



Leading learning and skills

National Learner Satisfaction Survey: Highlights from 2004/05

July 2006

Of interest to everyone involved in sustaining and improving levels of learner satisfaction across the post-16 education and training sector

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The 2004/05 National Learner Satisfaction
Survey was managed by the research team at
Learning and Skills Council, National Office.

In partnership with GfK NOP.

 **For information**

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Executive Summary

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This report contains highlights of results from the 2004/05 National Learner Satisfaction Survey (NLSS).

A national sample of over 43,000 learners were contacted between February and June 2005 and interviewed about their current learning experiences. These learners were studying on a range of programmes in further education, work-based learning and adult and community learning.

Learners were questioned about satisfaction levels relating to different aspects of their learning experience, the quality of teaching, management of learning, pre-entry advice and guidance, learner support and the benefits and impacts of learning.

Results for further education provision can be analysed over time at regional and local level.

National learner satisfaction levels were first captured in 2001/02. The 2004/05 survey gives the fourth year of results and shows the highest overall learner satisfaction levels to date. These results are a credit to all involved in the learning and skills sector.

Many positive key messages are contained in this report and a wealth of data is now available for longitudinal analysis of different sub-groups of learners.

Introduction

1

This is the fourth year of results for the NLSS.

2

For the 2004/05 survey, over 43,000 learners were interviewed from different types of provision:

- further education
- work-based learning
- adult and community learning (accredited and non-accredited).

3

The results give a valuable national picture and contain a wealth of information about different sub-groups of learners. For example, in further education provision, results can be analysed by different variables such as:

- age
- gender
- ethnicity
- area of learning
- level of current qualification
- disability, learning difficulty
- prior attainment level.

4

The sample size for further education learners ensures that results can be analysed in detail at regional and local LSC level.

5

This highlights report contains key findings and messages from the 2004/05 survey. Longitudinal results from key headline questions are presented, along with a snapshot of different key results for each type of provision.

6

Three reports will be published containing results from the different types of provision: further education, work-based learning and adult and community learning. These reports will present further analysis of NLSS results.

7

Tailored analyses of the results are available through the research tools website <http://researchtools.lsc.gov.uk> which contains the complete NLSS 2004/05 dataset.

8

This report contains some isolated findings from the survey and is not designed to be self-contained. Further information about results in this highlights report can be obtained from the three reports or the research tools website.

Methodology

9

A total of 43,671 learners were interviewed for the 2004/05 NLSS. Of these learners, 31,648 were interviewed from further education. The NLSS sample was designed to ensure a minimum of 500 learners were interviewed per local LSC. This allows for robust longitudinal analysis of further education results at local LSC level. This format continues from the 2003/04 NLSS methodology.

The number of learners interviewed from each type of provision is as shown in the table below:

10

Learners were interviewed in three 'waves' of interviews from February to June 2005. The interview lasted for approximately 10 minutes. Sets of 'core' questions were asked to learners in each wave and covered the areas:

- overall satisfaction with the learning experience
- overall satisfaction with the quality of teaching
- likelihood to return to learning in the future.

11

In addition to the core questions, each wave of interviews consisted of a particular set of 'modular' questions. The modular questions covered the areas of:

- pre-entry advice and guidance
- support for learning
- impact of learning.

	2004/05
	No. of Interviews
Further Education (total)	31,648
Of which:	
General FE	27,568
Sixth form college	2,254
Other/specialist	1,826
learnirect	903
Work-based Learning	5,619
FE delivered by Adult Learning Providers	1,731
Non-accredited Adult and Community Learning	3,770
Total	43,671

12

The core questionnaire remained largely unchanged from the previous year of the survey; this allows for longitudinal analysis of results. Some additional questions were added to the modular sections to allow for further in-depth analysis of learner responses.

13

Given the different nature of **learndirect** courses, the 2004/05 questionnaire included alternative versions of some core and modular questions to make them more relevant. This reflects the different style of learning on **learndirect** courses.

14

Learners unable to participate in the telephone survey because of a disability or learning difficulty were offered the option of completing the survey face-to-face. A total of 139 interviews were conducted face-to-face with learners in 2004/05. The data from these interviews is combined with the results of the telephone interviews.

15

All interviews were conducted by trained interviewers working on behalf of GfK NOP and all interviews were conducted in compliance with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct.

16

More information on the National Learner Satisfaction Survey methodology and questionnaire can be found in the updated document *NLSS: Guidance on the core methodology and core questionnaire*. This document has been updated to include the 2004/05 questionnaire.

17

This document, and the complete 2004/05 dataset, is available from the website <http://researchtools.lsc.gov.uk>.

Abbreviations used

18

At times the following abbreviations are used in the reporting of the NLSS results:

- further education – **FE**
- work-based learning – **WBL**
- further education delivered by adult learning providers – **FE delivered by adult learning providers**
- non-accredited adult and community learning (ACL) – **non-accredited ACL**.

19

Where there is discussion of data presented in figures and tables in this report, data subsequently mentioned and/or described is directly derived from the figures and tables.

20

The base size for non-accredited adult and community learning in 2001/02 is too small to use as a comparison with other years. Therefore, three years' longitudinal data is presented for this sample of learners.

21

Percentages: for clarity and brevity, and in accordance with normal practice, percentages in the figures are rounded to whole numbers. This means, where appropriate, they do not always add up to 100 per cent.

22

For some questions in this survey, as in earlier surveys, learners are offered a range of options where they can select as many or as few as they choose. Resulting percentages expressed, for example course choice, reflect learners' multiple response options and thus will usually add up to far more than 100 per cent.

23

In order to compare percentage results across different years of the survey we use the notation of change in 'percentage points'.

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Key Findings

24

Overall satisfaction levels of learners in LSC-funded provision have increased again in 2004/05 and are the highest in the four years since the survey began.

25

The percentage of learners saying they are 'extremely', 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with their overall learning experience in the different types of provision are given as:

- further education – 90 per cent
- work-based learning – 90 per cent
- further education delivered by adult learning providers – 93 per cent
- Non-accredited adult and community learning – 94 per cent

26

The breakdown of these percentages are shown in Figure 1.

27

Over the four years of the National Learner Satisfaction Survey, the quality of teaching and learning has been shown as the key driver for learners' satisfaction levels with their learning experience.

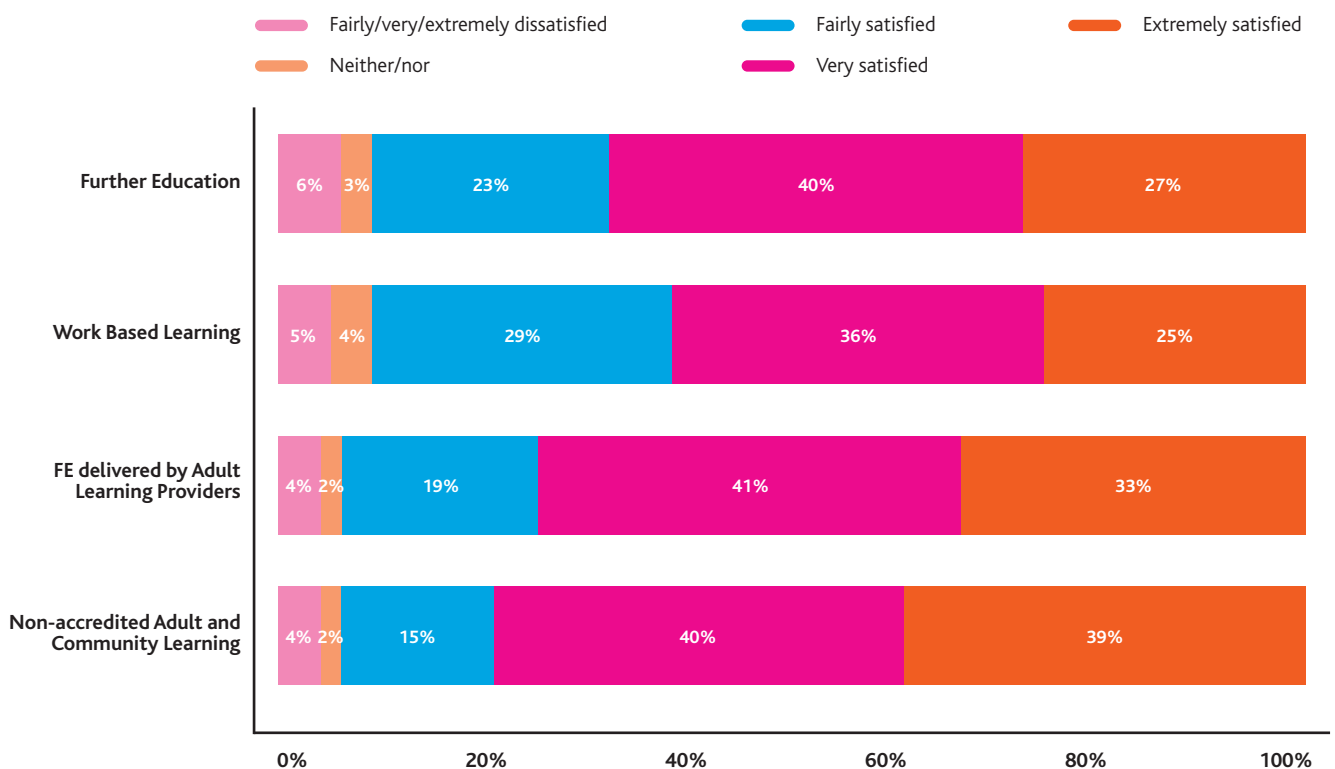
28

Learners were again asked to rate different aspects of their teaching on a scale of one to ten. The percentage of learners in 2004/05 rating the individual aspects of teaching a 9 or 10 out of 10 is shown in Table 1.

29

These results show an increase in these ratings for all aspects, in all provision compared to the 2003/04 survey. Table 2 shows the percentage point increase in learners' ratings compared with the previous year. These results are very positive for all types of provision.

Figure 1: Overall satisfaction with learning experience 2004/05, by type of provision.



Base: FE (31,648); WBL (5,619); FE delivered by adult learning providers (1, 731) Non-accred ACL (3,770)

Table 1. Ratings for different aspects of teaching for different types of provision – the per cent rating 9 or 10 out of 10.

	Further education	Work-based learning	FE delivered by adult learning providers	Non-accredited ACL
Unweighted	31,684	5,619	1,731	3,770
	%	%	%	%
Knowledge of the subject	69	62	77	81
How well they relate to you as a person	56	54	67	70
Making your subject interesting and enjoyable for you	47	38	58	67
Managing the group of learners	45	38	56	62
Planning their lessons	43	39	52	58
The support they give you for example in improving techniques or time management	42	42	47	54
Providing prompt and regular feedback on progress	42	41	51	54
Quality and availability of training materials they use	43	39	51	53
Understanding you and how you like to learn	40	38	49	56
Setting clear targets or learning goals to help you improve	39	40	45	50

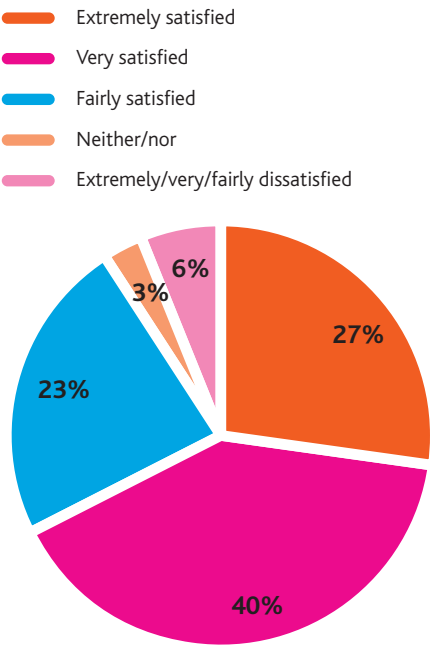
Table 2. Percentage point change for 2004/05, compared with 2003/04, for learners rating 9 or 10 out of 10 for different aspects of teaching and learning.

Percentage point change	Further education	Work-based learning	FE delivered by adult learning providers	Non-accredited ACL
Unweighted	31,684	5,619	1,731	3,770
Knowledge of the subject	+2	+4	+5	+1
How well they relate to you as a person	+4	+4	+4	+2
Making your subject interesting and enjoyable for you	+5	+5	+7	+4
Managing the group of learners	+4	+4	+3	+3
Planning their lessons	+4	+6	+7	+3
The support they give you for example in improving techniques or time management	+4	+4	+5	+2
Providing prompt and regular feedback on progress	+3	+4	+6	+3
Quality and availability of training materials they use	+5	+5	+8	+2
Understanding you and how you like to learn	+4	+3	+4	+4
Setting clear targets or learning goals to help you improve	+3	+4	+4	+3

Notes: Further results for each provision will be presented later in the report.

Further Education

Figure 2: Overall satisfaction with learning experience 2004/05 - FE sector.



Base: 31, 648

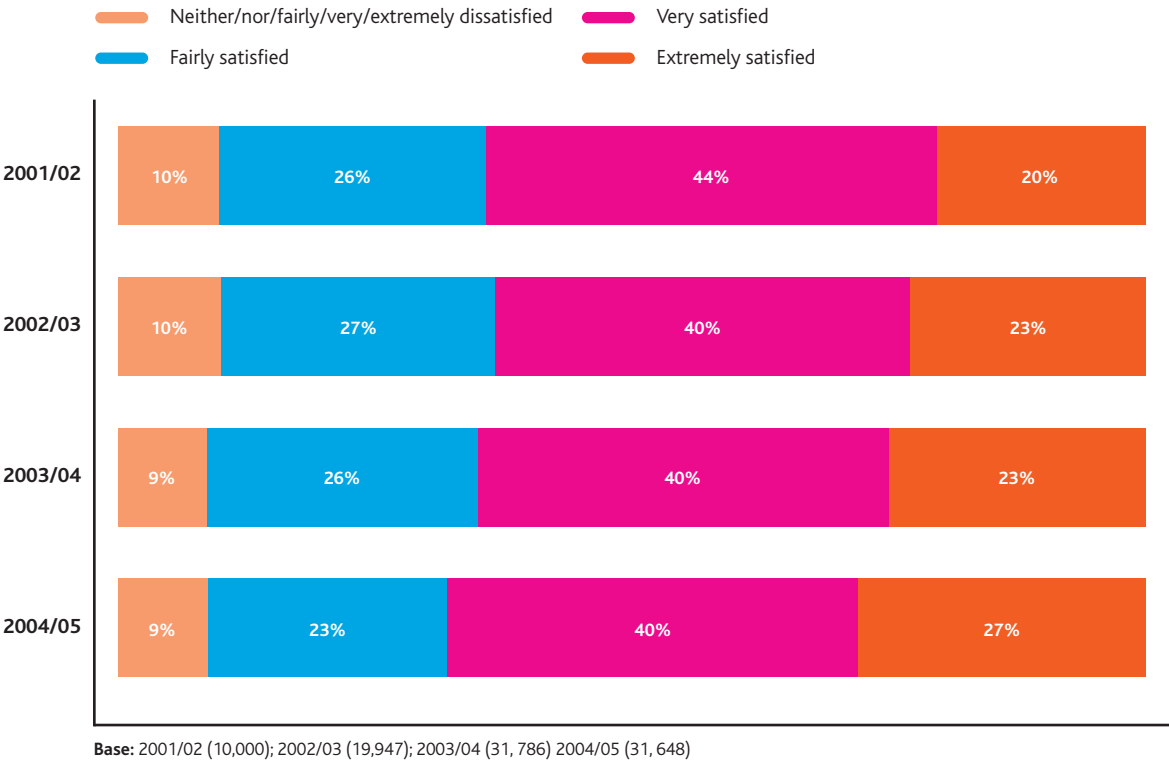
30
In 2004/05, over a quarter (27 per cent) of FE learners were 'extremely' satisfied with their experience overall and another four in ten (40 per cent) 'very' satisfied. Almost a quarter of learners (23 per cent) are shown as 'fairly' satisfied with their overall learning experience (Figure 2).

31
Figure 3 shows that learners' satisfaction with their overall learning experience has increased over time. The proportion of learners rating themselves as 'extremely' satisfied with the overall experience has increased by +4 percentage points since 2003/04 and +7 percentage points since 2001/02 (the first year of the National Learner Satisfaction Survey).

32
The proportion of learners who were 'very' satisfied decreased in the second year of the survey (2002/03) and has remained stable since then. The percentage of learners rating themselves as 'fairly' satisfied is at its lowest in 2004/05 since the 2001/02 survey.

33
When exploring the 2004/05 FE results by sub-groups, younger learners displayed lower levels of satisfaction; 21 per cent of the 16–18 age group were 'extremely' satisfied compared with 31 per cent of learners in the age group 25 plus. Learners with disabilities were more satisfied overall than those without disabilities (32 per cent compared with 27 per cent).

Figure 3: Overall satisfaction with learning experience in FE, over time.



34

The higher the level of qualification, the less likely it is for FE learners to be 'extremely' satisfied. These results ranged from 32 per cent at Level 1/entry level, 27 per cent at Level 2 and down to 21 per cent for learners at Level 4/5 or higher.

35

In 2004/05 FE learners' satisfaction with teaching overall is very high once again, as shown in Figure 4.

36

There has been an increase of +3 percentage points in learners rating themselves as 'extremely' satisfied with teaching overall since 2003/04 (Figure 4). In 2004/05 this percentage is 27 per cent (the highest it has been in the four years since the survey began).

37

The proportion of learners who were 'very' satisfied with the teaching they receive remains at 39 per cent and the percentage 'fairly' satisfied has decreased (from 28 per cent in 2003/04 to 24 per cent in 2004/05).

38

A similar profile of learners display lower levels of satisfaction with teaching overall compared with overall satisfaction with the learning experience; namely male learners, younger learners, minority ethnic groups and learners with higher levels of qualification (Level 4/5 and above).

39

There has been a significant increase in the proportion of learners rating a 9 or 10 out of 10 for all specific measures for teaching (Table 1). This is very positive

40

Just over three quarters of learners said the feedback they received was motivating.

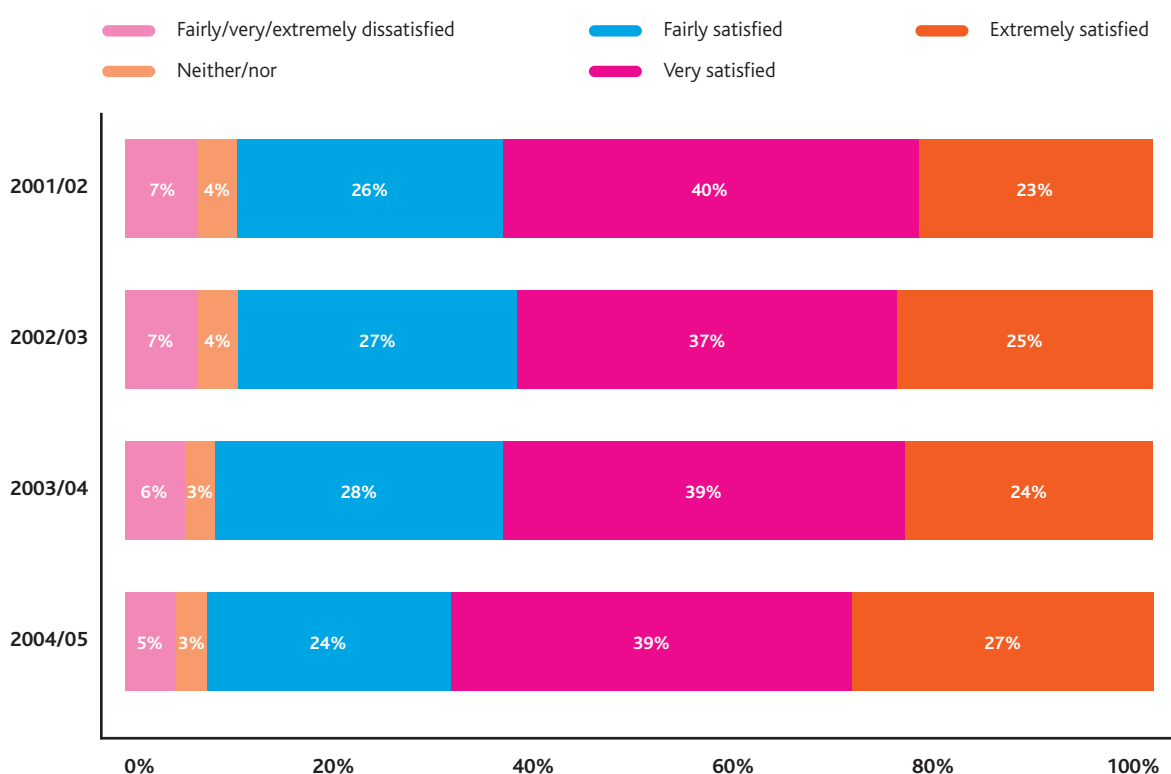
41

In 2004/05, 47 per cent of learners said that all their lesson time was put to good use and none was wasted. This is a significant increase from 43 per cent in 2003/04.

42

The reasons why learners in the survey left their course early were mostly related to the course/provider (38 per cent of all reasons could be summarised under this heading). Being on the wrong course (15 per cent) and health reasons (13 per cent) were the main contributors cited by early leavers. Employment reasons were mentioned by 18 per cent of respondents (leavers had 'got a job', lack of support from work).

Figure 4: Overall satisfaction with quality of teaching in FE, over time.



Base: 2001/02 (10,000); 2002/03 (19,947); 2003/04 (31,786) 2004/05 (31,648)

43

While acquisition of skills, knowledge and qualifications are important drivers for choice of course, other more personal and circumstantial reasons also play a key role in determining choice for many learners. Over three-quarters of learners (76 per cent) chose their course because 'it was at a time that suited me'.

44

Convenience of course and provider were mentioned by a higher percentage of female learners than males. Male learners were more influenced by the relevance to their job and their employer. Further analysis of results by gender differences will be reported in the further education report.

45

When considering which provider to attend, more learners gave a response concerning location compared with any other reason. However, while a higher percentage of younger learners chose courses which met their need for social engagement and gaining a qualification, older learners chose courses which suited their time and availability.

46

Over one third (34 per cent) of FE learners in the 2004/05 survey stated that 'teachers/tutors at college' were a source of pre-entry advice and guidance. This has been the most common source over the past two years and highlights the importance of providers to learners before they embark on a chosen course of study.

47

Following this, three tenths of learners stated that friends had been a source of advice (30 per cent), and just over one fifth (23 per cent) mentioned a college admissions adviser.

48

At least five in ten learners awarded their provider a 9 or 10 out of 10 for the majority of measures relating to management of their experience:

- 'seeing the same teacher/tutor/assessor throughout' (68 per cent)
- 'teachers/tutors/assessors turning up as planned' (66 per cent)
- 'making sure enough teachers/tutors/trainers and/or assessors are available' (60 per cent)
- 'helping new people settle in' (57 per cent)
- 'providing support when I or other learners have problems' (55 per cent).

49

There has been some improvement in all of these measures since 2003/04 (in the order of +3 to +4 percentage points).

50

Learners were asked if they had received certain health and safety guidance. The percentage of FE learners recalling certain guidance is as follows:

- emergency arrangements for fire (80 per cent)
- emergency arrangements for first aid and how to report an accident (62 per cent)
- who to ask for any health and safety advice or instructions (65 per cent)
- any dangers involved with your training and how to work safely (63 per cent).

51

Over five in ten learners (56 per cent) had experienced at least one problem during their learning experience. The most common issues related to managing commitments, keeping up with the standard of work and money pressures.

52

In 2004/05 10 per cent of learners made a complaint to their provider. Of these, 35 per cent said there was an outcome that had satisfied them. While the frequency of complaints has remained the same year-on-year, the proportion of complainants that were satisfied with the outcome has decreased slightly.

53

Six in ten learners said they had a positive attitude towards school when they left. The 18 per cent of learners who held a negative attitude towards learning when leaving school, almost three quarters of them said that they now get a 'buzz' out of learning.

54

Overall 76 per cent of FE learners responded they were getting a 'buzz' out of learning.

55

These social aspects of learning cannot be ignored; they appear to be important for attracting and retaining learners, with 48 per cent saying that they were enjoying learning mostly due to the social aspects.

56

Benefits of learning are once again mentioned in abundance. The most common benefits being:

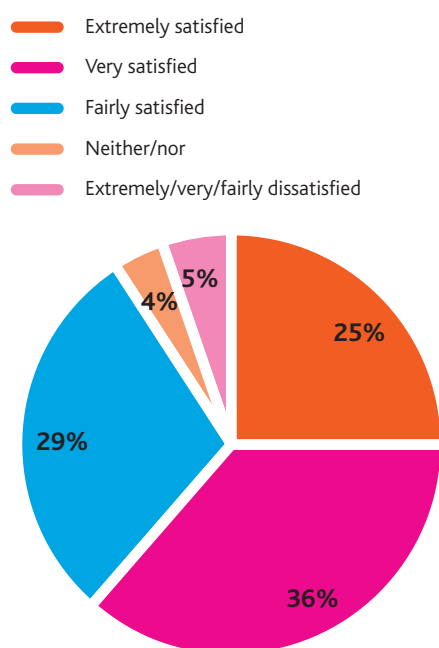
- 'I have a greater enthusiasm for the subject' (86 per cent)
- 'I feel more confident in my ability to learn' (83 per cent)
- 'I am more creative and prepared to try new things' (80 per cent)
- 'It has given me skills I can use for my job' (79 per cent)
- 'I am more positive about learning than I was when I started' (74 per cent).

57

Six in ten learners responded that they were 'very' likely to learn again within in the next three years, with a further 26 per cent stating they were 'fairly' likely to do so.

Work-based Learning

Figure 5: Overall satisfaction with learning experience 2004/05 - WBL sector.



Base: 5,619

58

Once again, nine in ten learners reported some level of satisfaction with their experience overall. Figure 5 shows a quarter of work-based learners are 'extremely' satisfied with their overall learning experience, over a third (36 per cent) are 'very' satisfied and less than one in three (29 per cent) are 'fairly' satisfied. Fewer than 1 in 10 learners were dissatisfied or 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' with their learning experience.

59

The results for overall satisfaction with learning experience in work-based learning are shown in Figure 6 for the four years of the survey.

60

The proportion of learners in work-based learning who reported they were 'extremely' satisfied with their overall learning experience was at an all time high in 2004/05 (from 17 per cent in the first year of the survey to 25 per cent in 2004/05).

61

Compared with 2003/04, satisfaction levels among male learners and female learners have become more equal; however, work-based learners in the older age groups remain more satisfied overall than 16–18 year olds.

62

Further information on differences in satisfaction levels between age groups and gender will be available from the 2004/05 NLSS work-based learning report.

63

Reasons for learners leaving their course early could be aggregated into four broad groupings:

- expectations being mismanaged (the most common single reason mentioned by early leavers was the individual being on the wrong course/programme)
- reasons related to the support offered by the employer and/or changes in employment
- reasons related to the quality of delivery
- health and personal reasons (including financial issues).

64

In the first category, the data identifies a need for expectations to be managed. Over a fifth of the early leavers (22 per cent) mentioned that they were simply on the wrong course or programme and four per cent said that the work involved was not what they had envisaged.

65

On the aspect of quality of delivery, eight per cent of early leavers thought the provider/college was badly run/disorganised and eight per cent mentioned specific problems with tutors/trainers or assessors.

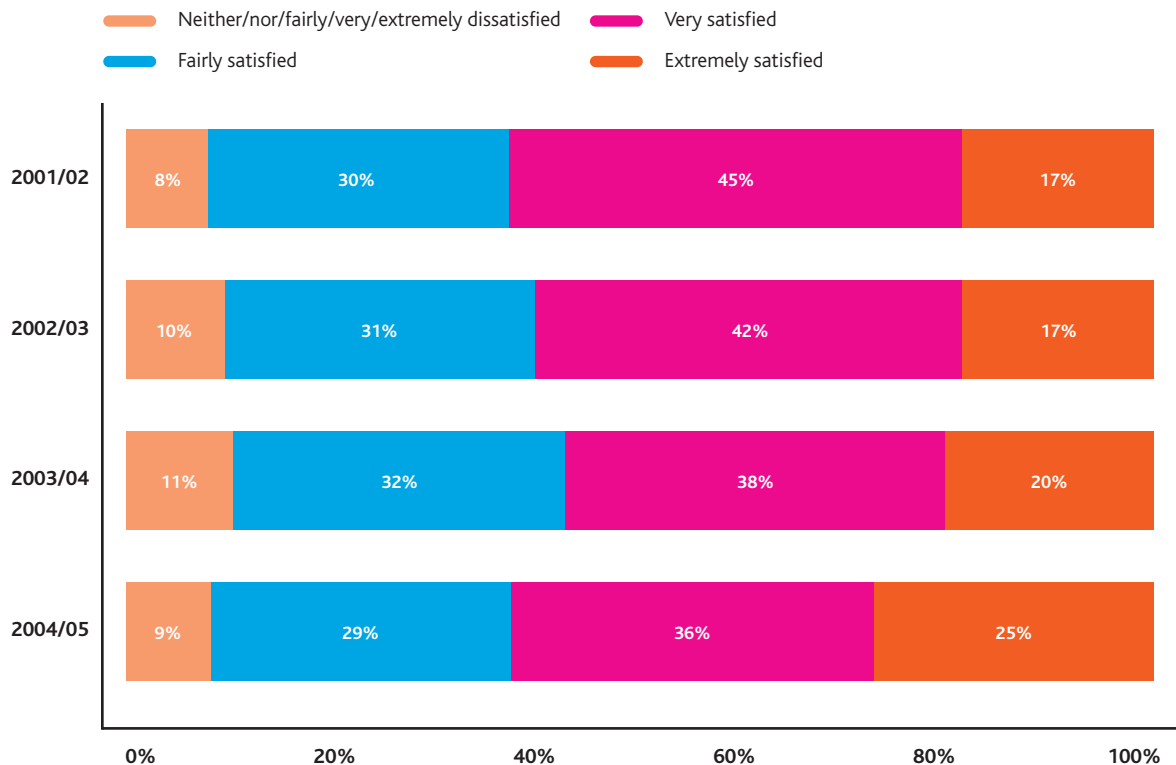
66

The survey highlights the dependence on the employment status for work-based learning (12 per cent of early leavers changed jobs and nine per cent 'got a job').

67

Health (six per cent) and financial reasons (eight per cent) were mentioned by almost a fifth of early leavers as reasons for stopping their course.

Figure 6: Overall satisfaction with learning experience in WBL, over time.



Base: 2001/02 (2,032); 2002/03 (2,003); 2003/04 (6,111) 2004/05 (5,619)

This question allowed a single response. Don't know not shown.

68

Overall satisfaction with teaching/training in work-based learning is extremely high once again in 2004/05 (nine in ten expressing some level of satisfaction). The proportion of learners who rated themselves as 'extremely' satisfied with teaching/training overall was at all time high (this figure has steadily increased year-on-year from 18 per cent in 2001/02 to 23 per cent in 2004/05). These results are shown in Figure 7.

69

The proportion of learners rating their tutors/trainers/assessors as a 9 or 10 out of 10 has increased for all individual measures since 2003/04. This was highlighted earlier, as shown in Table 2.

70

Fewer learners in 2004/05 considered some of their lesson/session time had been wasted (58 per cent compared to 60 per cent in 2003/04). Of those considering some time was wasted, the majority (31 per cent) thought that less than 10 per cent had been wasted.

71

Over a half (54 per cent) of work-based learners mentioned that lessons/sessions had been disrupted by learners arriving late by five minutes or more; at least a quarter mentioned that they were kept hanging around and/or that other learners were noisy/disruptive in sessions. Other types of disruption were mentioned by between 10 per cent and 25 per cent of learners. A quarter said they had experienced no disruptions at all.

72

Qualifications and acquisition of skills were primary drivers for undertaking programmes for almost all work-based learners (93 per cent mentioned to gain the qualification and 89 per cent mentioned to advance knowledge and skills in this area). However, liking the subject and personal interest were factors that should not be underestimated (mentioned by 85 per cent in both instances).

73

The main motivations for choice of provider (for learners who had a choice) were 'convenience of location' and simply the fact that the provider 'offered what was needed' (25 per cent and 24 per cent respectively). Almost a fifth of work-based learners had no choice which provider to attend (employer chose).

Figure 7: Overall satisfaction with quality of teaching in WBL, over time.



Base: 2001/02: (2,023), 2002/03: (2,003), 2003/04: (6,111), 2004/05 (5,619)
This question allowed a single response. Don't know not shown.

74 Employers were key to pre-entry advice for work-based learning (mentioned by 58 per cent of learners). Parents were ranked second in terms of sources of advice used (38 per cent). Other sources of advice mentioned by over a third of learners were Connexions (at 38 per cent, this was a significant increase compared with 27 per cent in 2003/04) and 'friends' 34 per cent.

75 The sources of advice which over a half of learners who used them rated as being 'very' useful, are given in the following order:

- Connexions (61 per cent)
- teachers/tutors at college/provider (59 per cent)
- employer (56 per cent)
- advisor at an Information and Guidance Centre (55 per cent)
- schools careers advisor (53 per cent)
- parents/family members (51 per cent).

76 Regarding management of learning, six out of 10 work-based learners in 2004/05 ranked their provider/college a 9 or 10 out of 10 for the factor 'seeing the same trainer/tutor/assessor throughout'.

77 Over half of work-based learners also rated the following factors a 9 or 10; trainers/tutors/assessors turning up as planned (59 per cent), helping new people settle in (55 per cent), providing support when learner has problems (54 per cent) and making sure enough trainers/tutors are available (52 per cent).

78 More than nine in ten learners recalled specific health and safety information:

- emergency arrangements for fire (94 per cent)
- emergency arrangements for first aid and how to report an accident (92 per cent)
- any dangers involved with your training and how to work safely (89 per cent)
- who to ask for any health and safety advice or instructions (92 per cent).

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79

Increases in recall of health and safety information have been significant for work-based learning since 2003/04.

80

Almost half of work-based learners (48 per cent) said that they had experienced none of the problems prompted in the survey. Problems mentioned by more than 15 per cent of learners were maintaining personal motivation (20 per cent), standard of work required (18 per cent) and juggling the course/programme with other commitments at work (17 per cent) and money pressures (16 per cent).

81

Almost two fifths (39 per cent) of learners who experienced one or more of the problems prompted in the survey had sought help from their provider. This is a significant increase year-on-year. Of those that sought help, 41 per cent said that it was 'very' useful. The proportion of learners who found that help and advice was very useful has increased year-on-year.

82

In 2004/05 14 per cent reported a complaint (formal and informal). Of these, 43 per cent said that an outcome had satisfied them, whereas 17 per cent said the outcome had not satisfied them. Over a third (38 per cent) said there had been no outcome at all to their complaint.

83

With regards to shifts in attitude over time, almost nine in ten (85 per cent) work-based learners with negative feelings about education when leaving school also agreed that they were, at the time of the survey, enjoying learning and getting a 'buzz' from it.

84

The social life of learning is important, with just over half of work-based learners agreeing that they enjoyed learning mostly due to the social aspects.

85

With regard to attitudes toward responsibilities and new challenges, almost all work-based learners agreed that they liked a new challenge (93 per cent) and the majority found it easy to motivate themselves for learning (77 per cent). However, the data for 2004/05 showed a significant proportion of learners had concerns about the standard or work required (31 per cent), managing their time properly (25 per cent) and/or taking on new responsibilities (23 per cent).

86

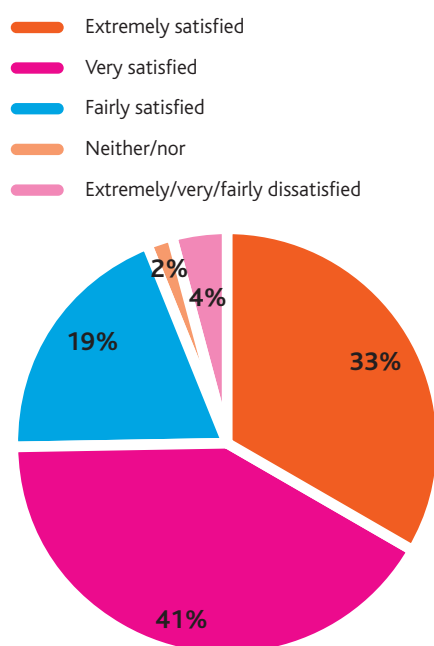
A strong belief in the benefits of the current learning experience was noted once again in 2004/05 (similar to previous years). Over three quarters of learners agreed that their learning experience gave them skills they could use for a job, more confidence in the ability to learn, enhanced their creativity, gave them greater enthusiasm for the subject, enabled them to be better at learning on their own and/or made them more positive about learning than when they started.

87

Almost half of work-based learners (46 per cent) indicated that they were 'very' likely to learn again within the next three years.

Further Education delivered by Adult Learning Providers

Figure 8: Overall satisfaction with learning experience 2004/05 - FE delivered by adult learning providers sector.



Base: 5,619

88

In 2004/05 a third of learners from FE delivered by adult learning providers (33 per cent) were 'extremely' satisfied with their overall learning experience (Figure 8). A further two in five (41 per cent) responded they were 'very' satisfied and almost a fifth (19 per cent) are 'fairly' satisfied.

89

In contrast, only four per cent of learners in FE delivered by adult learning provision are dissatisfied, and just two per cent are neither satisfied/nor satisfied.

90

Figure 9 shows year-on-year overall satisfaction has increased. The proportion of learners rating themselves as 'extremely' satisfied with the overall experience has increased by +5 percentage points since 2003/04. However the proportion of learners saying they are 'very' satisfied showed no change since 2003/04 (both 41 per cent), while the proportion saying they are fairly dissatisfied decreased by -3 percentage points.

91

When exploring the 2004/05 overall satisfaction with learning experience by sub-groups, male learners were more satisfied than female learners. Younger learners and learners from minority ethnic groups all displayed lower levels of satisfaction compared with all learners. Learners with disabilities were more satisfied overall than those learners without disabilities.

92

The most common reasons given for learners in this provision leaving the course early were health reasons (10 per cent), excess workload (9 per cent), wrong course (8 per cent) and problems with the quality of teaching (9 per cent).

93

Figure 10 shows satisfaction with the overall quality of teaching was high again in 2004/05 among learners in this type of provision. A third of learners (34 per cent) were 'extremely' satisfied, over two in five (41 per cent) were 'very' satisfied and a further 18 per cent 'fairly' satisfied with the overall quality of teaching. Year-on-year there was a six percentage point increase in the proportion of learners giving the highest rating.

94

A similar profile of learners display lower levels of satisfaction with teaching overall and also the specific measures, as they did for overall satisfaction with the experience; namely male learners, younger learners, and minority ethnic groups. These results are discussed in more detail in the adult and community learning report.

95

In 2004/05, 58 per cent of learners in FE delivered by adult learning providers said all their lesson time was put to good use and none was wasted.

96

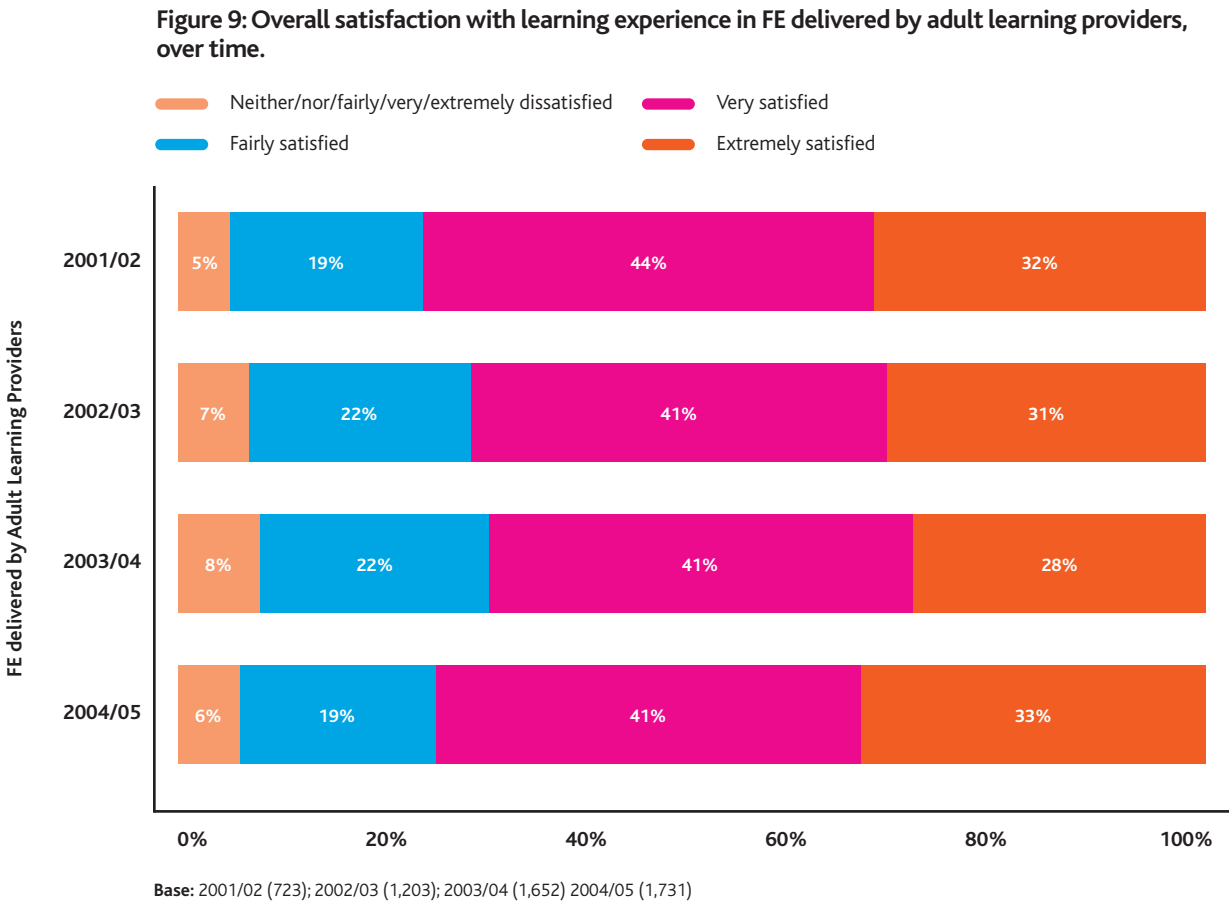
There has been a significant increase in the proportion of learners rating a 9 or 10 out of 10 for all specific measures for teaching (Table 1), with the factor 'knowledge of the subject' again receiving the highest rating (77 per cent gave a 9 or 10 out of 10 rating).

97

Just over four-fifths (82 per cent) of learners in further education delivered by adult learning providers said the feedback they received was motivating.

98

Own personal interest (92 per cent), advancing skills and knowledge in a particular area (89 per cent), flexibility in terms of timings (82 per cent) and liking the subject (79 per cent) were the primary drivers for undertaking their course for the vast majority of learners in FE delivered by adult learning providers.



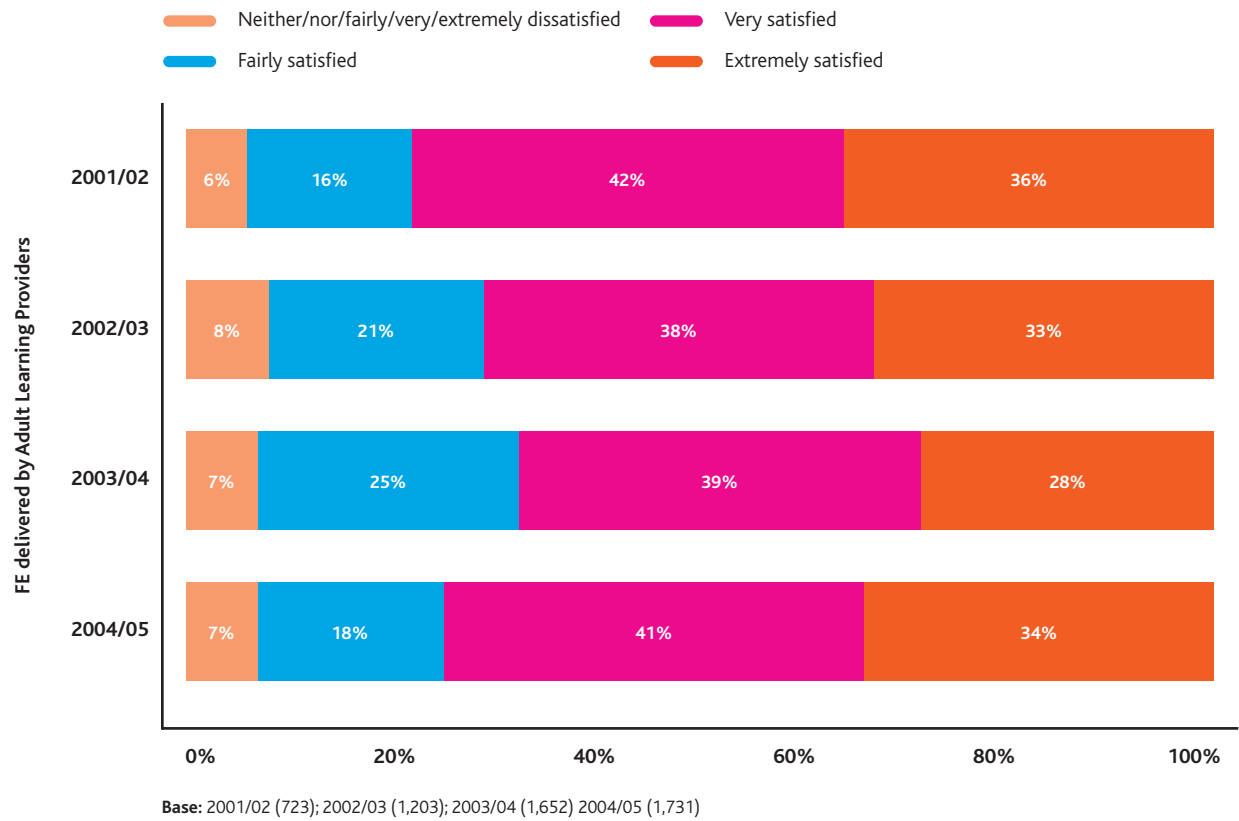
99
The main motivations for choice of provider (for learners that had a choice) were convenience of location (63 per cent) and simply the fact that the provider offered what was needed (29 per cent).

100
Friends were the most mentioned source of advice and guidance prior to entry onto the course for learners in this provision, mentioned by a quarter of learners. Teachers/tutors at the college/provider were ranked second in terms of use (22 per cent) closely followed by the college admissions office (21 per cent). Other sources of advice mentioned included parents and other family members (17 per cent), employers and teacher at school (both 11 per cent).

101
More than four in five of the learners in FE delivered by adult learning providers in 2004/05 ranked their provider/college a 9 or 10 out of 10 for the following factors: 'seeing the same trainer/tutor/assessor throughout' (86 per cent) and 'trainers/tutors/assessors turning up as planned' (83 per cent). The factor which achieved the lowest proportion of learners awarding a 9 or 10 out of 10 was 'managing timetables so they suit the learner as best they can', which still achieved a 9 or 10 out of 10 rating by 58 per cent of learners.

102
With regard to recall of health and safety guidance, over four in five learners in FE delivered by adult learning provision recalled emergency arrangements for fire (82 per cent), although there was lower recall of first aid arrangements and how to report an accident (60 per cent), who to contact for health and safety advice (58 per cent) and any dangers involved with training and how to work safely (52 per cent).

Figure 10: Overall satisfaction with quality of teaching in FE delivered by adult learning providers, over time.



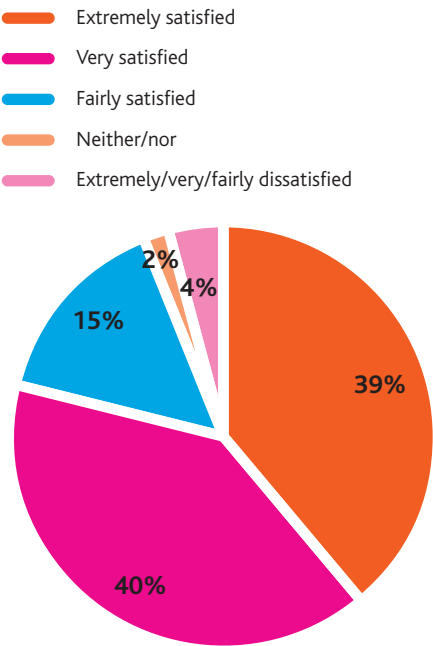
103 Just over two in five learners in this type of provision (43 per cent) said they had experienced none of the problems prompted in the survey. The most frequently mentioned problems were keeping up with the standard of work (27 per cent), personal motivation (25 per cent), fitting in course commitments with other work (24 per cent) and fitting in with other commitments at home (21 per cent). Only 13 per cent of these learners sought help and in four fifths of cases the advice received was deemed to be either 'very' or 'fairly' useful.

104 In 2004/05, 11 per cent of learners reported a complaint (formal and informal). Of these, just seven per cent said that the outcome had satisfied them, while 19 per cent said that there had been an outcome that had not satisfied them. The majority of learners who had made complaints (70 per cent) said that there had been no outcome at all.

105 A high percentage of learners in FE delivered by adult learning provision responded that they were likely to continue learning within the next three years. Over two thirds (68 per cent) stated they were 'very' likely and almost a quarter (24 per cent) are 'fairly' likely to continue learning within the next three years.

Non-accredited Adult and Community Learning

Figure 11: Overall satisfaction with learning experience 2004/05 - Non-accredited ACL sector.



Base: 3,770

106 Levels of satisfaction among non-accredited adult and community learners are generally very high and 2004/05 was no exception. Figure 11 shows 94 per cent of learners expressed some degree of satisfaction with their learning experience overall, with almost two in five (39 per cent) saying they are 'extremely' satisfied.

107 Satisfaction levels among this provision have increased over time. Figure 12 shows the satisfaction levels in non-accredited adult and community learning over the three years NLSS results.

108 The proportion of non-accredited learners giving an 'extremely' satisfied rating has increased by +6 percentage points from the 2003/04 survey. This increase seems to result from learners moving from the 'very' and 'fairly' satisfied ratings rather than any discernible reduction in levels of dissatisfaction.

109 Analysis by sub-groups of learners in this provision show female learners and older learners are considerably more satisfied than male learners, and younger learners. White learners also showed higher levels of satisfaction with their learning experience than those from ethnic minorities.

110 The overall satisfaction with quality of teaching over the three years NLSS results is shown in Figure 13 for non-accredited adult and community learning.

111 These results show similar patterns compared with overall satisfaction with the learning experience. In 2004/05, over two in five non-accredited adult and community learners (41 per cent) learners were 'extremely' satisfied, just under two in five (39 per cent) were 'very' satisfied and 14 per cent 'fairly' satisfied with the overall quality of teaching they receive.

Figure 12: Overall satisfaction with learning experience in Non-accredited ACL, over time.



Base: 2002/03 (1,958); 2003/04 (3,767); 2004/05 (3,770)

112

Only five per cent of learners in this provision are dissatisfied or neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the overall quality of their teaching.

113

In 2004/05, 70 per cent of non-accredited learners responded that all their lesson time was put to good use and none was wasted.

114

There has been a significant increase in the proportion of learners rating a 9 or 10 out of 10 for all specific measures for teaching, with 'knowledge of the subject' again receiving the highest rating (81 per cent gave a 9 or 10 out of 10 rating). These results are shown earlier in Table 1.

115

More than four-fifths (83 per cent) of learners in non-accredited adult and community learning said they found feedback motivating.

116

More than four in five learners in non-accredited adult and community learning in 2004/05 ranked their provider/college a 9 or 10 out of 10 for the following factors: 'seeing the same trainer/tutor/assessor throughout' (87 per cent), 'trainers/tutors/assessors turning up as planned' (85 per cent) and 'ensuring enough teachers/trainers/assessors are available' (81 per cent).

117

The factors that achieved the lowest proportion of learners awarding a 9 or 10 out of 10 were 'communicating changes in time for sessions' and 'managing timetables so they suit the learner as best they can'. However, both of these factors still achieved a 9 or 10 out of 10 rating by around two-thirds of learners in this provision (66 per cent and 65 per cent respectively).

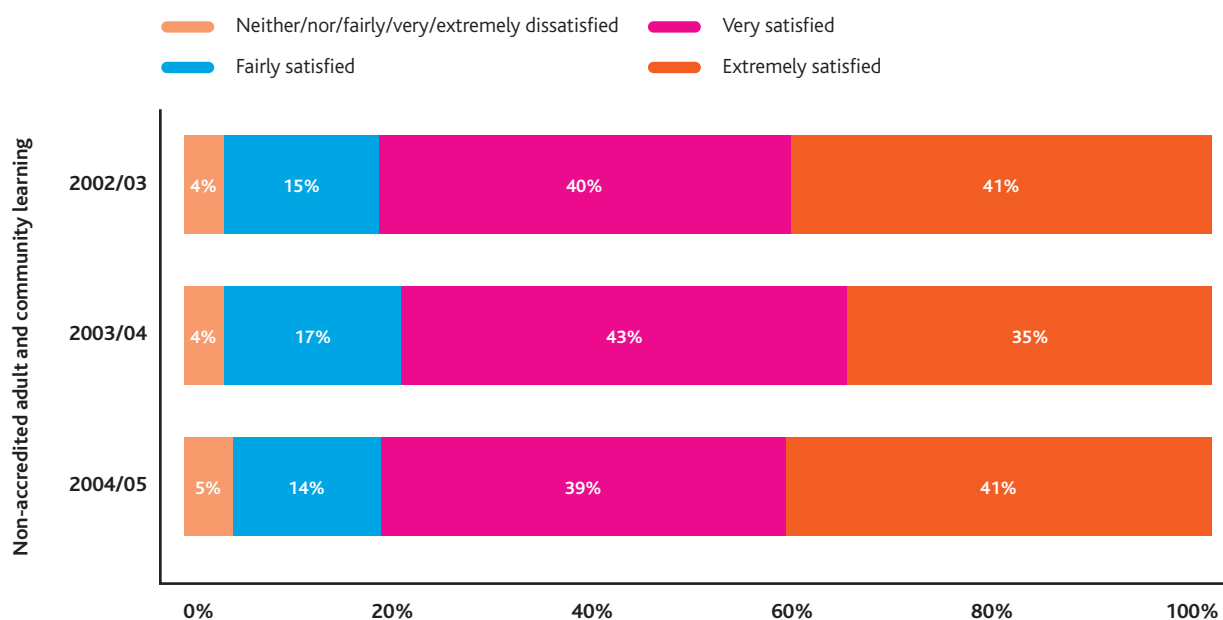
118

Four out of five non-accredited learners recalled specific health and safety information regarding emergency arrangements for fire (80 per cent). There was lower recall for other health and safety information regarding first aid and how to report an accident (57 per cent), dangers involved with your training and how to work safely (61 per cent) and who to contact for health and safety advice (64 per cent).

119

Three-fifths of learners said that they had experienced none of the problems prompted in the survey. Problems mentioned by more than 10 per cent of learners were home commitments (17 per cent), personal motivation (12 per cent) and standard of work required (11 per cent).

Figure 13: Overall satisfaction with quality of teaching in Non-accredited ACL, over time.



Base: 2002/03 (1,958); 2003/04 (3,767); 2004/05 (3,770)

120

Just under one in five (18 per cent) of learners who experienced one or more of the problems prompted in the survey had sought help from their provider. Of those that sought help, 48 per cent said that it was very useful and a further 19 per cent fairly useful.

121

In 2004/05, eight per cent of non-accredited adult and community learners reported a complaint (formal and informal). Of these, a quarter said that an outcome had satisfied them, a further quarter said that there had been an outcome that had not satisfied them (44 per cent said that there had been no outcome at all).

122

Nine out of ten learners in non-accredited adult and community learning said they enjoy learning and get a 'buzz' from it. The social life of learning is also important with more than a half (55 per cent) of learners agreeing that they enjoyed learning mostly due to the social aspects. However, over one in ten learners (11 per cent) in this provision were in learning because they 'couldn't think of anything better to do'.

123

With regard to attitudes toward responsibilities and new challenges, nearly nine in ten (89 per cent) learners agreed that they liked a new challenge and almost as many (84 per cent) found it easy to motivate themselves for learning.

124

Around a quarter to a fifth of learners in this provision had concerns about the standard or work required (24 per cent), managing their time properly (21 per cent) and/or taking on new responsibilities (19 per cent).

125

Learners in this provision are very positive about the perceived benefits of learning. More than two-thirds of non-accredited learners agreed their learning experience:

- gave them greater enthusiasm for the subject (89 per cent)
- enabled them to be more creative and to try new things (80 per cent)
- gave them more confidence in the ability to learn (75 per cent)
- benefited their health and sense of well-being (67 per cent)
- more positive about learning than when they started (67 per cent).

126

More than seven in ten (71 per cent) of non-accredited adult and community learners were very likely to learn again in the next three years.

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Equality and Diversity Messages

127

Four years of results from the National Learner Satisfaction Survey show some variations in satisfaction levels among certain sub-groups of learners. Although satisfaction levels are high in all types of provision, consistent trends among sub-groups include:

- female learners in the survey are generally more likely to say they are satisfied with their overall learning experience than male learners.
- across all types of provision, older learners are more likely to be satisfied with their overall learning experience than younger learners
- minority ethnic learners in the survey are less likely to be 'extremely' satisfied with their overall learning experience compared with the results for all learners.
- learners in the survey with disabilities are more likely to give a top rating of 'extremely' satisfied for their overall learning experience compared with learners without disabilities.

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128

Further analysis of results by different sub-groups of learners will be reported in the three reports containing analysis from each type of provision. This data is currently available from

<http://researchtools.lsc.gov.uk>.

Further Information and Key Publications

129

The 2004/05 dataset is available for analysis on the research tools website

<http://researchtools.lsc.gov.uk>.

130

Three reports containing further analysis of the results will be published in summer 2006:

- National Learner Satisfaction Survey: Further Education 2004/05
- National Learner Satisfaction Survey: Work-based Learning 2004/05
- National Learner Satisfaction Survey: Adult and Community Learning 2004/05.

131

A supporting document, *National Learner Satisfaction Survey: Guidance on the core methodology and core questionnaire*, is available from the research tools website. This document contains information about the sample and methodology used in the National Learner Satisfaction Survey.

132

All questionnaires used in the National Learner Satisfaction Survey are available from the research tools website.

133

Information and guidance about health and safety for both learners and providers is available from the website

www.safelearner.info.

134

The 2004/05 National Learner Satisfaction Survey is the first year where **learnirect** learners were asked alternate versions of some questions in the survey. The questions were modified to reflect the different style of learning at **learnirect**. Headline findings will be reported in the further education report and results from all questions are available from the research tools website.

135

Longitudinal findings for four years are now available on learner satisfaction within LSC-funded provision. The National Learner Satisfaction Survey will not take place in 2005/06. However, during this time further analysis of all results over the four years will take place.

136

We welcome your comments and any feedback about the National Learner Satisfaction Survey. Please email the research team at LSC National Office through learnersurvey@lsc.gov.uk.

Related Publications

*National Learner Satisfaction Survey:
Guidance on the core methodology and core
questionnaire*

Publication reference: LSC-P-NAT-060386

*National Learner Satisfaction Survey:
Further Education 2004/05*

Publication reference: LSC-P-NAT-060387

*National Learner Satisfaction Survey:
Work Based Learning 2004/05*

Publication reference: LSC-P-NAT-060388

*National Learner Satisfaction Survey:
Adult and Community Learning 2004/05*

Publication reference: LSC-P-NAT-060389

Useful Website:

The 2004/05 National Learner Satisfaction
Survey is available from
<http://researchtools.lsc.gov.uk>

Further Information

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