

Leading learning and skills

Research Report

A study on the perceived impacts of ESF funded learning on employability

Prepared for
Learning and Skills Council

By IFF Research

September 2009

Of interest to everyone involved in the
learning and skills sector

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Learning and Skills Council **National Office**

Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT
T 0845 019 4170
F 024 7682 3675
www.lsc.gov.uk

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Understanding the Impact of ESF funded learning on employability

Research report prepared for the **Learning and Skills Council** by **IFF Research Ltd**

September 2009

1 Introduction

1.1 This report presents the findings of a survey of 4,856 learners who were funded through the European Social Fund (ESF) as part of the 2000-2006 ESF Objective 3 programme. The survey was commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to assess the impact, as reported by learners, of ESF learning on their employment outcomes and employability skills. The LSC had spent £1.2bn ESF money by December 2007 (approximately £200m a year) which supplements and adds value to mainstream Government funding, increases the volume of learners on mainstream programmes, and is used to target hard to reach groups (in particular those not in employment, education or training aged 16-19 (NEET), the economically inactive, lone parents, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and ex-offenders).

1.2 The overall aim of the research was to understand the impact of ESF funded provision on the employment outcomes and employability skills of individuals, for example measuring the proportion that say they have: moved into employment and/or off benefit since the course; progressed in their job role; progressed into further learning and / or achieved qualifications; and / or improved their employability skills. More specifically, the objectives of the research were to assess:

- How ESF funding can make a difference to the outcomes of learners compared with mainstream provision alone
- To assess differences between those on provision funded by ESF only and those funded by a mix of ESF and LSC funding
- Why learners want to participate in learning
- Reasons for non-completion
- From the learners' perspective the main benefits of participating in the ESF funded learning
- Whether the benefits of learning differ by demographic group.

- 1.3 *It is important to note, however, that the research investigates such issues as changes in employment levels and progression at work by examining the situation of a group of ESF funded learners before their course (which had an actual or planned completion date between 1st August 2006 and 31st July 2007) with their situation in early 2009. However we cannot definitely conclude that any actual gains have come about as a result of their undertaking the ESF funded course since the gains may have arisen anyway, without their undertaking the learning. To isolate the effects of participation in ESF funded provision on employment would require comparing outcomes among the learners interviewed with a control group of similar individuals not undertaking such provision. It should also be noted that the outcomes as reported by learners may differ from those recorded on Management Information such as the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). For these reasons this study is therefore limited to reporting the perception of the impact of ESF funded provision only.*
- 1.4 Fieldwork was conducted from IFF's telephone centre at its offices in London from 27th January to 22nd March 2009. Sample was drawn from the Further Education and ESF Short Record data collections within the LSC's Individualised Learner Record (ILR). The following eligibility criteria were applied for learners to qualify for selection into the sample:
- Learners must have studied a purely ESF funded course or joint LSC and ESF funded provision with an actual or planned completion date between 1st August 2006 and 31st July 2007;
 - Learners must have been aged between 16 and 55 years old;
 - Learners must have completed 50% or more of their learning aim;
 - Learners must have been unemployed or working 16 hours per week or less, and/or having their fees remitted due to receiving Job Seeker's Allowance or income-based benefits at the start of their course;
 - Learners without telephone numbers on the ILR and those marked as indicating that they did not wish to be contacted for survey purposes were excluded;
- 1.5 At the analysis stage the data was weighted to ensure the achieved sample was representative of the population of ESF learners eligible for the survey (as defined in paragraph 1.4 above). Rim weighting was applied by age, gender, funding (ESF-only v. joint ESF and LSC funded learning) and guided learning hours (30 hours or under, 31-60 hours, 61-135 hours, 136 hours or more, or no information).
- 1.6 The statistical reliability of a survey of 4,856 respondents is high: on a survey result of 50% (the 'worst case' from a reliability point of view) the sampling error at the 95% confidence level is +/- 1.4% i.e. we can be 95% confident that the 'true' result – if all learners had been interviewed rather than a sample – lies within 1.4% of the survey finding. The reliability for sub-groups of learners is shown in Annex A.

Comparisons to a study of mainstream learners from disadvantaged groups

1.7 The Impact of ESF Learning study was designed to build upon a separate but similar study of learners participating in mainstream FE programmes, which excluded ESF funded learning. The *Impact of Learning on Employability* study was conducted from June to August 2007 and involved telephone interviews with 10,000 disadvantaged learners, all of whom:

- Were aged 20 to 55 at the end of August 2005
- Were enrolled on an FE course during the academic year 2005/06 (all completed their course between 1 August 2005 and 31 Jul 2006), and
- Learners must have been unemployed or working 16 hours per week or less, and/or having their fees remitted due to receiving Job Seeker's Allowance or income-based benefits at the start of their course;

1.8 Throughout the report findings are compared with the mainstream study though it should be noted in relation to the discussion at paragraph 1.3 that the mainstream learners are not intended to act as a strict control group for ESF funded learners, and it is also important to note that these are not like for like comparisons, are indicative only and should not be read as making strong direct conclusions between the perceived impacts of ESF and mainstream FE learning.

1.9 Because of the age restrictions on the mainstream study, where results of the ESF learners are compared to mainstream learners we restrict this just to those ESF learners aged 20-55 at the time of starting their course. While we make comparisons throughout the report between Mainstream and ESF learners aged 20-55, it is worth noting that the ESF interviews took place approximately 18 months later than the survey among Mainstream learners and that the two groups have a somewhat different profile, with ESF learners significantly:

- Less likely to have been in work before the course (8% v. 10%)
- More likely to be male (37% v 34%)
- Less likely to have a disability (27% v 36%)
- Less likely to have been on benefits before the course (82% v 88%)

2 What is the profile of the ESF learners interviewed for the survey?

Key messages on the profile of ESF learners interviewed for the survey:

- More than 9 in 10 ESF learners reported that they were not working at the time they started the course (92%). More than two fifths had never worked (42%)
- More than two in five of all learners reported being unemployed for more than a year prior to the course (43%)
- The majority of ESF learners (79%) reported being in receipt of benefits at the time of starting the course

Learner situation immediately before starting the course

- 2.1 Before discussing the reasons learners give as to why they undertook their ESF-funded learning we look briefly at the work and benefit status of learners prior to undertaking their course. The key characteristics of ESF learners at the time of starting the course, discussed more fully throughout the chapter, were that:
- The vast majority of learners reported that they had not been working (92%) with the remainder (8%) working part time (less than 16 hours a week). A large proportion had never worked (42%)
 - A significant proportion reported being unemployed for more than a year (43% of all learners)
 - Most learners said that they were in receipt of benefits (79%), and just over half of those reporting receipt of income or employment related benefits stated that they had been receiving them for over a year (54%)
- 2.2 The proportion working immediately before the course (8% among ESF learners aged 20-55) is similar, though statistically significantly lower, than found among mainstream learners (10%). However, the difference was more marked in regard to ever having worked, with ESF learners more likely never to have had paid employment than mainstream learners (35% v. 30% respectively among those aged 20-55).
- 2.3 A higher proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic ESF learners (53%) had never worked before the course than was found among White British ESF learners (35%).

2.4 Almost half of those not working when they started the course (47%) had been unemployed for more than a year, while a quarter (26%) had been unemployed for more than 5 years; this equates to 43% and 24% of all ESF learners respectively, and shows how the pool of ESF learners contains a high proportion of long-term unemployed. As shown in Table 2.1, ESF & LSC joint-funded learners were more likely to report being long-term unemployed than ESF-only funded learners (the difference being statistically significant at the 95% confidence level).

Table 2.1: Time unemployed before the course			
<i>Base: Those not working immediately before the course</i>	<i>All (4,456)</i>	<i>ESF only funded (2,848)</i>	<i>Joint funded (1,608)</i>
Less than 3 months	13%	15%	9%
3-6 months	14%	15%	12%
7-12 months	15%	15%	15%
More than a year	47%	44%	52%
More than 5 years	26%	24%	30%
Don't know	11%	10%	12%
Column percentages add to more than 100% since the categories 'more than a year' and 'more than 5 years' overlap. All the differences between 'ESF only funded' and 'joint funded' learners are statistically significant except for the unemployed for 7-12 months figure.			

2.5 The majority of ESF learners (79%) were in receipt of benefits at the time they started the course, most commonly Job Seeker's Allowance (30%) and Income Support (25%). Considerably more joint funded learners (87%) were receiving benefits at the time of starting the course than ESF-only funded learners (75%), with the difference particularly marked for Income Support (received by 40% of joint funded learners compared with 19% of ESF-only learners).

Table 2.2: Benefits received immediately before starting the course					
<i>Base: all</i>	<i>All ESF (4,856)</i>	<i>ESF only funded (3,127)</i>	<i>Joint funded (1,729)</i>	<i>ESF 20-55 (3,615)</i>	<i>Mainstream (10,000)</i>
Any benefits	79%	75%	87%	82%	100%
Job Seeker's Allowance	30%	29%	32%	31%	31%
Income Support	25%	19%	40%	31%	53%
Incapacity Benefit / Employment and Support Allowance	10%	10%	11%	12%	17%
Education Maintenance Allowance	9%	11%	5%	-	-
No benefits	20%	24%	12%	17%	-

2.7 Fewer ESF learners were on benefits at the time of starting the course (82% of the comparable age group) than in the study of mainstream learning where all respondents were on benefits at the time of starting their course. There was also a different profile of the benefits being received, with a much lower proportion of ESF than mainstream learners on income support or Incapacity Benefit / Employment and Support Allowance.

2.8 Learners on income or employment related benefits (61% of all learners) were asked how long they had been in receipt of benefits: over half (54%) stated that they have been in receipt of these benefits for a year or more.

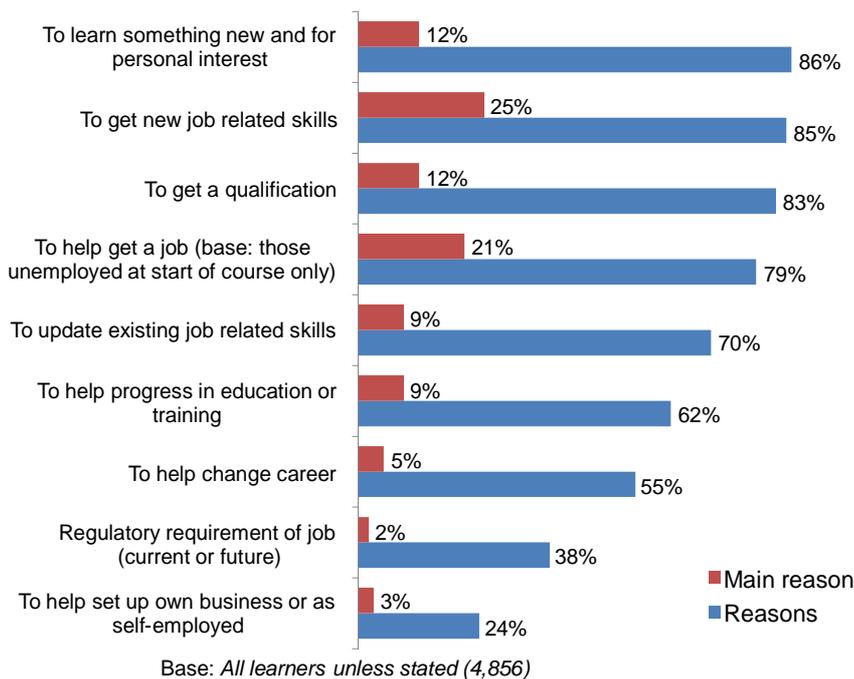
3 Why do learners choose to participate in ESF provision?

Key messages on learners' reasons for undertaking learning:

- Learners tend to have a number of reasons for undertaking ESF courses, combining personal interest / wanting to learn something new (86%), a desire for a (further) qualification (83%) and job-related aspects such as wanting to gain new job skills (85%) and to help get a job (79% of those not in paid work when starting)
- The importance of employment-related reasons for taking the course is emphasised when learners were asked for their *main* reason: gaining new job-related skills (25%) or to help get a job (21% of the unemployed) were the two most common main reasons given

3.1 All learners were read a list of possible benefits from undertaking the course and asked which they had hoped to obtain, and which had been their main reason for taking the course. The most commonly cited reasons are shown below in Figure 2.1.

Figure 3.1: Reasons for taking the course (prompted)



3.2 When asked for their *main* reason, more than two in five mentioned either gaining job-related skills (25%) or to help get a job (21% of the unemployed), indicating a strong employment focus. In comparison personal interest and gaining qualifications, although as likely to be mentioned as reasons for participating in learning, were far less often cited as the key reason (each 12%).

- 3.3 There were some statistically significant differences by sub-group, as follows:
- A lower proportion of female learners took the course to help get a job (76% v. 83% of male learners) but a higher proportion took the course in order to help progress on to further learning or training (65% v. 58% of male learners).
 - A higher proportion of lone parents took the course to help progress in learning or training (69% v. 62% overall).
 - Learners aged 16-19 were more likely than average to take the course to get a qualification (89%, and 20% said this was their main reason).
 - A significantly higher proportion of NEET learners than all learners took the course in order to gain a qualification (87%) or to help get a job (83%),
 - A lower proportion of learners that reported that they had been unemployed for more than a year took the course to get a job compared to those unemployed for less than a year (77% v. 83% respectively).
- 3.4 ESF learners' reasons for taking the course are very similar to those found in the mainstream learner study.

4 What has been the change in reported employment levels since the course?

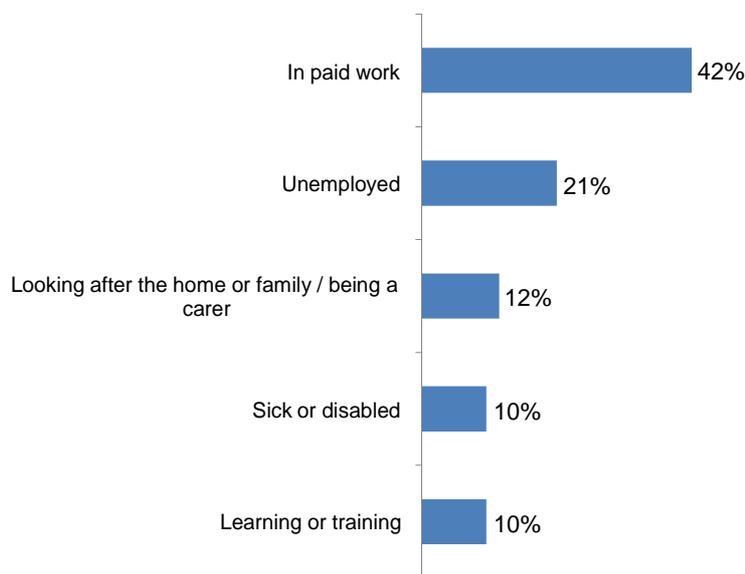
Key messages on the change in employment outcomes reported by learners since their ESF learning:

- In total 56% of learners had been in paid employment since the course, and over two fifths (42%) were working at the time of the interview. This compares with 8% that had been working (fewer than 16 hours a week) immediately before the course
- There was a 34 percentage point net increase in the number of ESF learners in employment compared against the start of the course (a 22 percentage point increase was found in the mainstream study). Most of those in new jobs (i.e. who were unemployed pre the course or who had changed jobs) have secured permanent positions (77%), and half are working 30 hours a week or more
- Of those working both before the course and when interviewed, almost nine in ten had experienced improvements at work, most often increased job satisfaction, and two thirds of these learners felt the course helped them achieve these improvements

What proportion of learners has moved into employment?

- 4.1 Immediately before starting the course, 8% of learners had been working (as discussed in paragraph 1.4 one of the sampling criteria for the survey was that learners must have been unemployed or, if working, working 16 hours per week or less). At the time of the interview, more than two in five of all learners reported being in paid employment (42%), clearly a large net increase.

Figure 4.1: Main learner activity in early 2009



Base: All learners (4,856)

- 4.2 The large increase in the proportion of learners reporting being in paid employment compared with immediately before the course (a net increase of 34 percentage points overall and specifically among those aged 20-55) exceeds that found for the mainstream study where there was a net increase in employment of 22 percentage points.

Table 4.1: Employment status as reported by learners

<i>Base: all</i>	<i>Base size</i>	Employed pre the course	Employed at time of interview	Net change
		%	%	
All ESF learners	4,856	8	42	+34%
ESF-only funded	1,729	9	46	+37% *
Joint ESF & LSC funded	3,127	7	34	+27%
White British	2,853	9	43	+34%
Black and Minority Ethnic learner	1,999	8	41	+33%
Male	1,840	8	43	+36%
Female	3,016	9	42	+33%
Economically inactive (from ILR)	3,990	7	43	+35%
Disability / Long term illness	1,243	3	24	+20%
Lone parents	1,691	8	39	+31%
Ex-offenders	106	6	40	+34%
Born outside the UK	1,393	8	42	+34%
Unemployed <7 months pre course	1,137	-	52	+52% *
Unemployed 7-12 months	657	-	42	+42% *
Unemployed > 1 year	2,172	-	32	+32%
ESF aged 20-55	3,615	8	42	+34%
Mainstream	10,000	10	32	+22%
<i>Percentages marked with a * show those where the net change figure is statistically higher at the 95% confidence level than the all learner figure</i>				

- 4.3 Among ESF-only funded learners and those who had been unemployed for less than a year (particularly those unemployed for 6 months or less) the net increase in employment levels was higher than average, the difference being statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.
- 4.4 Learners that at the time of the interview were working in a new job or as newly self-employed were asked what role the course had played in achieving their employment status. Over half of this group (55%) felt that the course had been vital or helpful in achieving employment.
- 4.5 Of those in a new job or who were newly self-employed, Black and Minority Ethnic learners (61%), those born outside the UK (63%) and those for whom English is not their first language (66%) were the most likely to state that the course had been vital or helpful in achieving this outcome.
- 4.6 There is a large difference between the ESF and Mainstream learners both in the proportion in employment at the time of interview, and the increase compared with immediately before the course. It would appear that these differences are due at least in part to a larger proportion of Mainstream learners at the time of interview caring for family or looking after the home (17% v. 12% of ESF learners) or their being temporarily or long-term / permanently sick or disabled (19% v. 10% of ESF learners).

What type of (new) employment have people gained?

- 4.7 Almost two fifths (39%) of all learners at the time of interview were working in a job that they did not have before starting the course (the vast majority of these had not been in work before the course, with the remainder working for a new employer). There was a spread in terms of how soon this (new) employment was gained, with broadly equal proportions saying they acquired this job during or immediately after the course (22%), within 3 months of the course finishing (21%), within 3-12 months (26%) and then more than a year later (29%).
- 4.8 Those who got their job within three months of the course finishing were more likely to state that the course had been vital or helpful in securing this position (61% v. 51% among those for whom it took more than 3 months).
- 4.9 Most of those in new employment were in permanent jobs (77%), and half were in full time positions working 30 hours or more (52%). Employment has been gained in a wide range of occupations, primarily in personal service roles (20%), elementary occupations (18%) and sales and customer service positions (15%).

Table 4.2: Job role of those in new employment	
<i>Base: Those working at the time of the interview but not in the same job as before the course (1,835)</i>	%
Personal service	20
Elementary occupations	18
Sales and customer service	15
Admin & secretarial	12
Associate professional & technical occupations	9
Skilled trades	9
Plant process and machine operatives	5
Professional occupations	5
T Managers and senior officials	5

Those who had worked since the course but were no longer working

- 4.10 Around a fifth of all learners (17%) had been in paid work since their course finished but were not in employment at the time of the survey. These jobs (the first post-course job was discussed if they had had more than one) were particularly likely to have been in elementary positions (33%) and sales and customer service roles (19%).
- 4.11 Half of these learners who worked after the course but were no longer working described the jobs as having been temporary or seasonal (49%) and in addition around one in ten said it had been a job with a fixed term contract (9%), two fifths (41%) had been in permanent positions.
- 4.12 Half said the decision to leave the job was their own (44%) or was decided in agreement with the employer (6%), though this was much higher among women (61%) than men (41%). Where the decision was not completely theirs, by far the most common reason cited was that the job had been temporary (51%). However, redundancy (20%) and some other form of dismissal (12%) were also common reasons why the job had come to an end where the employer had made the decision.

How many learners have moved off benefits?

- 4.13 At the time of the interview just over half the learners (52%) reported that they were receiving benefits. This represents a reduction of 27 percentage points from the situation immediately before the course (a statistically significant fall at the 95% confidence level, indeed all the changes in the following table are statistically significant at this level).

Table 4.3: Benefits received pre-course and at the time of interview		
<i>Base: all (4,856)</i>	<i>Pre the course</i>	<i>Time of interview</i>
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Any benefits	79	52
Income Support	25	17
Job Seeker's Allowance	30	10
Incapacity Benefit / Employment and Support Allowance	10	7

- 4.14 Reflecting the increased employment levels already discussed, the largest fall is in regard to Jobseekers Allowance (10% from 30%).
- 4.15 ESF-only funded learners were less likely to be on any form of benefits (49%) than joint funded learners (61%). However, fewer ESF-only funded learners were in receipt of benefits pre the course (75% v. 87% of those joint funded), and the decrease in the percentage on benefit is the same for both groups.
- 4.16 The drop in the proportion on benefit among ESF learners (22% among those aged 20-55) is a little lower than that found among mainstream learners (29%), as shown on the following table.

Table 4.4: Benefits at the time of interview – ESF v. Mainstream learners (showing % point change from the time immediately before the course)				
<i>Base:</i>	<i>ESF 20-55 (3,615)</i>	<i>+/-</i>	<i>Mainstream (10,000)</i>	<i>+/-</i>
Any benefits	60%	-22	71%	-29
Job Seeker's Allowance	9%	-23	12%	-19
Incapacity Benefit / Employment and Support Allowance	8%	-4	18%	+1
Income Support	20%	-10	53%	-
<p><i>Note: the differences between figures in the 'ESF 20-55' and 'Mainstream' columns are all statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. Hence for example we are 95% confident both that ESF learners aged 20-55 are less likely to report being on benefit at the time of interview than mainstream learners, and also that the reduction in those on benefit is lower among ESF than among mainstream learners.</i></p>				

What work-based improvements have been gained by those continuing in employment?

- 4.17 Learners that were employed before starting the course and were working at the time of the interview for either the same or a new employer (a base of 283 learners) were read a list of possible improvements and asked whether they had experienced any of these improvements at work since completing the course.
- 4.18 Almost nine in ten (87%) of these learners continuing in employment had experienced at least one of the improvements listed in Figure 4.2. Men (93% v. 84% of women), those doing entry level or level 1 courses (93%) and ESF-only funded learners (89% v. 77% among those joint funded) were particularly positive.
- 4.19 The main improvements among those continuing in employment were increased job satisfaction (69%), better job security (61%) and increased opportunities to train (61%). Just over half indicated that their pay had increased since the course, and two fifths had had a promotion or were in a higher level job.

Figure 4.2: Improvements seen since completing the course in current or new job (prompted)



Base: Those employed before the course and at the time of interview (283)

- 4.20 Those experiencing improvements were asked about the role of the course in bringing these about. A fifth of these learners (19%) felt that the improvements at work had come about directly because of the course; a total of two thirds (66%) felt that it had been a direct result of the course or it helped.
- 4.21 Those on full time courses were more likely to believe the improvements were a direct result of the course (29% v 16% who had done a part time course), as were those doing a course of more than 6 months (28%) and those doing a course at a higher level than they had previously done (30%). Relatively low base sizes mean these results are best treated as indicative only.
- 4.22 A small number of learners were interviewed who were working on a self-employed basis and had been self-employed or in paid employment before starting the course (35 respondents, clearly a low base so some caution is needed). The extent to which these learners felt improvements had taken place were not dissimilar to employees: 30 had experiencing any improvements (81%) - most commonly increased job satisfaction (24) and greater job security and improved longer term earning potential (18). Approximately three quarters of those experiencing improvements felt that the course had been vital (11) or helpful (12) in bringing these about.
- 4.23 Learners that were self-employed at the time of the interview that had not been immediately before starting the course (3% of all learners, a base of 144 respondents) were asked the extent to which the course had helped in their setting up on a self-employed basis. Encouragingly, almost two thirds felt that the course had been vital (34) or helpful (59) in bringing this about.

The perceived role of the course in bringing about employment benefits

- 4.24 We have discussed in this chapter that learners reporting moving into employment since the course, or those continuing in employment or self-employment and experiencing improvements such as better pay and job security, often believe the course was vital or helpful in achieving these outcomes or improvements. Summing these findings, and based on all ESF learners covered in survey, almost a quarter (24%) of all learners reported that since the course they had got a job or become self-employed, or had experienced improvements in their employment or self-employment, where they believed the course was vital or helpful in bringing this about.

5 What impacts did learners report that ESF courses had on their employability skills?

Key messages on the impact of ESF learning on employability skills:

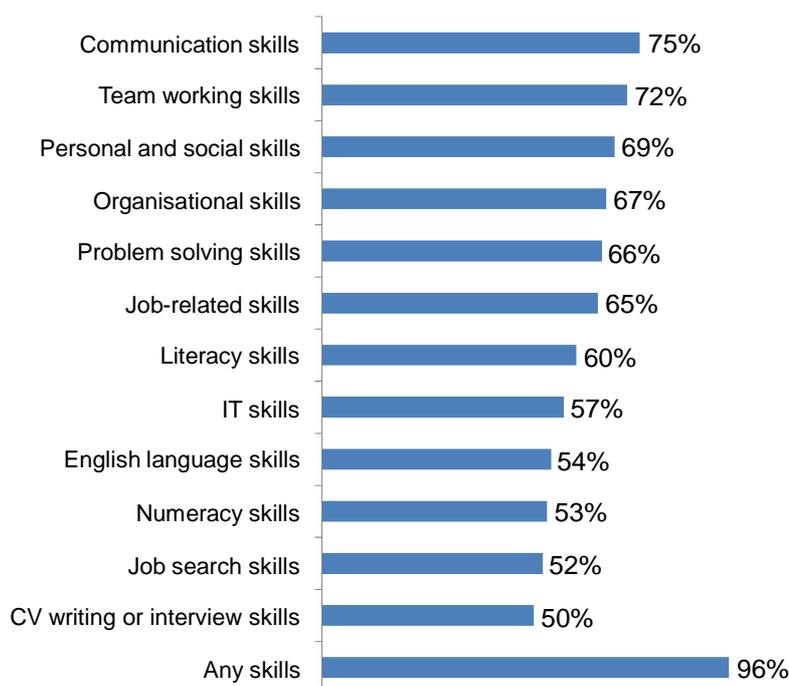
- Almost all learners (96%) felt they had gained employability skills as a result of the course
- Two thirds (66%) of those not working at the time of the interview felt that the course had given them more chance of finding a job in the future
- Two fifths (39%) had undertaken further learning since the course, and a quarter (23%) had achieved a qualification

How many learners have improved their employability skills and what skills have they gained?

5.1 Nearly all ESF learners felt their course has had a positive impact on their employability skills. The vast majority (96%) believe that they have gained one or more work-related skills from the course. Testament to this, seven in ten learners feel their employment and career prospects have improved as a result of the course (71%), and two thirds of those not working at the time of the interview felt they had more chance of finding a job in the future as a result of the course (66%, higher among ESF & LSC co-financed learners than ESF-only funded learners, 70% v. 63% respectively).

5.2 The skills which learners felt they acquired by undertaking the course are listed on the following chart. This was a prompted question, with the list of skills read out to respondents.

Figure 5.1: Skills gained from undertaking the course (prompted)



Base: All learners (4,856)

- 5.3 Although at least half of learners felt they gained each individual skill, the ESF courses appear to have had most success in regard to inter-personal skills: communicating (75%), team working (72%) and personal and social skills (69%). In comparison around half had benefited in regard to skills directly related to gaining work – job search skills (52%) and CV writing or interview skills (50%).
- 5.4 Predictably learners who completed the course were more likely to feel they had gained skills than those who left early (97% v. 90%), and approximately 8-10% fewer early leavers than completers mentioned improving communication, team working, personal and social skills, organisational and problem solving skills.
- 5.5 Black and Minority Ethnic learners were more likely to have gained each of the individual skills listed in Figure 5.1 as a result of the course: in particular English language skills (68% v. 45% of White British learners) and literacy skills (70% v. 53% of White British learners). Similarly young learners aged 16-19 were approximately 10-15% more likely to say their skills in each area improved (the one exception was IT skills, which varied very little by age group).
- 5.6 NEET learners were more likely than average to have gained each skill, with the difference particularly marked for team working skills (82% v. 72% overall), numeracy skills (60% v. 53%) and CV writing or interview skills (62% v. 50%).
- 5.7 In comparison to mainstream learners, ESF learners (aged 20-55) were generally more positive with regard to the skills they had gained as a result of taking the course, particularly in relation to communication, team working, literacy and numeracy, and job search skills.

Table 5.1: Skills gained from undertaking the course ESF learners v. Mainstream		
<i>Base:</i>	<i>ESF 20-55 (3,615)</i>	<i>Mainstream (10,000)</i>
Communication skills	73%	66%
Team working skills	69%	60%
Personal and social skills	68%	70%
Problem solving skills	64%	57%
Job-related skills	63%	64%
Literacy skills	59%	50%
IT skills	56%	55%
Numeracy skills	51%	41%
Job search skills	50%	44%

How many learners have achieved qualifications through ESF funded learning?

- 5.8 Two thirds of learners (66%), and four in five completers (79%), achieved a qualification through their ESF funded learning. Achievement of a qualification is lower overall than among mainstream funded learners (74% v. 67% of ESF learners aged 20-55, a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level). Joint ESF & LSC funded learners were much more likely to achieve a qualification (79%, equivalent to 86% of completers) than those funded through ESF only (61%, 75% of those completing).
- 5.9 Learners that took Level 2 (82%) and Level 3 courses (87%) were the most likely to have achieved a qualification.

How many learners have undertaken further training since the ESF course and what qualifications, if any, have been attained?

- 5.10 Two in five learners (39%) had started more education or training courses since the ESF course discussed with them. This is a little lower than found among mainstream learners (42% v. 39% among ESF learners aged 20-55). ESF & LSC co-financed learners were more likely than ESF-only funded learners to have gone on to take another course (44% v. 37%).

Table 5.2: Participation in education or training courses since the ESF course					
<i>Base:</i>	<i>All ESF (4,856)</i>	<i>ESF-only funded (3,127)</i>	<i>Joint funded (1,729)</i>	<i>ESF 20-55 (3,615)</i>	<i>Mainstream (10,000)</i>
Yes	39%	37%	44%	39%	42%

- 5.11 The following groups were all more likely to have participated in further courses: women (44%), lone parents (44%), Black learners (46%), those born outside the UK (44%) and those who had undertaken level 2 (43%) or level 3 (52%) courses through ESF.
- 5.12 Of the learners that had undertaken further learning, over half had taken one further course (54%) and a quarter had taken two courses (24%), though as many as 6% indicated that they had taken five or more courses since the ESF course discussed with them.
- 5.13 Overall, almost a quarter of all ESF learners had achieved a further qualification by the time of the interview (23%), higher among 16-19 year olds (26%) and women (25%).
- 5.14 Where those acquiring post-ESF qualifications gave responses that enabled an assessment of the level of these subsequent courses (just over half the cases), this was most often a level 2 qualification (54%), followed by level 3 qualifications (24%) and those below level 2 (19%).
- 5.15 A long list of qualification types had been achieved - where a qualification type was mentioned this was most often an NVQ (21% of all those acquiring a qualification). Other qualifications included 'certificates' (9%), City and Guilds (6%), First Aid qualifications (5%), European Computer Driving Licence (5%), GCSEs (5%), 'diplomas' (5%), A levels (4%) and BTEC/BEC (4%), Basic Skills including ESOL (4%) and CLAIT (3%).

6 What do learners feel are the main benefits of their ESF funded course?

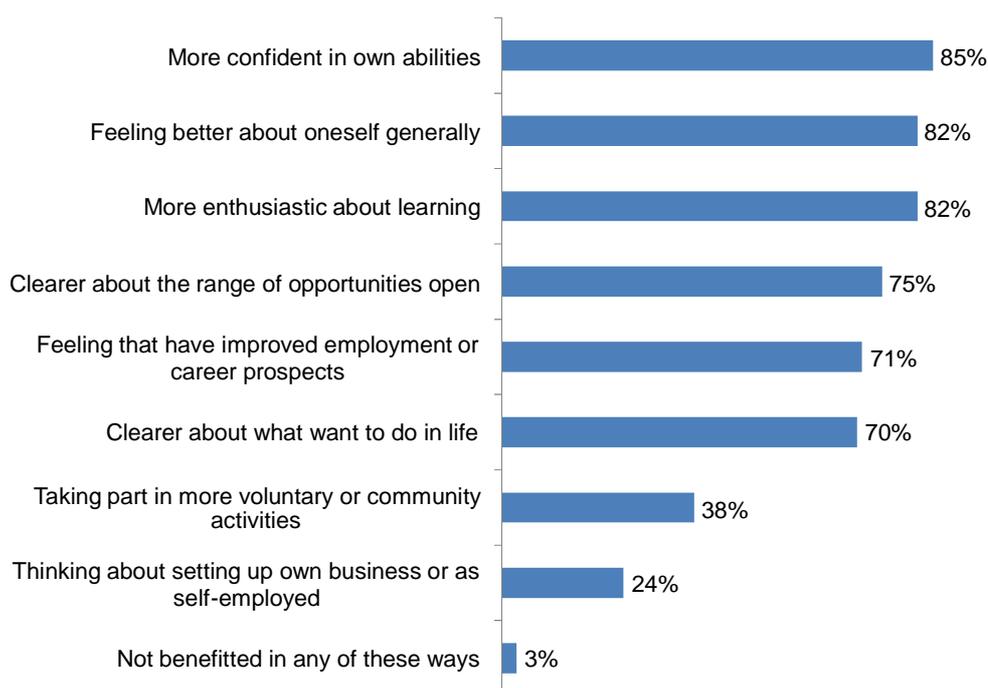
Key messages on the main perceived benefits of ESF funded courses:

- The vast majority of learners (97%) feel that they benefited from the course
- The most common benefits were felt to be increased confidence in their abilities (85%), feeling better about themselves (82%), having more enthusiasm for learning (82%) and being clearer about the range of options open to them (75%)
- Female learners and ethnic minority workers were more likely to feel that they have benefited from the course

Perceived benefits of the ESF course

6.1 All learners were asked what benefits they felt they had experienced as a result of going on the course. This was a prompted question with the list of potential benefits (shown in Figure 6.1) read out to them.

Figure 6.1 Perceived benefits of going on the course (prompted)



Base: All learners (4,856)

6.2 Encouragingly, almost all learners (97%) had experienced at least one of these benefits as a result of going on the course. Learners were particularly likely to feel they had gained in confidence, that they felt better about themselves and were more enthusiastic about learning. Many also felt more clear about the opportunities open to them as well as what they wanted to do in their life.

6.3 The benefits perceived by key target groups; Black and Minority Ethnic learners, people with disabilities, women, NEET and ex-offenders are shown below in table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Perceived benefits of going on the course – key learner groups

	All learners	Disability	Black and Minority Ethnic	Women	NEET	Ex offenders
Base:	(4,856)	(1,243)	(1,999)	(3,016)	(645)	(106)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
More confident about abilities	85	76	87	86	87	76
Feeling better about oneself generally	82	72	87	84	82	71
More enthusiastic about learning	82	79	87	85	82	80
Clearer about the range of opportunities open	75	65	76	76	77	68
Feeling have improved employment or career prospects	71	60	74	71	68	68
Clearer about what want to do in life	70	59	79	72	70	66
Taking part in more voluntary and community activities	38	39	44	41	34	41
Think about setting up own business or as self-employed	24	18	34	21	28	32
Not benefited in any of these ways	3	5	2	3	3	8

6.4 Women were significantly more likely than men to feel they benefited from the course in a number of areas, particularly in terms of feeling better about themselves generally (84% v. 79% of male learners), being clearer about what they want to do in their lives (72% v. 67%), becoming more enthusiastic about learning (85% v. 78%) and taking part in more voluntary or community activities (41% v. 34%).

6.5 Similarly, Black and Minority Ethnic learners were significantly more likely than White British learners to feel the course had brought benefits in terms of: being more enthusiastic about learning (87% v. 79%), feeling better about oneself generally (87% v. 79%), being clearer about what to do in life (79% v. 63%) and being interested in setting up their own business or as self-employed (34% v. 17%).

- 6.6 Lone parents were also positive that they had benefited from the course (98% perceived any benefits), and were significantly more likely than learners in general to feel that they were clearer about what they wanted to do in life as a result of the course (74% v. 70% overall) and to feel more enthusiastic about further learning or training (87% v. 82% overall).
- 6.7 There were groups of learners that were significantly less likely than average to perceive any of these benefits as a result of the course – though it should be noted that still the vast majority felt benefits had taken place:
- Learners who were ex-offenders - 8% did not feel any of these benefits had occurred, although this group were more likely than average to be thinking about setting up their own business or as self-employed (32% v. 24% overall).
 - Learners with a disability or long-term illness were consistently less likely to feel that each of these benefits had occurred, notably feeling that they have improved their employment or career prospects (60% v. 71% overall)
 - Learners in the oldest age band of 40-59 - a lower proportion felt they had benefited in each category.
 - Learners not currently in work or learning – 65% (v. 71% overall) feel that they have improved their employment or career prospects.
 - Non-completers – 8% perceived no benefits (v. 2% of those that did complete). Non-completers are examined in more detail in chapter 6.
 - Learners who undertook shorter courses – 6% of those that took a course lasting up to 6 weeks perceived no benefits compared with 1% among those whose course was 6 months or longer.

7 What are the reasons for non-completion and does non-completion affect the perceived impacts and benefits of ESF learning?

Key messages on the reasons for and perceived impact of non-completion:

- 16% of learners left the course early without completing, similar to the proportion found on the study of Mainstream learners (14%)
- The most common reasons for leaving early were not related to the course itself and included starting a job (26%), personal / family circumstances (18%) and ill health (14%)
- Some reasons did relate to the course such as the course not being what they expected (12%) or it being too hard (4%) or easy (2%), suggesting more / better prior information and advice would serve to reduce non-completion
- Early leavers were less likely than completers to report being in work or learning at the time of the interview, and perceive fewer benefits as a result of the course

What are the characteristics of those not completing their ESF learning?

7.1 It is important to note that part of the selection criteria for inclusion in the survey was that learners had to have completed at least 50% of their learning aim, hence the survey result will under-represent the proportion of those *starting* ESF funded learning that fail to complete their course. Noting this caveat, around one sixth (16%) of our sample did not complete the ESF course discussed with them. Non-completion rates by sub-group are shown below in table 7.1, with the base size for each sub-group is shown in brackets.

ESF & LSC Co-financed (1,729)	8%	Economically inactive (3,990)	17%
ESF-only financed (3,127)	19%	<i>Course level from ILR (where provided):</i>	
		Level 1 and entry (1,464)	17%
Male (1,840)	18%	Level 2 (1,232)	11%
Female (3,016)	14%	Level 3 (495)	7%
		Level 4+ (34)	4%
16-19 (1,060)	20%	<i>Course length:</i>	
20-24 (548)	13%	Less than 1 week (372)	10%
25-39 (1,795)	14%	2-6 weeks (630)	27%
40-59 (1,453)	16%	2-6 months (1,648)	18%
		6-12 months (1,461)	9%
Disability / long term illness (1,243)	17%	1 year + (455)	9%
Lone parent (1,691)	13%	<i>Guided learning hours:</i>	
Served a jail sentence pre-course (106)	28%	Less than 30 hours (2,892)	18%
Prior qualifications (4,117)	15%	31-60 hours (429)	12%
No prior qualifications (739)	22%	61-135 hours (413)	6%
NEET (645)	24%	136 hours + (804)	5%

7.2 Among the following groups of learners non-completion levels were (at least two percentage points) higher than average:

- ESF-only financed (19%)
- Male (18%)
- Aged 16-19 (20%)
- NEET (24%)
- Ex-offenders (28%)

And/or had:

- No prior qualifications (22%)

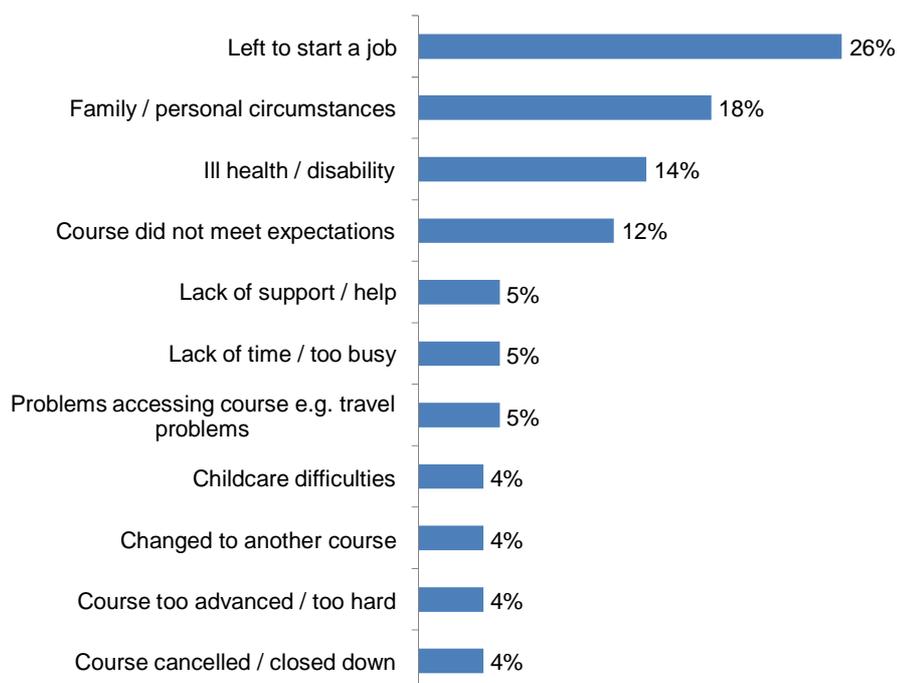
And/or took a course that was:

- Between 2-6 weeks (27%)
- Had fewer than 30 guided learning hours (18%)

What are the reasons for non-completion?

7.3 Learners that left their course without completing were asked to give their reasons for leaving early. The main responses (given by at least 4%) to this spontaneous question are shown in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1: Reasons for not completing the course (spontaneous)



Base: Those that left the course early (714)

- 7.4 The most common reason for leaving a course early, given by around one in four, was starting a job. It is encouraging that at the time of interview, 71% of these learners were still in employment. Personal circumstances changing (18%) and ill health (14%) were also quite common reasons - both indicate reasons outside of the learners' or providers' ability to influence. However, 12% left early because the course did not meet their expectations, 4% because the course was too hard and 2% because it was easier than they expected.
- 7.5 Male early leavers were particularly likely to attribute this to starting a job (35% v. 17% of female learners), while women were more likely to say the reason for leaving early was family reasons or personal circumstances (25% v. 11% of male learners).
- 7.6 Other noticeable demographic variations in reasons for leaving early include:
- Lone parents were considerably less likely than average to have left the course early in order to start a job (15% v. 26% overall) and considerably more likely to have left due to family or personal circumstance (30% v. 18% overall) and/or childcare difficulties (10% v. 4% overall).
 - Those with a disability or long term illness were more likely to cite health as a reason for leaving early (32%) and less likely to state that they did so to start a job (18%)
 - Those on fee remittance due to receipt of Job Seeker's Allowance leaving early were particularly likely to have done so because they started a job (36%), while those on fee remittance due to income support were particularly likely to cite ill health (28%)
 - ESF-only funded learners were far more likely than ESF and LSC co-financed learners to state that they left the course early because it did not meet their expectations (14% v. 6%)
 - Early leavers who were ex-offenders (a relatively low base of 28 learners) were considerably more likely to leave the course early because it did not meet their expectations (23%), putting this factor on a par with getting a job (26%) and family / personal circumstances (24%).
- 7.7 Mainstream learners were less likely than ESF learners to have left early to start a job (17% v. 25% of ESF learners aged 20-55) and more likely to have left due to other 'uncontrollable' circumstances such as family or personal reasons (25% v. 19% of ESF learners aged 20-55) or ill health or disability (23% v. 15% of ESF learners aged 20-55). These differences are all statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Are there differences in outcomes and perceived benefits between completers and non-completers?

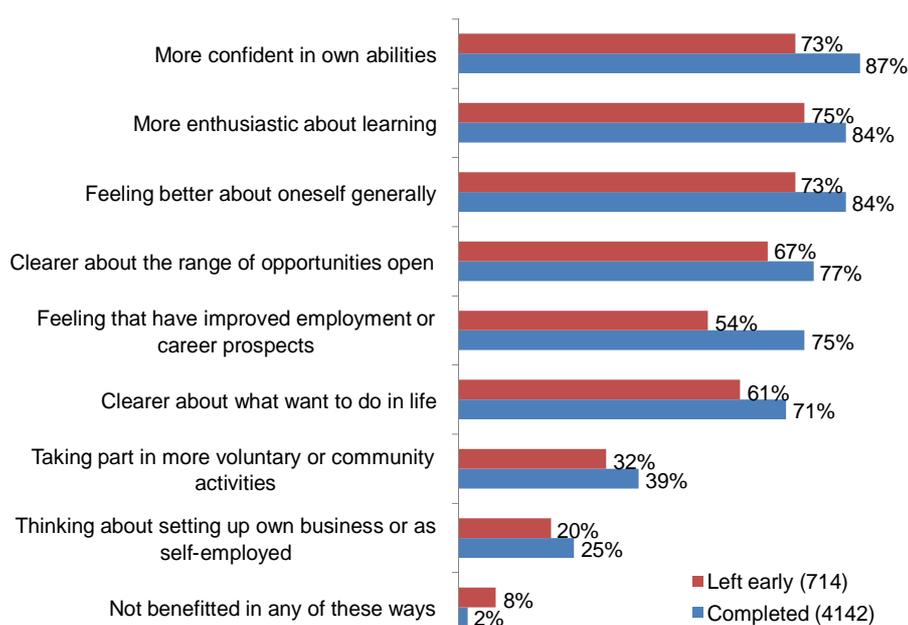
- 7.8 Overall 8% of ESF learners reported that they were working prior to the course compared with 42% reporting that they were working at the time of the interview, a net increase of 34 percentage points. This net percentage increase was exactly the same between early leavers and completers. However, more completers had gone on to further learning or training (11% v 3% among early leavers), hence non-completers are more likely at the time of interview to be neither working or in learning or training (56% v 47% among completers).

Table 7.2: Prior and current work / learning status				
	Prior to course	At time of interview		
Row percentages	In work	In work	Learning or training	Neither in work nor learning or training
All ESF learners	8%	42%	10%	48%
Completers	9%	43%	11%	47%
Early leavers	7%	41%	3%	56%

7.9 There were no significant differences between early leavers and completers in terms of job role, time taken to gain employment and permanence of job. This suggests that the crucial difference in this regard between early leavers and completers is the proportion continuing in to further learning or training.

7.10 As well as non-completers being less likely to have achieved positive outcomes, particularly in regard to further learning, early leavers are less likely to believe that they benefited from their learning activity. This is shown below in Figure 7.2 which shows differences in perceived benefits by completion status on this prompted question.

Figure 7.2: Perceived benefits of going on the course by completion status (prompted)



Base: All learners (4,856)

7.11 For each measure assessed, learners that left the course early were less inclined to state that the course had benefited them. Overall 8% of early leavers stated that they had not benefited in any of these ways listed compared with 2% among completers – in particular they were much less likely to state that the course had improved their job or career prospects.

7.12 In spite of these differences between completers and early leavers, it does remain the case that the vast majority (over 9 in 10) of early leavers did perceive that they had benefited in any of these ways (92%).

8 How does ESF learning benefit individual target groups?

Key messages on the benefits of ESF learning by target group:

- All key groups reported improved employment outcomes and experienced benefits as a result of the ESF course
- The reported impacts and benefits have been particularly marked for Black and Minority Ethnic learners
- Learners with a disability or long term illness were less likely than the other key target groups to report having moved into employment but still 24% were doing paid work at the time of the interview compared with 3% before the course, a net increase of 20 percentage points

8.1 In this chapter we look at differences in outcomes and reported benefits between ESF key target groups: women, lone parents, ex-offenders, those with a disability or long term illness, NEETs and Black and Ethnic Minority learners. The economically inactive are also a key target group, but results for this group have not been shown simply because they account for well over four in five ESF learners (84%) and hence results for this group are very close to the overall findings.

Women (of whom 3,016 were interviewed for the survey):

8.2 Overview

42% of women reported being in work at the time of the interview – an increase of 33 percentage points compared with before the course

57% felt that the course was vital or helpful in achieving or changing employment.

- Female learners were significantly more likely than male learners to report being on benefits at the time of interview (62% v. 40% of male learners), and the fall in the proportion on benefit is significantly lower among women (-18 percentage points) than men (- 37 percentage points)
- Women were significantly more positive about the impact of the course e.g.
 - Feeling better about themselves generally (84% v. 79% among men)
 - Clearer about what to do in the future (72% v. 67% among men)
 - More enthusiastic about future learning (85% v. 78% among men), indeed almost half (48%) think further learning in the next two years very likely compared with two in five (39%) of men

Lone parents (of whom 1,691 were interviewed for the survey):

8.3 Overview

39% of lone parents reported being in work at the time of the interview – an increase of 31 percentage points compared with before the course

58% felt that the course was vital or helpful in achieving or changing employment.

- Lone parents were significantly more likely than average to report that they were receiving benefits at the time of the interview (79%). This is a fall from the percentage on benefit pre the course (89%), but the drop is lower than average. Over half (54%) of lone parents were receiving Child Benefit and a third (33%) Child Tax Credit (significantly higher than the 23% and 14% respectively among all learners), which pushes the 'on benefit' figure up for this cohort, however lone parents were also more likely to be in receipt of Income support (30% v. 17% overall)
- Lone parents were significantly more likely than average to feel they have more chance of finding a job in the future (70% of those not working at the time of interview)
- Lone parents were significantly more likely than average to have undertaken further learning or training since the course (44% v. 39% among all learners)

Ex-offenders (of whom 106 were interviewed for the survey):

8.4 Overview

40% of ex-offenders reported being in work at the time of the interview – an increase of 34 percentage points compared with before the course

57% felt that the course was vital or helpful in achieving or changing employment.

- Ex-offenders were significantly less likely to have completed the ESF course (72% v. 84% among all learners)
- As likely as learners generally to have moved into employment (6% were employed before the course, 40% at the time of interview, a net increase of 34%)

Learners with a disability or long-term illness (of whom 1,243 were interviewed for the survey):

8.5 Overview

24% of learners with a disability or long term illness reported being in work at the time of the interview – an increase of 20 percentage points compared with before the course

54% felt that the course was vital or helpful in achieving or changing employment.

- Learners with a disability or long term illness were significantly less likely than average to report having entered employment: 24% were doing paid work at the time of the interview compared with 3% before the course, a net increase of 20 percentage points, lower than the 34 percentage point increase found overall
- Significantly more likely to report being on benefits at the time of interview (67% v. 52% overall) – although not surprisingly a large proportion (23% v. 7% overall) were receiving Incapacity Benefit / Employment and Support Allowance

Black and Minority Ethnic learners (of whom 1,999 were interviewed for the survey):

8.6 Overview

41% of Black and Minority Ethnic learners were in work at the time of the interview – an increase of 33 percentage points

61% felt that the course was vital or helpful in achieving or changing employment.

- Black and Minority Ethnic learners were more likely than learners overall to have gained a range of skills as a result of the course particularly so among Black learners (as outlined in chapter 5)
- Far more likely than average to think further learning is very likely in the next two years (54% v. 38% among White British learners), the figure being particularly high among Black learners (64%)

NEET learners (of whom 645 were interviewed for the study):

8.7 Overview

40% of NEET learners were in work at the time of the interview – an increase of 34 percentage points

58% felt that the course was vital or helpful in achieving or changing employment.

- NEET learners were less likely to have completed the course (24% left early, significantly higher than the 16% average among all learners)
- Those not working at the time of the interview were significantly less likely to feel that they have a better chance of finding a job as a result of the course (60% v. 66% overall)
- Much more likely to feel that they have gained a range of skills as a result of the course

9 What barriers to finding employment and progressing at work do ESF learners face?

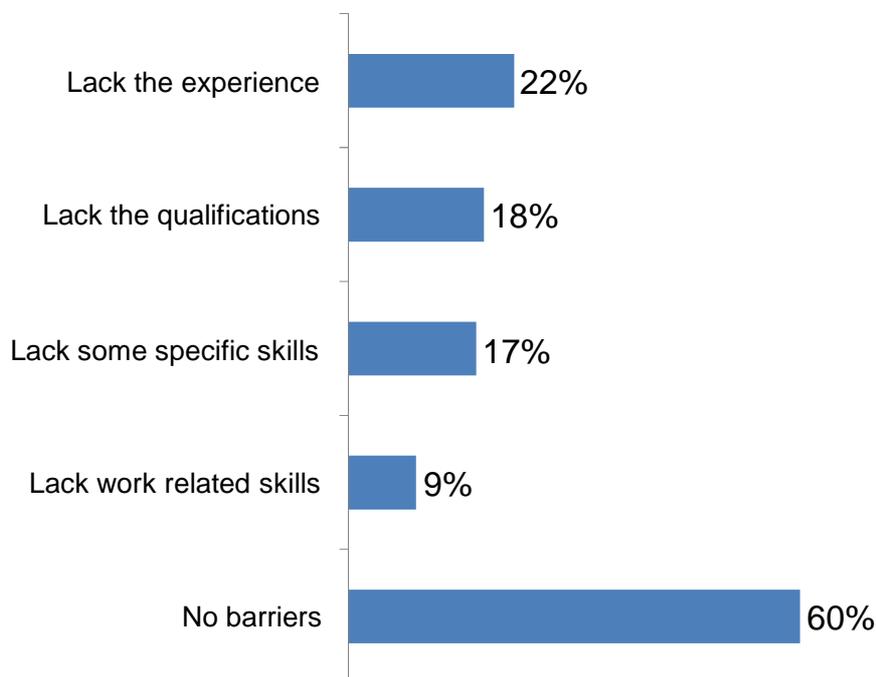
Key messages regarding barriers to work faced by learners:

- Three fifths of learners in work felt that they face no barriers to progressing in their job. However, around one in five recognised that they needed to improve their qualifications (18%) and/or skills (17%) to progress at work
- Among those looking for work, nearly all felt they faced barriers to getting work (91%). While these were usually felt to be 'external' such as a lack of appropriate jobs (67%) and / or simply a lack of jobs where they live (59%), many recognised a lack of qualifications (40%) and a lack of skills (26%) indicating a recognition for continued learning and training

What barriers do learners in work face?

- 9.1 A majority of learners in work felt that they faced no barriers to progression in their job (60%). The most commonly cited barriers are shown in Figure 9.1 – these were the barriers with which learners were prompted, others raised spontaneously included such factors as age, confidence / self esteem, and family commitments (each mentioned by 1% of those in work).

Figure 9.1: Barriers to progression at work (prompted)



Base: Those working at the time of the interview (2,013)

- 9.2 Around one in five feel they lack qualifications to progress (18%) and a similar proportion feel they lack specific skills (17%). Those lacking skills most often mentioned transferable skills such as IT, communication, problem solving and team working.
- 9.3 White British learners were more likely to feel that they faced no barriers (65%) than Black and Minority Ethnic learners (52%).

9.4 Others groups that were *more* likely to perceive barriers to progression at work were:

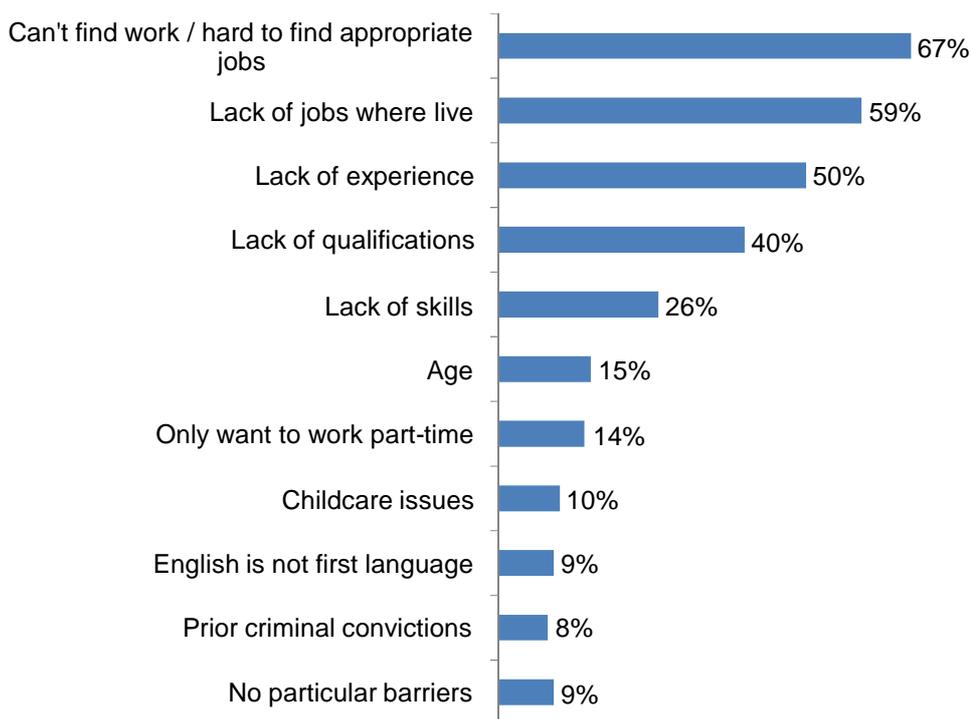
- Learners with a disability – 50% perceive any barriers
- Learners for whom English is not a first language – 52%
- Learners born outside the UK – 49%
- Learners who are ex-offenders – 52%

9.5 Interestingly, learners that had been NEET pre the course who were now working were among the least likely to perceive any barriers to progressing at work (31%).

What barriers do those not in work face to getting a job?

9.6 Only around one in ten learners that were seeking work at the time of the interview felt that they faced no barriers to finding work (9%). The two most commonly cited barriers are not being able to find work / appropriate jobs (67%) and a perceived lack of jobs where learners lived (59%) – both clearly relate to external factors and the local labour market, rather than learners' capacity and ability for work.

Figure 9.2: Barriers to entering work



Base: Those unemployed and seeking work (994)

9.7 A lack of qualifications and a lack of skills are frequent barriers to finding work (40% and 26% respectively), and indicate that many of those seeking work appreciate that they need further training to help them in the labour market. Learners that did not complete their ESF course were more likely to state that a lack of qualifications was a barrier to finding work (51%).

- 9.8 Barriers differ somewhat by sub-group. Male learners seeking work were more likely than women to cite not being able to find work / appropriate jobs, and a perceived lack of jobs where they lived (70% & 62% v. 63% & 55% respectively among women).
- 9.9 Women on the other hand were far more likely than men to face the difficulty of wanting to work part time (25% v 7% of men) and / or childcare issues (20% v 3% of men), as were lone parents (28% and 31% respectively).
- 9.10 NEET learners were considerably more likely to state that there were issues with being able to find work / appropriate jobs – almost four fifths of the NEET group that are currently out of work, felt that this was a barrier to moving in to employment (compared with two thirds overall)
- 9.11 Age is a barrier for around one in six (15%) though this affects almost two in five (37%) of those aged 40–59.

10 Conclusion

10.1 The survey has shown very positive changes in terms of ESF learners reporting moving into work and coming off benefit since their ESF course. In particular:

- More than two fifths (42%) were working at the time of the interview, compared with 8% that reported being in work immediately before the course, a net increase of 34 percentage points
- Whereas 79% reported receiving benefits immediately before the course, at the time of the interview just over half (52%) reported that they were receiving benefits, a net decrease of 27 percentage points

10.2 In addition, there are encouraging findings relating to the nature of employment gained, and the role learners believe the ESF course played:

- Most of those in new jobs (i.e. who were unemployed pre the course or who had now changed job) report having secured permanent positions (77%), and half are working 30 hours a week or more
- Among learners that at the time of the interview were working in a new job or were newly self-employed, more than half (55%) felt that the course had been vital or helpful in their achieving this new position.
- Among all the ESF interviewed, almost a quarter (24%) reported that since the course they had got a job or become self-employed, or had experienced improvements in their employment or self-employment, where they believed the course was vital or helpful in bringing this about.

A note regarding interpretation of the findings

10.3 The research investigates issues such as changes in employment levels and progression at work by examining the situation of a group of ESF funded learners before their course (which had an actual or planned completion date between 1st August 2006 and 31st July 2007) with their situation in early 2009. *We cannot definitely conclude that any actual gains have come about as a result of their undertaking the ESF funded course since the gains may have arisen anyway, without their undertaking the learning.* To isolate the effects of participation in ESF funded provision on employment would require comparing outcomes among the learners interviewed with a control group of similar individuals not undertaking such provision. It should also be noted that the outcomes as reported by learners may differ from those recorded on Management Information such as the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). *For these reasons this study is therefore limited to reporting the perception of the impact of ESF funded provision only.*

10.4 Although in some places in the report findings have been compared with a study of learners participating in mainstream FE programmes (see paragraph 1.7), it should be noted that the mainstream learners are *not* intended to act as a strict control group for ESF funded learners, these are *not* like for like comparisons, are indicative only and should not be read as making strong direct conclusions between the perceived impacts of ESF and mainstream FE learning.

Annex A: Sample profile of learners

Demographics / Profile of Learners

	ESF Study (4,856 interviews)				Mainstream FE (10,000 interviews)
	Number of interviews	Statistical confidence at the 95% level (see footnote)	Unweighted %	Weighted %	%
GENDER					
Male	1,840	+/- 2.3%	38	42	34
Female	3,016	+/- 1.8%	62	58	66
AGE					
16-19	1,060	+/- 3.0%	22	23	<i>Different banding used</i> (20-24) 12 (25-34) 32 (35-44) 33 (45-55) 20 (55+) 3
20-24	548	+/- 4.2%	11	15	
25-39	1,795	+/- 2.3%	37	37	
40-59	1,453	+/- 2.6%	30	25	
ETHNICITY					
White - British	2,853	+/- 1.8%	59	60	64
White - Irish	48	+/- 14.1%	1	1	1
White - Other	229	+/- 6.5%	5	5	4
Black or Black British - Caribbean	277	+/- 5.9%	6	5	6
Black or Black British - African	416	+/- 4.8%	9	8	7
Black or Black British – Other	84	+/- 10.7%	2	2	1
Asian or Asian British - Indian	185	+/- 7.2%	4	4	3
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	157	+/- 7.8%	3	3	3
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	100	+/- 9.8%	2	2	1
Chinese	23	+/- 20.4%	*	*	1
Other ethnic background	303	+/- 5.6%	6	6	4
Mixed	177	+/- 7.4%	4	4	2
Refused	4	+/- 49%	*	*	1

Statistical confidence is shown at the 95% confidence level, on a survey result of 50%

	ESF Study (4,856 interviews)				Mainstream FE (10,000 interviews)
	Number of interviews	Statistical confidence at the 95% level (see footnote)	Unweighted %	Weighted %	%
DISABILITY					
Yes	1,243	+/- 2.8%	26	25	36
No	3,613	+/- 1.6%	74	75	63
DEPENDENT CHILDREN					
Yes	1,975	+/- 2.2%	41	39	50
No	2,881	+/- 1.8%	59	61	50
REGION					
Unknown	0	-	0	0	9
East of England	254	+/- 6.1%	5	6	5
East Midlands	385	+/- 5.0%	8	8	5
Greater London	1,799	+/- 2.3%	37	35	26
North East	460	+/- 4.6%	10	10	5
North West	364	+/- 5.1%	7	8	16
South East	393	+/- 4.9%	8	8	6
South West	328	+/- 5.4%	7	7	6
West Midlands	431	+/- 4.7%	9	9	14
Yorkshire & the Humber	442	+/- 4.7%	9	9	8
BENEFITS PRE-COURSE					
None	915	+/- 3.2%	19	20	12
Job Seeker's Allowance Incapacity Benefit / Employment and Support Allowance	1,382	+/- 2.6%	28	30	31
Income Support	518	+/- 4.3%	11	10	7
	1,338	+/- 2.7%	28	25	50
GUIDED LEARNING HOURS					
Not supplied on sample	318	+/- 5.5%	7	2	11
< 30 hours	2,892	+/- 1.8%	60	77	27
30.1-60 hours	429	+/- 4.7%	9	5	21
60.1-135 hours	413	+/- 4.8%	9	6	19
135.1+ hours	804	+/- 3.5%	17	10	23

Statistical confidence is shown at the 95% confidence level, on a survey result of 50%

Learning and Skills Council
National Office

Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT
T 0845 019 4170
F 024 7682 3675
www.lsc.gov.uk

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