

Assessing the Needs of Disadvantaged Learners and Potential Learners

February 2010

Of interest to stakeholders interested in
Learner Support

Assessing the Needs of Disadvantaged Learners and Potential Learners

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Published by:

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978 1 85184 000 0

Printed in Great Britain

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Acknowledgements

The research team would like to thank David Windle and Delphine Tatot from the Learner Support Directorate and Charlotte Beckford from the Learning and Skills Council for their advice throughout the report.

The Institute for Employment Studies would like to thank Gill Brown, Richard James and Karen Patient for their editorial support, and Harriet Fearn, Sussana Baldwin, Helen Stevens and Paul Sissons for their support in the qualitative interviews. We would also like to acknowledge all the stakeholders who contributed to the early consultation.

NIACE would like to thank all the providers who attended the consultation events and NUS representatives who met with us after the consultation. We are particularly grateful to those who organised and hosted the focus groups. We would also like to thank all of the focus group attendees who gave up their time to participate.

A full list of the stakeholders who provided their time and support is reported in Appendix F.

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Executive Summary

The Institute for Employment Studies (IES), together with the National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE) and Ipsos MORI, were commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to undertake a project that explored the needs of disadvantaged learners and non-learners and specifically the (potential) role of learner support in promoting and enabling engagement in education and training among these groups.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project was to produce a series of recommendations as to how the Learner Support Directorate (LSD) within the LSC can more effectively encourage participation and success within education and training among 'disadvantaged' learners and potential learners. This gave rise to a series of objectives, which may be summarised as follows:

- To identify the motivations and barriers to participating in education and training, and assess the relevance of transport, childcare and other financial issues in restricting participation among different potentially disadvantaged groups.
- To understand the importance of Learner Support and other Further Education enablers in encouraging participation and retention among various disadvantaged groups, including views on financial incentives and willingness to fund education and training through Further Education loans.
- To review the experiences of disadvantaged learners and early leavers from Further Education, including the barriers encountered during their study; their experiences of learner support and its impact.
- To develop a segmentation typology of the disadvantaged learners and non-learners based on their attitudes and barriers to participating in education and

training, and review the extent to which various learner support enablers would encourage each of the segments to participate in Further Education (FE).

Methodology

The study was based on a mixed-methods approach. An initial scoping phase included a literature scan and interviews with a range of stakeholders involved in further education and training, including learner support: this phase (conducted between February and March 2008) informed the development of the survey questionnaire. The scoping phase was followed by a mainstage survey and analysis phase (April 2008 to December 2008). During this phase, a telephone survey of 5,000 'disadvantaged' learners, early leavers, and non-learners was designed and implemented, and the results were analysed. Disadvantaged was defined by the following criteria:

- among learners and early leavers – this group was based on people who had enrolled on a FE course during the 2007-08 academic year and were either still on the course or had left it before completing. In addition they had to fulfil at least one of the following criteria according to the Individualised Learner Record (ILR): be qualified at Level 2 or below; be in receipt of Learner Support; have a disability or learning difficulty; have had their fees waived; or, be otherwise defined as being from a disadvantaged group according to the ILR, for example be from an area of high deprivation, an ex-offender, or be from a travelling community.
- among non-learners – this group was based on people not currently in learning, who were qualified to below Level 2, or whose highest qualification was at Level 2 but their household (or parental income, among those aged 16 to 18) was below £30,000 for couples or £20,000 for individuals.

The survey was followed in December 2008 by a series of consultation events with learner support managers and other relevant stakeholders from within FE and training providers, about their views on Learner Support and how it could be improved. The final stage of the project, taking place between January and March 2009, was qualitative research with learners and non-learners, exploring some of the issues raised in the survey in more detail. This included nine focus groups and semi-structured interviews with 45 non-learners and early leavers.

Key Findings

Attitudes and barriers towards Further Education

It is possible to divide the learning disadvantaged population into eleven 'segments' based around attitudes and barriers towards education and training

- Around 27 per cent of the learning disadvantaged population are within five segments that can be described as having positive attitudes towards learning, and who may be receptive to learner support 'enablers'. These groups have been defined as:
 - **Could help with work** (ten per cent of the learning disadvantaged population) - predominantly in employment and see education and training as a route to job or career advancement;
 - **Can't afford it** (five per cent) - disproportionately interested in learning in next three years and see the benefits. Worry that education and training is expensive but could be encouraged to engage through financial or wider learner support;
 - **Could be fun** (five per cent) - mainly female and would be motivated to engage in learning for personal and social reasons (including a desire to improve their literacy and numeracy).
 - **Can't leave the kids** (four per cent) - predominately women aged between 19 and 49. This group comprises of parents with dependent children and childcare support is therefore most likely to be effective in supporting this group.
 - **Can't get there** (four per cent) - less likely to be in employment and more likely to be on a low income than the average learning disadvantaged individual. Highlighted transport and travel concerns. Could be encouraged to engage through support with transport, fees and other costs of study.
- There are five segments that are adverse to learning but could potentially be encouraged to think more positively about learning through wider LSC and partner marketing and publicity activities. These groups make up around 41 per cent of the learner disadvantaged population and comprise of:
 - **Can't find the time** (21 per cent) - disproportionately more likely to either be in employment and/ or looking after the family. Less encouraged than the average by financial or learner support enablers.

- **Learning difficulty, disability or health constraint** (nine per cent)- tend to be older than the average and are disproportionately more likely to report a learning difficulty, disability or health problem that would reduce their ability to participate. More likely than the average to be economically inactive and do not see benefits in learning.
- **Can't be bothered** (five per cent) - lack interest in engagement and are unlikely to see any benefits. A high proportion (two-fifths) are between 50 and 70 years old.
- **Won't help me** (four per cent) - a high proportion of this group are employed but do not believe that education and training would offer them job or career advancement.
- **Couldn't keep up / Too old to learn** (three per cent) - this group has a disproportionate number of older people; people who are not in employment; are on low incomes, or have no formal qualifications.
- The remainder of the learning disadvantaged population (31 per cent) are in a group labelled '**Whatever**'. It contains a disproportionate number of young people but is not otherwise defined in terms of any particular motivation or barrier to learning.

The potential demand for Further Education is high among 'learning disadvantaged' people, especially among young people

- The potential demand for Further Education and learner support is very high among 'learning disadvantaged' people. The majority of disadvantaged young people (over 95 per cent) and adults (62 per cent) are either in education or training or plan in the next three years to participate in education or training that will lead to a qualification.
- Interest in education and training declines with age and is linked to life events such as having children and/or engaging in employment (hence the interest in engagement from the 'Could help with work' and 'Can't leave the kids' segments). Reflecting this, the work related benefits of education and training are widely accepted, while the personal, developmental and social benefits of learning are also recognised - especially as a person gets older.

The main reasons for non-participation are not related to finance but to time constraints, structural issues and lack of interest

- There are numerous reasons for not participating in education or training. Some of the most frequently cited barriers to engagement in education and training related to having other time commitments (work or family). Structural issues

(eg courses not being available) and the belief that it was not necessary for finding or progressing in employment were also apparent.

Resource constraints (finance, transport and childcare) are important obstacles for a minority

- Financial barriers were reported by a minority of the population (around 20 per cent of adults and 12 per cent of young people) – making this the second most common barrier to participation, after lack of time. These mainly revolve around the direct costs of study but other factors, such as having to pay tuition fees, reduce or give up work or losing state benefits, were also mentioned.
- Transport and travel issues were reported by around four per cent of young people and adults. The qualitative research suggests that transport costs represented a significant drain on resources (especially for young people) but not a significant reason for non-participation. Availability and reliability of transport services was also an issue for a minority of learners and potential learners.
- Cost and provision of childcare were significant barriers among a minority of survey respondents (mainly adults) who had children under the age of five (21 per cent). Issues revolved around costs, availability and flexibility. A minority of non-learners suggested that distrust in formal childcare provisions was also an issue.
- Lack of information, advice and guidance (IAG) on the educational options available was rarely cited in the survey as a barrier to participation. However, further qualitative research did recognise that a lack of general IAG and information about learner support was an issue.

Incentives to participation

Scenario-testing found that weekly payments are more popular among young people than among adults, as a way of incentivising participation

- Weekly payments are popular and incentivise participation in the 16 to 18 age range. The proportion of young people who said they would be incentivised to participate in education increased with the amount of weekly payment on offer. Interestingly, however, a £20 weekly payment was the second most preferred option, when paired with a one-time bonus payment of £100.
- Weekly payments, though seen as useful for covering expenses, have less of an incentivising effect for those aged 19 and over. The qualitative research revealed that the main reasons for this among those not currently working revolved around concerns about interaction with state benefits. Among those in

work, it is clear that the monetary amounts suggested in the survey are below the relevant range for replacing the income lost by reducing or giving up work for study (which most did not want to do).

Loans are not popular but would have more appeal if they incorporated HE-style features

- Loans are not popular (especially among adults), but would have considerably broader appeal if “HE-style” features such as subsidised interest rates and/or income-contingent repayment were introduced.
- Where people would consider taking out a loan to pay for study, this was generally for hundreds rather than thousands of pounds.

Concerns about fees are a key deterrent that needs to be addressed to encourage higher participation

- Concerns about fees are a key deterrent to participation. Sixty-eight per cent of young people and 55 per cent of adults said that full fee remission or otherwise having their fees paid in full would be ‘very likely’ to encourage them to take up a course in the future.
- Childcare barriers are complex and overcoming them requires a holistic approach going beyond financial support.

The learner support on offer is not the only enabler that would make a difference to encouraging participation

- Importantly, having the right provision locally is at least as important for participation as most types of financial support.
- Improving IAG on course availability and progression routes was highlighted at all stages of the research, as well as IAG on eligibility, entitlements, and applications for learner support.
- Although they were less warmly received than some of the financial enablers, personal learning ‘buddies’ and taster courses would help to address psycho-social barriers such as lack of confidence.

Experiences in Further Education

Resource constraints do not act as a major obstacle to learners enrolling on their first choice of course: structural issues are more prevalent

- There is little evidence that learners are prevented from studying their ideal subject choice due to resource barriers (lack of finance, childcare or transport). Reasons for not being able enrol on first choice courses usually relate to meeting qualifications requirements and other difficulties in getting onto the course, such as course times not fitting with the learners' availability.

Learner support made a key difference to just over two-fifths of disadvantaged learners and early leavers

- Among those in learning and early leavers, 42 per cent of young people and 45 per cent of adults reported they would have had difficulties doing their course, in the absence of learner support.

Among learners and early leavers who did have difficulties, learner support played a key role in addressing them

For learners and early leavers who cited financial, transport or childcare difficulties, learner support played a key role in helping to address these:

- Sixteen per cent of young people and 22 per cent of adults said they would have had financial difficulties during their course, without learner support.
- Transport was often a drain on resources once on the course, rather than a significant barrier affecting decisions about whether or not to participate. Twenty per cent of young people and nine per cent of adults said they would have had transport difficulties without learner support.
- Childcare costs and provisions were significant barriers to participation for a sizeable minority of those with children. Thirteen per cent of those with children aged under-five reported they would have had childcare difficulties without learner support.
- Overall, almost two-thirds (62 per cent) of those who received learner support said that it had completely addressed their main barrier to participation while a further one-third (31 per cent) said it had partially resolved their main barrier.

However, many learners and workshop consultees alike felt that the application processes for learner support should be improved

- The application process for the various strands of learner support was seen as being complicated and at times slow. This was raised by learners and workshop

consultees alike. EMA was most often mentioned in this regard but this may have been due to its wider coverage than other forms of learner support.

- The attendance rule for EMA was questioned by some learners and workshop consultees as it was seen as being inconsistently applied and penalised learners who were late for reasons beyond their control.

Early leaving was associated more with circumstantial or course-related reasons than with factors that could be influenced by learner support

- A range of reasons were provided for early leaving. Most of these reasons were circumstantial (eg the learner had changed jobs, experience a bereavement or had health problems) or course related (ie the learner felt that it was not the course they wanted to do). Very few cited financial, childcare or transport reasons for withdrawal.
- A high proportion of early leavers did suggest, however, that financial support or incentives would have encouraged them to have completed their course or training.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the report

A wide range of programmes of financial and practical support are currently used to promote widening participation in the Further Education (FE) sector and to increase the retention, achievement and progression of existing learners. Schemes targeting disadvantaged learners and non-learners include (but are not limited to): Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA); discretionary Learner Support (including 20+ Childcare, residential bursaries and Hardship funds); Care to Learn (C2L); and Adult Learning Grants (ALG), as well as a range of policies for engaging adults into FE, covering those both in and out of work.

The Institute for Employment Studies (IES), together with the National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE) and Ipsos-MORI, were commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to undertake a study to explore the needs of disadvantaged learners and non-learners and the role of learner support in promoting and enabling engagement in education and training among these groups.

1.2 Overview of learner support schemes

In the financial year 2008-9 the programme of learner support available to those studying in further education was worth over £800 million spread over a number of schemes. A summary of these schemes is presented below.

- **Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)** aims to encourage young people from low-income families to stay on in further education or some LSC-funded work-based learning provision. Eligibility is dependent on attendance on recognised courses and pays students up to £30 each week, depending on household income. There are also bonus payments worth up to £200 in total. Money is paid directly to students and does not affect any other benefits their families may be receiving.

- **Adult Learning Grant (ALG)** is designed to assist low skilled, low income adults with the costs of full-time learning. The grant pays up to £30 per week, depending on the individual's income or the income of the individual and their partner (as applicable) for learners aged 19 and over who are on courses that will lead to their first full Level 2 or 3 qualification. Those in receipt of out of work benefits such as Jobseeker's Allowance or in receipt of Income Support do not qualify for the grant.
- **Care To Learn (C2L)** supports young parents in learning by contributing to the costs of their childcare while they learn. It covers the cost of OFSTED-registered childcare, up to a weekly maximum of £160 (£175 in London) per child, directly to the childcare provider.
- **Professional and Career Development Loans (formerly Career Development Loans (CDLs))** assist learners in covering the costs of work-related learning. Although they are commercial bank loans, the LSC supports learners by paying the interest on their loan, while they are studying or training. The learner starts to repay the loan one month after completing their course. Loans of between £300 and £10,000 may be applied for to help fund up to two years of training (or up to three years if the course includes work experience). The loans can be used to cover full-time, part-time or distance learning and are available to those who are both employed and unemployed.
- **Discretionary Learner Support Funds (LSF)** comprise of 16-18 Hardship Learner Support, 19+ Hardship Learner Support, 20+ Childcare Learner Support and Residential Bursaries. They are aimed at supporting learners who would otherwise be unable to participate in Further Education. The LSC provides allocations of discretionary learner support funds to Further Education colleges and Local Authorities and expects them to use their discretion to provide financial support to those students who are most in need, in accordance with the published Learner Support Fund Funding Guidance.
- **Dance and Drama Awards (DaDA)** support talented individuals to train to become actors, dancers, and stage managers. The LSC offer reduced tuition fees and means tested help with the living and learning costs at some of the leading private Dance and Drama training providers in England.
- **Sixth Form College Childcare** supports parents aged 20+ in learning at a sixth form college or school sixth form by contributing to the costs of their childcare while they learn. A maximum award of £160 per week (£175 in London) can be made for each child, subject to a household income assessment. Part-time learners are eligible to apply for pro-rated funds.
- **Residential Support Scheme (RSS)** provides financial support for accommodation costs to those students who need to study away from home. It

is aimed at learners aged 16 and over who are studying full-time on a first Level 2 or Level 3 LSC-funded course that is not available to them locally. Support is awarded following a household income assessment, with a maximum annual payment of £3,886 within London and £3,295 outside London.

- **Local Authority Transport Partnerships** are managed by Local Authorities and focus on transport being a barrier to education for 16-19 students. Valued at around £12m the funding may be used to provide individual and/or group services and support.

In April 2009, the LSC introduced the **Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work** scheme, aimed at out-of-work parents with a partner who is in work, the fund supports OFSTED registered childcare costs incurred while studying on certain skilled related courses to the value of up to £175 per child per week (£215 per week in London). The funds are available to those who have one or more children aged 14 or under (18 or under if the child is disabled), have a partner who is working and have a household income of £20,000 or less per year.

1.3 Aims and objectives

The main aim of the research is to ensure that future Learner Support strategy and delivery is rooted in a deeper understanding of the profile, needs and motivations of disadvantaged learners and potential learners. To this end, the research seeks to:

- identify the motivations and barriers to participating in education and training, and assess the relevance of transport, childcare and other financial issues in restricting participation among different potentially disadvantaged groups
- understand the importance of learner support and other Further Education enablers in encouraging participation and retention among various disadvantaged groups, including views on financial incentives and willingness to fund education and training through Further Education loans
- review the experiences of disadvantaged learners and early leavers from Further Education, including the barriers encountered during their study; their experiences of learner support and its impact
- develop a segmentation typology of the disadvantaged learners and non-learners based on their attitudes and barriers to participating in education and training, and review the extent to which various learner support enablers would encourage each of the segments to participate in Further Education
- produce a series of recommendations as to how the Learner Support Directorate (LSD) within the LSC can more effectively meet the needs of different client

groups, including an assessment of the types of interventions that are likely to be most useful and motivating for potential learners, and where relevant identify how different groups of learners can be targeted.

1.4 Methodology

The research for this study involved a mix of quantitative, qualitative and desk-based research spread over four key stages:

- An inception (scoping) phase which involved interviews with relevant education stakeholders and a review of existing literature. This took place between February and March 2008.
- A quantitative survey and analysis of learners, potential learners and early leavers. This took place between April and December 2008.
- A series of consultation events with learning support managers and other relevant stakeholders aimed at developing actionable policies which took place in December 2008.
- A series of nine focus groups and 45 qualitative interviews with disadvantaged learners, non-learners and early leavers between January and March 2009.

A summary of how each of the main stage research methods aimed to address the specific issues identified in the aims and objectives is reported in Table 1.1.

Table.1.1 Summary of the relationship between research methods and the aims and objectives of the project

	Survey	Practioner workshops	Qualitative interviews	Focus groups
To identify the motivations and barriers to participating in education and training, and assess the relevance of transport, childcare and other financial issues in restricting participation among different potentially disadvantaged groups.	X	X	X	
To understand the importance of learner support and other Further Education enablers in encouraging participation and retention among various disadvantaged groups, including views on financial incentives and willingness to fund education and training through Further Education loans.	X	X	X	X
To review the experiences of disadvantaged learners and early leavers from Further Education, including the barriers encountered during their study; their experiences of learner support and its impact.	X		X	X
To develop a segmentation typology of the disadvantaged learners and non-learners based on their attitudes and barriers to participating in education and training, and review the extent to which various learner support enablers would encourage each of the segments to participate in Further Education.	X			
Provide recommendations as to how the Learner Support Directorate (LSD) within the LSC can more effectively encourage participation and success within education and training among 'disadvantaged' learners and potential learners.	X	X	X	X

We discuss each of these elements and the scoping review in more detail below.

1.4.1 Scoping review of literature and initial consultations

In the early stages of the study, a qualitative scoping exercise and desk-based summary of relevant literature was carried out in order to review existing information, provide context to the study and inform questionnaire design. The contributors to this stage of the research are listed in the Appendices.

A summary paper was produced that outlined some of the key topics and question areas that the literature and expert contributors had identified as

requiring further investigation. This was used to help develop the survey questionnaire.

1.4.2 Survey of disadvantaged learners and non-learners

Ipsos MORI conducted a telephone survey of 5,000 disadvantaged learners, early-leavers and non-learners aged between 16 and 70 years old between 20 August and 7 October 2008. These groups were defined as follows:

- **Disadvantaged learners:** those who had enrolled on a Further Education course in the academic year 2007-8 or were still on the course at the time of fieldwork. The group was also restricted to those with prior attainment at Level 2 or below; who had started their course after 1 September 2007 and were still in learning. They also had to fulfil one of the following criteria: be in receipt of learner support (as reported in the ILR); have a disability/learning difficulty; have had their fees waived or be defined within the ILR as being part of a disadvantaged group (eg from an area of high deprivation, ex-offender, traveller etc).
- **Early leavers:** those who had not completed the course they have enrolled on in the academic year 2007-8. To be eligible for inclusion, they must fulfil all of the following criteria: have a prior attainment level of Level 2 or below; started their course after 1 September 2007 but did not complete it. In addition, they need to fulfil at least one of the following criteria (as flagged by the ILR): be in receipt of learner support; have a disability/learning difficulty; have had their fees waived; be classified as being disadvantaged.
- **Non-learners:** those who were not currently in learning. The sample was restricted to those whose highest qualification is below level 2; or whose highest qualification is level 2 but their household income (or parental income in the cases of 16 to 18 year olds living with their parents) before tax is below a certain threshold (£30,000 for couples and £20,000 for individuals).

The telephone survey was conducted by Ipsos MORI Telephone Surveys. All interviews were conducted using the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing system (CATI).

Further details related to the survey and the cluster analysis used to develop a typology of the learning disadvantage population are presented in the Appendices.

1.4.3 Consultation events

In December 2008 NIACE hosted three provider seminars aimed at operational and strategic managers. The aim of the seminars was to get reaction to Learner

Support in terms of what is working and what needs improving, and to give feedback to providers on the initial findings arising from the survey. The seminars were also used to sound out providers about who might be willing to host a focus group.

Recruitment to the seminars was through an application process on the NIACE website, along with an email mail out to various NIACE networks. NIACE hosted seminars in Birmingham, Sheffield and London. In total 87 people attended. A breakdown of sector attendance can be found in the Appendices. NIACE also had a one-to-one meeting with the FE Policy Officer, National Union of Students and the Head of Social Policy from the same organisation. This meeting was held after the consultation seminars and mirrored many of the findings. The seminars sought to review participants' views related to what they felt was working with the current learner support structure; what they felt needed changing; and what they felt should be the priorities for further development in the learner support framework.

1.4.4 Focus groups

Focus groups were conducted with nine groups of learners in receipt of learner support or non-learners who would potentially qualify for learner support. Research sites were selected to achieve a good geographical spread. In order to gather a range of views, researchers deliberately constructed focus groups with particular characteristics and included learners and non-learners in different age groups and those in White and Black and Minority Ethnic groups. A total of 96 participants contributed from nine different sites. The groups were recruited with the support of a selection of workshop practitioners who arranged the focus groups and provided a venue.

A flexible topic guide was devised by the researchers. Some questions were common to all groups; other questions were relevant to some groups and not others, varying according to the age, learner status and childcare responsibilities of the group members.

The discussions were recorded digitally, following participants giving consent. Each focus group lasted approximately one-and-a-half to two hours.

1.4.5 Qualitative interviews

Qualitative follow-up interviews were conducted with 45 non-learners and early leavers who had participated in the earlier survey. These were interviewed in February and March 2009. The interviewee leads followed up in this manner included:

- early leavers who had indicated in the survey that learner support may have made a difference to their decision to leave a course prior to completion
- non-learners living in rural areas
- non-learners with travel barriers
- non-learners with childcare barriers
- non-learners with financial barriers.

Recruiting follow-up interview participants according to these criteria enabled the research to gather a range of views and experiences reflecting on the usefulness of different approaches to supporting FE study.

A semi-structured interview guide was devised to enable IES interviewers to explore a variety of individual circumstances while ensuring that key information on barriers and how these might be overcome was systematically recorded.

1.5 Report structure

The remainder of this report is structured (around the aims of the research) as follows:

- Chapter 2 outlines the main research findings and puts forward some key recommendations that are derived from them.
- Chapter 3 develops a typology of the 'learning disadvantaged' population based on their attitudes and barriers towards learning. It highlights which attitudinal groups are 'closer' to learning and who the Learner Support Directorate could target, and which groups would require more intensive encouragement.
- Chapter 4 focuses on the incentives and enablers to participation. It explores attitudes to study loans, views on monetary incentives, and childcare or 'hardship' related support. It concludes by considering other structural factors that might support participation, which could be of interest to the wider LSC.
- Chapter 5 examines the attitudes, motivations and barriers to participating in education and training. Specific consideration is given to issues related to information, advice and guidance on learner support, and the extent of financial, transport and childcare related barriers to participation.
- Chapter 6 examines the experiences of those who have been recent learners in further education and who were in receipt of learner support or part of a widening participation/disadvantaged group. It reviews difficulties experienced by those in education; their experiences of learner support, and the

impact of that support. The section concludes by reviewing incidences of early leaving and the extent to which learner support would have made a difference.

The Appendices include further detail on the results of a market segmentation exercise reported in Chapter 3. They also provide more detail on the research methodology and supplementary tables covering the survey.

2 Main Findings and Recommendations

We present here some of the key findings and recommendations from the research. Observations are given under each subject heading, followed by recommendations for the different stakeholders. Recommendations are not given in a particular order.

It should be noted that the research intended to provide a broad overview of issues across the learner support client base and funding streams. It was not a specific evaluation of any one fund and so references to any particular fund should be reviewed in the context of other fund specific evaluations.

Also, the research evidence related to adult childcare was gathered before the national roll out of the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme in April 2009.

2.1 Childcare provision

2.1.1 Findings

- When arrangements around childcare (funding, availability, accessibility and travel) work well, they enable access to successful learning; but when they do not, they are a significant barrier (evidence from focus groups including recipients of C2L).
- The cost of childcare was the most frequently cited childcare issue raised by learners but the availability of childcare was also an issue. Childcare support was viewed by non-learners with children as being a major enabler to participation (evidence from survey responses mainly of parents over the age of 20).
- Childcare provision is a greater enabler to participation among those with children under the age of five than among those with older children as studying during school hours was viewed as an option by those with older children

(evidence from qualitative interviews with parent non-learners over the age of 20).

- Among some non-learners there was a greater preference for using informal childcare. Resistance to formal childcare and nursery/crèche facilities revolved around trust or concerns that there would be too many other children (evidence from qualitative interviews with parents over the age of 20).
- Some parents reported insufficient provision on or near learning sites, and provision is not sufficiently flexible (evidence from focus groups with parent learners and non-learners aged over 20, and qualitative interviews with parents over 20 who were non-learners or early leavers).
- The learning disadvantaged segments (see Chapter 3 and Appendix A) that were most likely to be motivated into engaging in Further Education through childcare support were the 'Can't leave the kids', 'Can't afford it' and 'Could help with work' groups.

2.1.2 Recommendations

For learning providers

- Consider ways of increasing childcare places in on-site day time provision such as using funds to subsidise group, rather than individual provision.
- Consider extending childcare provision to cover evening courses.
- Provide learners with information about local childcare provision which might be acceptable alternatives to on-site care.
- Allow for flexibility in childcare provision - eg to cover the time it might take to travel between college sites and childcare, as well as the time that the course actually takes up.

2.2 Transport issues

2.2.1 Findings

- Travel and transport issues are a significant issue among a minority of learners (especially those aged 16 to 18 and/ or living in rural areas) (evidence from survey).
- Transport issues cited by learners were often cost related but issues related to transport reliability and access were also raised as concerns (evidence from survey).

- Among adults, travel issues revolved around journeys from work or childcare providers to their place of study as well as journeys from home to study (evidence from qualitative interviews with non-learners and early leavers).
- The learning disadvantaged segments that were most likely to be motivated into engaging in Further Education through support with the cost of travel were those defined as 'Can't leave the kids', 'Can't afford it' and 'Can't get there'.

2.2.2 Recommendations

For LSD and Local Authorities

- Ensure a flexible package of transport related learner support. For example, group provisions such as subsidised buses and minibuses could be supported where transport links are poor, while individual subsidies might be more appropriate to target those with cost related transport difficulties in urban areas. Such provisions should be developed in association with Local Transport Partnerships.

For local providers and Local Authorities

- Ensure an integration of strategies related to the use of discretionary Learner Support to fund travel among individual learning providers (as expressed in their policy statements) and Local Authority Transport Partnership policy statements.

2.3 Study loans

2.3.1 Findings

- A sizeable minority of survey respondents indicated a willingness to use loans. However, there was significantly less interest in loans among those who participated in focus groups and qualitative interviews. It is possible that preparedness to consider loans among this group has fallen during the recent economic downturn (evidence from survey and qualitative interviews).
- Loans with repayment and interest conditions similar to those available to higher education students may be acceptable to some learners who can identify direct employment benefits from completing certain courses, for example where the course is a pre-requisite to practice, or where the course will lead to higher earning opportunities (evidence from survey and focus groups).
- Adult non-learners raised concerns (based on direct knowledge or hearsay) about the cost of tuition fees. Fee remission was the factor most often quoted by

adults in the survey as being a factor that would encourage participation (evidence from survey and qualitative interviews).

2.3.2 Recommendations

For LSD

- Consider extending the university loan offer to learners on vocational courses with good prospects of financial returns.

For LSC

- Consider developing deferred payment schemes covering fees for learners on vocational courses with good prospects of financial returns.

2.4 Financial support and incentives

2.4.1 Findings

- Books, equipment and childcare are significant costs (evidence from focus groups and qualitative interviews).
- Financial support, especially EMA, ALG and childcare funds are important in enabling disadvantaged groups to continue in learning. C2L is particularly popular (evidence from all research strands).
- The survey suggested that young people were significantly more motivated than adults by weekly payments, ie EMA/ALG type financial incentives. ALG is likely to be more effective in encouraging adults aged 19 to 29 to participate in education than older age groups (this may largely be due to the requirement to study full-time, even though this can be as little as 12 hours per week, which is less feasible among older adults).
- The focus groups found that young people were motivated by EMA because they wanted the money; adults valued the money from ALG as it enabled access to learning.
- The incentive effect of bonuses on participation is greater among 16 to 18 year olds than among those aged 19+ (evidence from survey).
- Weekly payments are preferred to one-off payments, although some learners need additional help to purchase books and equipment at the beginning of their courses (evidence from the focus groups with learners). Concerns related to having to make lump sum start of course payments were also raised by non-learners in the qualitative interviews.

- Some young people participating in the focus group raised concerns about losing EMA due to non-attendance resulting from issues beyond their control.
- The learning disadvantaged segments (see Chapter 3 and Appendix A) that were most likely to be motivated into engaging in Further Education through support with books and equipment were those who were termed 'Could be fun', 'Can't afford it' and 'Can't leave the kids'. Fee remission most appealed to 'Can't afford it', 'Can't leave the kids' and 'Could help with work' and a £30 a week incentive appealed to 'Could be fun', 'Could help with work' and 'Can't leave the kids' segments.

2.4.2 Recommendations

For LSD

- Consider the scope for introducing a part-time ALG style entitlement.
- Consider introducing a 'starter grant' to support the start up costs associated with some subjects.

For Learning providers

- Providers need to be flexible, transparent and fair in applying attendance rules.

2.5 Access and administrative issues

2.5.1 Findings

- Learners felt that process of applying for, and accessing funding, especially EMA and ALG, was complicated and required a lot of information (evidence from focus groups with learners).
- Accessing help to complete forms, especially from helpline staff, was also found to be difficult (evidence from focus groups with learners).
- EMA rules about attendance are perceived as being inconsistently applied by providers (evidence from focus groups with learners).
- Most learners prefer to be paid on the same day of the week to assist with budgeting (evidence from focus groups with learners).

2.5.2 Recommendations

For LSC

- Improve the efficiency of the application and payment process.
- Review the application forms and the language on forms to see whether there is scope for simplification.
- Ensure that the rationale for asking for information on application forms (eg to prove / confirm eligibility) is made clear.
- Enable college staff to verify documents rather than requiring applicants to send them elsewhere for verification.
- Work with HAPB to improve access to the helpline by increasing the number of staff or phone lines and improve the quality of the help in completing forms. Additional monitoring or caller satisfaction data could be reviewed to understand reasons for caller dissatisfaction.

For local providers

- Develop more flexible approaches to the application of attendance rules for EMA.
- Assist learners with budgeting by making payments on the same day each week.

For learning and IAG providers

- Improve onsite help with completing forms.

2.6 Information, advice and guidance

2.6.1 Findings

- Interest in studying is often associated with life-events (eg working, raising a family). For example, non-learners with very young children highlighted that they would be interested in finding out more about education opportunities once their children enter nursery (evidence from survey and qualitative interviews).
- Information about financial support and eligibility is often difficult to access and understand, and the quality of advice and help on this is generally regarded as poor, in part because IAG and learning providers do not know how

to access the information they need to support learners and potential learners (evidence from workshops and focus groups).

- Learners are often told about learner support on a 'need to know' basis. Those who did not 'need to know' at the start of their course risk losing out if their circumstances change during the course and they are not aware of the support available (evidence from qualitative interviews with non-learners and early leavers).
- Non-learners quoted a range of sources they would approach for IAG including: college prospectuses; college websites; Connexions; Citizens Advice Bureaux, other voluntary organisations and their websites. However, these websites did not always have links to IAG on learner support (evidence from qualitative interviews).
- The relationship between eligibility for benefits and learner support can be confusing and the eligibility rules related to Job Seekers Allowance and Income Support, eg restricting the hours of study allowed, may act as a barrier for some (evidence from qualitative interviews and focus groups).
- The groups defined as 'Could be fun', 'Can't leave the kids' and 'Can't afford it' were the most likely to suggest they would be motivated to engage in education if they had IAG regarding the options available to them.

2.6.2 Recommendations

For learning providers

- Ensure that clear up-to-date information about the learner support that is potentially available and eligibility guidance is included in prospectuses and that web-based information is easy to find and understand.
- Ensure that information about the learner support uses clear visual and written guidelines covering eligibility and the application process.
- Inform learners about Learner Support funds when they enquire about learning opportunities and provide access to detailed face-to-face advice.
- Ensure that potential and new learners are informed about the full range of learner support that might be available, irrespective of whether they need it at the point of enrolment.
- Ensure that potential learners are informed about their eligibility for fee remission. This should be promoted clearly in all documentation.

- Establish clear communication strategies in discretionary Learner Support policy statements for the promotion of Hardship, Residential bursaries and adult Childcare Learner Support to staff and learners.

For IAG providers

- Ensure that staff have the requisite information and training to provide accurate IAG on financial support for learning and the interaction between benefits and Learner Support funds.
- Ensure that relevant websites covering IAG learner support are linked to the organisation's website.

For LSD (working in partnership with Regional LSCs)

- Use as many channels of disseminating information about learner support funds as possible including provision of information on financial support to learners to IAG staff, college staff, community venues, Jobcentre Plus offices and Sure Start Centres. More active promotion and targeting of existing websites and paper based documents will go some way to achieving this.
- Improve communications with IAG managers and dissemination to front-line staff through:
 - Engagement with the National Association for Managers of Student Services to ensure that all Student Support Officer members have up-to-date information and communications material (eg hardcopy publications) related to learner support.
 - Ensuring that IAG providers and relevant voluntary support organisations have access to publication material from the LSD.
 - Informing voluntary organisations (eg Citizens Advice Bureaux) and key learning and employment web portals (eg Jobcentre Plus) of relevant web links related to learner support.
 - Holding regular regional briefing sessions for IAG workers in relation to financial support available to learners.
 - The use of electronic newsletters and/or email alerts to keep IAG and learning providers informed of changes to financial support.
 - Using learning (eg the Local Authorities Adult Learning Network, managed by NIACE and the National Institute for Mental Health in England) IAG provider (eg the Institute of Career Guidance, National Association of

Educational Guidance for Adults) and community networks (eg National Council for Voluntary Organisations) to disseminate information.

- Using Local Authority childcare lists and other nurseries as a way of publicising information on learning opportunities and learner support.
- Explore the value of producing a DVD for adults similar to the one used for young people accessing EMA. The DVD would feature the stories of adult learners who successfully used Learner Support to access learning and could be used by providers for IAG purposes.
- Review web-based information to ensure it is easy to find and understand. Learners could be involved in reviewing websites to make changes that meet their information needs.

For LSC National Office

- Consider how advice on financial support for learning can be made part of general IAG on accessing learning, eg through working with the Adult Advancement and Careers Service and the Careers Advice Service.
- Work with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to clarify rules about benefit and learner funding eligibility and provide clear, accessible information to Jobcentre Plus, IAG and college staff.

For DWP

- Consider reviewing benefit rules for claimants who wish to engage in learning to improve their employability.

2.7 Branding issues

2.7.1 Findings

- Although the term Education Maintenance Allowance had widespread recognition the term Adult Learning Grant was not very well recognised by participants in the qualitative interviews and focus groups, possibly because of the deliberately lower profile marketing approach which is taken by the scheme because of its specific eligibility criteria.
- Many learners in receipt of hardship funds did not know which fund their financial support came from (evidence from focus groups). The term 'hardship' was viewed by some of those participating in the qualitative interviews as having negative connotations.

2.7.2 Recommendations

For LSD

- There may be some scope to trade on the success of EMA by rebranding Adult Learning Grant as EMA or EMA for adults. We recognise, however, that the Adult Learning Grants are not designed to act as a full maintenance payment while studying and the potential difficulties of giving adults 'false hope' due to eligibility restrictions or the value of support need to be considered.
- To reduce the potential for stigma, the term Hardship Funds (used to describe funds that are based on either discretionary Learner Support or other local sources of finance) could be phased out and replaced by a phrase that is more neutral.

For Learning Providers

- The term Hardship Learner Support should be avoided.

2.8 Learning provision

2.8.1 Findings

- There is quantitative and qualitative evidence that non-learners and learners favour local, community-based provision (evidence from all research strands).
- Parents with young children favoured the opportunity to study close to their children's school / nursery during school / nursery hours (evidence from qualitative interviews with adult non-learners and early leavers).
- Learning champions (buddies) and mentors were identified by providers and survey participants as playing an important role in enabling access and engaging learners and non-learners who lacked confidence (evidence from workshops and survey).
- The groups defined as 'Can't leave the kids', 'Could be fun' and 'Can't afford it' were the most likely to suggest they would be more motivated to engage in education if a suitable course were available to them close to their home. Those defined as 'Could be fun', 'Couldn't keep up' and 'Can't leave the kids' were also the most likely to suggest that they were more motivated to engage in education or training if they had support from a personal learning advisor or buddy.

2.8.2 Recommendations

For LSC

- Consider whether, and how, locally-based provision can be expanded.
- Consider how subjects that might appeal to parents (eg 'maths skills for parents') can be provided in locations near schools during school hours.
- Consider how learning champions and mentors can be supported and encouraged.
- In terms of addressing the above, Family Learning and Extended Schools are clear steps in that direction. There is a need to ensure that these programmes are actively promoted.

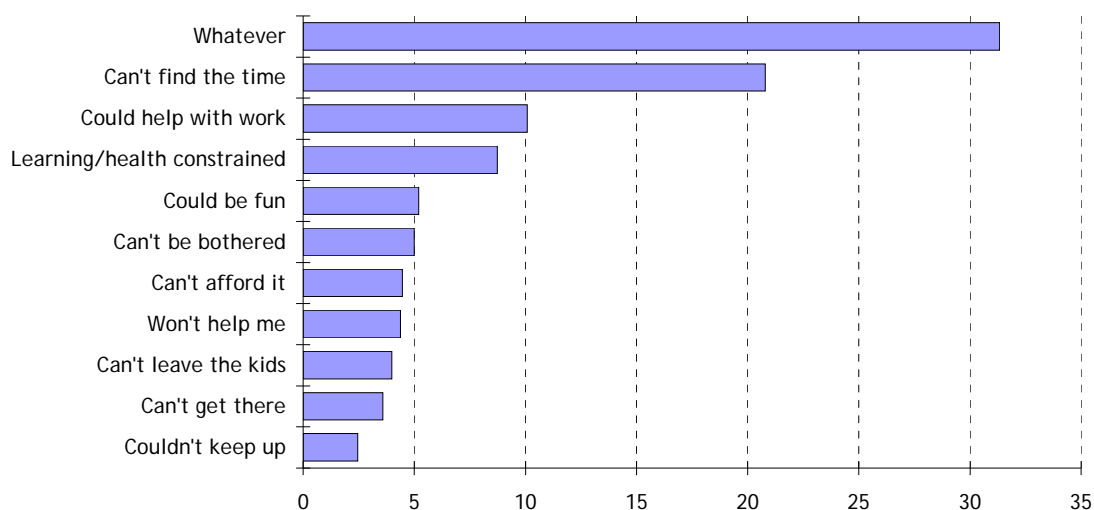
3 Developing a typology of disadvantaged learners and non-learners

In this chapter we develop a typology of disadvantaged learners and non-learners based on a cluster analysis of the attitudes and barriers towards education and training reported in the survey (the cluster methods are explained in more detail in Appendix B.3). This section summarises the characteristics of disadvantaged learners and non-learners based on the eleven segments we have identified.

3.1 Overview of disadvantaged segments

Using cluster analysis techniques to segment our survey, we identified eleven unique groups based on their attitudinal characteristics and barriers to participation. These groups are summarised in Figure 3.1:

Figure 3.1: Attitude and barrier segments



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =5,008 cases)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

The largest group (defined as '**Whatever**') account for 31 per cent of the learning disadvantaged population and are characterised by no particular barrier or significant view on education. As a whole, the young people who form this group are likely to participate in education without any strong perceptions of benefits or barriers to their study. Due to the disproportionate number of young people in this group, large financial incentives (ie £50 per week) were particularly motivating.

A further one-fifth of the population can be defined as '**Can't find the time**'. This group is disproportionately made up of middle aged people (30 to 49 year olds) who have work or family commitments that they see as reducing their willingness to study. Financial enablers and support with childcare do not appear to motivate this group into learning.

Ten per cent fall into a category that is described as '**Could help with work**'. These people are much more likely than average to be in employment (79 per cent) and less likely to be older (only 18 per cent are over the age of 50). They also tend to be better qualified than the average for the study, with 30 per cent possessing a Level 2 qualification.

Nine per cent can be defined as '**Learning difficultly, disability or health constrained**'. The majority cite learning difficulties and/ or disabilities and around one-half are aged over 50. This group have lower incomes and qualifications than

the average and are not particularly motivated by financial support or other enablers to studying.

The remaining groups comprise of : **Can't afford it** (five per cent); **Could be fun** (five per cent); **Can't be bothered** (five per cent); **Can't leave the kids** (four per cent); **Won't help me** (four per cent); **Can't get there** (four per cent); **Couldn't keep up / Too old to learn** (three per cent). Of these groups, the 'Can't afford it's, 'Can't leave the kids' and 'Can't get there's are the segments most likely to experience financial, childcare or transport barriers to participation. These groups constitute around 13 per cent of the disadvantaged learner / non-learner population. A more detailed summary of all eleven groups is presented below and in Appendix A.

The eleven segments can be divided between:

- those groups that are particularly interested in education and training, and who may be motivated and supported by the Learner Support Directorate
- groups that are less interested in learning and for whom learner support may not act as a sufficient primary motivator for engagement; and
- those who are hard to differentiate from the 'average' and therefore hard to specifically target.

3.2 Groups that are 'close' to engagement

Looking at the first group, around 27 per cent of the 'learning disadvantaged' population fall into an attitudinal or barrier segment that might be described in broad terms as having positive attitudes towards learning and who may be encouraged to engage in learning through financial or other support. These do not need convincing of the benefits of learning, but are deterred by practical barriers which, potentially, the LSD could help with. Hence, relative to the other segments, they should be LSD's priority. Specific groups include:

- **Could help with work** (ten per cent of the learning disadvantaged population)
 - This group is generally better qualified and closer to learning than the average and the overwhelming majority of this group can see benefits of learning related to their current job (such as gaining a pay rise or a promotion) and therefore see learning as an investment. The vast majority are in work, in the middle stages of their careers (nearly half are aged 30 to 49), and around half have dependent children. Many identify barriers in terms of time constraints due to family or work commitments, or financial considerations. They are more likely than the average to say that fee remission, help with course costs, having a course nearby, or help with transport or childcare, would encourage their participation. This group could be supported through work based training (eg

through Train to Gain) or through union learning reps. They are also more interested than most other groups in delayed payment loans.

- **Can't afford it** (five per cent of the learning disadvantage population) - This group are less likely to be in learning than the average, though the majority express an interest in learning in the next three years and they are more likely to see benefits to learning than the average. The main barriers for this group are concerns about the costs and worries about giving up work in order to do learning. The majority of this group are working, and are mainly aged between 19 and 49. They are better qualified than most other groups in this survey, although over two-fifths of this group would like to improve their 'skills for life'. They are more likely to be induced by enablers than the average, with help with fees, course costs, and childcare, as well as availability of a course nearby or help with travel costs, the most likely inducements. There is a need to ensure that this group have a clear understanding of the support available, including their eligibility for fee remission. This group is more likely than any other to be interested in study loans.
- **Could be fun** (five per cent of the learning disadvantaged population) - This group is closer to learning than other groups in this study, overwhelmingly seeing the personal developmental benefits of learning. They are less likely to be in employment than the average, and the group is predominately female. Most people in this group do hold a qualification, though again a large minority say that they would like to improve their literacy or numeracy skills. Although time constraints (due to family or work commitments) and financial concerns are cited as a barrier by many in this group, they are more likely to be enticed into learning by enablers than the average, with fee remission, support for course costs, nearby courses, IAG, and short tasters seen as enablers by more than half. A large proportion of this group could be engaged through their children's school and motivated to participate in family learning activities.
- **Can't leave the kids** (four per cent of the learning disadvantaged population) - The vast majority of this group have dependent children and see childcare as a barrier to taking up learning. Predominantly women and aged between 19 and 49, this group see a variety of benefits to learning such as personal development, getting a job/better job, and general employability improvements, and despite the fact that not many are in learning currently the vast majority are at least open to the idea of learning. They are more likely to say that enablers would help them to take up a course and in particular help with childcare, fee remission and availability of a course nearby. Those who wish to study cite a range of reasons for doing so (personal development, improving literacy and numeracy skills and employment prospects). Others suggest that participation would be an option once their children enter nursery school. Those with

younger children could be targeted through Sure Start centres. Offering childcare to support skills for life or employability related courses, or offering these courses during school hours are two methods of supporting this group.

- **Can't get there** (four per cent of the learning disadvantaged population) - This group is less likely to be in learning than the average, and although more than half are open to the idea of learning within the next three years, over one-third are not planning on taking up learning. They are also less likely to be in employment than the average and are more likely to be on low incomes. The main barrier for this group is travel, though time constraints due to work/family, financial considerations, confidence in ability, and not feeling that learning would help in their career, were also mentioned. Overall, members of the group were most likely to be encouraged to learn by help with fees, transport, childcare and course costs. Other support might include the use of local outreach centres by education providers. This group is among those least likely to be very interested in a study loan.

3.3 Groups that are 'distant' from engagement

There were five segments that could be described as currently adverse to learning and for whom financial or other types of learner support might offer limited encouragement. These particularly hard to reach groups make up around 41 per cent of the learning disadvantaged population. Whilst these groups would be difficult to target just through LSD activity, they could potentially be influenced to think more positively about learning through more general LSC and partner communications. However, developing such attitudinal change will be a long-term process. The groups comprise of:

- **Can't find the time** (21 per cent of the learning disadvantaged population) - Although the majority in this group are less keen than the average to engage in learning than the average in the immediate future these people are generally open to the idea of learning within the next three years. Many see benefits to learning either in terms of general skills or employability, personal development, or in terms of helping with a career change. However, nearly all of this group face barriers in terms of time constraints, either because of family or work commitments. This reflects the fact that many are women, have dependent children, are aged between 30 and 49, and/or are in employment. They are less likely to be encouraged to learn by enablers than the average, and despite the fact that family commitments were a barrier for many of them and many have children they were less likely to say that help with childcare would enable them to participate in learning than the average. It may be easier to target this group in the first instance through work based learning, shorter

courses and taster courses which are easier for them to combine with their existing commitments.

- **Learning difficultly, disability or health constrained** (nine per cent of the learning disadvantaged population) - The vast majority of this group cite a health problem, disability, or a learning difficulty as a barrier to participation, and nearly two-thirds of this group report LDD or health problems. They are educationally disadvantaged, with over half reporting no formal qualifications and less than one-in-five are in employment. More than half are over 50 and less than one-fifth are under 30 years of age. They are less likely to see benefits to learning or to be enticed by enablers to participation than most. Although they tend to be on lower incomes they are not particularly motivated by financial inducements. This group may be particularly hard to engage due to the age profile and lack of previous success in education. Learning champions may provide an important role in promoting engagement.
- **Can't be bothered** (five per cent of the population) - Although, this group tend to be slightly better qualified than the average for this survey, over a third still have no formal qualifications and they are generally switched off from learning, citing a lack of interest as a barrier. They are less likely to see benefits to learning than the average, and are much less likely to be induced by any enablers to participation or financial incentives. They are slightly less likely to be in employment than the average and over two-fifths of them are aged between 50 and 70. Encouraging education and training among members of this groups would first require the promotion of the benefits of these activities. This group is among those least likely to be very interested in study loans.
- **Won't help me** (four per cent of the population) - This group are less likely to be interested in learning and are less likely to see any personal job or career benefits to learning than the average. The majority of this group are in employment and they are generally better paid and better qualified than most groups covered by this survey. The main barrier to learning for this group is that they do not feel that learning would help them in their job or career. In addition to this they are less likely to be enticed by enablers than most groups. This group is only likely to participate if any benefits from education and training are clearly promoted.
- **Couldn't keep up / Too old to learn** (three per cent of the population) - Very few of this group are in learning currently, and the majority are not planning on taking up learning any time soon. They tend to be older, not in employment, on lower incomes, and nearly half have no formal qualifications at all. Many do see benefits in learning, particularly personal development, they overwhelmingly see lack of ability and confidence in their own ability as a barrier and some also cite additional barriers such as lack of time, financial barriers, and/or health,

disability, or learning difficulties as a barrier. They are less likely to be enticed by enablers than most other groups though almost half said that having a 'buddy' would help and a similar proportion said fee remission would help. There is a need to promote the view that education is not 'just for young people'. This group is among those least likely to be very interested in study loans.

3.4 Those ambivalent to engagement

Whatevers represent the largest single group (31 per cent of the learning disadvantaged population). The group is not defined by any particular motivation or barrier people in this group are disproportionately represented at either ends of the age spectrum. Although people in this group are slightly more likely to be in education or planning on learning in the next 12 months, an equally large section of this group have no intentions on learning in the near future. General employability and personal development are the most commonly cited benefits/motivators for this group. They are less likely, however, to be swayed by particular enablers than most groups, but due to the disproportionate number of young people in the group are more likely than the average to say that a financial incentive of £50 a week would make a difference. This group is difficult to target due to its 'indefinable' nature.

4 Incentives to Participation in Education and Training

This chapter examines the value of financial incentives to participate in FE, support for certain costs of studying in FE and certain other ‘structural’ enablers to participation.

4.1 Key points

- Loans are not popular but would have considerably broader appeal if “HE-style” features such as subsidised interest rates and/or income-contingent repayment were introduced.
- Weekly payments are popular and incentivise participation in the 16 to 18 age range.
- Weekly payments, though seen as useful for covering expenses, have less of an incentivising effect for those aged 19 and over.
- Concerns about fees are a key deterrent to participation.
- Childcare barriers are complex and overcoming them requires a holistic approach going beyond financial support.
- Having the right provision locally is at least as important for participation as most types of financial support.

4.2 Financial incentives

The survey investigated attitudes to a variety of existing and potential forms of financial support that could incentivise participation: Loans (such as Professional and Career Development Loans and alternatives), weekly payments (such as EMA/ALG) and financial support towards study costs, fees, childcare and transport.

4.2.1 Attitudes to loans

'My credit rating is too poor. I'd only take out £200-£300 anyway. Too daunting to pay back.'
(Non-learner 19+)

'I don't want to get into debt because it'll make me depressed.'
(Non-learner 19+)

'Not something I'd do.'
(Non-learner 19+)

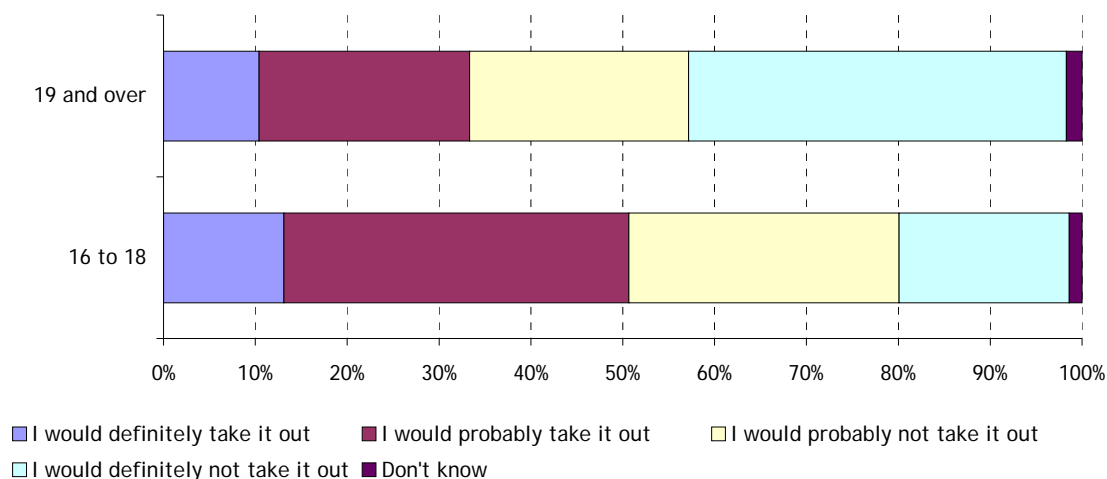
Both adults and young people tend to hold an established view as to whether a loan would be a welcome addition to the package of finance they might access to cover the costs of FE (there were very few 'don't know' answers to these questions). In the case of young people there was a marginally favourable reaction to most of the loan options presented in the survey, while among those aged 19 and over, opinion tended to be stacked against debt-financed study, even when more attractive HE-style loans were proposed. Nonetheless, there was in all cases a substantial minority of potential learners who said they would take out some type of loan if available. Further exploration in the qualitative research found that this demand was often for relatively small loan amounts (in the hundreds rather than in the thousands).

The baseline against which to gauge attitudes is the current offer – namely Professional and Career Development Loans (although awareness of these is patchy) – whereby a loan is provided by a bank, using its own lending criteria and on essentially commercial terms, but where repayments are deferred until the end of the course. On balance, young people were receptive to such a loan (51 per cent said they would definitely or probably take one out), while those aged 19 and over were less enthusiastic (only 33 per cent said they would definitely or probably take one out). It should be noted here that young people under the age of 18 would not be eligible for a Professional and Career Development Loan or similar product as consumer credit law does not permit people below this age to access credit. This is likely to be an over estimation of what would happen in practice and responses in the qualitative follow up interviews suggest a much lower willingness to take on debt. Difference by age in the willingness to contemplate financing an investment in FE learning by means of a loan is consistent with the finding, detailed in Chapter 5, that the perceived career investment benefits of FE were a more salient factor for 16 to 18 year olds than they were for those aged 19 and over.

It is worth noting, as can be seen in the figure below (and in the figures relating to the loan alternatives further on), that even when there is receptiveness to loans the proportion that would definitely take one out is always rather small. This may reflect the perceived riskiness of debt-finance, especially in the current economic climate. These worries were discussed in some detail in the focus groups, where

most learners were not disposed to take Professional and Career Development Loans for a variety of risk-averse reasons.

Figure 4.1: Whether respondent would take out a loan if the repayments were delayed until after the course was over



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

The survey provided respondents with two loan scenarios intended as more attractive alternatives to the existing model in order to ascertain i) what the principal objection to loans might be and ii) whether and by how much the potential market for such loans might be expanded by such changes:

- A cheaper alternative (whether respondent would take out an interest free or minimal interest loan);
- A safer alternative (whether respondent would take out a loan with repayments delayed until earnings reached a certain level).

It is interesting to observe that for both age categories, there is a favourable shift in reactions to both of these options, with the proportions definitely against falling and the proportions definitely and probably in favour both increasing as compared with the Professional and Career Development Loan-equivalent baseline. As measured by the proportion definitely interested in such a loan, the interest free option was most preferred in both age categories. For those aged 16 to 18, this raised the proportion that would definitely take one out from 13 per cent to 22 (a 70 per cent increase in the potential market). Although it should be noted, once again, that young people under the age of 18 would not be eligible for a Professional and Career Development Loan or similar products as consumer credit law does not permit people below this age to access credit. Seventeen per cent of

those aged 19 and over would definitely take out an interest-free loan as compared to 10 per cent in the baseline (a 60 per cent increase).

Figure 4.2: Whether respondent would take out an interest free (or minimal interest) loan

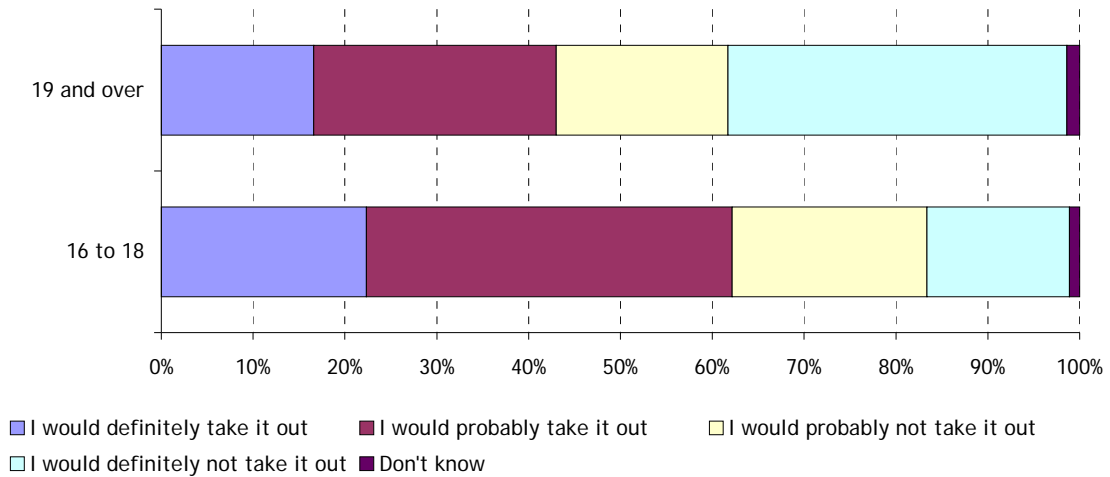
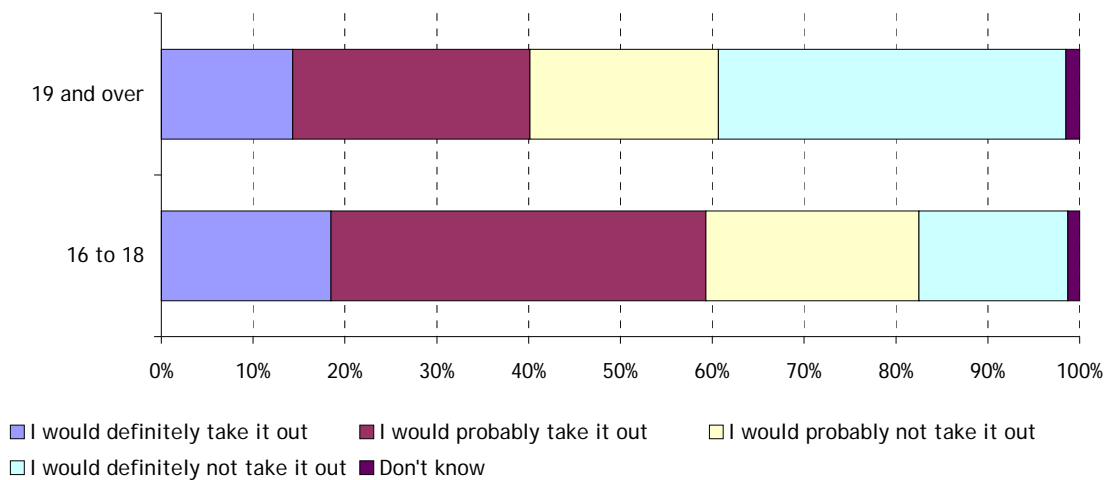


Figure 4.3: Whether respondent would take out a loan with repayments delayed until earnings reached a certain level



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

The figures above confirm that some move towards the “HE-style” student loan features of low interest and income-contingent repayment could dramatically increase interest in taking out loans to fund FE study, though the market would nonetheless remain relatively small (as would the individual loan sums most individuals seek to draw down).

4.2.2 Weekly payments

'I'm on Income Support so I don't think I can get that.' (Non-learner 19+)

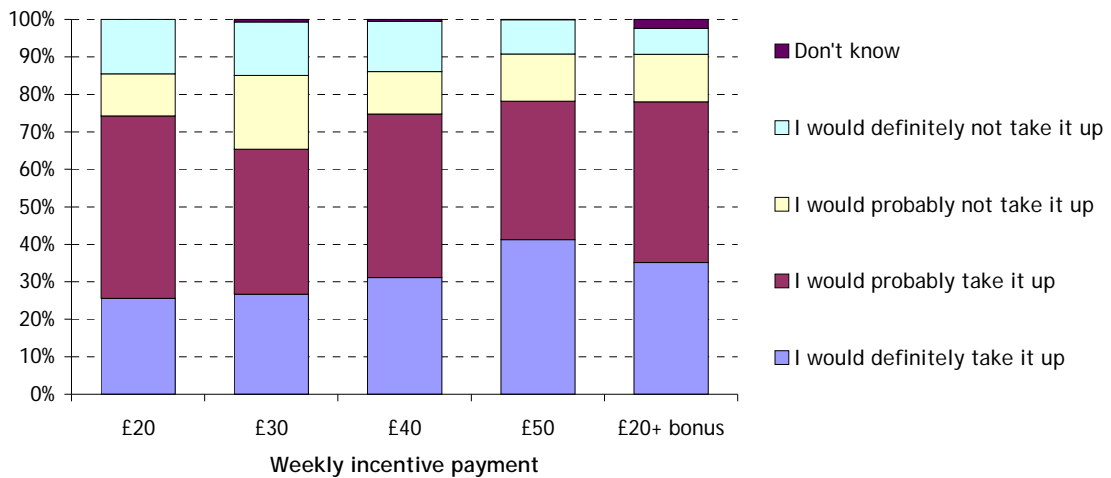
'You mean like my daughter's EMA?' (Non-learner 19+)

Weekly payments are offered to learners in FE – up to the £30/week level – to 16 to 18 year olds in the form of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and to those aged 19 and over in the form of Adult Learning Grant (ALG). In both instances, the support is subject to household income and minimum hours of study criteria. The survey investigated the incentivising effect of such payments if set at different levels (the amounts mentioned in the survey were randomized) by asking whether a payment set at a given level would lead them to follow a course at their nearest college.

Among those aged 16 to 18, it is evident that the higher the amount of weekly payment on offer, the greater the number likely to be incentivised to participate. This pattern was confirmed in focus group discussions with 16 to 18 year old non-learners. Interestingly, however, a £20 weekly payment (lower than the current amount received in most cases) was preferred when offered in the survey in conjunction with a one-time bonus payment of £100. This suggests that both weekly payments and lump sum payments have an incentivising effect on this group, implying that some sort of trade-off between the two may be feasible (it may be that a combined offer is the most cost-effective).

The picture that emerges in relation to those aged 19 and over is rather different in that it was not clear that higher weekly payments lead to greater participation (and the bonus payment was also less incentivising). The impact on those aged 19 and 20, whose circumstances are likely to be similar to those aged 16 to 18 in many cases, could not be robustly determined with this survey but certainly merits further investigation.

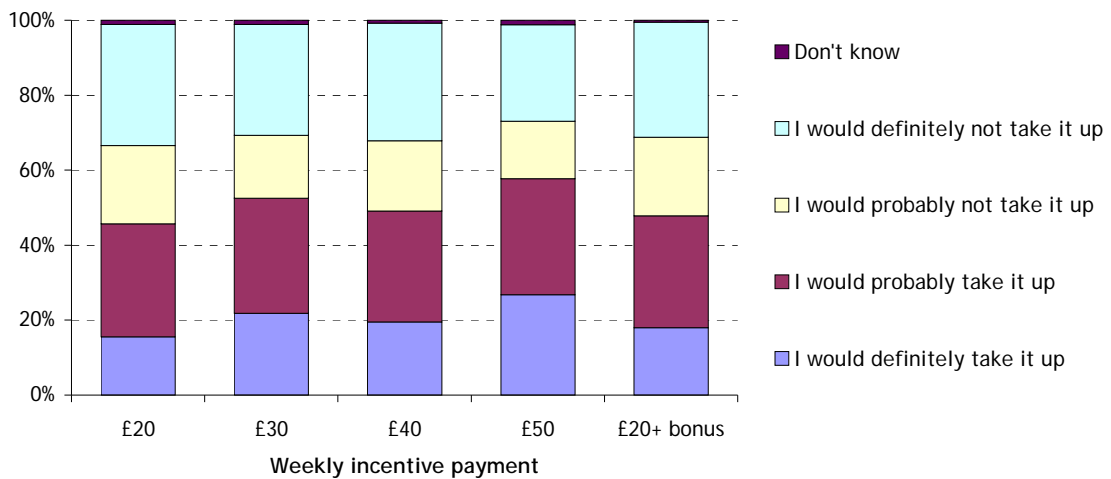
Figure 4.4: Whether a given weekly incentive would encourage 16 to 18 year olds to start learning



Base: Learning disadvantaged population aged 16 to 18 years old not in full-time education (unweighted sample =1,031 cases; each incentive payment response based on 1/5th of the sample)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Figure 4.5: Whether a given weekly incentive would encourage those aged 19 and over to start learning



Base: Learning disadvantaged population aged 19 to 70 years old not in full-time education (unweighted sample =3,177 cases; each incentive payment response based on 1/5th of the sample)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

From some of the qualitative follow-up interviews, it was possible to drill down further into this issue among those aged 19 and over:

- For those not in work there are numerous concerns around the interaction of weekly payments (and the minimum number of study hours required) with benefits despite reassurance on this point in the survey question;
- For some of those in work, the monetary amounts suggested in the survey (up to £50) are below the relevant range for replacing income lost in moving from anything near full-time work to near full-time study (which most did not want to do). Indeed, the focus groups (including those with 16 to 18 year olds) often discussed how it was strange that adults, presumably with greater calls on their finances, received the same weekly amount as most EMA recipients.

In the qualitative follow-up interviews, it was clear that many of the non-learners benchmarked the weekly payment against the out-of-pocket expense of study (*'Oh, that'll pay for my petrol'*) and thus considered the payment in terms of compensation rather than incentive. This was particularly the case among those looking after family, for whom the main appeal of a weekly payment was that it allowed ring-fencing of resources such that personal study decisions did not take money out of the household budget.

Generally, the visibility and awareness of Adult Learner Grant was rather low among non-learners who participated in the qualitative research. When ALG was explained to non-learners aged 19 and over, the response was sometimes to ask whether it is a bit like EMA. This is likely to reflect the fact that EMA is more aggressively marketed than ALG, which has deliberately taken a lighter-touch approach because of the specific eligibility criteria for the scheme. In the consultation exercises with providers, discussions tended to end up focusing on EMA rather than on ALG, although this is not necessarily surprising given the disparate sizes of the two schemes. When ALG was discussed by providers, it was often felt it gave *'learners false hope as very few qualify'*.

The weekly format of payments (whether ALG or EMA) was itself valued, for budgeting and self-control reasons, a point emerging strongly from both the focus groups with learners and the interviews with non-learners. Once in learning, weekly payments were often heavily relied upon. The focus groups reported many beneficiaries claiming that their continued participation would not be possible without it:

'I couldn't come. I get travel too. I probably wouldn't come... I simply couldn't afford it. I'm a single parent.' (Learners 25+)

4.2.3 Financial support to meet or overcome specific costs and barriers

The following subsections examine the evidence on the effectiveness of money designated to overcome specific costs or barriers, including support for costs of study (books and equipment), support with fees, support with childcare and support with the costs of travel. Each subsection is based on responses to the survey question on enablers (“if you could get help with [cost/barrier] how likely is it that it would make a difference to whether you take up a (further) course in the future or not?”) and is supplemented by insights from the follow-up qualitative research. There is a good deal of consistency in the responses regarding the various costs and barriers. In general, we can say that those for whom such help is very likely to make a difference to their decision are:

- Those planning to start a course in the next 12 months (as opposed to both those in learning already and those not thinking of doing a course so soon, if at all).
- Those in the 19 to 29 age bracket (as opposed to either younger or older learners and non-learners – the one exception to this pattern relates to support with the cost of transport which is most important in the 16 to 18 age bracket).
- Those in BME groups (who compared to their white counterparts report much more frequently that every type of support is very likely to make a difference).
- Those with children, especially in the case of children under the age of five.

There is less consistency in the responses in respect of employment status. Those in employment are more likely to value help with fees than those not in employment. This could reflect the greater likelihood of having to pay fees if one is in employment. The reverse holds for help with childcare, which is more likely to be valued by those not in employment. This could be because those in employment already have established childcare arrangements or are already a subset of parents who have been able to overcome childcare issues (otherwise they would not be in work). Both those in and those out of employment are equally unlikely to think help with transport costs will make a difference.

Bringing together some of the results characterised above, it is clear that the needs of potential learners with children go beyond childcare and should be treated holistically. For instance, making journeys between college and a childcare provider eligible for transport support might be useful, as might offering funds for books and equipment, such that study does not erode household budgets that parents would in any case prefer to keep ring-fenced for expenditure benefiting the family.

These findings regarding financial support earmarked to overcome specific barriers give an indication of the potential participation impacts of such measures and as such may be of use to colleges reviewing their discretionary support policies as well as to national priority setting exercises. The findings also suggest possible avenues for information and marketing campaigns, in that it may be particularly fruitful to ensure those in the 19 to 29 age group are targeted and that information reaches those in BME communities, where it is likely to be well received.

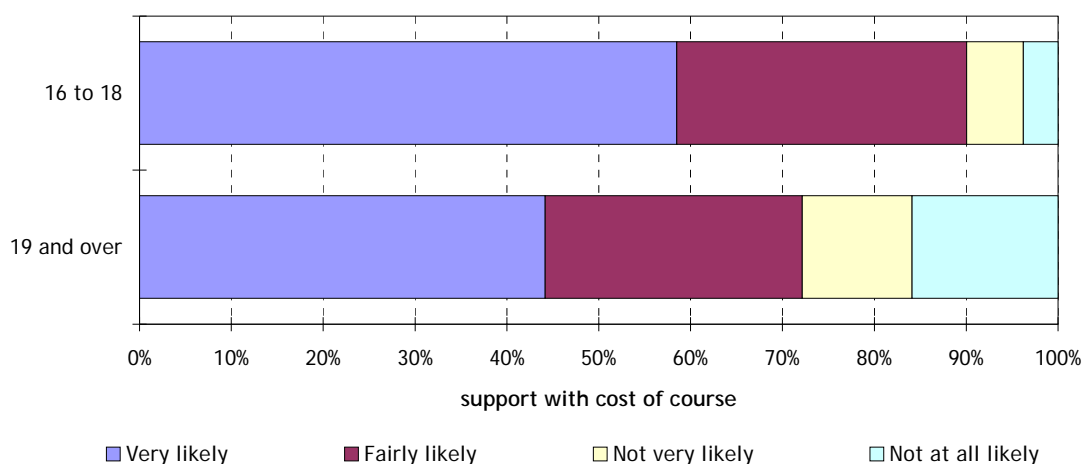
Support for costs of study (books and equipment)

'Fees, exams, books. It'd be crippling to have to pay for it all.' (Non-learner 19+)

'Books can be expensive.' (Non-learner 19+)

As discussed earlier in relation to weekly payments, there is a suggestion that financial support is for some a matter of covering costs rather than of pure financial incentive. The survey asked those who were not in learning whether an offer of financial support to cover costs of study such as books and equipment would make a difference to their decision to take up a course in the future. Those already in learning were asked a similar question about progressing to further study. Such an offer was far more likely to influence those aged 16 to 18 than those aged 19 and over, as seen in the figure below, though the numbers claiming their decision would be influenced were high in both instances.

Figure 4.6: How likely support with course costs would be to make a difference to future learning decisions



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

It should be noted that such support made very little difference to those in employment. This may be because the sums involved are not great in relation to the earnings sacrifice involved in moving from work into study, as noted earlier in relation to weekly payments.

In the follow-up qualitative interviews, it was apparent that the notion of help with such costs was generally well received: books and equipment are salient, tangible costs and are often the first types of expense that potential learners think about when prompted to consider the costs of study. When probed further, however, most interviewees did not consider that support with such costs would make a crucial difference to their future participation. The exceptions to this pattern tended to be in cases where interviewees were considering courses with significant, upfront equipment costs such as chef's knives or sets of hairdressing scissors. Where help with such costs was thought to be crucial, interviewees wanted the support to be guaranteed before the start of the course, perhaps as early as when making enquiries about the course.

As such, discretionary support funds are unlikely to meet the requirements of these potential learners and there may be value in focusing resources on a national, guaranteed 'starter grant' (at an appropriate level) for a restricted range of qualifications. This idea was raised by some of the learners taking part in focus groups.

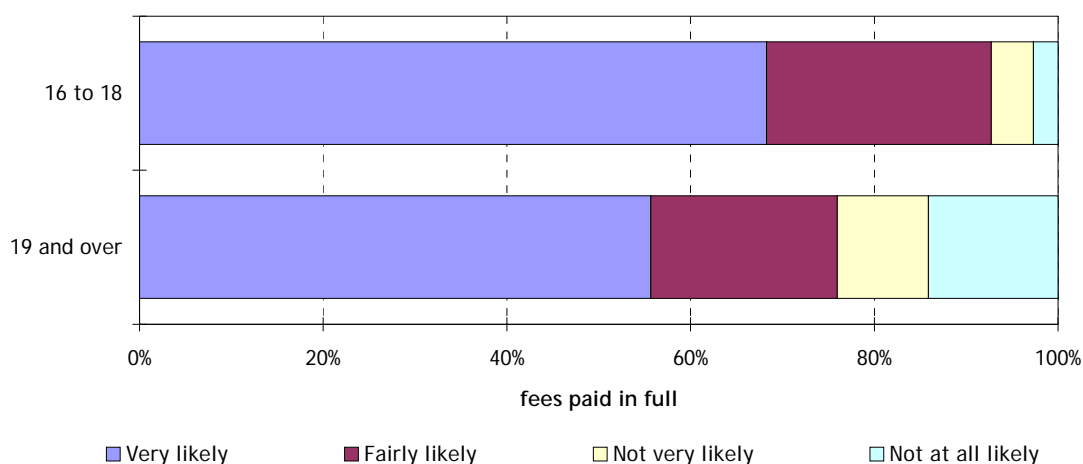
Support with fees

'That would take the pressure off. Less stress.' (Non-learner 19+)

'The courses I've looked at are all £400. I can't afford it. Maybe if it was paid in instalments.' (Non-learner 19+)

Support with the cost of fees would be very likely to make a difference to any decision to take up a course in the future for more than one in two disadvantaged learners and non-learners according to the survey. This proportion rises to over 68 per cent in the 16 to 18 age group (who are anyhow far more likely to be eligible for full fee-remittal). This makes fee remission potentially one of the most powerful incentives for raising participation.

Figure 4.7: How likely support with fees would be to make a difference to future learning decisions



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

These findings may be useful to both colleges and the LSC when reviewing policies regarding fee support and remission. Several issues pertaining to fee support emerged from the qualitative follow-up interviews (where participants raised the issue frequently even though fees were deliberately not mentioned by interviewers):

- Where people mention fees, they often have a precise and realistic notion of the likely level of fees for their likely preferred course of study, whether from research, from enquiries they have made or from word of mouth.
- Some people are aware that colleges generally charge fees, but unaware that they specifically would be eligible for fee remission.
- Some people are aware of fee remission, but because they have not been able to get clear information they are still worried they may have to pay.
- There are individuals for whom fees are – as a type of expenditure – less palatable than spending money on other study costs such as food and travel that are more familiar (and less ‘lumpy’) types of expenditure item.
- Many people look at the net impact of costs (including fees) and support on household budgets; it does not particularly matter to them whether support is earmarked for fees or for other study costs if the net result is the same.

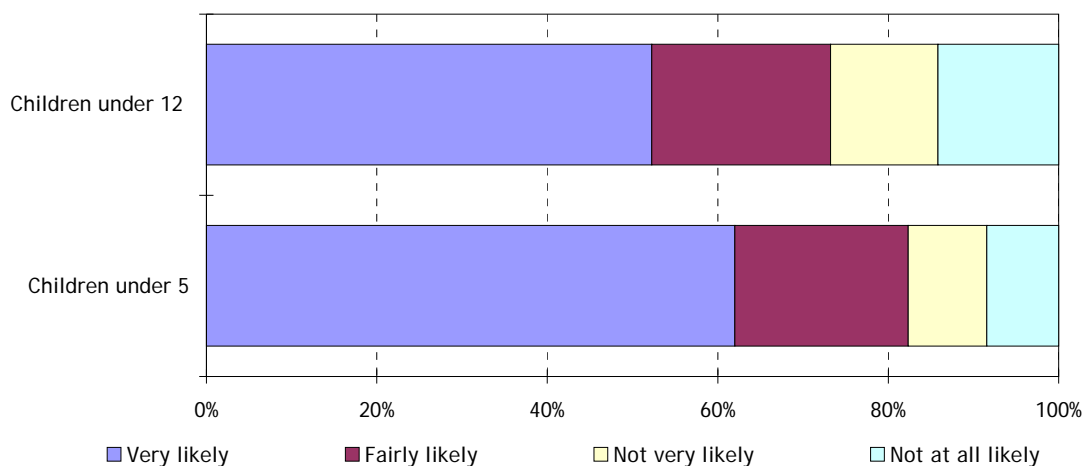
Support with childcare

'The only creche here is already full.' (Non-learner 19+)

'Next year. My toddler'll have a funded place then.' (Non-learner 19+)

Those aged up to 20 have an entitlement-based childcare arrangement in the form of Care to Learn, which was highly praised in the consultation with providers, where it was felt the key attribute was the scheme's flexibility. Apart from Sixth Form College Childcare, which is available for adult in 6th forms, there is no universal arrangement for those aged 20 and over, although the new Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme is changing this situation for those who are unemployed and who want to learn and whose partners work. The proportion of survey respondents with children for whom childcare support would be very likely to make a difference in any decision to undertake a course in the future was particularly high (62 per cent) among those with children under the age of five, as seen in Figure 4.8.

Figure 4.8: How likely support with childcare would be to make a difference to future learning decisions among those with children under 12 and/or children under five



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population with depended children under 12 and children under 5 (unweighted sample =1,090 (550 with children under 5); missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

The qualitative follow-up interviews found that the issues with childcare were rarely in terms of cost alone, with issues around availability in some cases and the willingness to use childcare in others:

- There was significant resistance to investigating any form of formal childcare for very young children, whether out of a resistance to the idea or because of the higher cost of such care. In several examples, family members were relied

upon to provide a certain amount of childcare, but this would be insufficient or at the wrong time to cover the needs of attendance at a college. As children became eligible for free nursery care and then got to school age, their parents became more receptive to ideas about using childcare to facilitate study options.

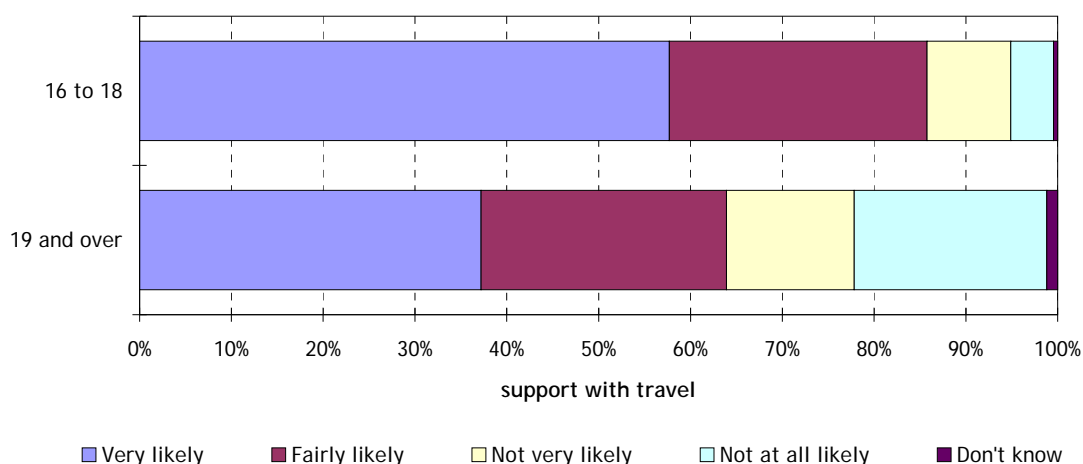
- Availability of public nursery places was sometimes a concern in particular localities. For several interviewees, crèche provision at a local college would have been the ideal scenario, given the additional challenges of using childcare far from both home and college.
- Compatibility of study with the 'school run' was another permutation taken by childcare barriers, with one single father stressing the importance of the availability of pre/post school clubs as a means of reconciling children's schooling with parents' learning.

Importantly, the follow-up interviews tended to find that – where childcare barriers were mentioned – these would make a critical difference to whether an individual would be able to plan for any future learning. The focus group evidence tends to suggest that, where financial help for childcare would help, there was a preference for this being paid straight to the childcare provider for budgeting reasons.

Support with the costs of travel

As seen from Figure 4.9, support with the costs of travel emerged from the survey as something that would be very likely to make a difference to the future learning decisions of 58 per cent of those aged 16 to 18 (and a difference to the decisions of rather fewer of those aged 19 and over who are more likely to have independent means of travel).

Figure 4.9: How likely support with travel costs would be to make a difference to future learning decisions



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Transport barriers rarely arose as critical factors within the qualitative follow-up interviews despite over-sampling of participants from rural areas. When transport issues arose, individuals could often think of ways around the barrier. When the difficulty was harder to resolve this tended to be for very varied reasons, making it clear that no one-size-fits-all policy can be appropriate. In this regard, maximum flexibility may be the key to successful support. The types of issues raised encompassed:

- Mobility difficulties
- Lack of appropriate bus routes
- Lack of driving license or car (occasionally among those aged 19 and over)
- Distance to college (but where a residential bursary would not be attractive because of distance from family)
- Difficulty choosing most appropriate course if provision is more expensive to get to than another course
- Travelling to and from childcare.

Consultation with providers endorsed the Transport Partnership Scheme as a successful way of resolving some of these issues, particularly as regarded supporting learners with learning difficulties or disabilities:

'...it enables providers to develop the independence and travelling skills of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This helps move them towards employment.'

Based on evidence from the focus groups, it is possible to say that where the costs of travel were the issue, bus passes, payment for car mileage or on receipt of train and bus fares were all seen as acceptable modes of payment. However, some of the younger follow-up interviewees expressed a strong preference for bus passes.

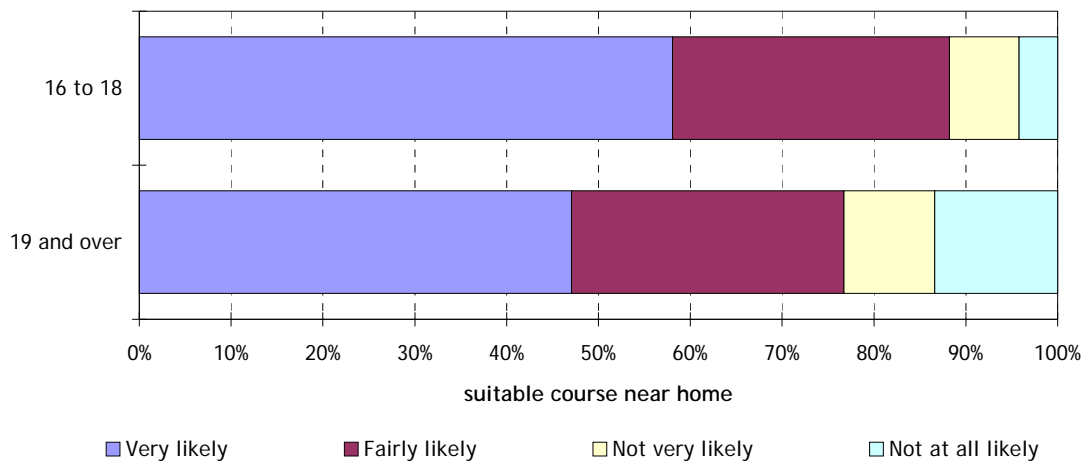
4.3 Other enablers

The survey explored the likelihood of whether a range of non-financial enablers would make a difference to any decision to take up a course in the future. The principle reason for these questions was to contextualise the responses regarding financial enablers, but they also provide important evidence on these as potential participation raising measures in their own right.

4.3.1 Learning provision: location and timing of courses

Having the right course available at a nearby college is at least as important for encouraging participation – in both age categories – as most of the forms of financial assistance detailed above, with the exception of subsidising fees in full. This pattern broadly holds across the spectrum of demographics and circumstances, with the possible exception of those with childcare issues (for whom there is a more complex need for balancing of childcare needs and provision).

Figure 4.10: How likely availability of a suitable course at a college near home would be to make a difference to future learning decisions



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

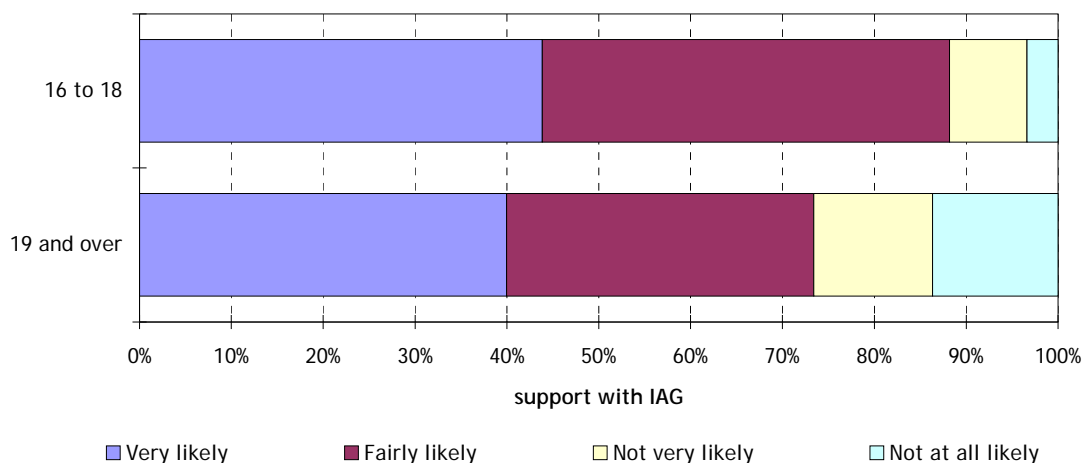
The qualitative follow-up interviews confirmed that survey respondents who have said they are interested in studying do tend to have looked into some of the provision available locally, to have formed preferences for what they would like to study and where and to have identified some of the difficulties they may face along the way. As such, the balance of opinions reflected in the figure can be relied upon as a balance of *informed* opinions rather than just a statement of the obvious. This finding therefore puts the effectiveness of financial support into perspective and indicates that policies in this area are unlikely to be fully effective unless the ‘right’ provision is available first.

The focus groups confirmed that a wide range of learning settings was popular with learners and potential learners, though generally local provision was preferred. Some non-learners liked the idea of provision in local community centres, presumably a familiar setting in which they would feel comfortable. There was a clearly demand from parents for learning situated in their children’s school or at least during the day with timetables compatible with dropping off and picking up children before and after school. The content of courses was generally felt to be at least as important as the location of delivery.

4.3.2 Information, advice and guidance

Information advice and guidance was valued by the survey respondents, especially by those in the 16 to 18 age bracket. Beyond this impact on participation, of course, there are many important impacts on retention, achievement, progression and work outcomes from accessing adequate IAG early on. Evidence from other research suggests that studying on the wrong course, potentially as a result of an IAG deficit, leads to increased drop-out (for example, see Johnson C, Page R, Miller L (2007) *Reasons for Early Leaving from Further Education and Work-based Learning Courses*, Research Report RR849, Department for Education and Skills; June 2007)

Figure 4.11: How likely advice about the options available would be to make a difference to future learning decisions



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

The qualitative follow-up interviews found that many non-learners had tried to access IAG, but that they had sometimes come away from the experience confused. While they were often able to establish what they would like to learn, they were not necessarily able to establish what they would have to pay, whether the number of hours would be compatible with their benefits or indeed what support they might be eligible for. One interviewee complained nobody could help her with her queries and she ended up 'going round the houses'.

The messages raised in the provider consultation and the focus groups were consistent with this theme of a need for better IAG in that they both underlined the need for those providing IAG (whether in Further Education colleges (FECs) or elsewhere) to be better informed and trained and kept up to date, particularly

with regard to financial support. There were widespread calls for a well-publicised, free helpline providing holistic assistance with enquiries regarding eligibility, entitlements and form-filling assistance. Alternatively (or possibly additionally) a one-stop shop service from which those interested in learning can come away with an idea both of what they would like to study and of what support they might be able to receive to help them. It should not be assumed all potential learners will be using online resources.

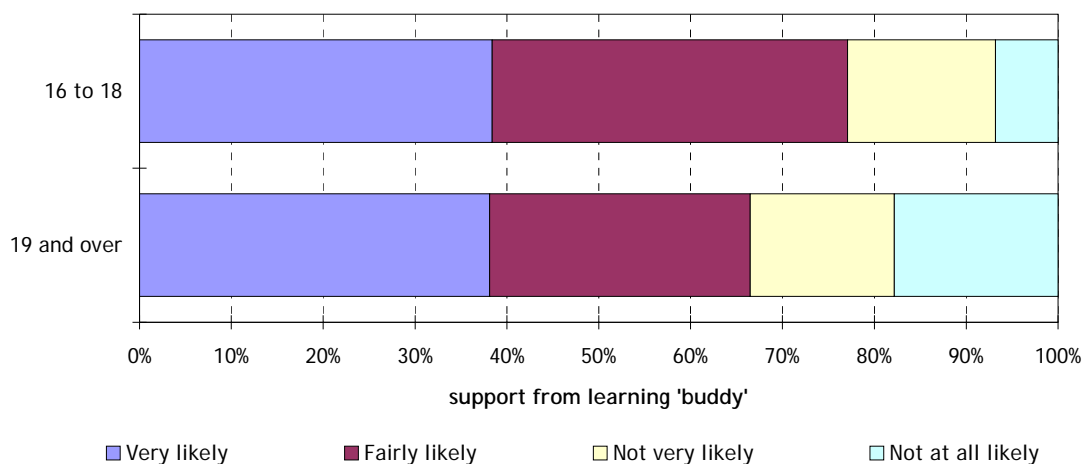
In light of this evidence, it might be worth researching examples of good practice in FECs to see how best to make sure that when a disadvantaged learner picks up the courage to make enquiries the system is able to answer their queries and to capitalise on their interest in learning. A relatively easy first step, highlighted in the focus groups, would be for information about funds and eligibility to be included in prospectuses and other media, including perhaps a DVD:

'Knowing you could get your exam fees paid for. Having the course paid is great but if people on benefits knew exam fees are free beforehand maybe more people would be encouraged to do courses.' (Learners aged 26 plus with children).

'A visual thing would be better, like a DVD - a five minute programme with real people, so you can see what they are doing, how far they have come, and what help they received.' (Non learners, 19-25 year olds).

The literature on barriers to participation stresses that informational, aspirational and psycho-social barriers (for instance, where participation is uncommon within the peer group) have possibly a greater impact than financial and practical barriers. Personal learning 'buddies' and taster courses are seen as two enablers that might help overcome such barriers. As indicated in Figures 4.12 and 4.13, these were reasonably warmly received in the survey, though perhaps not to the same extent as some of the financial enablers. Unfortunately, this question could not be covered in any qualitative depth. However, the interviews with non-learners did reveal a number of confidence issues and several of the interviewees were seeking courses that might help them to get back into learning or boost their self-confidence.

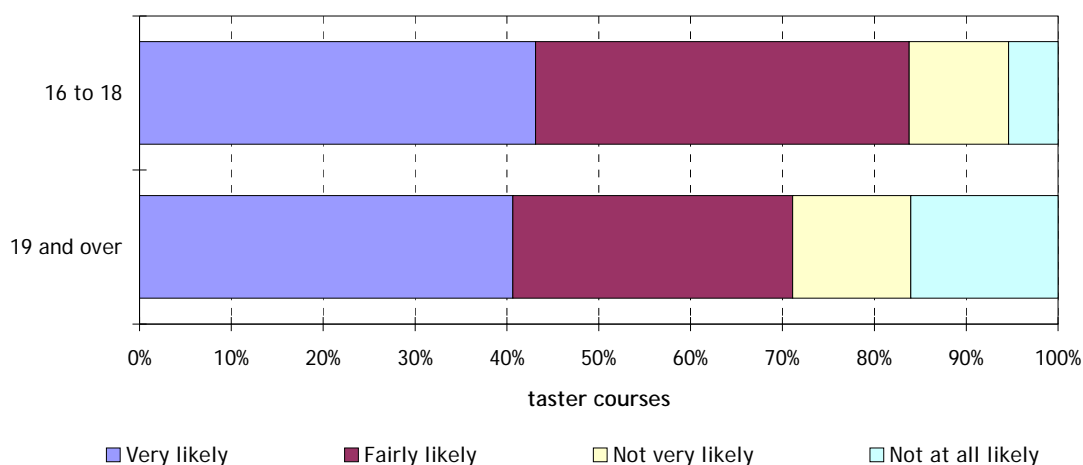
Figure 4.12: How likely a personal learning buddy would be to make a difference to future learning decisions



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Figure 4.13: How likely availability of a taster course would be to make a difference to future learning decisions



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

These findings suggest there may well be scope to increase participation using taster courses and learning buddies, though these are unlikely to be suitable or required for all disadvantaged potential learners.

5 Attitudes and Barriers to Education and Training

In this section we review the extent of interest in participating in education or training among the potential LSD client groups. We consider attitudes towards education and training; the perceived benefits of education and training; motivations for further studying; and some of the barriers to participation.

5.1 Key points

- There is a very high potential demand for further education and learner support among current disadvantaged non-learners. Around 73 per cent of the disadvantaged young people and five per cent of disadvantaged adults are in education. Among adults, 57 per cent plan to study for a course or training that will lead to a qualification in the next three years. Only 38 per cent do not expect to engage in education or training at all in the next three years.
- The main factor determining closeness to education is age. Interest in participating in education or training is highest among those aged 16 to 18 and those aged between 19 to 29 years but it then declines with age. Those aged 50 to 70 are the least interested in participating. Demand is also linked to life events such as having children and/or deciding to enter the labour market or change jobs.
- The majority of young people and adults believe that education and training have work related benefits, either specifically related to a current job or benefits associated with general employability and longer term job prospects. As age increases then a greater emphasis is placed on the personal, developmental and social benefits of learning.
- Motives for wishing to engage in education and training vary. Those who are interested in participation are slightly more likely than those less interested to recognise the personal, developmental and social benefits.

- Some of the most frequently cited barriers to engagement in education and training relate to having other time commitments (work or family). Structural issues (eg courses not being available) and dispositional issues (the belief that it is not necessary for employment) were also apparent.
- Although information, advice and guidance did not feature heavily as a barrier in the survey, not having relevant information on courses or the learner support available presented a significant issue in the qualitative interviews, focus groups and consultation workshops.
- Transport issues did not come up as a major barrier for the majority of disadvantaged learners or early leavers. In the qualitative research, respondents felt that transport costs represented a significant drain on resources but not a significant reason for non-participation. A minority cited the availability and reliability of transport services as being significant.
- Finance was mentioned by around 20 per cent of adults and 12 per cent of young people as a potential barrier to participation. Their main concerns relate to the costs of study. Other factors included having to pay tuition fees and the potential impact on working hours or the receipt of benefits.
- Lack of childcare provision was a significant barrier among a minority (21 per cent) of those who had children under the age of five. Issues revolved around costs, availability and flexibility. A minority of non-learners suggested that trust in formal childcare provisions was also an issue.

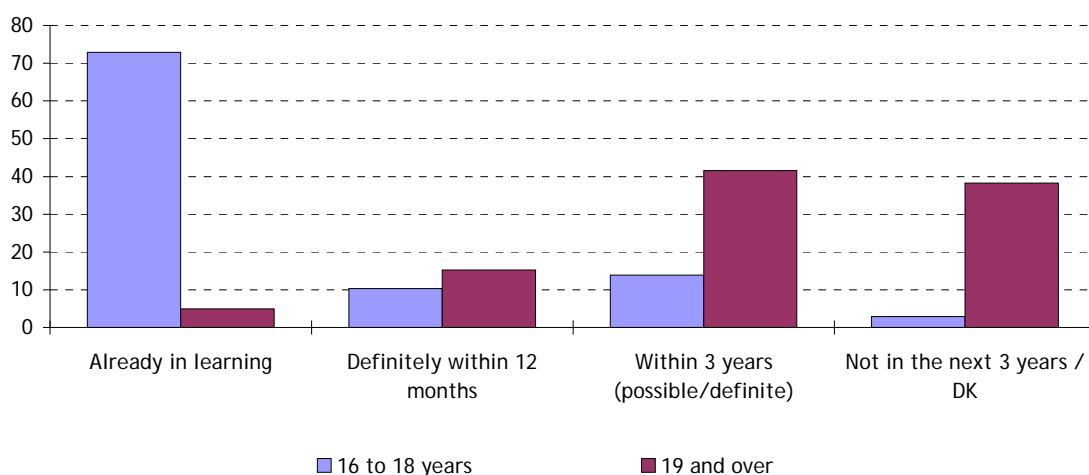
5.2 Intentions to participate in education and training

The survey aimed to assess the extent to which individuals were interested in participating on a course or training that would lead to a qualification. First, we asked all respondents not in education whether they were definitively or probably likely to engage in learning in the next 12 months. Those who were not definitely going to participate in the next 12 months were asked a follow up question about their intentions over the next three years. As we can see from Figure 5.1:

- the majority of young people (73 per cent) are in education or training, while most of the remainder believe they are likely to return to studying at some stage in the next three years and only three per cent do not believe they will re-engage with education;
- among adults (over 19s) only a few (five per cent) are currently studying, but 57 per cent believe they will probably study in the next three years. This means that 38 per cent of adults do not believe they will engage in learning that will lead to a qualification in the next three years.

The finding that around 97 per cent of disadvantaged young people and 62 per cent of disadvantaged adults are either studying or believe they will re-engage in education in the next three years was largely supported by the follow up qualitative interviewing where respondents who had indicated an interest in learning were asked to provide more detail of the types of courses they were looking to do. In all cases, the respondents were able to give vivid detail of the courses they were interested in and in many cases the respondents had actually made attempts to find out about course availability and costs etc. Thus, although the survey figures should be taken as indicative of the population's views, rather than an exact forecast demand, all this suggests that there is potentially high demand for further education among the cohort.

Figure 5.1: Intentions to participate in education or training leading to a qualifications by age group



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Views on the likelihood of taking part in education vary by individual characteristics. The survey suggests that women; those from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds, those with children; those in employment; those with Level 2 qualifications and those who do not have learning difficulties or disabilities are all disproportionately more likely to believe that they will engage in education over the next three years. Those between 19 and 29 years of age are also more likely to believe they will engage in learning, while people aged over 50 were the least motivated. There does not appear to be much relationship between income and willingness to study.

Among 16 to 18 year olds, the main factors affecting views on future participation were previous educational success and ethnicity. Those with Level 2 qualifications

and those from BME groups were more likely to suggest that they intend to engage in future learning. A detailed overview table of intent to participate by individual characteristics is presented in the Appendices.

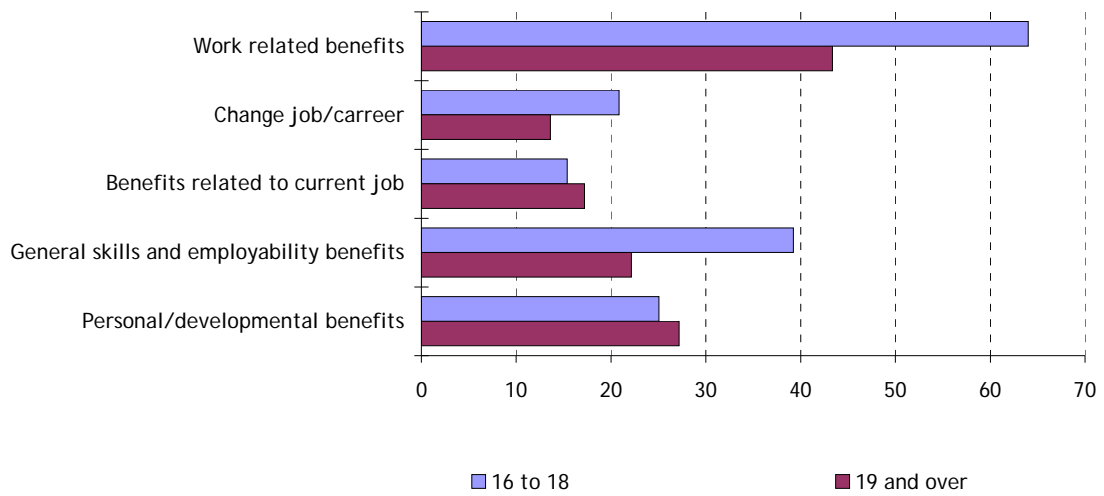
5.3 Perceived benefits of education and training

The survey respondents were asked to identify the benefits of participating in education or training. The most commonly reported benefits were usually work related. Young people were more likely than adults to cite these (64 per cent compared with 43 per cent of adults). This was largely due to their identification of general employability gains associated with education rather than links to any current job. Among adults, there is less emphasis on the general employability benefits of learning and relatively more focus on learning for the sake of acquiring qualifications and skills related to their current jobs.

Personal and developmental reasons for learning (such as meeting new people, doing it for the challenge and improving self-confidence) are also recognised by a large minority of both young people and adults. These reasons were found to be particularly important among some key groups of individuals: namely, those over the age of 50 (who tend not to associate learning with improved job prospects), and people with children (whose motives for learning are often associated with a desire to support their family).

A number of conclusions might be drawn from these observations. First, the employment and career benefits of learning are more apparent to young people than adults. This is largely because people see education as an investment that is made during the early part of their careers rather than during it.

Figure 5.2: Benefits to engaging in education and training



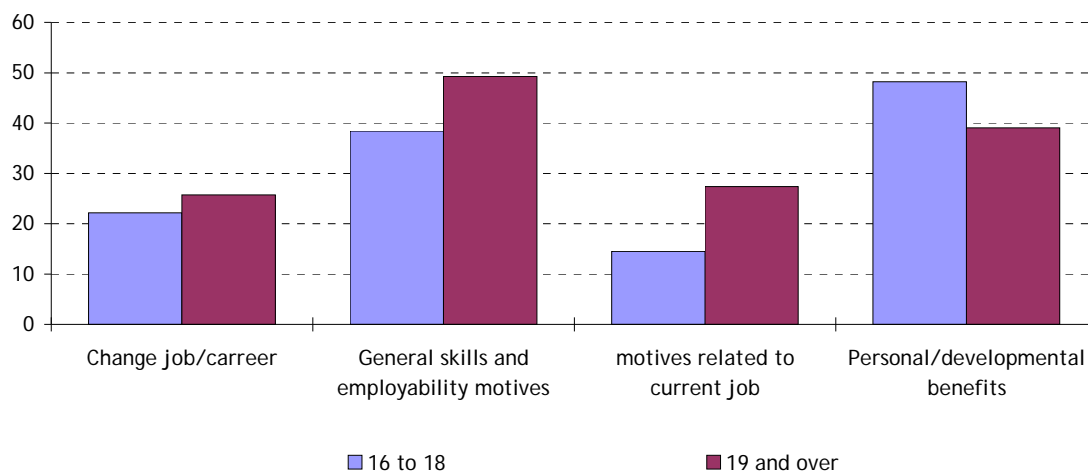
Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

5.4 Motivations for education and training

There is a difference between what the overall population of potential learners regards as the benefits of learning and what actually motivates those who wish to participate to do so. When those who expressed an interest in participating were asked about their motives, employment related reasons were still very important but personal development reasons increased in relevance. This suggests that although the economic benefits of education are quite widely accepted by all, the personal/ developmental benefits are less well recognised by those not seeking to participate.

Figure 5.3: Motives for wishing to participate in education or training



Base: Learning disadvantaged population who are studying or believe they will participate in education or training within the next three years (unweighted sample =3,893 cases; missing responses excluded; multiple responses possible)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

5.5 Barriers to education and training

The survey attempted to gauge the extent to which non-learners and learners experienced 'barriers' to participating in education. This was done in two ways:

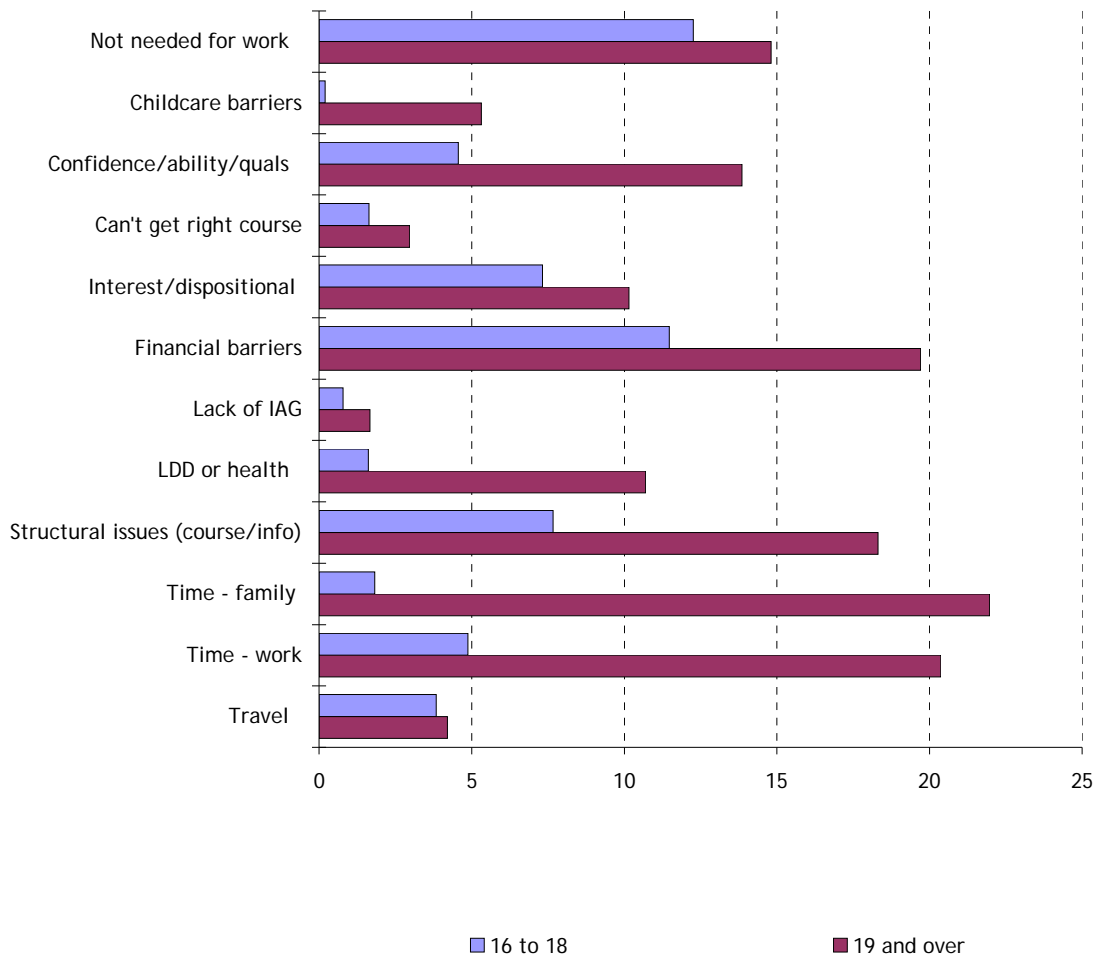
- non-learners, respondents were asked about the reasons for non-participation and follow-up questions were raised to find out whether there were any factors that made participation difficult.
- learners were asked about intentions to progress into further learning and whether there were any factors that were likely to make such progression difficult.

Time factors were the most often cited by adults as barriers to participation. The qualitative research suggested that this was partly because adult women often saw the need to look after the family as a time related barrier to participation rather than an issue of childcare. Indeed, those with young children who expressed an interest in re-engaging in education often suggested that they would like to do so once their children were in nursery school.

Adult men were more likely to cite work commitments as affecting their ability to participate in education and several qualitative examples highlighted how shift-working and working anti-social hours impinged on the ability of some to participate in education. They were also likely to suggest a lack of interest in participation as education and training were 'not needed for work'.

A range of dispositional barriers were also cited (such as fear of fitting in, not being able to keep up etc). The most significant dispositional barrier, however, was the belief held by 11 per cent of adults that they were too old to learn. The proportion who feel too old to learn increases significantly with age: 30 per cent of those aged 50 or over cited this barrier.

Figure 5.4: Barriers to participating in education



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded; multiple responses possible)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

5.5.1 Information, advice and guidance barriers

'They said there is help out there but if people don't know where to get it from then they don't get it.' (Focus group of learners aged 26 plus with children)

'... we knew about it [EMA] from school but 'when I started at college nobody really told me what I was entitled to. I was shocked I'd not been told before. I was told half way through.' (BME, 16-18 year-old learners).

Throughout the survey, attempts were made to gauge the importance of information, advice and guidance. When unprompted, lack of information, advice and guidance (IAG) on course options was rarely mentioned in the survey as a reason for not engaging in education and training. Around two per cent of the survey respondents suggested that this was something that prevented or made it difficult for them to participate. We should, however, treat this finding with a high degree of caution as a high proportion of respondents also suggested that they would be more likely to engage in education if they were to have information, advice and guidance (see Section 4.3.2). IAG related to student support did arise as a key issue in the qualitative research.

Sources of IAG

The messages from the qualitative research indicated that knowledge of the educational opportunities, learner support options, and the sources of IAG at their disposal varied among both learners and non-learner groups:

- For learners, the focus groups found that difference in knowledge often reflected the quality of support offered by key individuals within the college or school's career service. Learners had used a range of formal and informal sources of information including friends and family, college staff (reception staff, tutors and a student finance officer), Connexions and Jobcentre staff and the media including television. Where learners did find IAG helpful, this seemed to be down to the knowledge and efforts of key individuals such as a Connexions adviser who worked with young mothers, a college student finance officer, or a Jobcentre Adviser who worked at Sure Start.
- Non-learners who were planning to study in the next 12 months often suggested in the qualitative interviews that they were in contact with IAG support (either within a college or through other agencies - eg Connexions). People not in education but planning to study in the next three years, were often able to cite possible sources of information (eg Connexions, Citizen's Advice Bureaux, local college prospectuses and websites) but had mixed experiences of the quality of the information available.

This suggests that the more distant an individual is from participating in education the more likely it is that they will be relying on paper and web based information on IAG rather than personalised support. It is essential that these sources of information are clearly laid out and highlight the potential of receiving learner support.

Issues around awareness of learner support

The research process established some anecdotal evidence to suggest that individuals responsible for providing IAG on learner support were not always aware of where to find appropriate IAG resources. For example, in the consultation workshops each table had on it a copy of the LSC publication *Financial Help for Adults*, along with a printed copy of the *Learner Support Toolkit*, available to download from the LSC website. Many of the workshop student support participants were unaware of the existence of these documents, and such was the level of requests for copies of these two documents that NIACE sent versions of them to participants after each event took place.

A lack of awareness of the support available was also reflected in the focus group and qualitative interviews. Both non-learners and learners often reported difficulty in finding and understanding general information about education. Some of the participants in the focus groups who had used the directgov website found it time-consuming; while others did not have access to computers or preferred to speak to an actual person for advice.

Most of the focus group participants who were learners reported receiving IAG about funding and eligibility but many found it confusing, contradictory or inaccurate. These comments seemed to refer to staff in colleges and the agency administering EMA and ALG. Jobcentre staff were also mentioned in this regard. It should be noted, however, that the DWP and LSC are currently trialling a more integrated approach to employment and skills for new Jobcentre Plus claimants, whereby those with identified skill needs or an interest in retraining can be referred to the nextstep adult careers service for more tailored advice on learning options and the financial support that might be available for these.

Non-learners' knowledge of learner support

Among non-learners the knowledge of funding appeared mixed:

- Many of the adults who participated in the qualitative research were aware of Education Maintenance Allowance but the Adult Learning Grant was less well recognised.

- Adult non-learners who were planning to study in the near future often had some idea of the potential costs of study but were unsure of the support available and/ or whether they would have to pay course fees.
- Although several non-learners who wanted to study in the near future could provide what appeared to be very precise estimates of course fees, in some cases respondents raised concerns about fees when it was unlikely that these would have applied (eg they were interested in studying on a skills for life course, which would be free).

5.5.2 Childcare barriers

'[The college] offered me childcare but it was only for two hours a day and the childcare was on the main site, which was okay on Mondays when I was studying there but no good on Fridays when I was studying at [the other site], which was more than a mile away. I couldn't get from my course to the nursery on Fridays so I didn't go to college on those days.'

(Interview with adult early-leaver)

'There are limited places at the college crèche. That's what a lot of parents find... there's not enough crèche facilities for people to get onto courses so that puts them off. So they wait till they are at full time school.' (Learner 26 plus, with children).

Among parents aged 19+ with children under the age of five, the survey found that 21 per cent identified childcare barriers (there were too few cases to explore these issues among parents aged under 20). Slightly fewer (16 per cent) of those with children under 12 cited childcare barriers. These barriers mainly revolved around:

- Cost issues - among those with children under the age of five, around 11 per cent suggested that the cost of childcare was a barrier to participation (the figure drops slightly to eight per cent when looking at those with children under the age of 12).
- Availability issues - nine per cent of those with children under the age of five raised issues related to the suitability of childcare provisions (the equivalent figure for those with children under 12 was six per cent). The focus groups identified some cases where funding was available but childcare places were not, or were not available at the appropriate venues or times. Some specifically referred to the lack of crèche facilities at or near to the learning site (especially in split-site colleges), insufficient places at college crèches, and lack of evening provision.
- Trust issues - three per cent of parents with children under five raised concerns over trust (the same percentage of those with children under 12 raised these concerns). Issues of trust were also apparent in the qualitative interviews,

which found that non-learners often preferred to leave their children with close members of the family than in formal childcare.

5.5.3 Financial barriers

'A lot of people with children on income support would come to college if they could apply for [ALG]. A couple of people on my course dropped out because they're on job seekers allowance and so not entitled to ALG.' (Learners 25 +.)

'I'd prefer an apprenticeship to college as it allows you to work and earn at the same time.' (Non-learner 19+)

'If I spent it [studying] then that's less money I can spend on my family. I don't have much. I can't do that.' (Non-learner 25+)

Financial barriers to participation in education and training were reported by around 20 per cent of adults and 12 per cent of young people. Financial barriers were most likely to be mentioned by: those who were between the ages of 19 and 29 years (26 per cent); adults with children under five years old (27 per cent) and adults planning to study between two and three years' time (27 per cent).

Around 11 per cent of adults raised fears about education being expensive; eight per cent suggested that it would be hard to pay course fees and around two per cent were concerned with borrowing money or getting into debt. Among young people, six per cent suggested that education and training would be expensive; four per cent suggested that further study would involve difficulty in having to pay course fees, and two per cent raised concerns over getting into debt.

A small minority (less than one per cent) also raised issues related to having to give up state benefits or work in order to study. The qualitative research revealed a greater tension between receipt of state benefits and studying and/or receipt of learner support than the survey, partly because it allowed for greater exploration of these issues. Several of those in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance or income support raised concerns about losing their benefits if they undertake education or training for 16 hours per week or more. The qualitative research also revealed that people in employment were concerned about the financial implications of reducing their working hours in order to make any major commitments to education and training. Among young adults, this meant that apprenticeships and other forms of work-based training appeared more appealing than studying at a college with the assistance of an Adult Learning Grant.

5.5.4 Transport barriers

Transport and travel barriers did not feature highly in the survey. Among both young people and adults, around four per cent cited transport or travel related barriers.

Among current learners, issues related to transport appeared to be a more immediate issue. Around 17 per cent of 16 to 18 year olds and six per cent of adults suggest that in the absence of any learner support they would experience difficulty with the cost of transport. Around two per cent of young people and one per cent of adults reported issues with the reliability of transport. Finally, five per cent of young people and two per cent of adults raised concerns regarding the length of the journey to their place of study. The qualitative interviews highlighted how in some instances adults found other journeys to be more of an issue, eg travelling to and from college, childcare and/or work.

6 Experiences of Further Education

This chapter reviews the experiences of disadvantaged learners and early leavers in education and training. We begin by reviewing the factors that might affect the ability of learners and early leavers to participate fully in further education. The chapter then reviews the experiences of learners in receipt of learner support, the application process and views on the equity and efficiency of learner support administration (in particular Education Maintenance Allowance). Next we consider the difficulties that learners and early leavers might experience in the absence of learner support and the impact of learner support in reducing the difficulties experienced by those in FE. The chapter concludes by reviewing the reasons for early leaving and the potential impact of learner support in reducing the incidence of early leaving.

6.1 Key points

- The majority (over nine-in-ten) of 16 to 18 and adult learners were able to enroll on the course or training that they wanted to do, compared with around eight-in-ten early leavers.
- The reasons for not being able to enroll on first choice courses usually relate to meeting qualifications requirements and difficulties in getting onto the preferred choice course, rather than factors related to finance, transport or childcare.
- Nearly one-half of the disadvantaged learners and early leavers (45 per cent of young people and 42 per cent of adults) report that they had difficulties or barriers while studying (or would have had them in the absence of learner support).
- Transport, finance and childcare barriers to participation were cited by learners and early leavers. Childcare provisions are a barrier to a sizeable minority of

those with children, and without learner support they would not have been able to participate in education.

- The majority (93 per cent) of those who received learner support and reported a barrier suggest that this support assisted them with their main barrier to participation.
- However, the application process for the various strands of learner support was seen as being complicated and at times slow. EMA was most often cited in this regard but this may have been due to its wider coverage.
- The attendance rule for EMA was questioned by some learners and workshop consultants as it was not seen as being uniformly applied and penalised learners who were late for reasons beyond their control.
- A range of reasons were provided for early leaving. Most of these were circumstantial (for example, the learner had changed jobs, experienced a bereavement or had health problems) or course related (for example, the learner felt that it was not the course they wanted to do). Very few cited financial, childcare or transport reasons for withdrawal.
- A high proportion of early leavers did suggest, however, that financial support or incentives would have encouraged them to have completed their course or training.

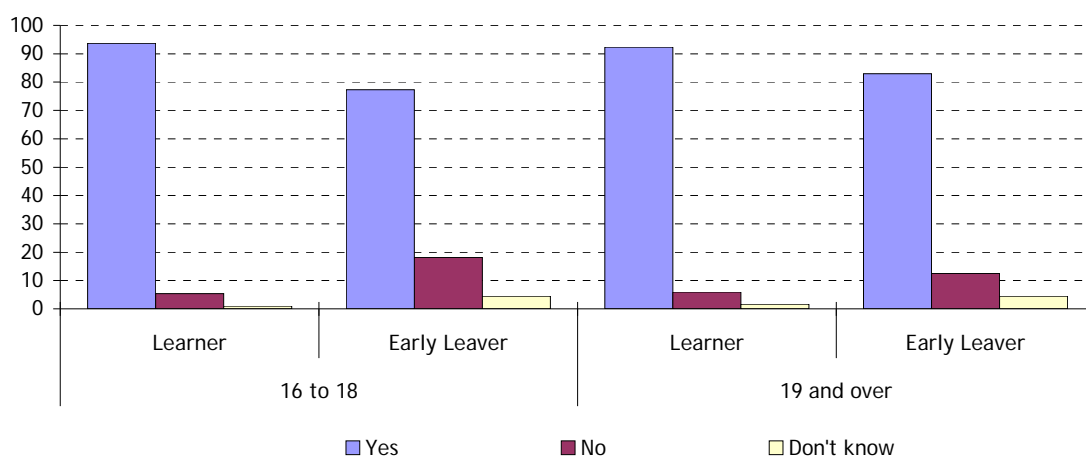
6.2 Partial barriers to participation

Barriers related to provision, finance, childcare and transport can all infringe the ability of non-learners to engage in education and training by preventing their participation completely. In some instances these barriers to engagement might not prevent participation completely but instead they might influence or restrict the choice of education or training that people access, thereby restricting their engagement to 'second preference' options. Such barriers can be described as 'partial barriers' to participation. The survey investigated whether those who had a recent episode of learning experienced any difficulties that prevented them from registering on their preferred course, ie whether they had experienced these partial barriers to participation.

Overall, the vast majority of learners were able to take up their preferred course option, ie they did not experience a 'partial barrier' that forced them to consider second preference courses. Among both adults and young people, over 90 per cent of the learners who completed their courses/training suggested that they were able to sign onto the exact course/training that they had wanted to take. Among early leavers, however, lower proportions said they were able to take on their first choice of course: 77 per cent of young early leavers and 83 per cent of adult early

leavers. There are two potential explanations for this. First, we should recognise that the learners and early leavers are slightly different groups (early leavers have a higher proportion of work based learners that may also have higher withdrawal). A second potential explanation is that those who experience difficulties in enrolling onto their first choice course are more likely to withdraw from education than those who are able to start a course of their preferred choice.

Figure 6.1: Whether learner / early leaver was able to register onto the course they wanted to take



Base: Learners and early leavers (unweighted sample =1,984 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

A review of the partial barriers to participating on a preferred choice course suggests that structural issues (eg the course not being available) and personal issues (eg not having the right qualifications) were by far the most significant barriers to enrolling on a first choice of course. Financial barriers and those related to transport and childcare were rarely cited. This suggests that although financial learner support may have a role in encouraging non-learners into education and in supporting their retention, it might be less relevant in directing the selection of one course over another.

6.3 Barriers while studying

We now turn to the difficulties experienced by learners during their course. Learners and early leavers who took part in the survey were asked whether, in the absence of any financial learner support, they would have had any difficulty in participating on their course. Nearly one-half of the disadvantaged learners and early leavers (45 per cent of young people and 42 per cent of adults) report that they had difficulties or barriers while studying (or would have had them in the absence of learner support).

Among young people, around 20 per cent of the learners and early leavers surveyed reported they would have had transport difficulties, while 16 per cent suggested they would have had financial difficulties. Adults highlighted similar concerns and nine per cent reported that they had transport difficulties (or would have had them without learner support) while 22 per cent suggested that they would have financial difficulties. Three per cent of adults reported that they had/would have experienced childcare difficulties. This translates to 13 per cent of those with children under the age of five.

The focus groups found that the cost of transport was viewed as a significant cost of learning, although not necessarily as a *barrier* for most participants. This point was echoed in the qualitative interviews with non-learners and early leavers, where adults and young people were able to identify transport costs as being an issue but did not feel that these costs were insurmountable. Among young people, this may be because many reported having had access to subsidized or free travel through bus passes or claiming costs on submission of receipts. Some participants used their EMA or ALG to cover travel costs, and parents helped some young people.

6.4 Application process

The survey and qualitative interviews did not focus on issues related to the application and administration of learner support. Consequently, the evidence presented here is based upon the findings from the focus groups and consultation workshops. Some of their comments are presented below.

- Providers and focus group participants felt that the processing of claims took too long. Focus group participants thought that the gap between making an application and receiving a decision, and between a decision and payment was too long for both EMA and ALG applicants. The problem seemed to rest with the agency – which has since been replaced – administering the process rather than with colleges.
- Consultation event participants identified the language and complexity of the application processes and application forms for learner support in general as barriers. Similarly, most focus group participants who applied for EMA and ALG perceived the forms to be lengthy, complicated and to require excessive unnecessary information (although neither form, in practice, asks for any information which is not required for the assessment of eligibility). Participants wanted the process of applying and receiving EMA to be easier and the helpline to be improved (several focus group participants commented on difficulty in getting through to advisors on the helpline).

- Focus group participants were unhappy about sending original documents such as bank statements and tax credit forms through the post. A few reported that documents had been lost or retained for a long time.

Individuals in the focus groups and consultation events suggested a range of improvements to the process including:

- simplify the application forms and the language on forms
- provide help with completing forms
- ensure that college staff and those administering funds centrally are better informed about the availability of funds, entitlements, and how to complete forms
- enable college staff to verify documents rather than sending them elsewhere for verification or invite a member of staff from the agency administering funds to come to colleges for this purpose
- improve the application and payment process. This largely relates to a need to ensure that the process for paying learner support is timely and efficient.
- make payments on the same day each week to assist with budgeting.

6.4.1 EMA attendance rules

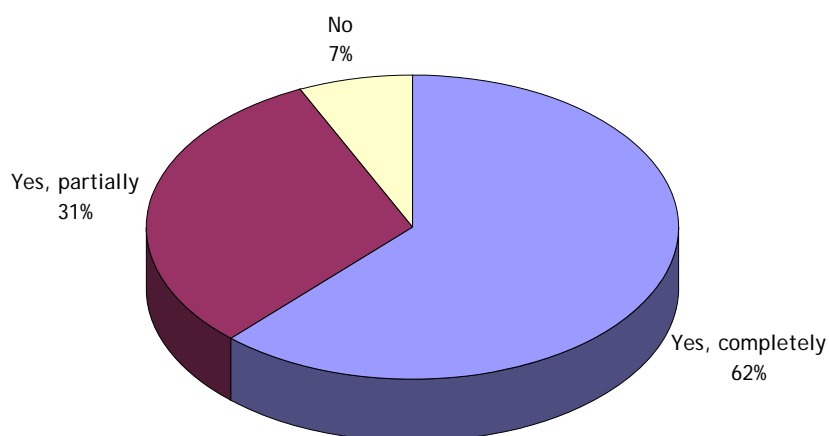
Issues related to the application of the attendance rule for EMAs were also raised within the focus groups. Some reported having payments stopped for reasons beyond their control such as late public transport, needing to attend work focused interviews or to look after children. In a similar vein, consultation event participants felt they should be given more discretion about reporting learners as missing sessions or being late for a session, as they felt that the ensuing cut to the EMA might disincentivise learners from attending (it should be acknowledged, however, that the providers have some discretion in how they apply the attendance rules). Participants suggested making deductions proportionate to the time they were late or the number of missed sessions.

6.5 Perceived impacts of learner support

Those in receipt of learner support and who suggested that they had/ would have experienced difficulties in studying without it were asked about the extent to which learner support had an impact in reducing their main barriers in studying. Just under two-thirds (62 per cent) of those that cited difficulties suggested that these difficulties were completely addressed through learner support, and nearly a third (31 per cent) suggested that the difficulties were partially resolved through

learner support. Seven per cent reported that their difficulties were not resolved but this figure falls to six per cent when we restrict the sample to those who reported difficulties that we might expect learner support to be able to assist (eg transport, financial support and childcare) - ie we exclude from our calculation learners who only claimed course or dispositional barriers.

Figure 6.2: Impact of learner support on main difficulty (learners and early leavers)



Base: Those who had received learner support and reported a potential barrier to participation (unweighted sample =1,063 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Finally, we review the impact of the individual strands of learner support by the difficulties experienced by learners. Among young people, discretionary learner support appears to be associated with the biggest impact (measured in terms of assisting with the main difficulties with studying). Around 95 per cent of all those who received support to assist with accommodation, transport or the costs of studying reported that this support assisted them in tackling their main difficulties. Education Maintenance Allowances were also positively viewed and 92 per cent of those in receipt of EMAs suggested that learner support assisted them in their dealing with their main difficulties.

Most adults in receipt of learner support were also positive about its impact, with between 90 and 94 per cent of adults in receipt of any one type of support (eg ALG, Hardship support etc) reporting at least a partial impact on the difficulties they would have encountered. The one group that stands out, however, is adult childcare where the proportion who cited difficulties and who suggested that learner support helped was 82 per cent. The reason that adult childcare has a lower rating than other types of support may be explained by the fact that almost a third of those citing childcare problems saw the problem as being one of a lack of

suitable provisions. Childcare support can help with the cost of provision but not its availability.

Table 6.1: Whether LS helped with main barrier to learning by type of support received

	16 to 18 year olds				19 year olds and over			
	Yes, completely Row N %	Yes, partially Row N %	No Row N %	Total N*	Yes, completely Row N %	Yes, partially Row N %	No Row N %	Total N*
Education Maintenance Allowance	53.8	38.6	7.5	376	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trips	66.1	29.8	4.2	163	63.8	26.5	9.3	109
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	65.5	29.7	4.7	216	60.4	30.2	9.4	130
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	62.6	29.0	8.4	42	57.7	24.3	17.9	39
Help to cover accommodation costs	73.9	21.1	5.0	43	66.3	20.2	13.5	39
Adult Learning Grant	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	52.4	37.9	9.7	83
Career Development Loan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	36.3	56.0	7.7	18
Course fees fully paid or discounted	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	69.2	24.1	6.0	420
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	59.2	32.3	8.5	162	57.3	33.3	8.9	89
Help with other expenses	61.7	28.4	9.9	62	63.2	29.1	7.7	35

* = base figures provided are unweighted

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

6.6 Reasons for early leaving

We now consider reasons for early leaving. Among young people, the most common reasons were course related. Around one-quarter (24 per cent) of the young people questioned reported that ended their study because they felt that it was not the course that they wanted to do or that they had changed their minds. A further nine per cent felt that the quality of teaching or training was poor. The second most often quoted set of issues among young people related to circumstantial problems such as changing jobs (eight per cent), health problems

(seven per cent) and not liking the people on the course (seven per cent). A range of other miscellaneous factors account for the remainder of the reasons. Few young people (two per cent) cited transport issues and none raised issues related to finance.

Adults were more likely to claim circumstantial reasons for withdrawal. Around 13 per cent reported health problems; 12 per cent reported that they had changed jobs; nine per cent experienced a change in their homelife (eg bereavement); eight per cent reported that the course did not fit in with their working hours and four per cent became pregnant. Course related issues were also a problem, with ten per cent claiming that the course was not what they had expected and nine per cent claiming that the teaching or training quality was poor and a similar percentage suggesting that finding time for the workload was a problem. Two per cent raised issues related to course fees and one per cent of adults who left their courses early suggested that childcare was a problem.

In summary, there are a host of miscellaneous reasons why people do not complete their courses. Among young people the problems are usually course related (ie the learners have not selected the 'right' course or have changed their minds). This is closely followed by circumstantial reasons for leaving related to their work and personal lives. For adults the issues tend to be more circumstantial, although course related reasons for withdrawal are not insubstantial. Among both groups, there is no real evidence from the survey that a lack of learner support has been a significant factor in their withdrawal.

Table 6.2 Reasons for early leaving

	16 to 18	19 and over
Found the course was not what I wanted to do after all/ changed my mind	24.4	10.0
Poor quality of teaching/ training	9.4	9.2
Changed to a different job	8.0	11.7
Health problems/ illness	6.6	12.9
Didn't like/ get on with people on the course	6.5	1.8
The course was cancelled/ stopped halfway through	3.6	4.7
Workload made it difficult to make time for study/ training	3.1	8.5
Other change in family/ homelife (e.g. bereavement)	3.1	9.1
The course was not at the right level for me (too difficult)	2.9	1.7
Got expelled/ fired/ made redundant	2.9	0.7
Didn't like exams/ classroom element	2.7	0.1
Times of the course/ training didn't suit my working hours	2.7	7.9
Became pregnant/ had a baby	2.6	4.2
Difficulties with transport/ getting to the course	2.3	0.1
Couldn't afford to pay course fees/ course too expensive	0.2	1.6
Difficulties finding childcare	-	0.7
Difficulties with paying for childcare	-	0.2

Base: Early leavers (unweighted sample =728 cases; missing responses excluded; multiple responses possible)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

6.6.1 Impact of learner support

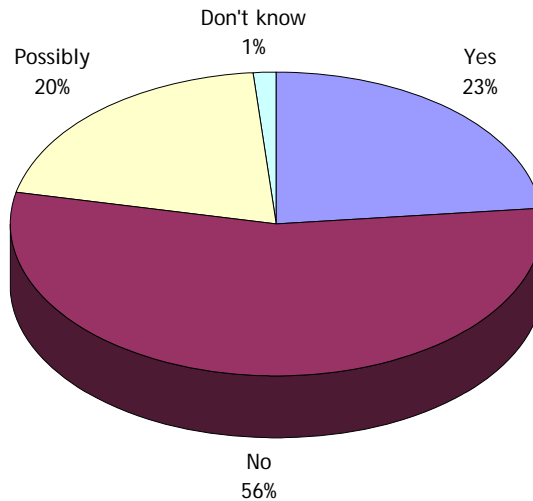
Finally, those who had left their courses early were asked whether different types of financial support or incentives would have made a difference to their study.

- Among young people around one-quarter (23 per cent) indicated that additional support with books, equipment or other course costs would have encouraged them to stay.
- A financial incentive of £30 per week offered to young people not in receipt of EMA was attractive to 43 per cent of early leavers who suggested that such a payment would have encouraged them to have completed their course.
- Among adults, 27 per cent of early leavers suggested that they would have completed their course if they had received additional support with books, equipment or other course costs.

- In terms of financial incentives, 40 per cent of adults suggested that they would have continued their course if they had received £30 per week for doing so.

These results suggest that while financial incentives and support are not necessarily the primary reasons for early leaving, it can play a role in encouraging completion.

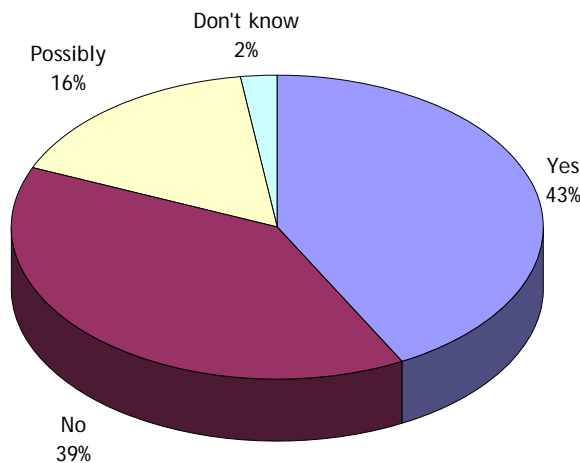
Figure 6.3: Whether support with books and equipment would have encouraged early leavers to stay in education (16 to 18 year old - excluding those in receipt of EMA)



Base = 429

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

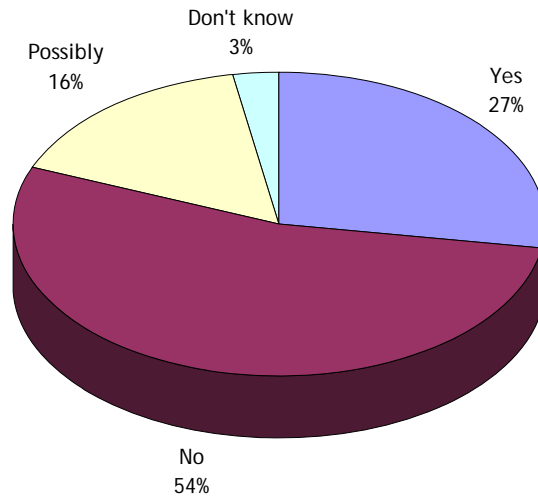
Figure 6.4: Whether receipt of £30 per week would have encouraged early leavers to stay in education (16 to 18 year old - excluding those in receipt of EMA)



Base = 429

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

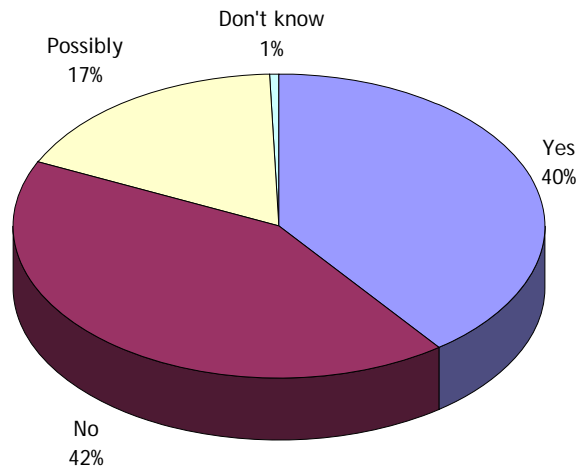
Figure 6.5: Whether support with books and equipment would have encouraged early leavers to stay in education (19 year olds and over - excluding those in receipt of ALG)



Base = 288

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Figure 6.6: Whether receipt of £30 per week would have encouraged early leavers to stay in education (19 year olds and over - excluding those in receipt of ALG)



Base = 288

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Appendix A: Disadvantaged Learners and Non-learners by Attitude and Barrier Segmentation

In Chapter 3 we developed a typology of disadvantaged learners and non-learners based on attitudes and barriers towards education and training. This chapter provides a more detailed overview of the nature of each disadvantaged segment, their motives, barriers and enablers (financial or otherwise) to participation. The methods used to develop these segments are reported in more detail within Appendix B.3.

A.1 Segment summary sheets

In this Appendix we present eleven summary sheets, one covering each of the disadvantaged population segments. Each reporting sheet begins with a summary box that reviews the attitudes, opinions and barriers of the particular segment of the population in question. The data for these pen portraits are presented in the Appendix C.

To alert readers to where figures should be treated with caution, numbers are either presented in brackets where percentages are based on a small number of respondents (ie from 26 to 49 people) or replaced with a dash (-) where the proportion is based on 25 respondents or less. Similarly, charts are omitted in this section where the base size for the chart is 25 or less, and notes are indicated with an asterisk (*) where the base for the chart is from 26 to 49.

Personal characteristics

The blue tables below the main text box table compares how the individual characteristics of our segment compare with the learning disadvantaged

population as a whole (as defined in the Chapter 1). For example, looking at those who make up the **Whatever** segment they were:

- more likely to be from a black or minority ethnic group (BME) than the disadvantaged population as a whole (19 per cent compared with 15 per cent);
- less likely than the disadvantaged population to have dependent children under 12 (10 per cent compared with 22 per cent)
- they are less likely than the disadvantaged population to report having learning difficulties or disabilities (12 per cent compared with 17 per cent)
- they were slightly less likely to be in employment (52 per cent compared with 56 per cent), and
- they were slightly less likely to be interested in taking a skills for life (SfL) course (34 per cent compared with 37 per cent).

In terms of their gender profile, around 54 per cent of this group are female and 46 per cent are male. Nearly one fifth (19 per cent) are aged 16 to 18, compared with ten per cent of the disadvantaged population as whole. At the other end of the age distribution, 37 per cent are between 50 and 70 years of age, compared with 31 per cent of the disadvantaged population.

Enablers to participation

The two tables in green outline the factors people believe are likely to encourage them to study. The left hand table 'Enablers to study' summarises the non-financial motivators. Among those **Whatever**s it suggests that:

- 38 per cent of the segment would be much more likely to study if they received IAG, compared with 40 per cent in the disadvantaged population overall;
- 46 per cent would be very much more motivated to study by having a course nearby, compared with 48 per cent of the disadvantaged population as a whole;
- 36 per cent would be very much more motivated to study by having a learning 'buddy', compared with 38 per cent of the disadvantaged population; and
- 37 per cent would be very much more motivated to study through being able to do a taster course, compared with 40 per cent of the disadvantaged population.

In summary, **Whatever**s are slightly less motivated by non-financial enablers to participation than the disadvantaged population as a whole.

The right-hand table looks at financial enablers. The figures suggest that:

- 45 per cent would be motivated if money was available to the costs of books and equipment, the same as the population of disadvantaged learners as a whole;
- 51 per cent of the segment would be motivated by course fees being paid in full, compared with 57 per cent of the disadvantaged population;
- 55 per cent of those with dependent children under the age of 12 would be motivated by childcare provisions, compared with 51 per cent of the disadvantaged population with children under 12;
- 39 per cent of the segment would be very much more motivated by support to pay for transport costs, compared with the same proportion in the population as a whole;
- 38 per cent would be very motivated by a payment of £30 per week while studying compared with the same proportion in the population as a whole.

In terms of attitudes to loans, between ten and 15 per cent of those that form part of the Whatever segment suggest that they would definitely be willing to take out a loan to support their study. Interest free loans were the most favoured.

Around 40 to 50 per cent of the segment suggest that they would be motivated to study full-time by a financial incentive of £30, £40 or £20 with a bonus at the end of the course. The proportion of those motivated to study rises to over 60 per cent when £50 per week is offered.

Learners and early leavers

The second page of each sheet provides an account of the reasons early leavers had for ending their courses. The table in blue reports the types of support available to learners accessed by the learners and early leavers. Reflecting the age profile of the Whatever, around 38 per cent of this group received EMAs, compared with 22 per cent of the disadvantaged learners and early leavers in our population.

The top pie chart examines the extent to which learner support helped individuals with the main barriers they had cited to learning. Around 93 per cent of the Whatever who received learner support suggested that this support helped them with their main barrier to studying, 60 per cent suggested that the support helped them completely.

The two pie charts at the bottom of the page report the extent to which early leavers believe that cost with the help of study, or whether £30 per week while studying, would help have encouraged / supported them to complete the course that they had left.

'Could help with work'

The majority of this group can see benefits to learning that relate to their current job. Most of this group are non-learners 83%. However, there are slightly more learners in this group (16%) than average. They are better qualified than average with 30% possessing a L2 qualification, and a further 40% having a qualification below L2. Only 30% have no qualifications at all. The income profile of this group reflects that of the coverage of this survey, with 81% on lower incomes (below £19,500 if single, or below £30,800 if married).

This group are closer to learning than on average: 16% are already in learning and 21% are planning on starting a course within the next 12 months. A further 44% are at least open to learning within the next 3 years, and only 18% say that they are not interested in learning in the next 3 years. The overwhelming majority of this group (89%) can see benefits of learning that relate to their current job, such as getting a pay rise or getting a promotion. One-in-five (22%) also see general employability benefits, and 18% see personal developmental benefits. For those interested in learning general skills and employability is the motivation cited most often (by 52%). Although, more than a third cite motives related to their current job (35%), or related to personal development (34%). In terms of attitudes to learning: the vast majority see learning as an investment (78%), and as a good way to meet new people (75%), even though the majority (63%) say that most of their friends left school at 16. The main barriers cited by this group are: time constraints (31%), financial barriers (20%), and career/work related barriers (19%).

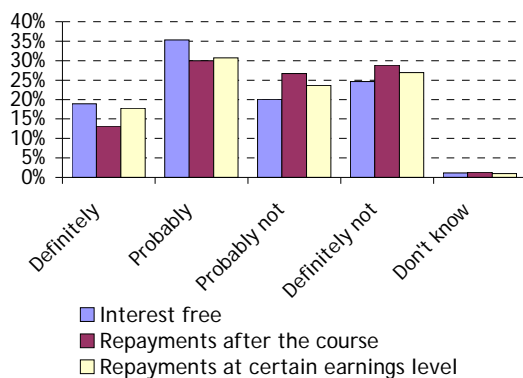
Individual characteristics (%)	Pop	Seg
BME	15.2	12.4
Has children under 12	21.8	23.2
Has children under 5	11.0	10.0
LDD or health problem	17.3	9.8
In employment	56.2	78.8
Would like to improve SFL	37.2	39.0

Age profile and gender (%)	Pop	Seg
Male	42.4	47.0
Female	57.6	53.0
16-18 years	10.4	10.4
19-29 years	20.4	24.3
30-49 years	38.3	46.8
50-70 years	30.9	18.4

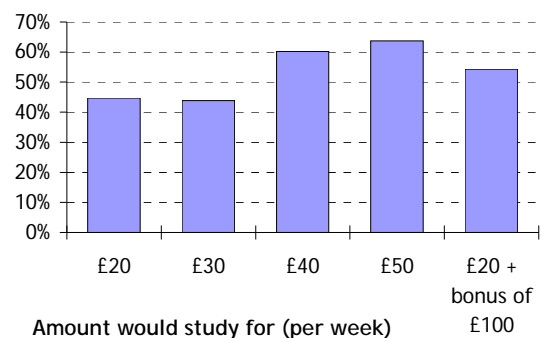
Enablers to study (%)	Pop	Seg
IAG	39.8	45.0
Course nearby	47.8	54.3
Buddy	37.9	43.1
Taster course	40.4	50.4

Learner support enablers to participation (%)	Pop	Seg
Money or support for course costs/equipment	45.4	54.1
Course fees paid in full	56.7	69.7
Help to pay childcare (% with kids under 12)	51.3	54.3
Help to pay transport	39.3	46.5
Payment of £30 p/w whilst learning	37.8	43.8

Attitudes to loans



Attitudes to financial incentives

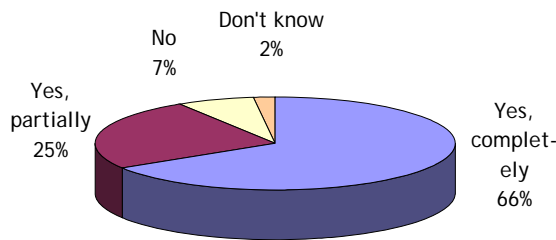


'Could help with work' (learners and early leavers only)

Of the early leavers in this group, 7% said that they couldn't get onto the course that they wanted to. Apart from course related reasons for leaving, 32% cited circumstantial reasons, and 8% said that they left because they failed the course.

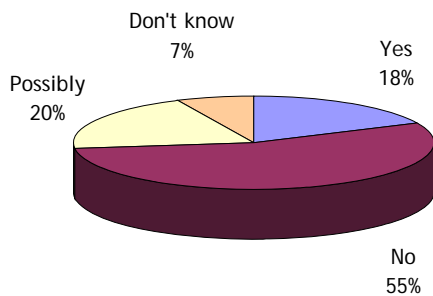
Proportion receiving learner support (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Education Maintenance Allowance	21.7	15.9
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trip	17.8	18.3
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	19.2	18.0
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	5.3	2.7
Help to cover accommodation costs	4.5	4.1
Adult Learning Grants	10.0	9.0
Career Development Loans	3.1	2.4
Course fees fully paid or discounted	54.7	66.8
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	16.4	14.2
Help with other expenses	5.2	5.1

Whether learner support helped with barriers

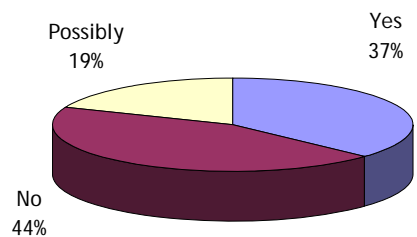


Encourage retention:

...help with cost of study



...£30 per week while studying



'Can't afford it'

These people are open to learning but concerned about the costs / having to give up work. Fewer than average are in learning (9%) or planning on entering learning within the next 12 months (23%) but 59% suggest they would like to do a course within three years, suggesting that they are potentially open to learning. Only 18% say they would not like to do any learning within the next three years. They are more likely to see the benefits of learning than the average, with general skills/employability and personal development benefits cited most frequently (31% citing each of these type of benefits). Main motivations cited by those planning on taking up learning reflected this with half (51%) citing general skills and employability motives and over a third (37%) citing personal developmental motives. In terms of attitudes the majority (71%) think that learning is a good way to meet new people, and more than two-thirds (68%) feel that learning is an investment. More than half (55%) say that they would like to learn something new but do not know how to find out about it. The main barriers to learning for this group are financial barriers with 100% citing this type of barrier. However, 17% of people in this group also cite time constraints as a barrier (See Appendix for Tables).

They are slightly better qualified than the average, with 40% possessing a below level 2 qualification, 29% possessing a level 2 qualification, and just 31% with no qualifications at all. The income profile of this group reflects that of the sample with just 19% earning more than £19,500 if single, or £30,800 if married.

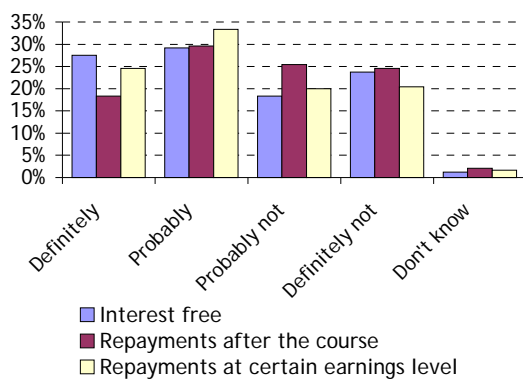
Individual characteristics (%)		
	Pop	Seg
BME	15.2	20.8
Has children under 12	21.8	17.9
Has children under 5	11.0	8.3
LDD or health problem	17.3	8.7
In employment	56.2	71.4
Would like to improve SFL	37.2	43.4

Age profile and gender (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Male	42.4	50.2
Female	57.6	49.8
16-18 years	10.4	8.3
19-29 years	20.4	36.2
30-49 years	38.3	42.7
50-70 years	30.9	12.8

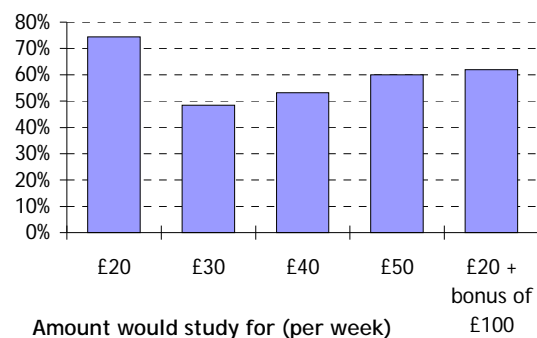
Enablers to study (%)		
	Pop	Seg
IAG	39.8	46.8
Course nearby	47.8	56.2
Buddy	37.9	40.4
Taster course	40.4	45.2

Learner support enablers to participation (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Money or support for course costs/equipment	45.4	58.3
Course fees paid in full	56.7	73.0
Help to pay childcare (% with kids under 12)	51.3	(60.9)
Help to pay transport	39.3	48.9
Payment of £30 p/w whilst learning	37.8	38.4

Attitudes to loans



Attitudes to financial incentives*



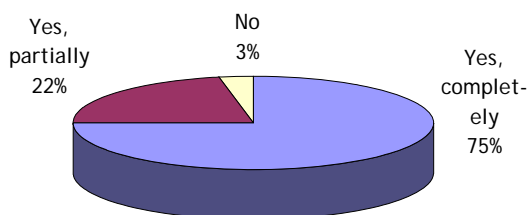
* figures should be treated with caution due to base sizes

'Can't afford it' (learners and early leavers only)

Around 13% of learners and early leavers in this group said that they had difficulty signing up for the right course. Apart from reasons related to their course, 23% cited circumstantial reasons for early leaving (figures for early leaving should be treated with caution due to the low number of early leavers in this group [Base, n= 45]).

Proportion receiving learner support (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Education Maintenance Allowance	21.7	21.1
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trip	17.8	16.3
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	19.2	14.4
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	5.3	4.0
Help to cover accommodation costs	4.5	3.2
Adult Learning Grants	10.0	12.7
Career Development Loans	3.1	0.8
Course fees fully paid or discounted	54.7	51.3
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	16.4	13.3
Help with other expenses	5.2	1.2

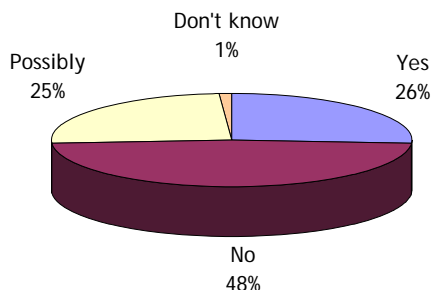
Whether learner support helped with barriers



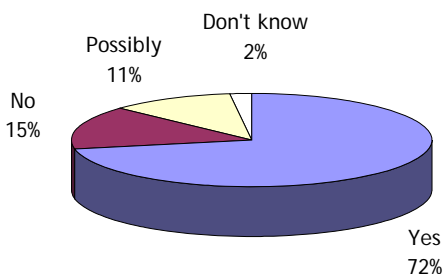
* numbers should be treated with caution. Base, n= 46.

Encourage retention*:

...help with cost of study



...£30 per week while studying



'Could be fun'

This group is interested in learning for personal development reasons. Around 10% of this group are learners, 1% are early leavers, and the majority (89%) are non-learners. Most have a qualification, 36% hold a L2 qualification and 34% hold a qualification below L2. Only 30% have no qualifications at all. Income levels of this group reflect the coverage of the survey with 83% earning less than £19,500 if single, or £30,800 if married.

This group tends to be closer to learning than other groups in this study: 11% are in learning, 21% plan on learning within 12 months, and more than half (54%) say they are open to learning within 3 years. Only 15% are not interested in learning within the next 3 years. People in this group overwhelmingly see the personal/developmental benefits in learning (100%). One-in-five (21%) also see general skills and employability benefits. As might be expected the majority of those interested in learning are motivated by personal development (57%). However, a sizeable minority are motivated by general skills and employability (43%). In terms of attitudes: the vast majority (90%) think that learning is a good way to meet new people, more than two-thirds (70%) feel that learning is an investment, and almost half (48%) say that they would like to learn something new but do not know how to find out about it. The most frequently cited barrier for this group is time constraints due to family or work commitments (43%), although financial concerns are also a barrier for some in this group (24%).

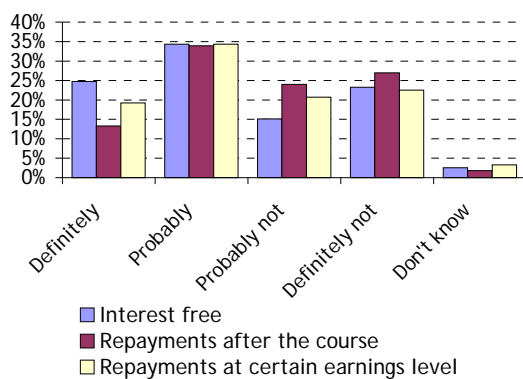
Individual characteristics (%)		
	Pop	Seg
BME	15.2	13.4
Has children under 12	21.8	20.7
Has children under 5	11.0	11.4
LDD or health problem	17.3	21.5
In employment	56.2	44.0
Would like to improve SFL	37.2	44.8

Age profile and gender (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Male	42.4	31.6
Female	57.6	68.4
16-18 years	10.4	11.1
19-29 years	20.4	25.6
30-49 years	38.3	34.1
50-70 years	30.9	29.1

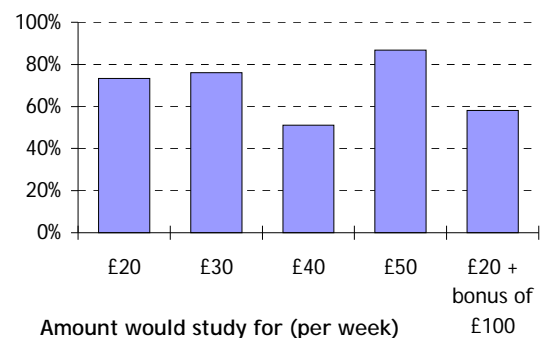
Enablers to study (%)		
	Pop	Seg
IAG	39.8	55.7
Course nearby	47.8	57.2
Buddy	37.9	47.9
Taster course	40.4	55.3

Learner support enablers to participation (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Money or support for course costs/equipment	45.4	60.3
Course fees paid in full	56.7	69.6
Help to pay childcare (% with kids under 12)	51.3	62.7
Help to pay transport	39.3	45.1
Payment of £30 p/w whilst learning	37.8	54.3

Attitudes to loans



Attitudes to financial incentives*



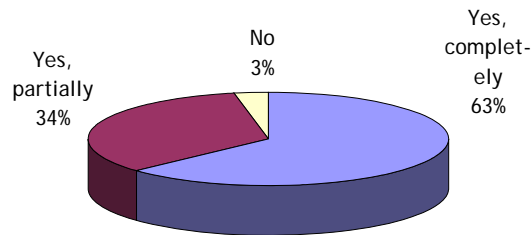
* figures should be treated with caution due to base sizes

'Could be fun' (learners and early leavers only)

Only 6% of early leavers and learners in this group said that they could not get onto the exact course that they wanted to. All early leavers in this group cited course related reasons for leaving their course, although circumstantial reasons were also cited by some (22%) (figures for early leaving should be treated with caution due to the low number of early leavers in this group [Base, n= 35]).

Proportion receiving learner support (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Education Maintenance Allowance	21.7	27.6
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trip	17.8	19.9
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	19.2	21.2
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	5.3	.7
Help to cover accommodation costs	4.5	5.4
Adult Learning Grants	10.0	12.2
Career Development Loans	3.1	1.7
Course fees fully paid or discounted	54.7	44.4
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	16.4	18.0
Help with other expenses	5.2	7.3

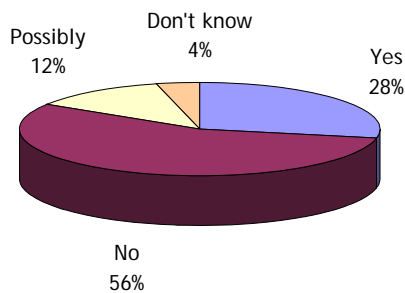
Whether learner support helped with barriers



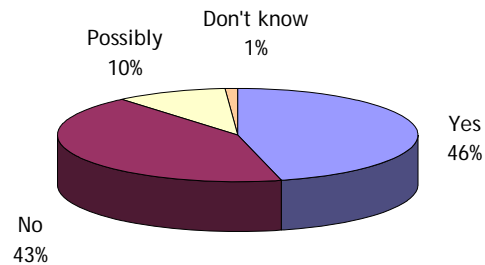
* numbers should be treated with caution. Base, n=35.

Encourage retention*:

...help with cost of study



...£30 per week while studying



'Can't leave the kids'

Nearly all of this group (96%) are non-learners, and just 3% are learners. Their qualification levels broadly reflect the coverage of the survey in general, with 30% qualified to level 2, 36% holding a below level 2 qualification, and 34% possessing no qualifications at all. Income levels of people in this group tend to be lower than those of people in other groups with only 8% earning more than £19,500 if single, or £30,800 if married.

In terms of closeness to learning, although not many are in learning currently (3%), the majority are at least open to learning: 20% are planning on starting a course within the next 12 months, and 62% within the next 3 years. Only 15% say they are not interested in learning within the next 3 years. Different people in this group see different benefits to learning: a third (33%) cite personal developmental benefits, a quarter (24%) cite benefits related to their current job, a quarter (24%) cite benefits related to general skills and employability, and one-in-five (20%) cite benefits in terms of a change in employment/career. The main barriers for this group are related to childcare (100% cite this as a barrier or difficulty). However, time constraints due to family or work commitments and financial barriers are also cited by some in this group (25 and 23% respectively).

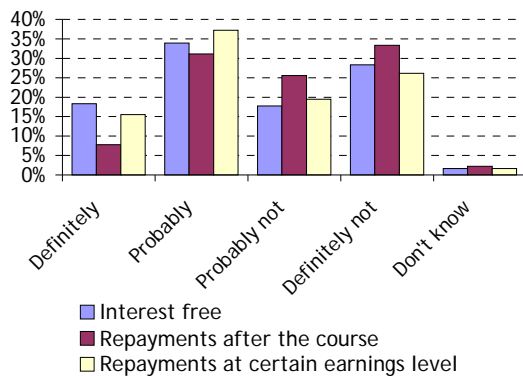
Individual characteristics (%)		
	Pop	Seg
BME	15.2	22.5
Has children under 12	21.8	88.9
Has children under 5	11.0	56.7
LDD or health problem	17.3	10.4
In employment	56.2	47.8
Would like to improve SFL	37.2	52.2

Age profile and gender (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Male	42.4	10.0
Female	57.6	90.0
16-18 years	10.4	0.4
19-29 years	20.4	35.8
30-49 years	38.3	61.9
50-70 years	30.9	1.9

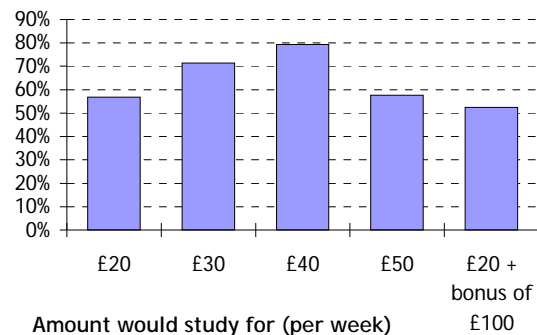
Enablers to study (%)		
	Pop	Seg
IAG	39.8	48.7
Course nearby	47.8	63.1
Buddy	37.9	43.8
Taster course	40.4	50.8

Learner support enablers to participation (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Money or support for course costs/equipment	45.4	56.3
Course fees paid in full	56.7	70.1
Help to pay childcare (% with kids under 12)	51.3	69.1
Help to pay transport	39.3	53.7
Payment of £30 p/w whilst learning	37.8	43.5

Attitudes to loans



Attitudes to financial incentives*



* figures should be treated with caution due to base sizes

'Can't leave the kids' (learners and early leavers only)

Of the early leavers in this group only 3% said that they had difficulty signing up to the course that they wanted.

Proportion receiving learner support (%)	Pop	Seg
Education Maintenance Allowance	21.7	8.4
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trip	17.8	15.5
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	19.2	15.7
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	5.3	22.5
Help to cover accommodation costs	4.5	0.1
Adult Learning Grants	10.0	7.2
Career Development Loans	3.1	12.5
Course fees fully paid or discounted	54.7	53.8
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	16.4	27.4
Help with other expenses	5.2	6.4

Note: The small number of learners and early leavers in this groups does not support further analysis

'Can't get there'

The vast majority of this group are non-learners (92%). Just 7% are in learning. The qualification profile of this group is split, with slightly more people than on average either qualified to level 2 (32%), or possessing no qualifications at all (41%). A quarter (26%) have below level 2 qualifications. People in this group are more likely to be on lower incomes than on average, with 88% earning less than £19,500 if single, or less than £30,800 if married.

In terms of closeness to learning, people in this group are not generally planning on taking up learning any time soon. They are less likely to be in learning than on average (just 7% are in learning), only 13% plan on starting a course in the next 12 months, and 36% say they are not interested in starting a course in the next 3 years. However, more than two-fifths (43%) are at least open to the idea of learning within the next 3 years. The most frequently cited benefits of learning are seen as personal developmental benefits (38%). The main barriers for this group are related to travel (100% cite travel related barriers). Other barriers cited by a number in this group are: time constraints due to family or work (36%), financial barriers (28%), lack of confidence in ability/qualifications (16%), and career/work related barriers (13%).

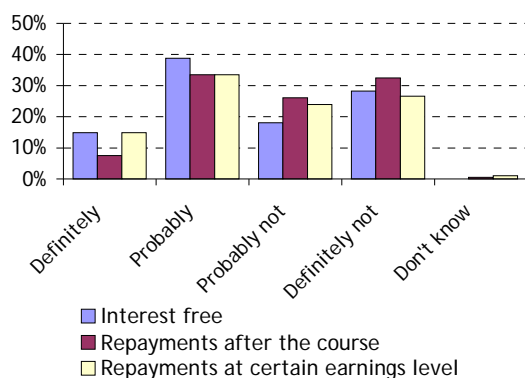
Individual characteristics (%)		
	Pop	Seg
BME	15.2	8.3
Has children under 12	21.8	22.9
Has children under 5	11.0	13.8
LDD or health problem	17.3	23.3
In employment	56.2	43.9
Would like to improve SFL	37.2	31.4

Age profile and gender (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Male	42.4	42.3
Female	57.6	57.7
16-18 years	10.4	9.0
19-29 years	20.4	18.4
30-49 years	38.3	40.4
50-70 years	30.9	32.3

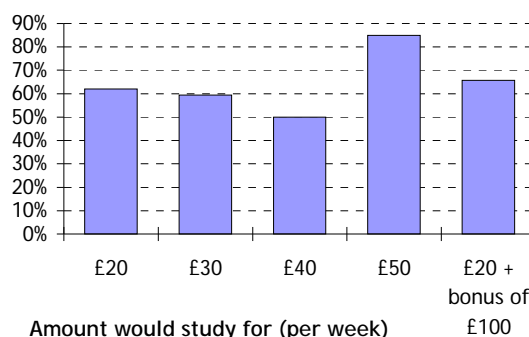
Enablers to study (%)		
	Pop	Seg
IAG	39.8	35.6
Course nearby	47.8	43.7
Buddy	37.9	34.1
Taster course	40.4	33.2

Learner support enablers to participation (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Money or support for course costs/equipment	45.4	44.9
Course fees paid in full	56.7	54.2
Help to pay childcare (% with kids under 12)	51.3	(52.1)
Help to pay transport	39.3	46.8
Payment of £30 p/w whilst learning	37.8	40.8

Attitudes to loans



Attitudes to financial incentives*



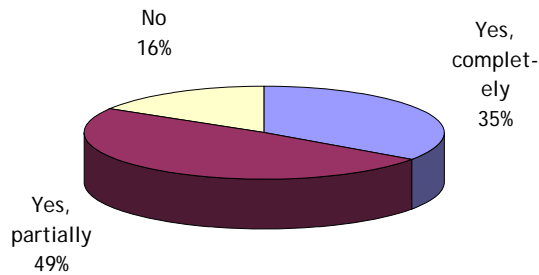
* figures should be treated with caution due to base sizes

'Can't get there' (learners and early leavers only)

Of the learners and early-leavers in this group 4% reported having difficulty getting on to the right course. Apart from course related reasons circumstantial reasons were the most common reason for early leaving, cited by 34% of early leavers. These figures should be treated with caution as the base for early leavers in this group is only 41.

Proportion receiving learner support (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Education Maintenance Allowance	21.7	41.2
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trip	17.8	24.3
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	19.2	32.3
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	5.3	17.8
Help to cover accommodation costs	4.5	9.2
Adult Learning Grants	10.0	18.4
Career Development Loans	3.1	8.5
Course fees fully paid or discounted	54.7	68.7
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	16.4	31.2
Help with other expenses	5.2	5.6

Whether learner support helped with barriers*

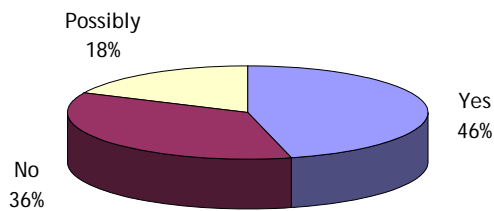


* numbers should be treated with caution. Base, n=49.

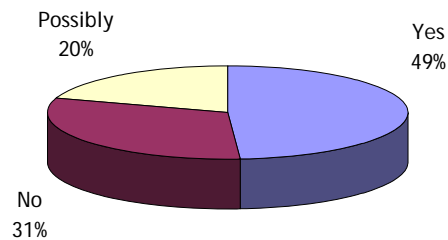
** numbers should be treated with caution. Base, n= 41.

Encourage retention:**

...help with cost of study



...£30 per week while studying



'Whatevers'

This group is not defined by any specific motivation or barrier. They are more likely than the average to be in learning (22%) or planning to go into learning in the next 12 months (19%) but 38% are still unlikely to study in the next 3 years. Benefits of learning were seen to include: improving general skills and employability (27% cited this), personal development benefits (17%) and help with a change of career or job (15%) are also seen as benefits by some in this group. The motivations for studying cited by those intending to take up learning reflect these benefits with general skills and employability (43%) and personal development (41%) cited most often by this group. In terms of attitudes to learning, the majority feel that learning is a good way to meet new people (81%) and that paying for learning is an investment (65%). Just over one third of this group would like to learn something new but do not know how to find out about it (38%), around a third (35%) feel that they did not get anything out of school, and just over half say that most of their friends left education at 16 years of age (51%). People in this group are less likely to report barriers than the average. However, ability/confidence (17%) and career/work related barriers (eg "I don't need it for my career", "It wouldn't help me in my job") (15%) were the most commonly cited barriers (See Appendix for Tables).

Around 39% of the group possess no qualifications at all; 35% hold below L2 qualifications, and 27% hold L2 qualifications. Income levels broadly reflect those of the disadvantaged population as a whole, with 20% earning more than £19,500 if single or £30,800 if cohabiting.

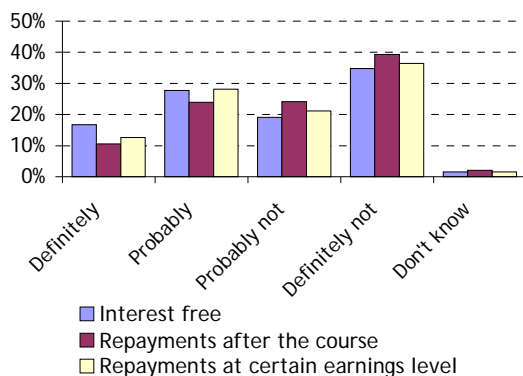
Individual characteristics (%)	Pop	Seg
BME	15.2	18.8
Has children under 12	21.8	10.4
Has children under 5	11.0	4.6
LDD or health problem	17.3	12.1
In employment	56.2	52.1
Would like to improve SFL	37.2	33.5

Age profile and gender (%)	Pop	Seg
Male	42.4	45.8
Female	57.6	54.2
16-18 years	10.4	19.3
19-29 years	20.4	19.2
30-49 years	38.3	24.7
50-70 years	30.9	36.8

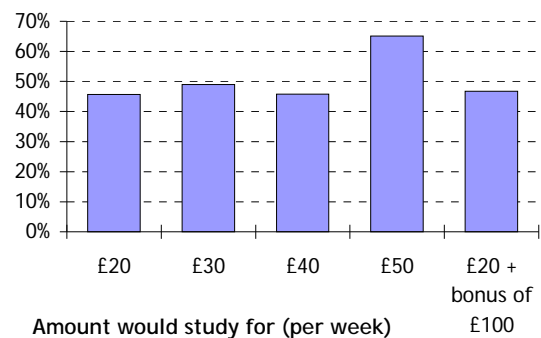
Enablers to study (%)	Pop	Seg
IAG	39.8	37.7
Course nearby	47.8	45.9
Buddy	37.9	36.4
Taster course	40.4	36.5

Learner support enablers to participation (%)	Pop	Seg
Money or support for course costs/equipment	45.4	44.6
Course fees paid in full	56.7	51.3
Help to pay childcare (% with kids under 12)	51.3	54.7
Help to pay transport	39.3	39.4
Payment of £30 p/w whilst learning	37.8	38.3

Attitudes to loans



Attitudes to financial incentives

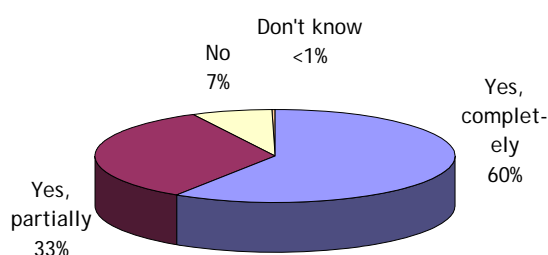


'Whatever's' (learners and early leavers only)

Among the early leavers and learners in this group 5% said that they had difficulty signing up to the right course for them. Apart from course related reasons for early leaving, 22% cited circumstantial reasons, and 2% cited transport related reasons.

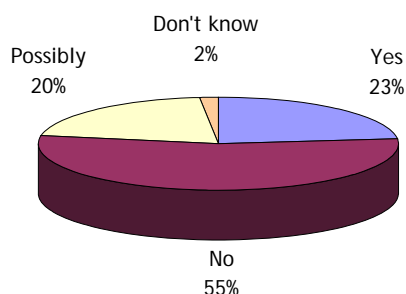
Proportion receiving learner support (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Education Maintenance Allowance	21.7	37.6
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trip	17.8	20.8
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	19.2	27.2
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	5.3	5.9
Help to cover accommodation costs	4.5	6.9
Adult Learning Grant	10.0	8.3
Career Development Loan	3.1	4.1
Course fees fully paid or discounted	54.7	47.6
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	16.4	18.5
Help with other expenses	5.2	6.9

Whether learner support helped with barriers

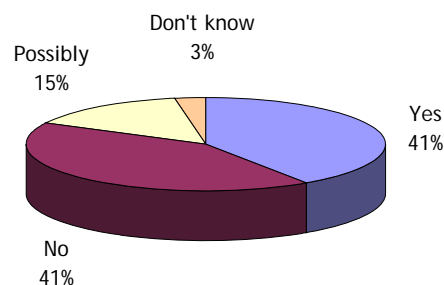


Encourage retention:

...help with cost of study



...£30 per week while studying



'Can't find the time'

This group is turned off from learning due to family or work commitments. The vast majority of this group are non-learners (96%), and only 3% are learners. They are no more or less qualified than on average with 26% holding a level 2 qualification, 37% with a qualification below level 2, and 26% possessing no formal qualifications at all. Although, the majority (78%) are on low incomes (less than £19,500 if single, or less than £30,800 if married), this is a slightly lower proportion than found generally in the coverage of this survey.

This group is not particularly close to learning, with only 3% in learning and 10% planning on taking up learning within 12 months. However, the majority of this group are open to learning within the next 3 years (53%). They see the main benefits in terms of personal development (27%), and general skills and employability (25%). Around 17% see benefits of learning in terms of helping with a job or career change. For those interested in learning the motivators are: general skills and employability (49%), and personal development (38%). In terms of attitudes towards learning: three-quarters (75%) think that learning is a good way to meet new people, two-thirds (66%) feel that learning is an investment, and more than two-fifths (43%) say that they would like to learn something new but do not know how to find out about it. Nearly all of this group (97%) cite time constraints due to work or family commitments as a barrier to learning. Nearly one fifth of this group also cite financial considerations as a barrier.

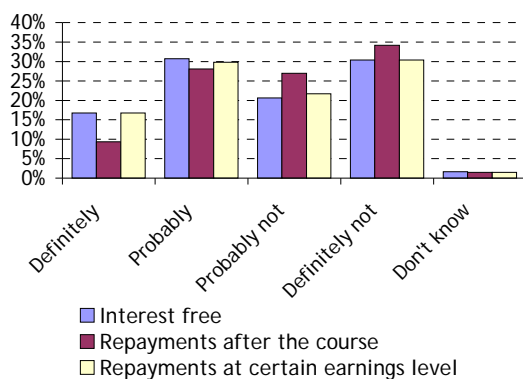
Individual characteristics (%)		
	Pop	Seg
BME	15.2	13.9
Has children under 12	21.8	40.4
Has children under 5	11.0	20.4
LDD or health problem	17.3	9.8
In employment	56.2	69.9
Would like to improve SFL	37.2	39.2

Age profile and gender (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Male	42.4	38.8
Female	57.6	61.2
16-18 years	10.4	2.1
19-29 years	20.4	19.0
30-49 years	38.3	56.4
50-70 years	30.9	22.5

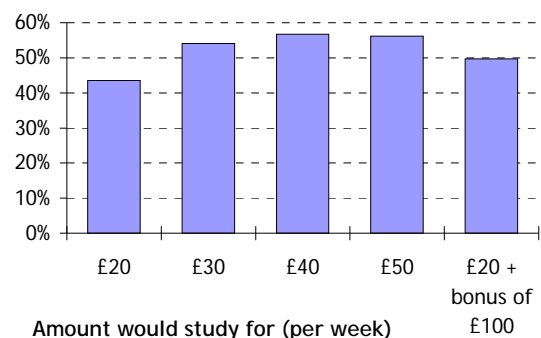
Enablers to study (%)		
	Pop	Seg
IAG	39.8	38.9
Course nearby	47.8	49.0
Buddy	37.9	36.4
Taster course	40.4	42.5

Learner support enablers to participation (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Money or support for course costs/equipment	45.4	43.3
Course fees paid in full	56.7	59.3
Help to pay childcare (% with kids under 12)	51.3	42.4
Help to pay transport	39.3	34.2
Payment of £30 p/w whilst learning	37.8	35.4

Attitudes to loans



Attitudes to financial incentives

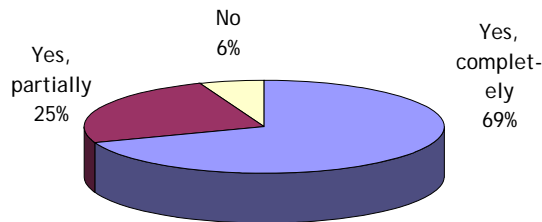


'Can't find the time' (learners and early leavers only)

Ability to get on the right course: of the early leavers and learners in this group, 7% said that they could not get onto the course that they wanted to. The main reasons for early leaving were course related (100%) or circumstantial reasons (31%).

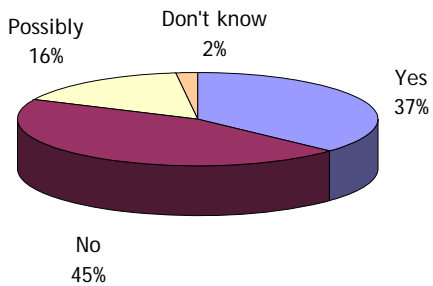
Proportion receiving learner support (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Education Maintenance Allowance	21.7	9.5
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trip	17.8	9.7
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	19.2	8.3
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	5.3	4.2
Help to cover accommodation costs	4.5	1.4
Adult Learning Grants	10.0	9.1
Career Development Loans	3.1	1.3
Course fees fully paid or discounted	54.7	51.8
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	16.4	9.5
Help with other expenses	5.2	2.0

Whether learner support helped with barriers

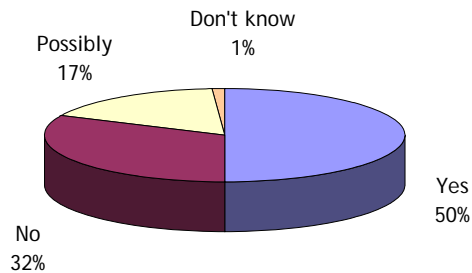


Encourage retention:

...help with cost of study



...£30 per week while studying



'Learning or health constrained'

The overwhelming majority of this group are non-learners (94%). Only 6% are learners. This group is less well qualified than on average: more than half (55%) have no qualifications at all, a quarter (25%) are qualified below level 2, and just one-fifth (20%) have a level 2 qualification. They also tend to have lower incomes with 92% earning less than £19,500 if single or £30,800 if married.

In terms of closeness to learning, they tend to be further from learning than on average: with just 6% in learning, only 13% planning on entering learning within 12 months, and just over half (51%) not interested in learning in the next 3 years. However, three-in-ten (29%) say that they are open to learning within the next three years. Fewer in this group see the benefits of learning than on average. The most frequently mentioned benefits are personal development related (30%). The main barriers to learning for this group are related to a learning difficulty, a disability, or a health problem (87% report this type of barrier). Other barriers mentioned by this group relate to confidence in ability and qualification levels (21%), and time constraints due to family or work commitments (12%).

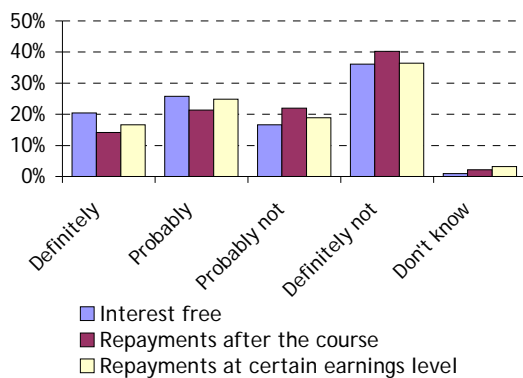
Individual characteristics (%)		
	Pop	Seg
BME	15.2	15.1
Has children under 12	21.8	15.8
Has children under 5	11.0	7.0
LDD or health problem	17.3	65.0
In employment	56.2	17.8
Would like to improve SFL	37.2	39.4

Age profile and gender (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Male	42.4	43.9
Female	57.6	56.1
16-18 years	10.4	5.8
19-29 years	20.4	11.6
30-49 years	38.3	28.9
50-70 years	30.9	53.8

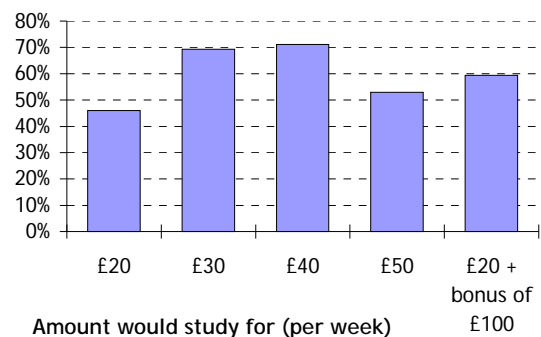
Enablers to study (%)		
	Pop	Seg
IAG	39.8	36.8
Course nearby	47.8	45.2
Buddy	37.9	38.7
Taster course	40.4	36.7

Learner support enablers to participation (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Money or support for course costs/equipment	45.4	37.6
Course fees paid in full	56.7	48.7
Help to pay childcare (% with kids under 12)	51.3	54.9
Help to pay transport	39.3	36.6
Payment of £30 p/w whilst learning	37.8	31.1

Attitudes to loans



Attitudes to financial incentives

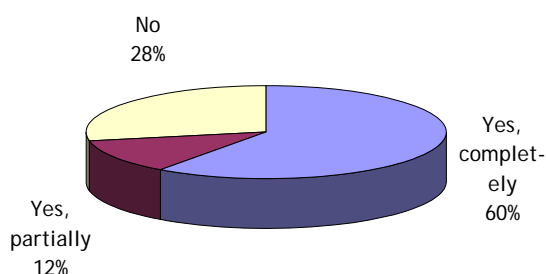


'Learning or health constrained' (learners and early leavers only)

Of the learners and early leavers in this group 15% said that they had difficulty signing up to the right course. Apart from course related reasons for early leaving, more than two-fifths (43%) reported circumstantial reasons for leaving, and 4% said that they left because they had failed (figures for early leaving should be treated with caution due to the low number of early leavers in this group [Base, n= 36]).

Proportion receiving learner support (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Education Maintenance Allowance	21.7	27.3
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trip	17.8	22.2
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	19.2	22.1
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	5.3	4.9
Help to cover accommodation costs	4.5	5.7
Adult Learning Grants	10.0	5.1
Career Development Loans	3.1	6.9
Course fees fully paid or discounted	54.7	49.3
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	16.4	25.5
Help with other expenses	5.2	4.8

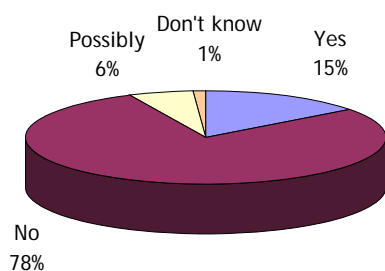
Whether learner support helped with barriers



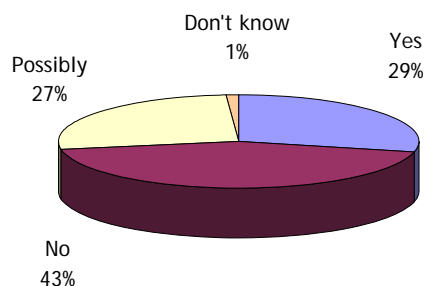
* numbers should be treated with caution. Base, n= 36.

Encourage retention*:

...help with cost of study



...£30 per week while studying



'Can't be bothered'

This group are not interested in any immediate participation in education or training. The vast majority of this group are non-learners (90%), and just 9% are learners. They tend to be slightly better qualified than other groups with 33% qualified to L2 and 31% with a below L2 qualification. However, 36% do not have any formal qualifications. Income levels for this group reflect average levels covered by this survey with 80% earning less than £19,500 if single, or £30,800 if married.

This group is further from learning than the average: just 9% are in learning, only 3% are planning on learning in the next 12 months, 31% say they would like to do a course in the next 3 years, and more than half (56%) are not interested in learning within the next 3 years. For those interested in learning motives reflect all three of these benefits to some extent, with half (50%) citing general skills and employability, just under half (46%) mentioning personal development, and more than a quarter (28%) reporting motivations related to their job. In terms of attitudes towards learning: the majority (81%) feel that learning is a good way to meet new people, and two-thirds (66%) think that learning is an investment. The main barriers to learning for this group are dispositional or interest related, with everyone in this group (100%) reporting that they are just not interested in learning (or further learning). However, some also cite more concrete barriers such as financial barriers (13%), and not having enough time due to family or work commitments (13%).

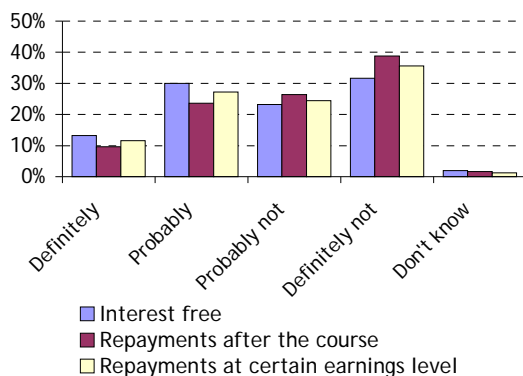
Individual characteristics (%)		
	Pop	Seg
BME	15.2	8.9
Has children under 12	21.8	11.6
Has children under 5	11.0	6.0
LDD or health problem	17.3	14.6
In employment	56.2	52.6
Would like to improve SFL	37.2	30.1

Age profile and gender (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Male	42.4	44.5
Female	57.6	55.4
16-18 years	10.4	11.1
19-29 years	20.4	19.9
30-49 years	38.3	24.8
50-70 years	30.9	44.1

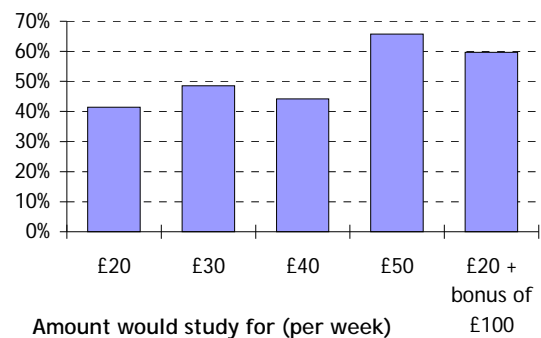
Enablers to study (%)		
	Pop	Seg
IAG	39.8	28.1
Course nearby	47.8	28.8
Buddy	37.9	23.8
Taster course	40.4	23.5

Learner support enablers to participation (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Money or support for course costs/equipment	45.4	31.6
Course fees paid in full	56.7	40.7
Help to pay childcare (% with kids under 12)	51.3	(14.6)
Help to pay transport	39.3	22.9
Payment of £30 p/w whilst learning	37.8	27.7

Attitudes to loans



Attitudes to financial incentives*



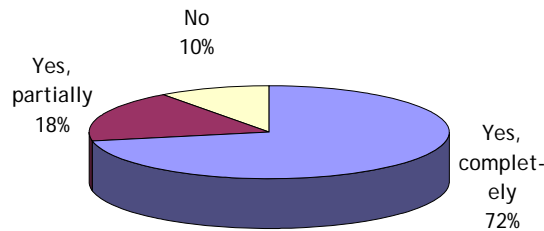
* figures should be treated with caution due to base sizes

'Can't be bothered' (learners and early leavers only)

Of the learners and early leavers in this group just 3% said that they had difficulty signing up to the course that they wanted. In terms of reasons for early leaving, apart from course related reasons (100%), 19% cited circumstantial reasons for leaving, and 6% said that they were encouraged to leave by their employer (figures for early leaving should be treated with caution due to the low number of early leavers in this group [Base, n= 36]).

Proportion receiving learner support (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Education Maintenance Allowance	21.7	23.8
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trip	17.8	27.0
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	19.2	28.0
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	5.3	4.9
Help to cover accommodation costs	4.5	2.2
Adult Learning Grants	10.0	8.7
Career Development Loans	3.1	1.8
Course fees fully paid or discounted	54.7	51.0
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	16.4	9.5
Help with other expenses	5.2	4.3

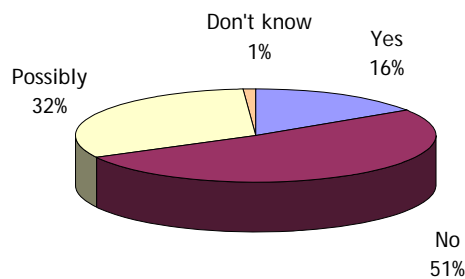
Whether learner support helped with barriers



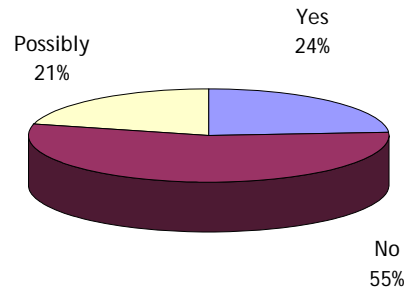
* numbers should be treated with caution. Base, n= 36.

Encourage retention*:

...help with cost of study



...£30 per week while studying



'Won't help me's

This group do not see any immediate personal job/ career benefits to learning. They are further from learning than the average with only 10% in learning and 3% planning to take up learning within the next 12 months. Over two-fifths (43%) say that they would not plan to take up learning within the next 3 years. This group tends to see the benefits of learning in terms of general skills and employability (23%), although personal development benefits (17%) and a change of job/career (16%) are seen as benefits by some. Reflecting this, motivations for this group tend to be related to general skills and employability (48%). However, around a third (34%) of those interested in learning cite motivations related to their current job. In terms of attitudes three-quarters (76%) feel that learning is a good way to meet new people, and 61% feel that learning is an investment. The main barriers for this group are career/work related barriers such as not feeling that learning would help them in their job or in their career (100% report this type of barrier). Time commitments (21%) and financial barriers (14%) are also an issue for some in this group.

Around 10% of this group are learners, 1% early leavers, and 89% are non-learners. They are slightly more likely to hold a qualification than the average, with 31% qualified to level 2 and 38% holding a qualification below level 2. They also tend to have higher incomes than other groups with 26% earning more than £19,500 if single, or £30,800 if married.

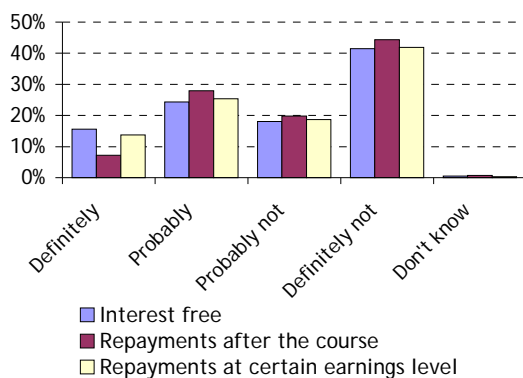
Individual characteristics (%)	Pop	Seg
BME	15.2	9.4
Has children under 12	21.8	15.7
Has children under 5	11.0	6.9
LDD or health problem	17.3	14.2
In employment	56.2	77.8
Would like to improve SFL	37.2	27.2

Age profile and gender (%)	Pop	Seg
Male	42.4	54.4
Female	57.6	45.6
16-18 years	10.4	9.0
19-29 years	20.4	20.8
30-49 years	38.3	43.8
50-70 years	30.9	26.5

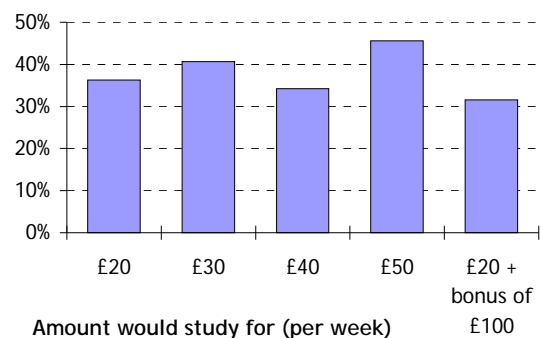
Enablers to study (%)	Pop	Seg
IAG	39.8	38.5
Course nearby	47.8	44.2
Buddy	37.9	36.4
Taster course	40.4	37.9

Learner support enablers to participation (%)	Pop	Seg
Money or support for course costs/equipment	45.4	35.6
Course fees paid in full	56.7	50.5
Help to pay childcare (% with kids under 12)	51.3	(34.8)
Help to pay transport	39.3	34.9
Payment of £30 p/w whilst learning	37.8	31.1

Attitudes to loans



Attitudes to financial incentives*



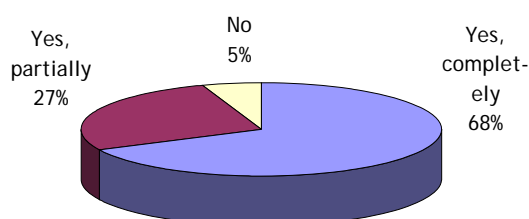
* figures should be treated with caution due to base sizes

'Won't help me's (learners and early leavers only)

Only 5% of early leavers in this group reported not being able to sign up for the course that they wanted to. Apart from course related reasons for early leaving, two-fifths (40%) also cited circumstantial reasons (figures for early leaving should be treated with caution due to the low number of early leavers in this group [Base, n= 34]).

Proportion receiving learner support (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Education Maintenance Allowance	21.7	15.7
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trip	17.8	14.8
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	19.2	13.8
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	5.3	4.2
Help to cover accommodation costs	4.5	5.1
Adult Learning Grants	10.0	8.0
Career Development Loans	3.1	4.4
Course fees fully paid or discounted	54.7	60.4
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	16.4	11.8
Help with other expenses	5.2	5.4

Whether learner support helped with barriers*

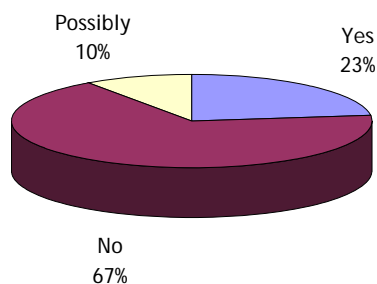


* numbers should be treated with caution. Base, n=38.

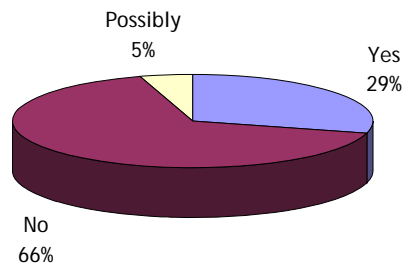
** numbers should be treated with caution. Base, n=34.

Encourage retention**:

...help with cost of study



...£30 per week while studying



'Couldn't keep up / Too old to study'

The vast majority (94%) of people in this group are non-learners. Just 6% of this group are currently in learning. They are generally less well qualified than on average. Nearly half (48%) have no qualifications at all, 22% have a below level 2 qualification, and 30% are qualified to level 2. They are also more likely to be on lower incomes than other groups covered in this study, with 93% on incomes of less than £19,500 if single, or £30,800 if married.

In terms of closeness to learning: the majority (57%) are not interested in learning within the next 3 years, just 6% are currently in learning, and only 3% intend to take up learning in the next 12 months. However, a third (34%) say they might be interested in learning within the next three years. The benefits of learning most commonly cited by this group are related to personal development (32%), general skills and employability (23%), and benefits related to a change in employment/career (18%). Motivations for those interested in learning reflect these benefits: general skills and employability (61%), personal development (55%), and a change in employment/career (39%). The main barrier for this group is confidence in ability, or lack of qualifications (100% cite this as a barrier/difficulty). However, a number also cite other barriers, such as: time constraints due to family or work commitments (26%), financial barriers (20%), and/or learning difficulties, a disability, or health problems (18%).

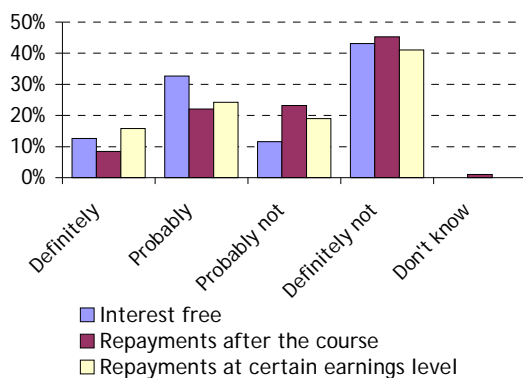
Individual characteristics (%)	Pop	Seg
BME	15.2	8.5
Has children under 12	21.8	9.5
Has children under 5	11.0	3.2
LDD or health problem	17.3	31.5
In employment	56.2	33.8
Would like to improve SFL	37.2	40.4

Age profile and gender (%)	Pop	Seg
Male	42.4	41.4
Female	57.6	58.6
16-18 years	10.4	4.5
19-29 years	20.4	3.0
30-49 years	38.3	33.1
50-70 years	30.9	59.4

Enablers to study (%)	Pop	Seg
IAG	39.8	34.6
Course nearby	47.8	36.3
Buddy	37.9	45.3
Taster course	40.4	37.6

Learner support enablers to participation (%)	Pop	Seg
Money or support for course costs/equipment	45.4	37.8
Course fees paid in full	56.7	44.4
Help to pay childcare (% with kids under 12)	51.3	-
Help to pay transport	39.3	36.4
Payment of £30 p/w whilst learning	37.8	32.9

Attitudes to loans



Attitudes to financial incentives

Note: Base too small to support analysis of this item

'Couldn't keep up' (learners and early leavers only)

One-in-six of learners and early leavers in this group (15%) said that they had difficulty getting on to the right course. These figures should be treated with caution as the base for early leavers in this group is only 35.

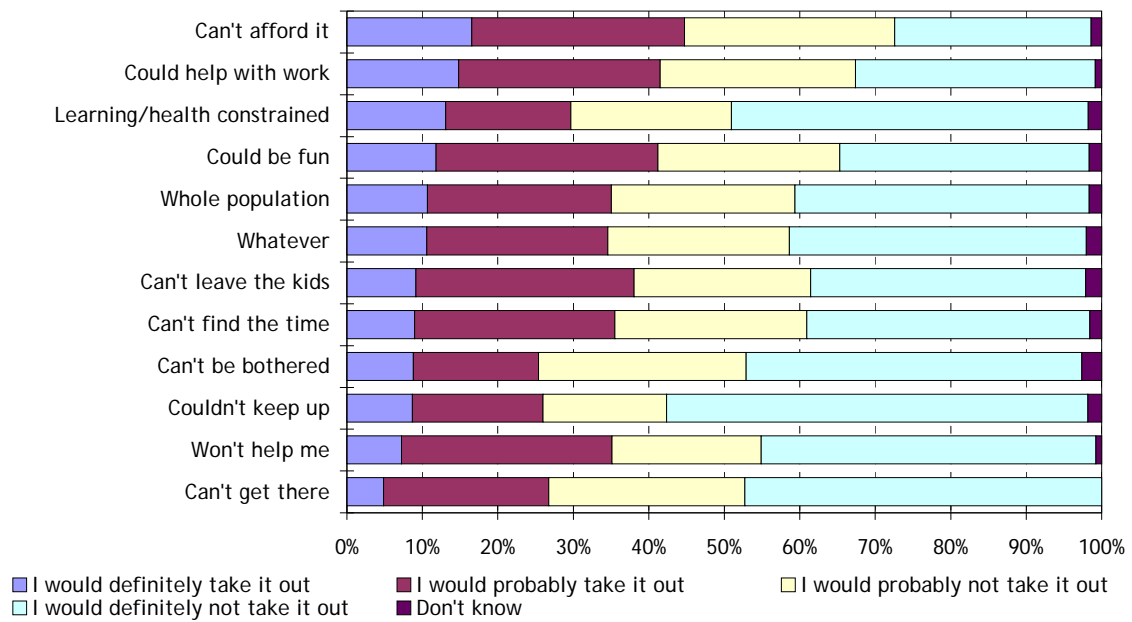
Proportion receiving learner support (%)		
	Pop	Seg
Education Maintenance Allowance	21.7	(17.1)
Help with the cost of books/ equipment/ field trip	17.8	(8.4)
Help with the cost of travel to and from your course	19.2	(8.4)
Help to cover childcare or childcare costs	5.3	(3.6)
Help to cover accommodation costs	4.5	(3.7)
Adult Learning Grants	10.0	(2.6)
Career Development Loans	3.1	(2.4)
Course fees fully paid or discounted	54.7	(63.4)
Help with support needs for disability or learning difficulty	16.4	(20.4)
Help with other expenses	5.2	(4.8)

Note: The small number of learners and early leavers in this group does not support further analysis.

A.2 Summary of segments by enablers

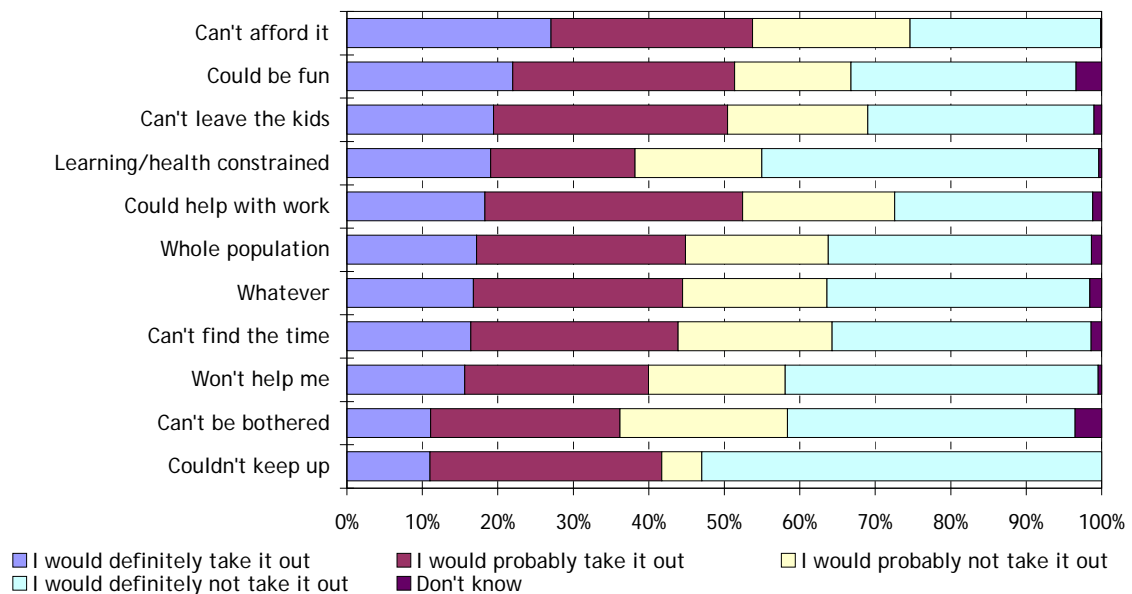
A.2.1 Attitudes to loans

Figure A.1: Whether respondent would take out a loan if the repayments were delayed until after the course was over



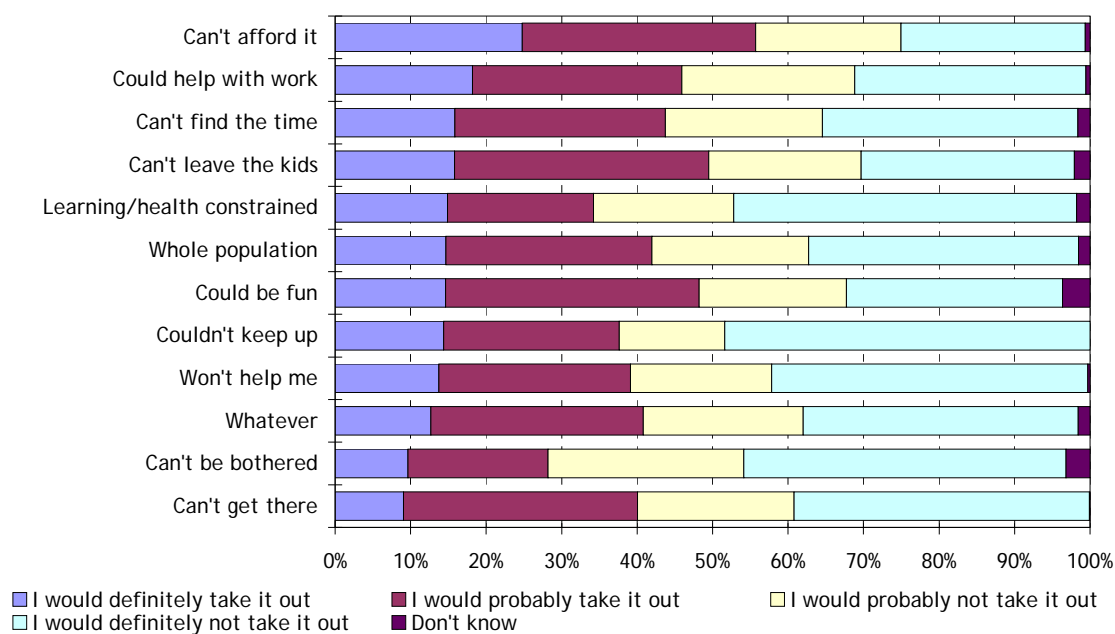
Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Figure A.2: Whether respondent would take out an interest free (or minimal interest) loan



Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Figure A.3: Whether respondent would take out a loan with repayments delayed until earnings reached a certain level



Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases; missing responses excluded)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

A.2.2 Attitudes to financial and other enablers

Table.A.1 Whether being offered money or support for course costs such as books and equipment would make a difference to participation

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know
Could be fun	60.3	26.1	5.7	7.8	
Can't afford it	58.3	29.5	8.9	3.1	.2
Can't leave the kids	56.3	33.5	5.8	3.6	.8
Could help with work	54.1	32.3	6.9	6.3	.3
Whole population	45.4	28.1	11.4	14.6	.5
Can't get there	44.9	33.6	13.1	8.4	
Whatever	44.6	25.3	10.2	19.4	.5
Can't find the time	43.3	30.0	13.4	12.1	1.1
Couldn't keep up	37.8	22.4	14.9	25.0	
Learning/health constrained	37.6	24.4	14.0	23.0	1.0
Won't help me	35.6	31.8	14.6	18.0	
Can't be bothered	31.6	28.7	21.1	18.6	

Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table A.2 Whether course fees being paid in full would make a difference to participation

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know
Can't afford it	73.0	16.9	6.1	3.9	
Can't leave the kids	70.7	21.4	4.7	3.1	
Could help with work	69.7	20.1	4.1	5.7	.4
Could be fun	69.6	18.7	5.5	5.6	.5
Can't find the time	59.3	21.9	9.1	9.5	.2
Whole population	56.7	20.7	9.3	12.9	.4
Can't get there	54.2	25.8	11.5	8.4	.0
Whatever	51.3	20.8	9.4	18.1	.4
Won't help me	50.5	23.6	12.5	13.4	
Learning/health constrained	48.7	15.3	13.9	20.0	2.1
Couldn't keep up	44.4	20.4	11.8	23.3	
Can't be bothered	40.7	23.7	17.8	17.7	.1

Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table A.3 Whether advice about the options available and what would suit them would make a difference to participation

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know
Could be fun	55.7	30.9	6.9	3.9	2.7
Can't leave the kids	48.7	42.5	6.1	2.7	
Can't afford it	46.8	37.1	9.9	6.1	.1
Could help with work	45.0	38.4	8.6	7.0	1.0
Whole population	39.8	34.1	12.4	12.4	1.3
Can't find the time	38.9	38.2	10.8	10.3	1.7
Won't help me	38.5	29.8	18.6	12.2	1.1
Whatever	37.7	32.5	12.8	15.7	1.3
Learning/health constrained	36.8	25.3	14.1	22.2	1.6
Can't get there	35.6	39.7	13.9	9.8	1.0
Couldn't keep up	34.6	31.0	16.9	15.3	2.1
Can't be bothered	28.1	28.6	24.7	18.1	.5

Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table A.4 Whether a suitable course at a college close to their home would make a difference to participation

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know
Can't leave the kids	63.1	30.5	3.1	3.2	
Could be fun	57.2	29.9	7.0	5.4	.4
Can't afford it	56.2	30.4	7.4	4.7	1.2
Could help with work	54.3	33.4	5.3	6.6	.3
Can't find the time	49.0	32.9	7.9	9.6	.6
Whole population	47.8	29.6	9.7	12.4	.5
Whatever	45.9	27.4	10.0	16.0	.7
Learning/health constrained	45.2	21.0	13.3	19.8	.7
Won't help me	44.2	29.7	15.2	10.8	
Can't get there	43.7	35.3	9.1	11.9	
Couldn't keep up	36.3	28.2	14.9	20.5	.0
Can't be bothered	28.8	30.9	20.3	19.3	.7

Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table A.5 Whether if they had help to pay for the cost of childcare it would make a difference to participation

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know
Can't leave the kids	64.7	19.0	7.6	8.1	.6
Can't afford it	37.6	12.1	14.3	33.0	3.0
Could help with work	36.3	21.5	9.0	28.0	5.2
Could be fun	31.4	15.0	9.5	31.9	12.2
Can't find the time	30.5	18.3	14.6	33.1	3.5
Whole population	30.3	15.5	12.7	35.8	5.7
Can't get there	28.6	18.5	17.4	30.9	4.6
Won't help me	28.2	9.7	19.8	32.8	9.5
Learning/health constrained	27.5	12.5	11.7	43.6	4.7
Whatever	27.5	13.9	12.3	40.4	5.9
Couldn't keep up	21.1	8.6	12.5	40.3	17.5
Can't be bothered	12.5	14.3	13.1	53.0	7.1

Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table A.6 Whether if they had help to pay for the cost of travel it would make a difference to participation

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know
Can't leave the kids	53.7	32.3	7.4	5.8	.8
Can't afford it	48.9	29.0	9.2	12.8	.2
Can't get there	46.8	34.5	10.1	8.3	.4
Could help with work	46.5	30.9	10.0	12.0	.6
Could be fun	45.1	30.0	8.8	14.6	1.5
Whatever	39.4	23.4	11.9	23.5	1.8
Whole population	39.3	26.9	13.3	19.3	1.2
Learning/health constrained	36.6	24.1	14.5	23.4	1.4
Couldn't keep up	36.4	17.8	22.2	23.6	
Won't help me	34.9	20.7	20.3	24.1	
Can't find the time	34.2	30.3	16.6	17.9	1.0
Can't be bothered	22.9	26.6	18.4	30.4	1.7

Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table A.7 Whether if they had a personal learning adviser or 'buddy' to give you help and advice when needed it would make a difference to participation

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know
Could be fun	47.9	32.0	11.9	7.0	1.2
Couldn't keep up	45.3	22.0	11.6	21.0	
Can't leave the kids	43.8	35.8	15.3	5.1	
Could help with work	43.1	33.1	14.2	9.3	.3
Can't afford it	40.4	33.0	14.8	10.6	1.1
Learning/health constrained	38.7	23.6	16.5	19.8	1.3
Whole population	37.9	29.3	15.7	16.5	.6
Can't find the time	36.4	31.5	17.7	13.7	.7
Won't help me	36.4	22.8	20.3	20.5	
Whatever	36.4	27.7	14.2	21.1	.6
Can't get there	34.1	35.9	13.1	16.6	.4
Can't be bothered	23.8	25.3	23.6	27.3	

Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table A.8 Whether if they could try out a short 'taster' course before signing up it would make a difference to participation

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know
Could be fun	55.3	32.1	8.2	3.8	.5
Can't leave the kids	50.8	32.6	11.2	4.0	1.4
Could help with work	50.4	28.1	11.6	9.0	.9
Can't afford it	45.2	27.8	14.7	11.1	1.2
Can't find the time	42.5	32.7	11.5	12.0	1.4
Whole population	40.4	31.3	12.5	14.8	1.0
Won't help me	37.9	30.9	14.4	16.8	
Couldn't keep up	37.6	27.3	9.4	20.8	4.9
Learning/health constrained	36.7	27.4	14.3	20.7	1.0
Whatever	36.5	31.4	11.9	19.5	.8
Can't get there	33.2	41.1	14.8	10.9	
Can't be bothered	23.5	34.8	21.3	19.7	.7

Base: Whole learning disadvantaged population (unweighted sample =4,997 cases)

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table A.9. Whether if they were paid £30 per week whilst learning it would make a difference to participation

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know
Could be fun	54.3	23.8	9.1	11.7	1.0
Could help with work	43.8	30.4	10.2	14.5	1.1
Can't leave the kids	43.5	37.7	7.8	10.1	.9
Can't get there	40.8	33.7	14.7	10.0	.8
Can't afford it	38.4	32.4	13.2	14.2	1.8
Whatever	38.3	26.2	13.3	21.5	.7
Whole population	37.8	27.6	14.5	18.7	1.4
Can't find the time	35.4	28.3	17.8	16.1	2.5
Couldn't keep up	32.9	23.7	16.6	26.9	
Learning/health constrained	31.1	24.5	14.5	26.9	3.0
Won't help me	31.1	25.0	19.5	22.9	1.5
Can't be bothered	27.7	24.7	24.6	23.0	

Appendix B: Survey methodology and cluster analysis methods

B.1 Sample design and weighting

Individual Learner Records database (ILR) was used as the sampling and weighting frame for learners and early leavers. At the time of sampling, whether a respondent was defined as a learner or early leaver depended on their completion status at A34. However, the status of learners might have changed between the time of sampling and fieldwork. Hence, during the interview and at the data analysis stage, we established whether someone was a learner or early leaver by the answer they gave in the survey questionnaire, ie whether or not they had completed the course (learners), were still on the course (learners) or had left before completing the full course (early leavers).

According to the answers given, 2,267 interviews were completed with learners and 732 with early leavers. These data were then weighted by the original sample universe of learners and early leavers (ie the profile based on ILR), as they represented the true profile of learners and early leavers at the time of sampling, even though the records themselves might have been out of date at the time of fieldwork.

The profile of non-learners was based on the Labour Force Survey. A total of 2,009 interviews were completed with this group. Separate weighting was applied to the disadvantaged learners, early leavers and non-learners so that data are representative of the population.

B.2 Questionnaire design and piloting

The questionnaire was designed by IES in consultation with the LSC. There was one common questionnaire script, though some questions were asked for a specific sample type only. Prior to the main survey, the questionnaire was piloted

by Ipsos MORI among 20 learners, ten early leavers and 20 non-learners. The objectives of the pilot were to check:

- the questionnaire for comprehension
- the questionnaire routing
- the interview length.

The vast majority of the feedback provided by the pilot interviewers was positive. Minor difficulties with one question was identified and addressed.

B.3 Response rates

As this is a quota survey, it is not possible to calculate a response rate in the same way as a random probability sample. Instead, a detailed breakdown of the sample is supplied below. The sample of learners and early leavers were from the ILR. We have combined learners and early leavers in the analysis of sample outcome below as they both follow the same screening questions and routing.

The sample of non-learners was mostly generated by Random Digit Dialling (RDD), though to maximise fieldwork efficiency, areas with a higher than average level of deprivation were oversampled and a top-up named sample of young people (16-18s) was used to supplement the main sample.

B.4 Cluster analysis

Cluster analysis is a statistical technique that attempts to classify units (in this case learners and non-learners) based on a measure of how similar or dissimilar they are over a number of variables or factors. The procedure, in essence, compares respondents across a number of factors and then groups them together if they are similar or separates them if they are dissimilar (depending on what specific procedure is used). The aim of the exercise is to explore whether any natural groupings or patterns of responses exist in the data and, if so, to identify them.

The cluster analysis used in this study followed a similar approach to that has been advocated by previous researchers¹.

Participants responses to a number of questions about their attitudes towards learning, and perceived benefits and barriers to learning were used in the analysis.

¹ For example, 'Chilvers, D. (2008). Segmentation of Adults by Attitudes Towards Learning and Barriers to Learning. DIUS research report 08-01' and 'Hair, J.F., Jr., W.C. Black, B. Babin, R. Anderson, and R. Tatham, (2006) *Multivariate Data Analysis*, (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall' (including detailed explanation on cluster analysis).

Firstly, a factor analysis based on the 49 questionnaire items identified 13 main factors that could be used for the cluster analysis procedure². The aim of the factor analysis was to identify a smaller number of latent factors that were underlying participants' responses to the questionnaire items, to ensure that too much weight was not attributed to two or more items that essentially measure the same thing, and to standardise scores across the different factors. The resultant factors were then put forward into a Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (HCA) procedure on a random subsample of 1000 participants using the Ward method and the Squared Euclidian Distance measure of dissimilarity. This method maximises the in-group similarity and the between group dissimilarity of potential clusters, thus increasing the chances that individuals in any one group will be more similar to each other over identified factors and more dissimilar to individuals in other groups.

A number of different cluster solutions were explored in order to identify the most parsimonious solution that represented the data most accurately. The eleven cluster solution was found to be the most appropriate solution. The HCA procedure was then repeated on another random subsample of 1000 participants to check the stability of the eleven cluster solution. Once it was established that the eleven cluster solution was stable and reflected the data best, a K-means non-hierarchical procedure was employed on the whole sample to fine tune cluster membership for the eleven clusters. Once the cluster membership of individuals in the sample was established the personal characteristics, attitudes, perceptions and barriers to learning of each of the groups could be explored in more detail.

² 49 derived variables were entered into the factor analysis (29 barriers items, 14 benefits to learning items, and 6 attitudinal items). The 13 factors put forward for cluster analyses were related to: negative schools experience, financial barriers, childcare barriers, travel barriers, social benefits, time constraints/barriers, worries about ability, worries about fitting in/keeping up, developmental vs. instrumental motivations, dispositional barriers, job related benefits, life change benefits, and career plans.

Appendix C: Survey Tables

Table C.1: Disadvantaged segmentation by age and sex

	Whatever	Can't afford it	Won't help me	Could be fun	Can't find the time	Could help with work	Can't be bothered	Learning/ health constrained	Can't leave the kids	Can't get there	Couldn't keep up	Total
Male	45.8	50.2	54.4	31.6	38.8	47.0	44.6	43.9	10.0	42.3	41.4	42.4
Female	54.2	49.8	45.6	68.4	61.2	53.0	55.4	56.1	90.0	57.7	58.6	57.6
Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (nb)	1,853	240	216	271	873	524	250	318	180	188	95	5008
16 to 18 yrs	19.3	8.3	9.0	11.1	2.1	10.4	11.1	5.8	.4	9.0	4.5	10.4
19 to 29 yrs	19.2	36.2	20.8	25.6	19.0	24.3	19.9	11.6	35.8	18.4	3.0	20.4
30 to 49 yrs	24.7	42.7	43.8	34.1	56.4	46.8	24.8	28.9	61.9	40.4	33.1	38.3
50 to 70 yrs	36.8	12.8	26.5	29.1	22.5	18.4	44.1	53.8	1.9	32.3	59.4	30.9
Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (nb)	1,850	240	216	270	870	523	250	318	179	186	95	4,997

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table C.O.1: Benefits, motivations and barriers by clusters

	Whatever	Can't afford it	Won't help me	Could be fun	Can't find the time	Could help with work	Can't be bothered	Learning/health constrained	Can't leave the kids	Can't get there	Could n't keep up	Total
Benefits												
Work related benefits	39.9	53.5	44.0	26.1	43.2	91.9	39.8	25.4	54.8	43.7	42.5	45.4
Of which												
<i>Change job/career</i>	15.4	17.6	16.8	5.5	17.1	8.2	9.6	10.9	20.9	17.6	17.8	14.3
<i>Benefits related to current job</i>	3.2	18.6	13.7	4.2	9.4	89.6	17.1	7.1	23.8	17.6	11.3	17.0
<i>General skills and employability benefits</i>	27.5	31.0	23.4	20.8	24.5	21.6	23.2	12.5	24.3	20.6	22.7	23.9
Personal/developmental benefits	17.3	30.7	17.1	100.0	26.5	18.0	17.4	29.7	33.6	38.0	31.9	27.0
Motivations												
Change job/career	21.5	27.7	21.8	27.3	27.1	21.2	21.5	28.6	36.9	26.3	38.6	25.1
General skills and employability motives	42.9	50.9	48.1	43.4	49.7	52.2	49.7	50.8	46.8	48.2	61.1	47.6
motives related to current job	24.1	22.4	33.6	22.5	24.7	34.8	28.3	13.9	24.6	27.8	24.9	25.4
Personal/developmental benefits	40.8	37.2	19.1	56.9	37.8	33.9	46.4	46.6	40.5	52.6	54.6	40.5
Barriers												
Career/work related barriers	14.7	9.1	100.0	7.1	5.0	19.3	11.0	2.6	7.4	13.4	8.6	14.5
Childcare related barriers	.0	1.7	1.9	3.4	.0	1.4	.9	.6	100.0	4.8	2.8	4.8
Confidence/ability/qualifications related barriers	17.1	1.2	4.5	3.3	5.5	5.5	8.7	20.8	4.6	16.2	100.0	13.0
Difficult to get on to course/	4.5	1.9	.8	3.9	.9	3.7	.8	.5	5.3	3.4	4.9	2.8

	Whatever	Can't afford it	Won't help me	Could be fun	Can't find the time	Could help with work	Can't be bothered	Learning/health constrained	Can't leave the kids	Can't get there	Could n't keep up	Total
course/college not suitable												
Interest/dispositional barriers	9.1	5.2	5.2	2.9	2.2	3.2	100.0	2.1	1.7	5.7	5.5	9.8
Financial barriers	8.6	100.0	14.2	24.3	19.7	19.5	13.4	7.6	23.0	27.7	19.9	18.8
Lack of information	1.5	1.1	.5	4.5	1.3	1.6	1.2	.4	1.9	2.6	4.5	1.6
Barriers related to learning difficulties/disability or health reasons	.3	3.1	1.7	8.2	.5	2.8	3.5	87.1	3.3	6.6	18.3	9.7
Structural barriers related to course/travel/Learning/disabilities/info	6.3	7.5	3.6	16.3	2.7	7.9	5.9	87.4	11.0	100.0	24.3	17.2
Lack of time due to family commitments	2.3	10.1	8.6	30.7	59.6	11.8	8.4	9.2	18.4	24.2	16.8	20.0
Lack of time due to work	1.4	8.8	15.0	16.2	58.5	24.0	7.6	2.5	9.9	15.7	12.4	18.8
Travel related barriers	.1	1.4	1.4	.9	.1	.1	.4	3.2	1.2	100.0	2.6	4.2

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table C.O.2: Attitudes by segmentation

	Whatever	Can't afford it	Won't help me	Could be fun	Can't find the time	Could help with work	Can't be bothered	Learning/health constrained	Can't leave the kids	Can't get there	Couldn't keep up	Total
One of the main benefits of doing a course is being able to meet new people												
Agree strongly	51.9	40.4	44.6	67.1	44.0	45.7	47.8	53.9	50.4	58.3	45.8	49.6
Agree slightly	29.8	30.4	31.0	22.5	32.0	28.8	33.3	26.8	30.2	28.0	24.4	29.6
Neither agree nor disagree	6.4	11.5	13.2	4.3	9.7	8.3	9.7	4.4	7.0	6.5	10.3	7.8
Disagree slightly	7.1	12.4	7.5	4.8	9.7	10.5	4.6	6.2	8.0	3.9	10.3	7.9
Disagree strongly	4.7	5.2	3.7	1.3	4.6	6.8	4.5	8.7	4.4	3.3	9.2	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	1,846	240	216	271	872	524	250	316	180	187	95	4,997
I would like to learn something new but I don't know where to start finding out about courses												
Agree strongly	18.8	31.8	18.7	26.0	19.9	17.7	13.3	29.7	32.6	23.5	26.9	21.5
Agree slightly	19.2	23.5	16.5	22.2	23.7	20.8	15.9	19.4	22.5	19.0	16.5	20.4
Neither agree nor disagree	7.4	11.0	16.8	6.3	10.1	6.4	10.7	5.9	5.6	12.2	7.3	8.5
Disagree slightly	25.4	19.1	22.0	21.8	23.7	29.5	30.3	20.1	24.6	22.7	15.1	24.3
Disagree strongly	29.2	14.6	25.9	23.7	22.7	25.5	29.8	24.8	14.7	22.5	34.2	25.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	1,838	240	214	270	869	521	249	314	180	185	95	4,975

	Whatever	Can't afford it	Won't help me	Could be fun	Can't find the time	Could help with work	Can't be bothered	Learning/health constrained	Can't leave the kids	Can't get there	Couldn't keep up	Total
I see paying for your own learning as a worthwhile investment:												
Agree strongly	32.8	32.2	30.1	34.2	31.6	45.8	34.4	35.3	25.8	25.7	26.6	33.4
Agree slightly	32.8	36.2	31.0	36.0	35.2	32.8	33.8	24.1	31.3	28.6	25.0	32.4
Neither agree nor disagree	9.6	8.8	15.9	12.8	11.8	6.8	11.5	7.2	16.6	14.6	15.2	10.7
Disagree slightly	12.9	12.5	7.8	9.9	11.5	7.2	8.1	13.7	9.5	14.1	16.2	11.4
Disagree strongly	12.0	10.3	15.2	7.1	9.9	7.4	12.3	19.7	16.8	17.1	17.0	12.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	1,832	237	216	269	864	519	247	314	180	188	94	4960
Learning is not for people like me												
Agree strongly	8.9	6.1	2.2	2.0	5.7	4.9	13.9	17.9	3.4	4.6	12.7	7.8
Agree slightly	6.5	8.6	5.4	2.2	5.3	5.0	6.5	7.0	3.7	5.1	8.9	5.9
Neither agree nor disagree	5.0	3.0	5.3	4.5	5.3	1.8	6.7	1.9	3.1	2.4	14.2	4.5
Disagree slightly	13.6	7.4	17.4	7.8	13.5	10.1	13.3	15.5	12.9	18.6	10.2	13.0
Disagree strongly	66.0	74.9	69.8	83.6	70.2	78.1	59.6	57.8	76.8	69.2	54.0	68.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	1,845	239	213	269	872	524	248	313	180	187	94	4,984
Most of my friends left education by the age of 16												
Agree strongly	36.4	38.9	40.6	37.9	43.0	47.7	35.6	51.3	41.7	42.2	51.8	41.3

	Whatever	Can't afford it	Won't help me	Could be fun	Can't find the time	Could help with work	Can't be bothered	Learning/health constrained	Can't leave the kids	Can't get there	Couldn't keep up	Total
Agree slightly	15.3	7.8	15.6	13.9	17.2	15.5	15.7	13.3	18.2	16.6	13.2	15.3
Neither agree nor disagree	6.1	14.0	9.9	4.4	7.2	3.7	7.8	2.6	7.5	10.6	13.0	6.7
Disagree slightly	14.7	14.5	14.5	18.0	13.0	13.7	15.0	12.3	10.2	11.5	9.2	13.8
Disagree strongly	27.6	24.8	19.4	25.8	19.6	19.4	25.9	20.5	22.5	19.0	12.8	22.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	1,836	237	213	269	864	518	248	311	180	188	95	4,959
I didn't get anything out of school												
Agree strongly	18.9	23.9	19.2	19.3	24.4	20.7	18.8	35.6	27.3	25.8	37.5	23.0
Agree slightly	12.1	18.5	8.5	8.9	10.9	10.9	12.6	13.3	14.5	17.4	15.7	12.2
Neither agree nor disagree	5.0	6.6	8.6	5.4	7.7	4.3	6.0	3.5	5.7	7.2	3.6	5.7
Disagree slightly	17.4	15.9	21.4	17.7	19.7	22.6	13.9	14.7	17.3	16.1	15.9	18.0
Disagree strongly	46.7	35.0	42.3	48.6	37.2	41.5	48.6	32.9	35.1	33.4	27.4	41.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	1,846	239	215	270	865	524	250	315	180	188	94	4,986

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table C.0.3: Benefits, motivations and barriers by sex and age

	Male	Female	Total	16 to 18 yrs	19 to 29 yrs	30 to 49 yrs	50 to 70 yrs	Total
Benefits								
Work related benefits	44.7	46.0	45.4	64.0	54.0	54.6	22.4	45.5
Change job/career	11.8	16.2	14.3	20.8	18.9	16.9	6.0	14.4
Benefits related to current job	16.9	17.0	17.0	15.4	20.0	22.6	8.6	17.0
General skills and employability benefits	25.5	22.7	23.9	39.2	28.3	26.8	12.2	23.9
Personal/developmental benefits	24.7	28.7	27.0	25.0	30.1	29.6	22.3	27.0
Motives								
Change job/career	22.2	27.2	25.1	22.2	33.2	25.3	14.2	25.2
General skills and employability motives	46.3	48.6	47.6	38.4	50.4	50.3	44.8	47.6
motives related to current job	27.2	24.1	25.4	14.5	26.5	30.3	21.1	25.4
Personal/developmental benefits	39.6	41.2	40.5	48.2	31.3	38.7	53.3	40.5
Barriers								
Career/work related barriers	18.5	11.6	14.5	12.3	14.3	14.6	15.5	14.5
Childcare related barriers	1.0	7.6	4.8	.2	8.1	7.7	.6	4.8
Confidence/ability/qualifications related barriers	13.3	12.7	13.0	4.6	1.9	6.0	31.4	12.9
Difficult to get on to course/ course/college not suitable	2.6	3.0	2.8	1.6	3.9	2.9	2.5	2.8
Interest/dispositional barriers	9.3	10.2	9.8	7.3	7.1	5.8	17.5	9.9
Financial barriers	18.6	19.0	18.8	11.5	26.0	22.9	11.5	18.8
Lack of information	1.3	1.8	1.6	.8	1.6	1.4	2.0	1.6
Barriers related to learning difficulties/disability or health reasons	9.6	9.8	9.7	1.6	3.8	8.4	18.1	9.8

	Male	Female	Total	16 to 18 yrs	19 to 29 yrs	30 to 49 yrs	50 to 70 yrs	Total
Structural barriers related to course/travel/Learning/disabilities/info	16.4	17.8	17.2	7.7	12.2	15.6	25.7	17.2
Lack of time due to family commitments	11.4	26.2	20.0	1.8	18.7	29.9	14.3	19.9
Lack of time due to work	21.8	16.6	18.8	4.9	17.8	27.6	13.0	18.8
Travel related barriers	4.0	4.3	4.2	3.8	3.4	3.9	5.2	4.2

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Table C.O.4: Views on financial and other enablers by segmentation (% reporting that enabler would make a very important difference)

	Whatever	Can't afford it	Won't help me	Could be fun	Can't find the time	Could help with work	Can't be bothered	Learning/health constrained	Can't leave the kids	Can't get there	Couldn't keep up	Total
If you were offered money or support for course costs such as books and equipment: Would this make a difference to your decision?	44.6	58.3	35.6	60.3	43.3	54.1	31.6	37.6	56.3	44.9	37.8	45.4
If course fees were paid in full: Would this make a difference to your decision?	51.3	73.0	50.5	69.6	59.3	69.7	40.7	48.7	70.7	54.2	44.4	56.7
If you had advice about the options available and what would suit you: Would this make a difference to your decision?	37.7	46.8	38.5	55.7	38.9	45.0	28.1	36.8	48.7	35.6	34.6	39.8
If there was a suitable course at a college close to your home: Would this make a difference to your decision?	45.9	56.2	44.2	57.2	49.0	54.3	28.8	45.2	63.1	43.7	36.3	47.8
If you had help to pay for the cost of childcare: Would this make a difference to your decision? (those with children only)	39.9	51.6	29.3	50.5	36.8	46.5	14.9	42.6	65.4	45.7	39.7	42.5
If you had help to pay for the cost of travel: Would this make a difference to your decision?	39.4	48.9	34.9	45.1	34.2	46.5	22.9	36.6	53.7	46.8	36.4	39.3
If you had a personal learning adviser or 'buddy' to give you help and advice when needed: Would this make a difference to your decision?	36.4	40.4	36.4	47.9	36.4	43.1	23.8	38.7	43.8	34.1	45.3	37.9

	Whatever	Can't afford it	Won't help me	Could be fun	Can't find the time	Could help with work	Can't be bothered	Learning/ health constrained	Can't leave the kids	Can't get there	Couldn't keep up	Total
If you could try out a short 'taster' course before signing up: Would this make a difference to your decision?	36.5	45.2	37.9	55.3	42.5	50.4	23.5	36.7	50.8	33.2	37.6	40.4

Source: IES / Ipsos-Mori Disadvantaged learner and non-learner survey 2008

Appendix D: Summary of key Characteristics of Focus Groups

Region	Provider	No.	16-18	19+	Learners	Non-learners	Majority with young children	BME
East Midlands	Northampton University and Sure Start	11		■		■		
South East	MAP, Mill Art Centre	12	■		■			
East Midlands	Leicester Adult Education Centre	11		■				
South West	City of Bristol College	12	■		■			■
North West	Warrington Collegiate	9		■			■	
North West	Stockport College	11	■		■			
West Midlands	Walsall Connexions	12	■			■		
Yorkshire and Humberside	Sheffield College	11	■			■		
Yorkshire and Humberside	Barnsley Dearne Community Partnership	7		■		■	■	

Key: shaded box indicates that participants had relevant characteristics identified in the first row

Appendix E: Glossary of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Term
ALG	Adult Learning Grant
BME	Black and minority ethnic group
CAB	Citizens Advice Bureau
C2L	Care to Learn
DaDA	Dance and Drama Awards
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
EMA	Education Maintenance Allowance
FE	Further Education
FEC	Further Education College
HE	Higher Education
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
IES	Institute for Employment Studies
LA	Local Authority
LDD	Learning difficulty or disability
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
LSD	Learner Support Directorate
LSF	Learner Support Fund
NIACE	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
RSS	Residential Support Scheme
SfL	Skills for Life

Appendix F: Research contributors

We would also like to acknowledge the following contributors for their early comments on the study: Bob Powell (HOLEX); Steve Stewart (Connexions); Juliette Collier (Campaign for Learning); Barry Hansford (National Association for Managers of Student Services); Ruth Hawthorn (National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling); Sue Yeomans (QIA); Alex Reader (LSC Regional); Ruth Barber (Workers' Educational Association); Christine Tyler (Association of School and College Leaders); Kate Bell (One parent families/ Gingerbread); Dr Judy Alloway (NICEC); Phil Brewins (Learner Support Directorate); Mick Fletcher (Independent consultant); Clare Muddiman (Learner Support Directorate); Adrian Clohessy (Learner Support Directorate) and Ian Pursglove (Learner Support Directorate).

NIACE would like to thank all the providers who attended the consultation events and NUS representatives who met with us after the consultation. We are particularly grateful to those who organised and hosted the focus groups. We would also like to thank all of the focus group attendees who gave up their time to participate. Representatives of the following institutions and organisations contributed their views and experiences:

Action for Carers and Employment	Black Country Learning and Skills Council
Adult College of Barking and Dagenham	Bournville College of Further Education
Atherton Evans Associates	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Barnsley Dearne Community Partnership	Calderdale College
Birmingham City Council	Chile Sports Cultural Development Association

City and Guilds	Northern Counties Housing Association
City of Bristol College	NUS
Connexions Leicestershire	OPIG
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills	Prospects Services Ltd
Doncaster College	Queen Mary's College
Durham University	Royal College of Nursing
Edexcel	St Mungo's Association
Essex County Council	Sheffield College
Guideline Career Services	Sheffield Mencap
Hereford College	Skilltrain Ltd
Herefordshire College of Technology	South Cheshire College
Hertfordshire County Council	South Thames College
HMYOI Wetherby	Southgate College
Jobcentre Plus	Staffordshire County Council
Kirklees Council	Stockport College
Learning and Skills Network	Surestart Teesdale
Leeds Thomas Danby College	Surrey County Council
Leicester Adult Education College	UK Youth
Leicester City Council	Walsall College
Leicestershire County Council	Warrington Collegiate
MAP - Multi Arts Programme	Warwickshire College
Moving on Service (Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council)	West Midlands Regional Learning and Skills Council
National Skills Academy for Financial Services	The Wheels Project
NHS Yorkshire and the Humber Strategic Health Authority	Wirral Metropolitan College
	Wolverhampton Adult Education Service

Wolverhampton Learning
Partnership

Workers' Educational Association

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This publication is available in electronic form on the Learning and Skills Council website:
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Publication reference: LSC-P-NAT-100509