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Unit Delivery Trials: Assessment of
Learner Benefits

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The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

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Key Findings

This section details the key findings emerging from this evaluation of the impact of learning undertaken in programmes of units, as opposed to traditional, linear delivery of 'full' qualifications¹. The aims of the evaluation were to explore the benefits of unit learning in terms of learner recruitment, retention and progression into further learning, positive outcomes in relation to employment and benefit status, qualifications and skills gained, and, where possible, to compare these benefits with traditional, 'full' qualifications.

The findings are based on a survey undertaken in August 2012 of 1,000 learners who undertook unit-based learning with Unit Delivery Trial providers in the academic year 2011/12, as well as on secondary analysis of the 2011/12 Individual Learner Record (ILR) database.

- **Unit learners tend not to have a preference as to whether they studied a unit based course or a 'full' qualification.** While a majority of learners were aware that their learning was unit based (61%), most of these did not have a preference as to whether they studied individual units / credits or a full qualification (70%). Where a preference did exist more (of those aware that they undertook unit based learning) would have preferred to have undertaken a full qualification (19%) than preferred their unit / credit structure that they undertook (9%). Very similar proportions said they would potentially have done course leading to a full qualification (72%) or tried to do a similar unit-based course with another provider (70%) if their actual unit course had not been available.
- **Unit learning can be a vehicle to broaden the appeal to a wider range of learners, albeit in a modest way.** Unit learners tend to be slightly more likely than the profile of all learners to be female, from a minority ethnic background, and reporting a disability, learning difficulty or health problem. In addition, unit learning has been specifically targeted to adults who are out of work and in receipt of active or inactive benefits as a means to improving their employability skills, hence it is not surprising that many fewer unit learners were employed immediately before their course (11% of unit learners at UDT providers and 4% of unit learners at non-UDT providers) than found among all Entry, Level 1 and Level 2 learners (55%).
- **Units offer a route into learning that, for some learners, was critical in (re-) engaging them with learning.** Around one in eight learners would not have considered doing any learning alternative to the specific unit course they did. Between a quarter and a third could have considered alternatives to learning. The importance of fully funded unit learning is evident in that around a third of learners stated that they would not have been able to undertake any learning at all if they had to pay for their course.

¹ The term 'full qualification' as used within this report refers to a complete qualification, as distinct from one or more units which may form part of a qualification. It does not refer to the use of 'full' as a way of identifying which qualifications are eligible for public funding.

- **Achievement of initial units looks to help stimulate progression into further learning and eventual 'full' qualification achievement.** A quarter (25%) of those learners who had left their original unit-based course had already gone on to further courses, and two in five of this group (42%) said that their initial unit course was a factor in their progression (with 23% saying they could not have accessed this further learning without the initial unit course). More than half of all learners in 'new' learning at the time of the interview were studying for a full qualification (54%), and three quarters (73%) of this group were working towards a full Level 2 or higher qualification. This is equivalent to 3% of all unit learners that at the time of the survey were studying for a full qualification at Level 2 or higher. Amongst those not currently learning, a clear majority (79%) reported it was likely that they would do some further learning in the next year, and three quarters (74%) of these expect to be working towards a full qualification.
- **Achievement of units may help learners achieve positive employment outcomes.** A quarter (25%) of those unemployed immediately before starting their learning were in paid work at the time of the survey². About half (52%) of those learners who reported being in a new job felt that their unit course had helped them secure it, and a quarter (23%) believed they would not have found this job without the unit course.
- Where unit learning has not (yet) led to employment, learners felt that it would **help to increase their chances of getting a job**, with this reported by 70% of unemployed learners. Out of work learners can study short units (which minimise their time away from the labour market) and, as discussed in Chapter 5, often study units specifically related to improving their job searching and application skills.
- Learners who were continuously in work felt that unit learning **increased their job satisfaction, gave better pay and promotion prospects, and better job security.** Working learners tend to acquire job-specific skills required by their employers.
- There is evidence of a **wide range of skills gained** from unit achievement, including job-specific skills, basic and generic skills, and job searching skills. In addition, **unit learning brings wider benefits**, such as improved confidence.
- The learner survey indicates that successful **unit learning can help reducing dependency on state benefits or tax credits.** There was a decrease of learners accessing state support (from 74% before their unit learning down to 62% at the time when surveyed).

² It is worth noting that at the time of the survey most learners (85%) had completed their programme of units, with the remainder relatively evenly split between those still on provision (6%) and those who left without completing (9%).

Chapter 1: Executive Summary

This report details the findings of an evaluation of learning undertaken in programmes of individual units, as opposed to traditional, linear delivery of 'full' or complete qualifications. The evaluation is based on a telephone survey of 1,000 unit learners conducted in August 2012, as well as analysis of the 2011-12 Individual Learner Record (ILR) database.

The profile and characteristics of unit learners

The age, gender, and ethnic minority status of unit learners is relatively similar to all learners undertaking learning at Entry level, Level 1 or Level 2, based on analysis of the 2011-12 ILR database³:

- A slight majority of unit learners are women (52% among those studying at providers that were part of the Unit Delivery Trial (UDT) programme, rising to 57% of unit learners studying at other providers). Among all Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 learners women were in a slight minority (47%). The gender profile of unit learners based at UDT providers was very different for those employed prior to their learning, among whom just a quarter (27%) were women;
- Most unit learners are aged 25-59 (72% at UDT providers and 75% among other providers) very similar to the proportion among all Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 learners (73%);
- One in five (19%) unit learners at UDT providers were Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, as were a quarter (25%) of unit learners at other providers, comparable to the proportion among all Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 learners (21%)

Unit learners have a very different employment status immediately before their learning than learners in general, and predictably many fewer were employed and many more not working and on benefits / tax credits. Over half (55%) of all Entry, Level 1 and Level 2 learners were employed before their course, compared to one in nine (11%) of unit learners at UDT providers, and just 4% of unit learners at non-UDT providers.

Among unit learners more were on active benefits than were only receiving inactive benefits, with this particularly marked among unit learners at UDT providers (61% were on active benefits vs. 45% among unit learners at non-UDT providers).

For just over a fifth of unit learners studying at UDT providers the ILR indicated that they had no prior qualifications (22%), and for approaching half (46%) their highest prior attainment was below Level 2 (it is worth noting that for 15% the level was unknown).

³ The ILR analysis considers learner data split into three main groups, including: a) learners undertaking unit learning at providers participating in the UDT programme (these correspond to the population in scope for the learner survey); b) learners undertaking unit learning at non-UDT providers; and c) a general total group of learners undertaking learning at Entry, Level 1 or Level 2.

Those on active and inactive benefits had a similar profile, while those employed immediately before their unit learning with a UDT provider tended to be better qualified (just over two thirds were qualified to Level 2 or higher). Unit learners at non-UDT providers had a similar profile, though a slightly higher proportion (55%) did not have Level 2 qualifications, and the prior attainment profile is similar between unit learners and Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 learners in general.

A majority of learners studying units at UDT and non-UDT providers studied multiple units (63% and 61% respectively). The main exception was learners at UDT providers who were employed immediately before their learning, among whom more than two-thirds (68%) studied a single unit.

Most unit learners in 2011/12 had completed their units at the time of interview (63% of those studying at UDT providers and 52% of those at non-UDT providers, much higher than the 39% among Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 learners in general). Most of the remainder were still undertaking their learning with just over one in twenty having left early (6% among unit learners at UDT providers and 7% of those at non-UDT providers, much lower than the 15% found among learners in general).

Learner motivations, and awareness of unit based learning

The majority of individuals undertook their unit learning in order to learn something new and to gain new skills (90%) and for employment related reasons, such as to improve their job prospects or helping them get a new job or career (88%). Other common motivations were wanting to meet new people (52%), to progress onto another course (48%), or being recommended to undertake learning by a National Careers Service, Next Step or Jobcentre Plus adviser (46%). Around half (49%) of those who were working as employees before the course were required or requested to start the course by their employer.

A majority of learners (61%) were aware that their learning was unit based. Among those who were aware of this most did not have a preference either way as to whether they studied units / credits or a full qualification (70%), though more (19%) would have preferred to undertake a full qualification than said they preferred the unit / credit structure (9%).

There were three main reasons why learners who would have preferred to undertake a full qualification did not do so: that the full qualification was not available (20%), that the learner could not afford the fees for a full qualification (19%) and that the provider recommended the learner to do units or credits and go on to a full qualification if they completed (18%).

When learners that were aware that they were undertaking a unit course were asked about the alternatives they would have considered if unit learning had not been available. A very similar proportion (72%) said they would have done a course leading to a full qualification with the same or another provider as said they would have tried to do a similar, unit based course with another provider (70%). The fact that both figures are high suggests that many are not particularly concerned as to whether it leads to units/credits or directly to a full qualification. Learners who were not aware that their course was unit or credit based were also asked about alternatives they might have considered had their course not been

available: from the unit perspective it is interesting that relatively few (19%) would have sought a higher level, more demanding course.

Type of unit based learning undertaken by learners

Analysis of the learning aims undertaken at Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 in the ILR database shows that only a small proportion of aims (4% or a total of 153,314 aims) were undertaken as units only, while the majority of aims (96%) were undertaken in the traditional, linear way.

Of the 19,000 specific units made available for unit delivery, only a small number have been taken up: 1,345 individual units in total, with 568 units at UDT providers and 1,110 at non-UDT providers.

Unit learners who were on active or inactive benefits were most likely to have learning aims to do with re-entering the world of work, as well as courses that would be applicable to a number of potential career paths, such as customer services. Among employed learners, the most popular learning aims were connected with the learners' existing employment.

Analysis of the ILR shows that most units studied were at Level 1 (68% at UDT providers, 59% at other providers), with most of the rest at Level 2 (just 6% among either group were at Entry Level). This is a stronger focus on Level 1 than found among Entry, Level 1 and level 2 learners in general (among whom 32% of aims were at Level 1). Among unit learners the main group where the emphasis was on Level 2 was learners at UDT providers who were employed prior to the course among whom three-quarters (75%) of the units were at Level 2.

In the survey, learners were asked about the delivery of their course. Most learners (90%) undertook their learning during the working week, although learners in employment were more likely than average to have studied in the evenings and at weekends (32%).

There was wide variety in the number of hours that unit learners spent each week on their course (including taught time and independent study). A quarter (24%) spent 25 hours or more per week studying, while 16% only spent between zero and four hours per week on their course; the remainder of learners spent between 5 and 24 hours per week.

Regarding duration, over two-fifths (44%) of learners were on courses that lasted between one and four weeks. The remainder were most likely to have been on courses lasting from five to 12 weeks (27%), or on short courses lasting less than one week (11%).

Learners were asked in the survey about the outcome of the course they undertook. Most learners (85%) stated that they completed their original programme of units, less than one in ten (9%) said that they left the course early, and a small number (6%) said that their study was still continuing at the time of the interview. Those at the interview who expressed a preference for studying to a full qualification were more likely to have left early (16%). The most common reason for non-completion was leaving to start a job (33%).

Impact of unit based learning

Prior to starting their unit learning, most learners were not in paid work, with two-thirds (67%) specifically unemployed and looking for work, compared to smaller numbers in education or training (6%), neither in nor looking for employment (6%), or doing voluntary work (2%). Nearly one in five (18%) were in paid employment.

Of those who were not in employment, over half (53%) had not worked for more than a year (indeed a third (34%) had not worked for more than two years) while a quarter (25%) had been out of work for less than six months.

The main barriers to finding work given by learners who were unemployed included: a lack of local jobs (mentioned by 62%), a lack of work experience (45%), a lack of qualifications or skills (42%) and a lack of confidence (36%).

Comparing the employment status of learners before and after their unit learning shows a large increase in the proportion doing paid work, from 18% before the course to 37% at the time of the survey. Overall a quarter (25%) of those who were unemployed before the course said that they were working as employees or on a self-employed basis at the time of the survey.

Among learners who were employed both before their learning and at the time of the survey, the vast majority (93%) were still working for the same employer in the same job role.

Of the employment gained by unit learners (i.e. the group of learners whose status changed from not being in work immediately prior to the unit learning to being in paid work at the time of the interview) just over half were in permanent jobs (56%) much lower than the 73% average amongst all learners in work when interviewed), while just over two-fifths (43%) were seasonal, casual, temporary, limited time contract jobs or some other form of non-permanent arrangement. Elementary Occupations were heavily represented, with almost two-fifths of those moving into paid jobs taking such roles (38% vs. 26% amongst all learners in paid jobs when interviewed). A fifth entered Sales and Customer Service roles (20%), and most of the remainder entered Administrative and Secretarial roles or Leisure and Caring roles (16% and 15% respectively).

There was a decrease in the proportion of learners receiving state benefits or tax credits, from three-quarter (74%) before they started their unit learning to just over three-fifths (62%) at the time of the interview. The proportion receiving Jobseekers Allowance, the most commonly accessed single support, fell from 59% before the course to 43% at the time of interview.

Learners reported having gained a variety of different skills from undertaking their unit learning. These included a number of generic skills, job-specific skills, skills related to looking for work, and basic skills such as literacy, English language, and numeracy. The most mentioned skills gained were in communication (74%), team working (72%), and organisational skills (68%).

Learners also reported a variety of wider benefits as a result of their course, such as feeling more confident about their abilities (83%), feeling better about themselves

generally (83%), feeling more clear about the range of opportunities open to them (78%), and feeling more enthusiastic about learning (76%).

Learners who reported being in a new job were asked about their perceptions of the role played by the learning they did, and around half (52%) believed that the course had helped them to get their current job, including just under a quarter (23%) who said they would not have got the job without the course.

Learners who were in work both before and after the course were asked if they had experienced any improvements in their employment situation, and whether these improvements were the direct result of the course. More than half (54%) reported getting more job satisfaction, three in ten (28%) felt they now had better pay and promotion prospects, and the same proportion felt they now had better job security. In each case between around three-fifths to two-thirds benefiting in these ways said the improvement was either a direct result of the course or the course helped.

Overall 70% of learners unemployed when interviewed felt that doing the unit course had increased their chances of finding a job, including one fifth (21%) who felt it had significantly increased their chances.

Further learning undertaken after unit based course

Of the learners who either completed their initial course, or left early, one quarter (25%) said that they had gone on to further courses or learning since (half these said that this new learning was a continuation of, or similar to, their initial course). Just over two-fifths (42%) of these individuals reported that the original course had positively influenced their ability to access further learning, with a quarter (23%) specifically saying they would not have been able to access the subsequent course without the initial (unit) learning, and more generally the original unit course impacted on their motivations to study, with around three-quarters of these learners saying that the original course got them more interested in learning, made them want to achieve a full qualification, and / or build on what they had learned from the original course.

Half (54%) of learners who gave their current status as studying said that their current learning would lead to a full qualification, one-fifth (21%) were studying further units or credits (a quarter were unsure of the nature of their learning). Out of the learners studying to a full qualification, nearly three-quarters (73%) said that this would be at Level 2 or above – this is equivalent to 40% of those whose main current activity is 'in learning' or 3% of our total sample of unit learners.

One in ten (10%) of all surveyed learners had already achieved a full qualification in the period since they started, completed, or left the original course. Notwithstanding a relatively high level of cases (20%) where it was not possible to definitely assign a level to their learning, most subsequent full qualifications that had been achieved tended to be at Entry level or Level 1 (34%) or a Level 2 qualification (32%).

Of those who were not studying at the time of the interview, more than two thirds (70%) said it was likely that they would go on to undertake further learning or courses in the next

year or so. Of these learners, three-quarters (74%) said that they expected the new learning to involve working to a full qualification (equivalent to 51% of all learners).

Chapter 2: Introduction

This report presents an assessment of the impact of learning undertaken in programmes of units, as opposed to traditional, linear delivery of ‘full’ qualifications⁴. The evaluation covers unit learning delivered by providers who participated in the Unit Delivery Trial (UDT) programme in 2011/12, including units delivered by these providers as part of the Offer for the Unemployed.

The policy context

The Coalition Government’s plans for the reform of the Further Education (FE) sector were set out in late 2010 in *Skills for Sustainable Growth*, and *Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth*. Both emphasised the importance of a skilled and productive workforce to securing future economic prosperity and long term growth, as well to extending opportunity and building stronger communities. The creation of a dynamic and efficient skills system that ensures the UK has an internationally competitive skills base is one of the key strategic ambitions of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

The Vocational Qualification Reform Programme started in 2008 and aimed to create a system based on learner and employer needs, offering clarity, flexibility and choice. Since 2010 the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) has been focussing funding on provision within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF which had been trialled since 2006), a unit based and credit bearing qualifications framework developed as part of the Vocational Qualification Reform programme. The key characteristics of the QCF include:

- It aims to hold unit and credit based vocational qualifications in a clear, easy to understand structure, with consistent titles showing each qualification's size (award, certificate or diploma), level (Entry Level to Level 8) and volume of achievement.
- Qualifications are built up from units. After successful completion of each unit learners are awarded credit, and credit can be accumulated towards a qualification achievement.
- Recognition and transferability of achievements, as credits will be recorded after completion of each unit making them transferable between employers.

As a unit based and credit bearing framework the QCF allows learning to be delivered more flexibly in smaller steps and at a pace better suited to the learner’s needs, and with units and credits accumulated to a full qualification. This reflected the realisation that, among others things, those furthest away from the labour market need encouragement back into learning and can be put off by the prospect of embarking on a full qualification. Similar feedback from employers and employer groups emphasised that studying to a full

⁴ The term ‘full qualification’ as used within this report refers to a complete qualification, as distinct from one or more units which may form part of a qualification. It does not refer to the use of ‘full’ as a way of identifying which qualifications are eligible for public funding’.

qualification was not always critical, and increased flexibility was paramount. The Vocational Qualification reforms aimed to make it much easier for employers to respond quickly to the rapid changes of the marketplace, allowed the facility for employers to become recognised as awarding organisations, and encouraged employers to work with other awarding organisations to develop bespoke units or qualifications and have them accredited.

Unit Delivery Trials (UDTs) were introduced along with the QCF in 2009/10. Since then there have been further rounds of Unit Delivery Trials, and in 2011/12 around 80 providers were taking part in the Trials. In addition in 2011/12 all providers registered on the SFA's Approved College and Training Organisation Register were eligible to offer fully-funded QCF units within the new single adult skills budget as part of the Offer to the Unemployed (available for learners who are unemployed and on active benefits, i.e. in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) or Employment Support Allowance – Work Related Activity Group (ESA – WRAG)).

For both elements some 19,000 units have been made available (from Entry Level 1 to those at Level 5 – the levels available vary between the Unit Delivery Trials and the Offer to the Unemployed). However, providers have tended to use a small percentage of these, often focussing on units relating to ICT (word processing, using spreadsheets) and job employability related skills (interview skills, how to look for a job, etc).

Extensive research into the operation and impact of Unit Delivery Trials has already been undertaken. This includes a formative 'Evaluation of Unit Delivery Trials' during the academic year 2010/11 (reported in September 2011), which drew on work with providers, awarding organisations whose units have been delivered through the trials, and learners. In April 2012 the evaluation 'Unit Delivery and Credit Accumulation and Transfer within the Qualifications and Credit Framework' was published, which focused on the experience of providers in organising and delivering a curriculum based on individual units during 2011/12⁵.

Building on these early insights, further research was required to assess what the value is of funding programmes of units to adults aged 19 plus compared to the traditional, linear delivery of 'full' qualifications. In particular, this evaluation sought to explore whether unit based learning increases the number of people who achieve a first full level 2 qualification, and whether it increases the range of people accessing and progressing into learning.

More specifically the evaluation sought to establish the extent to which unit delivery has:

- Allowed adults to access learning which they would not otherwise have accessed without the offer of a programme of units;
- Enabled high completion rates of unit learning undertaken;
- Improved attitudes, confidence and motivation to learn;

⁵ Both research publications can be accessed on the SFA's Unit Delivery website: <http://qcf.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/qcf-funding/unitdelivery/>

- Resulted in more learners progressing (or intending to progress) on to a further qualification than if they had not been able to study in this way;
- Equipped learners with new skills, produced tangible improvements in learners' employment, and increased their chances of getting a job or speeding up labour market re-entry.

Method

In order to meet the project aims and objectives a quantitative approach was adopted. The evaluation consisted of two main strands of inquiry:

- Primary survey research conducted amongst learners involved in unit based learning;
- Secondary analysis of the existing Individualised Learner Record (ILR) database.

The quantitative learner survey comprised 1,000 interviews conducted with learners who had undertaken unit based learning in the academic year 2011/12 with providers involved in the Unit Delivery Trials. The data was collected via telephone, using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). All the interviews were conducted from IFF's telephone centre in London.

The fieldwork took place from 16th August to 30th August 2012. This period included a rolling pilot phase during the first two days of interviewing, after which the survey data was examined and minor refinements were made to the questionnaire. The final questionnaire used for the study is referenced in Appendix A of this report.

The fieldwork sample was obtained from the 2011/12 ILR, a collection of data about learners and their learning supplied by providers in the Further Education (FE) and Skills sector in England. Eligible learners, and learning aims in scope for this study, were identified on the ILR database by combining two selection criteria:

- Firstly, learners must have undertaken their learning with one of the 77 learning providers who participated in the delivery of unit based learning in 2011/12 as part of the UDT (as a note, these providers participating in the UDT pilot phase also offered unit learning as part of the Offer for the Unemployed); and
- Secondly their learning aim(s) must have been unit or credit based.⁶

Applying these filtering protocols identified a total of 14,046 in-scope learners. Information about their demographics and their learning are discussed in chapters 3 and 5 of this report.

⁶ This selection criterion was defined via the ILR variable LARA_CREDIT_BASED_TYPE = '03'.

The starting sample for the survey fieldwork was substantially lower. A total of 5,593 useable contacts were left after setting aside unusable records, which included learners whose ILR records indicated that they did not wish to be contacted for research (as per ILR variables L27 and L52), in addition to learner records with missing or unusable telephone numbers.

Willingness to take part in the study was high, with very few refusals, as shown in the following table. As a note a strict response rate cannot be calculated as the fieldwork stopped when the target number of interviews (1,000) was achieved rather than trying to maximise the number of interviews from the starting sample.

Table 2.1: Response outcomes

Survey sample outcomes	
Starting sample	5,593
Sample not used	1,667
Wrong / ineligible number	439
No recall of unit learning	104
Eligible, used sample	3,383
No answer / engaged / still live at the end of fieldwork	2,130
Refusals	162
Appointments	88
Completed interview	1,003

At the analysis stage the final survey data was weighted to ensure that the findings were representative of the population of unit learners.

Table 2.2: Weighting of survey data

	Population	Unweighted survey results	Weighted survey results
<i>Base:</i>	14,046	1,000	1,000
Age	%	%	%
19-20	12	7	12
21-24	17	14	17
25-59	69	72	68
60 and over	2	7	2
Gender			
Female	49	42	50
Male	51	58	50
Number of units			
One unit	39	42	39
More than one unit	61	58	61
Employment / benefit status			

	Population	Unweighted survey results	Weighted survey results
<i>Base:</i>	14,046	1,000	1,000
Active benefits	59	33	59
Inactive benefits	16	24	16
Employed	13	21	13
Not known	12	21	12

Weighting was applied by grossing up the survey data to match the population counts of learners and their distribution along their employment and benefit status before the course. Further rim weights were then applied to correct the age distribution and the number of units undertaken.

In addition to the quantitative survey of learners, secondary data analysis was also conducted on the 2011/12 ILR. This was used to calculate a detailed demographic profile of learners who participated in unit or credit based learning with providers involved in the UDT to further help understanding the characteristics of this group (this is reported in Chapter 3). In addition, the ILR learning aims data could be used to explore the type of learning and the completion rates recorded for unit based learning (see Chapter 5). These profiles were compared to conventional, i.e. non-unit based learners and learning data so as to explore any substantial differences between the two groups.

Definitions and reporting conventions

In order to avoid the risk of confusing terminology, it is worth clarifying how this evaluation understands the concept of 'unit learning'. In principle, all learning aims are delivered as units within the QCF and any unit achievement results in credits that can count towards a qualification. So, undertaking 'unit learning' and studying for a 'full' qualification are not two different things that bear no relation to each other. Therefore, this evaluation uses the terms 'unit learning' or 'unit courses' to denote learning undertaken by learners who only embarked on one or more units in the first place, without necessarily signing up for a traditional, linear full qualification from the outset, even though these individual units bear credit that can (eventually) be accumulated to complete a programme of units leading to a full qualification.

Where possible, the findings from this piece of research are compared to an earlier study commissioned by BIS entitled *'Impact of Further Education learning'* and conducted in 2012. This involved a representative telephone survey of 4,000 learners aged 19+ who had taken part in FE learning in the 2010/11 academic year. Due to differences in the methodological approaches adopted and the make up of the two learner populations⁷, these comparisons illustrate indicative trends found in unit learning vis-a-vis traditional learning towards 'full' qualifications.

⁷ For example, the current unit learner survey is mostly made up of learners studying at Entry, Level 1 and Level 2 compared to the FE learner survey which included learners at all levels up to Level 4 and above.

Unless otherwise stated, all differences that are reported throughout this report are statistically significant at the 95% level. Where an asterisk (*) appears in data tables this indicates a proportion lower than 1%, and a hyphen (-) indicates that no observations were recorded in that particular cell.

The subsequent chapters of this report are aligned to the following structure:

- Chapter 3 presents a detailed profile of learners undertaking units of learning, including their basic demographics (age, gender, ethnicity), prior qualification levels, employment status and access to state benefits or tax credits; this analysis is supported by the population statistics calculated from the 2011/12 ILR.
- Chapter 4 explores learners' motivations for studying, the extent to which they were aware of and preferred (a programme of) unit learning over studying for a 'full' qualification in the traditional linear way, and the alternatives they considered had unit learning not been available as an option.
- Chapter 5 presents a profile of unit learning, including course levels, most frequently studied learning aims, and completion rates based on ILR figures; in addition, survey findings explore different types of delivery mode, length of courses and hours per week studied.
- Chapter 6 assesses the impact of unit learning on employment and further learning outcomes by way of comparing employment and benefit circumstances before and after the course, analysing skills and other benefits gained, and determining the extent to which positive outcomes can be attributed to the unit course that learners undertook.
- Chapter 7 looks into further learning undertaken by learners after they finished their initial unit course, including their motivations to continue learning, an analysis of the type of further learning, qualifications obtained, and intentions to undertake further study.
- The research findings are summarised into a final chapter that presents the overall conclusions of this evaluation.

Chapter 3: The profile and characteristics of unit learners

In this chapter we examine the demographic profile, prior employment and benefit claiming status, prior qualifications, and completion status of three groups of learners:

- Learners undertaking units at any of the 77 providers who participated in the Unit Delivery Trials (UDTs);
- Learners undertaking units with any other provider (for example via the Offer for the Unemployed); and
- All learners undertaking learning at Entry level, Level 1 or Level 2, which includes a small proportion of learners undertaking unit learning (3%) and a clear majority doing traditional, linear learning (97%).

The data in this chapter is based on analysis of the Individual Learner Record (ILR) from the 2011-12, not survey data. In all cases the data from the ILR has been filtered to only include learners studying at Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2, so as to provide meaningful comparisons between unit learning and traditional, linear learning.

Within the chapter, analysis of those undertaking a programme of units, whether with a UDT provider or elsewhere, is further broken down, as follows:

- Learners who were employed previously;
- Learners on 'active benefits'; this group of learners were in receipt of either JSA or ESA WRAG before they started their units and were not employed; and
- Learners classified as being on 'inactive benefits' who received any other types of state benefits or tax credits prior to their unit learning but who were not employed nor receiving active benefits.

For simplicity this classification is 'single coded' in the hierarchy described above – for example someone receiving active benefits and inactive benefits has been classified in the 'active benefits' category.

Demographic profile of learners

Table 3.1 describes the age, gender, ethnicity and disability status of the various groups of learners.

Table 3.1 Demographic profile of learners (ILR analysis)

	Learners studying units with UDT PROVIDERS				Learners studying units with NON-UDT PROVIDERS				ALL
	Active benefits	Inactive benefits	Employed	TOTAL DOING UNITS AT UDT PROVIDERS	Active benefits	Inactive benefits	Employed	TOTAL DOING UNITS AT NON-UDT PROVIDERS	TOTAL
<i>Base</i>	8,245	2,174	1,547	13,568	19,028	14,967	1,549	42,424	1,890,471
Age	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
19 to 20	4	4	1	3	3	2	2	3	3
21 to 24	24	21	10	21	20	17	14	18	19
25 to 59	71	67	83	72	74	76	80	75	73
60 plus	2	8	6	4	2	5	4	4	4
Gender	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	38	57	73	48	34	47	63	43	53
Female	62	43	27	52	66	53	37	57	47
Ethnicity	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
White	80	76	89	80	78	72	72	73	77
BAME	19	24	11	19	21	27	27	25	21
Not known	1	1	0	1	2	1	1	2	1
Disability	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Has disability	15	17	6	14	15	14	13	15	11
Does not have disability	83	80	93	83	83	84	84	83	86
No info	1	3	1	3	2	2	3	2	3

Most unit learners undertaking their learning with a UDT provider fall into the 25 to 59 age bracket (72%), with most of the remainder (21% overall) aged 21-24. Those that were employed prior to their learning were less likely to be under 25 (11% v. 25% among all unit learners at UDT providers).

This age profile is very similar to unit learners at non-UDT providers, and to all learners that were undertaking Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 courses.

Among all Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 learners the gender split is fairly even, with a slight majority (53%) male. The overall gender balance of unit learners at UDT providers is also relatively even (though with a slight majority female (52%), however this varied widely between those on active benefits (62% female) and those who were employed (73% male). Unit learners at other (non-UDT) providers showed a similar pattern of those having been on active benefits being particularly likely to be female, those employed being particularly likely to be male: overall almost three-fifths of unit learners at non-UDT providers were female (57%).

By broad ethnicity, a fifth (21%) of Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 learners in general are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic. Among unit learners at UDT providers the figure was a little lower (19%), but much lower among those employed prior to their learning (11%). By contrast those undertaking unit learning at other providers were more likely than learners in general to be Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (25%).

Unit learners at UDT providers (14%) and at other providers (15%) were a little more likely than learners in general (11%) to have a disability, learning difficulty, or health problem. Unit learners at UDT providers that had been in work immediately before their learning were much less likely than average to have a disability, learning difficulty, or health problem (6%), though this large difference by employment status was not found for unit learners at other providers.

In summary, the ILR data indicates that learners undertaking units of learning are comparable in their age profile to the overall average of all learners, but are more likely to be women, slightly more likely to be BAME and to report a learning difficulty, disability or health problem. Some of these groups appear to be underrepresented in the group of all learners compared to the general population, which indicates that unit learning is successful with engaging these groups into learning⁸.

Active and inactive benefits received before learning

As shown in Figure 3.1 below, there are very large differences between learners who were studying a programme of units compared to the overall average of all learners studying at Entry and Levels 1 and 2 in terms of their prior employment and benefit claiming status. As discussed earlier, this classification into 'employed', 'active benefits' and 'inactive benefits' is an over simplification in that people have been assigned to a single category, prioritising employed, then active benefits, then inactive benefits. Hence someone in employment receiving inactive benefits has been classified as 'employed', and someone receiving active benefits and inactive benefits has been classified in the 'active benefits' category.

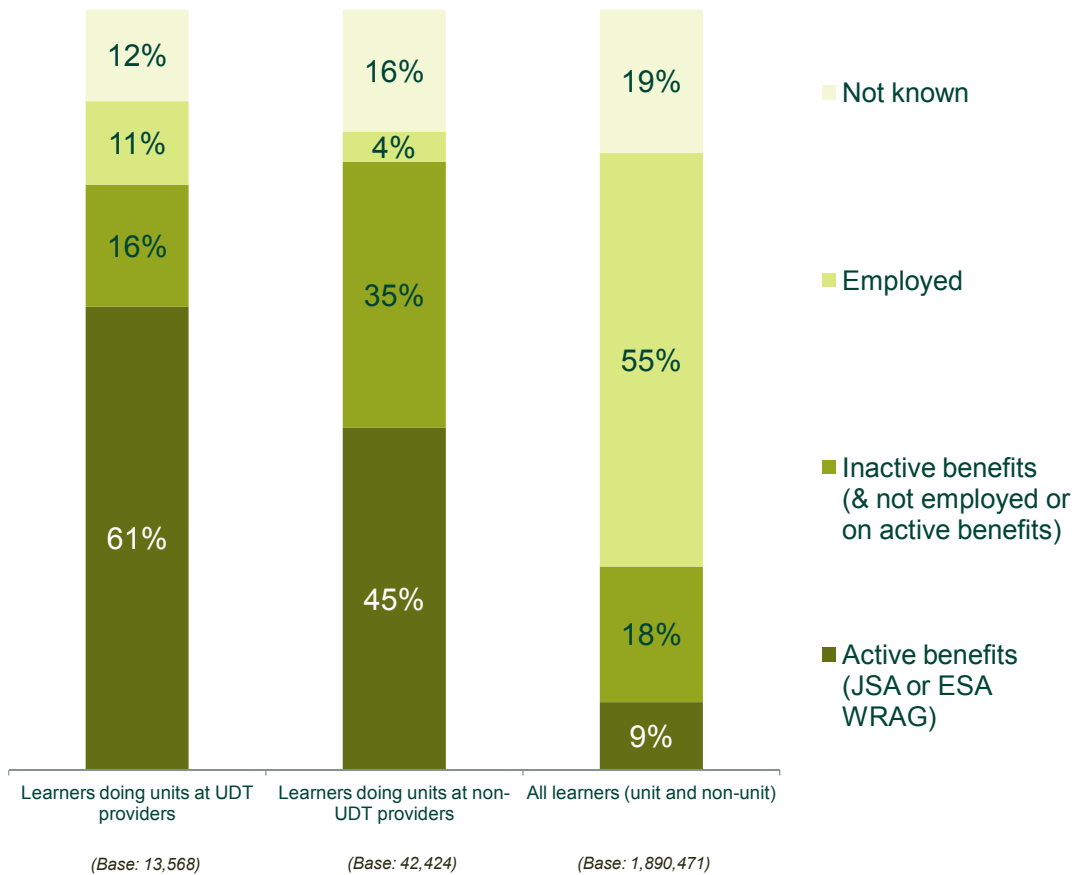
It is also worth noting relatively high proportions of individuals on the ILR with no classifications.

Unit learners have a very different employment / benefit profile than learners in general, and predictably many fewer were employed and many more not working and on benefits / tax credits. Over half (55%) of all Entry, Level 1 and Level 2 learners were employed before their course, compared to one in nine (11%) of unit learners at UDT providers, and just 4% of unit learners at non-UDT providers.

⁸ For example, the proportion of females is 47% amongst all learners compared to 51% amongst all residents in England aged 19 years or over, according to data from the NOMIS 2011 mid-year population estimates. Similarly, one in nine (11%) of all learners reported a learning difficulty, disability or health problem compared to an estimated 15% of all working age adults in Great Britain, according to the Family Resources Survey 2010/11.

Among unit learners more were on active benefits than were only receiving inactive benefits, with this particularly marked among unit learners at UDT providers (61% were on active benefits vs. 45% among unit learners at non-UDT providers).

Figure 3.1 Learner employment and benefit status prior to their learning



Prior attainment level and current learning

Table 3.2 shows the prior highest qualification level of learners as identified through the ILR.

Table 3.2 Prior highest qualification level (ILR analysis)

	Learners studying units with UDT PROVIDERS				Learners studying units with NON-UDT PROVIDERS				ALL
	Active benefits	Inactive benefits	Employed	TOTAL DOING UNITS AT UDT PROVIDERS	Active benefits	Inactive benefits	Employed	TOTAL DOING UNITS AT NON-UDT PROVIDERS	TOTAL
<i>Base</i>	8,245	2,174	1,547	13,568	19,028	14,967	1,549	42,424	1,890,471
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
No qualifications	25	20	14	22	25	20	16	22	26
Entry & Level 1 & Other qualifications below L1	26	28	14	24	28	41	25	33	28
Level 2	22	17	29	21	21	16	24	19	22
Level 3	8	6	23	10	8	7	11	8	10
Level 4 and above	6	8	16	8	6	8	12	7	6
Not known & 'Other qualification level unknown'	11	21	5	15	12	8	12	12	9

For just over a fifth of unit learners studying at UDT providers the ILR indicated that they had no prior qualifications (22%), and for approaching half (46%) their highest prior attainment was below Level 2 (it is worth noting that for 15% the level was unknown). Those on active and inactive benefits had a similar profile, while those employed immediately before their unit learning tended to be better qualified (just over two thirds were qualified to Level 2 or higher). Unit learners at non-UDT providers had a similar profile, though a slightly higher proportion (55%) did not have Level 2 qualifications.

The profile of prior attainment is similar between unit learners and all Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 learners.

Table 3.3 The nature of the current learning (ILR analysis)

	Learners studying units with UDT PROVIDERS				Learners studying units with NON-UDT PROVIDERS				ALL
	Active benefits	Inactive benefits	Employed	TOTAL DOING UNITS AT UDT PROVIDERS	Active benefits	Inactive benefits	Employed	TOTAL DOING UNITS AT NON-UDT PROVIDERS	TOTAL
<i>Base</i>	8,245	2,174	1,547	13,568	19,028	14,967	1,549	42,424	1,890,471
Number of units studied	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
One unit	28	48	68	37	29	46	46	39	N/A
More than one unit	72	52	32	63	71	54	54	61	N/A
Completion status	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Completed	69	60	43	63	55	52	55	52	39
Continuing	25	32	56	31	40	38	40	41	46
Other	6	8	2	6	5	9	5	7	15

The majority of unit learners were undertaking a programme consisting of multiple units (63% among those with UDT providers, 61% among other providers), as shown in Table 3.3 above. The main exception to this trend was those at UDT providers that were employed immediately before their learning, among whom only a third (32%) were undertaking multiple units. Unit learners on active benefits prior to their learning, whether at a UDT provider or elsewhere, were particularly likely to have been on a programme involving multiple units (72% and 71% respectively).

Looking at the course completion data available from the ILR shows that two in five (39%) Entry, Level 1 and Level 2 learners on provision in 2011/12 had completed their learning aims by the end of 2011/12, while 46% had their status recorded as 'continuing' and for a further 15% a mix of other outcomes were recorded (including withdrawal, temporary withdrawal, or transfer to another aim).

Predictably given that they are studying units as opposed to a 'full programme', among unit learners this trend is slightly reversed, with a majority having completed (63% among those studying at UDT providers, and 52% among those at other provider). Learners with UDT providers who were on active benefits before their learning were particularly likely to have completed their units (69%), while those who were employed were much less likely to have completed (43%), this likely to reflect the fact that employed learners have to fit their studies around their work hours.

Chapter 4: Learner motivations, awareness of unit based learning, and alternatives considered

This chapter explores learners' main motivations for doing their unit course, the extent to which they were aware that their learning was unit based (as opposed to learning automatically leading up to a 'full' qualification), their preference for this type of learning and any alternatives they might have considered. The analysis draws on data gathered through the learner survey; in addition, comparisons between these survey findings and those reported in an earlier FE learner survey are made where possible.

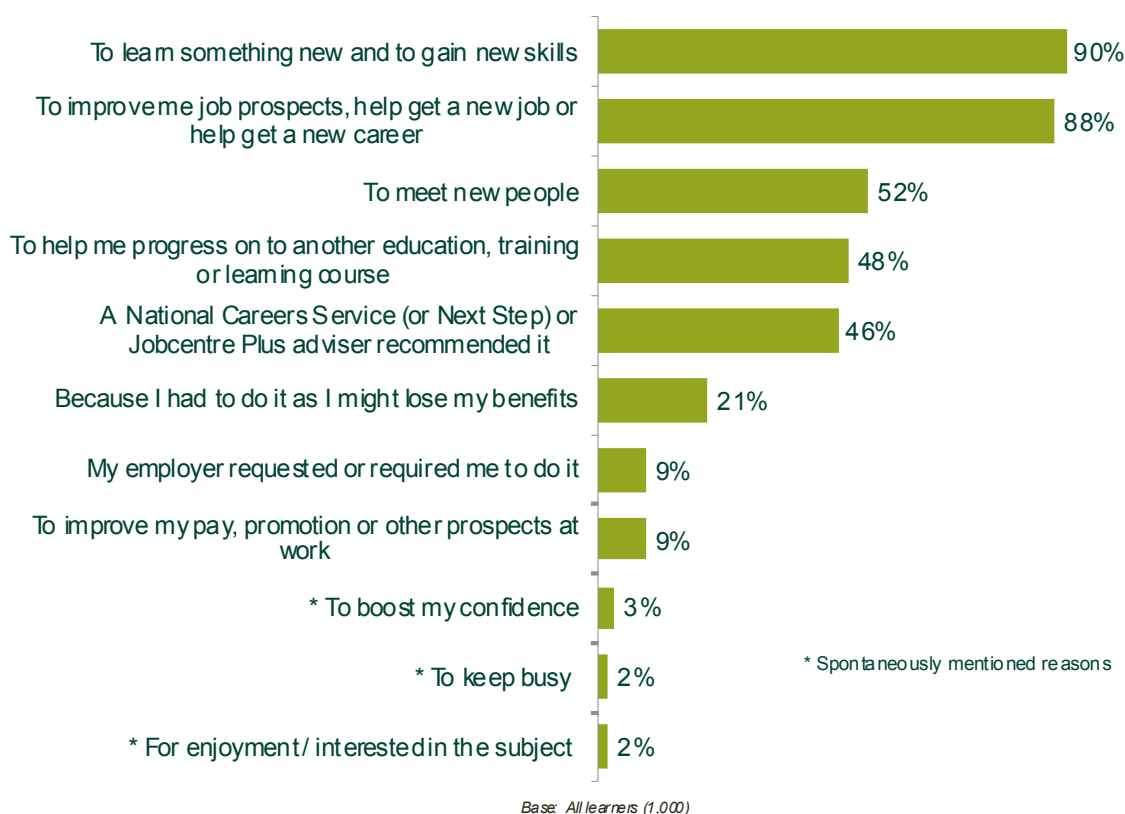
Learner motivations

The vast majority of learners undertook their learning to learn something new and to gain new skills (90%) and for employment-related reasons, such as improve their job prospects or helping them get a new job or career (88%). Around half wanted to meet new people (52%), to progress onto another education, training or learning course (48%), or were recommended to undertake learning by a National Careers Service, Next Step⁹ or Jobcentre Plus adviser (46%). Employers also had an influence for those in work, and around half of those working as employees prior to their learning (49%, though representing only 9% of all unit learners interviewed) started the course at least in part because their employer required or requested it.

While some of those on benefits prior to their learning indicated that they did the learning so that they would not lose their benefits (28%, equivalent to 21% of all learners), very few did not also have more positive reasons such as wanting to gain skills or improve their job prospects.

Results are summarised on Figure 4.1 below. Most figures shown are prompted, with the list of possible reasons read out to respondents who could choose more than one option to respond. However, the most common spontaneous reasons are also shown, where respondents were asked if they had other reasons for undertaking the learning.

⁹ Next Step was replaced by the National Careers Service on 5th April 2012

Figure 4.1 Reasons for undertaking unit learning

In addition, learners were subsequently asked about their one main reason for undertaking the unit learning. Again, motivations around improving job prospects (47%) and learning some new skills (32%) featured on top of the single most important factors. To put these survey findings into context, the recent 'Impact of Further Education learning' study commissioned by BIS and conducted in 2012 also asked learners about their main reasons for undertaking their courses. The top two reasons given were 'to improve my job prospects / get a new job or new career' (29%) and 'to learn something new / gain new skills' (27%), but the lower proportion mentioning each suggests that unit learners are more motivated by these factors than FE learners.

Awareness that the course was unit based, and preference for unit based learning

A majority of learners (61%, higher among those receiving benefit / tax credits pre the course but otherwise varying little by sub-group) were aware that their learning was unit based (described to respondents as not necessarily leading to a full qualification but which enables you to collect units or credits which can be used towards gaining a full qualification at a later date), and most of these learners (70%) did not have a preference either way as to whether they studied units / credits or a full qualification. Where a preference did exist more (of those aware that they undertook unit based learning) would have preferred to have undertaken a full qualification (19%) than preferred their unit /

credit structure that they undertook (9%). We discuss these issues in more detail in this section.

We have seen that one in five (19%) of those aware that they undertook unit based learning would have preferred to undertake a full qualification (equivalent to 12% of all respondents). These learners were asked why they did not embark on a course leading directly to a full qualification. Results on this spontaneous question are shown on the following table.

Table 4.1 Reasons for undertaking unit based learning when would have preferred a full qualification (spontaneous)

<i>Base: All who would have preferred a full qualification</i>	116
	%
The course they wanted to do was not available as a full qualification	20
Learner could not afford the fees for a full qualification	19
The provider recommended learner to do units/credits and go on to a full qualification if they completed	18
Learner not sure they had time available for a full qualification / shorter course more convenient	11
Not told about / not sure about what was available	9
Learner found a job	7
Personal / family reasons (e.g. caring responsibilities)	5
Learner concerned that a full qualification might be too hard	2
The provider thought the learner may struggle with a full qualification	2
Liked the idea of studying in smaller units so could progress at own pace	2
Other reasons	7
No particular reason / don't know	10

Three main reasons predominate: the full qualification not being available, not being able to afford the fees for a full course, and the provider recommending that the learner start with units/credits to then consider moving on to a full qualification if they completed. Each was mentioned by around one in five learners that would have preferred to study directly for a full qualification. Around one in ten said the reason was feeling that a shorter course was more convenient and having concerns they did not have the time available to complete a full qualification (11%), and that they were not sure about the options available (9%).

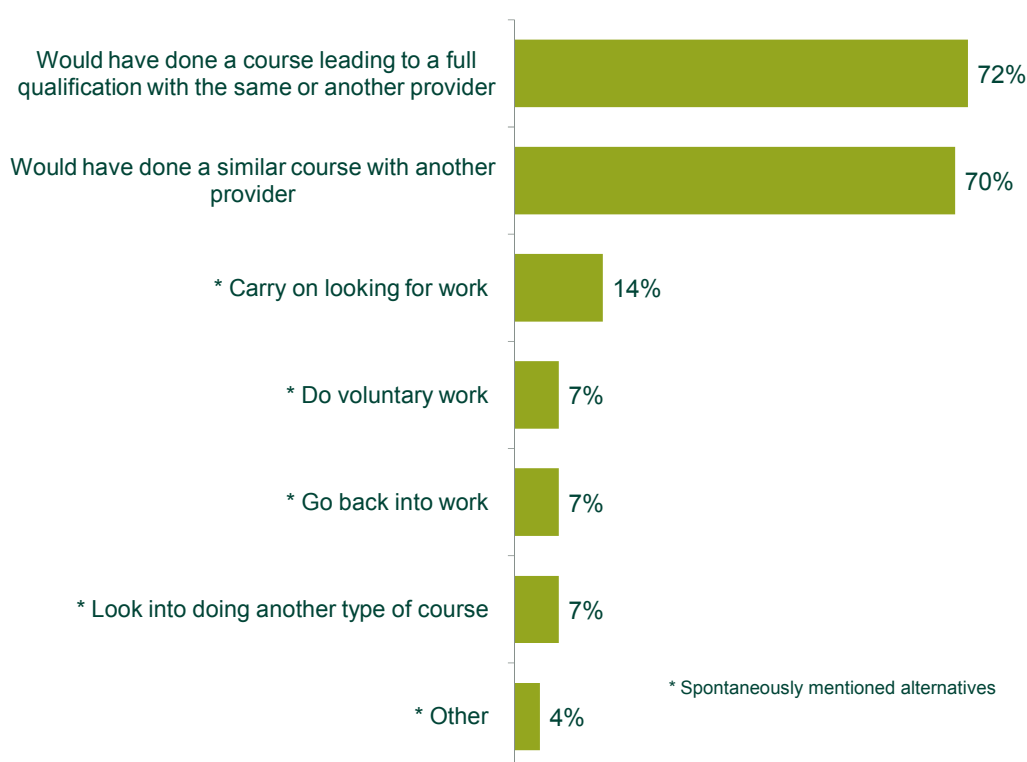
Alternatives considered

As a further indicator of the extent to which the unit format of the learning was a preference, learners who were aware of the nature of their unit course were asked, if they had been unable to do the course in units and credits, if they would have done a similar course with another provider, a course leading to a full qualification with the same or another provider, or if they would have done something other than learning. Respondents could pick all or none of the options. Perhaps somewhat inconclusively almost the same proportion say they would have done a course leading to a full qualification be it with the

same or a different provider (72%) as say they would have tried to do a similar, unit based course with a different provider (70%). This does suggest the main interest is in undertaking some learning, while the achievement or not of a full qualification compared to individual units is less critical.

There were a number of other non-learning alternatives mentioned by learners on a spontaneous basis, including continuing to look for work (14%), doing voluntary work (7%) and going back to work (7%) instead of learning; another small proportion (7%) stated they would have looked into studying a different type of course.

Figure 4.2 Alternatives considered had unit learning not been available



Base: Learners aware that their learning was unit / credit based (622)

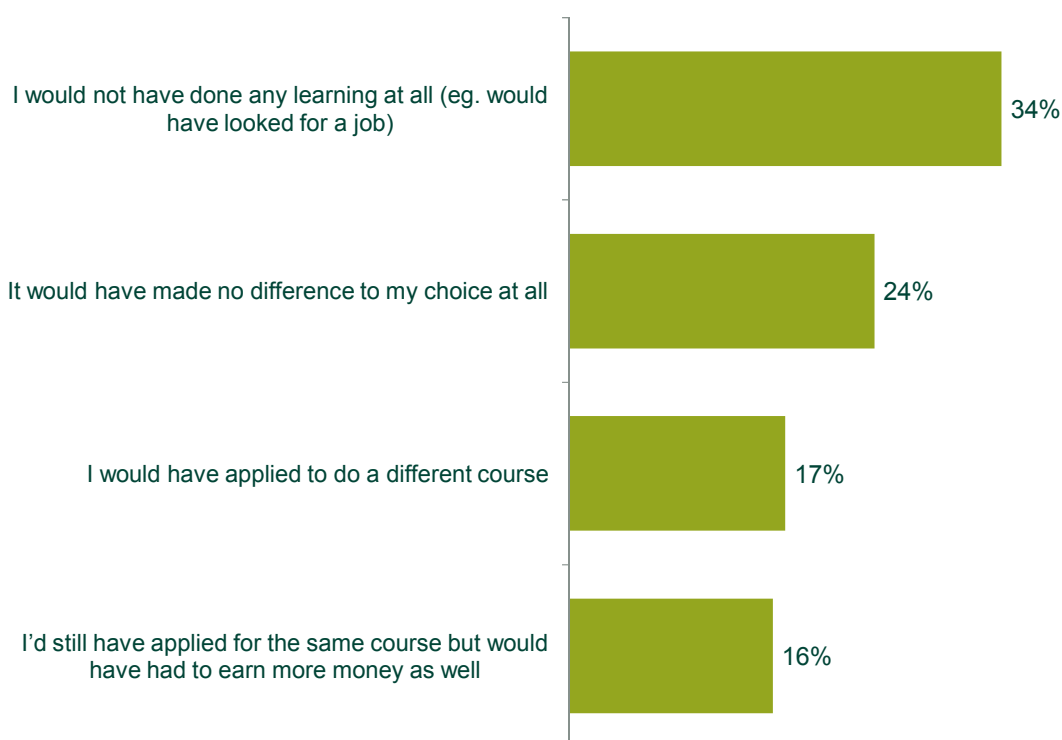
The group of learners who were not aware that their course was unit or credit based were asked a similar question about alternatives they might have considered had their course not been available, with respondents asked to pick one alternative. Around half (53%) stated that they would have undertaken a similar level course with another provider (this is equivalent to 21% of all unit learners), while one in five (19%) would have done a higher level, more demanding course with the same or another provider. One in eight (12%) reported they would not have considered any other alternative to doing the original course – learners who were employed before the course were more likely to not have done anything at all in the absence of the course (24%).

Finally, in order to explore further notions of additionality – i.e. the extent to which fully funded units were undertaken by individuals who would not have done this in the absence of the available funding – all learners were asked what they would have done if they had to pay for their course. The survey findings of this single-coded question are shown in Figure

4.3 below. A third of learners stated they would not have done any learning at all (34%) in the event of having to pay for their course – this is a clear indication of positive additionality effects of fully funded units. The remainder felt that this would have made no difference to their choice (24%) or were willing to consider alternatives, including applying for a different course (17%) or applying for the same course but trying to earn more money (16%).

The prospect of having to pay for their learning would have had an above average adverse effect – in terms of learners stating they would have abandoned their plans for learning – on learners who were unemployed before the course and receiving either active benefits or inactive benefits (38% and 36% respectively, compared with 26% among those in work before the course).

Figure 4.3 Alternatives considered if had to pay for course



Base: All learners (1,000)

The earlier FE survey commissioned by BIS in 2011 also explored notions of additionality and defined '**pure additionality**' as referring to training received by individuals who would not otherwise have received any training. This category included those who would 'not have stayed in learning at all' and who would have 'done something else' and amounted to a total of 30% of these FE learners – this can be compared to the 34% of unit learners who reported they would not have done any learning at all in the current survey.

On the other end of the spectrum, the 2011 FE survey defined '**quantitative deadweight**' as occurring when the individuals would have undertaken some comparable form of training in the absence of publicly funded training. This category included learners responding that paying for their course 'would have made no difference to my choice at all'

or that they 'would have had to earn more money' and amounted to 61% of FE learners overall. This can be put into context with the current survey findings of 40% of unit learners who reported that they would have applied to a different course or that they would have applied to the same course but would have had to earn more money. This suggests less quantitative deadweight among unit learners than found among the wider population of FE learners.

Finally, in between the above extremes, '**qualitative additionality**' and '**qualitative deadweight**' was conceptualised as publicly funded training which might move an individual to a higher level of attainment or result in an employer providing better quality training than would otherwise be the case (qualitative additionality), although the original training that is replaced through the provision of public funding is considered qualitative deadweight loss. The FE survey responses ('would have applied to do a different course') indicate that qualitative deadweight loss and qualitative additionality accounted for 9% of responses. This can be compared to the 17% of unit learners who said they would have applied to do a different course in case they had to pay for their learning.

Table 4.2 Overview of additionality and deadweight measures

	Learners studying units with Unit Delivery Trials providers (2011/12)	FE learners (2010/11)
	%	%
Pure additionality	34	30
Qualitative additionality or deadweight	9	17
Quantitative deadweight	40	61

Chapter 5: Type of unit based learning undertaken by learners

This chapter examines the type of learning undertaken by learners who studied a programme of units in 2011/12. Based on ILR data the analysis first profiles the type of unit learning undertaken with UDT and non-UDT providers compared to the average total of all Entry, Level 1 and Level 2 learning undertaken in that academic year. Then, drawing on the survey responses, it examines the delivery mode, hours per week studied, and the length of the course, followed by the completion status of the learner, and the reasons behind any failures to complete.

Type of learning

The figures in this section have been compiled from the entire 2011-12 ILR database and provide a comprehensive profile of the type of learning undertaken in that year with regard to level of learning, main delivery method and basic completion rates. The data is based on individual units of learning, rather than learners, so as to capture all instances where learners could have studied more than one unit. The data in Table 5.1 below has been filtered and categorised in the same way as the ILR data presented in Chapter 3 of this report.

Level of learning undertaken

Looking first at the level of learning undertaken by unit learners at UDT providers, there is a clear difference between learners who were previously on benefits / receiving tax credits, and those who were employed. The majority of units studied at UDT providers by those on benefit before their learning were at Level 1 (74% among those on active benefits and 67% among those on inactive benefits) with most of the remainder (around a quarter in each case) studying units at Level 2. This was in contrast to the situation among those employed just before their learning, among whom one fifth (22%) of units studied were Level 1, while three-quarters (75%) of units were Level 2.

The unit learning offered by non-UDT providers showed little variation by the employment / benefits status of the learner prior to their learning. Overall three-fifths of units (59%) were at Level 1, a third (34%) at Level 2 and 6% at Entry Level.

These figures are in inverse proportion to the learning aims of all Entry, Level 1 and Level 2 learners (including unit learners and non-unit learners), where one third (32%) of learning aims were Level 1, and just over half (55%) were at Level 2. Therefore we can see that on the whole the learning aims of unit learners are more likely to be at Level 1 when compared to all learners, except in the case of previously employed learners at UDT providers, among whom this trend is reversed.

Table 5.1 Profile of learning aims (based on 2011/12 ILR counts)

	Learners studying units with UDT PROVIDERS				Learners studying units with NON-UDT PROVIDERS				ALL
	Active benefits	Inactive benefits	Employed	TOTAL	Active benefits	Inactive benefits	Employed	TOTAL	TOTAL
Base <i>(note: units not learners)</i>	30,436	5,446	2,401	42,203	58,204	34,563	3,575	111,111	3,822,182
Level	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Entry	5	8	3	6	5	7	8	6	13
Level 1	74	67	22	68	62	59	57	59	32
Level 2	21	25	75	26	33	34	35	34	55
Main Delivery Method	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Class contact	98	98	64	96	98	73	88	89	40
Workplace learning	*	*	29	2	*	*	6	*	46
Distance learning	*	*	5	*	*	26	3	9	9
Other	1	2	2	2	2	*	3	1	5
Completion status	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Completed	76	72	50	73	60	55	57	57	42
Continuing	20	24	49	22	37	39	38	38	44
Other	5	4	2	4	4	6	5	5	14

Main delivery method

The vast majority of units studied by unit learners at both UDT providers and non-UDT providers were delivered by classroom contact – this accounted for 96% of units at UDT providers and 89% of units at non-UDT providers. This is a different delivery profile to the learning aims of all learners, where just two-fifths (40%) of learning aims were delivered via class contact, and nearly half (46%) were delivered in the workplace.

However, units studied by previously employed learners at UDT providers were less likely to be classroom delivered and more likely to be delivered in the workplace (64% and 29% respectively). This is not matched by the units studied by previously employed learners at non-UDT providers, where only 6% were delivered in the workplace.

A quarter (26%) of units studied by learners on inactive benefits before their learning at non-UDT providers were delivered via distance learning, a greater proportion than any other group.

Completion status

Most units undertaken by learners on benefits when they started their provision at UDT providers had been completed (76% of units studied by learners on active benefits and 72% of units studied by learners on inactive benefits). This compared with half (50%) of units undertaken by learners who were employed. However, the majority of employed learners at UDT providers were undertaking units at Level 2, whereas learners in receipt of benefits were more likely to be studying Level 1 courses, which will generally be shorter to complete.

There is greater parity between the completion status of units studied by different types of learners at non-UDT providers: three-fifths (60%) of units studied by learners on active benefits when they started were completed, along with over half (55%) of units studied by learners on inactive benefits, and nearly three-fifths (57%) of units studied by employed learners. There is also broad similarity in the proportions of units with statuses of 'continuing' or 'other.' Again, this reflects the profile by level in these providers.

Overall a greater proportion of 2011/12 unit learning had been completed (73% of aims at UDT providers and 57% at non-UDT providers) when compared to the learning aims as a whole, where two-fifths (42%) of aims have a status of 'completed', and just over two-fifths (44%) are recorded as 'continuing' (vs. 22% with a status of 'continuing' at UDT providers and 38% at non-UDT providers). Once more, this is a reflection of the level of study, as unit learners were more likely to be studying at Level 1 compared with the overall learner population.

Top 10 aims for unit learners at UDT providers

The ILR analysis of all learning aims undertaken at Entry level, Level 1 or Level 2 shows that only a very small proportion of aims in 2011/12 (4% or a total of 153,314 aims) were undertaken as units only, compared to a vast majority of other aims (96%) that were undertaken in the traditional, linear way.

A total of 19,000 specific units were made available for unit delivery, including units provided as part of the Offer for the Unemployed, but only a small number of these were actually taken up in 2011/12 (1,345 individual units in total). For the group of UDT providers the ILR indicates that 568 units were taken up; this figure is higher amongst Non-UDT providers (1,110 units).

Below in Tables 5.2 to 5.4 we can see the top ten learning aims within UDT providers, split by those undertaken by learners on active benefits, learners on inactive benefits, and learners who were employed.

Table 5.2 Top ten units studied by learners on active benefits at UDT providers

Aim Title	Level	Frequency
Interview Skills	1	2,107
Searching for a Job	1	1,950
Applying for a Job	1	1,929
Communicating Solutions to Others	1	1,361
Preparing for an Interview	1	1,138
Preparing for and learning from interviews	1	1,021
Supporting the customer service environment	2	752
Managing Your Health at Work	1	742
Safe Learning in the Workplace	1	565
Preparation for Work	1	514

Data based on analysis of the 2011/12 ILR

Table 5.3 Top ten units studied by learners on inactive benefits at UDT providers

Aim Title	Level	Frequency
Job application skills	1	162
Preparing for and learning from interviews	1	120
Personal Presentation in the Workplace	2	111
Searching for a Job	1	105
Applying for a Job	1	102
Preparing for an Interview	1	99
Interview Skills	1	96
Word Processing software	1	88
Understanding customer service in the retail sector	1	87
Awareness of the skills and attitudes needed to work in adult social care	1	86

Data based on analysis of the 2011/12 ILR

Among learners on active or inactive benefits, a high number of learning aims relate to re-entering the world of work, such as interview and job search and application skills, as well as courses that could be applicable to a number of career paths, such as customer services. The top 10 most frequent units tend to be undertaken at Level 1.

Table 5.4 Top ten units studied by employed learners at UDT providers

Aim Title	Level	Frequency
Dementia Awareness	2	712
Principles of safeguarding and protection in health and social care	2	191
Meet and greet travel and tourism services	2	89
Valuing equality and diversity	1	65
The person centred approach to the care and support of individuals with dementia	2	55
Understand the factors that can influence communication and interaction with individuals who have dementia	2	55
Union Representatives - Induction	2	47
Conflict Management for the Private Security Industry	2	45
Working in the Private Security Industry	2	45
Handling Members' Problems	2	40

Data based on analysis of the 2011/12 ILR

Among employed unit learners, as might be expected, none of the most common learning aims related to job search and job applications. Instead, the aims are connected to the learners' existing employment, with generic aims such as valuing equality and diversity also relatively popular, as well as aims that are connected to more specific careers such as the care industry (dementia awareness, and safeguarding and protection) and the private security industry – both industries that typically require employees to gain minimum level 2 qualifications in essential areas.

Top ten aims for unit learners studying with non-UDT providers

In order to provide a comparison with the main units studied by unit learners at UDT providers, the tables below show the top ten learning aims undertaken in 2011/12 by learners studying with non-UDT providers, again split by those who were on active benefits, those who were on inactive benefits, and those who were employed before they undertook their learning.

We can see differences in the top ten learning aims studied by learners at non-UDT providers across all statuses. Among learners on active benefits at non-UDT providers, we once again see aims to do with interview, job application and general workplace skills, and mostly at Level 1. However, unlike the top ten units studied by learners on active benefits at UDT providers, there are also more specific job-related aims, such as Private Security Industry related courses at Level 2.

Table 5.5 Top ten units studied by unit learners on active benefits at non-UDT providers

Aim Title	Level	Frequency
Job application skills	1	1305
Job and training search skills	1	1129
Applying for a Job	1	1055
Working in the Private Security Industry	2	939
Conflict Management for the Private Security Industry	2	926
ICT for employment	1	887
Interview skills	1	810
Positive Attitudes and Behaviours at Work	1	742
Developing own Interpersonal Skills	1	712
Job Seeking Skills	1	711

Data based on analysis of the 2011/12 ILR

Among learners on inactive benefits there are even greater differences compared against learning at UDT providers. The top ten aims of these learners at non-UDT providers feature a number of IT courses, while those studied by learners on inactive benefits at UDT providers (see Table 5.3) were mainly related to job searching. In addition, the aims studied at non-UDT providers were generally of a higher level, with over half being at level 2, compared to just one unit in the top ten studied at UDT providers.

Table 5.6 Top ten units studied by unit learners on inactive benefits at non-UDT providers

Aim Title	Level	Frequency
Word Processing software	2	2072
Spreadsheet Software	2	1314
Self-Assessment	1	971
Database Software	2	962
IT User Fundamentals	1	918
Presenting personal information effectively	1	910
Presentation software	2	811
Working in customer service	1	679
Conflict Management for the Private Security Industry	2	660
Working in the Private Security Industry	2	657

Data based on analysis of the 2011/12 ILR

The greatest differences in the top ten learning aims between UDT and non-UDT providers, however, are those studied by employed learners. Those studied at non-UDT providers were at a lower level overall (mostly Level 1 or Entry compared with mostly level 2 at UDT providers) and tended to be associated with job seeking or general career related skills, with only a single unit being connected to a specific career (Dementia Awareness,

which also appeared in the top ten list for employed learners at UDT providers). It could be that learners at non-UDT providers were employed in some form of temporary jobs before their unit course(s) and had an interest in learning about job searching and interviewing skills to improve their chances to secure a better job.

Table 5.7 Top ten units studied by employed unit learners at non-UDT providers

Aim Title	Level	Frequency
Word Processing software	2	2072
Spreadsheet Software	2	1314
Self-Assessment	1	971
Database Software	2	962
IT User Fundamentals	1	918
Presenting personal information effectively	1	910
Presentation software	2	811
Working in customer service	1	679
Conflict Management for the Private Security Industry	2	660
Working in the Private Security Industry	2	657

Data based on analysis of the 2011/12 ILR

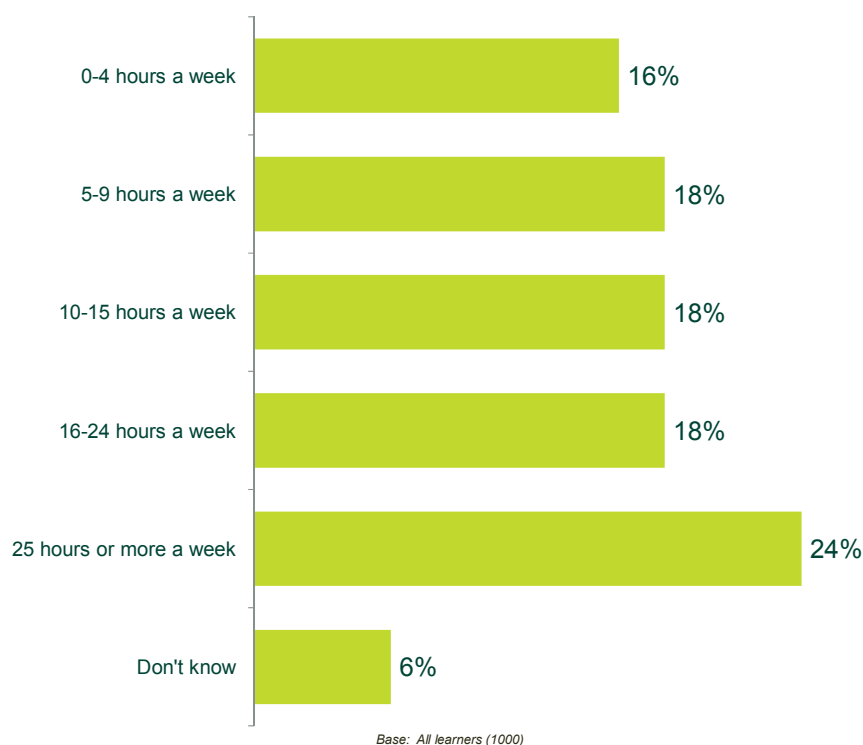
Delivery mode of unit learning and length of study

In the survey, learners were asked about some of the key features of their unit course, including the delivery mode (when they undertook their learning), the length of time they typically spent studying, and the duration of the course as a whole.

The majority of learners, nine in ten (90%), undertook their learning during the working week, while a much smaller proportion, around one in eight (13%), studied at evenings and weekends.

As would be expected, learners who were in employment before the course were much more likely to have studied at evenings and weekends: two-thirds (32%), compared with less than one in ten (9%) of those who were unemployed, and just 3% of those who were studying full time. Similarly, those who were not receiving state benefits or tax credits before the course were more likely to study at evenings and weekends – one quarter (24%), compared with less than one in ten (9%) of those who were in receipt of such support.

There was wide variety in the number of hours a week that learners spent on their unit course (that is, the time spent receiving tuition and the time spent studying independently in a typical week), as Figure 5.1 below shows. One quarter of learners (24%) spent 25 hours or more, with the remainder relatively evenly split between those spending 0-4, 5-9, 10-15 and 16-24 hours per week on their course (each mentioned by 16% to 18%).

Figure 5.1 Time spent on course in a typical week

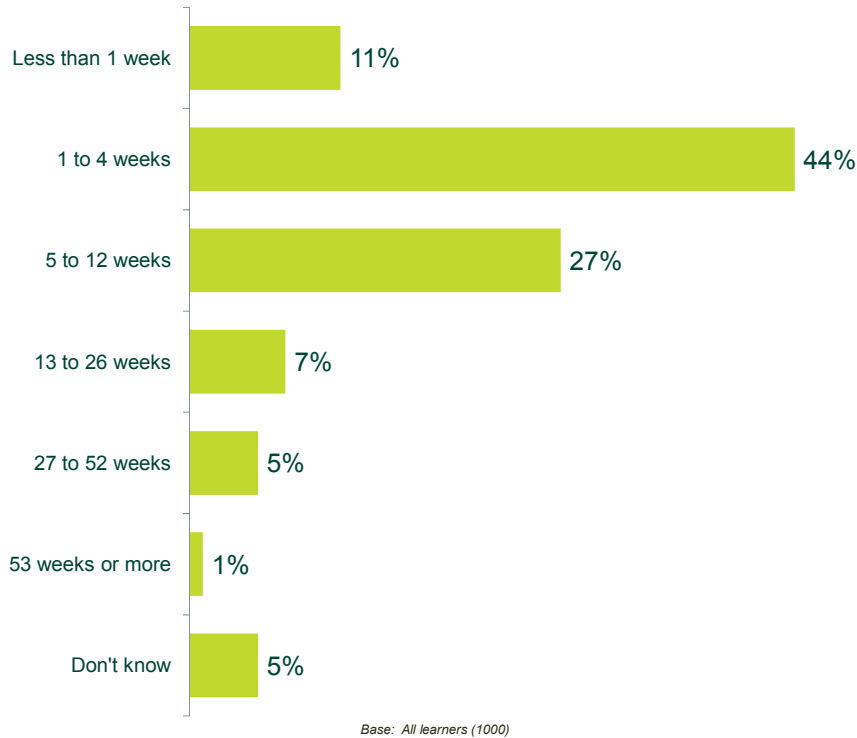
The following learners groups were more likely than average to recall having spent very little time (0-4 hours) on their course each week:

- Those employed before the course (39% compared with 6% who were studying, and 12% unemployed). It was noticeable that few of those on active benefits immediately before their unit learning studied for less than 5 hours a week (8%), indeed a third of this group (32%) studies for at least 25 hours a week).
- Those studying only one unit (31% compared with 7% studying multiple units). This relates to the first bullet point, as those employed learners were particularly likely to be undertaking a single unit (76% vs. 31% of those that were unemployed).
- Those who left the course early (28% compared with 15% who completed the course).
- Women: one fifth (22%) spent 0-4 hours and a further fifth (21%) spent 5-9 hours (compared with 11% and 15% respectively among men). This relates to the fact that women were more likely to be studying only one unit than men (46% compared with 31% of men) and were more likely to be employed (27% of women were employed before their course compared with 10% of men).

There was also variety in the length of time that learners were on the course. The largest proportion of learners, over two-fifths (44%), were on courses that lasted between one and four weeks; a quarter (27%) reported courses lasting from five to 12 weeks, and just over one in ten (11%) did units lasting less than one week. Courses longer than 12 weeks were

rare, and increasingly so as the duration increased: 7% were on a course for 13-26 weeks, 5% were on a course for 27-52 weeks, and just 1% were on a course for 53 weeks or more¹⁰.

Figure 5.2 Duration of course



Combining the data collected about hours studied per week and the length of the course allows an estimate of the total hours learners spent on their unit courses. The greatest proportion of learners (48%) spend between 50 to 199 hours on unit learning, and about a quarter (27%) between 20 to 49 hours. Smaller proportions either invested much fewer hours (13% doing less than 20 hours in total) or substantially larger number of hours (13% doing 200 or more hours) in their programme of unit learning.

¹⁰ This 1% represents a small group of learners, more than half of whom undertook 2 or more units, with a variety of learning aims in the areas of job seeking and work skills, IT, childcare, motor vehicle maintenance and security industry skills.

Completion status

Learners were asked about the outcome of the course they undertook. The majority (85%) had completed their original programme of units¹¹; less than one in ten (9%) said that they left the course early; and a small proportion (6%) said that they were still studying at least some of the units at the time of the survey. These findings are comparable to the earlier FE learner survey which reported 85% of learners who had completed their qualification or training, while 15% decided not to continue or dropped out.

Among those who were most likely to have completed the initial course were learners who undertook more than one unit – nearly nine in ten (88%) of these learners stated that they completed their course, compared with four fifths (81%) of learners who only studied a single unit.

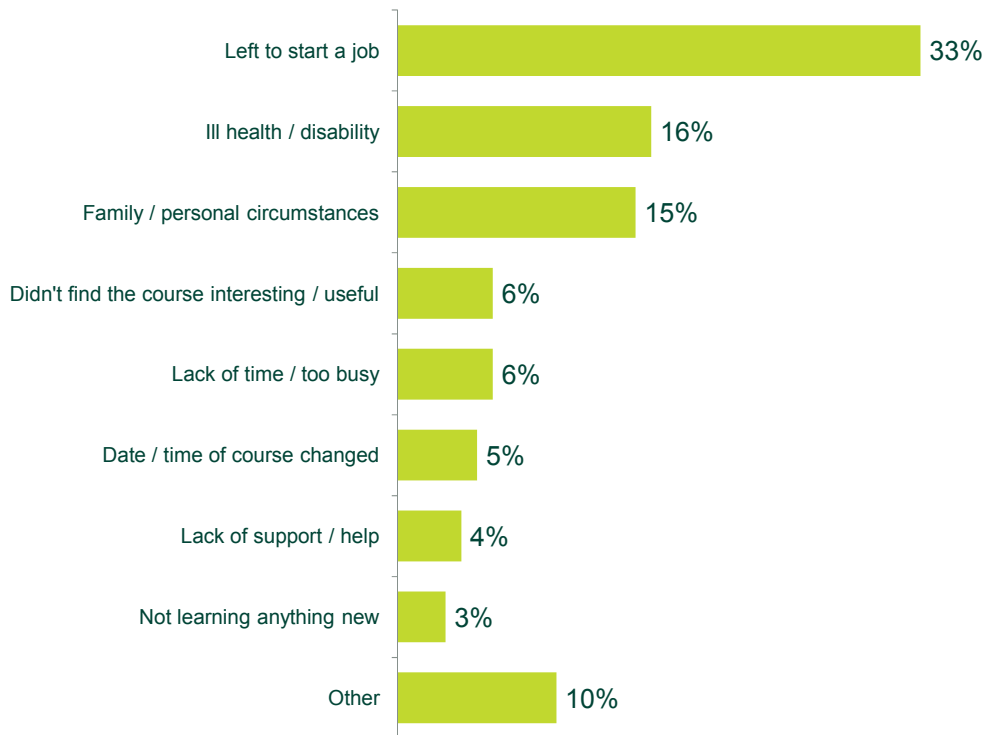
Those groups who were more likely to have left the course early included:

- Those who were unemployed before the course (10% compared with 5% of those who were employed before the course).
- Those who expressed a clear preference for studying to a full qualification (16% compared with 5% of those who preferred to study units or credits, and 6% who expressed no preference).
- Those who felt the course made no difference in their ability to find a job (12% compared with 5% of those who felt the course gave them more chance of finding a job and 4% of those who felt they had had some job improvement).

Learners who left their course early were asked for the reasons why this was the case. As shown in Figure 5.3 below, the most common reason, given by one third of learners (33%), was leaving in order to start a job. This reason was given by seven in ten (70%) of those who were unemployed before the course but were employed at the time of the survey.

The two next most common reasons for leaving the course early were ill health or disability (16%), and family or personal circumstances (15%).

¹¹ As a note, there is a difference between the proportion of learners who reported having completed their course during the survey (85%) and the ILR statistics showing the proportion of learners who completed their learning aim (see Table 3.3) or the proportion of learning aims that were completed (see Table 5.1). In part, this difference is due to a time factor. The survey interviewed learners at a time when more learners were able to report a definitive outcome of their course, while the ILR data records all learning aims during an entire academic year, where there is a greater likelihood of aims being recorded as 'continuing'.

Figure 5.3 Reasons for leaving course early

Base: Learners who left their course early (81)

The reasons for leaving the course given by unit learners differ from those reported in the earlier FE learner survey, among whom the most common reasons were health and family issues (27%) and course related issues (26%), while starting or changing a job was only mentioned by 8% of non-completers as the main reason for leaving. Low base sizes should be noted.

Chapter 6: Impact of unit based learning

This chapter explores the impact of unit learning from a variety of angles. The analysis firstly compares the employment and benefit situation of learners before and after undertaking unit learning and the extent to which any employment improvements are attributed to their learning. The chapter then focuses on a variety of skills and other benefits that learners reported having gained from their course. Finally, this section concludes with an assessment of positive impacts in relation to future learning.

Comparison of employment situation before and after unit learning

One of the key aims of this evaluation was to look at the extent to which unit learning improves skills and employability, and leads to successful employment progression.

Most learners were not in paid work immediately before they started their unit learning: two thirds of unit learners (67%) were unemployed and looking for work, and others were in education or learning (6%, including those on government funded employment or training programmes), were neither in nor looking for employment (6%, including those in caring roles) or were doing voluntary work (2%). Overall approaching one in five (18%) were in paid employment (17% as employees, 1% self-employed).

Women were significantly more likely than men to have been in work immediately before starting their unit learning (27% v. 10% respectively); four in five men had been unemployed and looking for work (79%). The younger the learner the more likely there were to have been in education or learning prior to their unit learning, from 11% among those aged 19 or 20, to 4% of those aged 25 plus).

Among those not in paid work before their unit learning (excluding also the retired), a slight majority had not worked for more than a year (53%), compared with a quarter (25%) who were short term unemployed (out of work for less than six months). Overall a third (34%) had not been in work for more than two years. Results were very similar among those specifically unemployed and looking for work: among this group just over a quarter (27%) were short term unemployed, compared with half (49%) out of work for more than a year.

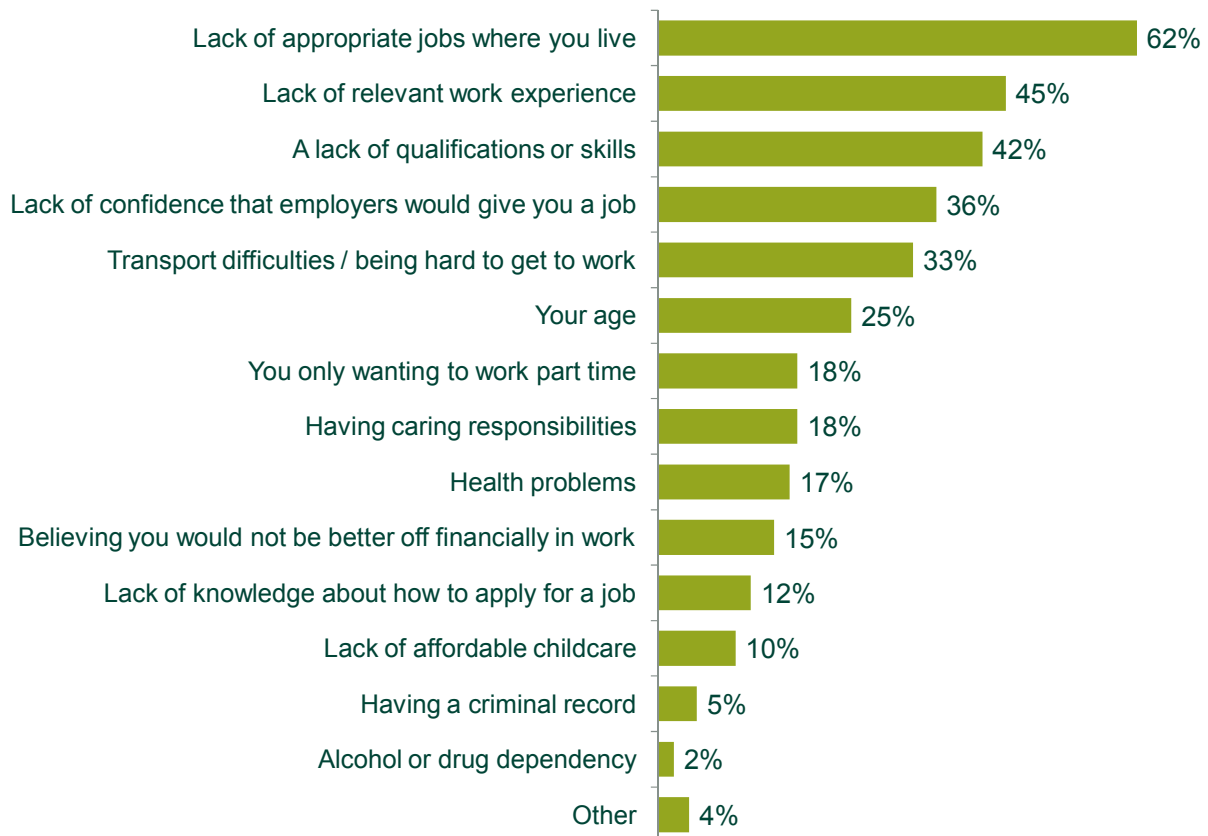
Some learner groups were more likely to have experienced very long episodes of being out of work (more than 2 years), in particular (figures based on those not working nor retired immediately before their unit learning):

- learners with no prior qualifications at all (58% vs. between 27% to 36% of those with a prior qualification between Entry level to Level 4 or higher);
- learners in receipt of inactive benefits (52%);
- female learners (42% vs. 27% of male learners); and

- older learners (41% of those aged 25+ vs. 23% of those aged 21 to 24 and 12% of those aged 19 to 20).

Those not in work or retired before their unit learning gave a variety of reasons why they found it difficult to find work, which are presented in figure 6.1. This was a prompted question with potential reasons read out to respondents.

Figure 6.1 Reasons for not finding work (prompted)



Base: Learners who were not working before the course, and not retired (662)

These barriers to employment can be grouped into the following factors:

- Perceived lack of local jobs (mentioned by 62%) and mobility barriers to access local jobs (33%) – these factors are much less pronounced in London compared to other regions;
- A perceived lack of work experience (45%, a more significant barrier for younger learners) and / or a lack of qualifications or skills (42%, by contrast, this is more of a problem for older learners, and was particularly often mentioned by those with no prior qualifications (77%));
- Lack of confidence (36%) and / or knowledge of how to apply for jobs (12%);
- Disadvantages (some potentially discriminatory) including age (25%), health problems (17%), a criminal record (5%) or alcohol / drug dependency (2%). Age as

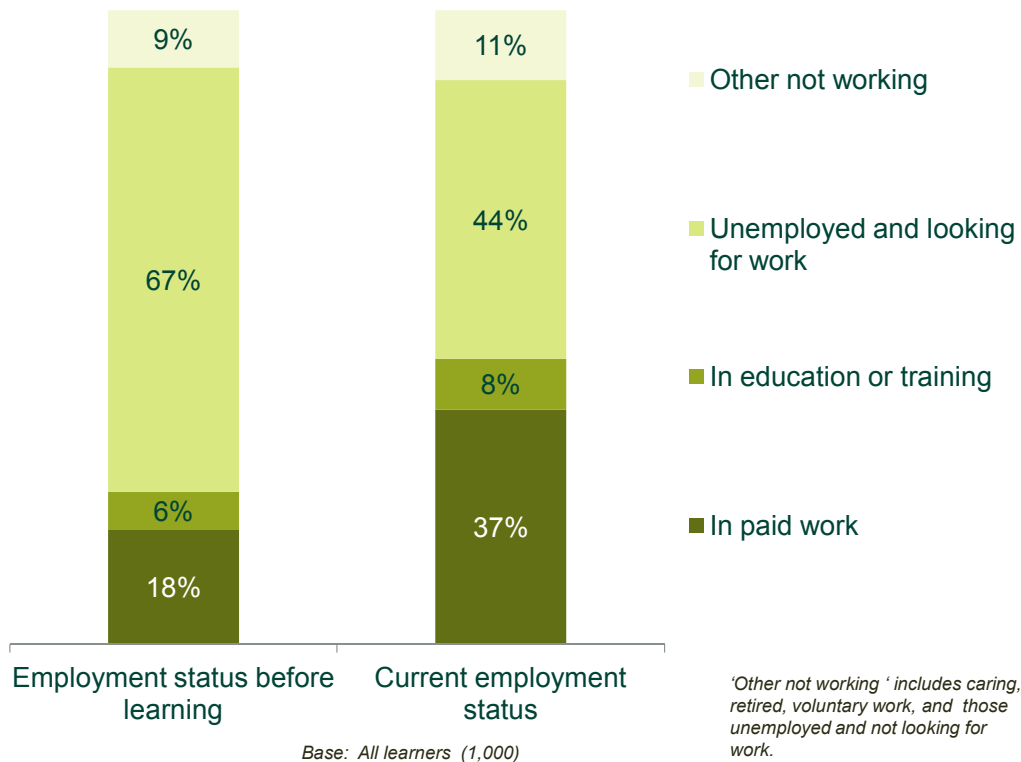
a barrier was cited by the youngest age group (25% of 19-20 year olds) and older learners (31% of those aged 25 plus) but by very few of those aged 21-24 (6%);

- Lack of affordable childcare (10%) and having caring responsibilities (18%). More women than men reported these barriers to employment, for example 30% of women not in work said having caring responsibilities was a barrier to finding work;
- Personal preferences, such as wanting to work part-time only (18%) or believing that they would not be financially better off in work (15%). Women were particularly likely to mention wanting to work part-time as a barrier (30%).

There were some marked differences in the range of barriers cited between those on active and inactive benefits. Those on active benefits were much more likely to mention a lack of appropriate jobs locally (66% vs. 45% among those on inactive benefits) and their lack of work experience (46% vs. 36%), while those on inactive benefits placed greater weight on having caring responsibilities (42% vs. 14% of those on active benefits), lack of affordable childcare (29% vs. 7%), health problems (33% vs. 14%), only wanting to work part-time (36% vs. 14%) and believing they would not be better off in work (23% vs. 12%). These differences in part reflect the fact that those on inactive benefits were predominantly women (71%), whereas a majority of those on active benefits were men (60%).

The survey captured learners' employment status before they started their unit learning and at the time when they were interviewed¹². Figure 6.2 below shows a comparison of their employment status at these two points in time.

¹² The maximum time lag between learners' employment status at the start of the course and the survey interview could be about 1 year, considering that a learner might have started their unit learning at the beginning of the 2011/12 academic year and the interviews took place in August 2012.

Figure 6.2 Employment status before and after unit learning

While we cannot say for certain (given the absence of a comparator group) that learning had an impact on employability, encouragingly there has been a large increase in the proportion doing paid work, from 18% immediately before the unit learning to 37% at the time of the interview, and a significant decrease in the proportion of learners unemployed and looking for work (44% vs. 67% before the course).

Clearly a substantial proportion of unit learners entered the labour market: overall a quarter (25%) of those who were not in work before the course reported working as employees or on a self-employed basis when interviewed, equivalent to one in five (19%) of all unit learners at UDT providers. Among the minority that were in paid work immediately before their unit learning, the vast majority were still in paid employment (92%): 3% of this group were unemployed and looking for work. This is shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Employment status before and after unit learning

	Employment status before the course		
	In work	In learning or training	Not in work or learning
<i>Base: All learners</i>	291	47	660
	%	%	%
Current employment status			
In work	92	18	25
In learning or training	3	31	8
Not in work or learning	5	50	66

The relatively low base size for those in learning or training before their unit learning means caution is needed

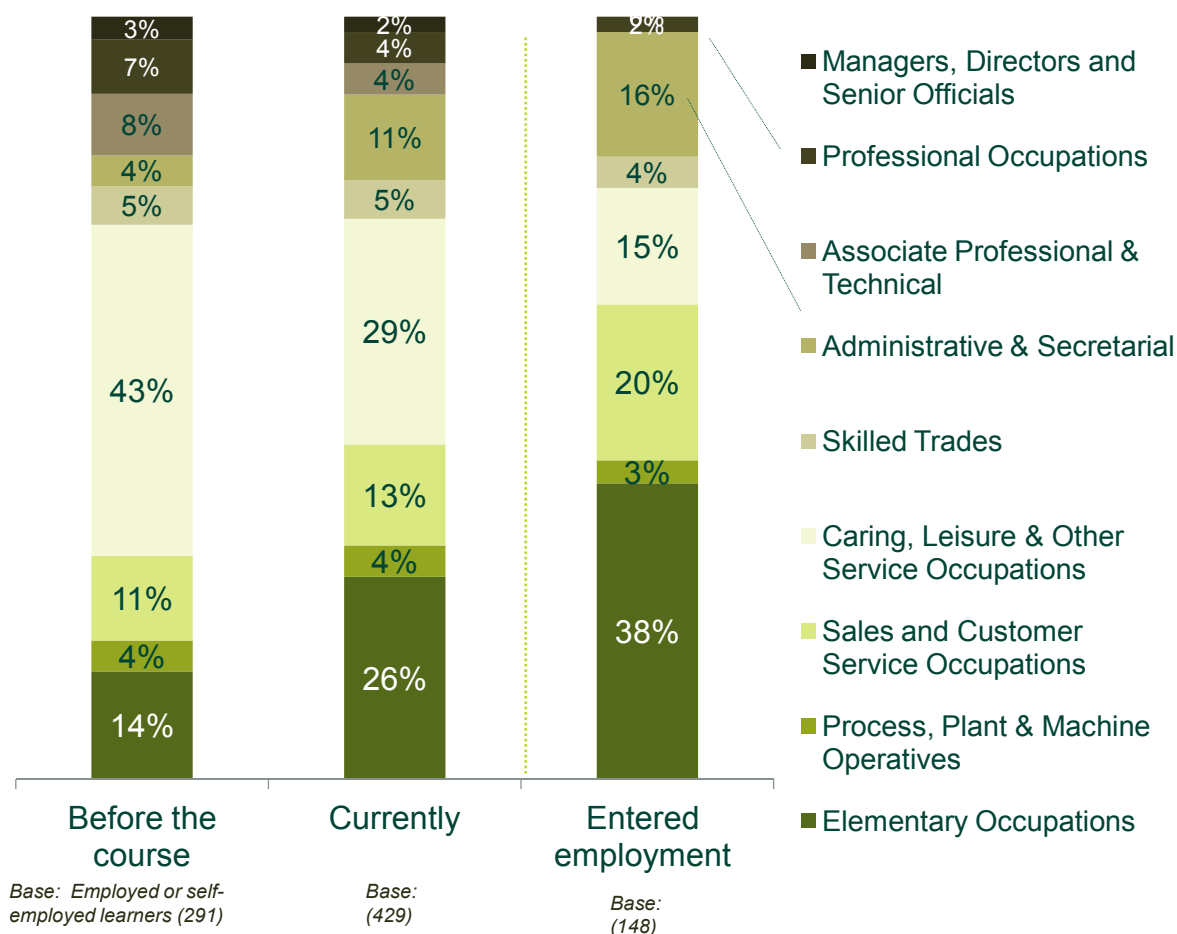
Clearly the group moving from not working prior to their learning to paid employment at the time of interview (19% of all learners) are of particular interest. Compared with unit learners in general, these 'labour market entrants':

- Were younger (22% were aged 19-20, compared with 12% of all learners interviewed) and more likely to be male (56% vs. 50% of all unit learners);
- Their periods of worklessness before the course tended to be shorter (with 66% having been out of work for 12 months or less compared with 46% of all those out of work before the course);
- Tended to undertake shorter learning (71% studying four weeks or less compared to 55% on average), but were more likely to have undertaken multiple units (70% vs. 61% observed amongst all learners), suggesting more intense learning than average;

Looking at the jobs gained by those whose status changed from not being in work immediately prior to the unit learning to being in paid work at the time of the interview, just over half were permanent jobs (56%, much lower than the 73% average amongst all learners in work when interviewed), while just over two-fifths (43%) were seasonal, casual, temporary, limited time contract jobs or some other form of non-permanent arrangement. Elementary Occupations were heavily represented, with almost two-fifths of those moving into paid jobs taking such roles (38% vs. 26% amongst all learners in paid jobs when interviewed). A fifth entered Sales and Customer Service roles (20%), and most of the remainder entered Administrative and Secretarial roles or Leisure and Caring roles (16% and 15% respectively). Very few gained Managerial, Professional or Associate Professional positions (2%).

Figure 6.3 shows the occupational profile of those in work before and after the course, and in the final column of those moving into employment (having been unemployed before their unit learning). This shows that the occupational profile of the newly employed is different to the occupational profile of those in work before their learning, with fewer taking Caring, Leisure and Other Service positions and more entering Elementary Occupations.

Figure 6.3 Occupational profile of those in work before their unit learning, at the time of the survey, and among those entering employment



Among those working both before their learning and at the time of interview there was a high degree of job and occupational continuity: 93% were working for the same employer (or were still self-employed) and the vast majority of learners (93%) who reported still working with the same employer were in the same job role with the same responsibilities as before the course. Within this group remaining in paid employment, only 5% had changed occupational groups.

The survey also collected information on the type of employment conditions and the hours per week that learners worked at both points in time. Most (73%) of those working as employees at the time of interview were in permanent roles, compared with around one in six (17%) doing seasonal, temporary or casual work and around one in ten working under a fixed term contract (7%) or some other form of non-permanent arrangement (2%). A much higher proportion of those working as employees immediately before their unit learning had been in permanent positions (90%), indicating that relatively speaking those moving from unemployment to employment following their learning were quite likely to be taking non-permanent jobs (43%).

The findings on occupation and on contract arrangements suggest a tendency for employment gains to be towards 'lower level' employment.

There was little change in the typical number of hours per week learners were working. Before the course about three in five (58%) of those in work reported working 30 hours or more per week compared to two in five (39%) working fewer than 30 hours. These figures were broadly comparable to those reported by current workers (61% and 38% respectively) and by those entering the labour market having been previously unemployed (58% and 40% respectively).

Comparison of benefit status before and after unit learning

Reflecting the increase in employment levels, there was an overall decrease of 12 percentage points in the proportion of learners receiving state benefits or tax credits, from three-quarters (74%) before they started their unit learning to just over three-fifths (62%). The following sub-groups were more likely to be accessing state benefits or tax credits:

- Learners who were unemployed before the course (85%) and when surveyed (85%), and those who were in education or training before (82%) and after the course (84%), compared to those in work (25% and 25% respectively);
- Learners with no or low prior qualifications: 82% of those with no prior qualifications and 82% of those with Entry or Level 1 qualifications accessed state support before the course; these figures were 83% and 70% at the point when surveyed;
- Female learners (80% before the course compared to 68% amongst men), however this difference had evened out when learners were interviewed (63% vs. 61% respectively).

A substantial proportion of learners who were in receipt of any benefits or tax credits before the course were not receiving any such support when surveyed (21%) – this group represents 2,180 learners or 16% of the overall population of unit learners. At the same time there was also a movement into benefits among learners who had not previously been receiving them (15%, equivalent to 4% of all unit learners). However, for the overall majority (81%) of all learners there was no change in their benefit status.

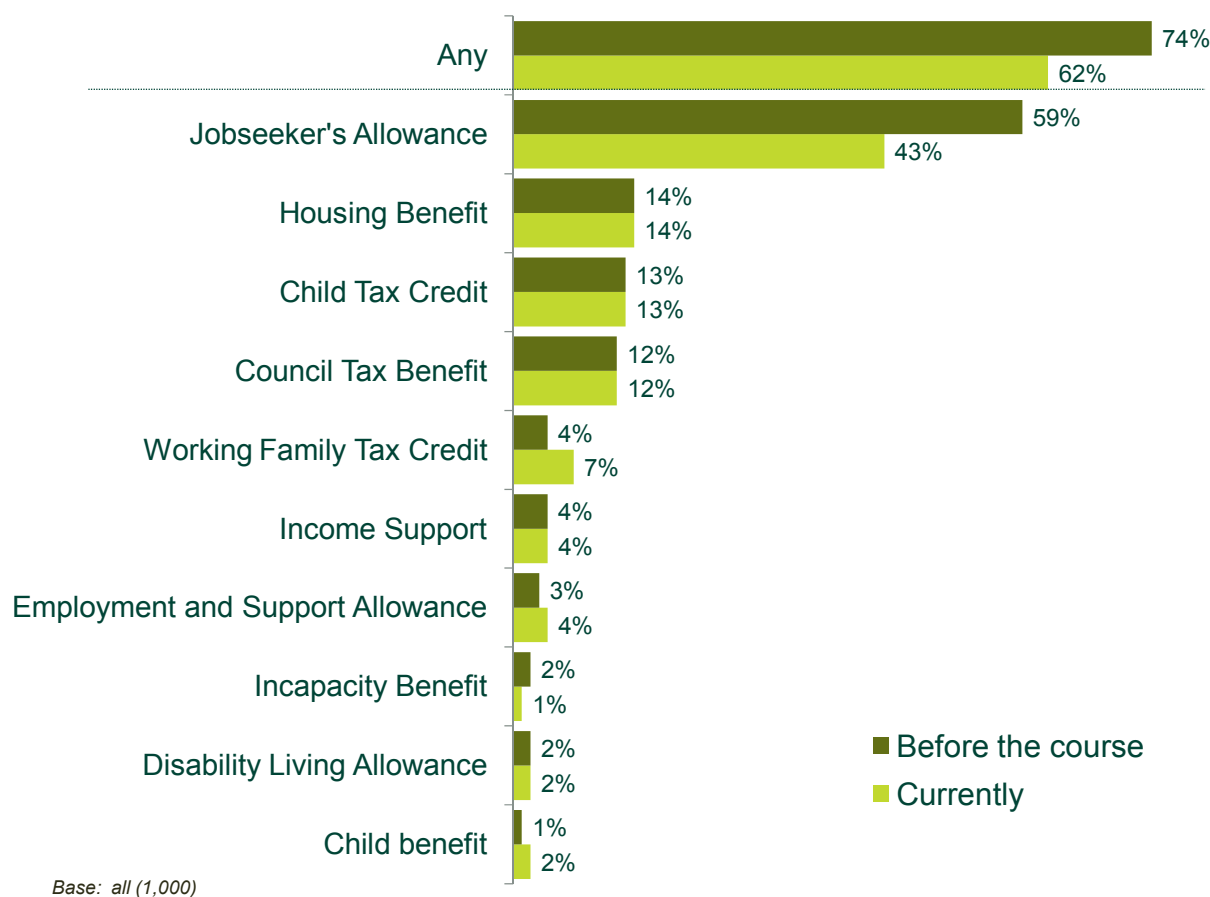
Table 6.1 Benefit status before and after learning

	Benefit status before the course	
	Receiving support	Not receiving any support
<i>Base: All learners</i>	635	364
	%	%
Current benefit status		
Receiving support	79%	15%
Not receiving any support	21%	84%

Figure 6.4 overleaf illustrates the various types of benefits or tax credits accessed by learners at both points in time; this data is based on those learners in receipt of benefits or tax credits. It is clear that learners most frequently accessed Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), but the data shows a decrease from eight in ten (80%) benefit recipients claiming JSA

before the course compared to seven in ten (69%) when surveyed. This decrease is equivalent to a 16 percentage point drop from 59% to 43% if based on all learners.

Figure 6.4 Accessing benefits and tax credits before and after learning



Other than the change in the proportion of all unit learners receiving JSA, other changes in benefits / tax credits being received were minimal.

Specific skills and wider benefits provided by unit based learning

Learners were asked about the specific skills they gained by undertaking their unit based learning, and also about a number of wider benefits provided by their course. In general, there is ample evidence of unit learning having a positive impact in these areas.

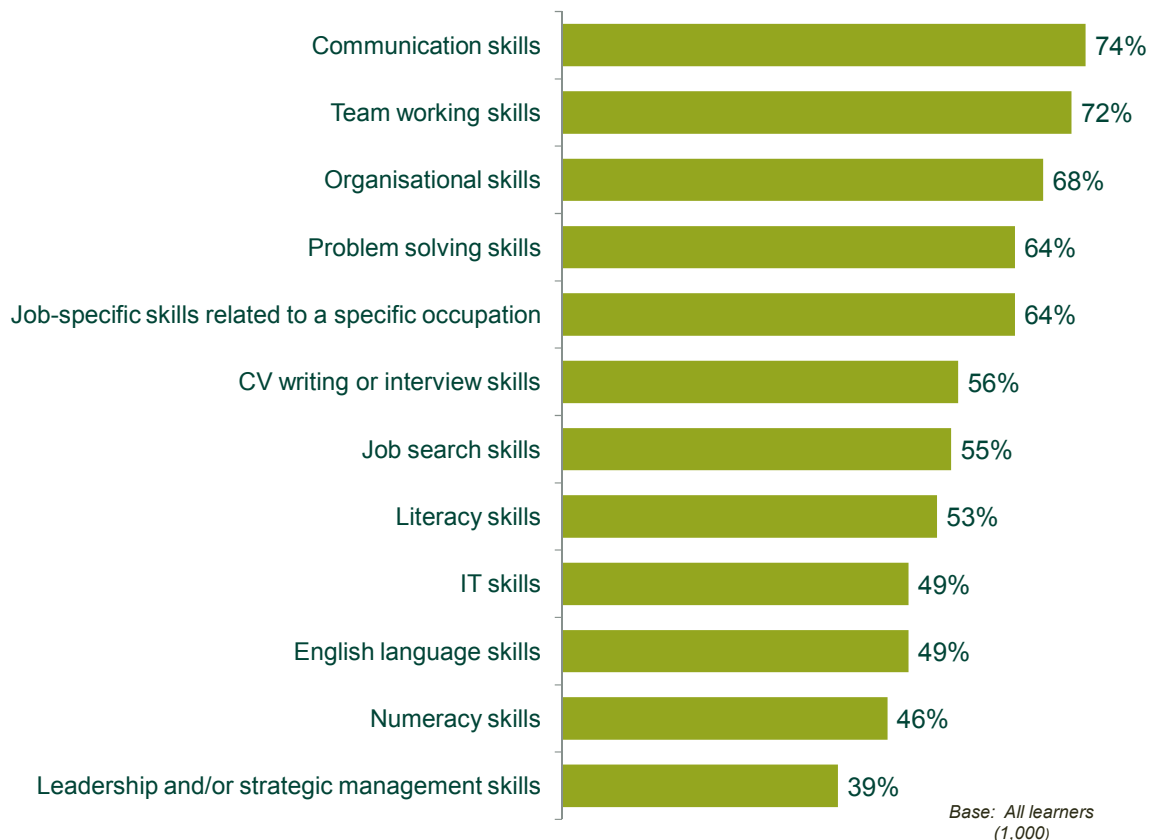
Figure 6.5 below shows a variety of different skills that learners reported having gained or improved from undertaking their unit of learning. These can be categorised into the following broad areas, including:

- **Generic skills**, such as Communication (74%), Team working (72%), Organisation (68%), and problem solving (64%) – younger learners were more likely to report skills gains in these areas;

- **Job-specific skills** related to a particular occupation (64%); again this was more likely to be reported by younger learners;
- **Skills related to looking for work** and/or preparing for job interviews, such as CV writing or interview skills (56%) and job search skills (55%) – gains in these areas were more likely to be reported by men, those aged under 25, and learners who were not working before the course,;
- **Basic skills**, including Literacy (53%), English language (49%) and numeracy (46%); – again, any skills gains in these areas were more likely to be reported by learners who were not working before the course, learners with no prior qualifications or Entry or Level 1 qualifications, and younger learners;
- Other skills, such as IT (49%) and leadership (39%).

Learners who studied more than one unit were consistently more likely to report a skills gain in most of these areas compared to those who undertook just one unit. In addition, those who were aware from the outset that their learning was unit based rather than automatically leading to a full qualification, were more likely to report having gained any of these skills compared to those unaware of the precise nature of their course. These findings suggest that greater learner awareness of what type of learning they are undertaking and greater engagement evidenced through taking multiple units of learning is associated with more skills gains.

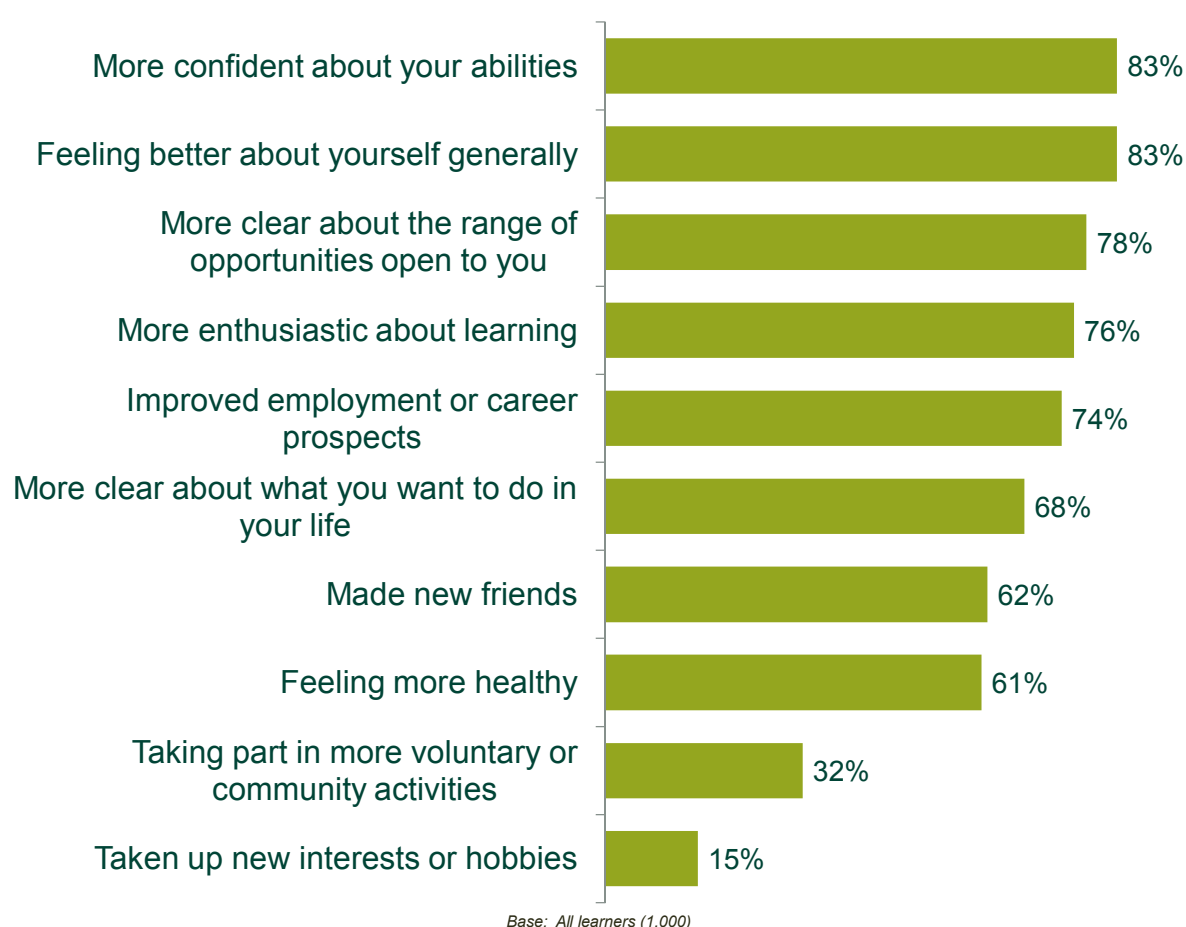
Figure 6.5 Specific skills gained by the unit based course (prompted)



The earlier FE learner survey also explored wider benefits gained from doing a course. The results show some similarities to the responses of the UDT learners – 69% of FE learners who completed their course reported that it improved their ability to do their job, 51% reported it improved their literacy, and 41% said that it improved their numeracy.

In addition to specific skills and measurable employment outcomes, the evaluation also explored learners' perceptions around a number of wider benefits – sometimes referred to as 'soft benefits' – that unit based learning provides. Learners reported a variety of these wider benefits as a result of their course. Results on this prompted question are shown on Figure 6.6.

Figure 6.6 Wider benefits gained by the unit based course (prompted)



Most of the benefits were reported by a majority of learners. It appears as if the unit learning had particular impact with regard to enhancing personal well being including improving their confidence (83%), making people feel better about themselves generally (83%) and learners feeling more healthy (61%). In the earlier FE learner survey, 82% of completers said they gained confidence and self-esteem, and 52% said it helped with their health problems or disability.

In addition two-thirds to three-quarters reported increased awareness of life chances includes becoming clearer about the range of opportunities open to them (78%) and being clearer about what they want to do in their lives (68%) as a result of their learning. For a

comparison, 72% of completers in the earlier FE learner survey said they had a better idea about what they want to do in life.

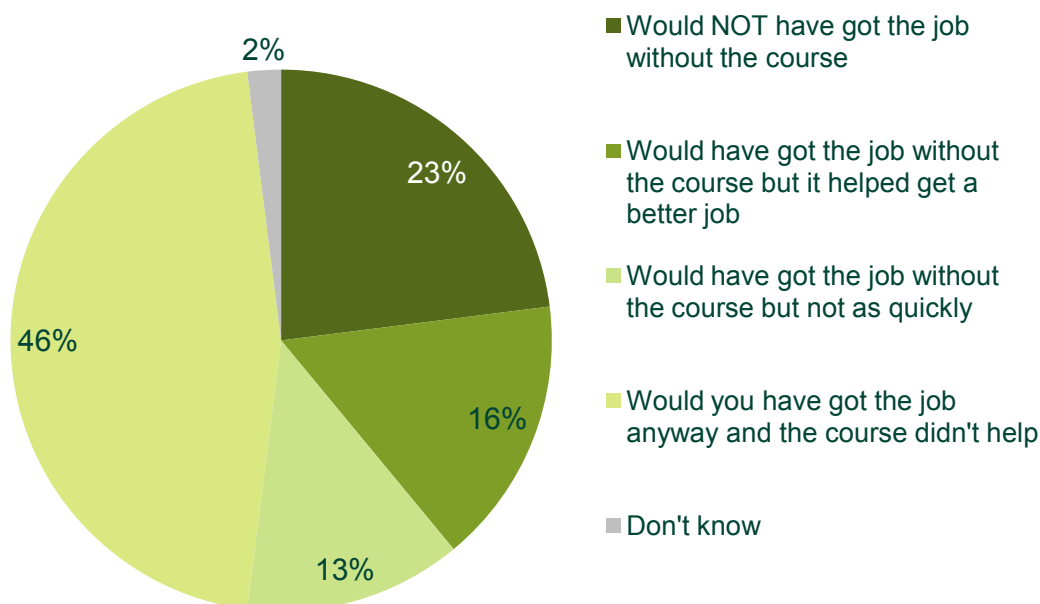
Encouragingly most learners reported improved future prospects, including becoming more enthusiastic about learning (76% - similar to the 79% of completers in the earlier FE survey) and improved employment or career prospects (74%). The latter benefit was more often experienced by those who were not working prior to the learning (75%) than those who were employed (69%), though clearly increased future employment and career prospects benefited the majority of learners whatever their prior employment status.

In line with the trends discussed around skills gains, learners who studied more than one unit were consistently more likely to benefit in the ways discussed on the previous chart than those who undertook just one unit. There were few differences by gender but younger respondents were more likely than average to have gained clarity about the opportunities open to them (91% of 19-20s and 84% among those aged 21-24) and to feel better about themselves generally (91% of 19-20s and 86% among those aged 21-24). Those with prior qualification at level 4 or higher (degree level or equivalent) were less likely to report all of the benefits discussed, though overall still more than nine in ten (92%) reported benefiting in at least one of the ways listed.

Assessing the impact on employment outcomes

The provision of unit based learning aims to improve access by offering flexible, bite-sized learning, specifically for learners who are further away from the labour market and who may struggle with barriers such as lack of time to commit to a traditional 'full' qualification. In this context, the survey findings about positive employment outcomes are particularly pertinent.

The analysis has already considered the evidence of the net overall change in employment circumstances, and highlighted that a substantial proportion of learners entered employment or self-employment that had not been in work before the course. Exploring the critical issue of attribution (to what extent can positive impacts be attributed to the learning?) the survey asked learners who reported being in a new job about their perceptions of the role of the learning they did. As Figure 6.8 below shows, around half (52%) believed that the course had helped them secure their current job (including just under a quarter (23%) saying they would not have got the job without the course) compared to just under half (46%) who felt that they would have gotten the job anyway. Relatively low base sizes mean few statistically significant differences occurred by sub-group identifying those particularly likely to report the learning helped secure their new job.

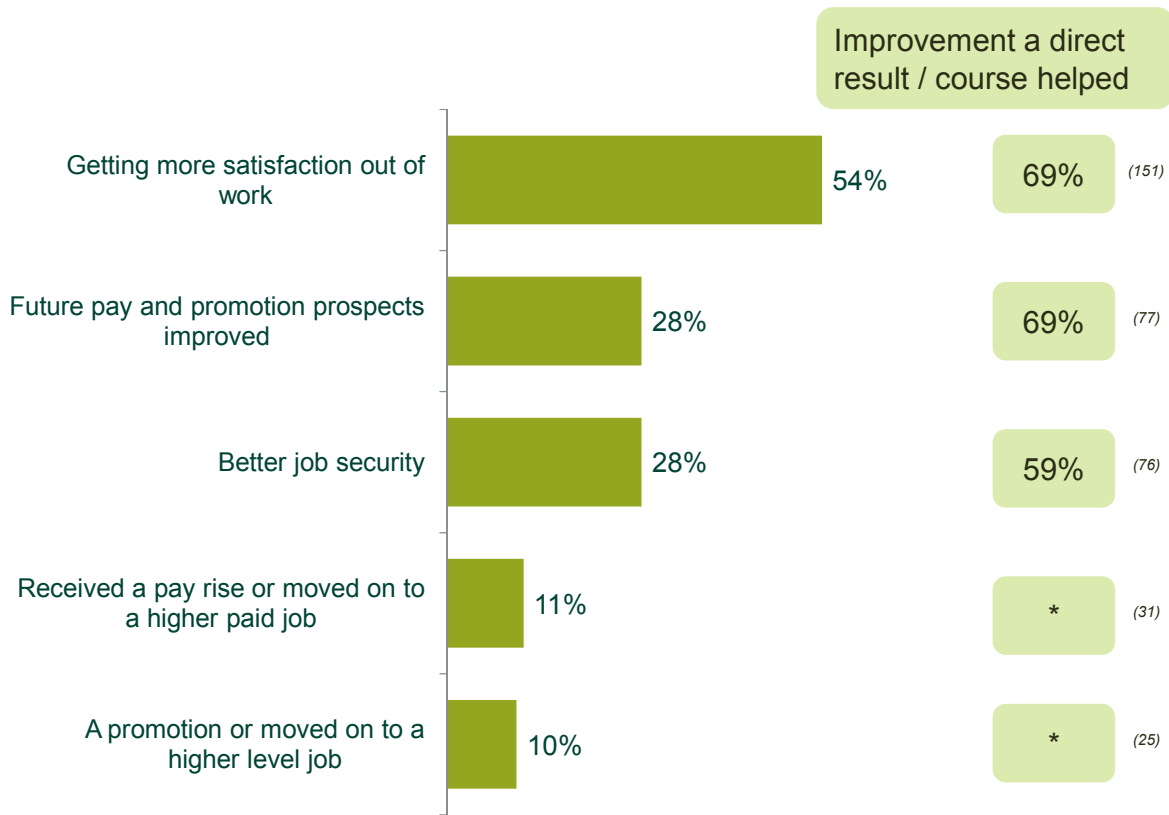
Figure 6.8 Role of the unit course in securing current job

Base: Learners in work, excluding those working for same employer as before the course (161)

Learners who reported being in work both before and after the course confirmed a variety of improvements in their employment situation, as shown in Figure 6.7 below. These benefits were largely attributed to having undertaken the unit based learning.

- More than half (54%) reported they were getting more job satisfaction out of their work. Most of these felt that this improvement came about either as a direct result of doing the course (9%) or that the course helped in this respect (60%).
- Approaching three in ten (28%) reported that their future pay and promotion prospects have improved. More than two thirds of this group felt that this progress was a direct result of the course (10%) or that it helped (59%).
- Approaching three in ten (28%) felt that they now have better job security, and three-fifths of these reported this improvement to be a direct result of the course (11%) or that it helped (47%).
- One in nine had received a pay rise or moved on to a higher paid job (11%), and a similar proportion reported a promotion or moving on to a higher level job (10%).

Figure 6.7 Employment outcomes and attribution to the unit course



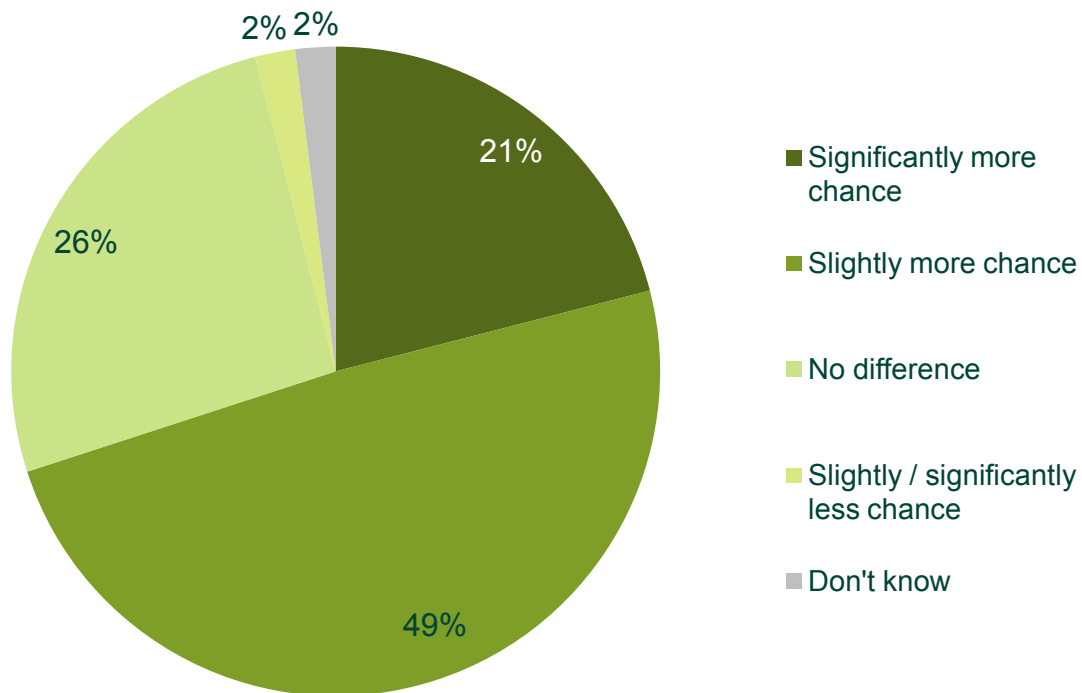
Base: Learners who were in work before and after the course (273)

Base: All who reported an improvement, * denotes base sizes too small

Overall, two thirds (64%) of all the learners in this group who were in work at both points in time reported any of the above improvements in their work situation (this is equivalent to 11% of the total unit-learner population). Learners who were aware that they were studying a unit course were more likely to report any such improvement (72% compared to 28% of those unaware).

In addition, there is evidence that unit based learning helps unemployed learners in their efforts to secure a job in the future. As Figure 6.8 shows, seven in ten (70%) of those not currently in work felt that doing the unit course had increased their chances of finding a job, including one in five (21%) feeling that it had significantly increased their chances. Unemployed learners who studied multiple units were more likely to believe their learning had helped their future employment prospects (72% vs. 63% amongst those studying for just one unit).

By contrast, a quarter reported that it had made no difference (26%), and a very small proportion of the unemployed (2%) said it made matters worse.

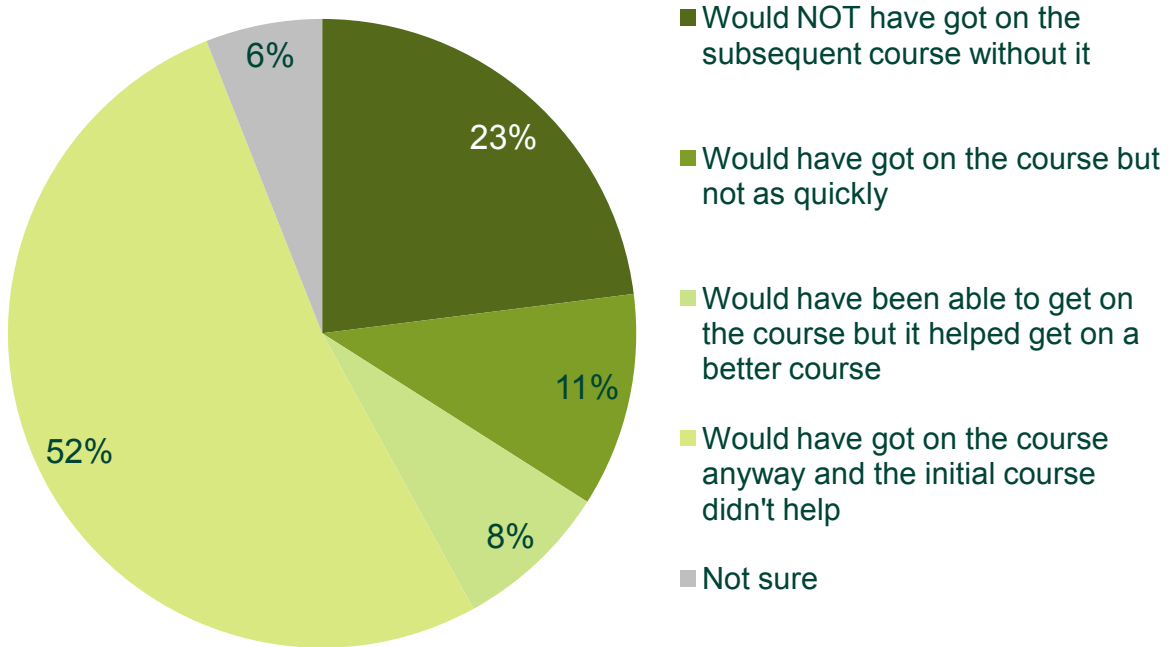
Figure 6.8 Impact of unit learning on securing future employment

Base: Learners not currently in work (531)

Impact on further learning

A quarter (25%) of learners who completed their initial programme unit said they went on to do further learning. In total, more than a quarter of all unit learners (27%) stated they had undertaken further study or indicated their current employment status as being in some form of learning – this compares to 30% amongst learners interviewed as part of the earlier FE survey. As shown in Figure 6.9, around two in five moving to further learning (42%) indicated that the initial unit course had positively influenced their accessing of further learning, with a quarter (23%) saying they would not have been able to access the subsequent course without the initial (unit) learning, one in nine (11%) saying it meant they started sooner than they would otherwise have done, and one in twelve (8%) feeling the initial course helped them getting a better subsequent course. By contrast, about half (52%) reported that the initial unit course had made no difference.

Figure 6.9 Impact of initial unit learning on further learning activities



Base: Learners who went on to further learning after their initial unit course (274)

Chapter 7: Further learning undertaken after unit based course

A key reason for funding programmes of units is not just that it engages people that would not otherwise have undertaken learning but that it results in more learners progressing or intending to progress to further qualifications and increases the number of people achieving a first full Level 2 qualification.

This chapter examines how many learners have gone on or intend to go on to do further learning after their initial unit based course, their motivations for undertaking further learning, and particularly whether they have already attained, or expect to attain, a full level-2 qualification.

Further Learning

Of those learners not still on their initial programme of units a quarter (25%) indicated that they had gone on to do further courses or learning since. This was higher among:

- Those that completed their provision (26%) than among early leavers (16%);
- Those who had studied more than one unit study (27%, compared with 21% of those who only studied a single unit);
- Those employed prior to their unit learning (32%).

It was noticeable that there was little difference by the highest prior qualification level of the learner nor the level of the programme of units they had been undertaking, indicating success in encouraging a broad range of learners to continue learning.

The 27% of learners who stated that they had gone on to do further study after their initial programme of units or who gave their current employment status as being in full-time education or other types of training, were asked for more information about this study.

Half (49%) of these learners undertook their subsequent learning with the same provider, rising to three-fifths (59%) of those whose initial learning comprised a single unit and half (51%) indicated that this new learning was a continuation of, or similar to, their previous course. Predictably those staying with same provider were more likely to describe their subsequent learning as a continuation (70%, compared with 30% of those studying with a different provider).

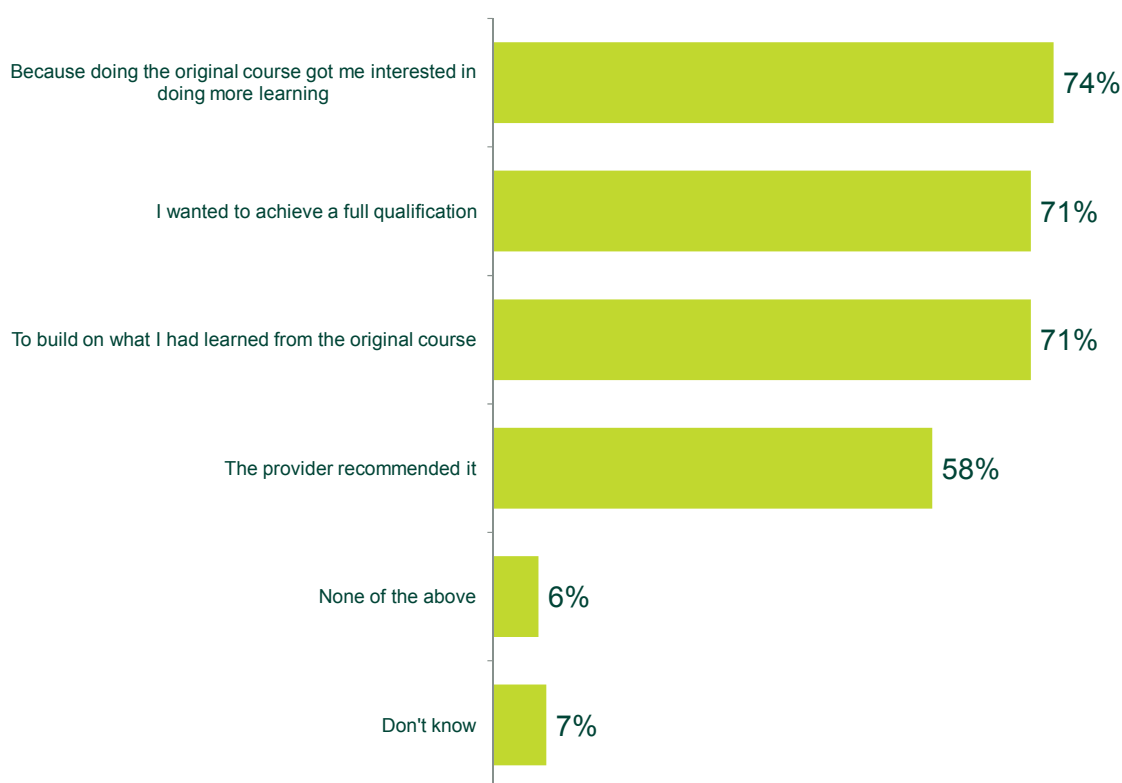
Overall two-thirds of learners undertaking further learning either studied with the same provider or said their course was a continuation of or in a similar subject area to the original unit learning. So the emerging picture indicates fairly structured learning journeys for most unit learners who continued with subsequent learning activities. These different types of learning journeys appear to influence the extent to which certain benefits were reported by learners in terms of employment outcomes. In particular, among learners who

undertook subsequent learning and were unemployed at the time when surveyed, those that had undertaken study that was unrelated to their initial unit course were less likely to state that their initial unit course had improved their chances of finding a job (60%) than those where the subsequent course was a continuation of their initial course (82%).

Motivations for further study

Learners who had gone on to do further learning were asked about their motivations, with this being a prompted question with potential options read out to respondents. As shown in Figure 7.1, undertaking their original unit learning has had a clear impact on their motivations to progress to subsequent study. Around three-quarters (74%) stated that the original course got them interested in doing more learning, said that they wanted to achieve a full qualification, and / or wanted to build on what they had learned from the original course. Fewer, though still a majority (58%), were influenced by the provider recommending it.

Figure 7.1 Reasons for doing subsequent course or courses (prompted)



Base: Learners who have done or are doing subsequent learning (274)

The following groups who went on to further learning were particularly likely to say that their original course got them interested in this learning:

- Learners whose highest qualification level before the original course was up to L3 (77%, the figure varied little by whether the individual had qualifications at qualifications at Level 1, 2 or 3 or indeed no prior qualifications) compared with learners qualified at Level 4 and above (53%) – suggesting that unit learning has

been particularly successful in engaging more lower level learners into further learning.

- Those who were on inactive benefits (and who were not on active benefits or working) before the course (87% compared with 73% of those on active benefits and 64% of those who were employed).

More likely to mention achieving a full qualification as a motivation for undertaking further learning were:

- Those who were on inactive benefits before the course (86% compared with 58% who were employed);
- Those who originally studied more than one unit (75% compared with 62% who had only studied one unit);
- Those not working or learning before the course (74%) or at the time when surveyed (77%).

Type of further learning

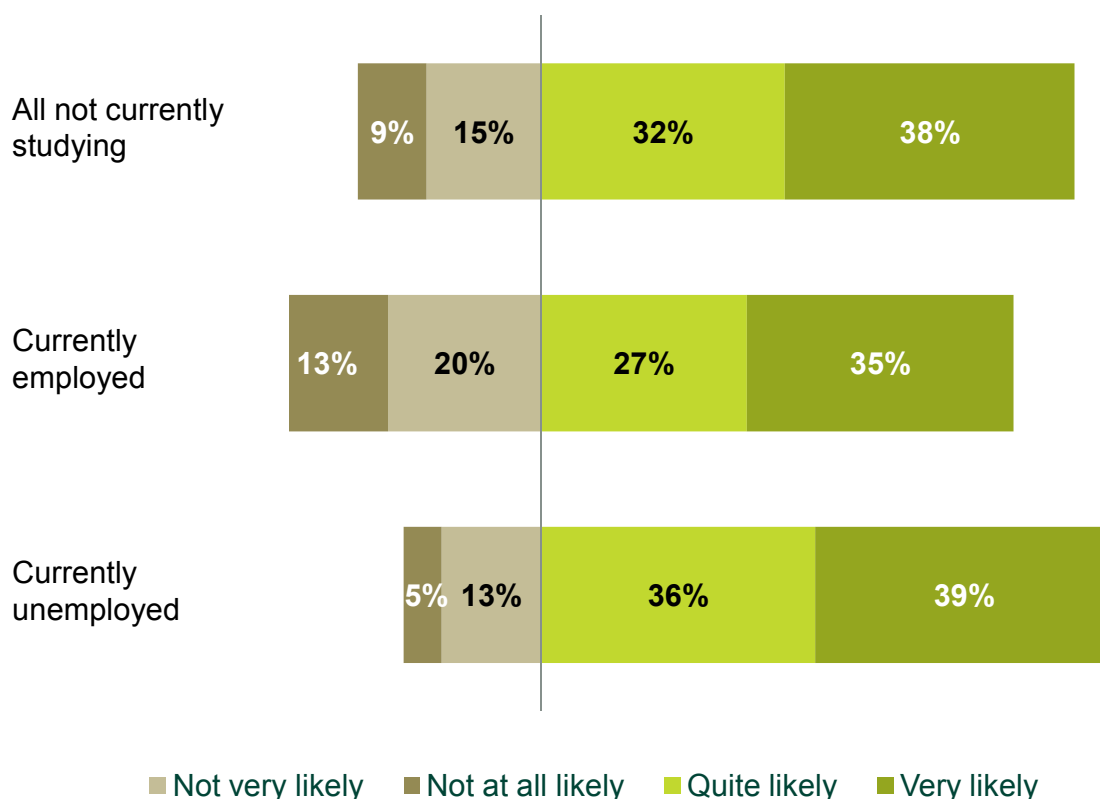
Half (54%) of those learners who described their employment status at the time of interview as 'in learning' said that this learning would lead to a full qualification, one-fifth (21%) were studying (further) units or credits, and a quarter (25%) were not sure about the nature of their learning. Of those that were studying towards a full qualification, nearly three-quarters (73%) indicated that this would be at Level 2 or above (with a further 13% unsure of the level). This is equivalent to 40% of those whose main current activity is 'in learning' studying to a full Level 2 qualification, or 3% of our total sample of unit learners.

All respondents were also asked if they had attained any full qualification in the period since they started, completed or left the original unit course. One in ten (10%) said that they had, higher among those still undertaking their original programme of units (19%), 21-24 year olds (14%), and learners in the East Midlands and London (20% and 18% respectively).

Notwithstanding a relatively high level of cases (20%) where it was not possible to definitely assign a level to their learning, most subsequent full qualifications that had been achieved tended to be at Entry level or Level 1 (34%) or a Level 2 qualification (32%). One in seven claimed to have achieved a level 3 qualification or higher since starting their unit learning (14%). Due to very low base sizes, it is not possible to perform any reliable sub-group analysis.

Intention to do further learning

All those who were not currently studying at the time of the interview were asked how likely it was that they would go on to undertake further learning or courses in the next year or so. Seven in ten felt that it was very (38%) or quite (32%) likely.

Figure 7.2 Likelihood of going on to undertake further study

Base: All Learners not currently in full-time learning - 988

The likelihood of further study in the next year or so (among those not currently in full time education or learning) varied widely by employment status, with those employed at the time of interview thinking it far less likely than average (62% v 75% among other learner groups including those currently unemployed). It is interesting that those in work at the time of the interview who were not employed before the course were even less likely to think future learning to be likely (52%).

Likelihood of further study also varied as follows:

- Those receiving benefits / tax credits at the time of the interview were more likely than average to think learning likely (76% vs. 60% among those not on benefits) – this of course relates to the difference described above in relation to employment status;
- Women were more inclined to further study: 75% stated that it was likely (with 43% thinking it very likely) compared with 66% of men (and 32% saying it was very likely).
- Those with lower level qualifications before their unit learning were more likely to think more learning likely, indeed among those with no prior qualifications 78% thought it very or quite likely that they would undertake more learning in the next

year or so, suggesting unit delivery has successfully engaged many learners with low prior qualifications;

Learners' perceptions of the extent to which the initial programme of study had led to any improvement in their job, or their chances of finding a job, also appears to have a clear impact on their feelings towards undertaking further study.

- More than four-fifths (83%) of employed learners who had experienced any job improvement as a result of their original unit course felt further study was likely (and 46% felt it was very likely).
- Four-fifths (80%) of those unemployed who felt the initial course had given them more chance of finding a job felt that it was likely that they would do further study (and 44% felt it was very likely).
- In comparison, just two thirds (65%) of those who felt the course had made no difference to their chances of finding a job felt it was likely that they would go on to do further study, with three in ten (30%) feeling it very likely.

Intention to work towards a full qualification

The 70% who said that it was 'likely' or 'very likely' that they would go on to undertake further learning or courses in the next year or so were asked whether they expected the new learning to involve working to a full qualification. Three-quarters (74%) stated that they did expect to be working to a full qualification, equivalent to 51% of all learners surveyed.

The following groups were more likely than average to expect further learning to lead to full qualifications (figures based on those thinking learning likely):

- Those unemployed at the time of interview: nearly four-fifths (77%) expected that they would work to a full qualification, compared with just over two-thirds (68%) of those who were employed and expecting further learning;
- Learners who reported receiving on benefits / tax credits after the course: three-quarters (76%), compared with just over two-thirds (69%) of those who did not receive such support;
- Younger learners aged 19-20 (89%) and 20-24 (85%);
- In addition, those with a highest prior qualification at Entry or Level 1 were more likely to state an intention that their future learning that will lead to a full qualification (79%) as were those whose original unit course was at Entry or Level 1 (85%). This confirms high interest in studying to full qualifications among those with relatively lower levels of prior attainment.

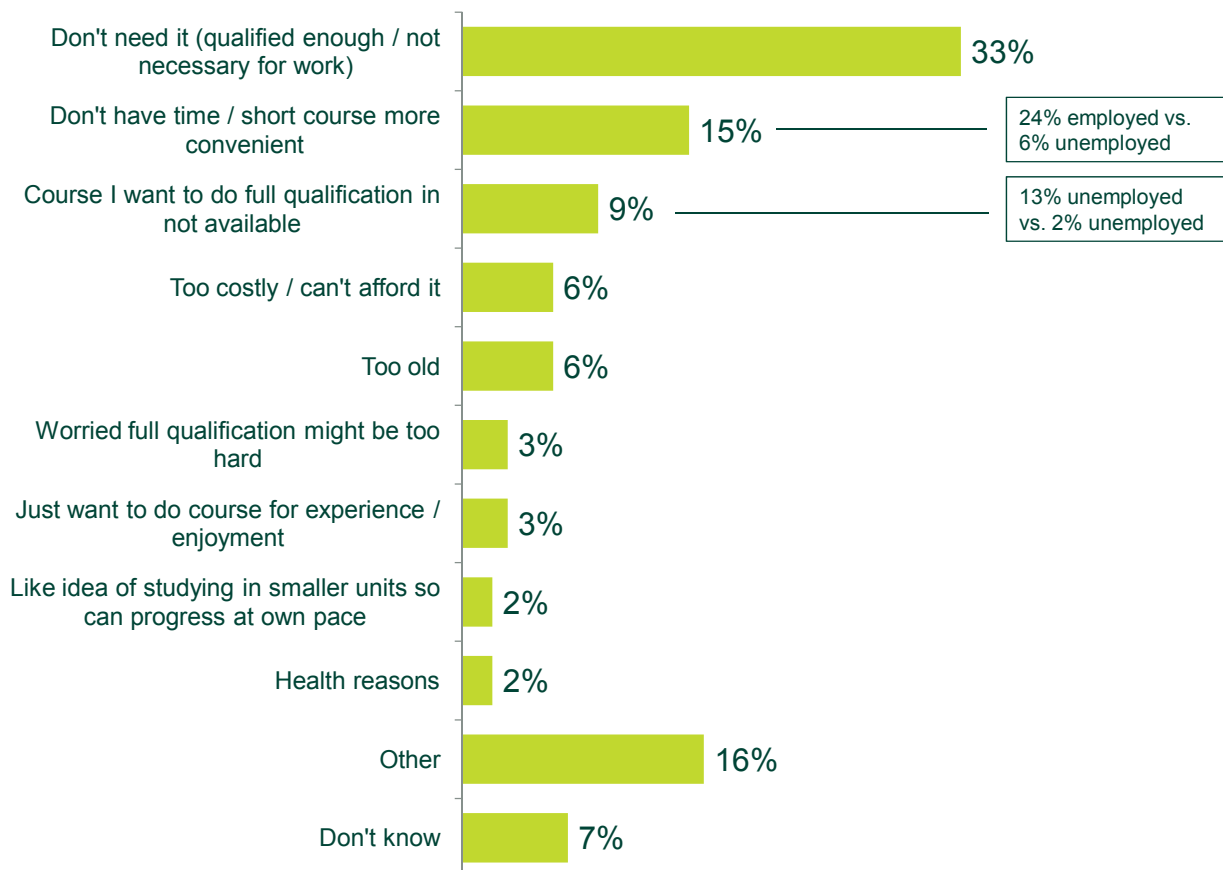
All those who said that they were likely to go on to do further learning, but did not expect this learning to involve working to a full qualification, were asked as an open question why this was the case. As shown in Figure 7.3 below, the main reason given was that learners

felt they did not need it (33%), for example because they were already qualified enough, or because they would not need it for their work. Those on benefits / receiving tax credit at the time of interview were particularly likely to give this response (54%, compared with 22% of those not on benefits).

The second most common reason, mentioned by 15% of respondents, indicates a more concrete barrier to achieving full qualifications; learners felt that they did not have enough time to complete a full qualification, or that a shorter course might be more convenient. This reason was much more likely to be a factor for those who were working (24%) compared with those who were unemployed (6%).

Other reasons given were that the course they wanted to do a full qualification in isn't available (9%), that doing a full qualification is too costly or they cannot afford it (6%), that they feel they are too old to do a full qualification (6%), that they are worried a full qualification might be too hard (3%), and that they simply wanted to do the course for enjoyment, or to gain experience (3%).

Figure 7.3 Reasons for not wanting to work towards a full qualification



Base: Learners who do not expect their new learning to lead to a full qualification (137)

Respondents who stated that they were currently studying towards a full qualification, or that they had attained a full qualification since beginning their original course (14% of the overall total) were asked whether it was always their intention when they started the course to go on to do the full qualification, whether this was something they considered

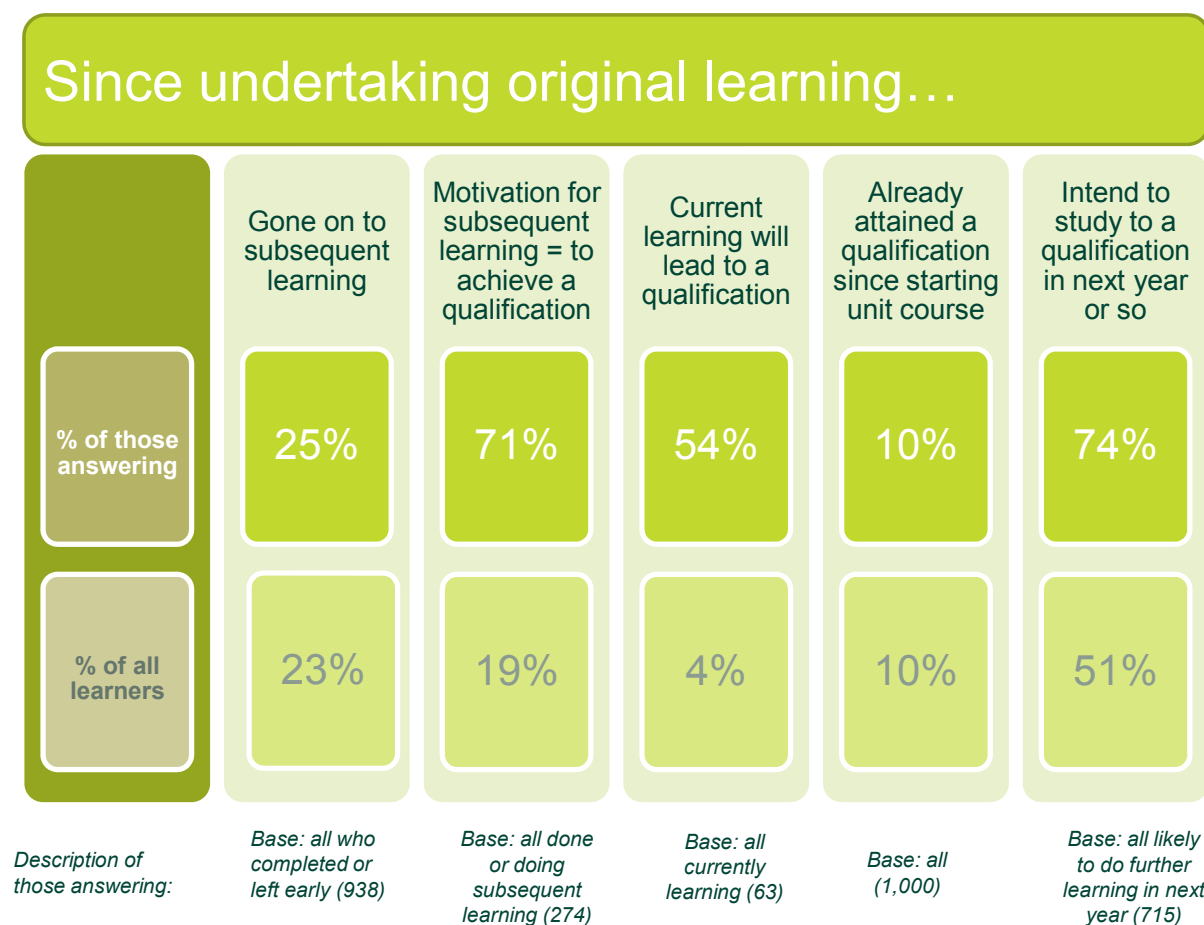
during the unit course, or whether it was only since the course that they had wanted to go on and do the full qualification.

Nearly half (48%) said that it had always been their intention to go on to a full qualification, while 16% began to consider it during the course, and a further quarter (26%) made the decision since finishing the unit course. Small base sizes mean it is hard to draw reliable conclusions, but it appears as if those undertaking a single unit and those on benefits/tax credits before or after their course were particularly likely to say it was always their intention to go on to do a full qualification.

Qualification summary

The table below summarises some of the key figures to do with subsequent learning and the achievement of full qualifications by learners. The top row of figures is the percentage based on the number of people who were asked the question in the interview; the lower row of figures is the percentage based on all respondents.

Figure 7.4 Qualification attainment summary



Chapter 8: Conclusions

The emerging findings of this evaluation provide empirical evidence to support a number of positive assessments of unit learning in 2011/12, in particular with regard to outcomes relating to further learning, improvements in current employment, and increased chances to finding a job in the future.

Additionality – has unit learning allowed adults to access learning they would not otherwise have accessed?

One of the key policy objectives of unit learning is to encourage a greater number of adults to take up learning by attracting and retaining learner groups that previously had not been able to access appropriate mainstream provision. Providing learning in units in a more flexible way, so that learners can study individual units in small blocks and accumulate credit over the short term or over a longer period of time, is aimed at increasing overall participation in learning.

The evaluation collected relevant evidence to explore notions of additionality, i.e. to address the critical question about the extent to which unit learning has allowed adults to access learning that they would not otherwise have done. It is worth noting that unit learning as opposed to learning to a full qualification is rarely being chosen by learners as an explicit preference: as many as two-fifths of learners (39%) were unaware that their learning had involved units / credits, and among those that were aware most (70%) did not have a preference either way and only 9% actively preferred the format of unit learning compared with 19% saying they would have preferred to study to a full qualification. In the survey, learners were asked about possible alternatives they would have considered had their (unit) course not been available.

- Around one in eight learners who were aware that their course was unit based (13%) would not have considered learning if the (unit) course they began had not been available (this includes those who would have sought voluntary work or continued looking for work), and a third (32%) would have considered an alternative to learning.
- Similarly, one in eight of those unaware that their course was unit based (12%) reported they would not have considered any other learning alternative to doing the course that they did (12%, rising to 24% among learners who were employed before the course), and around a quarter (26%) would have considered non-learning alternatives.

Unit learning also seeks to remove important barriers to participation including cost. All units undertaken by the learners surveyed for this evaluation were fully funded, and the importance of this funding was evident in that:

- A third of learners (35%) stated they would not have been able to undertake any learning at all in the event of having to pay for their course;

- One in five of those who stated that they initially would have preferred working towards a full qualification (19%) said they could not afford the fees for this traditional, linear programme of study and thus ended up doing the unit course instead.

Has unit learning broadened the appeal of learning and allowed a wider range of learners to participate, including those not previously in the market for learning?

Unit learning is designed to broaden choice and thereby expand the appeal to a wider range of learners. The ILR analysis conducted as part of this evaluation indicates that in terms of key demographics unit learners tend to be slightly more likely to be female, from a BAME background, and reporting a disability, learning difficulty or health problem, compared to the profile of all learners studying at a similar level. Regarding gender and disability, there are indications that female and disabled learners are underrepresented in the profile of all learners, while unit learning appears to be more successful in engaging these learner groups.

Unemployed adults are a particular priority in the targeting of relevant unit learning provision under the Offer for the Unemployed, with unit learning seen as an efficient way of improving basic skills, employability skills and job readiness of those not in work, without requiring them to invest too much time away from the labour market. The ILR analysis confirms that providers have targeted their unit curriculum offer specifically to unemployed adults with about four in five learners undertaking units (77% at UDT providers and 80% at non-UDT providers) being out of work and on active or inactive benefits before their course, compared to a quarter among all Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 learners (27%).

ILR analysis of the top ten units studied in 2011/12 indicates that providers are able to tailor suitable programmes of units to meet diverse needs of different types of learners. Previously unemployed learners on active or inactive benefits tended to undertake units with an emphasis around employability, such as job searching skills, preparing for an interview or preparation for the world of work; these units tended to be at Entry or Level 1. Learners who were in paid work before their unit learning typically engaged with learning to gain or improve job specific skills relating to their existing employment; these units tended to be at Level 2.

Completion of unit learning and progression into further learning – to what extent is unit learning a first step towards completing full qualifications?

Providers are encouraged to offer units of learning as a means to increase participation and reach out to a wider range of potential learners, but the policy also aims at providing the foundation for learners to accumulate further unit achievements towards progression to a full qualification. The survey collected a range of relevant evidence of unit learning that has triggered progression onto further learning, including:

- In the survey, about half of learners (48%) stated their motivation for doing their unit course was to help them progress on to another education, training or learning

course. Three-quarters (76%) stated that feeling more enthusiastic about learning was one of the key benefits they gained from their initial learning.

- A majority began a programme consisting of multiple units (63% among those studying with UDT providers, 61% among those with other providers).
- Unit learning completion rates were high, with more than four in five (85%) having completed their initial programme of units.
- A quarter (25%) of those not still undertaking their initial programme of units had gone on to do a subsequent course; of those around seven in ten stated that the original course had got them interested in doing more learning (74%), wanted to build on what they learned from the original course (71%), and stated it was their intention to work towards a full qualification (71%, which is equivalent to 19% of all learners). A quarter (23%) of those undertaking further learning said they could not have undertaken their subsequent learning without having completed their original unit course. Overall 4% of the sample were undertaking subsequent learning leading to a full qualification.
- Seven in ten (70%) of those learners not currently studying said that further learning was likely in the next year or so. Of those, three-quarters (74%) intended this study to lead towards a full qualification (equivalent to 51% of all learners).

Impact of unit learning: skills and other benefits gained, and improved employment prospects

The evaluation provides concrete evidence of a number of tangible benefits gained from unit learning, as well as positive outcomes regarding current employment or future employment chances.

The survey found learners' initial motivations to emphasise skills development and career progression, with 90% saying they wanted to learn new skills, and 88% stating their motivation was to improve their job prospects, help get a new job, or help get a new career. In turn, they reported a wide range of new skills they learnt, in addition to a variety of other benefits including improved employment or career prospects (74%).

There has been a large increase in the proportion of learners doing paid work, from one in five (18%) before the unit course to two in five (37%) at the time of the interview. Overall, a quarter (25%) of those not in paid work before the course reported being in work at the time of the interview (equivalent to 19% of all learners).

Similarly, the survey recorded a positive development in terms of the proportion of learners in receipt of state benefits or tax credits which had decreased from three-quarters (74%) before the course to just over three-fifths (63%) when surveyed.

Specific benefits were reported amongst three key learner groups, and all tended to attribute tangible outcomes to their unit course:

- A majority of learners (52%) who started a new job confirmed that their initial unit course had helped them get their current job, including a quarter (23%) who felt they could not have secured this job without the course.
- Substantial proportions of those in work at both points in time reported improvements in their employment situation, such as more job satisfaction, better pay or promotion prospects, and better job security; the majority felt that their original unit course had helped or contributed directly to bring about these improvements.
- Amongst unemployed learners, seven in ten (70%) felt that doing their unit course had helped their chances of finding a job in the future, with one in five (21%) thinking it had significantly increased their chances.

Appendix: Questionnaire

Introduction and Screening

SA) May I speak to <NAME FROM SAMPLE>?

Yes – named person speaking	1	ASK S1
Yes – transferred	2	
Definite appointment	3	RECORD TIME AND DATE TO
Soft appointment	4	CALL BACK
<i>IF NOT IN ON A FEW OCCASIONS SEEK ALTERNATIVE NUMBER</i>	5	ASK NEXT QUESTION
Moved / no longer lives here	6	
Not available in deadline (away for the next 2 weeks)	7	THANK AND CLOSE
Never heard of person / wrong number	8	THANK AND CLOSE (SUBMIT FOR A TELEPHONE NUMBER SEARCH)
Other (SPECIFY)	9	RESEARCH STAFF TO EXAMINE AND DECIDE NEXT STEP

IF MOVED or GIVEN ALTERNATIVE NUMBER

SB) Is there a new number I can call to get hold of <NAME FROM SAMPLE>?

IF NECESSARY ADD: **it's just in relation to a study we are conducting for the government among people who recently did courses to see what they thought of the course and to see what they've done since. [It's for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.**

Yes	1	TAKE NEW NUMBER, THEN REDIAL
No	2	THANK AND CLOSE
Refusal	3	

WHEN SPEAKING TO NAMED PERSON

SC) Good morning / afternoon, my name is <XXX> calling from IFF Research. We're conducting a survey on behalf of the government's Department for Business, Innovation and Skills among people that have recently done learning and training to see what they think of the learning, and what they have done since.

All your answers will be treated in the strictest of confidence (nobody will know how individual people have responded).

The interview should only take around 15-20 minutes. We can do this now or at a more convenient time for you

[SHOW ON SCREEN THE PROVIDER, START DATES AND UNITS]

ADD IF NECESSARY:

- All information collected will be treated in the strictest confidence. Responses will not be attributed to any individual. Results will be reported in an anonymised format.
- We work strictly within the Market Research Society Code of Conduct (their number if you need to check IFF is a genuine market research company is 0500 39 69 99)
- The contact at IFF Research is Jessica Huntley Hewitt if they would like to find out more about the survey - 020 7250 3035
- At BIS the contact is Phillip Lacey 0114 207 5158
- Respondent details were supplied via the Individualised Learner Record, which is a collection of data about learners and their learning that is requested from providers in the FE and Skills sector

Continue	1	CONTINUE
No recall of courses	2	
Refusal / not interested	3	THANK AND CLOSE

SD) According to our records you undertook a short course with <PROVIDER> starting in around <START DATE 1> studying <UNIT 1 TITLE>. Do you recall this?

[NB IF REMEMBER ONE KEY ELEMENT CODE AS A YES e.g. doing a course in that month OR doing a course with that title]

Yes	1	GO TO SE
No	2	THANK AND CLOSE
Don't know	X	

ASK IF YES

SE) Did you complete this learning or course, did you leave before the end, or are you still studying this course?

Completed	1
Left early	2
Still studying (some of these units)	3
Other (SPECIFY)	4
Don't know	X

IF COMPLETED OR LEFT EARLY

- SF) And have you gone to do any further courses or learning since, whether with <PROVIDER> or another provider?**

Yes	1	READ OUT STATEMENT BELOW
No	2	
Don't know	X	

IF YES AT SF SAY: “Later I’d like to ask about this learning you went on to do, but for the moment I’d like to ask about the learning you [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) did] [IF (SE=3) are doing] with <provider> involving <UNIT TITLE 1> and your situation before doing this learning.”

ALL OTHERS: For the rest of the interview when I refer to ‘the course’ I mean the learning that you were doing with <PROVIDER> studying <UNIT TITLE 1>.

SECTION B – SITUATION IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE COURSE

ASK ALL

I’d like to ask some questions about what you were doing when you started the course or project.

- B1) Which one of the following best describes your MAIN situation or activity in the week before starting the course...READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.**

Doing paid work as an employee	1
Working on a self-employed basis	2
In full-time education or training	3
On a government funded employment or training programme	4
On a training course that was not government funded	5
Unemployed and looking for work	6
Doing voluntary work	7
Not in or looking for paid work (for example looking after children or relatives)	8
(DO NOT READ OUT) Can't remember	X

IF NOT IN OR LOOKING FOR PAID WORK IMMEDIATELY BEFORE COURSE (B1=8)

- B2) Were you not looking for work for any of the following reasons.....READ OUT. MULTI CODE OKAY**

Looking after the family, home or caring for dependents	1
Temporarily sick or injured	2
Long term-sick or disabled	3
Retired	4
Doing unpaid voluntary work	5
Not needing or wanting employment	6
Not looking for work as there were no jobs available	7
Or was there some other reason you were not looking for a job (SPECIFY)	0
(DO NOT READ OUT) Can't remember	X

IF NOT WORKING AT TIME STARTED COURSE AND NOT RETIRED [ASK ALL EXCEPT (B1 =1 OR 2) or (B2=4)] – OTHERS GO TO B5

- B3) Thinking about before you started the course or project, which, if any, of the following things made it difficult for you to find work...READ OUT (MULTICODE OK)**

.RANDOM START PLACE	
A lack of qualifications or skills	1
Lack of relevant work experience	2
Lack of affordable childcare	3
Having caring responsibilities	4
Health problems	5
Your age	6
Lack of knowledge about how to apply for a job	7
Lack of confidence that employers would give you a job	8
Alcohol or drug dependency	9
Having a criminal record	10
Lack of appropriate jobs where you live	11
Transport difficulties and it being hard to get to appropriate work	12
You only wanting to work part time	13
Believing you would not be better off financially in work	14
Were there any other reasons why it was difficult for you to find work (SPECIFY)	0
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X
(DO NOT READ OUT) None of these	V

ASK IF NOT WORKING AT TIME STARTED COURSE AND NOT RETIRED [ASK ALL EXCEPT (B1 =1 OR 2) or (B2=4)] – OTHERS GO TO B5

B4) At the time you started the course or project, how long had you been out of work?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY – SINGLE CODE.

Less than 6 months	1
6 to 12 months	2
More than a year up to 2 years	3
More than 2 years	4
Don't know	X

ASK ALL

B5) Just before starting the course, were you receiving state benefits and or tax credits?

Yes	1	ASK B6
No	2	CHECK B7
Don't know	X	

IF YES

B6) What benefits or tax credits were you receiving?

Jobseeker's Allowance	1
Income Support	2
Incapacity Benefit	3
Employment and Support Allowance	4
Housing Benefit	5
Council Tax	6
Child Tax Credit	7
Working Family Tax Credit	8
Other (SPECIFY)	9
Don't know	X

IF ESA (B6=4)

B6b) Can I check, when you received the Employment and Support Allowance, were you placed in the Work-Related Activity Group (WRAG) or in the Support Group?

INTERVIEWER EXPLAIN IF NECESSARY: Employment and Support Allowance involves a medical assessment called the Work Capability Assessment. This assessment places claimants into two groups:

- a) People in the ESA Work-Related Activity Group are expected to take part in work-focused interviews with their personal adviser and will get support to help prepare for suitable work.
- b) People in the Support Group tend to have an illness or disability that has a severe effect on their ability to work, and they won't be expected to work.

ESA Work-Related Activity Group	1
ESA Support Group	2
Don't know	X

IF WORKING IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE COURSE (B1=1 OR 2) ASK:

B7) What was your job title and what were your main duties or responsibilities in this job at the time you started the course?

PROBE FULLY. RECORD VERBATIM

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION; PROBE FOR FULL DETAILS. FOR EXAMPLE, IF 'SUPERVISOR' WHAT INDUSTRY WERE THEY SUPERVISING IN? IF 'MANAGER', WHAT SORT OF MANAGER AND IN WHICH INDUSTRY?

NOTE TO CODING: CODE TO 3 DIGIT SOC

IF WAS WORKING AS AN EMPLOYEE (B1=1) – OTHERS CHECK B9

B8) Was this job...READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Permanent	1
Seasonal, casual or temporary	2
A job done under a contract for a limited period	3
Or another type of job that was not permanent	4
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

IF WORKING IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE COURSE (B1=1 OR 2) ASK:

B9) How many hours a week, on average, were you usually working immediately before you started the course – excluding meal breaks but including any paid overtime? PROBE FOR BEST ESTIMATE

EXACT ANSWER _____

Don't know	X
IF DON'T KNOW ASK: Was it...READ OUT	
30 hours or more per week	1
16 to 29 hours per week	2
Under 16 hours per week	3
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X
Refused	V

ASK ALL

- B10) Before you started the course with <PROVIDER>, what was the highest qualification that you had obtained, whether from school, college, with an employer or elsewhere.**

PROBE FULLY: **What type of qualification was this? What level? What grade?**

If NVQS / GNVQs probe what level?

If GCSEs: how many grade A-C? How many grade D or below?

If A Levels / AS Levels or equivalent: How many?

(NOTE TO CODERS TO BE CODED TO LEVEL)

WRITE IN		
No qualifications	X	

SECTION A – THE COURSE

ASK ALL

- A1) I'd now like to ask about the course with <PROVIDER>. [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) Did you do] [IF (SE=3) Are you doing] the course with <provider> during the evenings or weekends, or [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) did you do] [IF (SE=3) Are you doing] it during the working week? Allow multicode**

Evenings / weekends	1
During the working week	2
Don't know	3

- A2) How many hours a week [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) did] [IF (SE=3) are] you typically spend on this course including both time spent receiving tuition and time spent studying independently? PROMPT IF NECESSARY**

IF RESPONDENT SAYS IT VARIED WIDELY, ASK FOR A TYPICAL WEEK

0-4 hours a week	1
5-9 hours a week	2
10-15 hours a week	3
16-24 hours a week	4
25 hours or more a week	5
Don't know	X

- A3) How long [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) were you on] [IF (SE=3) are] the course?**

ALLOW DON'T KNOW.

___	ANSWER IN DAYS
___	ANSWER IN WEEKS
___	ANSWER IN MONTHS
___	ANSWER IN YEARS
X	DON'T KNOW

ASK ALL

I'd now like to ask some questions about your reasons for taking the course or doing the learning, which you [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) did] [IF (SE=3) are doing] with <PROVIDER>.

- A4) Which of the following were reasons for doing this course...READ OUT?**

MULTICODE OK.

IF A4 MULTICODED

- A5) Which of these reasons was the most important?**

READ OUT (ALL CODED AT A4). SINGLE CODE.

ROTATE ORDER	A4			A5
	Yes	No	Don't know	
To learn something new and to gain new skills	1	2	X	1
To meet new people	1	2	X	2
To improve your job prospects, help get a new job or help get a new career	1	2	X	3
IF EMPLOYEE OR SELF-EMPLOYED BEFORE COURSE B1=1 or 2 To improve your pay, promotion or other prospects at work	1	2	X	4
IF EMPLOYEE BEFORE COURSE B1=1 or 2 Your employer requested or required you to do it	1	2	X	5
IF RECEIVING BENEFITS / TAX CREDITS BEFORE THE COURSE Because I had to do it as I might lose my benefits	1	2	X	6
To help you progress on to another education, training or learning course	1	2	X	7
A National Careers Service (or Next Step) or Jobcentre Plus adviser recommended that you should do the course	1	2	X	8
What other reasons, if any, did you have? (SPECIFY OTHER 1)	1	2	X	9
IF YES TO PREVIOUS STATEMENT And what other reasons, if any, did you have? (SPECIFY OTHER 2)	1	2	X	10

ASK ALL

- A6) From our records, we understand that the learning that you [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) were] [IF (SE=3) are] studying with <provider> [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) did] [IF (SE=3) does] not necessarily lead to a full qualification but [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) enabled] [IF (SE=3) enables] you to collect 'units' or 'credits' which can be used towards gaining a full qualification at a later date. Were you aware of this at the start of the training?**

Yes	1	ASK A6a
No	2	CHECK A7
Don't know	X	

IF YES AT A6 (AWARE THAT COURSE INVOLVED UNITS AND CREDITS)

- A6a) Did you initially sign up for one unit, or multiple units?**

One	1
More than one	2
Don't know	X

IF YES AT A6

A6b) Was it your preference to study units or credits, or would you have preferred to have studied to a full qualification, or didn't you mind either way?

Preferred units or credits	1	CHECK A6D
Would have preferred a full qualification	2	ASK A6c
Didn't mind either way	3	CHECK A6D
Don't know	X	

WOULD HAVE PREFERRED FULL QUALIFICATION

A6c) So why didn't you undertake a course leading to a full qualification? DO NOT READ OUT (MULTICODE OK)

The course I wanted to do a full qualification in wasn't available	1
The provider recommended I do units/credits first and then go on to do a full qualification if I completed	2
The provider thought I might struggle with a full qualification	3
I was worried a full qualification might be too hard	4
I wasn't sure I had the time available to do a full qualification / decided a shorter course might be more convenient	5
I liked the idea of studying a course in smaller units so I could progress at my own pace	6
Other (SPECIFY)	0
Don't know / no particular reason	X

IF YES AT A6 (AWARE THAT COURSE INVOLVED UNITS AND CREDITS)

A6d) If you had not been able to take the course in units and credits do you think you would have....READ OUT?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Done a similar course with another provider	1	2	3
And do you think you would have done a course leading to a full qualification with the same or another provider	1	2	3

And if the course had not been available do you think you would have done something other than learning (IF YES SPECIFY)	1	2	3
---	---	---	---

IF NO / DON'T KNOW AT A6 (NOT AWARE THAT COURSE INVOLVED UNITS AND CREDITS)

- A6e) If the course you [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) did] [IF (SE=3) are doing] with <provider> had not been available which one of the following do you think you would have been most likely to have done....READ OUT AND SINGLE CODE?**

Another similar level course with another provider	1
A higher level, more demanding course with this or another provider	2
Done something other than learning (SPECIFY)	3
Or not done anything at all	4
(DO NOT READ OUT) Other (SPECIFY)	0
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

ASK ALL

- A6f) And if you had had to pay for the course you [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) did] [IF (SE=3) are doing] with <provider>, which one of the following best describes what you think you would have done: READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

It would have made no difference to my choice at all	1
I'd still have applied for the same course but would have had to earn more money as well	2
I would have applied to do a different course	3
I would not have done any learning at all (eg. would have looked for a job)	4
I would have done something else (IF YES: SPECIFY)	0
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know / depends (e.g. on what it would have cost)	X

IF LEFT EARLY (SE=2)

- A7) You said earlier that you did not complete the course. Why did you not complete it?**

DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE FULLY. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Left to start a job	1	
Course too advanced / too hard	2	
Course too easy	3	

Problems accessing course e.g. travel problems	4	Section C
Not learning anything new	5	
Didn't find the course interesting / useful	6	
Lack of support / help	7	
Lack of time / too busy	8	
Family / personal circumstances	9	
Ill health / disability	10	
Childcare difficulties	11	
Course cancelled / closed down	12	
Other (SPECIFY)	13	
Don't know / Can't remember	X	

SECTION C – SITUATION SINCE THE COURSE

ASK ALL

- C1) I would like to get a few details about what you are doing at the moment. Which one of the following do you regard as your main activity ...READ OUT AND SINGLE CODE.**

Doing paid work as an employee	1
Working on a self-employed basis	2
In full-time education or training	3
On a government funded employment or training programme	4
On a training course that was not government funded	5
Unemployed and looking for work	6
Doing voluntary work	7
Or Not in or looking for paid work (for example looking after children or relatives)	8
(DO NOT READ OUT) Other (SPECIFY)	0

IF NOT IN OR LOOKING FOR PAID WORK (C1 = 8)

- C2) Are you not looking for work for any of the following reasons.....READ OUT. MULTI CODE OKAY**

Looking after the family, home or caring for dependents	1
Temporarily sick or injured	2
Long term-sick or disabled	3
Retired	4
Doing unpaid voluntary work	5

Not needing or wanting employment	6
Not looking for work as there are no jobs available	7
Or are there some other reason you are not looking for a job (SPECIFY)	0
(DO NOT READ OUT) Can't remember	X

ASK IF CURRENTLY WORKING AND WAS WORKING IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE COURSE (C1=1 and B1=1), OR IF SELF-EMPLOYED NOW AND BEFORE (C1=2 and B1=2)

C3) IF EMPLOYEE (C1=1): Can I just check are you currently working for the same employer as you were before the course?

IF SELF-EMPLOYED (C1=2): **Are you currently still working on a self-employed basis in the same role as before the course?**

[INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF ON MATERNITY LEAVE CODE AS A YES]

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	X

ASK IF EMPLOYEE WITH SAME EMPLOYER (C1=1 & C3=1)

C3a) And are you in exactly the same job role with the same responsibilities as before the course?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	X

ASK IF CURRENTLY WORKING EXCEPT IF SELF-EMPLOYED IN SAME JOB ROLE OR EMPLOYEE IN SAME JOB ROLE (ASK IF C1=1 or 2 UNLESS (C3a=1) OR (C1=2 & C3=1)

C4) What is your job title and what are your main duties or responsibilities?

PROBE FULLY. RECORD VERBATIM

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION; PROBE FOR FULL DETAILS. FOR EXAMPLE, IF 'SUPERVISOR' WHAT INDUSTRY WERE THEY SUPERVISING IN? IF 'MANAGER', WHAT SORT OF MANAGER AND IN WHICH INDUSTRY?

NOTE TO CODING: CODE TO 3 DIGIT SOC

ASK ALL CURRENTLY WORKING AS AN EMPLOYEE (C1 = 1)

C5) Is this job...?

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

Permanent	1
Seasonal, casual or temporary	2
A job done under a contract for a limited period	3
Or another type of job that is not permanent	4
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

ASK ALL CURRENTLY WORKING (C1 = 1 OR 2)

C6) How many hours a week, on average, do you usually work – excluding meal breaks but including any paid overtime? PROBE FOR BEST ESTIMATE

EXACT ANSWER _____	
Don't know	X
IF DON'T KNOW ASK: Is it... READ OUT	
30 hours or more per week	1
16 to 29 hours per week	2
Under 16 hours per week	3
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X
Refused	V

ASK ALL

C7) Are you currently receiving state benefits and or tax credits?

Yes	1	ASK C8
No	2	GO TO SECTION D
Don't know	X	

IF YES

C8) What benefits or tax credits are you receiving?

Jobseeker's Allowance	1
Income Support	2
Incapacity Benefit	3
Employment and Support Allowance	4
Housing Benefit	5
Council Tax	6
Child Tax Credit	7
Working Family Tax Credit	8
Other (SPECIFY)	9
Don't know	X

SECTION D – BENEFITS OF THE COURSE

ASK ALL

- D1) Thinking about the course you did with <provider>, do you feel you benefited in any of the following ways by going on the course? Are you now...READ OUT

	Yes	No	Don't know
More enthusiastic about learning	1	2	3
Taking part in more voluntary or community activities	1	2	3
More clear about what you want to do in your life	1	2	3
More confident about your abilities	1	2	3
More clear about the range of opportunities open to you	1	2	3
Feeling better about yourself generally	1	2	3
Feeling you have improved employment or career prospects	1	2	3
Feeling more healthy	1	2	3
And have you made new friends as a result of the course	1	2	3
And as a result of the course have you taken up new interests or hobbies, for example joining a club or society	1	2	3

- D2) Which, if any, of the following skills do you feel you have gained or improved from undertaking the <UNIT 1> course?**

READ OUT. ALLOW DON'T KNOW.

(Rotate start point except final one)	Yes	No	Don't know
Job-specific skills related to a specific occupation	1	2	X
Problem solving skills	1	2	X
Team working skills	1	2	X
Organisational skills	1	2	X
Literacy skills	1	2	X
Numeracy skills	1	2	X
IT skills	1	2	X
Communication skills	1	2	X
Leadership and/or strategic management skills	1	2	X
Job search skills	1	2	X
CV writing or interview skills	1	2	X
English language skills	1	2	X
Are there other skills that have improved because of the course (SPECIFY)	1	2	X

IF WORKING BEFORE THE COURSE AND WORKING NOW [(B1=1 or 2) & (C1=1 or 2)]

- D3) Compared to the work you were doing before the course, do any of the following apply...READ OUT**

FOR EACH YES AT D3

- D4) Do you think <improvement AT D3> was a direct result of you doing the course, do you think doing the course helped, or do you think the course made no difference?**

	D3			D4			
	Yes	No	DK	Direct result	Helped	No difference	DK
Have you had a promotion or moved on to a higher level job?	1	2	3	1	2	3	4

Have you received a pay rise or moved on to a higher paid job?	1	2	3	1	2	3	4
Do you have better job security?	1	2	3	1	2	3	4
Are you getting more satisfaction out of your work?	1	2	3	1	2	3	4
Have your future pay and promotion prospects improved?	1	2	3	1	2	3	4

ASK ALL CURRENTLY WORKING AS AN EMPLOYEE OR SELF EMPLOYED EXCLUDING THOSE WORKING IN SAME JOB AS BEFORE COURSE [(C1=1 OR 2) AND (C3= 2 or X)]

- D5) **To what extent do you think the course helped you get your current job? Do you think that ...READ OUT AND CODE ONE ONLY**

You would NOT have got the job without the course	1
You would have got the job without the course but not as quickly	2
You would have got the job without the course but it helped get a better job	3
Or do you think you would you have got the job anyway and the course didn't help	4
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	X

ASK IF NOT CURRENTLY WORKING (C1=NOT 1 OR 2) AND NOT RETIRED (C2=NOT 4)

- D7) **Do you feel that because of the course that you now have significantly more chance of finding a job in the future, do you think your chances have improved slightly, has it made no difference, do you feel you have significantly less chance of finding a job because of the course, or do you have slightly less chance? PROMPT IF NECESSARY. SINGLE CODE.**

Significantly more chance	1
Slightly more chance	2
No difference	3
Slightly less chance	4
Significantly less chance	5
Don't know	X

SECTION E – FURTHER STUDY

IF DONE OR DOING SUBSEQUENT LEARNING OR 'CURRENT LEARNER AND SAID COMPLETED THE ORIGINAL COURSE' [(SF=1) OR (SE=1 & C1=3, 4 or 5)]

- E1) You mentioned that you have done or are doing further learning since the course where you were studying with <provider>. Was this subsequent learning with the same provider?**

Yes	1
No	2
(DO NOT READ OUT) not sure	X

IF DONE OR DOING SUBSEQUENT LEARNING [(SF=1) OR (SE=1 & C1=3, 4 or 5)]

- E2) And was this subsequent course a continuation of, or in similar subject areas, to the original learning, or was it not related?**

Continuation / similar	1
Not related	2
(DO NOT READ OUT) not sure	X

IF DONE OR DOING SUBSEQUENT LEARNING [(SF=1) OR (SE=1 & C1=3, 4 or 5)]

- E3) To what extent did the initial course we have been discussing help you get on the subsequent courses or courses you have taken. Would you say that... READ OUT AND SINGLE CODE**

You would NOT have got on the course without it	1
You would have got on the course but not as quickly	2
You would have been able to get on the course but it helped get on a better course	3
You would have got on the course anyway and the course didn't help	4
(DO NOT READ OUT) Not sure	X

IF DONE OR DOING SUBSEQUENT LEARNING [(SF=1) OR (SE=1 & C1=3, 4 or 5)]

- E4) Which of the following were reasons for doing the subsequent course or courses...READ OUT**

ROTATE ORDER	Yes	No	Don't know
To build on what I had learned from the original course	1	2	X
The provider recommended it	1	2	X
Because doing the original course got me interested in doing more learning	1	2	X
I wanted to achieve a full qualification	1	2	X

IF CURRENTLY LEARNING [C1=3, 4 or 5]

- E5) Is [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) your current course] [IF (SE=3) this additional course] intended to lead to a full qualification, or does it lead to units or credits like the [IF (SE=1,2,4,X) original course] [IF (SE=3) the course we've discussing earlier]?**

Full qualification	1	ASK NEXT QUESTION
Units or credits	2	ASK E6
(DO NOT READ OUT) not sure	X	

IF FULL QUALIFICATION

- E5a) Qualifications are often described by their level. Level 2, for example, is equivalent to 5 GCSEs at grade A*-C, and includes such things as BTEC Awards, Certificates, and Diplomas at Level 2, and NVQ Level 2s. Is your current course at level 2 or higher?**

Yes – level 2 or higher	1
Below level 2	2
Other (SPECIFY)	0
Not sure	X

ASK ALL

- E6) Since you [SE=1: finished] [SE=2: left] SE=3 or SE=4 or SE=5: started] the course with <provider>, have you attained any full qualifications, as opposed to units or credits?**

SINGLE CODE.

Yes	1	ASK E7
No	2	CHECK E8
Don't know	X	

ASK IF ATTAINED FULL QUALIFICATIONS (E6=1)

E7) Which qualifications did you get?

PROBE FULLY: What type of qualification was this? What level? What grade?

If NVQS/GNVQs probe what level?

If GCSEs: How many grade A-C? How many grade D or below?

A Levels / AS Levels or equivalent: How many?

(NOTE TO CODING: TO BE CODED TO LEVEL)

WRITE IN

ASK ALL NOT CURRENTLY STUDYING (All except C1=3)

E8) And how likely do you think it is that you will go on to undertake further learning or courses in the next year or so?

SINGLE CODE.

Very likely	1	ASK E9
Quite likely	2	
Not very likely	3	CHECK E11
Not at all likely	4	
Don't know	X	

IF VERY OR QUITE LIKELY

E9) The original course you did with <provider> involved attaining units or credits which can be used towards gaining a full qualification. Do you expect this new learning to involve working to a full qualification?

Yes	1	CHECK E11
No	2	ASK E10
Don't know	X	CHECK E11

IF NO

E10) Why don't you think you will work towards to a full qualification?

Don't know	X	

IF YES AT E5 OR E6

- E11) Was it always your intention when you started with <PROVIDER> to go on to do the full qualification, was this something you first considered during the course, or is it only since the course that you've wanted to go on and do the full qualification?**

Always intention	1
During	2
Since the course	3
Don't know	X

SECTION F – DEMOGRAPHICS

Finally I now just have a few questions about yourself. These are just to help us analyse the results.

- F1) INTERVIEWER CODE GENDER OF RESPONDENT.**

Male	1
Female	2

ASK ALL

- F2) Can you please tell me your current age? SINGLE CODE.**

Exact age in years _____

- F3) And what age did you first leave full time education? Was it... READ OUT AND SINGLE CODE.**

Under 16	1
16	2
17	3
18	4
Over 18	5

Never left full time education	6
(DO NOT READ OUT) Can't remember	X

ASK ALL

- F4) Which of the following best describes your ethnic group? READ OUT BOLD CATEGORIES THEN RELEVANT MORE DETAILED CATEGORIES. SINGLE CODE.**

White	
British	1
Irish	2
Any other white background (SPECIFY)	3
Black or Black British	
Caribbean	4
African	5
Any other Black background (SPECIFY)	6
Asian or Asian British	
Indian	7
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	9
Any other Asian background (SPECIFY)	10
Mixed	
White and Black Caribbean	11
White and Black African	12
White and Asian	13
Any other mixed background (SPECIFY)	14
Chinese	15
Any other (SPECIFY)	16
Refused	X

ASK ALL

- F5) Were you born...(READ OUT)?**

In the UK	1
Elsewhere in the European Union	2
Elsewhere	4
(DO NOT READ OUT) Refused	X

- F6) Is English your first language?**

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

F7) Do you have any long-term illness, health problem or disability - by long-term, we mean that it can be expected to last for more than one year

Yes	1	ASK F8
No	2	ASK F9
Don't know	3	

IF YES

F8) Does this illness or disability affect the amount or type of work you can do?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

ASK ALL

F9) In general would you say your health is ...READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

Excellent	1
Very good	2
Good	3
Fair	4
Or poor	5
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know / refused	X

ASK ALL.

F10) In which of the following type of household do you currently live...READ OUT?

Do you live alone	1
In a joint household with a spouse or partner but no children	2
In a joint household with a spouse or partner and children	3
As a single parent, with your child or children	4
In a family home with parents and / or siblings	5
In shared accommodation with other adults	6

Or in some other situation (SPECIFY)	0
(DO NOT READ OUT) Don't know	8
(DO NOT READ OUT) Refused	X

ASK ALL EXCEPT IF CODES 1 OR 2 AT F10

F11) What is the number of children in this household aged under 19 who are financially dependent on you?

None	0	ASK F13
Number	_____	ASK F12
Don't know / refused	X	ASK F13

IF PROVIDE A NUMBER AT F11

F12) What is the age of the youngest child?

Age	_____
Don't know / refused	X

ASK ALL

F13) What is your religion or belief? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY

Baha'i	1
Buddhist	2
Christian (Catholic, Protestant, Cof E, Methodist etc)	3
Hindu	4
Jewish	5
Muslim	6
Sikh	7
Other (WRITE IN)	8
None / no religion / atheist	9
Don't know	10
Prefer not to say	11

F14) Which of these describes your sexual orientation...READ OUT? SINGLE CODE ONLY

Heterosexual	1
--------------	---

Homosexual	2
Bisexual	3
Other	4
Or prefer not to say	5

F15) I'd like to ask about your general wellbeing. The Government is interested in wellbeing generally and are asking questions about this in each survey. So on a scale 0 – 10 where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely':

	0-10	Don't know / refused
Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?		X
Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?		X
Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?		X
Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?		X

ASK ALL

F16) The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills may conduct further research in the future. Would you be willing to take part in future research on similar issues carried out by them, or their appointed research consultants?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	X

ASK ALL

F17) It is sometimes possible to link the data we have collected from you with other surveys or datasets, to which BIS have authorised access. Would you be content for this to be done, as it can provide the potential for further analysis? In doing this, we assure you that your confidentiality will be respected and the linked data will be anonymised and used for statistical and analytical purposes only, with only authorised researchers having access to the linked data.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	X

THANK RESPONDENT AND CLOSE INTERVIEW

I declare that this survey has been carried out under IFF instructions and within the rules of the MRS Code of Conduct.

Interviewer signature:	Date:	
Finish time:	Interview Length	Min s

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