as a whole. The employer evaluation allows assessment of the extent to which the Train to Gain service stimulates employer training activity, both in the short term (in the months following the initial contact) and in the longer term (13 to 20 months after this initial contact). Employers were asked whether they had accessed, or were planning to access, training provision as a direct result of the discussions they had had with their skills broker. We refer to any such training activity prompted by the skills brokerage intervention as training undertaken 'through Train to Gain'. It should be noted that this does not, therefore, apply exclusively to training subsidised through the Train to Gain funding stream.

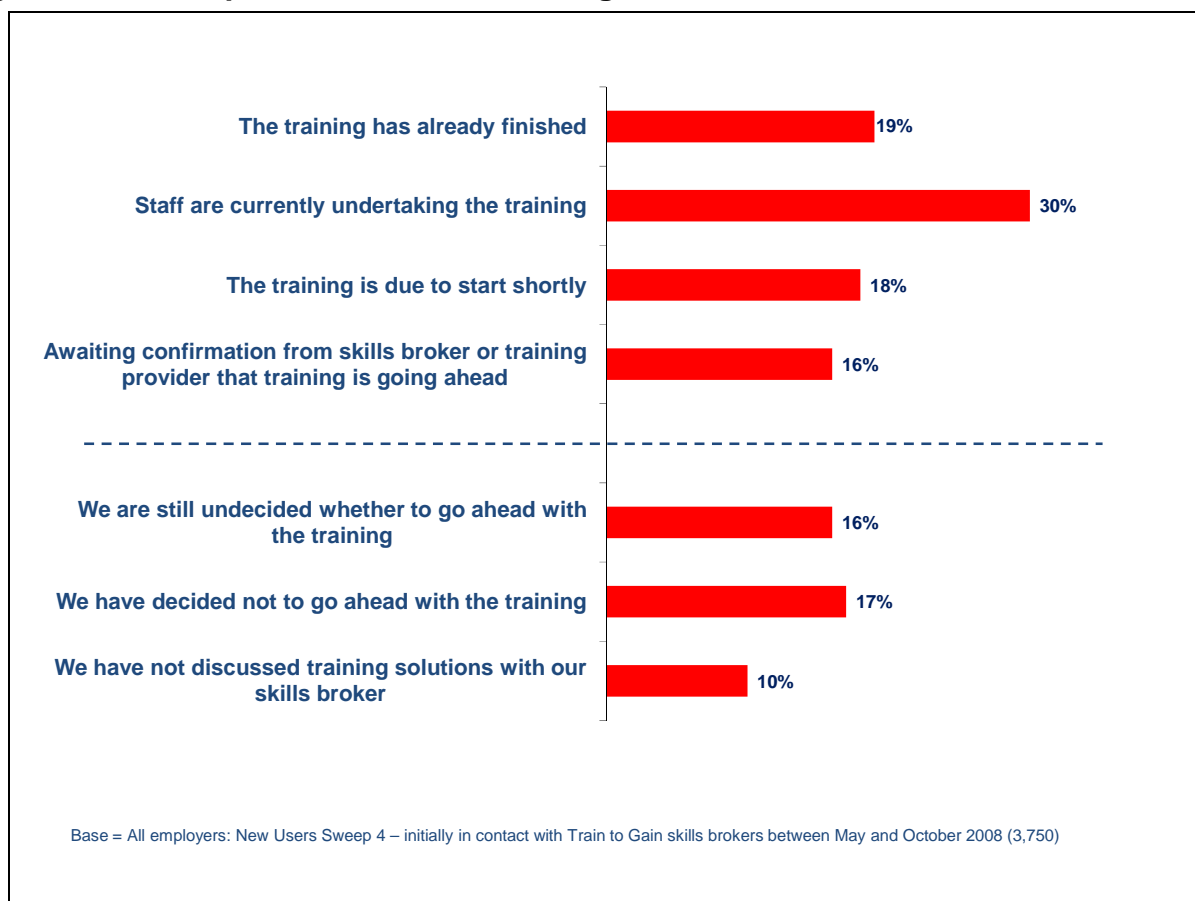
The impact of Train to Gain on employer training activity in the short term

138 Throughout the employer evaluation, there has been evidence that the skills brokerage intervention leads to a considerable degree of take-up of training solutions. Figure 13 shows the proportion of employers at Sweep 4 who were at different stages of Train to Gain training following discussions with the skills broker. The figure shows the training status of employers at the time of the Sweep 4 survey in January to March 2009, two to 11 months after the initial contact with the skills brokerage service (between May and October 2008).

139 Among Sweep 4 new users, at the time of the initial survey, around a fifth (19 per cent) of the cohort had already had some staff complete a course of training, which they had arranged after discussions with the skills broker. Three in 10 (30 per cent) reported that some of their staff were currently undertaking a course of training through Train to Gain. Employers who had staff that had already finished training, or who had staff in training at the time of the survey, are referred to in the rest of this section as having 'taken up' Train to Gain training.

140 One employer in six (17 per cent) had decided not to undertake any training, and a further one in 10 (10 per cent) had not actually got to the stage of having a full discussion regarding their training and development options within the context of the Train to Gain service.

Figure 13: Take-up of Train to Gain training in the short term



Note: Employers could give more than one answer to this question for different blocks of training or different groups of learners engaging with the training. For instance, one employer may have had some staff who had finished a course of Train to Gain training, and some staff still waiting to go ahead. Therefore, the figures shown sum to over 100 per cent.

141 Collectively, those employers who had already had staff undertake training are described in the following section as having ‘taken up’ Train to Gain training. If we include those employers who had training scheduled or were waiting for confirmation, we get the group ‘committed’ to Train to Gain training. Around three in five (61 per cent) of all the employers surveyed in Sweep 4 had ‘committed’ to training as a result of contact with the skills broker at the time of the first interview. As Table 12 shows, the proportion of each employer cohort

committing to undertake training under Train to Gain has remained relatively stable across Sweeps 1 to 4 (apart from a slight increase in Sweep 2).

Table 12: Commitment to and take-up of training in the short term, as a result of discussions with a Train to Gain skills broker, by evaluation sweep

	Base	Initial contact made	Point of survey	'Commitment' to Train to Gain training	'Take-up' of Train to Gain training
Sweep 1	3,759	Jan–Apr 07	Jun–Jul 07	64%	42%
Sweep 2	3,976	May–Oct 07	Jan–Mar 08	65%	51%
Sweep 3	3,753	Nov 07–Apr 08	Jun–Aug 08	62%	44%
Sweep 4	3,750	May–Oct 08	Jan–Mar 09	61%	42%

142 The likelihood of the initial skills brokerage intervention leading to the employer committing to training activity increases with the size of the employer establishment. The smallest employers (with 1–4 employees) are the least likely to have committed to training in the short term, although still just over half (53 per cent) had done so. Table 13 highlights the way in which the commitment rates increase as employer size increases among Sweep 4 employers.

Table 13: New User Sweep 4: Commitment to and take-up of training in the short term as a result of discussions with a Train to Gain skills broker, by employer size

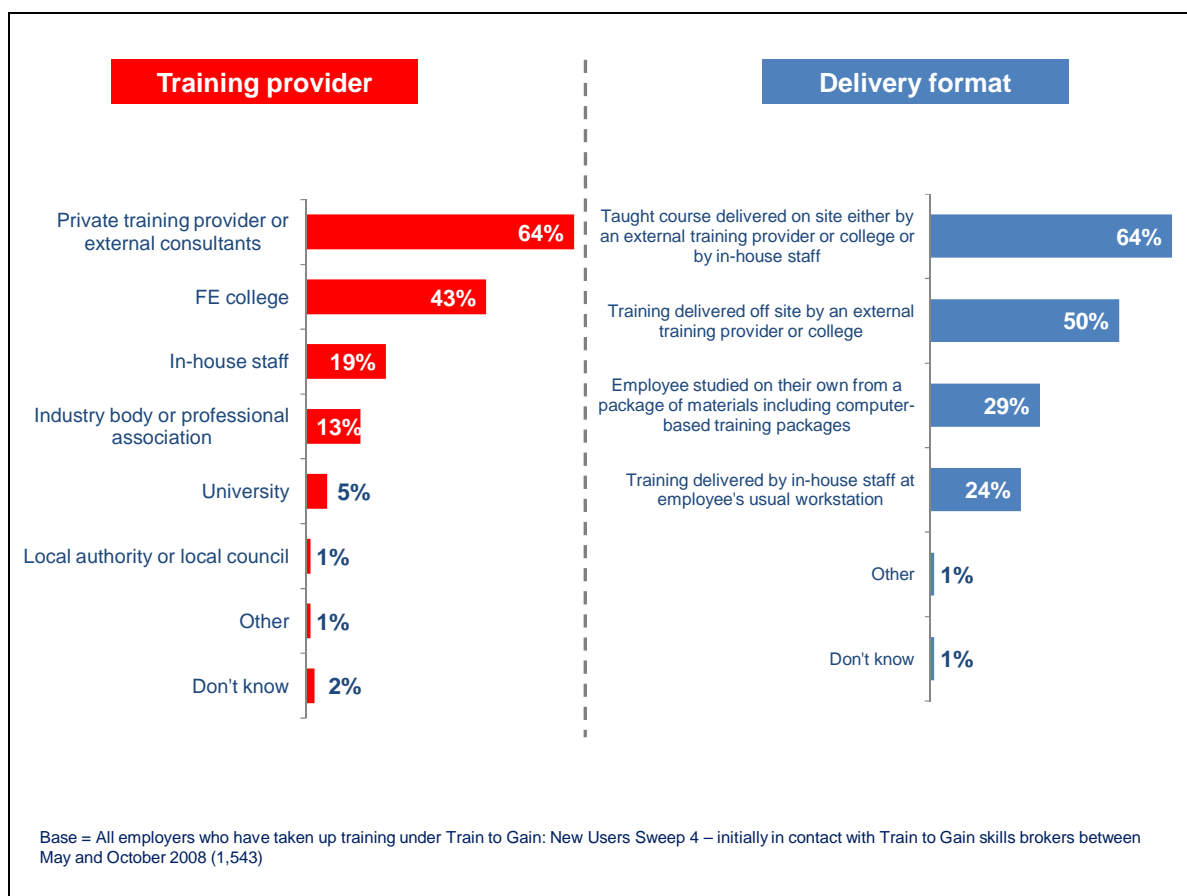
Number of employees	Base	'Commitment' to Train to Gain training	'Take-up' of Train to Gain training
1 to 4	796	53%	33%
5 to 9	786	57%	36%
10 to 49	1,628	64%	45%
50 to 249	433	68%	53%
250 plus	102	69%	53%
Overall	3,750	61%	42%

143 Results also vary by industry sector. Commitment rates in the short term are significantly higher than average among employers operating in the Public Administration, Health and Education sector (66 per cent, compared with an average of 61 per cent) and among employers in the Hotels and Restaurants sector (67 per cent). Conversely, employers operating in the Financial and

Business Services (55 per cent) and the Primary, Utilities and Manufacturing sectors (51 per cent) are significantly less likely to commit to engaging with training solutions discussed with the skills broker. These sector patterns have remained relatively constant over the four sweeps of the employer evaluation.

- 144 Where employers have taken up training provision in the short term following the initial Train to Gain intervention, a variety of different types of training have been accessed. Figure 14 shows the proportion of employers who have taken up training through Train to Gain, using different types of training providers and choosing different delivery formats. As some of the employers had arranged various courses of training for staff through Train to Gain at the time of survey, a degree of overlap is apparent in the groups of employers using different providers or different formats of training (and thus the data for each element of the figure sums to over 100 per cent).

Figure 14: Training provider and delivery format of training undertaken through Train to Gain



145 The majority of employers who arranged some training soon after discussion with a skills broker used either a private training provider or consultant (64 per cent) or a further education (FE) college (43 per cent) to deliver this training. Interestingly, as many as one in five employers (19 per cent) had been prompted by the skills broker to arrange a course of training delivered by in-house staff.

146 By far the most common delivery formats for Train to Gain training were taught courses delivered on site (64 per cent) or training delivered off site (50 per cent) by an external training provider or college.

147 The discussion to date has assessed all training undertaken as a result of contact between the employer and the Train to Gain skills broker, rather than just training that was subsidised through the Train to Gain funding stream. Assessment of the extent to which employers have contributed to funding

training provision is important in assessing the performance of the Train to Gain service against one of its key objectives: namely, to promote and encourage continued employer investment in staff training that will help move the business forward.

148 Table 14 shows, for each sweep of the evaluation, the proportion of those employers that have undertaken training in the short term who have accessed different levels of subsidies for this training activity. Again, it should be noted that, because employers could have accessed various courses of training for staff by this point, with different funding arrangements for each, the figures for the proportion of employers accessing fully subsidised, partly subsidised and wholly unsubsidised training in each column sum to over 100 per cent.

Table 14: The proportion of employers accessing subsidies for training conducted in the short term as a result of discussion with a Train to Gain skills broker

	Sweep 1	Sweep 2	Sweep 3	Sweep 4
Base: All employers taking up training through Train to Gain	1,584	1,914	1,592	1,543
Fully subsidised training	68%	62%	58%	62%
Partly subsidised training – employer paid:	29%	35%	38%	35%
Nearly all of the costs	1%	1%	2%	2%
Most of the costs	2%	3%	4%	3%
Roughly half the costs	12%	18%	19%	15%
Less than half the costs	12%	11%	11%	14%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%	1%
Wholly unsubsidised training	12%	13%	16%	12%
Don't know	3%	4%	3%	3%

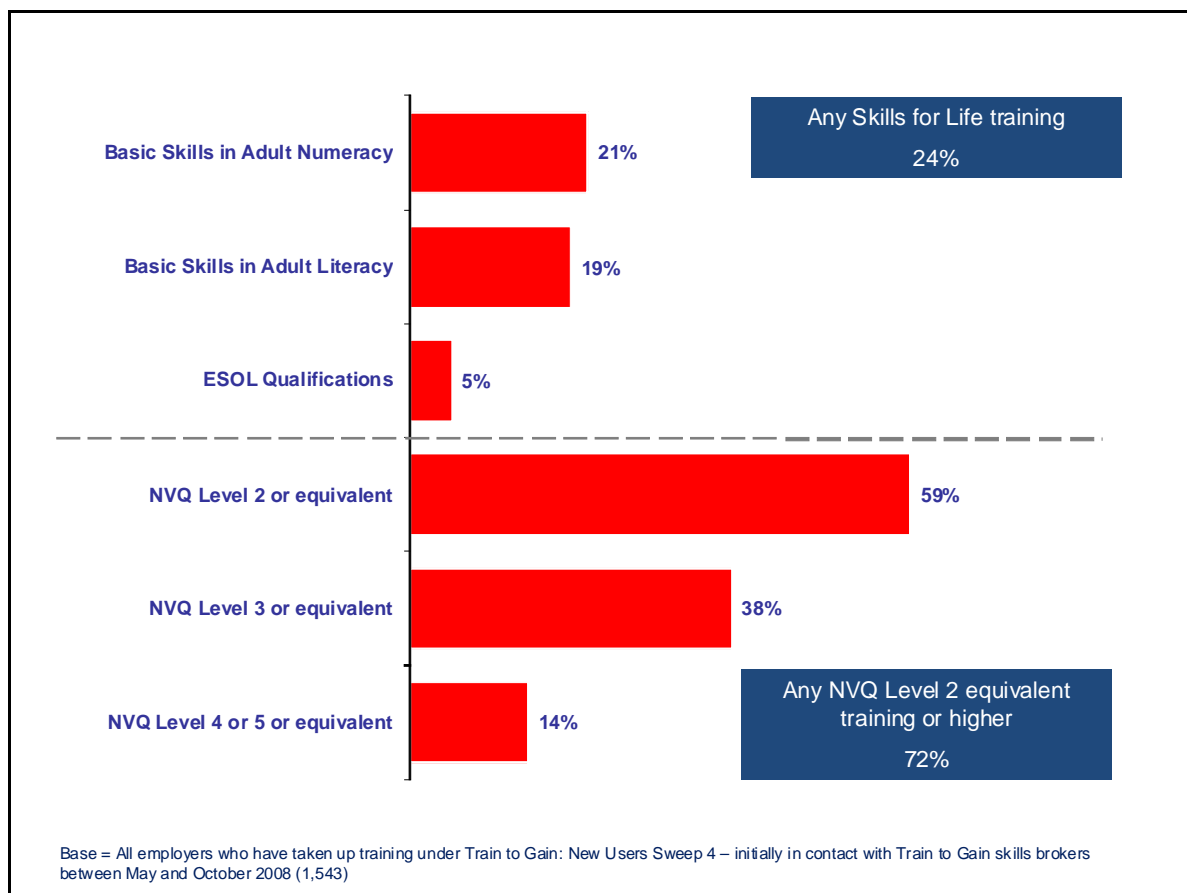
149 Overall, just over three-fifths of those employers that took up training arranged at least some training for staff that was fully subsidised through Train to Gain in Sweep 4 (62 per cent). The majority of employers who accessed full subsidies through Train to Gain received this for all training (86 per cent), meaning that at this point they had not accessed any other training through Train to Gain to which they had made a contribution.

- 150 Just over a third of employers who had taken up training (35 per cent) had accessed some provision on a part-subsidised basis – in most cases (86 per cent), the employer was likely to have had to contribute only around half of the costs (or less). One employer in eight (12 per cent) had, following skills brokerage intervention, accessed training that they had paid for in full themselves. In total, just over two-fifths (44 per cent) of employers who accessed training had made some contribution to the costs.
- 151 The patterns of employer access to subsidies for training conducted in the short term as a result of discussions with a Train to Gain skills broker have settled down at relatively consistent levels since the first sweep of the employer evaluation. The lower level of employers accessing full subsidies after Sweep 1 may reflect the fact that, as the operation period for Train to Gain has gone on, the supply of employers who would be eligible for these full subsidies has declined. This perhaps underlines the importance of the recently introduced new flexibilities in eligibility for funded provision, including those that relate to repeat qualifications at Level 2 or Level 3.
- 152 The likelihood that employers have made at least some contribution to the costs of training increased markedly with employer size. Among employers with fewer than 10 employees, just under two-fifths (39 per cent) made some contribution. This compares with 63 per cent of the largest establishments (employing upwards of 250 people). This shows how subsidies for training are being preferentially channelled to small employers through the Train to Gain system.
- 153 There are also significant differences by sector, with employers from the Financial and Business Services (50 per cent), the Construction (47 per cent) and the Primary, Utilities and Manufacturing (48 per cent) sectors more likely to have made a contribution to training costs through Train to Gain than those in the Hotels and Restaurants (33 per cent) and the Wholesale and Retail (33 per cent) sectors. In the Hotels and Restaurants sector, this may well reflect the above-average take-up of Level 2 qualifications that are eligible for subsidies. Broadly speaking, these sector patterns have remained constant

over time, although the gap between the sector with the highest proportion of employers making some contribution to the costs of training and the sector with the lowest has decreased over time. In other words, Train to Gain is reaching employers ever more evenly across the sectors.

154 In terms of the level of training accessed through Train to Gain in the short term, just over seven in 10 of those employers who had taken up training (72 per cent) had some employees who had achieved (or were working towards) a qualification at Level 2 or above (in most cases specifically at Level 2). Just under two in five (38 per cent) had accessed training at Level 3, and just under a quarter (24 per cent) had accessed training designed to lead to a Skills for Life qualification in adult numeracy, adult literacy or English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).

Figure 15: The proportion of employers accessing training at different levels in the short term as a result of discussion with a Train to Gain skills broker



- 155 Across Sweeps 1 to 4, the pattern has been for fewer employers to access Skills for Life and Level 2 qualifications, with a corresponding increased focus on Level 3 training. As Table 15 shows, these effects are not large, but the change between Sweeps 1 and 4 for the proportion accessing Skills for Life, Level 2 and Level 3 training is statistically significant for all three measures. This would indicate an increasing focus both on stimulating demand for Level 3 training (including through the roll-out of funding for qualifications at this level from the initial Level 3 pilot regions) and on progression of Train to Gain learners from Level 2. There has also been a significant decline in the summary measure relating to the proportion of employers accessing training at Level 2 or above (from 80 per cent at Sweep 1 to 72 per cent at Sweep 4). The proportion of employers who have accessed training at Level 2 or above has decreased because of a fall at Level 2, which cancels out the rise at Level 3.
- 156 Throughout the evaluation, when we refer to training ‘undertaken’ or ‘accessed’ through Train to Gain, the frame of reference for employers was any training undertaken as a direct result of their discussions with the skills broker. Therefore, the training included is not exclusively funded through Train to Gain and is also not exclusively designed to lead towards any type of formal qualification. This explains why there can be a decrease in the overall proportion of employers who had staff working towards (or already having attained) a formal qualification by the time of the survey. Figure 15 excludes some of those employers who had accessed training that was not designed to lead to a qualification, and those employers who were not aware whether the courses were designed to lead to a qualification at the levels shown or who did not know the number of staff involved (see Q46 on the new user survey, Annex D).

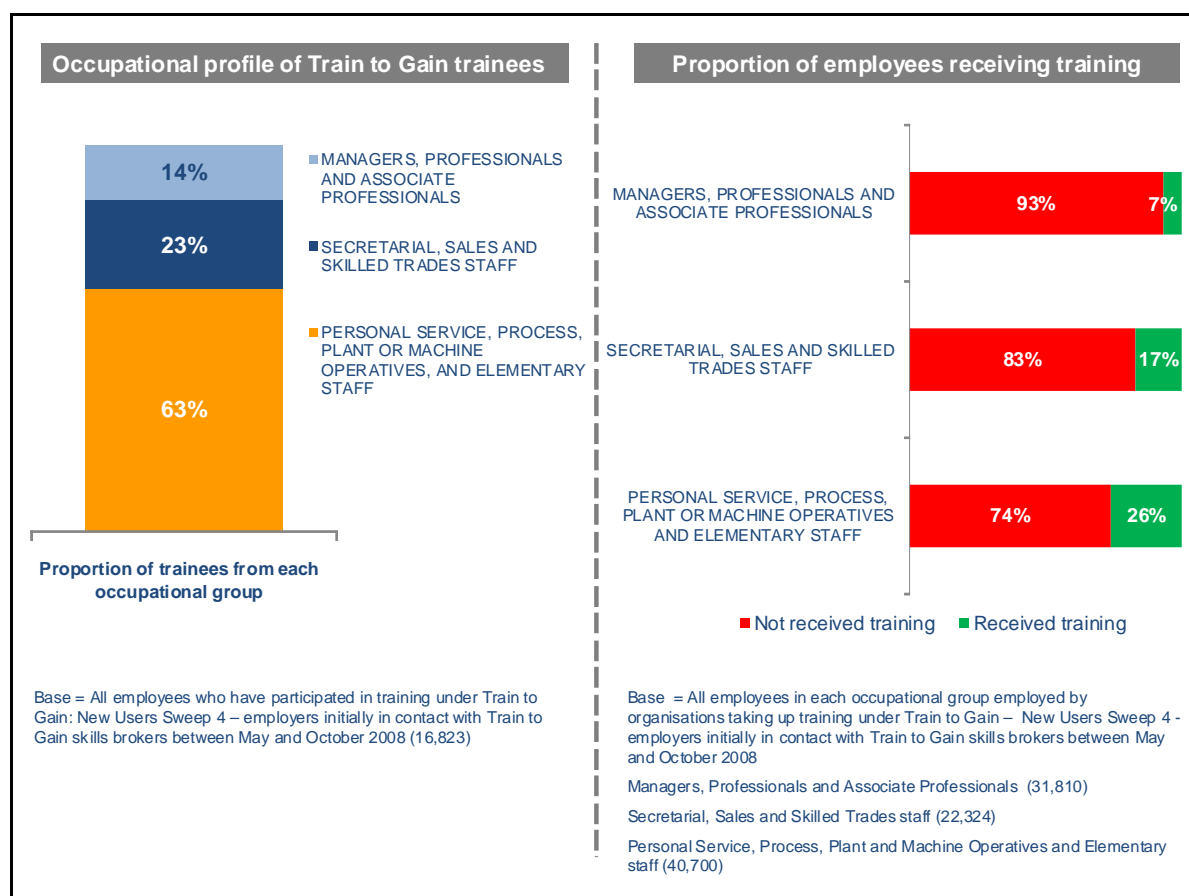
Table 15: Levels of qualifications accessed through Train to Gain

Level of qualification	Proportion of employers who have had employees working towards or achieving formal qualifications through Train to Gain			
	Sweep 1	Sweep 2	Sweep 3	Sweep 4
Base: All employers accessing training through Train to Gain in the short term	1,584	1,914	1,592	1,543
Skills for Life	28%	27%	27%	24%
Level 2	71%	64%	60%	59%
Level 3	33%	34%	34%	38%
Level 4 or 5	14%	16%	15%	14%
Level 2 or above	80%	77%	72%	72%

- 157 As well as the level of training undertaken, it is also interesting to look at the occupations that are most likely to participate in Train to Gain training. Employers were asked to give the number of people employed at the site, and then the number trained through Train to Gain in three broad categories:
- Managers, Professionals and Associate Professional occupations;
 - Secretarial, Sales or Skilled Trades occupations;
 - Personal Service, Process, Plant and Machine Operatives, or Elementary occupations.
- 158 As Figure 16 shows, just under two-thirds (63 per cent) of all those employees who had been enrolled on training through Train to Gain at the time of the first interview were employed in Personal Service, as Process, Plant and Machine Operatives, or in Elementary occupations. Approaching half of the trainees in this group (48 per cent, or equivalent to 31 per cent of all trainees) were drawn from the Public Administration, Health and Education sector, reflecting to a certain degree the high level of take-up of training from social care organisations, and suggesting that most of these trainees were in Personal Service roles.
- 159 Individuals employed in Secretarial, Sales or Skilled Trades occupations made up just under a quarter of all trainees who engaged with Train to Gain training in the short term (23 per cent).

- 160 The remainder of the trainee population (14 per cent) was made up of Managers, Professionals and Associate Professionals. Hence, clearly overall Train to Gain training has covered a wide spectrum of employees with different levels of skills and experience.
- 161 The employer evaluation has revealed fluctuations in the occupational profile of Train to Gain trainees over time. For Sweeps 2 and 3, the proportion of trainees from Managers, Professional and Associate Professional occupations was significantly higher (18 per cent and 22 per cent, respectively) than in Sweep 1 (12 per cent) and Sweep 4 (14 per cent). There was a corresponding decrease in Sweep 2 (57 per cent) and Sweep 3 (59 per cent) in the proportion of trainees from the category of Personal Service, Process, Plant and Machine Operatives and Elementary occupations, compared with a high of 71 per cent at Sweep 1 and an increased proportion again at Sweep 4 (63 per cent).

Figure 16: The occupational profile of Train to Gain trainees



162 Individuals employed in the Personal Service, Process, Plant and Machine Operatives and Elementary occupations were also the most likely to receive Train to Gain training, relative to total employment. In those organisations that undertook training via Train to Gain in the short term, a quarter (26 per cent) of all individuals employed in the Personal Service, Process, Plant and Machine Operatives and Elementary occupations participated in Train to Gain learning, compared with 17 per cent of those employed in the Secretarial, Sales or Skilled Trades occupational group, and as few as 7 per cent of Managers, Professionals and Associate Professionals.

Evidence for engagement with the Leadership and Management Advisory Service

163 The Leadership and Management Advisory Service (LMAS) is a discrete service within Train to Gain, through which employers can access support and training for senior management. As discussed above, there has been a shift to

qualifications at Level 3 and above over the course of the evaluation, and an increasing focus on higher-level management skills is an important element in the new offers that have been developed to support SMEs.

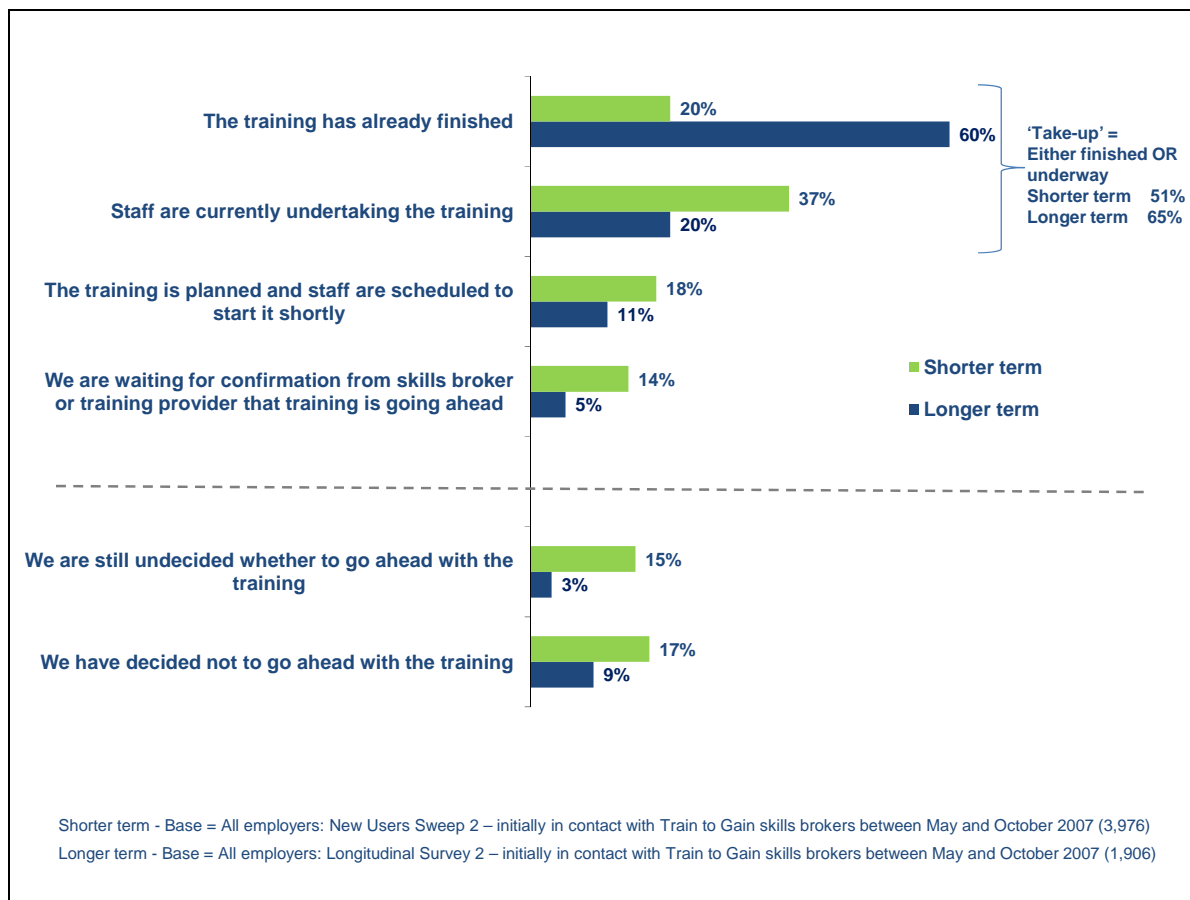
- 164 As the LMAS was only launched in 2008, engagement with the service was only assessed in Sweep 4 of the evaluation. In total, one in eight of the Sweep 4 employers (12 per cent) reported that some of their management staff had received some leadership and management training, coaching or mentoring, following an initial contact with the Train to Gain skills broker.
- 165 Employers operating in the Public Administration, Health and Education sector were significantly more likely to have taken up leadership and management training: 15 per cent had done so, compared with 12 per cent of employers overall. Employers in the Construction and the Wholesale and Retail sectors were the least likely to have accessed training in this area (7 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively). Small and medium-sized employers with between 10 and 249 staff showed higher rates of engagement with leadership and management training (16 per cent) than the smallest employers (with fewer than 10 employees) (7 per cent), but also than the largest employers (with more than 250 staff) (also 7 per cent). This pattern may reflect the existence of well-developed management training schemes among the largest employers, and also perhaps a lack of cover for managers in the smallest companies to allow them to participate in training.
- 166 Where employers had accessed leadership and management training, this was most likely to be for/about:
- training towards a qualification – 32 per cent (the most common specific qualification types mentioned were NVQ Levels 3 and 4, higher education (HE) degrees and postgraduate masters, and Institute of Leadership and Management qualifications);
 - training not designed to lead to a qualification – 31 per cent; and
 - one-to-one coaching or mentoring – 2 per cent.

- 167 In only half of cases where the employer had accessed leadership and management training (51 per cent, equivalent to 6 per cent of employers overall) did the employer report that they had been referred to a specialist leadership and management advisor by their original skills broker.

The impact of Train to Gain on employer training activity in the longer term

- 168 To investigate the longer-term impact on training activity, a sub-set of Sweep 2 employers was followed up one year after the initial interview, as part of the second longitudinal survey (in January to March 2009). Figure 17 shows the training status of these employers at both points. When interviewed a few months after the initial skills brokerage contact, a fifth (20 per cent) of these employers had completed some training. By the second interview, three-fifths of employers (60 per cent) had had staff complete training initiated as a result of discussions with their Train to Gain skills broker.
- 169 In total, the proportion of employers with Train to Gain training completed or under way rises from 51 per cent in the short term to 65 per cent a year later.

Figure 17: Take-up of training through Train to Gain in the short and long term

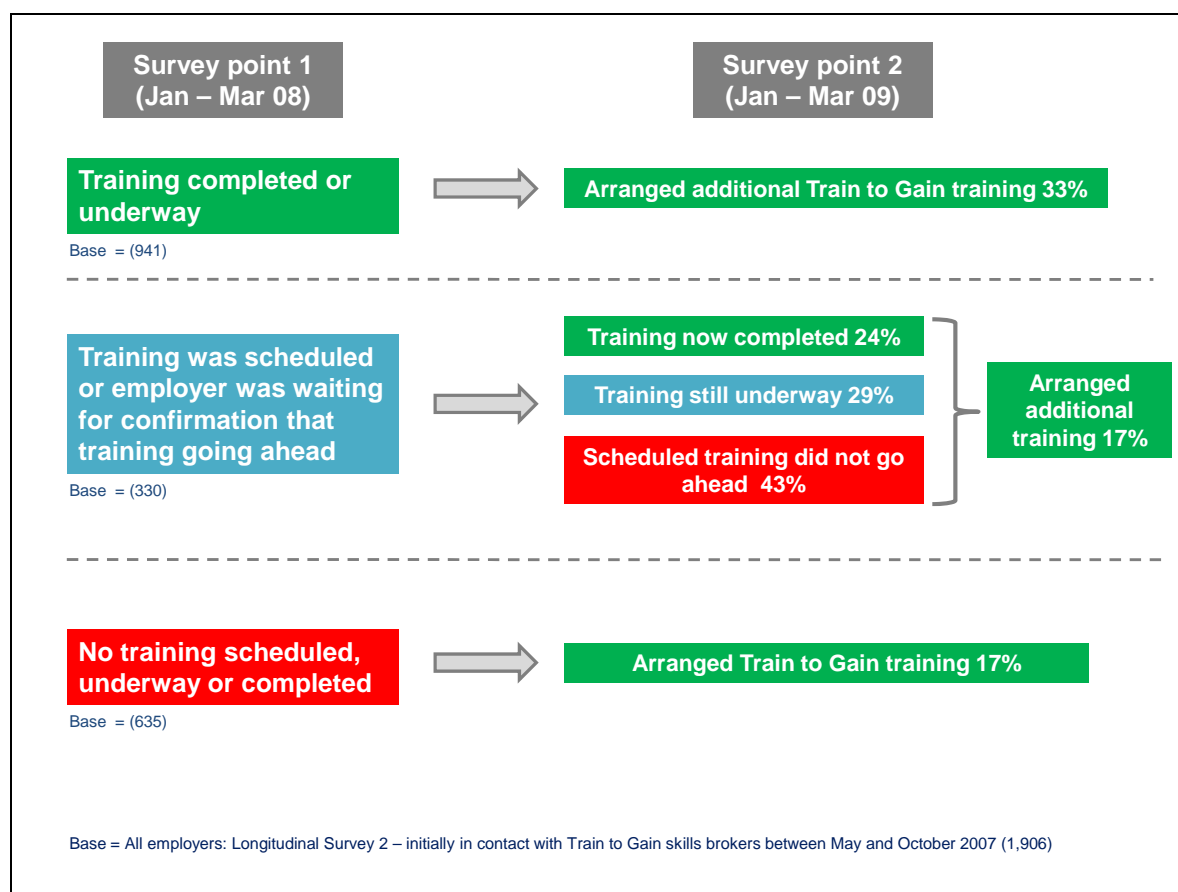


Note: Employers could give more than one answer to this question for different blocks of training or different groups of learners engaging with the training. For instance, one employer may have had some staff who had finished a course of Train to Gain training, and some staff still waiting to go ahead. Therefore the figures shown for each point in time sum to over 100 per cent.

170 This data gives a good idea of the overall impact on employer training activity of the Train to Gain intervention. However, in order to track the pattern of engagement and re-engagement with Train to Gain provision over the first one or two years following contact with the skills broker, it is also useful to look at the training activity of different groups of employers. Among employers interviewed both in early 2008 and a year later, in 2009, it is possible to show, for example, whether training under way or planned at the initial survey was completed, and whether any additional provision was taken up in the following year. Figure 18 splits the cohort into three groups according to their status at the first survey (in terms of whether they accessed Train to Gain training after

contact with the skills broker), and then describes the subsequent activity through Train to Gain over the following year.

Figure 18: Additional training activity through Train to Gain following the initial survey



171 Where employers at the time of their first interview had already taken up training, there was a relatively high re-engagement rate, with a third (33 per cent) having arranged another programme of training through Train to Gain by the time of the second interview. This was defined as any additional training that had been arranged as a direct result of discussions the employer had had with their skills broker. The majority of the employers who had taken up further training opportunities (73 per cent) had continued contact with their skills brokerage organisation during this time, suggesting the importance of ongoing advice and skills brokerage in prompting the employer to continue training in the long term. Most of those employers that arranged further training through Train to Gain had received full or part subsidies for at least some of this activity (90 per cent).

- 172 In a substantial proportion of cases, the initial training that employers were planning through Train to Gain did not actually take place. This applies to over two-fifths of cases (43 per cent) where the employer reported in early 2008 that staff were scheduled to undertake training or where the employer reported that they were waiting for confirmation from a skills broker or a training provider that training was going ahead.
- 173 Where employers had not committed to training through Train to Gain after the initial contact with the skills broker, around one in six (17 per cent) went on in the subsequent 12 months to access training that could be attributed to the Train to Gain intervention.
- 174 In order to further assess continued employer engagement with the Train to Gain service, we can explore whether employer expectations of further engagement are being converted into continued participation in training. As part of the longitudinal survey, a total of 1,241 employers were resurveyed (these were employers who had indicated in the initial interview that they expected to engage in training under Train to Gain in the following year). Nearly two-fifths of the employers in this group (37 per cent) went on to do so.
- 175 Overall, the data indicates an increase in the proportion of employers actively involved with Train to Gain training over time, driven by both subsequent engagement of employers who did not train initially, and continuing or additional training activity undertaken by those who did. Accordingly, the proportion of all employers who accessed training through Train to Gain that was designed to lead to qualifications at Levels 2, 3 or 4/5 has also increased. For instance, as Table 16 shows, in the longitudinal survey (13 to 20 months after initial contact with the skills broker) over two-fifths (45 per cent) of all employers who had used the skills brokerage service had, as a result, accessed some training for staff at Level 2. This compares with 33 per cent of employers who had taken up Level 2 provision by the first survey point.

Table 16: Levels of qualifications accessed through Train to Gain – time series comparison

	Short term – survey point 1 New User Sweep 2	Long term – survey point 2 Longitudinal Survey 2
Base: All employers	3,976	1,906
Skills for Life (adult numeracy, adult literacy or ESOL)	14%	14%
Level 2	33%	45%*
Level 3	17%	28%*
Level 4 or 5	8%	10%*

* Difference in the proportion of employers taking up provision at this level at survey points 1 and 2 is statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level.

- 176 The following table shows the proportion of those employers that accessed provision at Level 2 and Level 3 in the longer term who received full or part subsidies to support this training. While Level 2 training is the more likely to attract full funding, over half of employers who had accessed training at Level 3 received full subsidies for this provision.

Table 17: Funding of Level 2 and Level 3 training through Train to Gain

	Level 2	Level 3
Base: All employers accessing each level of provision by survey point 2 – Longitudinal Survey 2	835	515
Fully subsidised training	77%	61%
Partly subsidised training	18%	29%
Wholly unsubsidised training	5%	12%
Don't know	5%	5%

- 177 Again, it should be noted that, because employers could have accessed various courses of training for staff at Level 2 or at Level 3 by this point, with different funding arrangements for each, the figures for the proportion of employers accessing fully subsidised, partly subsidised and wholly unsubsidised training in each column sum to over 100 per cent.
- 178 There was a substantial proportion of Sweep 2 employers (45 per cent) who reported that the availability of subsidies for Level 2 training was very important to their decision to get involved with Train to Gain. Using the second longitudinal survey to highlight the long-term patterns of training activity, it was

found that half (54 per cent) of these employers did go on to access Level 2 provision, and received either full or part subsidies to support this training. Where employers rated the availability of subsidies for Level 3 training as a very important motivating factor in their involvement with Train to Gain, just a third (32 per cent) had actually gone on to access subsidised provision at this level in the 13 to 20 months after the initial contact.

Reasons for not taking up training following contact with the Train to Gain skills broker

- 179 Those employers who failed to take up the opportunity of accessing training for staff following the initial contact with the skills broker were asked why they had been reluctant to engage with Train to Gain training. In Sweeps 1 to 3 of the evaluation, this question was asked on an unprompted, open-ended basis. In Sweep 4, in order to get an indication of the relative importance of the various barriers and concerns, employers were asked to give the extent of their agreement with a number of factors that had been highlighted in previous sweeps as key reasons for not engaging with Train to Gain training.
- 180 Figure 19 shows the Sweep 4 data for the proportion of those employers that had not taken up training who agreed slightly and agreed strongly that each factor played a part in their decision. While a large number of factors played a part, three were particularly likely to be key (with a high proportion agreeing strongly):
- the training suggested was not appropriate or relevant to their organisation at that time (33 per cent agreed strongly);
 - staff were not eligible to receive subsidised training (30 per cent agreed strongly); and
 - the employer had already accessed the same or similar training opportunities outside Train to Gain (29 per cent agreed strongly).

Figure 19: Reasons for not taking up training through Train to Gain



181 Many of those employers who did not take up training agreed that this was because staff did not meet the eligibility criteria for receipt of subsidised training (40 per cent). This suggests that the availability of funding to support training is a ‘deal breaker’ for some employers who are unwilling to make a full investment in the training themselves. This may also be one reason why there is a drop-off in engagement between training being planned and actually taking place (see above), with the employers unaware that funding is not available until the training is about to start. The lack of funding and a feeling of being misinformed by the skills broker over subsidies available also appear as reasons for dissatisfaction with the skills brokerage service (see Table 9), highlighting the importance of managing employer expectations in this area.

182 It was in Sweep 3 that employer concerns regarding the economic climate first arose as a significant reason for not engaging with Train to Gain training. At

Sweep 3, when the employers who had had an initial contact with a Train to Gain skills broker in November 2007 to April 2008 were surveyed, 6 per cent of those employers who had decided not to take up training said that this was because training was not a priority for their business in the challenging economic climate. As Figure 19 shows, when Sweep 4 employers were asked for the first time on a **prompted** basis whether concerns about the economic climate had had any influence on their decisions about taking up training, almost three in 10 of those employers who had decided against engagement with training (28 per cent) agreed that this was the case. It is not possible from the employer evaluation data to distinguish whether the remainder were not concerned about the economic climate because the training solutions being put forward by the skills broker would have been available without any financial contribution from the employer. Employer views on the economic downturn are explored in more depth below.

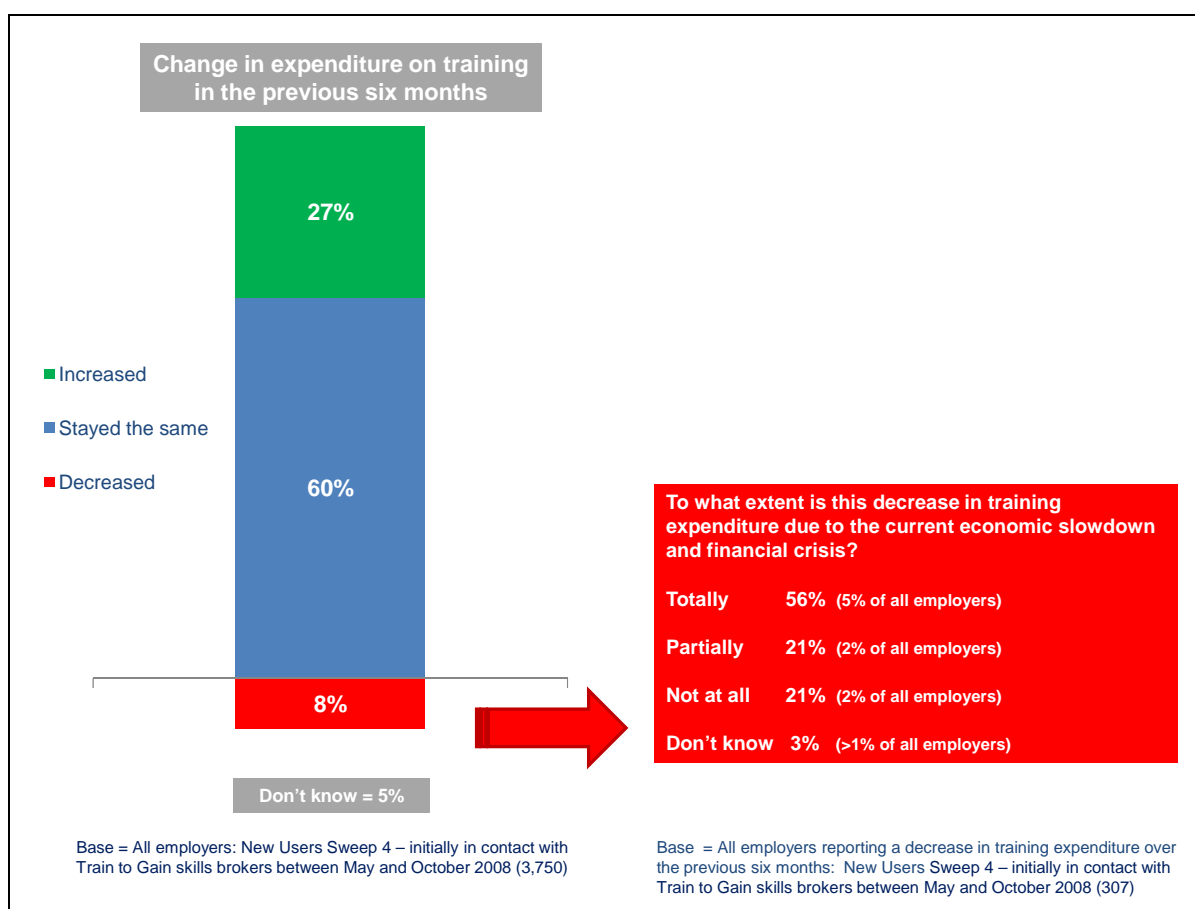
The impact of the economic downturn on employer training activity through Train to Gain

- 183 We now look at the impact the economic downturn has had on employers interviewed for Sweep 4, where the period when the employers initially became involved with the Train to Gain service (between May and October 2008) corresponded to a period when the economy was entering a clear recession. Persuading employers of the benefits of arranging and investing in training for employees in order to prepare for a future recovery in the economy has been a key focus of recent Train to Gain promotional campaigns, and it is thus interesting to explore how employers who have been involved with the skills brokerage service view these issues.
- 184 All Sweep 4 employers were asked how their expenditure on training for employees had changed over the six months preceding the interview (that is, in the approximate period July 2008 to February 2009) and about the role played by the economic downturn. As Figure 20 shows, just over a quarter (27 per cent) of employers stated that their expenditure on training had **increased** over the previous six months, with three-fifths (60 per cent) saying that expenditure had remained the same. These findings do seem very positive,

and indicate that the vast majority of Train to Gain employers are continuing to invest in staff training and development, despite the difficult economic circumstances. It should be noted, however, that, as actual volumes of expenditure were not assessed, it could be that the group of employers who have reported a static or increasing level of expenditure started from a low level of investment. Also, it is likely that, in some cases, continued investment in training reflects a need for the employer organisation to cover the costs of statutory training for employees, for example health and safety, or training in social care.

- 185 In total, 8 per cent of Sweep 4 employers reported that their expenditure on training for employees had decreased over the six months prior to the survey. Of these, most attributed this decrease to the effects of the economic downturn either totally (56 per cent) or partially (21 per cent). This is equivalent to 6 per cent of all employers who have seen training expenditure cut at least partly as a result of the economic downturn. During this period, employers in the Construction sector were significantly more likely to report a decrease in training expenditure as a result of the downturn (9 per cent), while a smaller proportion of Public Administration, Health and Education sector employers reported cut-backs prompted by the economic climate (3 per cent).

Figure 20: Change in expenditure on training in the previous six months attributable to the effects of the economic downturn



- 186 Larger employers (those with upwards of 50 employees) were more likely to report a decrease in expenditure on training due to the economic downturn (10 per cent) than were their smaller counterparts (6 per cent of micro-employers, employing 1–4 people, and 6 per cent of organisations employing 5–49 staff).
- 187 In cases where employers reported a decrease in training expenditure due to the economic downturn over the sixth months prior to the interview, this was associated with a lower incidence of take-up of training through Train to Gain, following involvement with the skills brokerage service. The take-up rate for Train to Gain training among employers who reported a decrease in training expenditure was 33 per cent – significantly lower than the overall rate for the full Sweep 4 cohort (42 per cent). Where these employers had not pursued the training opportunities discussed with the skills broker, they were much more likely than average to agree strongly that this was due to their concerns about

the economic climate (58 per cent, compared with 20 per cent of employers overall who did not take up training). This suggests that, where employers are cutting back because of the economic downturn, this is having a negative impact on the likelihood that they will engage with Train to Gain training. It should be recognised, however, that it is still the case that a third of those employers who have seen training decrease have still accessed training through Train to Gain, and that, overall, those employers who report a negative impact of training budgets and expenditure make up only a small minority of those surveyed.

- 188 Evidence from the latest longitudinal research, conducted in early 2009, which involved resurveying employers who had initially been in contact with the skills brokerage service in May to October 2007, provides tentative evidence that those employers who reported a decrease in training expenditure in late 2008/early 2009 may be prioritising other training activity conducted outside Train to Gain. Although, again, while most employers resurveyed here reported either an increase in training expenditure over the sixth-month period prior to the interview (31 per cent) or stable expenditure (58 per cent), one in 10 (9 per cent) reported a decrease, with 6 per cent overall reporting a downturn in expenditure due to the challenging economic situation. Where employers had undertaken some training through Train to Gain in the few months following the initial skills brokerage contact (survey point 1, in early 2008) and also reported a recent decrease in expenditure as a result of the economic downturn, this was associated with a significantly lower rate of engagement with additional training activity through Train to Gain in 2008. Similarly, while almost a fifth (17 per cent) of employers who had not taken up training at the first survey point subsequently went on to arrange some training through Train to Gain in the following year, in those cases where the employers also reported a negative impact of the downturn on expenditure for the latter part of 2008 the figure was just 4 per cent.

The Additional Impact and Value of Train to Gain in Influencing Employer Training Activity

Key findings

- 189 Overall, a majority (two-thirds) of those Sweep 4 employers initially in contact with a skills broker between May and October 2008 had trained staff in the 12 months prior to contact with the skills broker, and a quarter of employers (25 per cent) had already arranged some training in the previous 12 months at Level 2 or above.
- 190 These findings indicate that a significant minority of those using the skills brokerage service already have routes into training at Level 2, and hence there is potential for better targeting of employers without prior experience of training to Level 2 or above.
- 191 Among those Sweep 4 employers who embarked on training as a result of dealings with a skills broker but who also trained in the previous year, 70 per cent accessed training for staff that had not previously been trained, 69 per cent trained more staff than they would otherwise have done (because of Train to Gain), and 41 per cent had extended the offer of training to employees in occupational groups that would not otherwise have had the opportunity. Clearly, these results indicate high levels of 'additionality'.
- 192 Overall, results indicate that Train to Gain has encouraged almost half (47 per cent) of Sweep 4 employers to undertake training for the first time (pure additionality) or to add to existing training (quantitative or qualitative additionality). The longitudinal surveys suggest that additionality increases in the long term, due to a decrease in substitution.
- 193 Just under two-thirds (64 per cent) of those employers who accessed training under Train to Gain and who also undertook training outside Train to Gain in the previous 12 months felt that involvement with the service had allowed them to access better-quality training than they would otherwise have done.

Introduction

- 194 The previous section highlighted the fact that the Train to Gain service has had a considerable impact on employer training activity, leading to around three-fifths of Sweep 4 employers going on to commit to training through Train to Gain in the months following their initial contact with the skills brokerage service (61 per cent). However, these findings alone do not make clear the ‘additional’ value of the training activity: that is, the impact of the service over and above other training that has been (or could be) undertaken by the employer. This section seeks to answer the question of whether the skills brokerage service is associated with an increase in the scope and quality of the training provision being accessed by employers.
- 195 One initial objective of the Train to Gain service was to target the service on employers who were the furthest from the point of being able to offer work-based training opportunities to staff, and who were in need of information on relevant training solutions and, perhaps, financial support to facilitate an engagement with effective training and development. If it is the case that many employers already have a history of arranging and funding training for employees, then this may indicate that there is less value being added by the skills brokerage service in these cases.

Training activity prior to the Train to Gain intervention

- 196 The starting point for addressing the question of additionality is an analysis of employers’ engagement with training activity before their contact with the skills brokerage service. In Sweep 4 of the employer evaluation, two-thirds of employers (64 per cent) had arranged or funded some training for their staff outside Train to Gain in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- 197 In terms of the level of this prior training, in the 12 months prior to the point of survey, up to a quarter of employers (25 per cent) had already arranged some training for staff that would lead to a qualification at Level 2 or above. Table 18 shows the proportion of all employers who had arranged some form of training outside Train to Gain in the previous 12 months, and the proportion of

employers who had arranged training for employees that would lead to a formal qualification in Skills for Life, or at Level 2, 3, 4 or 5.

Table 18: Proportion of employers who arranged training for employees outside Train to Gain in the previous 12 months

Level of qualification	Proportion of employers who have had employees working towards or achieving formal qualifications outside Train to Gain			
	Sweep 1	Sweep 2	Sweep 3	Sweep 4
Base: All employers	3,759	3,976	3,753	3,750
Any training outside Train to Gain in previous 12 months	68%	68%	66%	64%
Skills for Life	10%	8%	6%	6%
Level 2	26%	20%	18%	15%
Level 3	20%	17%	16%	14%
Level 4 or 5	16%	13%	11%	10%
Level 2 or above	38%	30%	27%	25%

198 These findings indicate that there is a significant minority (25 per cent at Sweep 4) of those using the skills brokerage service who already have a route into training, as well as the resources and expertise to arrange this. Therefore, there is still potential for better targeting of employers without prior experience of training to Level 2 or above. The fall in the proportion reporting prior training arranged at Level 2 or above across the research may indeed be evidence of better targeting by skills brokers.

The additional impact of the Train to Gain service on training activity

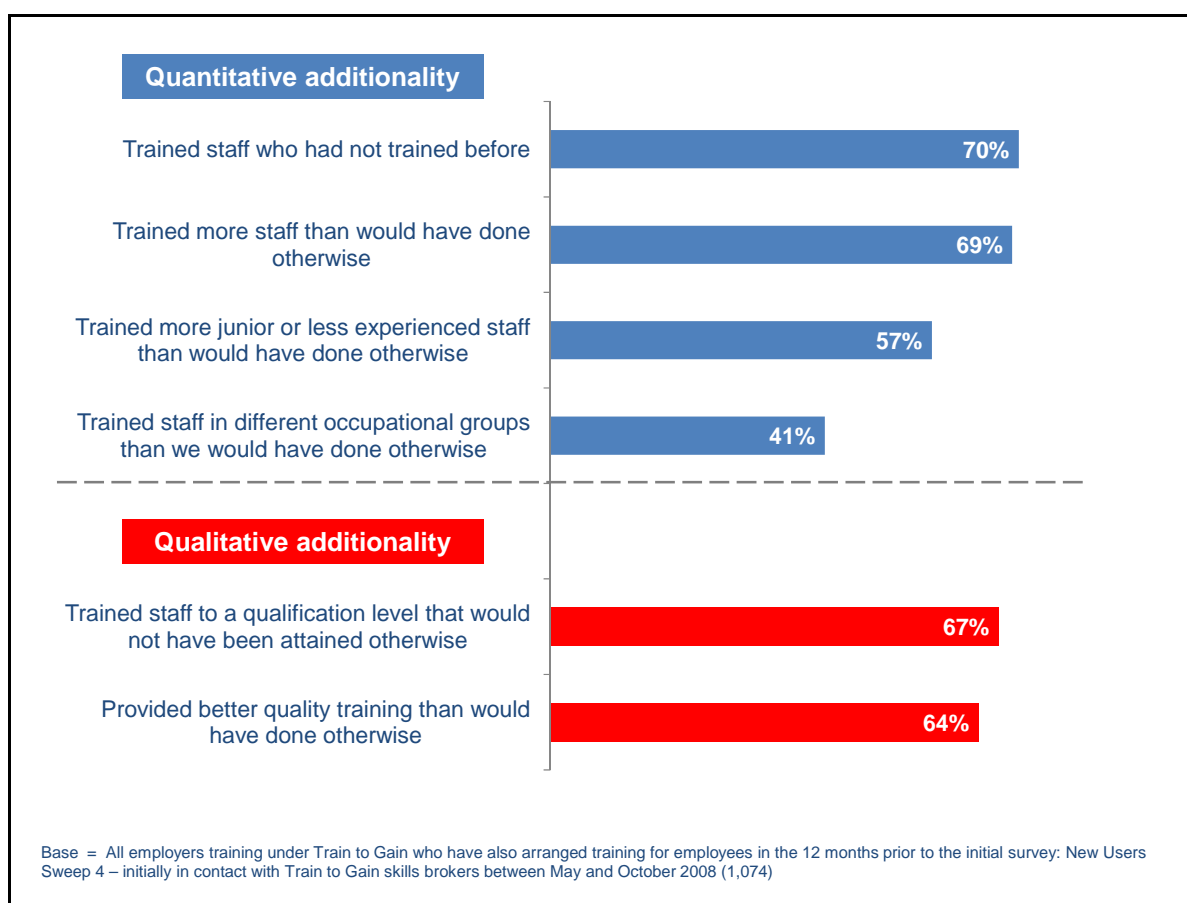
199 Clearly, the additional impact of the Train to Gain service on employer training activity can vary markedly – from those who have made no changes to their training activity following contact with the skills broker, to those at the other end of the scale who, having failed to arrange or fund any staff training in the previous 12 months, undertook new training as a result of Train to Gain.

200 Between these two extremes are those who took up training through Train to Gain as a result of contact with the skills brokerage service, but who had already offered some training to employees in the previous year. It is in this group that there lies the potential for Train to Gain to encourage employers to

train more staff than before; to train those not previously trained; to train more junior staff; or to train staff in additional occupational groups (quantitative additionality).

- 201 There may also be a positive impact on the quality or the level of training that the employer is able to offer (qualitative additionality).
- 202 A substantial impact is evident at Sweep 4 for this group that had taken up Train to Gain training but had also conducted other training in the previous 12 months. Around seven in 10 (70 per cent) reported that, following contact with Train to Gain, they had accessed training for staff members who had not previously received training. Seven in 10 (69 per cent) reported that involvement with Train to Gain had allowed them to train more staff than they would otherwise have done. Fewer employers reported having trained more junior employees than they would otherwise have done (57 per cent), or extending the offer of training to employees in occupational groups that would not otherwise have had the opportunity (41 per cent).
- 203 In terms of qualitative effects on training activity, two-thirds (67 per cent) of those employers who had accessed training through Train to Gain but also other training in the previous year reported that, thanks to Train to Gain, they had been able to train staff to a qualification level that they would not otherwise have attained. Interestingly, those employers who, in the previous year, had already had staff working towards a formal qualification at Level 2 or Level 3 outside Train to Gain were as likely as those who had conducted previous training but not at this level to say that Train to Gain had allowed them to offer training at a level that would not otherwise have been attained. This highlights the value of Train to Gain in allowing employers to offer more employees the opportunity to access formal qualifications. Employers who had accessed training before but who went on to take up new Level 3 training through Train to Gain were the most likely to agree that Train to Gain had allowed them to access training at a qualification level that would not otherwise have been achievable (75 per cent said this was the case).

Figure 21: Quantitative and qualitative impact on training activity among employers who had taken up training through Train to Gain and also outside Train to Gain in the previous 12 months



- 204 Just under two-thirds (64 per cent) of employers who accessed training both under Train to Gain and outside Train to Gain in the previous 12 months felt that involvement with the service had allowed them to access better-quality training than they would otherwise have done.
- 205 A high proportion of those who had taken up training in the year before their involvement with Train to Gain reported that at least some of the provision accessed through Train to Gain was merely for staff who would have received some training in any case (67 per cent), suggesting that a certain amount of substitution of training provision is associated with Train to Gain. However, the vast majority of employers who agreed with this statement (95 per cent) also reported some quantitative or qualitative effects of training.

206 Table 19 provides a summary of the additional value associated with Train to Gain, based on all employers rather than just on those training in the previous year. This includes those employers who did not commit to training through Train to Gain (who are included in the 'No impact on training provision' category). The table highlights the proportion of employers in each sweep who exhibit 'substitution' effects – that is, cases where the employer has committed to training under Train to Gain but did not at that point report any positive quantitative or qualitative change in their overall training offer as a result.

Table 19: Summary of additionality effects associated with the Train to Gain service

	New user research sweep			
	Sweep 1	Sweep 2	Sweep 3	Sweep 4
Base: All employers	3,759	3,976	3,753	3,750
Additionality effect	%	%	%	%
Pure additionality	20	20	20	21
Quantitative additionality only	4	4	4	4
Qualitative additionality only	1	2	2	2
Both quantitative and qualitative additionality	21	27	23	21
Total additionality	47	53	49	47
No impact on training provision (not committed to Train to Gain training)	36	35	38	39
Substitution	17	12	12	14

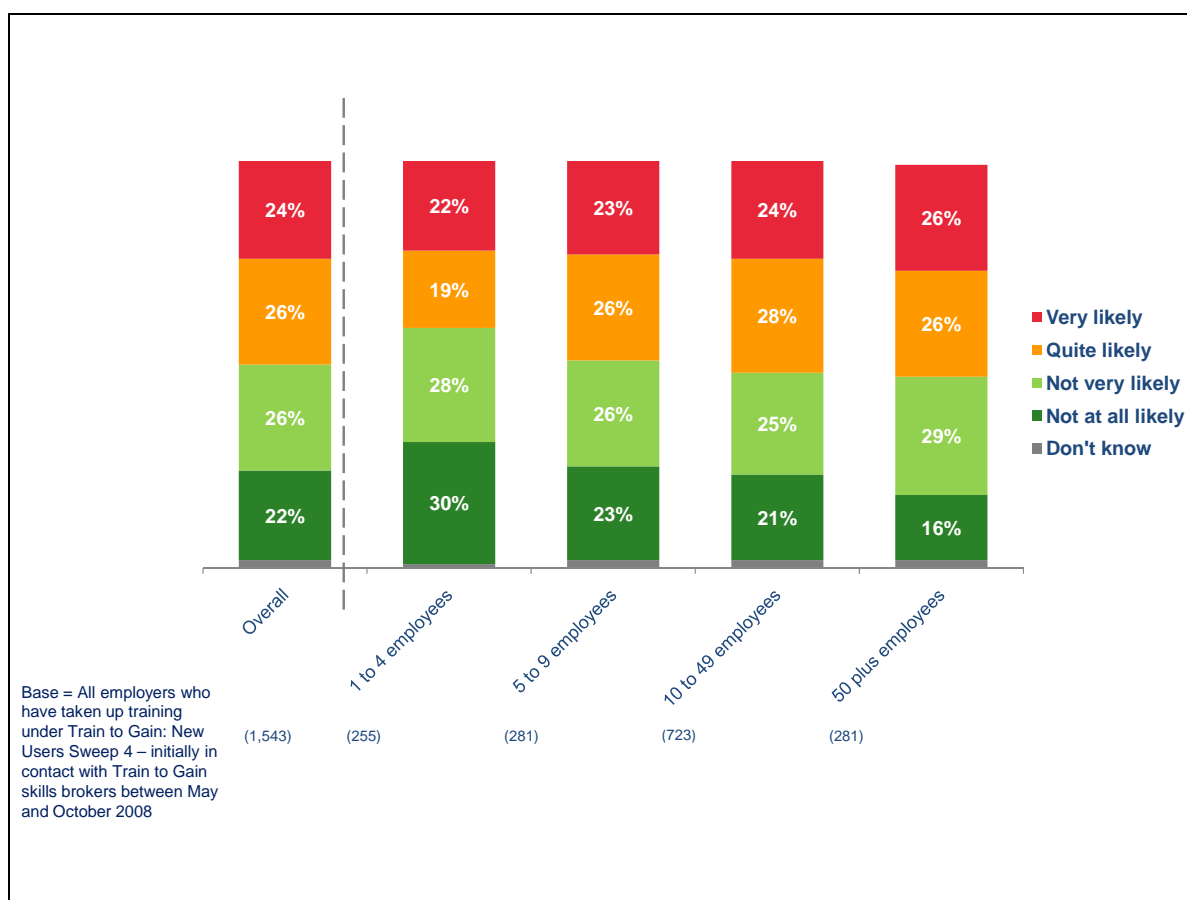
Note: Sweep 3 figures sum to less than 100 per cent because of rounding.

207 The estimates of additionality shown in Table 19 for Sweep 4 suggest that Train to Gain has been successful in encouraging employers to undertake training for the first time (pure additionality) or to add to existing training (quantitative or qualitative additionality) in just under half of all surveyed establishments (47 per cent). There was a peak in the incidence of additionality (53 per cent) at Sweep 2 (referring to contacts made between May and October 2007), which reflected the higher rate of take-up of training

solutions in this Sweep (51 per cent of employers had taken up training through Train to Gain at Sweep 2, compared with between 42 per cent and 44 per cent in the other sweeps).

- 208 The remaining Sweep 4 employers that did not exhibit additionality had either not committed to Train to Gain training at the time of the survey (39 per cent) or had used Train to Gain training as a substitute for training that they would probably have been able to offer in any case (14 per cent). Although the incidence of substitution has dropped off from the higher level evident in Sweep 1 (17 per cent), across Sweeps 2 to 4 there has been a persistent minority of employers who have not reported additional value from the service, despite the fact that they have accessed training solutions (12 per cent to 14 per cent). In Sweep 4, employers in the Public Administration, Health and Education sector (which makes up more than a third of the cohort) are the most likely to exhibit substitution effects (19 per cent, compared with 14 per cent of all employers). The incidence of substitution increases with employer size: from 7 per cent among micro-employers (1–4 employees) to 16 per cent among employers with 250 employees or more.
- 209 In order to explore further the idea of substitution and duplication of provision, those employers interviewed in Sweep 4 who had taken up training were asked how likely it was that they would have arranged the same or similar training without the involvement of Train to Gain. Half of these employers (50 per cent) said it was likely that this training activity would have been accomplished in any case, without the involvement of Train to Gain.

Figure 22: Likelihood that Sweep 4 new user employers training through Train to Gain would have arranged the same or similar training without the Train to Gain service



210 As is illustrated in Figure 22, there was a reasonably strong effect by employer size, with the smallest employers (fewer than five employees) much more likely to say that they would not have undertaken this training activity in the absence of Train to Gain (30 per cent said it was not at all likely, compared with 16 per cent of employers with 50 employees or more).

211 Employers operating in the Public Administration, Health and Education sector are significantly less likely to report that Train to Gain was instrumental in allowing employees access to training: 31 per cent of employers in this sector felt that it was very likely that employees participating in Train to Gain training would have received the same or similar training in any case, compared with 24 per cent overall. By contrast, in the Wholesale and Retail sector, the proportion of employers who thought it very likely that these staff would have

been trained without the Train to Gain intervention was only one in 10 (10 per cent).

- 212 There is some evidence that financial support for training activity available through Train to Gain may be used to subsidise training that would have taken place in a similar form anyway. Where Sweep 4 new user employers had taken up training through Train to Gain and received full subsidies to cover the cost of all this training activity, over two-fifths (44 per cent) felt that the same or similar training would have been offered to staff without the support of Train to Gain. It should be noted, however, that most of these employers do actually report some additional effects in terms of the quality or quantity of the training.

Assessing additionality at the employee level

- 213 The discussion thus far has focused on training activity at the employer level. It is also possible to look at additionality at the employee level – that is, the extent to which employees who receive training through Train to Gain are new to training. Table 20 shows the proportion of Train to Gain trainees who had already been provided with training by their employer in the year prior to involvement with Train to Gain (Sweep 4 new user survey).
- 214 Of the 94,000 or so employees who had participated in training through Train to Gain at Sweep 4, just under half (49 per cent) had already been involved with other training, independent of Train to Gain, in the previous 12 months. Note that these trainee figures are taken from the weighted New User Sweep 4 survey data, from employers' reports of the number of employees in their establishment who had participated in Train to Gain training by the time of the survey, a few months after the initial contact with the skills brokerage service.

Table 20: The proportion of trainees participating in training under Train to Gain who also received other training arranged by their employer in the previous 12 months

Number of employees	Number trained under Train to Gain*	Number of trainees also engaging in other training in the past 12 months*	% of those training under Train to Gain who also received other training in the past 12 months
Managers, Professionals and Associate Professionals	12,900	6,600	51
Secretarial, Sales and Skilled Trades staff	21,300	8,700	41
Personal Service, Process, Plant and Machine Operatives and Elementary staff	59,500	30,500	51
Total	93,700	45,800	49

* Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.

215 Train to Gain trainees employed in Secretarial, Sales or Skilled Trades roles were less likely already to have received some training in the previous year than were other occupational groups (41 per cent). Around half of Train to Gain trainees employed in Managerial, Professional or Associate Professional roles, or in the Personal Service, Process, Plant and Machine Operatives and Elementary staff occupations, had participated in other training. Thus it is in these occupations that Train to Gain has the greatest impact in terms of additionality.

The effects of the Train to Gain service on the timing of training activity

216 For Sweep 4 of the employer evaluation, employers were asked whether Train to Gain had led to staff undertaking training at an earlier date than they would otherwise have done. Two-thirds of employers who had taken up training through Train to Gain (66 per cent, equivalent to three in 10 (28 per cent) of all employers in contact with the skills brokerage service) said that involvement with the service had allowed them to bring forward training activity.

217 Among the 'potential additionality' group (those who had accessed training through Train to Gain but had also arranged other training for staff in the previous 12 months), again around two-thirds (67 per cent) agreed that Train

to Gain had allowed them to undertake some of their training activity at an earlier date.

The additional impact of the Train to Gain service on training activity in the longer term

218 The discussion above has focused on the additional impact of Train to Gain on employers just a few months after their initial contact with the skills brokerage service. Table 21 shows the additional impact on employer training activity for Sweep 2 new users a few months after the skills brokerage contact, and then again a year down the line, 13 to 20 months after the initial contact.

Table 21: Summary of additionality associated with Train to Gain, in the short and long term

	% of employers	
	Short term – survey point 1 (New User Sweep 2)	Longer term – survey point 2 (Longitudinal Survey 2)
Base: All employers	3,976	1,906
Additionality effect	%	%
Pure additionality	20	17
Quantitative additionality only	4	7
Qualitative additionality only	2	2
Both quantitative and qualitative additionality	27	34
Total additionality	53	60
No impact on training provision (not committed to Train to Gain training)	35	34
Substitution	12	5

219 In the longer term, considerably more employers report that Train to Gain has allowed them to offer training to a greater number (or a greater range) of staff (7 per cent); to access better-quality or higher-level training (2 per cent); or both (34 per cent). On a positive note, a significantly lower proportion of employers exhibit substitution effects in the long term (5 per cent, compared with 12 per cent in the short term), since more employers report that, by this

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time, Train to Gain had allowed them to make qualitative or quantitative improvements to their training offer to employees.

Employer Satisfaction with Training Provision Accessed through Train to Gain

Key findings

- 220 Satisfaction with the training delivered by Train to Gain is high: over nine in 10 (91 per cent) of the Sweep 4 employers who accessed Train to Gain training were satisfied when they were asked to rate it for the Sweep 4 new user interview, which took place a couple of months after contact with the skills broker.
- 221 Regarding specific aspects of the training, satisfaction was highest for the location and timing of the courses, and lowest for the speed of agreed follow-up actions.
- 222 Just 3 per cent of the Sweep 4 employers who had completed or were undertaking Train to Gain training were dissatisfied with the service they received from their training provider. The main causes of dissatisfaction were: lack of contact from the training provider; the content of the training being irrelevant or not what the employer had requested; the fact that it was too simple or generic; the disorganised nature of the training; and the training not being beneficial.

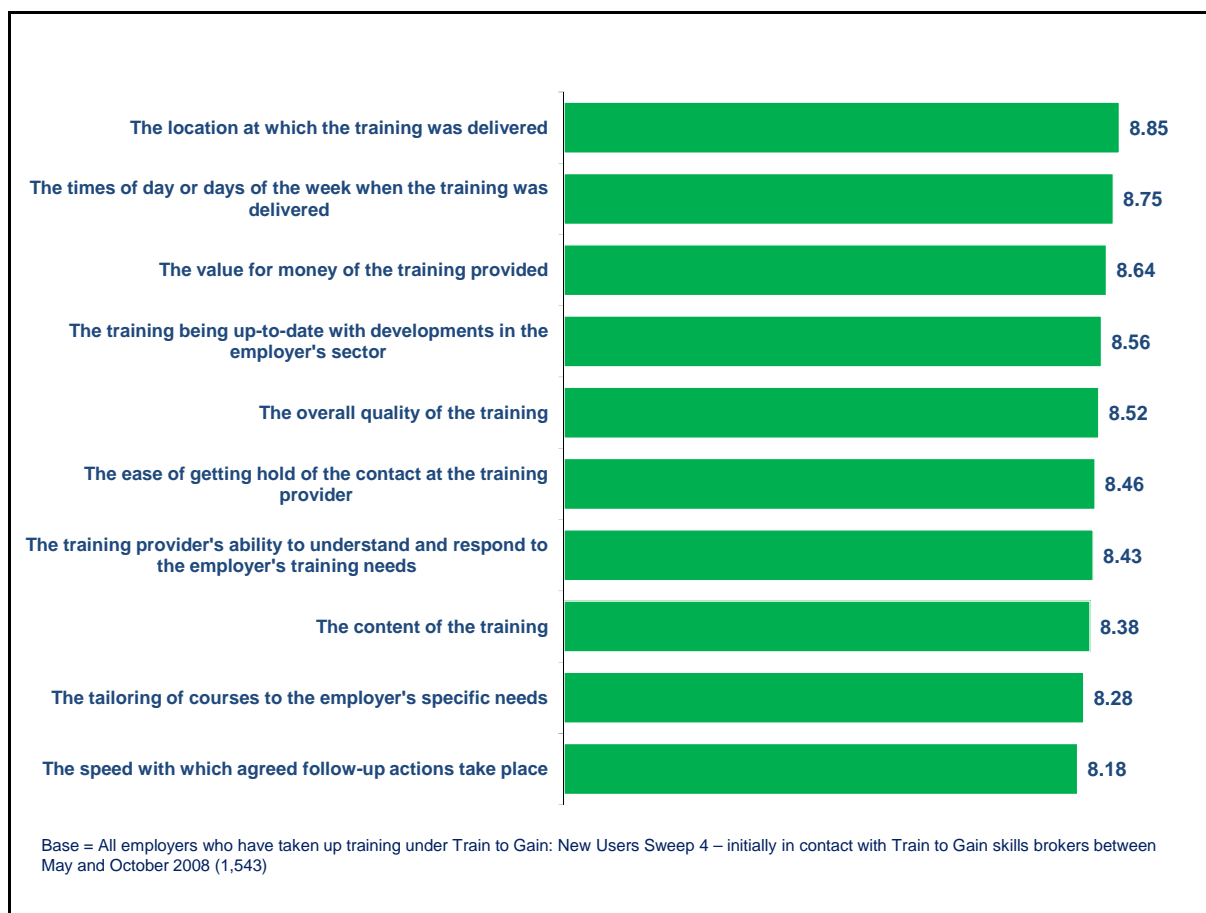
Introduction

- 223 This section concentrates on employer satisfaction with training accessed through Train to Gain. Employers' overall satisfaction with the training received will be examined, as will changes in satisfaction with training providers throughout the period of evaluation.

Satisfaction with individual aspects of training provision

- 224 Those Sweep 4 employers who had accessed Train to Gain training were asked to rate the training they had accessed on a variety of measures. Employers were asked to give a satisfaction rating for each aspect on a scale of 1 to 10, where a score of 1 indicated that the employer was highly dissatisfied and 10 that they were highly satisfied. The outcomes for these 10 measures are displayed in order of satisfaction in Figure 23.

Figure 23: Satisfaction with individual aspects of training accessed through Train to Gain



225 Across all four sweeps, and for all 10 aspects measured, satisfaction was high among employers: all the mean scores were above 8 out of 10. The location and timing of the courses received the highest mean level of satisfaction (8.85 and 8.75, respectively, in Sweep 4), while the responsiveness to agreed follow-up actions achieved the lowest mean satisfaction score (8.18).

226 It is encouraging that the value for money offered by the training scored highly, although satisfaction was, unsurprisingly, highest for those who received fully subsidised training through Train to Gain (a mean score of 8.95), compared with those who received partly subsidised training (8.47) or did not receive any subsidy (7.94).

227 As has been the case in previous sweeps, those employers whose training was delivered by an FE college were less satisfied with the speed with which follow-up actions took place than were other employers who received training

from different types of provider (mean score of 8.06, compared with 8.18 overall). Employers who used an FE college were also less satisfied with the ease of getting in touch with a contact at the provider (mean score of 8.23, compared with 8.46 overall).

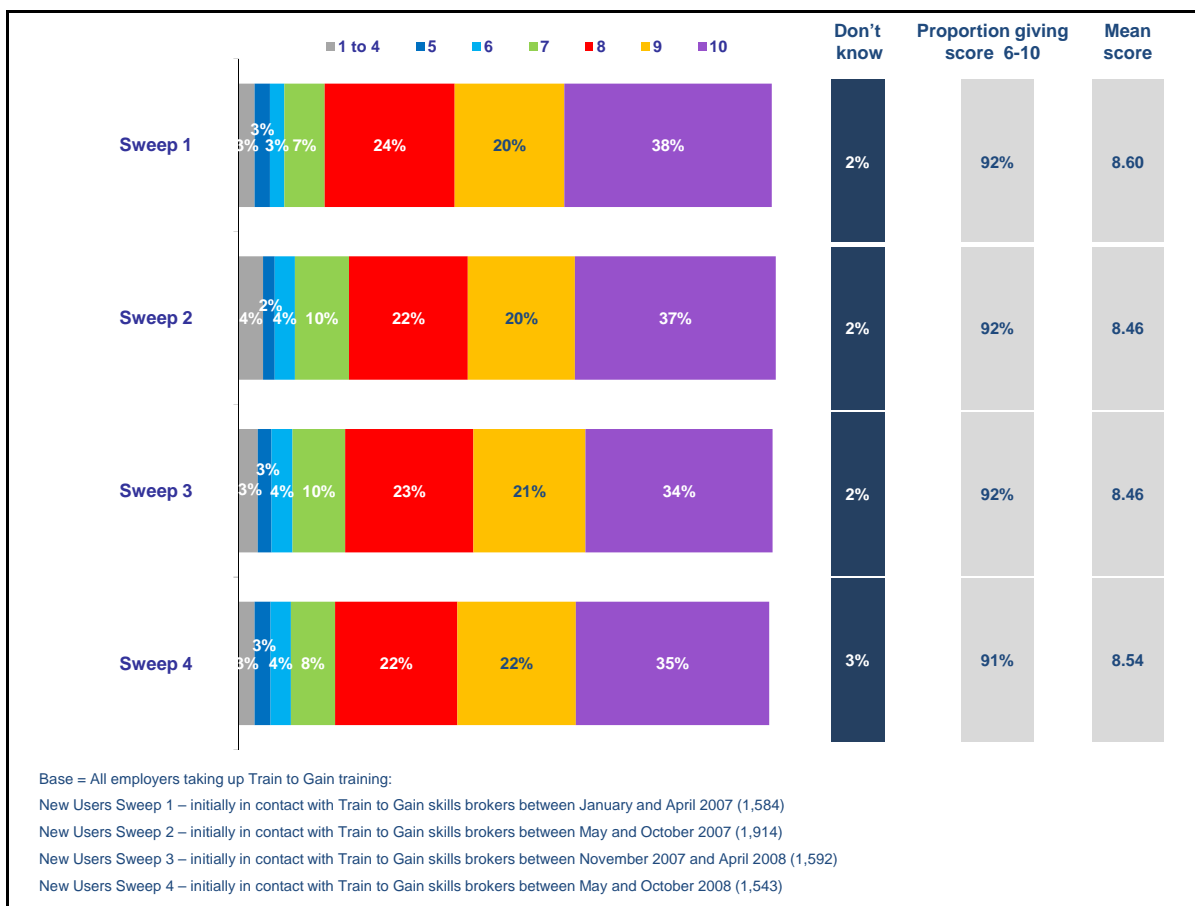
228 The general pattern across the employer evaluation in terms of satisfaction with these aspects of the training consisted of a significant fall in satisfaction levels between Sweep 1 (January to April 2007 contacts) and Sweep 2 (May to October 2007 contacts), since when there has been little significant variation in satisfaction in Sweeps 2, 3 and 4. Satisfaction with the following factors was significantly higher at Sweep 1 than overall across the employer evaluation:

- the location at which the training was delivered (9.03 at Sweep 1, compared with 8.85 at Sweep 4);
- the times of day or days of the week when the training was delivered (8.83 at Sweep 1, compared with 8.75 at Sweep 4);
- the value for money of the training provided (8.77 at Sweep 1, compared with 8.64 at Sweep 4);
- the ease of getting hold of the contact at the training provider (8.50 at Sweep 1, compared with 8.46 at Sweep 4);
- the content of the training (8.48 at Sweep 1, compared with 8.38 at Sweep 4); and
- the tailoring of courses to the employer's specific needs (8.38 at Sweep 1, compared with 8.28 at Sweep 4).

Overall satisfaction with training provision

229 Those employers who had accessed Train to Gain training were asked to provide an overall satisfaction rating for the training they had received. Ratings were provided on a scale of 1 to 10, with a score of 1 to 4 taken to indicate dissatisfaction, and a score of 6 to 10 satisfaction. The results are illustrated in Figure 24.

Figure 24: Overall satisfaction with training accessed through Train to Gain



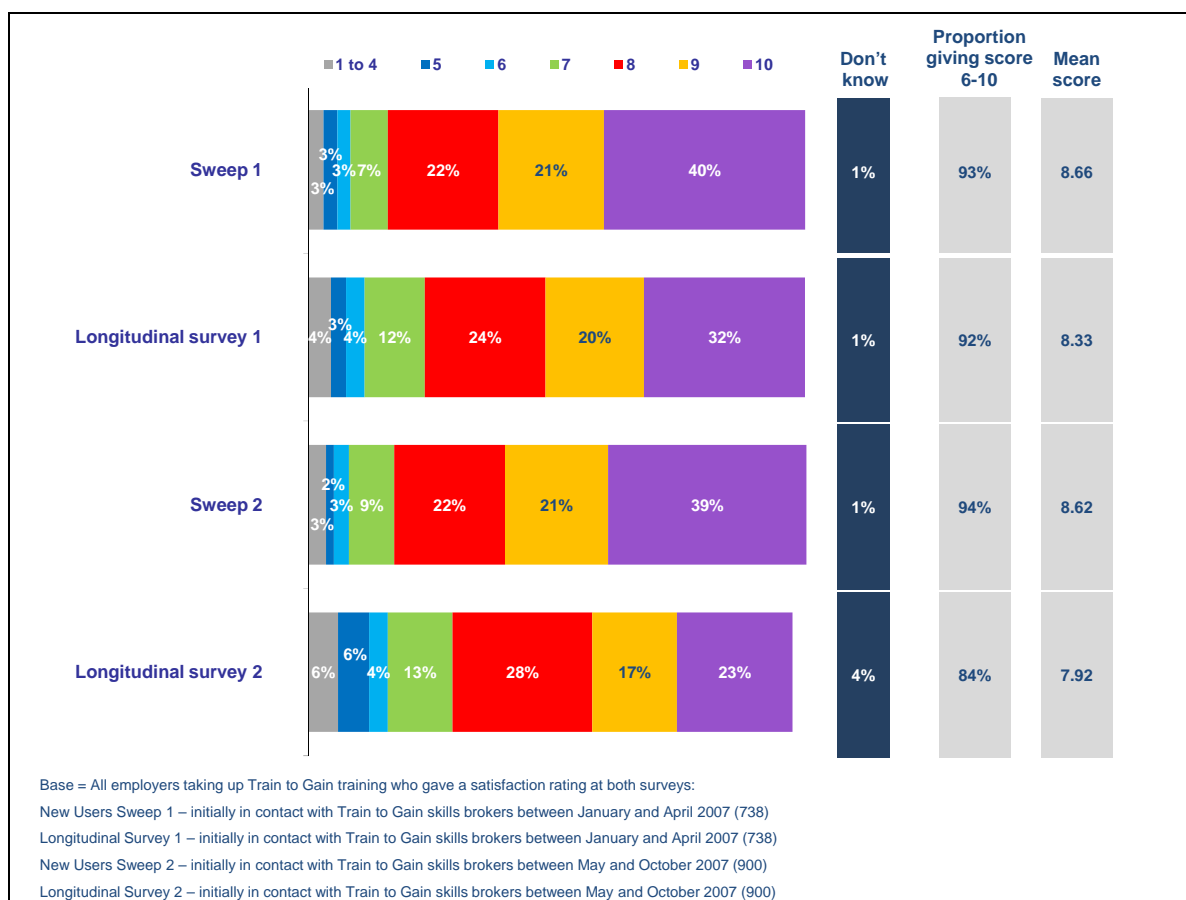
Note: Sweep 2 figures sum to more than 100 per cent because of rounding.

- 230 Broadly speaking, findings have remained very consistent since Sweep 1 of the evaluation. Satisfaction with the training provider or college used, and with the training received from these providers, has been high: over nine in 10 of those employers who accessed Train to Gain training at each sweep said they were satisfied (a rating of at least 6 out of 10).
- 231 Looking at Sweep 4 of the evaluation, there were no significant differences in overall satisfaction with the training accessed according to type of training provider (e.g. FE college, university or private training provider). There were also no significant differences in overall satisfaction with training when analysed by the type of course and the delivery mode.

Changes in overall satisfaction with training provision over time

232 From the two longitudinal studies, one can examine those employers who provided a satisfaction rating for Train to Gain training at the initial survey point and one year later (see Figure 25). It should be noted that, at each survey point, employers were asked to give their satisfaction rating based on all training accessed through Train to Gain. In the first longitudinal cohort, the proportion of those satisfied (indicated by a score of at least 6) remained at almost the same high level (92 per cent, compared with 93 per cent at Sweep 1). The mean satisfaction score decreased at the follow-up for this first longitudinal cohort, as the proportion giving the highest score (10) has decreased over time (40 per cent in Sweep 1, compared with 32 per cent in the follow-up survey). In fact, if we examine the movement in individual employer ratings between the two survey points, a quarter (26 per cent) gave a lower rating for training at the second interview than they had originally. Conversely, few employers offer an improved appraisal of the training received (10 per cent), and the majority provide the same score at both interviews (63 per cent).

Figure 25: Longitudinal changes in satisfaction with training accessed through Train to Gain



233 In the second longitudinal cohort, the proportion of those satisfied (a score of at least 6) decreased significantly – from 94 per cent at Sweep 2 to 84 per cent at Longitudinal Survey 2, one year later. If we examine the movement in individual employer ratings between the two survey points, almost half (45 per cent) gave a lower rating for training at the second interview than they had originally – a higher proportion than in the first longitudinal cohort. From the second cohort, one in six did improve their rating of satisfaction (18 per cent), while the remaining 32 per cent provided the same score at both interviews.

Reasons for dissatisfaction with training provision

234 In Sweep 4, just 3 per cent of employers who had completed or were undertaking Train to Gain training stated that they were dissatisfied with the service they had so far received from their training provider (that is, they provided a score of between 1 and 4 out of 10). A lack of contact from the

training provider was the principal cause of concern for dissatisfied employers, with 24 per cent highlighting this. These employers were also concerned about the content of the training – specifically that it was irrelevant or not what they had requested (19 per cent), or was too simple or generic (12 per cent). Other frequent complaints included a lack of organisation in the training (7 per cent) and the training not being beneficial (4 per cent).

235 In Longitudinal Survey 2, the chief reasons for dissatisfaction were general concerns about the quality of the training (mentioned by 47 per cent of those dissatisfied) and a lack of continuity in contact or proactive follow-up contact on the part of the training provider (29 per cent). This latter factor may contribute particularly towards the decline in individual employers' satisfaction ratings between the initial and the follow-up surveys.

The Impact of Train to Gain on Employer Performance

Key findings

- 236 Even in the short term, a few months after initial contact with the skills brokerage service, Sweep 4 employers reported considerable benefit from staff participation in Train to Gain training, such as improvements in employee self-confidence (80 per cent) and in job-related skills and performance in their work role (74 per cent). Two-thirds of employers (66 per cent), even soon after accessing Train to Gain training, said the training was contributing to improved long-term competitiveness.
- 237 In the case of those employers who had taken up training by the time of the first interview, a few months after contact with their skills broker, it is encouraging that, when they were re-interviewed some 12 months later, four in five (80 per cent) reported improved quality standards, three in five (61 per cent) improved productivity, and half improved staff retention (53 per cent).
- 238 While around half (52 per cent) of the Sweep 4 employers who had taken up training reported a positive impact on staff productivity, this has yet to carry through in all cases to increases in sales and turnover (reported by 19 per cent of employers training) or profit margins (17 per cent).
- 239 Having contact with Train to Gain through the skills brokerage service has had a range of impacts: two-thirds of Sweep 4 employers agreed that it had led to a better understanding of local training provision, and three in five believed that it had helped to identify current (56 per cent) and future (55 per cent) skills requirements. Three-fifths (60 per cent) also felt that it had raised the profile of training and workforce development within management.

Introduction

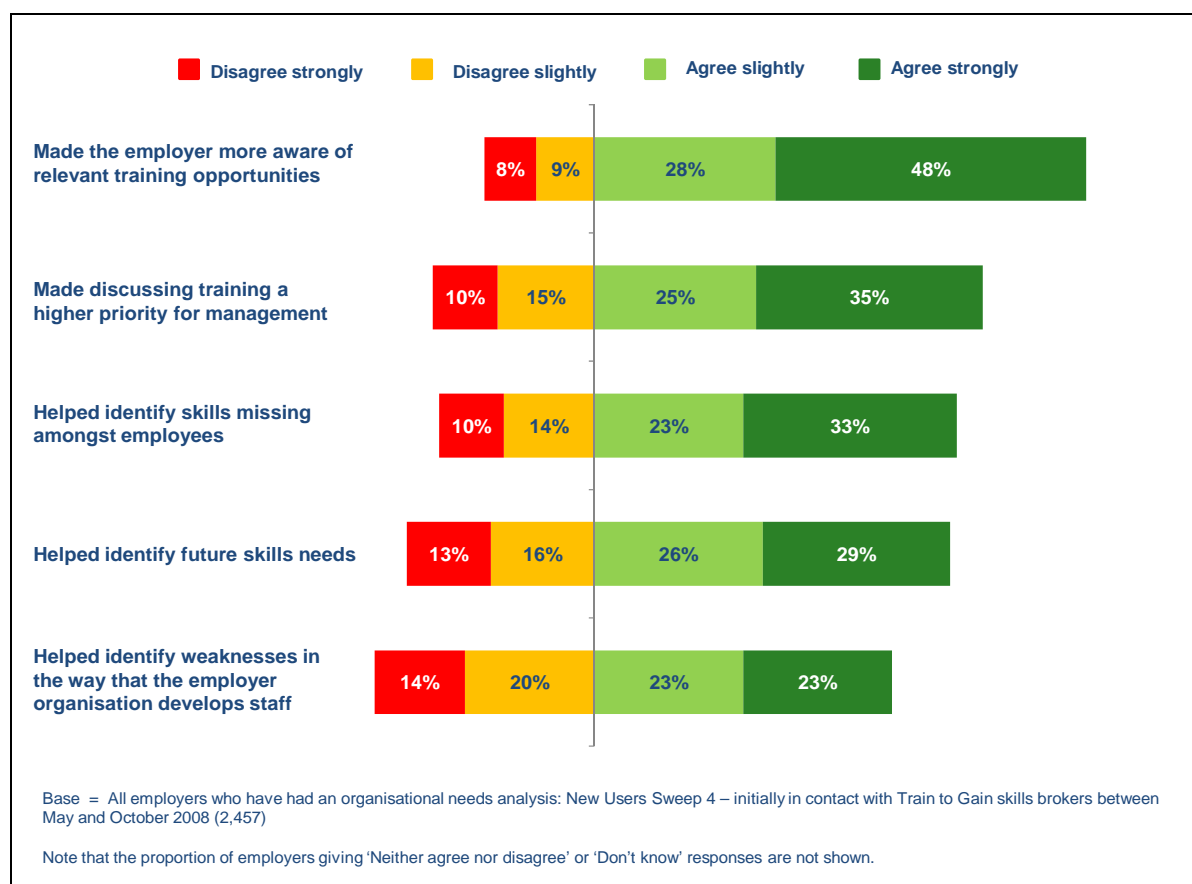
- 240 This section concentrates on the impact of Train to Gain on the business operation as a whole, including the effect on training culture and awareness of training opportunities, as well as the benefits to employees. The long-term and short-term impacts of employer involvement with the skills brokerage service

are discussed. The findings examined in this section relate to employers who participated in New User Sweep 4 and Longitudinal Survey 2.

Benefits gained from the organisational needs analysis

- 241 All employers who had had an ONA conducted by a skills broker were asked to evaluate the service in terms of the value and impact of a number of aspects. Figure 26 shows that, for each of the five aspects measured, a greater proportion of employers agreed that the ONA had contributed positively to the establishment than disagreed. The ONA was most effective in increasing awareness of relevant training (75 per cent agreed), while three-fifths (60 per cent) agreed that the ONA encouraged greater consideration of skills and training among management. A similar proportion (55 per cent) agreed that the ONA had helped to identify future skills that may be useful and had helped to identify missing skills (56 per cent). Just under half (45 per cent) felt that their ONA had helped identify weaknesses in developing staff, with a third (34 per cent) indicating that this had not been an outcome of their ONA.
- 242 This suggests that the ONA is better at increasing employer awareness of training opportunities than it is at appraising the current and future skills and development needs of each individual business (although it is still deemed to be successful in these areas by a sizeable proportion of employers). There is potential for improvement in the ONA by enhancing the analysis of an establishment's specific requirements.

Figure 26: Impact of organisational needs analysis

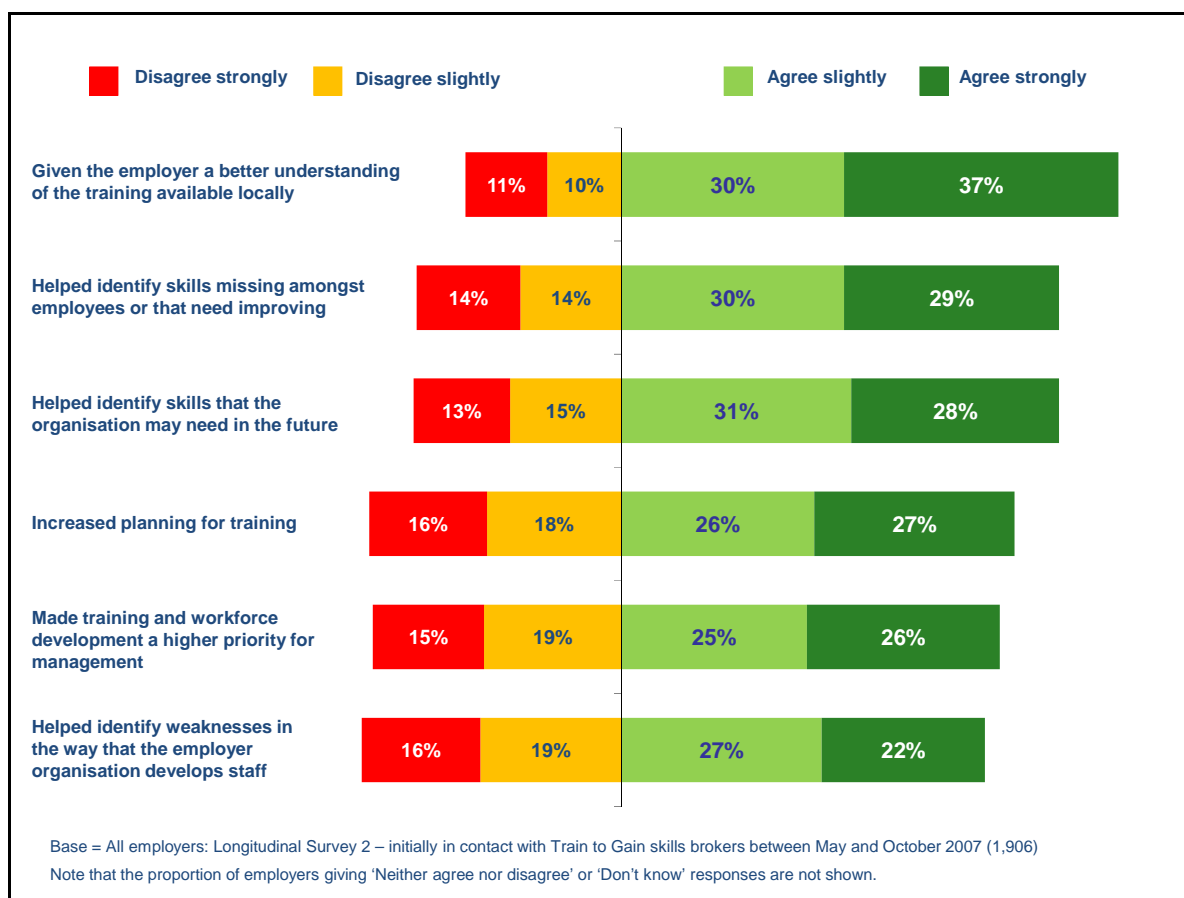


Impact of Train to Gain on employer training and development culture

243 This section assesses the impact that Train to Gain has had on the way training and workforce development is viewed in the workplace. This includes changes to the employers' 'training culture' among those employers included in the second longitudinal survey. These employers can base their responses on potentially greater knowledge and experience of Train to Gain (since their first contact with a skills broker occurred over a year earlier).

244 In the second longitudinal survey, all employers, regardless of whether their staff had participated in Train to Gain training, were asked the extent to which they agreed that Train to Gain had had an impact on training and development within their workforce. As Figure 27 shows, the greatest impact was in making the employer more aware of relevant training opportunities. The structure and prominence of training within businesses have seen less of an impact.

Figure 27: Impact of Train to Gain on training culture



245 When interviewed as part of the second longitudinal survey, those employers who had participated in Train to Gain training were also asked to indicate the impact that Train to Gain had had on three aspects of their business. The proportion in agreement (both strongly and slightly) that there had been an impact was in excess of 70 per cent for each:

- improved the company culture by demonstrating that the employer is interested in staff development (78 per cent);
- improved the quality of the training that is undertaken at the establishment (73 per cent); and
- increased the amount of training undertaken (70 per cent).

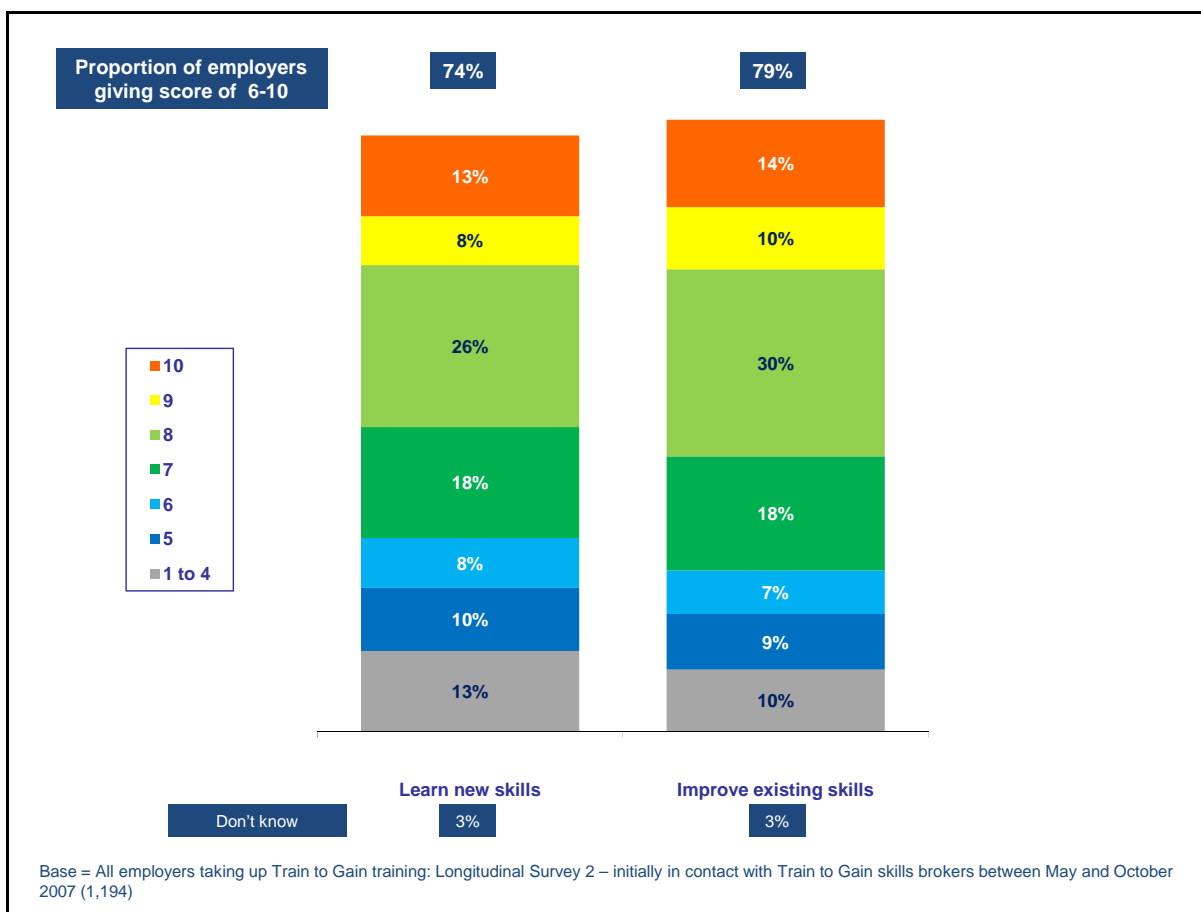
246 It is particularly encouraging that – over a year after the initial contact with a skills broker – more than three-quarters (78 per cent) believe that Train to Gain has improved company culture.

247 Although (as Figure 27 shows), for many employers, involvement with Train to Gain has had a positive impact on developing training culture in the workplace, the same employers have not committed to the Government's Skills Pledge to the same extent. Of those employers who participated in the second longitudinal survey, between two-fifths and a half (45 per cent) were aware of the Government's Skills Pledge, with one in seven (15 per cent) claiming to have made a Skills Pledge and a further one in 20 (5 per cent) planning to do so. Those who had already taken the Skills Pledge were more strongly in agreement about the positive impact that Train to Gain had had on staff development issues in their business.

Impact of Train to Gain on employee skills and capabilities

248 Those employers taking part in the second longitudinal survey who had undertaken training through Train to Gain were asked whether this had led to staff developing new skills and/or improving their existing skills. Employers rated both these measures on a scale of 1 to 10, where a score of 1 meant there had been no development of skills at all and 10 that employees had developed their skills to a great extent. As Figure 28 shows, three-quarters of employers (74 per cent) gave a score of between 6 and 10 for their staff developing new skills, with slightly more indicating that staff had built on their existing skills (79 per cent). There has been no significant change compared with Longitudinal Survey 1, where again around three-quarters of employers who had taken up training gave a score of at least 6 for the extent of new skills development (76 per cent) and developments in existing skills (79 per cent).

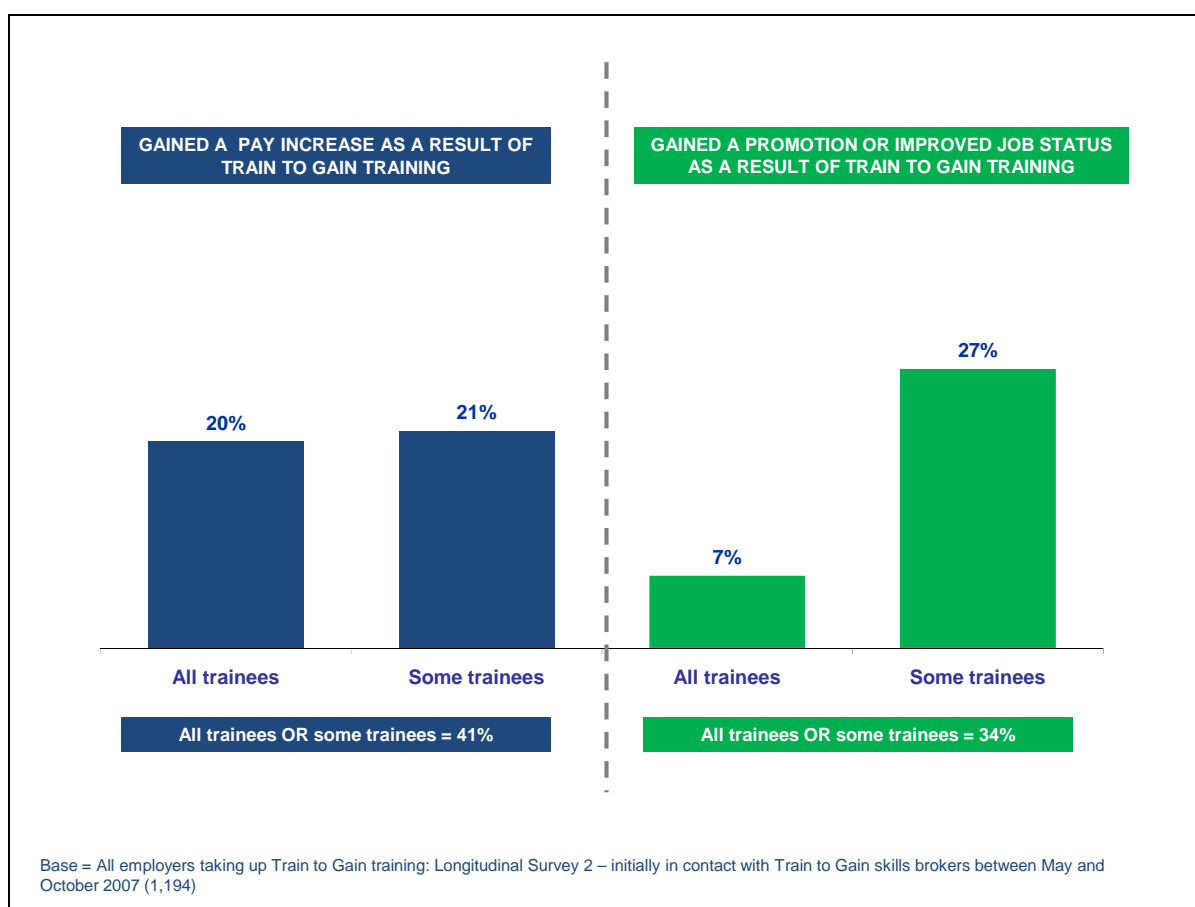
Figure 28: Extent to which Train to Gain training has impacted on employees' existing skills, and extent to which it has enabled employees to develop new skills



The positive impact of Train to Gain on employee pay and promotion prospects

249 The longitudinal evaluation has also revealed significant benefits for those employees who participated in the training, in terms of their career development and their pay and promotion prospects. As Figure 29 shows, among those employers who have taken up training as a result of contact with the skills brokerage service, two-fifths (41 per cent) said that at least some of the staff who had participated in the training had gone on to receive a pay rise as a result.

Figure 29: The proportion of employers offering pay rises and promotions to employees participating in Train to Gain training – Longitudinal Survey 2



250 Those employer establishments located in the South West region were most likely to offer pay rises to staff who participated in Train to Gain training (48 per cent). Conversely, employers in Yorkshire and the Humber (32 per cent) and the East of England (34 per cent) were less likely than average to award pay rises to employees.

251 Those employers who have accessed Level 3 training for staff are also more likely than average to offer pay rises to trainees on completion. Half of those who took up training and who had employees working towards qualifications at Level 3 (52 per cent) had awarded pay rises to at least some of those participating in the training, compared with the overall average of 41 per cent among employers training through Train to Gain.

252 As Figure 29 shows, a significant proportion of those employers who have accessed training (34 per cent) have offered employees a promotion or

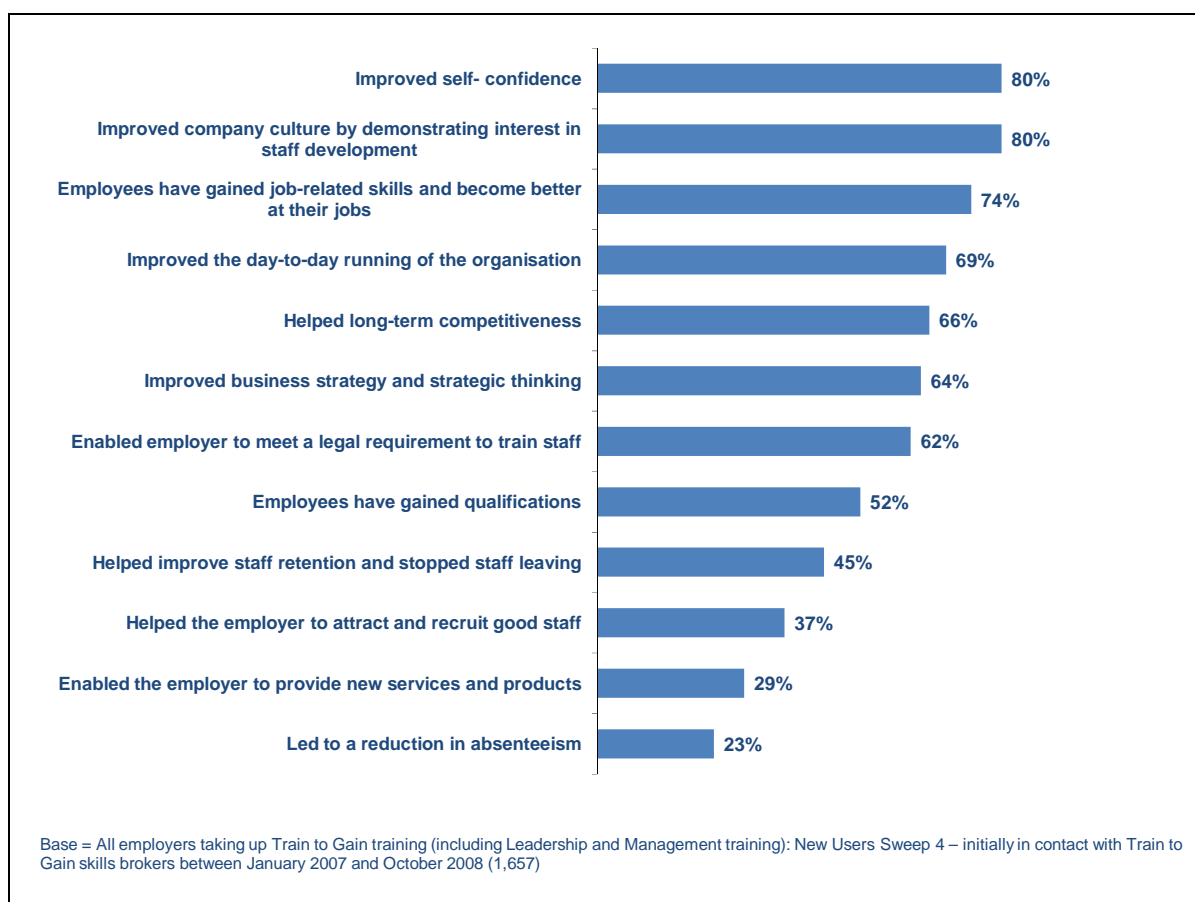
opportunities to enhance their job role or status as a result of their engagement with Train to Gain training. Again, this was most likely to occur among employers who had accessed Level 3 training for staff (46 per cent).

253 Of those employers who offered promotion to all their staff who had accessed Train to Gain training, around three-fifths (58 per cent) also gave all these employees a pay increase. That said, three in 10 (30 per cent) of those employers did not give any of their staff a pay rise.

Benefits to business from Train to Gain training

254 Figure 30 provides an overview of the most immediate, short-term benefits to businesses from training accessed through Train to Gain, as evidenced by those Sweep 4 new users who had undertaken training through Train to Gain at the time of the initial survey, a few months after their initial contact with the skills brokerage service.

Figure 30: Business benefits of Train to Gain training in the short term



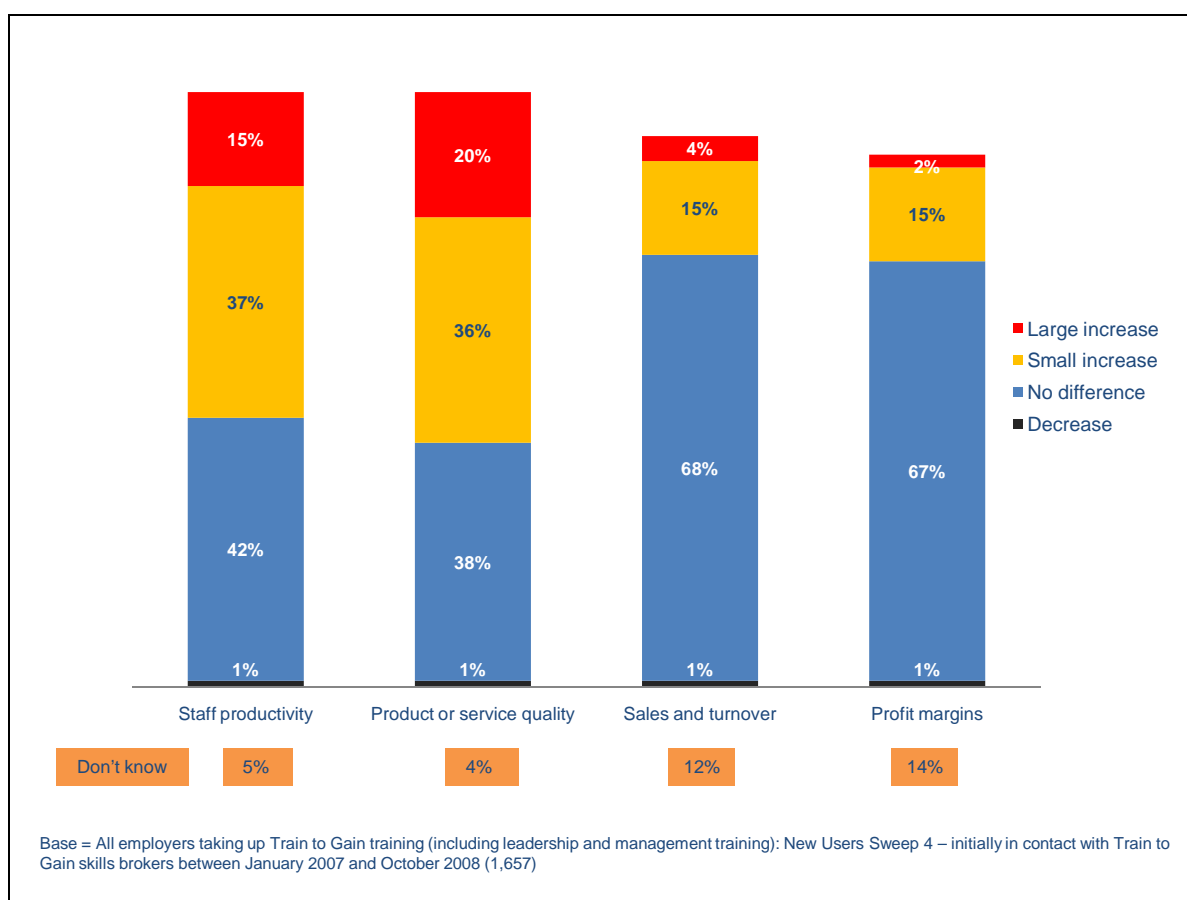
- 255 It is evident that two benefits to employees are prominent: namely, that their self-confidence has improved through participation in Train to Gain training (80 per cent) and that they are perceived by employers to have improved at their jobs (74 per cent). These benefits to staff are, however, less evident among employers in the Construction sector, where 60 per cent believe that their staff have become better at their jobs through Train to Gain training, and 68 per cent consider their employees to have gained in self-confidence.
- 256 Two-thirds of employers (66 per cent), even at an early stage after accessing Train to Gain training, rate the training as having contributed to improved long-term competitiveness. This is most strongly felt by small establishments (with fewer than five employees) (70 per cent agree) and least strongly felt by those with 250 or more staff (59 per cent).
- 257 A key benefit for the majority of businesses that have participated in Train to Gain training is that it reflects an improved company culture towards staff development (80 per cent at Sweep 4). This is consistent with the reported proportion of employers in the second longitudinal survey who agreed that involvement with Train to Gain has improved this aspect of company culture (78 per cent).
- 258 Those employers who had staff engage with training through Train to Gain that led to formal qualifications at Level 2 were particularly likely to report a number of benefits from this training. Most of these focused particularly on the motivation and commitment of the staff that participated in the training, namely:
- improvements in employee self-confidence (87 per cent of employers training to Level 2 report this benefit, compared with 80 per cent of all employers training);
 - improvements in staff retention (50 per cent, compared with 45 per cent overall); and
 - a reduction in absenteeism (27 per cent, compared with 23 per cent overall).

- 259 Employers training to Level 2 through Train to Gain were also significantly more likely to say that this had helped them to become better able to attract and recruit good staff (44 per cent, compared with 37 per cent overall). Perhaps less positively (since it suggests substitution of training), they are also more likely to say that it has helped them to meet a legal requirement to train staff (71 per cent, compared with 62 per cent overall).
- 260 Employers who had had employees undertake Level 3 training through Train to Gain were also more likely to experience certain benefits:
- improvements in employee self-confidence (89 per cent of employers training to Level 2 report this benefit, compared with 80 per cent of all employers training);
 - improvements in the job-related skills of employees and in their ability to perform in their job role (82 per cent, compared with 74 per cent overall);
 - an increased ability to meet legal requirements to train staff (74 per cent, compared with 62 per cent overall);
 - improvements in staff retention (55 per cent, compared with 45 per cent overall);
 - an improvement in the ability of the organisation to attract and recruit good staff (49 per cent, compared with 37 per cent overall); and
 - a reduction in absenteeism (30 per cent, compared with 23 per cent overall).
- 261 Training to Level 3 through Train to Gain is also associated with an above-average incidence of benefits to the day-to-day running of the employer organisation (76 per cent, compared with 69 per cent across all employers training through Train to Gain) and to the long-term competitiveness of the business (74 per cent, compared with 66 per cent overall). Employer engagement with leadership and management training under Train to Gain is associated with a similarly increased likelihood of the employer experiencing improvements in the day-to-day running of operations (74 per cent, compared with 69 per cent across all employers training through Train to Gain), and

improvements in the overall strategy and strategic thinking within the organisation (72 per cent, compared with 64 per cent overall).

- 262 Certain benefits of training were more likely to be experienced by different sizes of employer. While the smallest employers (fewer than five staff) were significantly less likely than average to report most of the benefits listed in Figure 30, they were as likely as other employers to report that engaging with Train to Gain training will help them to compete in the long term (68 per cent, compared with 66 per cent of all employers training). They were more likely to say that they had been able to provide new services and products as a result of the training (32 per cent, compared with 29 per cent overall).
- 263 Employers were also asked in more detail about the extent to which their organisation had experienced each of four tangible financial or operational benefits as a result of involvement with Train to Gain. Figure 31 details the findings for staff productivity, product or service quality, sales and turnover, and profit margins. The relatively high rates of 'don't know' responses reflect the fact that many employers could not answer the question, as it was too early to draw any concrete conclusions about the effects of Train to Gain training.

Figure 31: Effect of Train to Gain training on four key financial or operational benefits



264 Over half of all new users at Sweep 4 (52 per cent) who had taken up training by the time of the first interview, a few months after initial contact with the skills broker, stated that Train to Gain training had had an impact on staff productivity, with fewer (42 per cent) claiming that, at the time of interview, no such effect was evident. It was reported above that three-quarters (74 per cent) of new users at Sweep 4 had seen their employees become better at their jobs. There is evidence that this improvement in job-related skills has coincided with a perceived increase in staff productivity, as three-fifths (62 per cent) of those employers who indicated that staff performed better also stated that productivity had increased, compared with one in seven (14 per cent) of those whose staff had not improved at their jobs.

265 At the time of survey, the majority of Sweep 4 new users who had taken up Train to Gain training stated that they had yet to see any positive impact on

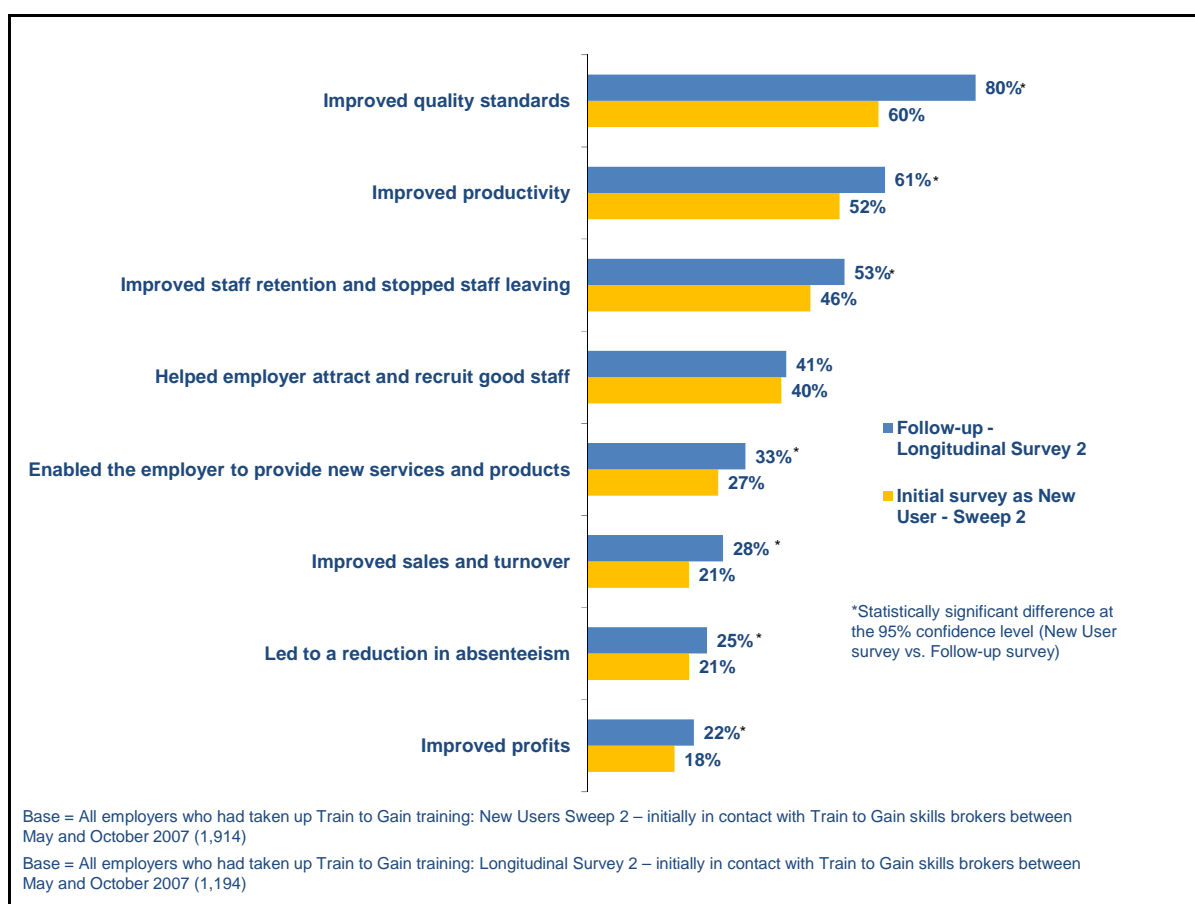
their sales and turnover figures or on the organisation's profit margins (69 per cent and 68 per cent, respectively) following their involvement with Train to Gain training. As Figure 31 shows, only around a fifth report any increase in these measures that is attributable to the effect of employee involvement in Train to Gain training.

266 At first glance, there would seem to be some inconsistency in the responses of employers to the question of whether Train to Gain had delivered a measurable impact on the financial health of the business. The low proportion reporting an increase in sales and turnover and an improvement in profit margins is in contrast to the higher proportion of this same group agreeing that the Train to Gain training had helped the organisation's long-term competitiveness (66 per cent). This may reflect the fact that employers are looking to the long term, confident that the effects of the training will transfer through to greater competitiveness as time goes on. It should be noted that, in many cases, the training was under way at the time of survey, and consequently around one employer in seven said that they could not judge at that point in time whether the training was having an impact on these financial measures (the 'don't know' category in Figure 31). Indeed, in the longitudinal research it has been found that employers are more likely to report improvements in financial performance attributable to Train to Gain when resurveyed 13 to 20 months after their initial contact with the skills broker (see Figure 32).

267 Figure 32 highlights the long-term benefits of Train to Gain by showing the improvements experienced as a result of training when Sweep 2 employers were resurveyed 13 to 20 months after their initial contact with the skills brokerage service. To allow time-series comparisons to be made, the data shown in Figure 32 is based on those employers who were already under way with Train to Gain training by the time of their initial survey, a few months after their first contact with the skills brokerage service, and therefore excludes those who only took up training after this time.

268 The figure shows the proportion of those employers who had experienced certain benefits of training by the time of the first interview, and the proportion who reported these impacts by the time they were recontacted a year later. It should be noted that, for four of these categories ('improved quality standards', 'improved productivity', 'improved sales and turnover', 'improved profits'), the question formats used in the initial and the follow-up interviews were slightly different. For these benefits, Figure 32 shows the proportion of employers reporting at the initial interview that these elements had shown a 'large increase' or a 'small increase'. The follow-up interview figures refer to the proportion of employers reporting that they had experienced these benefits **at all**.

Figure 32: Proportion of employers experiencing benefits of Train to Gain training at initial interview and when recontacted



Note: Two benefits measured in the follow-up interview ('improved customer service standards' and 'improved our image across the industry and sector') were not included in the initial interview, and are therefore not shown in this figure.

- 269 Figure 32 shows the sustained long-term impact of Train to Gain training in many areas, with the proportion of employers experiencing benefits from the training increasing as time goes on. For all but one factor (helping the employer recruit good staff), when they were interviewed for a second time, significantly more employers said that Train to Gain training had had a beneficial effect than when they were asked to evaluate the effect of training at the first interview, nearer the time they had first accessed Train to Gain training.
- 270 In particular, the impact of Train to Gain on quality standards and productivity – the two areas where, at the initial interview, the benefit was perceived to have been greatest – was viewed as significantly more beneficial one year later.
- 271 There is also evidence that over time the impact that training accessed through Train to Gain has on sales and turnover and profitability increases, with significantly higher proportions of employers recognising this at the interviews conducted for the longitudinal surveys.

Negative impacts on business from Train to Gain training

- 272 Alongside the positive impacts of Train to Gain training illustrated throughout this section, there may also be concerns on the part of employers with regard to staff participation in training. Those employers who completed the second longitudinal survey in early 2009 were asked whether there was anything in their experience of accessing Train to Gain training with which they were less happy. The two key areas of concern were that:
- wage costs had increased as staff became more highly skilled or qualified (38 per cent); and
 - staff that did not require training had requested the same (or similar) training as others (24 per cent).
- 273 It could be argued that the ‘negative’ impact that wages had increased due to increased skill levels was, in fact, a positive reflection of successful training and a sign of employees’ progress.

274 Other identified concerns (albeit considered negative by less than one in 10 of employers) were:

- reduced production levels as a result of hours lost to training (8 per cent);
- management time involved in administration of Train to Gain (7 per cent);
and
- not being able to meet customer or production requirements as staff away training (5 per cent).

Future Demand for Train to Gain Services

Key findings

- 275 Over three-quarters of Sweep 4 new user employers (78 per cent) would be likely or very likely to use the Train to Gain service again in the future. Most of these expect to engage in Train to Gain training (76 per cent) and/or to be in contact with their skills broker to assess further (or to reassess) the organisation's skills and training needs (75 per cent).
- 276 Around a sixth of Sweep 4 employers (17 per cent) said that they were unlikely to use the Train to Gain service again in the future. In two-fifths of cases, the reasons focused on issues to do with the skills brokerage service, while in a quarter of cases it related to negative views of the training suggested or provided (for example, it was not felt to be relevant).
- 277 On a positive note, there is no clear evidence from this latest sweep of the employer evaluation to suggest that the economic downturn is having a widespread negative effect on employer training activity. Only a small minority of Sweep 4 employers (6 per cent) anticipate a decrease in training expenditure over the coming two years due to the economic downturn (although it should be noted that, in some cases, training expenditure is anyway at a low level).

Introduction

- 278 The final section of findings concentrates on the likely future demand for Train to Gain services among employers, and on whether they would access other advice and training services in the future. Specifically, this section examines:
- the likely nature of any future engagement with the Train to Gain service among those employers that have used the skills brokerage service;
 - demand for different levels of training provision;
 - the impact of the economic downturn on future employer expenditure on training; and

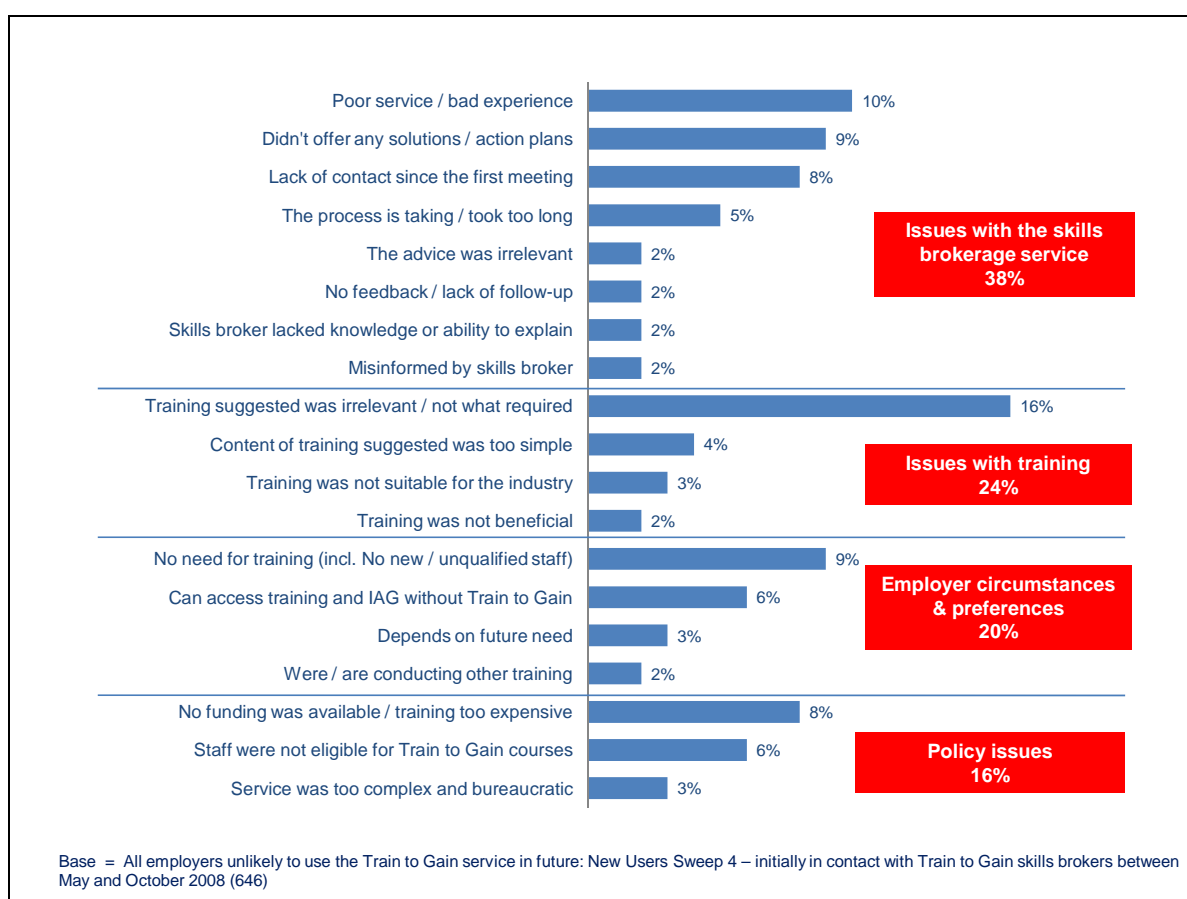
- those organisations that employers would be likely to approach for information on future training requirements.

Likelihood of future of involvement with Train to Gain

- 279 Overall, more than three-quarters of Sweep 4 employers (78 per cent) would be likely or very likely to use the Train to Gain service again in the future, with just under half (48 per cent) saying that they would be very likely to use the service again. This trend is consistent across Sweeps 1 to 4, and demonstrates the perceived value of the Train to Gain service to its users.
- 280 Those employers who had had a greater depth of engagement with the Train to Gain service demonstrated a greater tendency to say that they would use the service again in the future. In all, 93 per cent of those Sweep 4 employers who had taken up training would be likely or very likely to use the service again, compared with three-fifths (62 per cent) of those who had completed an ONA with the skills broker but not trained, and a similar proportion (59 per cent) who, at the time they were initially interviewed a few months after their first contact, had had only an informal discussion with the skills broker about their training requirements. On a positive note, of those employers who reported that they had had an initial contact with the skills broker but had decided not to pursue any further involvement at that time, half (50 per cent) said that they would be likely to re-engage with the Train to Gain service again in the future.
- 281 Overall, just under a fifth of all Sweep 4 employers (17 per cent) said that they were unlikely to use the Train to Gain service again in the future (with an additional 5 per cent saying that they were unsure or that it was too early to anticipate their future plans).
- 282 Figure 33 shows the reasons why employers are unlikely to use the service again in the future. The single most common reason given focuses on a perceived lack of relevance of the training offered through Train to Gain (stated by 16 per cent of those unwilling to use the service again). However, a greater proportion of employers in total (38 per cent) gave reasons related to the skills brokerage service, ranging from general comments on the poor service

received from the skills broker (10 per cent) to a failure on the part of the skills broker to keep in touch with the employer to follow up on the initial contact (8 per cent) and to come up with suitable action plans and training solutions that would allow the employer to move their training activity forward through Train to Gain (9 per cent). The proportion of employers who gave reasons relating to the skills brokerage service has increased from 27 per cent at Sweep 1 to 38 per cent at Sweep 4. Conversely, there has been a decrease since Sweep 1 in the number of those giving reasons that had to do with training (from 28 per cent at Sweep 1 to 24 per cent at Sweep 4).

Figure 33: Reasons why employers are unwilling to use the Train to Gain service again in the future



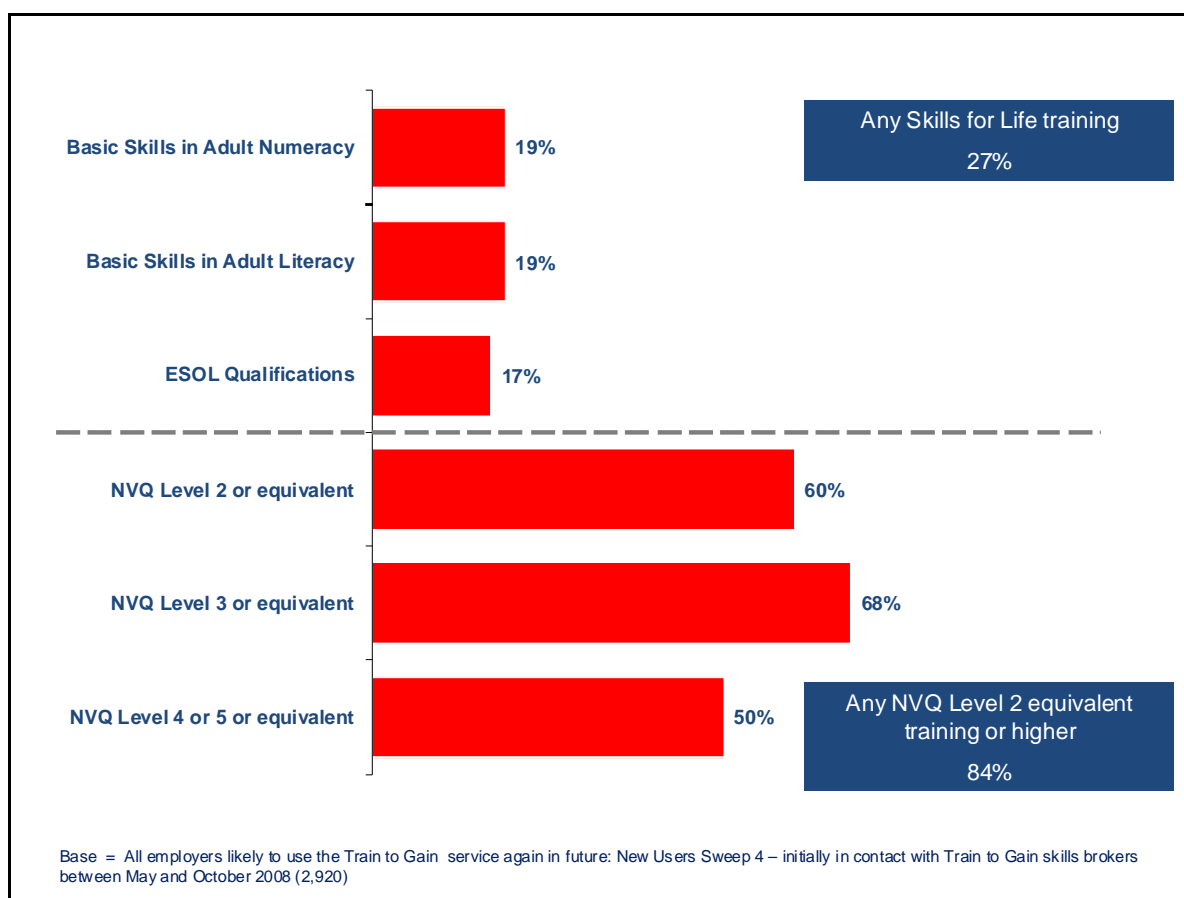
Note: Employers could give more than one answer to this question, and therefore the figures shown sum to over 100 per cent.

283 A less frequently mentioned factor was the bureaucracy that employers feel is involved with Train to Gain, including the paperwork requirement. This issue is addressed in the Train to Gain *Plan for Growth*.

Nature of future involvement with Train to Gain

- 284 Across all stages of the evaluation, just over three-quarters (76 per cent at Sweep 4) of those employers likely to use the Train to Gain service again next year expect to engage in Train to Gain training. A similar proportion (75 per cent at Sweep 4) expect to be in contact with their skills broker to assess further (or to reassess) the organisation's skills and training needs.
- 285 At Sweep 4, of those employers who are likely to use the Train to Gain service again in the future, a fifth would be interested in their staff undertaking basic skills in adult numeracy and adult literacy. Figure 34 shows which qualifications employers would be interested in having their staff achieve through Train to Gain.

Figure 34: Types of training qualifications employers would be interested in having their staff undertake through Train to Gain in the future



- 286 A greater proportion of these employers are interested in their staff undertaking qualifications at Levels 2 and 3 through Train to Gain (60 per cent

and 68 per cent, respectively, at Sweep 4). The demand for Level 2 or equivalent qualifications has fallen significantly since Sweep 1 (from 68 per cent to 60 per cent). This might indicate a certain saturation of the market, with skills brokers finding it harder over time to identify those employers that have an ongoing demand for training at Level 2.

The impact of the economic downturn on future employer expenditure on training

- 287 For Sweep 4 of the evaluation, employers were asked about the impact of the recession on their anticipated level of expenditure on training.
- 288 Just over two-fifths (41 per cent) of all employers interviewed for Sweep 4 anticipated expenditure on training for employees to increase over the next two years. Furthermore, a similar proportion (43 per cent) expected no change in the level of spend on training.
- 289 The high proportion of employers who anticipate maintaining or increasing their training expenditure over the coming years may be taken as a positive indicator of the perceived value they place on continued training and development of staff, even in times of economic difficulty. It should be noted, however, that these forecasts may be based on employers feeling that the economy will recover sufficiently in the short-term future to allow them to leave their budgets unchanged, and the need to ring-fence budgets for statutory training may also play a role. Furthermore, some of these employers may well be starting from a relatively low level of expenditure, or none at all.
- 290 Although most employers anticipate a continuation or increase in the current rate of expenditure on training and development over the next two years, it is evident that not all are buffered from the limitations imposed by a recession. One employer in 14 (7 per cent) anticipated a decrease in expenditure on training, and over four-fifths of these employers (81 per cent, 6 per cent of employers overall) attributed this anticipated decrease either totally or partially to the effects of the economic downturn.

- 291 Interestingly, it is the larger employers that are more likely to anticipate a decrease in training expenditure over the next two years as a result of the economic downturn: one in eight (12 per cent) of those employers with at least 250 employees thinks this will be the case, compared with one in 20 (5 per cent) of those employers with fewer than five employees. Again, this may reflect the fact that the starting point for expenditure on training in the smaller companies is very low, and therefore it is less likely that it will need to be cut back to help employers deal with the effects of the recession. It is the case that smaller employers are less likely to report having a formal budget that is specifically set aside for training – only a fifth (21 per cent) of employers with fewer than five staff have a separate budget for training, compared with over four-fifths (86 per cent) of those that employ upwards of 250 people.
- 292 It is interesting to note how future decreases in training expenditure might affect demand for Train to Gain services. While employers who feel that there will need to be cuts over the next two years because of the economic downturn do not show any increased rate of demand for Train to Gain in future, it is clear that the service still has a key role to play in contributing to the ability of these employers to continue developing staff. When surveyed for Sweep 4 in early 2009, three-quarters (76 per cent) of those employers who anticipated a fall in expenditure on training due to economic concerns said that they would be likely to use the Train to Gain service again in the future (compared with 77 per cent of all employers), and seven in 10 (70 per cent) anticipated that they would engage with training through Train to Gain over the following year.

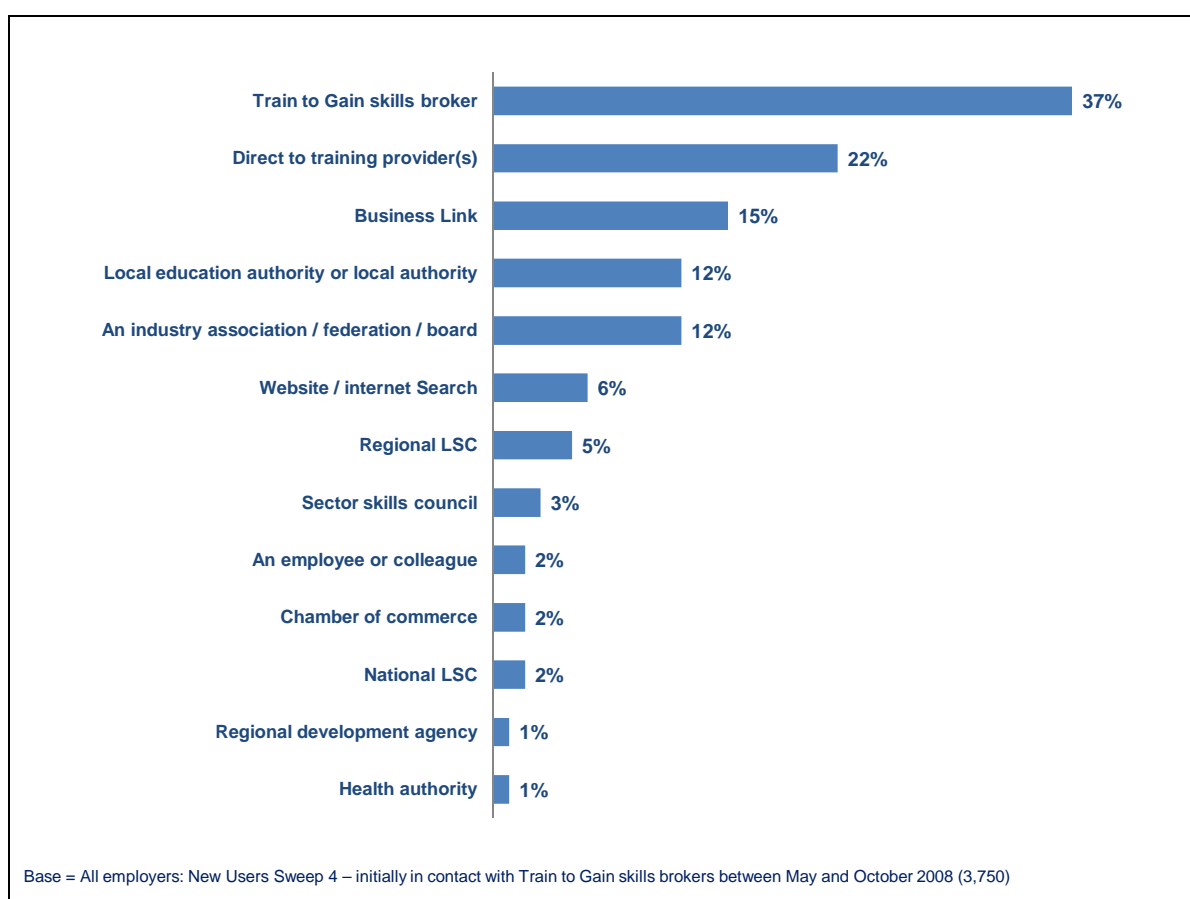
Organisations that employers would be likely to approach for information on future training requirements

- 293 To assess further the likely impact of Train to Gain on the future use of advisory services, employers were asked which persons or organisations they would approach for future advice and guidance on skills and training issues.
- 294 As Figure 35 shows, employers would be most likely to refer to their skills brokerage organisation for information on training, with just over a third of employers (37 per cent) citing the service as their preferred source of

information and advice. With the move to the integrated brokerage service, it will be important that relationships with those employers that have already used the skills brokerage service are maintained, and that employers know whom to contact with regard to Train to Gain in future.

295 Throughout the course of the whole evaluation, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of employers who state that they would approach a skills broker in the future for information on what training might be available (37 per cent of new users interviewed at Sweep 4 would approach a skills broker, compared with 26 per cent of Sweep 1 new users). This is encouraging evidence that employers are becoming more convinced of the ongoing value of the brokerage service.

Figure 35: Organisations that employers would be likely to approach for future advice on training requirements



296 Just over one employer in five (22 per cent) reported that they would approach a training provider for information on training opportunities in the future. Other

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popular sources of information and advice on training include Business Link (15 per cent), the local education authority (12 per cent) and an industry association, federation or board (12 per cent).

Conclusions and Key Messages

- 297 There are a number of key messages to emerge from the employer evaluation, and these have implications for the delivery of Train to Gain in the future. These include lessons regarding the delivery of the skills brokerage service, raising awareness of the services in order to engage employers with Train to Gain, and ensuring that Train to Gain reaches those employers least able or willing to invest in staff training and development. While the overall reaction to the service among employers has been very positive, and while there is evidence of extensive benefits arising from employer involvement with Train to Gain, it is clear that there are opportunities for Train to Gain to have an even greater impact on employers and on the skills of the workforce as a whole.
- 298 In summarising the findings of the employer evaluation, the key message – one that should not be understated – is the very positive experience that employers report of their involvement with the skills brokerage service. Eight in 10 of those employers who have used the skills brokerage service were satisfied with the service they received, and indeed two-thirds were very satisfied (that is, they awarded a score of at least 8 out of 10 for satisfaction). Skills brokers are rated highly by employers on factors such as their knowledge of potential training solutions, impartiality of advice, and their ability to help employers navigate the training and accreditation landscape. Across all areas of skills broker performance rated by employers, in no case did the mean satisfaction score fall below 7 out of 10.
- 299 Where problematic issues were identified, these often centred on the lack of perceived relevance of the advice and the solutions that the skills broker was able to offer the employer. Indeed, key driver analysis has indicated that the ability of the skills broker to understand the needs of the individual employer, to identify tailored solutions and to produce a workable action plan for training activity is important in raising employer satisfaction, emphasising the importance of a continued focus on demand-led services.

- 300 Another key area for improvement that is highlighted by the employer evaluation lies in effective follow-up with employers, to ensure that their needs are met and that their interest in developing the training strategy through Train to Gain is converted into take-up. Where employers have been dissatisfied with the service, this is often because of a failure on the part of the skills broker to get back in touch with the employer after the initial discussion, or their failure to carry out the actions required to take the employer's engagement further. The longitudinal research has found that, in around two-fifths of cases where the employer reported that they had training scheduled to take place through Train to Gain or were waiting for confirmation of this, the training ultimately did not actually go ahead. Three-fifths of employers did not have any further contact with their skills broker after the first few months of their involvement with the service. Of these, many would have liked some assistance from the skills broker in identifying suitable training during this time. Along with the high level of interest in continued or renewed involvement with the service expressed by employers, this highlights the potential that exists for increasing take-up of Train to Gain services, even without looking for new employer contacts.
- 301 In making sure that employers are encouraged to increase take-up of and investment in training, the findings of the employer evaluation would also suggest that it is important to be clear about the financial support options available. Skills brokers need to work to encourage employers to continue with training solutions even when they are not eligible for subsidised training – the evaluation has shown that, along with the perceived lack of fit or relevance of suggested training to employer needs, this is a key element in employer rejection of training through Train to Gain. Clearly, not all employers can be offered financial support through Train to Gain, and the evaluation has revealed that, in many cases, employers are willing to make a financial contribution themselves to training. The findings of the evaluation do, however, support the case for increasing the support channelled to small employers through the new SME support package: currently, the smallest employers are

those most likely to 'drop out', without the brokerage intervention having any impact on their training activity.

- 302 Within the context of the existing funding model, the evaluation has revealed that there is a potential to increase awareness among eligible employers (those with fewer than 50 employees) of the opportunity to access contributions to wage costs for staff time spent out of work on training. In Sweep 4, as many as a third of all eligible employers were not aware that this was available through Train to Gain. In these ways it may be possible to increase the proportion of cases where the Train to Gain intervention leads to the employer undertaking new training activity (currently at 61 per cent, where employers are surveyed 13 to 20 months after the initial contact with the skills broker).
- 303 In terms of employer awareness of the service more generally, while the evaluation has shown that the national-level promotional campaigns for Train to Gain have had some impact on employer awareness, the proportion of employers who only become aware of Train to Gain when contacted by skills brokers still outweighs the number of those whose awareness was triggered by the media publicity. Therefore, there is an opportunity to increase employer awareness and take-up through these channels.
- 304 In terms of what the evaluation would suggest as target groups for these campaigns, employers from the Financial and Business Services sector are under-represented among those using the skills brokerage service, and they are also less likely to have whatever involvement they do have converted into training activity through Train to Gain. As is discussed below, the findings would also suggest that the service should seek to reach out more to those employers that are furthest from being in a position to offer development opportunities to staff.
- 305 In evaluating the success of Train to Gain, it is useful to focus on the additional value associated with the service, rather than just on the proportion of employers who progress into training. The findings are broadly positive in this regard, as they suggest that, in around half of all cases (49 per cent), Train to

Gain has been successful in encouraging employers to undertake training for the first time or in directly enabling them to add to existing training. Where employers had previously arranged training for staff, in most cases Train to Gain added value, with upwards of two-thirds of these employers saying that they had been able to offer training to more staff or to those who had not received training before, or to offer better-quality or higher-level training.

306 However, there has been a persistent minority of employers in each sweep of the evaluation (12 per cent to 14 per cent) who do not report any additional impact from Train to Gain, despite having accessed training – in many cases on a subsidised basis. This suggests a degree of duplication and substitution of activity within Train to Gain. Even when employers have increased the scope or quality of training, many of the employers said that they would have arranged similar training for staff anyway. This highlights the case for more effective targeting of the skills brokerage service and funding available through Train to Gain on those with the greatest need of support in raising the skills of their workforce. It is clear that, in many cases, those employers picked up by the skills brokerage service do already have a route into training at Level 2 and the resources to support this.

307 Training provision initiated by the employer's involvement with Train to Gain is having a considerable impact on the skills and motivation of the employees who participate, as well as knock-on effects on the performance of the employer organisation as a whole. The majority of employers who have had staff undertake training through Train to Gain have seen an improvement in skills that are of direct relevance to the job roles of those staff, and an associated increase in employee performance and productivity. Level 2 provision, which makes up the bulk of the training undertaken through Train to Gain, is particularly associated with improvements in staff confidence, motivation and commitment. In the long term (when surveyed 13 to 20 months after the initial contact) over eight in 10 of those employers training through Train to Gain see improvements in service or product quality as a result, and around a quarter of these report financial benefits in terms of sales and

turnover and profitability. Ensuring that training undertaken does filter through into 'bottom line' benefits will require skills brokers to continue to ensure that there is a direct match between the training and the skills that will make the greatest difference to the organisation. The introduction of the Train to Gain sector compacts should facilitate identification of the industry's skills needs more generally. Another challenge for the service in the future will be to ensure consistently high standards of service across the different regions – employers served by the London and the West Midlands skills brokerage services displayed lower satisfaction and poorer outcomes in the evaluation. It will be important to monitor this in light of the recent integration of the brokerage service.

- 308 On a positive note, there is no clear evidence from the latest sweep of the employer evaluation to suggest that the economic downturn is having a widespread negative effect on employer training activity. Only a small minority of employers report a decrease in training expenditure over the past six months or an anticipated decrease over the coming two years (although it should be noted that, in some cases, training expenditure is anyway at a low level). While there is some tentative evidence to suggest that employers affected by the downturn are less likely to have taken up training through Train to Gain, it is clear that they are seeking to use the Train to Gain service in the future. To encourage employers to maintain their training and development activity during the economic downturn, it will be important to communicate the support available to employers, and to promote the business case for engagement with Train to Gain that has been revealed by the employer evaluation.

Annex A: Comparative Findings for Key Indicators

Trends in key findings across the 'new user' element of the employer evaluation are highlighted in the table below.

Figure A.1: Key findings from the new user sweeps of the employer evaluation

	New User Research Sweep				Overall	Change Sweeps 1-4
	1	2	3	4		
Performance indicator	%	%	%	%	%	% points
Proportion of contacts made with employers with fewer than five employees. <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	17	17	20	22	19	+5*
Proportion of contacts made with employers with upwards of 50 employees. <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	18	18	16	14	16	-4*
Proportion of employers first becoming aware of Train to Gain through promotions in the media. <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	5	13	12	16	12	+11*
Proportion of employers first becoming aware of Train to Gain only when contacted by skills broker. <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	26	25	24	24	25	-2*
Proportion of employers 'satisfied' with the skills brokerage service (giving overall satisfaction score of between 6 and 10). <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	80	78	77	78	78	-2*
Proportion of employers 'very satisfied' with the skills brokerage service (giving overall satisfaction score of between 8 and 10). <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	63	61	60	61	61	-2
Proportion of employers 'dissatisfied' with the skills brokerage service (giving overall satisfaction score of between 1 and 4). <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	11	13	13	13	12	+2*
Proportion of employers likely to recommend Train to Gain to another employer. <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	80	80	78	80	79	0
Proportion of employers 'taking up' training (training completed or under way) as a result of contact with the skills brokerage service. <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	42	51	44	42	45	0
Proportion of employers 'committed' to training (training completed, under way or scheduled) as a result of contact with the skills brokerage service. <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	64	65	62	61	63	-3*
Proportion of all employers accessing provision at Level 2 or above as a result of contact with the skills brokerage service <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	34	39	32	30	34	-4*

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	New User Research Sweep				Overall	Change Sweeps 1-4
	1	2	3	4		
Performance indicator	%	%	%	%	%	% points
Proportion of employers training under Train to Gain and making some contribution to the costs. <i>Base = All employers training under Train to Gain (6,633)</i>	38	44	48	44	44	+6*
Proportion of employers 'satisfied' with training accessed through Train to Gain and provider delivering this training (giving overall satisfaction score of between 6 and 10). <i>Base = All employers training under Train to Gain (6,633)</i>	92	92	92	91	92	-1
Proportion of employers training under Train to Gain who feel that as a result employees have gained job-related skills and become better at their jobs. <i>Base = All employers training under Train to Gain (6,633)</i>	74	75	76	74	75	-1
Proportion of employers training under Train to Gain who feel that as a result product or service quality has improved. <i>Base = All employers training under Train to Gain (6,633)</i>	60	60	60	57	59	-3
Proportion of employers training under Train to Gain who feel that as a result staff productivity has improved. <i>Base = All employers training under Train to Gain (6,633)</i>	52	52	52	52	52	0
Proportion of employers training under Train to Gain who feel that as a result there have been increases in sales and turnover. <i>Base = All employers training under Train to Gain (6,633)</i>	20	21	21	19	20	-1
Proportion of employers training under Train to Gain who feel that as a result there have been increases in profit margins. <i>Base = All employers training under Train to Gain (6,633)</i>	17	18	18	17	18	0
Proportion of employers likely to use the Train to Gain service again in the future. <i>Base = All employers (15,238)</i>	77	77	76	78	77	+1

* Differences in the Sweep 1 and Sweep 4 figures are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Annex B: Methodological Details

- 1 This appendix gives more detail on the strategies for the sampling of employers and the weighting of survey data used in the employer evaluation.

Sampling employers and applying quotas: new user sweeps

- 2 The details of 77,154 employers were supplied to IFF Research by skills brokerage organisations. This figure represents the population of all employers for whom the initial contact with the skills brokerage service came during the period from January 2007 to October 2008. Approximately 47,000 employer records were selected at random for use in the employer evaluation, while the rest formed the sample for the monthly satisfaction monitor research conducted by IFF Research. From these, a total of 15,238 employers were interviewed across the four new user sweeps, meaning that around a third of the available sample was interviewed, sampled on the basis of regional quotas.
- 3 For each new user sweep, quota targets for interviews were set by region. The quota system was designed to ensure a sufficient base number of interviews in each region for each sweep, to allow robust region-based analysis of the data. This also took into account the representation of each region in the employer sample population, as provided by the skills brokerages.
- 4 For each new user sweep, the quota targets for the regions were calculated as follows: each of the nine regions in England was allocated 200 interviews, while the remaining interviews, up to the initial target of 3,750, were distributed in proportion to the regional profile of the sample population provided by the skills brokerages. In New User Sweep 2, extra 'boost' interviews were conducted in the East Midlands region, bringing the total interviews achieved to 3,976.

Weighting: new user sweeps

- 5 At the analysis stage, regional weights were applied to the data from each of the new user sweeps to ensure that the results reflected the regional sample populations. Table B.1 shows a comparison of the unweighted (or 'raw') regional

profile of interviews against the weighted regional profile, for all new user sweeps combined. The table also gives the confidence intervals associated with the sample of employers within each region. Where results are presented for all employers, on a finding of 50 per cent we can be 95 per cent confident that the true figure lies within 0.8 per cent of the survey findings.

Table B.1: The regional profile of interviews achieved and of the employer population – New User Sweeps 1 to 4

Region	Number of interviews	% of interviews	% of population (% after weighting applied)	Confidence intervals on a finding of 50%
North East	891	5.8	7.8	+/- 3.3%
North West	1,445	9.5	7.7	+/- 2.6%
East Midlands	1,931	12.7	9.9	+/- 2.2%
West Midlands	2,121	13.9	16.1	+/- 2.1%
East of England	1,983	13.0	14.2	+/- 2.2%
South East	1,762	11.6	11.4	+/- 2.3%
South West	1,952	12.8	14.3	+/- 2.2%
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,607	10.5	9.7	+/- 2.4%
London	1,546	10.1	8.8	+/- 2.5%
Total	15,238	100.0	100.0	+/- 0.8%

- 6 The total number of interviews conducted in the North East was substantially lower than for other regions because of the smaller starting sample for this region. The original sample of employers was randomly split, in order to allow the skills brokerage service in the region to conduct its own programme of research. The data has, however, been weighted to the full population of employer contacts from the January 2007 to October 2008 period.
- 7 As this report focuses on Sweep 4 of the research, Table B.1A replicates the regional data for the Sweep 4 survey alone.

Table B.1A: The regional profile of interviews achieved and of the employer population – New Users Sweep 4

Region	Number of interviews	% of interviews	% of population (% after weighting applied)	Confidence intervals on a finding of 50%
North East	282	7.5	8.8	+/- 5.8%
North West	396	10.6	9.3	+/- 4.9%
East Midlands	407	10.9	10.1	+/- 4.9%
West Midlands	437	11.7	12.4	+/- 4.7%
East of England	609	16.2	19.9	+/- 4.0%
South East	405	10.8	10.0	+/- 4.9%
South West	412	11.0	10.3	+/- 4.8%
Yorkshire and the Humber	408	10.9	10.3	+/- 4.9%
London	394	10.5	9.0	+/- 4.9%
Total	3,750	100.0	100.0	+/- 1.6%

Sampling employers: longitudinal surveys

- 8 The starting samples for Longitudinal Surveys 1 and 2 were all employers who stated that they would be willing to be recontacted with regard to the ongoing evaluation of Train to Gain at the end of the New User Sweep 1 and the New User Sweep 2 interviews, respectively. As Table B.2 shows, around three-fifths of these employers completed an interview as part of one of the longitudinal surveys, a year after the initial interview.

Table B.2: Achieved longitudinal survey interviews as a proportion of employers previously agreeing to ongoing involvement in the employer evaluation

	Evaluation element	
	Longitudinal Survey 1	Longitudinal Survey 2
Number of employers interviewed in relevant new user sweep	3,759	3,976
Number of employers agreeing to ongoing involvement in the evaluation – starting sample	2,863	3,025
Number of employers re-interviewed	1,685	1,906
% of starting sample re-interviewed	59	63

Weighting: longitudinal surveys

- 9 Regional weights were applied to the data from each of the longitudinal surveys, in order to ensure that the results reflected the regional sample populations for all employers initially in contact with the skills brokerage service in the sampling period (January to April 2007 for Longitudinal Survey 1 and May to October 2007 for Longitudinal Survey 2). Tables B.3 and B.4 show comparisons of the unweighted and the weighted regional profiles for Longitudinal Surveys 1 and 2.

Table B.3: The regional profile of interviews achieved and of the population of employers – Longitudinal Survey 1

Region	Number of interviews	% of interviews	% of population (% after weighting applied)
North East	152	9.0	7.2
North West	129	7.7	7.3
East Midlands	138	8.2	6.6
West Midlands	358	21.2	28.0
East of England	209	12.4	13.1
South East	248	14.7	16.9
South West	197	11.7	9.7
Yorkshire and the Humber	130	7.7	3.8
London	124	7.4	7.3

Table B.4: The regional profile of interviews achieved and of the population of employers – Longitudinal Survey 2

Region	Number of interviews	% of interviews	% of population (% after weighting applied)
North East	94	4.9	8.9
North West	187	9.8	8.4
East Midlands	361	18.9	11.6
West Midlands	189	9.9	10.9
East of England	214	11.2	10.8
South East	194	10.2	9.9
South West	279	14.6	16.8
Yorkshire and the Humber	243	12.7	15.1
London	145	7.6	7.8

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Annex D: Research Tools

Latest New User Sweep questionnaire script

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL	Train to Gain Employer Evaluation Telephone Questionnaire NEW USERS SWEEP 4	January 2009
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ASK IF NAMED SAMPLE

- S1) **Good morning / afternoon. My name is XXX and I'm calling from IFF Research. Please may I speak with [NAMED RESPONDENT FROM SAMPLE]?**

Yes named person speaking / put through	1	GO TO S4
Hard appointment	2	MAKE APPT
Soft Appointment	3	
Named person works at a different site / head office and not able to transfer	4	GO TO S2
Named person no longer works at organisation	5	GO TO S3
Not heard of named contact	6	
Refusal - Company policy	7	THANK AND CLOSE
Refusal – Taken part in recent survey	8	
Refusal – Other reason	9	
Not available during fieldwork period	10	

IF NEED TO TAKE NEW NUMBER FOR NAMED CONTACT (S1/4):

- S2) **Can you give me the correct number for [NAMED RESPONDENT FROM SAMPLE]?**
RECORD NEW PHONE NUMBER AND RE-DIAL
DP INSTRUCTION: LOOP BACK TO S1

RECORD NEW NUMBER FOR NAMED CONTACT	
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ASK IF NOT NAMED SAMPLE OR IF NAMED RESPONDENT NO LONGER WORKS AT ORGANISATION OR NOT HEARD OF AT ORGANISATION (S1/5 OR S1/6):

S3) Please may I speak to the manager or director here who is responsible for training at this site?

INTERVIEW NOTE IF NO TRAINING CONTACT:
ASK FOR PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR HUMAN RESOURCES

Yes put through	1	GO TO S4
Hard appointment	2	MAKE APPT
Soft Appointment	3	
Refusal	4	THANK AND CLOSE
Refusal – company policy	5	
Refusal – Taken part in recent survey	6	
Nobody at site able to answer questions	7	
Not available during fieldwork period	8	

ONCE SPEAKING TO NAMED RESPONDENT / SENIOR PERSON (S1/1 OR S3/1):

S4) Good morning / afternoon. My name is XXXX, calling from IFF Research. We are undertaking a research project for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to find out about companies' experiences of the Train to Gain service.

According to our records, your establishment has been involved with Train to Gain. This may have involved anything from a simple telephone call with a skills broker about your establishments' training needs through to training actually being arranged. Can you just confirm that your company has been involved with the Train to Gain Service?

ADD IF NECESSARY:

Your skills broker organisation was [BROKER ORGANISATION].

Yes	1	GO TO S6
No	2	GO TO S5
Don't Know	3	
Referral to someone else who may have had contact with Train to Gain	4	GO TO S7
Refused	5	THANK AND CLOSE

REASSURANCES AS NECESSARY:

- **We are still interested in speaking to you even if your organisation did not engage in training as a result of contact with a Train to Gain skills broker.**
- **As you may know Train to Gain was launched in August 2006 and is a national service to give employers access to the training and skills that they require for their business. It is being evaluated to assess how the service meets the needs of employers.**
- **We were given your name by their skills broker via the Learning and Skills Council.**
- **If respondent wishes to confirm validity of survey or get more information about aims and objectives, they can call:**
 - **MRS: Market Research Society on FREEPHONE 0500 396999**
 - **IFF: Laura Godwin or Steve Close 020 7250 3035**
 - **LSC Kate Murphy 02476 823 401**

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ASK IF DON'T THINK COMPANY HAS HAD INVOLVEMENT WITH TRAIN TO GAIN (S4/2 OR S4/3):

S5) You may have been involved with Train to Gain without realising that was what you were taking part in. Have you had any dealings with [BROKER ORGANISATION] recently in relation to training opportunities that may be available to you?

Yes	1	GO TO S6
No	2	GO TO S5A
Don't Know	3	
Refused	4	THANK AND CLOSE

ASK IF SAYS COMPANY HAS HAD NO INVOLVEMENT WITH TRAIN TO GAIN (S5/2, S5/3)

S5a) We were given the name of your organisation and your contact details by [BROKER ORGANISATION]. They told us that they had been in touch with you in the last few months. Have you any ideas why they might have your organisation's details? (ADD IF NECESSARY : It may be that they were in touch with someone else in your organisation about this. Is there anyone else at that establishment who looks after your training needs?)

PROBE AS NECESSARY:

Could you tell me, have you spoken to anyone at all in the last few months from outside your organisation about training your staff, or reviewing your skills and training needs? Have you used any external training provider, consultant or advisor recently? If you have, can you tell me who they are?

Have you had any dealings with your local Business Link? If so, of what kind?

THANK AND CLOSE

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S6) Could you spare around 20 minutes to give us your views on the Train to Gain Service? All your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence and nothing will be attributed to a specific individual or company.

REASSURANCES AS NECESSARY:

- **We are still interested in speaking to you even if your organisation did not engage in training as a result of contact with a Train to Gain skills broker.**
- **As you may know Train to Gain was launched in August 2006 and is a national service to give employers access to the training and skills that they require for their business. It is being evaluated to assess how the service meets the needs of employers.**
- **We were given your name by their skills broker via the Learning and Skills Council.**
- **If respondent wishes to confirm validity of survey or get more information about aims and objectives, they can call:**
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 - **LSC Kate Murphy 02476 823 401**

Yes, continue	1	GO TO S8
Hard appointment	2	MAKE APPT
Soft Appointment	3	
Respondent not the best person to answer questions on Train to Gain	4	GO TO S7
Refusal	5	THANK AND CLOSE
Refusal – company policy	6	
Refusal – Taken part in recent survey	7	
Nobody at site able to answer questions	8	
Not available during fieldwork period	9	

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IF RESPONDENT NOT BEST PERSON TO SPEAK ABOUT TRAIN TO GAIN (S4/4 OR S6/4):
S7) Can you give me the correct contact details of the person I need to speak to? RECORD
 NEW CONTACT DETAILS AND RE-DIAL
 DP INSTRUCTION: LOOP BACK TO S1

NEW CONTACT NAME	
NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER	
NEW JOB TITLE	

ASK ALL
S8) Can I just check what type of involvement your organisation has had with Train to Gain, by this I mean the contact you have had with [BROKER ORGANISATION] recently? Have you..?

	Yes	No
S8_1. Taken up training as a result of a conversation with a skills broker	1	2
S8_2. Had a formal Organisational Needs Analysis with a skills broker ADD IF NECESSARY: An Organisational Needs Analysis is an assessment of your organisation's training and skill needs.	1	2
IF NOT HAD TRAINING OR ONA (S8_1/2 AND S8_2/2): S8_3. Had a less formal discussion with a skills broker about your organisation's skills, training needs or other business issues	1	2
IF NOT HAD TRAINING, ONA OR LESS FORMAL DISCUSSION (S8_1/2 AND S8_2/2 AND S8_3/2): Made plans or made an appointment to discuss your organisation's skills, training needs or other business issues with a skills broker	1	2

ASK IF S8_4=2

S8E) What type of involvement has your company had with Train to Gain?

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REG) RECORD REGION FROM SAMPLE

1	North East	6	South East
2	North West	7	South West
3	East Midlands	8	Yorkshire and Humberside
4	West Midlands	9	London
5	East of England		

MNTH) RECORD MONTH OF INITIAL CONTACT FROM SAMPLE

13	May 2008	16	August 2008
14	June 2008	17	September 2008
15	July 2008	18	October 2008

Section A: Establishment details

ASK ALL

Q1) First of all, I would like to ask you a few questions about your company or organisation.

Does this establishment form part of a larger organisation with multiple sites or branches, or is it the only site of the business /organisation? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Part of a larger organisation	1	GO TO Q2
Single site	2	GO TO Q4
Don't Know	3	

ASK FOR ALL WHERE PART OF A LARGER ORGANISATION (Q1/1):

Q2) Is this site the head office of your organisation?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	3

ASK IF NOT THE HEAD OFFICE (Q2/2 OR Q2/3):

Q3) Which of the following statements best describes the situation at your site with regard to the setting of human resource or training objectives?

The HR and training objectives are wholly laid out for you elsewhere, by another part of the organisation	1
You have some input into the setting of HR and training objectives for employees at your site	2
You lead the setting of HR and training objectives for employees at your site	3
Don't know	X

ASK ALL

Q4) Can you tell me what the main activity of the business at this site is? WRITE IN. CODE TO 3 DIGIT SIC.

PROBE AS NECESSARY:

What is the main product or service of this establishment?

What exactly is made or done at this establishment?

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

Q5) Including you and any working proprietors, how many people are on the payroll at this location?

ENTER EXACT NUMBER

ADD AS NECESSARY: Do not include outside contractors/agency staff.

ADD AS NECESSARY: Include both full-time and part-time staff

ADD AS NECESSARY: If you are unsure of the exact number please provide an approximation

WRITE IN	1-99999
----------	---------

ASK IF DON'T KNOW NUMBER OF PEOPLE AT SITE (Q5/DK):

Q5A) It is really important that we have a feel for the number of people on the payroll at this location. Would you be able to provide us with an approximate number?

Yes	1	LOOP BACK TO Q5
No	2	THANK AND CLOSE

ASK FOR ALL WHERE PART OF A LARGER ORGANISATION (Q1/1):

Q6) Can you tell me which of these bands best represents the number of people on the payroll in the entire organisation in England?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

ADD AS NECESSARY: Do not include outside contractors/agency staff nor the self-employed other than a self-employed owner

ADD AS NECESSARY: Include both full-time and part-time staff

1 – 9	1
10 – 49	2
50 – 249	3
250 or more	4
Don't know / Refused	X

DP INSTRUCTION: RE-ASK Q5 AND Q6 WITH FOLLOWING TEXT IF BAND ANSWERED AT Q6 IS LESS THAN NUMBER GIVEN AT Q5. You have just told me that the number of people on the payroll in the entire organisation is less than the number on the payroll at this location. Can I just check your answers?

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Section B: Understanding of Train to Gain and nature / depth of engagement

ASK ALL

Q7) How did you first hear about Train to Gain? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF RESPONDENT GIVES MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE, CODE THE FIRST MENTIONED.

From an FE College	1
From a training provider other than an FE college	2
When skills broker contacted us	3
Received a leaflet or flyer through the post / email	4
Advertisement on TV / newspaper / radio / internet	5
From an employee or colleague	6
Through the Learning and Skills Council	7
Through Business Link	8
Attended a launch or exhibition	9
From another employer or business network, not including any of the organisations mentioned above	10
Train to Gain was already in place when I joined the company	11
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	12

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Q8) In terms of your understanding of the Train to Gain service, would you say that you had a...?
 READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

Very detailed level of understanding	1
Fairly detailed understanding	2
Some understanding	3
Or have you only really heard the name	4
(DON'T READ OUT) Don't know	X

Q9) What was it that initially attracted you to get involved with Train to Gain? DO NOT READ OUT.
 CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Fully or partly subsidised level 2 training	1
Fully or partly subsidised level 3 training	2
Fully or partly subsidised training (level unspecified)	3
Training or support for senior managers / business owners	4
To get some training	5
Free review and analysis of business needs	6
Help with identifying training needs	7
Help with training planning	8
Independent impartial advice on training / brokerage	9
Free information, advice and guidance	10
Contribution to wage costs for employee time off for training	11
Links to other business support services	12
Access to on-the-job or on-site training and mentoring	13
Help with searching for suitable training providers and courses	14
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	15
SINGLE CODE: Nothing in particular / It was down to the skills broker contacting us	16
Don't Know	X

Q10) On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important, how important was the offer of full or part subsidised level 2 training in your decision to get involved with Train to Gain? If you weren't aware that this is part of the offer please say so. READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

PROMPT IF NECESSARY: **Level 2 training is equivalent to NVQ Level 2 or GCSEs.**

1. Not at all important	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5. Very important	5
[DO NOT READ OUT] Don't Know	X
[DO NOT READ OUT] Not aware this was a part	Y

Q11) On the same scale, how important was the offer of full or part subsidised level 3 training in your decision to take part in Train to Gain? If you weren't aware that this is part of the offer please say so. READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

PROMPT IF NECESSARY: **Level 3 training is equivalent to NVQ Level 3 or A-Levels.**

1. Not at all important	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5. Very important	5
[DO NOT READ OUT] Don't Know	X
[DO NOT READ OUT] Not aware this was a part	Y

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ASK ALL WITH FEWER THAN 50 STAFF (Q5<50):

Q12) On the same scale, how important was the offer of the contribution to wage costs in your decision to take part in Train to Gain? If you weren't aware that this is part of the offer please say so. READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

PROMPT IF NECESSARY: Contribution to wage costs refers to funding to compensate employers for the time employees spend in training.

1. Not at all important	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5. Very important	5
[DO NOT READ OUT] Don't Know	X
[DO NOT READ OUT] Not aware this was a part	Y

Section C: Satisfaction with the skills brokerage Service

READ OUT:

Changing the subject slightly, I would now like to ask some questions focusing specifically on the service you received from your skills broker, and the skills needs analysis that they conducted at your organisation.

These questions all refer to the experience you have had with your skills broker, rather than any training provider or college you may have dealt with or any training provision you may have received.

ADD IF NECESSARY:

Your skills broker was based at [BROKER ORGANISATION].

Your skills broker is the person who will have talked to you about your business' training needs and provided advice about what skills your business has right now, and what it might need in the future. The skills broker would be from a different organisation to that which delivered the training.

ASK ALL

Q13) Thinking of the FIRST communication you had with this skills broker, did they contact you or did you contact them? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

I / we contacted broker	1
Skills broker contacted us	2
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	3
Don't know / Can't remember	X

ASK IF FIRST CONTACTED BY BROKER (Q13/2):

Q14) And before the skills broker contacted you, had you previously been in touch with a training provider or college with regard to the Train to Gain service? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know / Can't remember	X

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ASK ALL

- Q15) After that first contact you had with your skills broker, on how many subsequent occasions have you had contact with him or her, either face to face, over the telephone or via e-mail? Do you think it is roughly...?**

None (just had 1 initial contact)	1
1	2
2-4	3
5-9	4
10+	5
Don't know	X

- Q16) Thinking about the following four statements, which best describes the relationship your organisation currently has with your skills broker? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**

We have ongoing contact so that he/she can continue to ensure our training needs are met	1
We have had limited recent contact but we will recontact them where a training need arises in the future	2
We are waiting for / expecting our skills broker to get back to us regarding training opportunities that we have discussed	3
We do not envisage further dealings with our skills broker	4
DO NOT READ OUT None of the above (SPECIFY NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP WITH BROKER)	5
DO NOT READ OUT Don't know	X

ASK ALL WHO HAVE HAD AN ONA (S8_2/1):

- Q16a) How long was the meeting that you had with the skills broker in which the Organisational Needs Analysis was conducted? Was it...? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**

Less than an hour	1
Between 1 and 2 hours	2
Between 2 and 3 hours	3
Over 3 hours	4
We had more than one meeting in which the ONA was conducted	5
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	X

ASK ALL

- Q17) Do you consider your skills broker to be independent from training providers?**

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	3

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ASK ALL:

Q18a) I am now going to read out a number of factors relating to the service you have received from your skills broker. Firstly, I'd like you to consider how IMPORTANT that factor is to you, and then how SATISFIED you have been with that particular aspect of the service.

Firstly, how important to you is the skills broker's understanding of your training and development needs? Please give your rating on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is highly unimportant and 10 is highly important.

Please note that this question refers to how important you consider this factor to be in the skills broker service, and NOT how satisfied you have been with the actual service that has been delivered.

Q18b) I would now like to ask about how SATISFIED you are with your skills broker in relation to the factor that you have just rated on importance.

Please give your rating on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is highly dissatisfied and 10 is highly satisfied.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied have you been with the skills broker's understanding of your training and development needs?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE FOR EACH FACTOR. ROTATE FACTORS.

Q18a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X
Q18b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X

ASK ALL

Q19a) How important to you is the impartiality of advice offered by your skills broker?

Q19b) And how SATISFIED have you been with the impartiality of advice offered by your skills broker?

Q19a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X
Q19b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X

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ASK ALL

Q20a) How important to you is the skills broker's ability to signpost you to a range of providers?

Q20b) And how SATISFIED have you been with the skills broker's ability to signpost you to a range of providers?

Q20a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X
Q20b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X

Q21a) How important to you is the ease of getting hold of your skills broker?

Q21b) And how SATISFIED have you been with ease of getting hold of your skills broker?

Q21a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X
Q21b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X

THERE IS NO Q22

Q23a) How important to you is the speed with which agreed follow-up actions take place?

Q23b) And how SATISFIED have you been with the speed with which agreed follow-up actions take place?

Q23a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X
Q23b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X

Q24a) How important to you is the expertise and knowledge of the skills broker?

Q24b) And how SATISFIED have you been with the expertise and knowledge of the skills broker?

Q24a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X
Q24b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X

Q25a) How important to you is the skills broker's ability to translate your company's needs into an action plan?

Q25b) And how SATISFIED have you been with the skills broker's ability to translate your company's needs into an action plan?

Q25a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X
Q25b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X

Q26a) How important to you is the skills broker's knowledge of training solutions within Train to Gain, and of training providers in your area?

Q26b) And how SATISFIED have you been with the skills broker's knowledge of training solutions within Train to Gain, and of training providers in your area?

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Q26a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X
Q26b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X

ASK ALL

Q27a) How important to you is the skills broker's ability to identify potential funding to support your training activities?

Q27b) And how SATISFIED have you been with the skills broker's ability to identify potential funding to support your training activities?

Q27a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X
Q27b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X

ASK ALL

Q28a) How important to you is the skills broker's ability to explain various types of accreditation and qualifications?

Q28b) And how SATISFIED have you been with the skills broker's ability to explain various types of accreditation and qualifications?

Q28a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X
Q28b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X

ASK ALL

Q29) And finally for this section, on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is highly dissatisfied and 10 is highly satisfied, overall how satisfied have you been with the service you have received from your skills broker ?

PROMPT AS NECESSARY. SINGLE CODE.

1 – Highly dissatisfied	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10 – Highly satisfied	10
Don't know	X

IF DISSATISFIED WITH SERVICE OVERALL (Q29/1-4):

Q30) Can you tell me why you have given this rating? PROBE FULLY AND WRITE IN VERBATIM

WRITE IN	
Don't Know	X

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ASK ALL WHO HAVE HAD AN ONA (S8_2/1):

Q30a) Can you tell me to what extent you agree with the following statements about the Organisational Needs Analysis conducted by your skills broker? Has the Organisational Needs Analysis...?

	Disagree strongly	Disagree slightly	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree slightly	Agree strongly	Don't know
Q30a_1. Helped you to identify skills missing amongst our employees or that need improving	1	2	3	4	5	X
Q30a_2. Helped you to identify weaknesses in the way that your organisation develops its staff	1	2	3	4	5	X
Q30a_3. Helped you to identify skills that your organisation may need in the future	1	2	3	4	5	X
Q30a_4. Made discussing skills and training issues a higher priority for management	1	2	3	4	5	X
Q30a_5. Made you more aware of relevant training opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	X

ASK ALL WHO HAVE HAD AN ONA (S8_2/1):

Q30d) At the time when the skills broker conducted the Organisational Needs Analysis with you, did they give you a clear understanding of the follow up action which would be taken? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	3

ASK IF HAVE HAD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS EXPLAINED (Q30D/1):

Q30e) Were you given a timeframe within which this action would be undertaken? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	3

ASK IF TIMEFRAME FOR FOLLOW UP ACTIONS HAS BEEN EXPLAINED (Q30E/1):

Q30f) So far, has this timeframe been met? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	3
Too early to say	4

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ASK ALL:

- Q30g) Did the process of accessing advice and training through Train to Gain take longer than you had anticipated, was it about what you expected, or did it happen quicker than you expected? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.**

Longer than expected	1
About what expected	2
Quicker than expected	3
Too early to say	4
Don't know	X

Section D: Evaluating the Training

ASK ALL:

- Q31) Changing the subject, in relation to the training that you have discussed with your skills broker which of the following applies?**

If more than one situation applies for different groups of staff then please say yes to all that apply.

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

The training has already finished	1	GO TO Q33
Staff are currently undertaking the training	2	
The training is planned and staff are scheduled to start it shortly	3	GO TO Q59
We are waiting for confirmation from skills broker or training provider that training is going ahead	4	
We are still undecided whether to go ahead with training	5	
We have decided not to go ahead with the training	6	GO TO Q32
[SINGLE CODE] We have not discussed training solutions with our skills broker	7	GO TO Q59

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ASK IF NOT GOING AHEAD WITH TRAINING (Q31=6):

NQ32) To what extent do you agree that the following are reasons you have decided not to go ahead with [IF Q31=1-4: some of] the training that was discussed?

	Disagree strongly	Disagree slightly	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree slightly	Agree strongly	Don't Know
The type of the training suggested was not appropriate or relevant	1	2	3	4	5	X
The training suggested was too basic for our needs	1	2	3	4	5	X
The training suggested was too advanced or specialised for our needs	1	2	3	4	5	X
The training required too much time from our staff	1	2	3	4	5	X
The training was too expensive	1	2	3	4	5	X
Staff were not eligible to receive subsidised training	1	2	3	4	5	X
Staff were not interested in receiving the training	1	2	3	4	5	X
We decided that training was not a priority for the business	1	2	3	4	5	X
We found the same or similar training opportunities elsewhere	1	2	3	4	5	X
Concerns regarding the current economic climate	1	2	3	4	5	X

NQ33) Were there any other reasons that you have decided not to go ahead with training?

PROBE FULLY

ASK IF UNDECIDED ABOUT GOING AHEAD WITH TRAINING (Q31/ 5):

Q32A) Why are you undecided about whether to go ahead with [TEXT SUB IF Q31 / 1-4 – “some of the”] training? Are there any particular barriers preventing you from taking up this training? What would persuade you to take up the offer of training?

PROBE FULLY

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ASK ALL WHO HAVE STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED OR ARE CURRENTLY BEING TRAINED (Q31/1 or Q31/2)

Q33) I would now like to ask you some questions about the training that your staff undertook or are currently undertaking which followed as a result of your discussions with your skills broker.

Which of the following best describes this training?

READ OUT. CODE ALL MENTIONED.

Training delivered by an external training provider or college that took place off-site	1
A taught course delivered on-site either by an external training provider or college or by in-house staff	2
Training delivered by in-house staff that took place at the employees' usual work station	3
Learning which involved employees studying on their own from a package of materials including computer based training packages	4
What other methods of training have you used following on from discussions with your skills broker? (PLEASE SPECIFY)	5
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	X

Q34) And which of the following types of providers have you used to deliver this training? READ OUT. CODE ALL MENTIONED.

An FE college	1
A private training provider / external consultants	2
A university	3
An industry body or professional association	4
In-house staff	5
Other (SPECIFY)	6
Other (SPECIFY)	7
Other (SPECIFY)	8
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	X

THERE IS NO Q35

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Q36) I would now like to ask about how satisfied you have been with the service you have received from your TRAINING PROVIDER. The training provider would be the college or company who have supplied the training you have received under Train to Gain, following on from the discussions you have had with your skills broker.

Please give your rating on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is highly dissatisfied and 10 is highly satisfied.

READ FOR EACH ITERATION: On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied have you been with..?

IF RESPONDENT HAS USED MORE THAN ONE PROVIDER: Please provide ratings for the provider you consider to be your main provider of Train to Gain training

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE FOR EACH FACTOR. ROTATE FACTORS.

	Highly dissatisfied										Highly satisfied	DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know
Q36a. The overall quality of the training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Q36b. The training being up-to-date with developments in the sector	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Q36c. The tailoring of courses to your specific needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Q36d. The content of the training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Q36e. The location of the training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Q36f. The times of day or days of the week when the training was delivered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Q36g. The ease of getting hold of your contact within the training provider or college	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Q36h. The speed with which agreed follow-up actions take place	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Q36i. The training provider's ability to understand and respond to your training needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	

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Q36j. The value for money of the training provided	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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THERE IS NO Q37

Q38) Overall, on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is highly dissatisfied and 10 is highly satisfied, how satisfied have you been with the training provider or college and the training they have supplied you with under Train to Gain? PROMPT AS NECESSARY

1 – Highly dissatisfied	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10 – Highly satisfied	10
Don't know	X

IF DISSATISFIED WITH SERVICE OVERALL (Q38/1-4):

Q39) Can you tell me why you have given this rating? PROBE FULLY AND WRITE IN VERBATIM

WRITE IN	
Don't Know	X

ASK ALL WHO HAVE STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED OR ARE CURRENTLY BEING TRAINED (Q31/1 or 2):

Q40) Changing the subject slightly, I'd now like to ask about how this training has been funded. Which of the following apply? READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

We've received fully subsidised training through Train to Gain	1	ASK Q42
We've received partly subsidised training through Train to Gain	2	ASK Q41
We've received some training that we've paid for in full ourselves	3	ASK Q42
Don't Know	4	

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

IF RECEIVED PARTLY SUBSIDISED TRAINING (Q40/2):

Q41) In cases where the training has been part funded by yourselves and part funded by Train to Gain have you generally had to pay ...? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Nearly all the costs of the training	1
Most of the costs	2
Roughly half of the costs	3
Less than half of the costs	4
Don't Know	0
Refused	X

ASK ALL WHO HAVE STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED OR ARE CURRENTLY BEING TRAINED (Q31/1 or 2)

Thinking still about the training that you have undertaken which was discussed with the skills broker, we are interested to know which groups of employees have received this training. Firstly, however, I need to get an idea of the different occupational groups your establishment employs.

Q42) Does your establishment employ any [category]?
READ OUT LIST BELOW. SINGLE CODE FOR EACH OCCUPATIONAL GROUP.

ADD AS NECESSARY: Staff should be categorised according to their primary role i.e. the one that takes up the greatest proportion of their time.

INTERVIEWER NOTE: ALL JOBS SHOULD FALL INTO ONE OF THESE 3 CATEGORIES – SEE SHEET FOR EXAMPLES

ASK FOR EACH OCCUPATIONAL GROUP EMPLOYED (Q42/1):
Q43) And how many of your staff are employed as [INSERT OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY]?
INTERVIEWER NOTE: TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF IS [INSERT NUMBER FROM Q5].

DP INSTRUCTION: CHECK SUM OF Q43 EQUALS Q5. IF NOT RE-ASK Q43 WITH FOLLOWING TEXT: This sums to [SUM OF Q43] yet earlier you told me you had [INSERT NUMBER FROM Q5] people on the payroll at this location. Can I just check your answers again?

ASK FOR EACH OCCUPATIONAL GROUP EMPLOYED (Q42/1):
Q44) And of the [INSERT NUMBER FROM Q43] [INSERT OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY] you employ, how many have been involved with the training through Train to Gain which was discussed with your skills broker?

ASK FOR EACH OCCUPATIONAL GROUP TRAINED UNDER TRAIN TO GAIN (WHERE Q44>0):
Q44a) Of those [INSERT NUMBER FROM Q44] [INSERT OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY] how many have also been involved with other training outside of Train to Gain in the past 12 months?

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

	Q42		Q43	Q44	Q44a	
	Yes	No	Number	Number	Number	DK
MANAGERS, PROFESSIONALS AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS	1	2	<i>(0 – response given at Q5)</i>	<i>(0 – response given at Q43)</i>	<i>(0 – response given at Q44)</i>	X
SECRETARIAL, SALES OR SKILLED TRADES STAFF	1	2	<i>(0 – response given at Q5)</i>	<i>(0 – response given at Q43)</i>	<i>(0 – response given at Q44)</i>	X
PERSONAL SERVICE, PROCESS/PLANT/MACHINE OPERATIVES OR ELEMENTARY STAFF	1	2	<i>(0 – response given at Q5)</i>	<i>(0 – response given at Q43)</i>	<i>(0 – response given at Q44)</i>	X

ASK FOR EACH OCCUPATIONAL GROUP WHERE THE RESPONDENT DOES NOT KNOW HOW MANY ALSO TRAINED OUTSIDE TRAIN TO GAIN (WHERE Q44a/DK):

Q44aDK) Have ANY of these [INSERT OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY] received other training outside of Train to Gain in the past 12 months?

	Q44aDK	
	Yes	No
MANAGERS, PROFESSIONALS AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS	1	2
SECRETARIAL, SALES OR SKILLED TRADES STAFF	1	2
PERSONAL SERVICE, PROCESS/PLANT/MACHINE OPERATIVES OR ELEMENTARY STAFF	1	2

ASK ALL WHO HAVE STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED OR ARE CURRENTLY BEING TRAINED (Q31/1 or 2)

Q44B) How likely do you think it is that you would have arranged the same or similar training for these staff without the involvement of Train to Gain? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Very likely	1
Quite likely	2
Not very likely	3
Not at all likely	4

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

Don't know	X
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ASK ALL WHO HAVE STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED OR ARE CURRENTLY BEING TRAINED (Q31/1 or 2)

Q45) Has your involvement in Train to Gain had any of the following effects...? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE PER ROW.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Q45a. We have trained more staff than we would have done otherwise	1	2	X
Q45b. We have trained staff who we had not trained before	1	2	X
Q45c. We have trained more junior or less experienced staff than we would have done otherwise	1	2	X
Q45d. We have trained staff in different occupational groups than we would have done otherwise	1	2	X
Q45e. We have provided better quality training than we would have done otherwise	1	2	X
Q45f. We have trained staff to a qualification level which would not have been attained otherwise	1	2	X
Q45g. We have provided additional training to staff who would have received training anyway	1	2	X
Q45H. Staff have undertaken training at an earlier date than they would have done otherwise	1	2	X

Q46) As a result of your involvement in Train to Gain how many employees have attained or are working toward attaining...READ OUT

	Number	Don't know
Basic Skills qualifications in Adult Numeracy	<i>0-Sum of answers given at Q44</i>	X
Basic Skills qualifications in Adult Literacy	<i>0-Sum of answers given at Q44</i>	X
English for Speakers of Other Languages qualifications (ESOL)	<i>0-Sum of answers given at Q44</i>	X
An NVQ 2 or other level 2 qualifications or equivalent – by “level 2 or equivalent” I mean qualifications such as 5 GCSEs at Grade A-C, BTEC first or general diploma, or GNVQ intermediate.	<i>0-Sum of answers given at Q44</i>	X
An NVQ 3 or other Level 3 qualifications or equivalent – by level 3 we mean qualifications such as 2 A levels, BTEC National or GNVQ Advanced	<i>0-Sum of answers given at Q44</i>	X

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

An NVQ 4 or 5 or other level 4 or higher qualification, such as degrees, MBAs, or professional qualifications	<i>0-Sum of answers given at Q44</i>	X
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ASK ALL:

Q46B) Have any management staff received any leadership and management training, coaching or mentoring following on from contact with the skills broker? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

IF HAVE RECEIVED LEADERSHIP TRAINING (Q46B=1):

Q46C) What form did this Leadership and Management training take? READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Training for a qualification	1
Training but not for a qualification	2
One-to-one coaching or mentoring	3
Other (SPECIFY)	4
Don't know	5

IF STAFF HAVE BEEN TRAINING TOWARDS A LM QUALIFICATION (Q46C=1):

Q46D) What type of qualification have they been working towards?

WRITE IN	
Don't Know	X

IF HAVE RECEIVED LEADERSHIP TRAINING (Q46B=1):

Q46E) Did this come about as a result of the skills broker referring you to a specialist Leadership and Management advisor?

ADD IF NECESSARY: **The Leadership and Management Advisory Service is a discrete service within Train to Gain through which employers can access support and training for senior management.**

DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	3

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

ASK ALL WHO HAVE STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED OR ARE CURRENTLY BEING TRAINED OR DONE LMAS TRAINING (Q31=1 OR Q31=2 OR Q46B=1):

Q47) Could you tell me if your organisation has experienced any of the following benefits as a result of involvement with Train to Gain? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE PER ROW.

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Too early to say
Employees have gained qualifications	1	2	3	4
Employees have gained job-related skills and become better at their jobs	1	2	3	4
We have been able to provide new services and products	1	2	3	4
It has helped improve staff retention and stopped staff leaving	1	2	3	4
It has helped us to attract good staff	1	2	3	4
It has led to a reduction in absenteeism	1	2	3	4
Employees have gained self-confidence	1	2	3	4
Has improved company culture by demonstrating we are interested in staff development	1	2	3	4
Has helped our longer-term competitiveness	1	2	3	4
It has enabled us to meet our legal requirement to train these staff	1	2	3	4
It has improved business strategy and strategic thinking	1	2	3	4
It has improved the day-to-day running of the company / organisation	1	2	3	4

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

ASK ALL WHO HAVE STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED OR ARE CURRENTLY BEING TRAINED OR DONE LMAS TRAINING (Q31=1 OR Q31=2 OR Q46B=1):

Q48) Thinking just about the Train to Gain training you have been involved with, what impact would you say the training has had on _____ (FACTOR)?

Would you say the training has led to an increase in _____ (FACTOR), a decrease, or has the training made no difference?

IF INCREASE OR DECREASE ASK IF LARGE OR SMALL IMPACT.

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE PER ROW.

	Large increase	Small increase	No difference	Small decrease	Large decrease	Don't know
Staff productivity	1	2	3	4	5	X
Product or service quality	1	2	3	4	5	X
Sales and turnover	1	2	3	4	5	X
Profit margins	1	2	3	4	5	X

Section E: Other training outside Train to Gain

ASK ALL

Q49) [IF HAVE STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED OR ARE CURRENTLY BEING TRAINED (Q31/1 or Q31/2 or Q46B=1): Leaving aside the training that you have engaged with under Train to Gain, I would now like to talk about any other training that you may have recently arranged or funded for staff.

[IF HAVE NOT YET ENGAGED WITH TRAINING (Q31/3-7 and NOT Q46B=1): **Changing the subject slightly, I would now like to talk about any other training that you may have recently arranged or funded for staff outside of Train to Gain.**

[IF HAVE STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED OR ARE CURRENTLY BEING TRAINED (Q31/1 or Q31/2 or Q46B=1): **Outside of the training your employees have received under Train to Gain, has your organisation arranged any other training for employees in the past 12 months?**

[IF HAVE NOT YET ENGAGED WITH TRAINING (Q31/3-7 NOT Q46B=1): **Has your organisation arranged any training for employees in the past 12 months?**

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't Know	3	

ASK IF ENGAGED WITH OTHER TRAINING IN PAST 12 MONTHS (Q49/1):

Q50) How many of your employees have been engaged with this training in the past 12 months?

WRITE IN	(1-RESPONSE GIVEN AT Q5)
Don't Know	X

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

ASK IF DK HOW MANY TRAINED IN PAST 12 MONTHS (Q50 /DK):
Q50RAN) Is it roughly...?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

1 – 9	1
10 - 49	2
50 – 249	3
250 or more	4
Don't know / Refused	X

ASK IF ENGAGED WITH OTHER TRAINING IN PAST 12 MONTHS (Q49/1):
Q51) And of those [INSERT NUMBER FROM Q50 OR BAND FROM Q50RAN] employees who have been involved with this training, how many are in managerial, professional or associate professional occupations?

INTERVIEWER NOTE - TOTAL NUMBER OF MANAGERS, PROFESSIONALS AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS IS [INSERT NUMBER OF MANAGERS EMPLOYED AT Q43]

INTERVIEWER NOTE – FOR EXAMPLES OF MANAGERIAL, PROFESSIONAL AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONAL SEE HAND OUT.

WRITE IN	<i>(0 – response given at Q50 or top of band given at Q50RAN)</i>
Don't Know	X

ASK IF ENGAGED WITH OTHER TRAINING IN PAST 12 MONTHS (Q49/1):
Q51a) And of those [INSERT NUMBER FROM Q50 OR BAND FROM Q50RAN] employees who have been involved in the training that you have arranged in the past 12 months, how many have been involved in vocational training leading to a formal qualification?

WRITE IN	<i>(0 – response given at Q50 or top of band given at Q50RAN)</i>
Don't Know	X

IF DON'T KNOW HOW MANY INVOLVED IN TRAINING LEADING TO A QUALIFICATION (Q51a/DK):
Q51RAN) Would it be...?

Less than 10% of the workforce	1
Between 10% and 29% of the workforce	2
More than 30% of the workforce	3
Don't know	4

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

ASK IF ENGAGED WITH OTHER TRAINING IN PAST 12 MONTHS (Q49/1):

Q52) Over the last 12 months, approximately how many employees, have attained as a result of learning or training that you have funded, arranged or supportedREAD OUT

	Number	Don't know
Basic Skills qualifications in Adult Numeracy	<i>0-resonse given at Q51a or Q50/Q50RAN if Q51a=DK</i>	X
Basic Skills qualifications in Adult Literacy	<i>0-resonse given at Q51a or Q50/Q50RAN if Q51a=DK</i>	X
English for Speakers of Other Languages qualifications (ESOL)	<i>0-resonse given at Q51a or Q50/Q50RAN if Q51a=DK</i>	X
An NVQ 2 or other level 2 qualifications or equivalent – by “level 2 or equivalent” I mean qualifications such as 5 GCSEs at Grade A-C, BTEC first or general diploma, or GNVQ intermediate.	<i>0-resonse given at Q51a or Q50/Q50RAN if Q51a=DK</i>	X
An NVQ 3 or other Level 3 qualifications or equivalent – by level 3 we mean qualifications such as 2 A levels, BTEC National or GNVQ Advanced	<i>0-resonse given at Q51a or Q50/Q50RAN if Q51a=DK</i>	X
An NVQ 4 or 5 or other level 4 or higher qualification, such as degrees, MBAs, or professional qualifications	<i>0-resonse given at Q51a or Q50/Q50RAN if Q51a=DK</i>	X

Q53) I'd now like to ask about how this training has been funded. Which of the following apply? READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

We've received fully subsidised training	1
We've received partly subsidised training	2
We've received some training that we've paid for in full ourselves	3
Don't Know	4

ASK ALL:

Q55) Does your establishment have a training plan that specifies in advance the level and type of training your employees will need in the coming year?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

Q56) Does your establishment have a budget for training expenditure?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

Q56B) Which of the following applies to your establishment with regard to the Investors in People Standard or Profile...? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

ADD IF NECESSARY: The Investors in People Standard is a business improvement tool designed to advance an organisation's performance through its people. Investors in People accreditation is achieved through a formal assessment of an employer's working practices by an Investors in People Assessor.

The establishment is recognised as an Investor in People	1
You are working towards the Investor in People Standard	2
The establishment was recognised as an Investor in People but the status has lapsed	3
None of the above	4
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't Know	X

Q56C) Have you heard of the government's Skills Pledge programme which has been established to encourage employers to support their employees in developing their skills? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	X

ASK IF AWARE OF THE SKILLS PLEDGE PROGRAMME (Q56C/1)

Q56D) Has your organisation made a formal commitment to staff training and development through the government's Skills Pledge programme? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Yes, we have made a Skills Pledge	1
Yes, we have plans to make a Skills Pledge	2
No	3
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't Know	X

Section F: Future training activity

ASK ALL

Q57) Having been through the Train to Gain process, how likely would you be to use the service again in the future? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Very likely	1
Fairly likely	2
Fairly unlikely	3
Very unlikely	4
DO NOT READ OUT: Too early to say	5
Don't know	X

IF UNLIKELY TO USE SERVICE AGAIN (Q57/3-4):

Q58) Why do you say that?

WRITE IN	
Don't Know	X

IF LIKELY TO USE SERVICE AGAIN (Q57/1-2):

Q59) What, if any, involvement do you expect to have with Train to Gain in the future? Do you expect...? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE PER ROW.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
To engage in training under Train to Gain in the next year	1	2	X
IF TAKEN UP TRAINING (Q31/1-2): To be in contact with your skills broker in order to evaluate the training that has taken place so far or that is to take place shortly	1	2	X
To be in contact with your skills broker to further assess or re-assess your organisation's skill and training needs	1	2	X

ASK ALL WHO HAVE RECEIVED FULLY SUBSIDISED TRAINING UNDER TRAIN TO GAIN (Q40/1):

Q60) If the type of training your organisation has received on a fully subsidised basis under Train to Gain had been offered but with a cost to you the employer, how likely would you have been to go ahead with the training? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Very likely	1
Fairly likely	2
Fairly unlikely	3
Very unlikely	4
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't Know	X

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

IF LIKELY TO USE SERVICE AGAIN (Q57/1-2):

Q61) Which of the following types of training qualifications would you be interested in your staff undertaking through Train to Gain in the future

Basic Skills qualifications in Adult Numeracy	1
Basic Skills qualifications in Adult Literacy	2
English for Speakers of Other Languages qualifications (ESOL)	3
An NVQ level 2 or other equivalent level 2 qualifications such as 5 GCSEs at Grade A-C, BTEC first or general diploma, or GNVQ intermediate.	4
An NVQ level 3 or other equivalent level 3 qualifications such as 2 A levels, BTEC National or GNVQ Advanced	5
An NVQ level 4 or 5 or other level 4 or higher qualifications such as degrees, MBAs, or professional qualifications	6
DO NOT READ OUT: None of the above	7

ASK ALL

Q63) And how likely would you be to recommend the service to a business colleague outside of your own organisation? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Very likely	1
Fairly likely	2
Fairly unlikely	3
Very unlikely	4
DO NOT READ OUT: Too early to say	5
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't Know	X

ASK ALL

Q63A) Has your expenditure on training for employees increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past 6 months? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Increased	1
Decreased	2
Stayed the same	3
Don't know	4

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

IF TRAINING DECREASED (Q63A/2)

Q63B) How much do you think this decrease in training has been due to the current economic slowdown and financial crisis? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Totally	1
Partially	2
Not at all	3
Don't know	4

ASK ALL

Q63C) And compared to the current level of expenditure on training, do you expect expenditure on training for employees to increase, decrease or stay the same over the next 2 years? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Increase	1
Decrease	2
Stay the same	3
Don't know	4

IF TRAINING TO DECREASE (Q63C/2)

Q63D) How much do you think this decrease in training over the next 2 years will be due to the current economic slowdown and financial crisis? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Totally	1
Partially	2
Not at all	3
Don't know	4

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

ASK ALL:

Q64) Thinking about any future training requirements you may have, which persons or organisations would you approach to get information about what's available? DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Skills broker	1
Regional LSC	2
National LSC	3
Direct to provider(s)	4
Chamber of Commerce	5
Business Link	6
Regional Development Agency/RDA	7
Sector Skills Council	8
An Industry Association / Federation / Board	9
Investors in People	10
Health Authority	11
Local Education Authority, or Local Authority	12
An event or exhibition focusing on training opportunities	13
A website (PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH WEBSITE / WHICH ORGANISATION'S WEBSITE)	
Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	14
Don't know	X

ASK ALL:

Q65) We've now come to the end of my questions on Train to Gain. Have you any further comments you would like to make about the Train to Gain service or the training your organisation has received?

WRITE IN	
No comments	X

Q66) Would you be happy to be contacted again in relation to the ongoing evaluation of Train to Gain?

Yes	1	
No	2	

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

Q67) Would you like to receive a regular emailed communication with news about Train to Gain?

Yes	1	Take email address
No	2	

Q68) Would you be happy for us to pass back your comments to individual skills brokers on an attributable basis so that they can continually try to improve the service that they provide?

IF YES PLEASE ADD: Your comments will be passed back to your skills broker along with your contact details so that they can address any specific problems that you may have.

Yes	1	Take email address
No	2	

IF WANT TO RECEIVE EMAIL (Q67/1 OR Q68/1):

EMAIL) RECORD EMAIL ADDRESS

WRITE IN EMAIL	
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ASK ALL:

NAME) Could I record your name and job title?

WRITE IN NAME	
WRITE IN JOB TITLE	
Refused	X

GEND) INTERVIEWER RECORD GENDER OF RESPONDENT

Female	1
Male	2

THANK AND CLOSE:

Thank you for answering these questions. To re-iterate, this research has been conducted by IFF Research on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council. All of the information you have given us will remain confidential, and will be passed back to the LSC on a non-attributable basis only unless you have given permission for us to pass back comments to skills brokers.

Latest Longitudinal Survey questionnaire script

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Train to Gain Employer Evaluation
Telephone Questionnaire
LONGITUDINAL SURVEY 2

January 2009

- ASK ALL
S1) **Good morning / afternoon. Please could I speak to [NAMED RESPONDENT FROM SWEEP 2]?**

Yes named person speaking / put through	1	GO TO S4
Hard appointment	2	MAKE APPT
Soft Appointment	3	
Named person works at a different site / head office and not able to transfer	4	GO TO S2
Named person no longer works at organisation	5	GO TO S3
Not heard of named contact	6	
Refusal – Company policy	7	THANK AND CLOSE
Refusal – Taken part in recent survey	8	
Refusal – Other reason	9	
Not available during fieldwork period	10	

- IF NEED TO TAKE NEW NUMBER FOR NAMED CONTACT (S1/4):
S2) **Can you give me the correct number for [NAMED RESPONDENT FROM SWEEP 2]?**
RECORD NEW PHONE NUMBER AND RE-DIAL
DP INSTRUCTION: LOOP BACK TO S1

RECORD NEW NUMBER FOR NAMED CONTACT	
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Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

ASK IF NAMED RESPONDENT NO LONGER WORKS AT ORGANISATION OR NOT HEARD OF AT ORGANISATION (S1/5 OR S1/6):

S3) Please may I speak to the manager or director here who is responsible for training at this site?

INTERVIEWER NOTE IF NO TRAINING CONTACT:
ASK FOR PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR HUMAN RESOURCES

Yes put through	1	GO TO S5
Hard appointment	2	MAKE APPT
Soft Appointment	3	
Refusal – Company policy	4	THANK AND CLOSE
Refusal – Taken part in recent survey	5	
Refusal – Other reason	6	
Nobody at site able to answer questions	7	
Not available during fieldwork period	8	

IF SPEAKING TO NAMED CONTACT (S1/1):

S4) Good morning / afternoon. My name is XXXX, calling from IFF Research on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council.

You may remember we spoke to you last year about your companies' experience of the Train to Gain service and you kindly agreed that we could contact you again.

Could you spare around 20 minutes to give us your views on the Train to Gain Service? All your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence and nothing will be attributed to a specific individual or company.

REASSURANCES AS NECESSARY:

- **We are still interested in speaking to you even if you had quite limited contact with a Train to Gain skills broker, and even if you did not engage in training as a result of contact with Train to Gain. We would like to talk in more detail about the issues you raised last time we spoke to you, and your views looking back on your experience of Train to Gain.**
- **If you are no longer involved with Train to Gain, then we would still like to speak to you to review what you have got out of the service, and how Train to Gain could be improved.**
- **You may have been involved with Train to Gain without realising that was what you were taking part in. Your skills broker was based at [BROKER ORGANISATION] and you may have had dealings with them in relation to training opportunities that may be available to you**
- **As you may know Train to Gain was launched in August 2006 and is a service to give employers access to the training and skills that they require for their business. It is being evaluated to assess how the service meets the needs of employers.**
- **If respondent wishes to confirm validity of survey or get more information about aims and objectives, they can call:**
 - **MRS: Market Research Society on FREEPHONE 0500 396999**

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

- IFF: **Laura Godwin or Steve Close: 020 7250 3035**
- LSC **Kate Murphy: 02476 823 401**

Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

Yes, continue	1	GO TO S7
Hard appointment	2	MAKE APPT
Soft Appointment	3	
Respondent not the best person to answer questions on Train to Gain	4	GO TO S6
Organisation has had no involvement with Train to Gain at all	5	THANK AND CLOSE
Refusal – Company policy	6	
Refusal – Taken part in recent survey	7	
Refusal – Other reason	8	
Nobody at site able to answer questions	9	
Not available during fieldwork period	10	

IF SPEAKING TO UNNAMED TRAINING MANAGER / DIRECTOR (S3/1)

S5) Good morning / afternoon. My name is XXXX, calling from IFF Research on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council.

Last year we spoke to [NAMED CONTACT FROM SWEEP 2] about your business' involvement with Train to Gain. At the end of the interview they indicated that they would be happy to be contacted again to talk about your ongoing experiences of Train to Gain. As we understand that [NAMED CONTACT FROM SWEEP 2] is no longer working at this site, we were hoping you would be able to answer some questions on their behalf.

If you are the best person there to speak to about Train to Gain, could you spare around 20 minutes to give us your views on the Train to Gain service? All your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence and nothing will be attributed to a specific individual or company.

REASSURANCES AS NECESSARY:

- **We are still interested in speaking to you even if you had quite limited contact with a Train to Gain skills broker, and even if you did not engage in training as a result of contact with Train to Gain. We would like to talk in more detail about the issues you raised last time we spoke to you, and your views looking back on your experience of Train to Gain.**
- **If you are no longer involved with Train to Gain, then we would still like to speak to you to review what you have got out of the service, and how Train to Gain could be improved.**
- **You may have been involved with Train to Gain without realising that was what you were taking part in. Your skills broker was based at [BROKER ORGANISATION] and you may have had dealings with them in relation to training opportunities that may be available to you**
- **As you may know Train to Gain was launched in August 2006 and is a service to give employers access to the training and skills that they require for their business. It is being evaluated to assess how the service meets the needs of employers.**
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Employer Evaluation of Train to Gain: Sweep 4 research report

- MRS: **Market Research Society on FREEPHONE 0500 396999**
- IFF: **Laura Godwin or Steve Close: 020 7250 3035**
- LSC **Kate Murphy: 02476 823 401**

Yes, continue	1	GO TO S7
Hard appointment	2	MAKE APPT
Soft Appointment	3	
Respondent not the best person to answer questions on Train to Gain	4	GO TO S6
Organisation has had no involvement with Train to Gain at all	5	THANK AND CLOSE
Refusal – Company policy	6	
Refusal – Taken part in recent survey	7	
Refusal – Other reason	8	
Nobody at site able to answer questions	9	
Not available during fieldwork period	10	

S6) IF RESPONDENT NOT BEST PERSON TO SPEAK ABOUT TRAIN TO GAIN (S4/4 OR S5/4):
Can you give me the correct contact details of the person I need to speak to?
 RECORD NEW CONTACT DETAILS AND RE-DIAL
DP INSTRUCTION: LOOP BACK TO S1

NEW CONTACT NAME	
NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER	
NEW JOB TITLE	

S7) ASK ALL
When we last spoke to your business last year, it was indicated that [INSERT Q5 FROM SW2] staff were on the payroll at your establishment. Including you and any working proprietors, how many people are now on the payroll at this location?.
 ENTER EXACT NUMBER

ADD AS NECESSARY: Do not include outside contractors/agency staff.
ADD AS NECESSARY: Include both full-time and part-time staff
ADD AS NECESSARY: If you are unsure of the exact number please provide an approximation

WRITE IN	1-99999
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S8) IF DON'T KNOW NUMBER OF PEOPLE AT SITE (S7/DK):
Would you estimate it is...READ OUT

4 or fewer	1
5-9	2

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10-24	3
25-49	4
50-99	5
100-249	6
250 plus	7
Don't know	X

Section A: Relationship with the skills broker

ASK ALL

Q1) Have you had any contact with a skills broker in the last year or so?

ADD IF NECESSARY:

A skills broker is a person who will have talked to you about your business' training needs and provided advice about what skills your business has right now, and what it might need in the future. The skills broker would be from a different organisation to that which delivered the training.

Your skills broker is based at [BROKER ORGANISATION].

Yes	1	GO TO Q4
No	2	ASK Q2
Don't Know	X	GO TO Q12

IF NO CONTACT WITH SKILLS BROKER (Q1/2)

Q2) Would you have liked to have been in contact with a skills broker during this time?

Yes	1	GO TO Q12
No	2	ASK Q3
Don't Know	X	

IF WOULDN'T HAVE LIKED ANY CONTACT (Q2/2 OR 3)

Q3) Why do you say that?

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Skills broker already dealt with skills and training needs	1	GO TO Q12
Disappointed with previous dealings	2	

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Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	3	
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X	

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IF HAD CONTACT WITH SKILLS BROKER IN LAST YEAR OR SO (Q1/1)

- Q4) Which of the following statements best describes the relationship your organisation currently has with your skills broker?**
READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

We have regular ongoing contact	1	ASK Q5
We are in touch occasionally	2	
We have had limited recent contact but we will re-contact them where a training need arises in the future	3	
We do not have a relationship with a skills broker	4	GO TO Q6
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X	ASK Q5

IF ANY RELATIONSHIP (Q4/1-3 OR 5)

- Q5) Can you tell me how satisfied you have been with the frequency with which your skills broker has kept in touch. Do you feel there is too much contact, about the right amount or do you feel there has been too little contact?**
SINGLE CODE.

Too much	1
About the right amount	2
Too little	3
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

IF HAD CONTACT WITH SKILLS BROKER IN LAST YEAR OR SO (Q1/1)

- Q6) And again over the last year or so, have you had a single point of contact and dealt with the same skills broker throughout, or have you been in contact with more than one skills broker?**
SINGLE CODE

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF MORE THAN ONE PROMPT WHETHER 2/3 OR 4+

Single point of contact	1	GO TO Q8
2 or 3 contacts	2	ASK Q7
4 or more	3	
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X	GO TO Q8

IF BEEN IN CONTACT WITH MORE THAN 1 BROKER (Q6/2 OR 3)

- Q7) And has this caused you any problems?**
SINGLE CODE

Yes (PLEASE SPECIFY)	1
No	2
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

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IF HAD CONTACT WITH SKILLS BROKER IN LAST YEAR OR SO (Q1/1)

Q8) I'd now like to ask you what type of involvement or level of contact you have had with your skills broker over the last year or so. Have they...?
READ OUT.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
a) Sent something through the post or via e-mail	1	2	X
b) Had a brief conversation with you on the phone	1	2	X
c) Answered a query on training	1	2	X
Helped you to find solutions for training needs that you had already identified.	1	2	X
e) Talked to you about your organisation's skills and training needs - this is sometimes referred to as an Organisational Needs Assessment or ONA	1	2	X

IF HAD ONA (Q8E/1)

Q9) And when approximately did this take place. Was it...?
READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

Around a year or so ago	1	GO TO Q12
Between 6 and 12 months ago	2	
Between 3 and 6 months ago	3	
Within the last 3 months	4	
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know / Can't remember	X	

IF NOT HAD ONA (Q8E/2 OR X)

Q10) Did your skills broker offer to discuss your organisation's skills and training needs or to conduct an Organisational Needs Assessment or ONA?

Yes	1	ASK Q11
No	2	GO TO Q12
Don't Know	X	

IF OFFERED ONA BUT DIDN'T TAKE IT UP (Q10/1)

Q11) Why didn't you take up the offer?
DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Still plan to do so	1
It was arranged but we had to cancel	2
It was arranged but they cancelled / didn't turn up	3
No time to do it	4
No skills or training needs	5
Didn't like the broker (PLEASE SPECIFY WHY NOT)	6

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Other (PEASE SPECIFY)	7	
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ASK ALL

Q12) How likely is it that you will maintain your relationship with your skills broker in the next year or so? Is it ... ?

READ OUT SINGLE CODE

Very likely	1
Quite likely	2
Not very likely	3
Not at all likely	4
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

Q13) And in terms of your current understanding of the Train to Gain service, would you say that you had a...?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

Very detailed level of understanding	1
Fairly detailed understanding	2
Some understanding	3
Or have you only really heard the name	4
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

Section B: Satisfaction with the skills brokerage service

Q14) IF HAD CONTACT WITH SKILLS BROKER IN LAST YEAR OR SO (Q1/1). OTHERS GO TO Q17
I am now going to read out a number of factors relating to the service you have received from your skills broker, and I'd like to know how SATISFIED you have been with that particular aspect of the service. Please give your rating on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is highly dissatisfied and 10 is highly satisfied. So on a scale of 1 to 10 how satisfied have you been with...

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE FOR EACH FACTOR. ROTATE FACTORS.

- i) the skills broker's understanding of your training and development needs?**
- ii) the impartiality of advice offered by your skills broker?**
- iii) the skills broker's ability to signpost you to a range of providers?**
- iv) the ease of getting hold of your skills broker?**
- v) the speed with which agreed follow-up actions take place?**
- vi) the expertise and knowledge of the skills broker?**
- vii) the skills broker's ability to translate your company's needs into an action plan?**
- viii) the skills broker's knowledge of training solutions within Train to Gain, and of training providers in your area?**
- ix) the skills broker's ability to identify potential funding to support your training activities?**
- x) the skills broker's ability to explain various types of accreditation and qualifications?**

	Highly dissatisfied										Highly satisfied	Don't know	N/A
i	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X		
ii	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X		
iii	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X		
iv	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X		
v	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X		
vi	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X		
vii	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X		
viii	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X		
ix	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X		
x	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	X		

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Q15) And on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is highly dissatisfied and 10 is highly satisfied, overall how satisfied have you been with the service you have received from your skills broker ?

PROMPT AS NECESSARY. SINGLE CODE.

1 – Highly dissatisfied	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10 – Highly satisfied	10
Don't know	X

IF DISSATISFIED WITH SERVICE OVERALL (Q15/1-4):

Q16) Can you tell me why you have given this rating? PROBE FULLY AND WRITE IN VERBATIM

WRITE IN	
Don't Know	X

Section C: Training status and satisfaction

ASK THOSE WHO SAID TRAINED AT SWEEP 2 (SW2_TRAIN/1)

Q17a) When we spoke to [IF S1=1 “you”][IF S1=5 OR 6 “your business”] in [INSERT MONTH FROM SW2] 2008, [IF S1=1 “you”][IF S1=5 OR 6 “it was”] mentioned that some of your staff [IF SW2_Q31A=1 “had undertaken”] [IF SW2_Q31B=1 “were undertaking”] training as a result of discussions you had with your skills broker. Since then have you arranged any additional training for any of your staff as a result of discussions you had with your skills broker?

Yes	1	ASK Q17D
No	2	GO TO D17D
Don't Know	3	

ASK THOSE WHO SAID ONLY PLANNING TO TRAIN AT SWEEP 2 (SW2_TRNCOM/1 & SW2_TRAIN/2)

Q17b1) When we spoke to you in [INSERT MONTH FROM SW2] 2008, you mentioned that you were planning some training for your staff as a result of discussions you had with your skills broker. Has this training that was planned now finished, is it still taking place or did the training not go ahead?

Training complete	1	ASK Q17B2
Training still taking place	2	
Training not started/ not gone ahead	3	
Don't Know	4	

ASK THOSE WHO SAID ONLY PLANNING TO TRAIN AT SWEEP 2 (SW2_TRNCOM/1 & SW2_TRAIN/2)

Q17b2) And since then have you arranged any additional training for any of your staff as a result of discussions you had with your skills broker?

Yes	1	ASK Q17D
No	2	GO TO D17D (IF Q17B1/1 OR 2). OTHERWISE
Don't Know	3	GO TO Q53.

ASK THOSE WHO SAID NOT TRAINED AT SWEEP 2 (SW2_TRNCOM/2)

Q17c) Have you arranged any training for any of your staff as a result of discussions you had with your skills broker?

Yes	1	ASK Q17D
No	2	ASK Q20
Don't Know	3	

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ASK IF UNDERTAKEN OR ARRANGED TRAINING (SW2_TRAIN/1 OR Q17B2/1 OR Q17C/1)

Q17d) So thinking about all of the training you have arranged since your initial contact with the skills broker in [INSERT MNTH] 2007, which of the following apply.

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

At least some of this training has already finished	1	ASK Q18
Staff are currently undertaking the training	2	
Training is planned and staff are scheduled to start it shortly	3	ASK Q53
We are waiting for confirmation from a skills broker or a training provider that training is going ahead	4	

D17D – DUMMY VARIABLE FOR ROUTING (MULTICODE)

At least some of this training has already finished	1	
Staff are currently undertaking the training	2	
Training is planned and staff are scheduled to start it shortly	3	
We are waiting for confirmation from a skills broker or a training provider that training is going ahead	4	

=1 IF Q17B1=1 OR Q17D=1 OR Q17A=2,3

=2 IF Q17B1=2 OR Q17D=2

=3 IF Q17D=3

=4 IF Q17D=4

IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q18) Was any of this training fully or partly subsidised through Train to Gain?

Yes	1	GO TO Q23
No	2	
Don't Know	X	

IF NOT ARRANGED TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (Q17C/2 OR 3).

Q20) Can I just check, have you ever discussed training solutions with your skills broker?

Yes	1	ASK Q21
No	2	GO TO INSTRUCTION ABOVE Q53
Don't Know	X	

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IF DISCUSSED TRAINING WITH BROKER BUT NOT UNDERTAKEN ANY (Q20/1)

Q21) Which of the following best describes the situation with regard to the training that you discussed?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

We are still undecided whether to go ahead with any training that was discussed	1	ASK Q22
We have decided not to go ahead with any training that was discussed	2	
Other – please specify	3	

IF DISCUSSED TRAINING WITH BROKER BUT NOT UNDERTAKEN ANY (Q21/1 OR 2)

Q22) To what extent do you agree that the following are reasons for not [TEXT SUB IF Q21/1 – “yet”] taking up any of the training that was discussed?

	Disagree strongly	Disagree slightly	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree slightly	Agree strongly	Don't Know
The type of the training suggested was not appropriate or relevant	1	2	3	4	5	X
The training suggested was too basic for our needs	1	2	3	4	5	X
The training suggested was too advanced or specialised for our needs	1	2	3	4	5	X
The training required too much time from our staff	1	2	3	4	5	X
The training was too expensive	1	2	3	4	5	X
Staff were not eligible to receive subsidised training	1	2	3	4	5	X
Staff were not interested in receiving the training	1	2	3	4	5	X
We decided that training was not a priority for the business	1	2	3	4	5	X
We found the same or similar training opportunities elsewhere	1	2	3	4	5	X

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IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q23) Overall, on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is highly dissatisfied and 10 is highly satisfied, how satisfied have you been with the training provider or college and the training they have supplied you with following discussions with your skills broker? ?

PROMPT AS NECESSARY

1 – Highly dissatisfied	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10 – Highly satisfied	10
Don't know	X

IF DISSATISFIED WITH TRAINING OVERALL (Q23/1-4):

Q24) Can you tell me why you have given this rating?

PROBE FULLY AND WRITE IN VERBATIM

WRITE IN	
Don't Know	X

Section D: Impact of Train to Gain on staff

IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q25) [IF TRAINED AT SWEEP 2 (SW2_TRAIN/1)]
When we spoke to your business last year, you indicated that [INSERT SW2_Q44SUM] staff at your establishment had trained as a result of discussions you have had with your skills broker.
In total, [IF SW2_Q44SUM>0 “including those [INSERT SW2_Q44SUM] staff,” how many of those on your payroll at your establishment would you say have participated in training undertaken as a result of discussions you have had with your skills broker, including those who have since left the company?

ADD AS NECESSARY: If you are unsure of the exact number please provide an approximation

WRITE IN	SW2_Q44SUM-99999
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IF Q25 < SW2_Q44SUM

Q25B) You have given a number of staff trained that is lower than the number provided when we spoke to your business last year. Could you confirm that <INSERT Q25> is the correct number who have participated in training undertaken as a result of discussions you have had with your skills broker, including those who have since left the company.

Yes	1	ASK Q26
No	2	GO BACK TO Q25 AND INSER CORRECT NUMBER

IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q26) Thinking about all training your staff have participated in as a result of discussions with your skills broker, has any of this training been designed to lead to the following qualifications...?

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FOR EACH YES AT Q26

Q27) And how many of these [INSERT NUMBER FROM Q25] staff have attained or are working toward attaining...READ OUT

ADD AS NECESSARY: If you are unsure of the exact number please provide an approximation

	Q26			Q27	
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Number	Don't Know
a) Basic Skills qualifications in Adult Numeracy or Literacy or ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages qualifications)	1	2	X	0- answer given at Q25	X
b) An NVQ 2 or other level 2 qualifications or equivalent – by “level 2 or equivalent” I mean qualifications such as 5 GCSEs at Grade A-C, BTEC first or general diploma, or GNVQ intermediate.	1	2	X	0- answer given at Q25	X
c) An NVQ 3 or other Level 3 qualifications or equivalent – by level 3 we mean qualifications such as 2 A levels, BTEC National or GNVQ Advanced	1	2	X	0- answer given at Q25	X
d) An NVQ 4 or 5 or other level 4 or higher qualification, such as degrees, MBAs, or professional qualifications	1	2	X	0- answer given at Q25	X

Q28) IF ANY TRAINING TO LEVEL 2 (Q26B/1) AND GIVEN NUMBER AT Q27B I'd like to understand a bit more about your staff who have attained or who are working toward attaining an NVQ level 2 or other level 2 qualification. First of all, can you describe for me in more detail the job titles or primary roles of those who have undertaken or who are currently undertaking this training?

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: Probe for full details, for example, if ‘supervisor’ probe for ‘what type of supervisor’?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: ENTER EACH DETAILED RESPONSE AS SEPARATE ENTRY (UP TO 3 SPECIFIC JOB TITLES – IF RESPONDENT CITES MORE THAN 3 THEN ASK FOR THOSE WITH MOST PEOPLE TRAINING AT LEVEL 2)

WRITE IN. TO BE CODED TO 4 DIGIT SOC

1)
2)
3)

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ASK IF MORE THAN 1 OCCUPATION ENTERED AT Q28. FOR EACH SPECIFIC OCCUPATION GIVEN AT Q28 ASK:

Q29) And how many of your [INSERT JOB TITLE TEXT FROM Q28] staff have attained or are working toward attaining an NVQ level 2 or other level 2 qualification?

	Number
Occupation 1	<i>1 - answer given at Q27B</i>
Occupation 2	<i>1 - answer given at Q27B</i>
Occupation 3	<i>1 - answer given at Q27B</i>

DP INSTRUCTION:

IF 2 OCCUPATIONS GIVEN AT Q28, CHECK SUM OF Q29 IS EQUAL TO Q27B.

IF 3 OCCUPATIONS GIVEN AT Q28, CHECK SUM OF Q29 IS NOT MORE THAN Q27B.

IF NOT RE-ASK Q29 WITH FOLLOWING TEXT: This sums to [SUM OF Q29] yet earlier you told me you had [INSERT NUMBER FROM Q27B] people who have attained or who are working toward attaining an NVQ level 2 or other level 2 qualification. Can I just check your answers again?

IF ANY TRAINING TO LEVEL 2 (Q26B/1)

Q30) I'd like to know how this Level 2 training has been funded so can you tell me which of the following apply?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

We've received some fully subsidised Level 2 training through Train to Gain	1
We've received some partly subsidised Level 2 training through Train to Gain	2
We've received some Level 2 training that we've paid for in full ourselves	3
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't Know	4

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Q31) IF ANY TRAINING TO LEVEL 3 (Q26C/1) AND GIVEN NUMBER AT Q27C I'd [TEXT SUB IF ANY TRAINING TO LEVEL 2: "also"] like to understand a bit more about your staff who have attained or who are working toward attaining an NVQ level 3 or other level 3 qualification. Can you describe for me in more detail the job titles or primary roles of those who have undertaken or who are currently undertaking this training?

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: Probe for full details, for example, if 'supervisor' probe for 'what type of supervisor'?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: ENTER EACH DETAILED RESPONSE AS SEPARATE ENTRY (UP TO 3 SPECIFIC JOB TITLES – IF RESPONDENT CITES MORE THAN 3 THEN ASK FOR THOSE WITH MOST PEOPLE TRAINING AT LEVEL 3)

WRITE IN. TO BE CODED TO 4 DIGIT SOC

1)
2)
3)

ASK IF MORE THAN 1 OCCUPATION ENTERED AT Q31
FOR EACH SPECIFIC OCCUPATION GIVEN AT Q31 ASK:

Q32) And how many of your [INSERT JOB TITLE TEXT FROM Q31] staff have attained or are working toward attaining an NVQ level 3 or other level 3 qualification?

	Number
Occupation 1	<i>1 - answer given at Q27C</i>
Occupation 2	<i>1 - answer given at Q27C</i>
Occupation 3	<i>1 - answer given at Q27C</i>

DP INSTRUCTION:

IF 2 OCCUPATIONS GIVEN AT Q31, CHECK SUM OF Q32 IS EQUAL TO Q27C.

IF 3 OCCUPATIONS GIVEN AT Q31, CHECK SUM OF Q32 IS NOT MORE THAN Q27C.

IF NOT RE-ASK Q32 WITH FOLLOWING TEXT: This sums to [SUM OF Q32] yet earlier you told me you had [INSERT NUMBER FROM Q27C] people who have attained or who are working toward attaining an NVQ level 3 or other level 3 qualification. Can I just check your answers again?

Q33) IF ANY TRAINING TO LEVEL 3 (Q26C/1) I'd like to know how this Level 3 training has been funded so can you tell me which of the following apply?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

We've received some fully subsidised Level 3 training through Train to Gain	1
We've received some partly subsidised Level 3 training through Train to Gain	2
We've received some Level 3 training that we've paid for in full ourselves	3

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(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't Know	4
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IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q34) Again thinking about all training your staff have participated in as a result of discussions with your skills broker, we're interested to know whether training delivered through Train to Gain has resulted in staff learning new skills and / or improving their existing skills. So therefore, on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is "Not at all" and "10 is "To a great extent", can you tell me to what extent training delivered through Train to Gain has resulted in employees learning new skills?

And on the same scale can you tell me to what extent training delivered through Train to Gain has resulted in employees improving their existing skills?

	Q34A	Q34B
1 – Not at all	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9
10 – To a great extent	10	10
Don't know	X	X

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IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q47) Have any staff been promoted or improved their job status as a result of the training they received following your discussions with the skills broker?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF YES THEN ASK WHETHER THIS IS ALL STAFF THAT HAVE RECEIVED TRAINING OR SOME STAFF

Yes – All staff	1
Yes – Some staff	2
No	3
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q49) Have any staff received a pay increase as a result of training received following your discussions with the skills broker?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF YES THEN ASK WHETHER THIS IS ALL STAFF THAT HAVE RECEIVED TRAINING OR SOME STAFF

Yes – All staff	1
Yes – Some staff	2
No	3
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q50) And has anyone left your organisation as a result of Train to Gain?

Yes	1	GO TO Q51
No	2	GO TO Q 53
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	3	

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IF SOMEONE HAS LEFT BECAUSE OF TRAIN TO GAIN (Q50=1)

Q51) Was this because...?

READ OUT

	Yes	No	Don't Know
They were reluctant to do the training	1	2	X
They were able to use the skills acquired through Train to Gain to find a better job	1	2	X
They were able to use their qualification to find a better job	1	2	X
Or was it for any other reason (PLEASE SPECIFY)	1	2	X

Q52) How many staff have left as a direct result of Train to Gain?

ADD AS NECESSARY: If you are unsure of the exact number please provide an approximation

WRITE IN	1-99999 (ALLOW DK)
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IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING IN BOTH SWEEPS (SW2_Q44SUM>0 AND Q25>0)

Q52B) You said earlier that [INSERT Q25] staff in total have participated in training as a result of discussions with your skills broker. How many of these participated in training just in the last year?

ADD AS NECESSARY: If you are unsure of the exact number please provide an approximation

WRITE IN	1-Q25
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Section E: Impact of Train to Gain on training ‘culture’

ASK ALL

Q53) Changing the subject slightly, I’d now like ask you what impact Train to Gain has made on how training and workforce development is viewed in your workplace.

Can you tell me to what extent you agree with the following statements regards being involved with Train to Gain. Has it...

READ OUT. ROTATE STATEMENTS

	Disagree strongly	Disagree slightly	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree slightly	Agree strongly	Don't Know
Helped you to identify skills missing amongst employees or that need improving	1	2	3	4	5	X
Helped you to identify weaknesses in the way that your organisation develops its staff	1	2	3	4	5	X
Helped you to identify skills that your organisation may need in the future	1	2	3	4	5	X
IF ARRANGED TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2): Improved the quality of the training that is undertaken at this establishment	1	2	3	4	5	X
IF ARRANGED TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2): Increased the amount of training undertaken	1	2	3	4	5	X
Given you a better understanding of the training available locally	1	2	3	4	5	X
Made you plan training more	1	2	3	4	5	X
Made training and workforce development a higher priority for management	1	2	3	4	5	X
IF ARRANGED TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2): Improved the company culture by demonstrating you are interested in staff development	1	2	3	4	5	X

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IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q55) Have any of your staff who have received training as a result of discussions with your skills broker gone on to receive further training or are there plans for them to do so in the future?

IF YES: Is this further training through Train to Gain or is outside of Train to Gain?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Yes – already receiving further training – through Train to Gain	1
Yes – already receiving further training – not through Train to Gain	2
Yes – plans for them to receive further training in the future training – through Train to Gain	3
Yes – plans for them to receive further training in the future training – not through Train to Gain	4
No	5
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

Section F: Impact of Train to Gain on the business

IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q56) I'd now like ask you whether you feel there have been any broader business benefits of being involved with Train to Gain

Could you tell me if your organisation has experienced any of the following benefits as a result of the training delivered to your employees through Train to Gain?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE PER ROW. ROTATE STATEMENTS

	Yes	No	(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	(DO NOT READ OUT) Too early to say
Improved sales and turnover	1	2	3	4
Improved profits	1	2	3	4
Improved productivity	1	2	3	4
We have been able to provide new services and products	1	2	3	4
It has helped improve staff retention and stopped staff leaving	1	2	3	4
It has helped us to attract and recruit good staff	1	2	3	4
It has led to a reduction in absenteeism	1	2	3	4
Improved quality standards	1	2	3	4
Improved customer service standards	1	2	3	4
It has improved our image across the industry or sector we work in	1	2	3	4

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IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q57) Could you tell me if your organisation has experienced any of the following impacts as result of the training delivered to your employees through Train to Gain?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE PER ROW. ROTATE STATEMENTS

	Yes	No	(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	(DO NOT READ OUT) Too early to say
Our wage costs have increased as a result of our staff being more highly skilled and/or qualified	1	2	3	4
We have become less productive as a result of the number of hours lost to training	1	2	3	4
We have not been able to meet customer or production requirements as a result of people being away at training	1	2	3	4
Staff who you feel do not require this training have requested the same or similar training	1	2	3	4
The management time involved in the administration of Train to Gain would put me off going through the process again	1	2	3	4

IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q58) Has your involvement with Train to Gain had any other impact on your business, whether positive or negative?

INTERVIEWER NOTE – PROMPT WHETHER POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE IMPACT

Yes - positive	1	ASK Q59A
Yes – negative	2	ASK Q59B
No	3	GO TO Q60
Don't know	4	

Q59) What have these impacts been?

DP INSTRUCTION – SEPARATE OPEN-ENDED FOR + AND - COMMENTS

Q59a - Positive	Q59b - Negative
PROBE FULLY	PROBE FULLY

Section G: Additionality

IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q60) Has your involvement in Train to Gain had any of the following effects...? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE PER ROW.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
a. We have trained more staff than we would have done otherwise	1	2	X
b. We have trained staff who we had not trained before	1	2	X
c. We have trained more junior or less experienced staff than we would have done otherwise	1	2	X
d. We have trained staff in different occupational groups than we would have done otherwise	1	2	X
e. We have provided better quality training than we would have done otherwise	1	2	X
f. We have trained staff to a qualification level which would not have been attained otherwise	1	2	X

IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2)

Q61) How likely do you think it is that staff trained as a result of your contact with the Train to Gain skills broker would have received the same or similar training in any case? READ OUT

Very likely	1	GO TO Q63
Quite likely	2	
Not very likely	3	ASK Q62
Not at all likely	4	
Don't know	X	ASK Q63A

IF WOULDN'T HAVE RECEIVED SAME OR SIMILAR TRAINING (Q61/3 OR 4)

Q62) Would they have received ANY training without the involvement of the skills broker?

Yes	1	GO TO Q63A
No	2	
Don't know	3	

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IF LIKELY TO HAVE RECEIVED SAME OR SIMILAR TRAINING (Q61/1 OR 2)

- Q63) Why did you train your staff through Train to Gain instead?
 PROBE: Why did you not arrange it through other means?
 Did you receive any additional value as a result of being involved with Train to Gain**

PROBE FULLY

ASK ALL

- Q63a) IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2) Outside of the training your employees have received as a result of discussions with your skills broker, has your organisation arranged any other training for employees over the last 18 months or so?**

IF NOT ARRANGED TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D not 1 or 2)

Has your organisation arranged any training for employees outside of Train to Gain over the last 18 months or so?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	X

IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER OR ARRANGED OTHER TRAINING OUTSIDE TRAIN TO GAIN (D17D/1 OR 2 OR Q63a/1)

- Q63b) [FOR 1ST ITERATION: To what extent have your staff become more motivated as a result of [TEXT SUB IF D17D/1 OR 2 AND Q63A/1 "ALL"] the training that they have received over the last 18 months or so? Would you say a lot, a little or has there been no change...?] [FOR SUBSEQUENT ITERATIONS: And as a result of this training, to what extent have staff.....]. SINGLE CODE**

A lot	1	ASK Q63C
A little	2	
No change	3	GO TO Q64
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't Know	X	

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IF UNDERTAKEN TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER **AND** ARRANGED OTHER TRAINING OUTSIDE TRAIN TO GAIN AND STAFF MORE MOTIVATED (D17D/1 OR 2 AND Q63A/1 AND Q63B/1 OR 2)

Q63c) And to what extent would you say that this improvement is attributable to the training your staff have received through Train to Gain. Would you say wholly, partially or not at all?
SINGLE CODE

Wholly	1
Partially	2
Not at all	3
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't Know	X

REPEAT Q63B AND Q63C FOR FOLLOWING IMPACTS ON STAFF – INTERLEAVE Q63B WITH Q63C.

Gained in self-confidence
Improved their numeracy and / or literacy skills
Improved their IT skills
Improved their job-specific technical skills
Improved their communication skills
Started working better as a team
Gained more job satisfaction
Become more forthcoming and open about skills they might lack

Section H: Future involvement and closing questions

ASK ALL

Q64) What, if any, involvement do you expect to have with Train to Gain in the future? Do you expect...? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE PER ROW.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
To engage in training under Train to Gain in the next year	1	2	X
IF ARRANGED TRAINING AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION WITH SKILLS BROKER (D17D/1 OR 2): To be in contact with your skills broker in order to evaluate the training that has taken place so far or that is to take place shortly	1	2	X
To be in contact with your skills broker to further assess or re-assess your organisation's skill and training needs	1	2	X

ASK ALL

Q65) And how likely would you be to recommend the service to a business colleague outside of your own organisation? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Very likely	1
Fairly likely	2
Fairly unlikely	3
Very unlikely	4
DO NOT READ OUT: Too early to say	5
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't Know	X

ASK ALL

Q66A) Has your expenditure on training for employees increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past 6 months? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Increased	1
Decreased	2
Stayed the same	3
Don't know	4

IF TRAINING DECREASED (Q66A/2)

Q66B) How much do you think this decrease in training has been due to the current economic slowdown and financial crisis? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Totally	1
Partially	2
Not at all	3

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Don't know	4
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ASK ALL

Q67A) And compared to the current level of expenditure on training, do you expect expenditure on training for employees to increase, decrease or stay the same over the next 2 years? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Increased	1
Decreased	2
Stayed the same	3
Don't know	4

IF TRAINING TO DECREASE (Q67A/2)

Q67B) How much do you think this decrease in training over the next 2 years will be due to the current economic slowdown and financial crisis? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Totally	1
Partially	2
Not at all	3
Don't know	4

ASK ALL

Q68) Does your establishment have a training plan that specifies in advance the level and type of training your employees will need in the coming year?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

ASK ALL

Q69) Does your establishment have a budget for training expenditure?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

ASK ALL

Q70) Which of the following applies to your establishment with regard to the Investors in People Standard or Profile...?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

The establishment is recognised as an Investor in People	1
You are working towards the Investor in People Standard	2

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The establishment was recognised as an Investor in People but the status has lapsed	3
None of the above	4
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't Know	X

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ASK ALL

Q71) Have you heard of the government's Skills Pledge which has been established to encourage employers to support their employees in developing their skills?

ADD IF NECESSARY: The Skills Pledge is a voluntary, public commitment by the leadership of a company or organisation to support all its employees to develop their basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, and work towards relevant, valuable qualifications to at least Level 2 (equivalent to 5 good GCSEs).

Yes	1	ASK Q72
No	2	GO TO Q73
Don't know	3	

ASK IF AWARE OF THE SKILLS PLEDGE PROGRAMME (Q69/1)

Q72) Has your organisation made a formal commitment to staff training and development through the government's Skills Pledge?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Yes, we have made a Skills Pledge	1
Yes, we have plans to make a Skills Pledge	2
No	3
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't Know	X

ASK ALL:

Q73) We've now come to the end of my questions on Train to Gain. Have you any further comments you would like to make about the Train to Gain service or the training your organisation has received?

WRITE IN	
No comments	X

Q74) Would you be happy to be contacted again in relation to the ongoing evaluation of Train to Gain?

Yes	1	
No	2	

Q75) Would you like to receive a regular emailed communication with news about Train to Gain?

Yes	1	Take email address
No	2	

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Q76) Would you be happy for us to pass back your comments to individual skills brokers on an attributable basis so that the LSC can continually try to improve the service that they provide?

IF YES PLEASE ADD: Your comments will be passed back to your skills broker along with your contact details so that they can address any specific problems that you may have.

Yes	1	Take email address
No	2	

**IF WANT TO RECEIVE EMAIL (Q75/1 OR Q76/1):
EMAIL) RECORD EMAIL ADDRESS**

WRITE IN EMAIL	
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**ASK ALL:
NAME) Can I take your name and job title?**

WRITE IN NAME	
WRITE IN JOB TITLE	
Refused	X

GEND) INTERVIEWER RECORD GENDER OF RESPONDENT

Female	1
Male	2

THANK AND CLOSE:

Thank you for answering these questions. To re-iterate, this research has been conducted by IFF Research on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council. All of the information you have given us will remain confidential, and will be passed back to the LSC on a non-attributable basis only unless you have given permission for us to pass back comments to skills brokers.

