

# Workforce Skills in Lifelong Learning

An analysis of the National Employers Skills Survey in England 2007,  
including UK wide comparisons

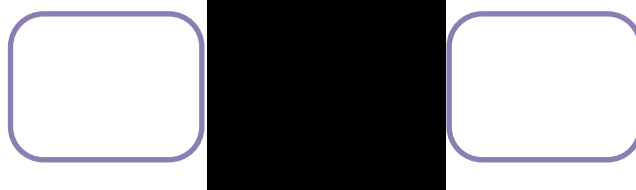


Skills for Learning Professionals

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# Foreword

**The UK is currently the sixth largest economy globally based on GDP<sup>1</sup>, but the next 10 years present a number of challenges to our position, not least the potential impact on our workforce from the current global economic instability.**

In the run-up to the 2012 Olympics we are going to require a whole range of different skills from our existing workforce. In addition, unskilled jobs are reducing in numbers and with ever-changing advances to the way we work, employers are discovering that they need their employees' skills updated on a regular basis.

The National Employers Skills Survey 2007<sup>2</sup> is the most comprehensive source of information on current skills, recruitment and training issues affecting lifelong learning employers in England. Over 2,300 lifelong learning establishments responded to this research which complements existing labour market intelligence on professional development. This report investigates issues unearthed by this research as well as comparing data from employers skills surveys from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales where possible.

This report highlights the fact that the lifelong learning workforce, so vital in 'upskilling' and training the rest of the workforce across the four nations of the UK, is not immune to the problems associated with recruitment, skills shortages and skills gaps. We are committed to overcoming these issues by taking forward the solutions developed in our Sector Skills Agreement.

But what does the National Employers Skills Survey 2007 mean for the sector? Robust labour market

intelligence informs workforce development decisions and policy at all levels: locally, nationally and across the UK; so we will continue to have a profession that attracts and retains high-calibre individuals by offering flexible entry routes and transferable skills. The further education workplace also will reflect and celebrate the diverse nature of the UK in the 21st century. At Lifelong Learning UK we are committed to supporting the sector in achieving this vision and to ensuring that the UK lifelong learning workforce is the best in the world.



David Hunter  
Chief Executive Officer  
Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)

<sup>1</sup> Population, Income and GDP data from CIA World Factbook

<sup>2</sup> Commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council

# I. Executive summary

This report details the findings of the National Employers Skills Survey 2007 (NESS07)<sup>3</sup> for the sector covered by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK). NESS07 incorporates responses from over 2,300 lifelong learning establishments and is the most comprehensive source of information on current skills, recruitment and training issues affecting lifelong learning employers in England.

Lifelong Learning UK is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) responsible for the professional development of staff working in the UK lifelong learning sector, encompassing community learning and development; further education; higher education; libraries, archives and information services; and work based learning. This report is intended to complement existing labour market intelligence gathered by Lifelong Learning UK to further underpin the strategies addressing the professional development needs of individuals working in the lifelong learning sector. The findings laid out in this report represent a significant contribution to the evidence base essential to inform decisions and policy regarding workforce development at all levels; locally, nationally and across the UK.

This report is divided into the following sections:

## Introduction, background and key findings

Sections 1, 2 and 3 of this report provide background to Lifelong Learning UK's analysis of the NESS07 data. A summary of the key findings of the research is shown in Section 3.2, Table 3.3. The overall findings are shown along with analysis by occupational level, region and area of work.

## Recruitment issues

Section 4 covers the vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies and skill shortage vacancies reported by respondents to NESS07 from the lifelong learning sector. Their incidence is examined by occupational level, region and type of establishment. The causes and impact of these vacancies are investigated, as are the efforts taken to overcome them. A comparison of how the lifelong learning sector ranks against other sectors is also provided.

## Skills gaps

Section 5 examines the extent to which lifelong learning employers believe staff are not being fully proficient in their designated role. The impact of specific skills gaps and actions taken to overcome them are also investigated.

## Training and workforce development

Section 6 investigates lifelong learning employers' training and development activity, which is central to developing the skills of their workforce. This includes the extent and nature of the training provided; the proportion of staff receiving these development opportunities; and the main sources of such provision.

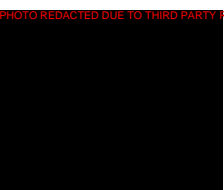
These issues are explored at the national level, with an analysis of regional variations and differences across different types of organisation by area of work and funding.

The examples of best training practice identified in this report could be used for benchmarking purposes by the lifelong learning sector across the UK.

## Comparisons across the UK

The findings from employer skills survey research in the other three nations of the UK (equivalent to NESS07) are presented for comparison wherever the data is available. A summary of the key findings of the employer skills surveys across the UK is shown in Section 3.2, Table 3.4.

Conclusions on the findings are discussed and the implications for Lifelong Learning UK's future work explored in Section 7. In general employers in the lifelong learning sector are more likely than other employers to be taking positive action to overcome recruitment and skills issues.



<sup>3</sup> The National Employers Skills Survey 2007 (NESS07) was commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council along with its partners, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills and the former Sector Skills Development Agency to gather robust and reliable information from employers in England on current skills, recruitment and workforce development issues.

The findings outlined in this report will help to identify specific regions and areas of work where there are issues that need to be addressed. Where these issues correspond to Lifelong Learning UK's Business Plan 2008–2009<sup>4</sup> and Sector Skills Agreement<sup>5</sup> this is highlighted, both in the text and in the key findings for each section.

As part of the National Employers Skills Survey 2007, interviews were conducted with a total of 2,385 employers in the lifelong learning sector in England, summarised as follows:

Area of work	Total	Percentage
Technical and vocational (further education colleges)	151	6
Higher education	469	20
Adult and other education (work based learning and adult and community learning)	1,410	59
Libraries and archives	355	15

This was weighted to a total of 20,480 employers with 802,136 employees (see Appendix 1).

## Key findings

### Recruitment issues

- Eight per cent of lifelong learning employers reported hard-to-fill vacancies, mainly amongst sales/customer service staff, elementary staff, professionals and associate professionals.
- There was a relatively high vacancy rate for associate professionals in all regions. Many of these vacancies were hard to fill because applicants lack the required skills, experience or qualifications.
- 52 per cent of the causes of hard-to-fill vacancies reported by lifelong learning establishments were skills related.
- Skills shortages identified by lifelong learning establishments include technical, practical or job-specific; problem solving; written communication; customer handling and literacy. Lifelong Learning UK intends to ensure that the workforce is able to use new technology, both in business development and quality assurance but also in the everyday running of operations.
- The main actions reported by lifelong learning employers to overcome hard-to-fill vacancies were increasing advertising/recruitment spend, using new recruitment methods/channels and increasing the training given to the existing workforce in order to fill the vacancies.
- Reporting of technical, practical or job-specific skills shortages in the lifelong learning sector is greatest but has dropped since 2005.

### Skills gaps

- Skills gaps were experienced by 17 per cent of lifelong learning employers, but seven per cent of the workforce were not considered to be fully proficient. The percentage of employers with skills gaps has fallen since 2005.
- The most significant skills gaps reported were amongst professionals and sales/customer service staff in the East Midlands, and skilled trades staff in the South East.
- Specific skills gaps identified by employers in lifelong learning were management, technical and practical, and IT professional skills.
- Lifelong learning employers were more likely to report a specific negative impact as a result of vacancies than as a result of skills gaps.
- Only a small proportion of employers had taken no action to address skills gaps.

<sup>4</sup> LLUK Business Plan 2008–2009. Available at: [http://www.lluk.org/documents/lluk\\_business\\_plan\\_2008\\_2009.pdf](http://www.lluk.org/documents/lluk_business_plan_2008_2009.pdf) [Accessed 9 October 2008]

<sup>5</sup> LLUK Sector Skills Agreement. Available at: <http://www.lluk.org/2984.htm> [Accessed 9 October 2008]

### Training and workforce development

- 86 per cent of lifelong learning employers in England had funded or arranged training or development for their employees in the previous 12 months, compared with 67 per cent for all employers.
- The highest levels of training by lifelong learning employers were in the North East, North West and West Midlands.
- The proportion of employers with a training plan and training budget was above the national average.
- Professionals and associate professional/technical occupations were more likely to receive off-the-job training than other occupational groups.
- Teaching or training was most frequently sourced from external consultants and private training providers.
- There is an apparent disconnection between employers' attitudes to staff proficiency when identifying skills gaps and when identifying training needs.

### Comparison of key findings across the UK

- It is notable that in all four nations the hard-to-fill vacancy rate is lower in the lifelong learning sector than it is across all sectors. In the lifelong learning sector in England most hard-to-fill vacancies are as a result of skills issues. This is not the case in the lifelong learning sector in the other three nations.
- The percentage of lifelong learning employers with skills gaps was high in all four nations.
- In England and Northern Ireland there was a greater incidence of reported skills gaps in the lifelong learning sector than there was across all sectors. This was not the case in Scotland and Wales.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Lifelong Learning UK

Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) is the Sector Skills Council responsible for strategic workforce development across the lifelong learning sector, comprising the following areas of work: community learning and development (CLD); further education (FE); higher education (HE); libraries, archives and information services (LAIS); and work based learning (WBL). Lifelong Learning UK has developed a Sector Skills Agreement (SSA) that outlines solution areas for the lifelong learning workforce and the organisation's commitment to working collaboratively with employers, stakeholders, the UK Government, devolved administrations and other partner organisations. The Sector Skills Agreement includes the delivery of an action plan, to address the priority skills needs of the lifelong learning sector across the four nations of the UK. This report will serve to underpin and inform the delivery of this action plan, confirming exactly what the sector's priority skills needs are.

Securing and interpreting labour market intelligence for employers in the lifelong learning sector is a key strategic objective for Lifelong Learning UK

This report is intended to complement the labour market intelligence already gathered by Lifelong Learning UK focusing on the sections within the lifelong learning workforce that are not fully represented in the national data sets (see Section 2.4). Intelligence such as this underpins the strategies addressing the professional development needs of individuals working in the lifelong learning sector. This report therefore represents a significant contribution to the evidence base essential to Lifelong Learning UK's engagement with employers, stakeholders and policy makers in the sector. Lifelong Learning UK is committed to furthering the dissemination of the findings laid out in this report as part of an ongoing research strategy, to better inform decisions and policy regarding workforce development at all levels: locally, nationally and across the UK.

### 2.2 The National Employers Skills Survey 2007

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is required to formulate national and local strategies for England, underpinned by sound labour market analysis.

The Learning and Skills Council – along with its partners, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and the former Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) – commissioned a National Employers Skills Survey in 2003 (NESS03), 2004 (NESS04) and 2005 (NESS05) which explored skills shortages and workforce development activity among approximately 72,000, 27,000 and 75,000 employers respectively across England.

The National Employers Skills Survey 2007 (NESS07) incorporates responses from just over 79,000 employers across the workforce and is the most comprehensive source of information on current skills, recruitment and training issues affecting employers in England. Its high importance to policy makers charged with raising the country's skill levels is not just because of the scale of the survey, but also because:

- It is a key source of labour market information on skill-shortage vacancies, skills gaps and workforce development activity, and is a crucial part of the evidence to inform skills policy.
- The partnership approach developed by the Learning and Skills Council, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills and the Sector Skills Development Agency allows the key agencies involved in skills policy to develop a shared understanding of skill deficiencies and workforce development issues through the use of one overarching survey with widely accepted terminology and definitions.

The survey responses have been categorised by Sector Skills Council using the standard industrial classification (SIC) codes (see Section 2.4). The Sector Skills Councils have a responsibility to gather and disseminate labour market intelligence, within a common framework. Access to the NESS data allows the Sector Skills Councils to filter the data and produce sector-specific reports.

The survey, in reporting regionally and by Sector Skills Council, can inform:

- Regional strategic plans being drawn up by regional partners to identify priority areas
- The work of the Sector Skills Councils to identify sector priorities and to influence the supply of learning and training to meet their employers' needs
- At country level, policy papers such as the 2005 White Paper on education and skills
- At a UK-wide level the key findings can be compared with intelligence from the other three nations, to support or inform national policy drivers.

### 2.3 Scope and aims

The NESS survey collects information from a sample of employers in England. All establishments of two or more employees are eligible, across the complete spectrum of business activities. Single-person establishments, or sole operators, are excluded<sup>6</sup>.

The overarching aim of NESS is to provide the Learning and Skills Council and its partners with robust and reliable information from employers in England on skills deficiencies and workforce development. This data can be used to assess the impact of skills initiatives and underpins policy development. The Learning and Skills Council made the data from NESS07 available to Lifelong Learning UK for the purpose of analysis specific to the lifelong learning workforce.

This report aims to provide data and analysis of:

- How many employers in the lifelong learning sector in England have difficulty finding suitably skilled new recruits to fill vacant positions; how many vacancies remain unfilled because of skill shortages among applicants in each of the major occupational categories; and which skills are in short supply.
- How many employers in the lifelong learning sector in England face skills deficiencies among their existing workforce; how many (and which) employees are affected; the nature of the skills challenges they face; and the extent to which employers in the lifelong learning sector in England actively engage in professional development of their workforce, and how this compares across the UK.

- Employer use of further education colleges, higher education establishments and private training providers as sources of teaching and training for workforce development. This is particularly crucial for Lifelong Learning UK as the workforce we represent comprises the learning providers described by the report. As a result, it is important that our work recognises the impact of other sectors on the lifelong learning workforce.
- How the lifelong learning sector in England compares with both the lifelong learning sector and all sectors across the UK.

In Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Skills Monitoring Survey 2005 (Department of Employment and Learning) was designed to provide a snapshot of the skills needs of NI employers in the non-agricultural sectors. The survey provides an overview of vacancies, skills gaps and training. The Sector Skills Summary Report (February 2008) provides a breakdown by Sector Skills Council sector.

In Scotland research similar to NESS is carried out by Futureskills Scotland, part of Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The Scottish Employer Skills Survey 2006 informed breakdowns by Sector Skills Council sector. The Lifelong Learning UK Sector profile for Scotland was published in 2007.

In Wales, research similar to NESS was commissioned by the Future Skills Wales partnership. The Lifelong Learning Future Skills Wales 2005 Sector Skills Survey presents the findings for the Lifelong Learning UK sector in Wales.

The findings from the four nations of those sectors covered by Lifelong Learning UK are presented here for comparison wherever the data is available. In some cases data from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales is not available simply because there were too few responses from the lifelong learning sector in these nations to generate robust statistics.

Where possible, comparisons with skills issues identified across Europe are drawn, although these are made in necessarily broad terms. Comparison of specific data from different countries is risky because of the diverse techniques, language, definitions and interpretation of data.

<sup>6</sup> In general the lifelong learning workforce has fewer sole-operators than other sectors, although there are many self-employed private training providers of work based learning, which may result in under-representation of this part of the workforce. See Appendix 2 for further details of workforce coverage.



### 2.3.1 Data weighting

Weighting of the survey data was undertaken to ensure that the survey results are representative of the population of employers. The weighting process involved grossing-up the survey results to population estimates on an establishment and an employment basis separately (see Appendix 1).

In this report NESS data with an unweighted base (i.e. the actual number of respondents) of less than 30 are not reported on unless it is necessary to do so. In general this data is replaced with '-' in tables. Data with an unweighted base between 30 and 50 are italicised, as the actual number of respondents is relatively low and the figures should therefore be treated with caution.

## 2.4 The lifelong learning workforce

This report summarises the findings of the NESS07 for the sector covered by Lifelong Learning UK. Sectoral data from the NESS is provided on the basis of standard industrial classification (SIC) codes. The five standard industrial classification codes that were assigned to define the lifelong learning sector are:

- 80.22 technical and vocational secondary education
- 80.30/1 sub-degree level HE
- 80.30/2 & 3 first- and postgraduate-degree level HE
- 80.42 adult and other education not elsewhere classified
- 92.51 library and archives activities.

It is important to note that using standard industrial classification codes to define the lifelong learning sector can result in under-representation of the work based learning and community learning and development areas of work in the NESS data (especially for the individual strands within community learning and development such as youth work, which is a substantial part of the lifelong learning workforce). There is also potential for under-representation of the further education and libraries, archives and information service areas of work. For a full analysis of the standard industrial classification code coverage, see Appendix 2.

The importance of the sector covered by Lifelong Learning UK cannot be underestimated. The lifelong learning workforce is vital to the workforce across all sectors in that it is largely responsible for their learning provision, as well as learning provision within the lifelong learning sector.

The total spend by institutions involved in the lifelong learning sector is approximately £21 billion per annum across the UK

The sector is a significant economic player. The total spend by the institutions involved in lifelong learning is approximately £21 billion per annum<sup>7</sup>. This figure does not include the considerable investment made by industry. The Confederation of British Industry (2008) estimates that over £33 billion per annum is invested in employees' skills by firms across the UK.

The economic importance of this sector is further enhanced by the economically beneficial activities of the various learners; whether these are graduates of higher and further education entering employment; individuals in employment who are upgrading their existing skills with either on- or off-the-job training; or individuals supporting community capacity building or regeneration through their involvement in community based education or youth work activities.

<sup>7</sup> England – planned budget for Higher Education, Further Education, Adult Learning, Skills and Lifelong Learning – £17.4 billion from Department for Education and Skills Departmental report 2006 (page 79)

Northern Ireland – planned budget for learning, research and skills training – £567.4 million from Northern Ireland Government Priorities and Budget 2006–2008 (page 68)

Scotland – budget for lifelong learning – £2.2 billion from Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Draft Budget 2007–2008, Scottish Executive (page 4)

Wales – programme budget for Lifelong Learning and Skills for Young People and Adults – £590 million from DELLS Operational Plan 2006 – 2007, Spending Programme Area 8

## 3. Returns and key findings

### 3.1 Responses to the survey

Interviews were conducted with a total of 2,385 establishments in the lifelong learning sector. An unweighted summary of these responses is shown in Appendix 3. All subsequent data shows weighted results (see Section 2.3.1 and Appendix 1 for a summary of data weighting).

Lifelong learning establishments responding to the survey are described by region and by standard industrial classification code in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1 Establishments' area of work (standard industrial classification code) by region

	Percentage technical and vocational	Percentage higher education	Percentage adult and other education	Percentage libraries and archives	Percentage of total
East of England	10	19	61	10	11
East Midlands	4	14	62	19	9
Greater London	6	18	61	15	15
North East	8	17	55	20	4
North West	9	19	59	13	12
South East	8	17	65	10	18
South West	5	17	60	18	12
West Midlands	4	22	60	15	10
Yorkshire and The Humber	3	14	67	15	9
Percentage of Total	7	18	62	14	100

Weighted base: All lifelong learning establishments.

The summary of regional variation in returns is shown in the final column of Table 3.1. Overall, the greatest number of responses was from the South East and the lowest from the North East, an indication that the number of providers in each region correlates to population density and that this is being reflected in the sample. The 'adult and other education' classification, roughly equating to the community learning and development area of work (see Appendix 2), accounted for two thirds of the responses, although in terms of workforce size, higher education accounts for 61 per cent of the total in employment (see Table 3.1 for a summary of the numbers employed in each occupational level, region and area of work of the lifelong learning sector).

Table 3.2 Type of establishment (funding) by region

	Percentage seeking a profit	Percentage charity/voluntary sector	Percentage local government financed body	Percentage central government financed body	Percentage none of the above/other
East of England	54	16	24	2	5
East Midlands	46	17	26	5	5
Greater London	48	24	20	5	3
North East	33	20	35	7	5
North West	50	17	30	2	2
South East	62	13	17	4	4
South West	51	13	26	4	6
West Midlands	48	15	31	3	4
Yorkshire and The Humber	46	19	28	2	4
Percentage of Total	51	17	25	4	4

Weighted base: All lifelong learning establishments.

Overall 51 per cent of establishments reported seeking a profit, which is surprising given the high returns from adult and other education. It is possible that the majority of these respondents are actually private work based learning providers and not community education providers.

In general there is a greater percentage of establishments returning the survey in the South and East of England that are seeking a profit and a greater percentage of establishments receiving local government funding returning the survey from the North and West. The greatest regional response from charitable/voluntary establishments was from Greater London. The returns are sufficient for robust analysis although care must be taken when further analysing regions with lower returns (such as the North East) to be aware that the unweighted base may be below 30 establishments (see Section 2.3.1 and Appendix 1).

### 3.2 Key findings

A summary of the key findings from lifelong learning establishments responding to NESS07 is shown in Table 3.3. The overall findings are shown along with analysis by occupational level, region and area of work.

**Table 3.3 Summary of key findings from the lifelong learning establishments responding to NESS07**

	Number employed	Number not fully proficient	Percentage not fully proficient	Number of vacancies	Vacancies as percentage of number employed	Number of hard-to-fill vacancies	Percentage vacancies which are hard-to-fill	Number of skills shortage vacancies	Percentage vacancies which are skills shortage vacancies	
Occupational level	Managers	114,380	6,938	6	745	1	137	18	117	16
	Professionals	303,062	22,299	7	7,854	3	1,910	24	1,020	13
	Associate professionals	62,865	3,223	5	3,885	6	865	22	702	18
	Administrative/clerical staff	179,706	10,977	6	3,710	2	431	12	347	9
	Skilled trades	28,150	4,481	16	762	3	59	8	42	6
	Personal service staff	26,006	1,591	6	1,049	4	131	12	122	12
	Sales/customer service staff	34,293	2,977	9	507	1	185	37	158	31
	Machine operatives	6,438	222	3	74	1	–	–	–	–
	Elementary staff	47,236	2,578	5	466	1	127	27	70	15
	Unclassified staff	–	–	–	318	–	58	18	36	11
Region	East of England	74,200	11,281	15	1,712	2	374	22	315	18
	East Midlands	66,071	8,346	13	1,259	2	114	9	95	8
	Greater London	131,509	7,689	6	3,452	3	798	23	730	21
	North East	42,392	1,993	5	876	2	180	21	117	13
	North West	104,335	2,697	3	2,913	3	634	22	420	14
	South East	137,232	11,912	9	4,133	3	954	23	303	7
	South West	79,034	4,159	5	1,741	2	351	20	225	13
	West Midlands	80,937	3,629	4	1,842	2	248	13	209	11
	Yorkshire and The Humber	86,426	3,579	4	1,561	2	253	16	199	13
Area of work	Technical and vocational	37,522	1,600	4	1,309	3	281	21	140	11
	Higher education	490,704	37,201	8	7,659	2	862	11	674	9
	Adult and other education	215,983	13,080	6	9,027	4	2,530	28	1,619	18
	Libraries and archives	57,926	3,405	6	1,492	3	232	16	180	12
<b>Overall</b>	<b>802,135</b>	<b>55,286</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19,487</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3,905</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2,613</b>	<b>13</b>	

Weighted base: All in employment in lifelong learning sector establishments.

The findings from employer skills survey research in the other three nations of the UK (equivalent to NESS07) are presented for comparison wherever the data is available. In some cases data for the lifelong learning sector from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales is not available simply because there were too few responses from the sector in these nations to generate robust statistics.

A summary of the key findings of the employer skills surveys across the UK is shown in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4 Comparison of the key findings across the UK**

		Vacancies as percentage of total employed	Hard-to-fill vacancies as percentage of total employed	Skills shortage vacancies as percentage of total employed	Skills shortage vacancies as percentage of hard-to-fill vacancies	Percentage of establishments reporting skills gaps	Skills gaps as percentage of total employed	Percentage of establishments providing off-the-job training	Percentage of establishments providing both on- and off-the-job training
England (brackets show NESS05 value)	All sectors	2.8 (2.7)	0.8 (0.9)	0.6 (0.7)	71 (70)	15 (16)	6 (6)	46 (46)	67 (65)
	Lifelong Learning sector	2.4 (2.2)	0.5 (0.5)	0.3 (0.3)	67 (71)	17 (19)	7 (5)	72 (77)	86 (89)
Northern Ireland	All sectors	2.1	1.1	0.4	–	9	8.9	34	–
	Lifelong Learning sector	2.6	0.7	0.1	–	10	8.7	67	–
Scotland	All sectors	4	2	–	61	22	8	–	57
	Lifelong Learning sector	2	1	–	48	20	–	–	70
Wales	All sectors	3.5	1.2	0.5	–	18	6	58	–
	Lifelong Learning sector	1.6	0.4	–	–	17	3	54	–

Data reproduced from DELNI (2008), Futureskills Scotland (2007), Future Skills Wales (2005).

## 4. Recruitment issues

This section covers the vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies (HtFVs) and skill shortage vacancies (SSVs) reported by respondents to NESS07 from the lifelong learning sector. The incidence of these vacancies is examined by occupational level, region and type of establishment. Analysis is presented of causes, the impact and measures taken to overcome both hard-to-fill and skills shortage vacancies. A comparison of how the lifelong learning sector ranks against other sectors is also provided.

### Definitions

**Vacancies** are those posts that are vacant at the time of the survey for which the employer is seeking to recruit from the external labour market.

**Hard-to-fill vacancies** are those vacancies described by employers as being particularly difficult to fill. Reasons often include skills related issues, but may simply involve such aspects as the employer being based in a remote location, poor pay or terms and conditions of employment.

**Skills shortage vacancies** are those hard-to-fill vacancies which result from a lack of applicants with the required skills, work experience or qualifications.

### Key findings and actions

The findings of this report reveal a relatively high rate of vacancies for associate professional level posts in the lifelong learning sector (such as learning support staff, instructors, demonstrators or facilitators). **One of the key solution areas from Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Skills Agreement is to develop a knowledge bank for use by Information, Advice and Guidance professionals who are in a position to advise new entrants to the sector.**

Correspondingly the findings suggest that associate professional vacancies are likely to be hard-to-fill because of a low number of applicants with the right skills or work experience. **Specifically targeted recruitment programmes combined with Lifelong Learning UK's commitment to professionalising the lifelong learning workforce may help to address the reported shortage of associate professionals (Lifelong Learning UK Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five, solution areas one and eight).**

Skills shortages identified by lifelong learning establishments include general IT user skills and IT professional skills. Information and communication technology (ICT) is a basic requirement of operating in the modern electronic environment. It is obvious that without an appropriately e-capable and e-confident workforce, learning delivery will suffer as the learners become more technically competent. With internet access now widely available at home, library and archives staff must also ensure that their information and communication technology skills are sufficient to provide a service to an increasingly e-capable customer base. **As specified in the Lifelong Learning UK Business Plan 2008–2009 (Deliverable 7.8) and the Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five (solution area ten), Lifelong Learning UK intends to ensure that the workforce is able to use new technology, both in business development and quality assurance but also in the everyday running of operations. This will include making sure that the tools and skills are in place to deliver learning and services that incorporate all the enhancements of new technologies.**

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## 4.1 Incidence of vacancies

Across establishments from all sectors making a return to the NESS survey, 18 per cent reported having vacancies, compared with 25 per cent of establishments from the lifelong learning sector. A full comparison of the incidence of vacancies for the individual sectors is shown in Appendix 9 and the regional variation in reporting of vacancies across all sectors is shown in Appendix 4.

Respondents to NESS07 specified the actual number of current vacancies. These vacancies are specified by occupational level, and expressed as a percentage of the total number of staff employed at that level.

### 4.1.1 Occupation and region

Table 4.1 Vacancies in lifelong learning sector establishments as a percentage of total employed by occupation and region

	East of England	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire and The Humber	Overall percentage
Managers	0.4	0.6	1.4	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.8	0.8	1
Professionals	2.6	1.4	2.4	1.8	1.6	5	3.3	2.4	1.8	3
Associate professionals	4.7	6.6	6.7	9.8	10.8	5.3	2.9	6.3	4.8	6
Administrative/ clerical staff	2.3	1.2	2.8	2.3	2.5	1.6	1.9	2.3	1.7	2
Skilled trades	<i>1.1*</i>	–	<i>1.5*</i>	<i>1.8*</i>	–	<i>9.6*</i>	<i>1.3*</i>	<i>1.2*</i>	<i>0.2*</i>	3
Personal service staff	<i>5*</i>	<i>6.2*</i>	<i>4*</i>	<i>2*</i>	<i>12.2*</i>	<i>0.7*</i>	<i>5.6*</i>	<i>1.8*</i>	<i>2.7*</i>	4
Sales/customer service staff	<i>2.5*</i>	<i>1.5*</i>	<i>1.6*</i>	<i>0.5*</i>	<i>2.1*</i>	<i>3*</i>	<i>1.6*</i>	<i>0.4*</i>	–	1
Machine operatives	–	–	<i>7.1*</i>	<i>15.2*</i>	<i>2.9*</i>	<i>0.6*</i>	<i>2.9*</i>	–	–	1
Elementary staff	<i>0.1*</i>	<i>1.6*</i>	<i>0.5*</i>	<i>0.8*</i>	<i>3.4*</i>	<i>0.3*</i>	<i>0.2*</i>	2.6	<i>0.6*</i>	1
Totals	2.3	1.9	2.5	2	2.7	3	2.2	2.3	1.6	

\* Data in italics are based on low numbers and should be treated with caution. Base: Total in employment at each occupational level and region (example: the vacancy rate for managers in the East of England is 0.4 per cent of the total number of managers employed in this region).

The total for each region in Table 4.1 above show the regional variation in vacancies as a percentage of total employed in the lifelong learning sector in each region. The vacancy rate for employees in lifelong learning establishments in England as a whole is 2.4 per cent. The South East shows a higher than average rate of 3.0 per cent, which is largely due to relatively high numbers of vacancies for associate professionals, which in the lifelong learning sector can include learning support staff, instructors, demonstrators, facilitators, youth work support staff and assistant archivists or assistant librarians. Vacancy rates for professionals are also relatively high in the South East. These two occupational groups account for 46 per cent of the lifelong

Vacancy rates for associate professionals are relatively high in all regions

learning workforce in England (see Table 4.1 for a full summary of the numbers employed at each occupational level). Vacancy rates for associate professionals are relatively high in all regions, most notably in the North West (see Table 4.1 for the full analysis).

### 4.1.2 Occupation and area of work

Table 4.1 shows the regional breakdown of vacancy rates by occupation. Table 4.2 below shows the same occupational vacancy rates analysed by area of work (as defined by standard industrial classification code).

Table 4.2 Lifelong learning sector vacancies as percentage of total employed by occupation and area of work

Vacancies as percentage of total employed	Technical and vocational education	Higher education	Adult and other education	Libraries and archives
Managers	0.3	0.2	1.3	0.5
Professionals	5.6	2.1	3.7	1.3
Associate professionals	2.1	2.6	13.9	1.2
Administrative/clerical staff	1.0	1.2	2.5	11.9
Skilled trades	–	1.1*	5.4*	–
Personal service staff	3.8*	1.5*	7.9*	3.1*
Sales/customer service staff	13.1*	0.8*	3.3*	0.3*
Machine operatives	–	0.4*	2.2*	0.7*
Elementary staff	1.2*	0.9*	1.5*	0.6*
Totals	3.4	1.5	4.1	2.5

\* Data in italics are based on low numbers and should be treated with caution. Base: Total in employment at each level and standard industrial classification code (example: the vacancy rate for managers in technical and vocational education is 0.3 per cent of the total number of managers employed in this area of work).

The area of work that made the greatest return to NESS07 within the lifelong learning sector was higher education, accounting for 61 per cent of the workforce. This is a reflection of the size of establishments in higher education compared with other areas of work. The vacancy rate is not particularly high across the range of occupational levels for higher education, never exceeding the all sector average of 2.8 per cent. Particular areas with high vacancy rates are administrative and clerical roles within libraries and archives, associate professionals within adult and other education, and (to a lesser extent) professional roles within technical and vocational education. All of these vacancy rates are significantly greater than the all sector average.

### 4.2 Hard-to-fill vacancies

Eight per cent of establishments from the lifelong learning sector reported having hard-to-fill vacancies compared with an all sector average of seven per cent. A full comparison of the incidence of hard-to-fill vacancies for the individual sectors is shown in Appendix 9, and explored in Section 4.4.1.

Eight per cent of establishments from the lifelong learning sector reported having hard-to-fill vacancies



#### 4.2.1 Causes of hard-to-fill vacancies

Overall the main causes of hard-to-fill vacancies are low number of applicants with the required skills (25 per cent of establishments who provided causes for hard-to-fill vacancies), lack of work experience (14 per cent) and lack of qualifications (13 per cent). In total 52 per cent of causes listed are skills related. No other single cause accounted for more than eight per cent of the responses. A low number of applicants generally, no-one interested in this type of job and poor terms and conditions (e.g. pay) offered for the post together accounted for 23 per cent of establishments' responses.

52 per cent of hard-to-fill vacancies reported by lifelong learning establishments are skills related

The variation across occupation levels of the three main causes identified above is slight. In general, wherever the percentage response is high for a particular occupational level, it is based on low numbers and caution must be taken with any conclusions that are drawn. It can be stated with confidence that low numbers of applicants with the required skills or work experience is a particular problem with vacancies for associate professionals. The complete findings are shown in Appendix 5, which examines the causes of hard-to-fill vacancies by occupational level.

The reporting on the main causes of hard-to-fill vacancies has changed since the 2003 NESS report for the lifelong learning sector. In 2003 the reported causes were due to a low number of people with the required skills (56 per cent of hard-to-fill vacancies), a low number of applicants generally (40 per cent) and not enough people interested in this type of work (37 per cent).

It is worth noting that the percentage of vacancies that are hard-to-fill in the lifelong learning sector has fallen consistently since 2003. For a full year on year comparison of the key findings see Appendix 7.

#### 4.2.2 Impact of hard-to-fill vacancies

Table 4.4 Impact of hard-to-fill vacancies

	Lifelong learning sector, England. Percentage	All sectors, England. Percentage
Lose business or orders to competitors	30	34
Delays developing new products or services	43	35
Difficulties meeting quality standards	28	30
Increases operating costs	36	34
Difficulties introducing new working practices	33	28
Increases workload for other staff	69	74
Outsource work	27	25
None [unprompted]	10	9
Don't know [unprompted]	–	–

*Base: All establishments with hard-to-fill vacancies (example: 30 per cent of lifelong learning establishments with hard-to-fill vacancies stated the impact that they lose business or orders to competitors). Percentages do not total 100 as multiple responses were allowed.*

Table 4.4 shows that although the greatest impact of hard-to-fill vacancies is an increased workload on other staff, there are also direct impacts on revenue and business. There is a slight difference between the figures for the lifelong learning sector and all sectors across England: slightly fewer lifelong learning establishments report an increased workload for other staff and rather more report a delay developing new products or services. This probably reflects the position that no courses are run if staff are not in post to deliver them, or that developing new courses (such as research and development) is postponed for the same reason.

### 4.2.3 Action taken to overcome hard-to-fill vacancies

Table 4.5 Action taken to overcome hard-to-fill vacancies

	Lifelong learning sector, England. Percentage	All sectors, England. Percentage
Increasing salaries	4	4
Increasing the training given to your existing workforce in order to fill the vacancies	13	10
Redefining existing jobs	5	6
Increasing advertising/recruitment spend	36	44
Increasing/expanding trainee programmes	7	7
Using new recruitment methods or channels	20	23
Offering enhanced terms and conditions (inc. working hours)	–	–
Making existing staff work longer hours	2	3
Considering a wider range of applicants	–	–
Hiring additional part-time/temporary/agency/contract staff	2	3
Recruiting additional staff from overseas	–	–
Subcontracting more work to outside organisations	–	–
Automating certain tasks	–	–
Other	3	–
Nothing	6	13
Don't know	–	–

Base: All establishments with hard-to-fill vacancies (example: four per cent of lifelong learning establishments with hard-to-fill vacancies stated that they increase salaries to overcome hard-to-fill vacancies). Percentages do not total 100 as multiple responses were allowed.

Table 4.5 shows that the most common actions taken by employers to overcome recruitment difficulties in both the lifelong learning sector and across all sectors are: increasing advertising and recruitment spend (36 per cent and 44 per cent respectively) and using new recruitment methods or channels (20 per cent and 23 per cent). This is similar to the results in 2005.

A significant minority of employers still take no action in response to hard-to-fill vacancies. Six per cent of employers with vacancies which are hard-to-fill in the lifelong learning sector do nothing to tackle the problem (13 per cent of employers across all sectors in England).

### 4.2.4 Potential policy driver revealed by hard-to-fill vacancy data

The findings outlined in Section 4.2 suggest that vacancies for associate professionals are likely to be hard-to-fill because of a low number of applicants with the right skills or work experience. According to UK and Europe-wide employment forecasts (CEDEFOP 2008) the demand for associate professionals in the education sector is likely to increase above the average trends over the next five years, so this could be regarded as a particularly important policy driver. One of the key solution areas from Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Skills Agreement is to develop a knowledge bank for use by Information, Advice and Guidance professionals who are in a position to advise new entrants to the sector. Specifically targeted recruitment programmes such as Lifelong Learning UK's Catalyst programme<sup>8</sup> may help to address this shortage of associate professionals.

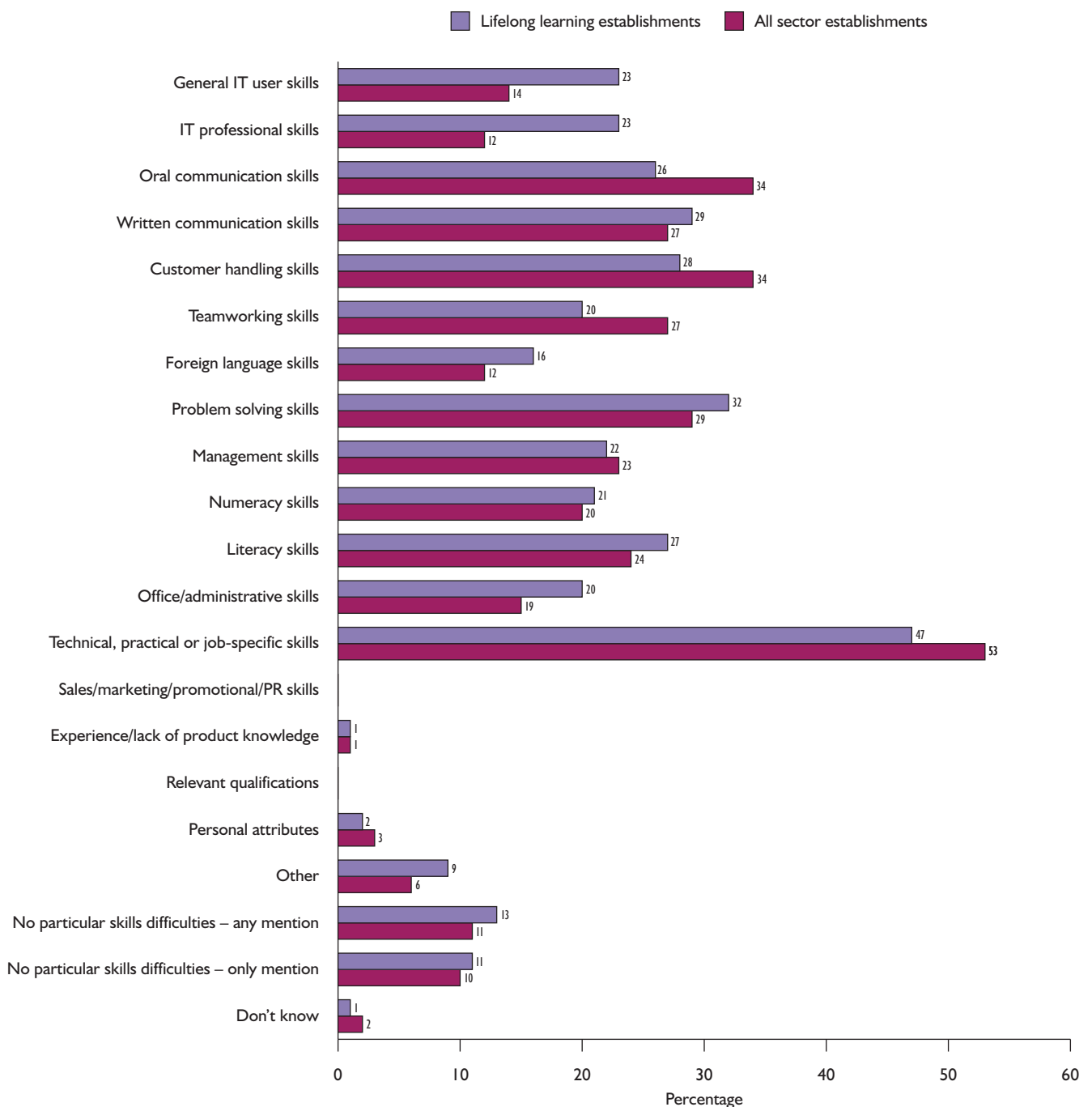
### 4.3 Skill shortage vacancies

Five per cent of establishments from all sectors responding to NESS07 reported having skills shortage vacancies, compared with six per cent of establishments from the lifelong learning sector. A full comparison of the incidence of skills shortage vacancies for the individual sectors is shown in Appendix 9, and explored in Section 4.4.1.

<sup>8</sup> The Catalyst programme aims to attract new talent into the further education sector in England, but also to enable current teachers, trainers and tutors in the sector to update their skills in industry. Further details available at: <http://www.lluk.org/3016.htm> [Accessed 15 October 2008]

Figure 4.1 Summary of skills found difficult to obtain from applicants

Figure 4.1 shows a summary of the skills shortages that were reported by lifelong learning establishments in NESS07.



Weighted base: All establishments with skills shortage vacancies. Lifelong learning sector: 1,205. All sectors: 67,269 (example: 23 per cent of establishments with skills shortage vacancies in the lifelong learning sector stated that 'general IT user skills' were difficult to obtain from applicants).

By far the greatest skills shortage reported is technical, practical or job-specific skills which equates to “learning delivery, including pedagogy and Information Learning Technology” as identified in Lifelong Learning UK’s Sector Skills Agreement Stage Three report. This theme feeds into the action plans developed for the Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five report. The requirements for learning delivery are different in all areas of work within the lifelong learning sector and as a result the development of this action plan will be flexible and incorporate specific consultation and feedback with the individual sectors. It is worth noting that in the comparison of skills shortages reported over the last four NESS studies (see Figure 4.1) there is an upward trend in reporting of this particular shortage from 2003 to 2005 but a substantial drop in reporting from 53 per cent in 2005 to 47 per cent in 2007. The next NESS data set in 2009 may support this. Statements about trends based on only four data points can only be tentative.

Reporting of technical, practical or job-specific skills shortages in the lifelong learning sector is greatest, but has dropped since 2005

The second highest skills shortage identified is problem solving skills. Reporting of this shortage has been steadily increasing since 2003. The specific nature of this skills shortage is likely to vary considerably across the different areas of work and further research is required to investigate how best to address it. The shortage in problem solving skills is further analysed in Section 4.3.3.

The third greatest skills shortage is written communication skills. Reporting of this shortage has decreased from 33 per cent in 2005 to 29 per cent in 2007. Unfortunately, comparison with previous data is not possible due to different wording of the surveys for 2003 and 2004.

Other skills shortages identified by lifelong learning establishments in NESS07 which are also identified in Lifelong Learning UK’s Sector Skills Agreement Stage Three report are general IT user skills and IT professional skills. Information and communication technology (ICT) is fundamental to operating in the modern electronic environment. No other skill set has evolved as quickly as information and communication technology in recent years and it is recognised as being a serious issue across all sectors and all four nations (DELNI 2008, Futureskills Scotland 2007, Future Skills Wales 2005, Learning and Skills Council 2008). Without an appropriately e-capable and e-confident workforce, learning delivery will suffer as the learners become more technically competent. With internet access now widely available at home, library and archives staff must also ensure that their information and communication technology skills are sufficient to provide a service to an increasingly e-capable customer base.

In July 2008, Becta published a refresh of the Department for Education and Skills e-strategy, *Harnessing Technology* (Becta 2008a), building on the system-wide approach to the application of ICT in education, skills and children’s services. Becta is leading on the co-ordination, development and delivery of this e-strategy, establishing the technological infrastructure for schools and colleges to make the best use of technology. Lifelong Learning UK is working in partnership with Becta and other stakeholders on the further education and skills implementation plan (Becta 2008b). This work is in line with the Lifelong Learning UK Business Plan 2008–2009 (Deliverable 7.8) and the Sector Skills Agreement (solution area ten) which details Lifelong Learning UK’s recognition of the need to ensure that the lifelong learning workforce is able to use new technology, not only in business development and quality assurance but also in the everyday running of operations. This includes:

- making sure that the tools and skills are in place to deliver learning and services that incorporate all the enhancements of new technologies
- refreshing e-learning standards in the form of e-learning application guides based on the teaching standards in the lifelong learning sector.

IT professional skills has seen the only notable rise in reporting across all sectors, cited in connection with 13 per cent of skills shortage vacancies in 2007 compared with 10 per cent in 2005.

#### 4.3.1 Skills shortage vacancies by occupation

A full analysis of the skills found difficult to obtain from applicants within each occupational group is shown in Appendix 6. The most significant skills shortage for the professionals, associate professionals and administrative and clerical staff that make up the majority of the lifelong learning workforce is technical, practical or job specific skills. In relation to occupation group, general IT user skills shortages are reported for administrative and clerical posts, customer handling skills and problem solving skills for professional posts, and problem solving skills for associate professionals.

According to employment forecasts for Europe and the UK (CEDEFOP 2008) the demand for associate professionals in the education sector is likely to increase above the average trends over the next five years, so skills shortages at this occupational level may be regarded as particularly important policy drivers and are examined in greater detail in Section 4.3.3.

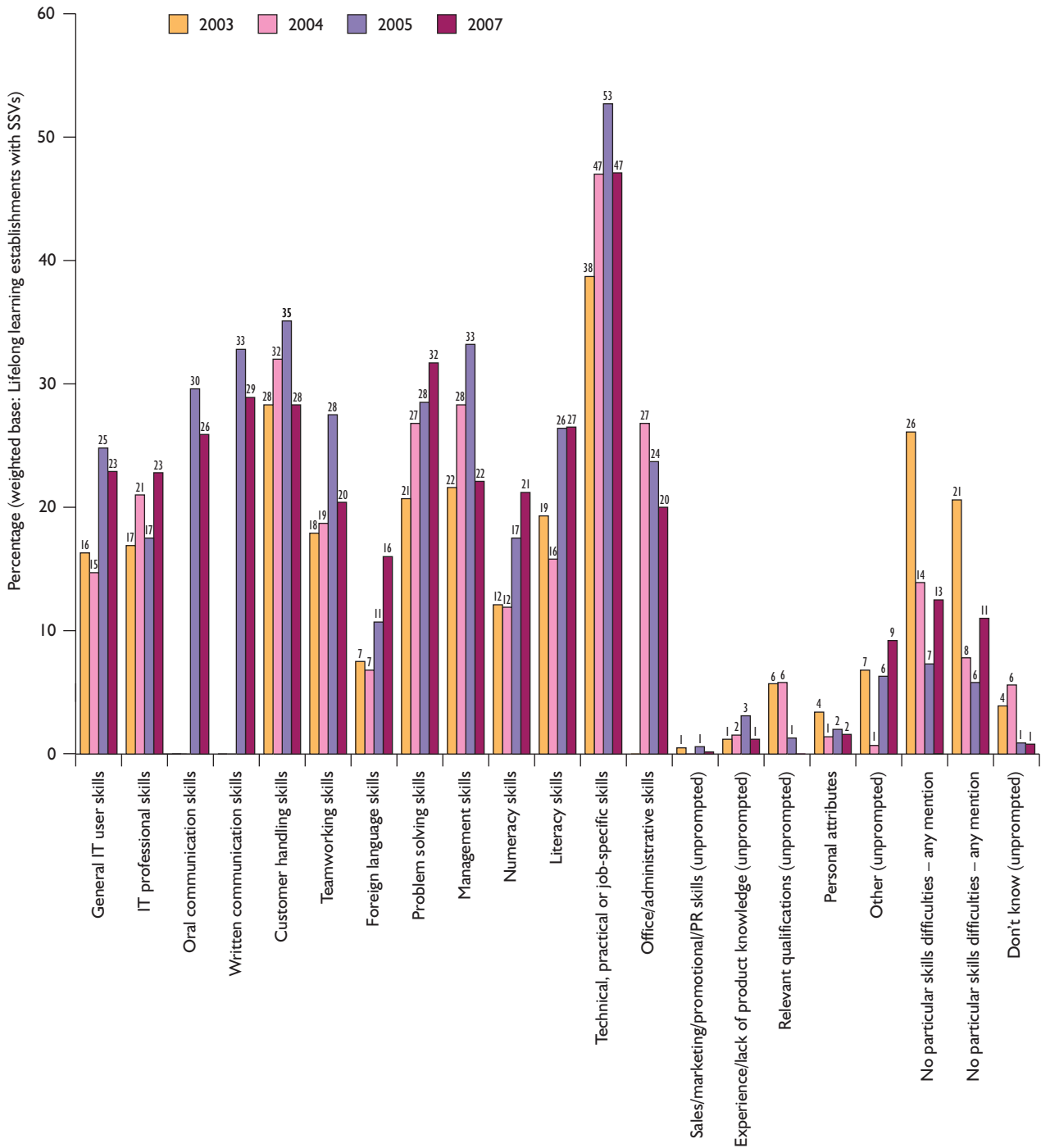
#### 4.3.2 Year on year comparison of skills shortage vacancies

Figure 4.2 plots the trends in the summary reporting of skills found difficult to obtain from applicants since 2003. For a full summary of the trends in the NESS data for the lifelong learning sector since 2003, see Appendix 7. All trends in reporting should be treated with a degree of caution, as only four sets of survey results are available for comparison.

Numeracy and literacy skills shortages have been steadily increasing since 2003

Examining the trends in skills shortages in the lifelong learning sector since 2003 shown in Figure 4.2, there are several shortages identified by establishments that have been steadily increasing, namely numeracy skills, literacy skills and to a lesser extent foreign language skills. These are the issues that need to be addressed now, so that they do not become serious problems in the future. As previously discussed, some skills shortages should be regarded as potential policy drivers and as such should be more investigated in greater depth. A further analysis of how reporting of problem solving skills, numeracy skills, literacy skills and technical, practical or job-specific skills varies across region, area of work and type of funding is therefore summarised in Section 4.3.3.

Figure 4.2 Trends in the summary of skills found difficult to obtain from applicants in the lifelong learning sector



### 4.3.3 Potential policy driver skills shortages

#### Analysis by region

Table 4.6 Selected skills shortages by region

		Problem solving skills	Numeracy skills	Literacy skills	Technical, practical or job-specific skills
Region	East of England	<i>14*</i>	<i>39*</i>	<i>47*</i>	<i>59*</i>
	East Midlands	<i>11*</i>	–	–	<i>40*</i>
	Greater London	41	23*	34	40
	North East	<i>40*</i>	<i>33*</i>	<i>33*</i>	<i>57*</i>
	North West	32	22	22	44
	South East	42	14	31	56
	South West	<i>10*</i>	<i>10*</i>	<i>10*</i>	<i>55*</i>
	West Midlands	<i>6*</i>	<i>9*</i>	<i>9*</i>	<i>23*</i>
	Yorkshire and the Humber	46	31	27	50

\* Data in italics are based on low numbers and should be treated with caution. Weighted base: Lifelong learning establishments in each region with skills shortage vacancies (example: 41 per cent of lifelong learning establishments in London which have skills shortage vacancies stated that problem solving skills were difficult to obtain from applicants).

Due to the lower number of responses from certain regions, a complete and robust comparison of the skills shortages identified in this report as potential policy drivers is not possible. However it is clear from Table 4.6 that the incidence of these shortages does vary across the regions of England. Problem solving skills is most significant as a shortage in Yorkshire and The Humber. Literacy skills are a significant shortage in Greater London, the South East and possibly East of England. Technical, practical or job-specific skills shortages are reported by all establishments in the lifelong learning sector in England, with the possible exception of West Midlands. Reporting of all skills shortages was low in this region.

#### Analysis by area of work

Table 4.7 Selected skills shortages by standard industrial classification code

		Problem solving skills	Numeracy skills	Literacy skills	Technical, practical or job-specific skills
Area of work	Technical and vocational	<i>62*</i>	<i>36*</i>	<i>36*</i>	<i>13*</i>
	Higher education	28	33	37	37
	Adult and other education	31	17	23	52
	Libraries and archives	<i>32*</i>	<i>12*</i>	<i>12*</i>	<i>57*</i>

\* Data in italics are based on low numbers and should be treated with caution. Weighted base: Lifelong learning establishments in each area of work with skills shortage vacancies (example: 28 per cent of higher education establishments which have skills shortage vacancies stated that problem solving skills were difficult to obtain from applicants).

Only the data on higher education and adult and other education in Table 4.7 is based on a sufficient number of responses to allow robust analysis. Interestingly the findings show that the shortage of technical, practical or job specific skills is less of an issue for posts in higher education than in the other areas of work. Literacy skills and numeracy skills are more of an issue within higher education than in adult and other education.

## Analysis by funding type

Table 4.8 Selected skills shortages by funding type

		Problem solving skills	Numeracy skills	Literacy skills	Technical, practical or job-specific skills
Funding type	Seeking a profit	44	22	28	49
	Charity/voluntary sector	27	29	39	45
	Local government financed	14	13	17	37
	Central government financed	<i>11*</i>	<i>23*</i>	<i>23*</i>	<i>73*</i>
	None of the above	<i>33*</i>	<i>14*</i>	<i>14*</i>	<i>59*</i>

\* Data in italics are based on low numbers and should be treated with caution. Weighted base: Lifelong learning establishments in each area of work with skills shortage vacancies (example: 44 per cent of profit seeking lifelong learning establishments which have skills shortage vacancies stated that problem solving skills were difficult to obtain from applicants).

Table 4.8 shows that problem solving skills are a particular issue for lifelong learning establishments seeking a profit and that literacy skills and numeracy skills are an issue for charitable or voluntary organisations.

## Comparison across all sectors

When analysing skills shortages across each of the 25 Sector Skills Councils, it is evident that skills shortages affect different sectors in different ways. Lifelong Learning UK ranks in the middle of all Sector Skills Councils for problem solving skills and numeracy skills. Whereas, for literacy skills Lifelong Learning UK ranks in the upper quartile, as only four other sectors report this shortage more often than employers in lifelong learning. Lifelong learning establishments report technical and job specific skills (the most significant skills shortage for both lifelong learning and across all sectors) less often than the majority of establishments across all sectors; Lifelong Learning UK ranks close to the lower quartile, as establishments in 19 other sectors report this shortage more often than lifelong learning employers. A full

breakdown of the percentage of establishments within each sector reporting these shortages is shown in Appendix 8.

## 4.4 Vacancy comparisons

Across all sectors, Greater London establishments account for the largest share of overall national employment and correspondingly the largest total number of skills shortage vacancies reported are also in London.

Responses from establishments in the lifelong learning sector differ slightly in that the greatest share of all employed is in the South East region, more closely mirroring the actual population figures. This region also has the greatest number of hard-to-fill vacancies. London does however account for the greatest number of skills shortage vacancies; in fact one in five vacancies in the lifelong learning sector in Greater London are skills shortage vacancies. One quarter of all skills shortage vacancies reported in England (both by establishments in the lifelong learning sector and across all sectors) are being experienced by establishments based in London, suggesting high levels of competition for skilled workers in the capital.

One quarter of all skills shortage vacancies reported by the lifelong learning sector in England are in London establishments

For all sectors this effect extends to the wider South East region, where the region's percentage share of skills shortage vacancies (20 per cent) exceeds the region's share of all those in employment (16 per cent). This is not the case for the lifelong learning sector, where the employment share is greater than any other region at 17 per cent but the proportion of skills shortage vacancies is significantly less at 12 per cent. Other than London, the East of England and the North West are the only regions where the proportion of skills shortage vacancies exceeds the proportion in employment. Although the North East only accounts for five per cent of total employment in the lifelong learning sector, its percentage share of vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies and skills shortage vacancies is very similar. These results are shown in Table 4.9.



Table 4.9 Regional analysis of percentage share of vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies and skills shortage vacancies

		Number employed	Percentage share of employment	Number of vacancies	Percentage share of vacancies	Number of hard-to-fill vacancies	Percentage share of hard-to-fill vacancies	Number of skills shortage vacancies	Percentage share of skills shortage vacancies
Region	East of England	74,200	9	1,712	9	374	10	315	12
	East Midlands	66,071	8	1,259	6	114*	3*	95*	4*
	Greater London	131,509	16	3,452	18	798	20	730	28
	North East	42,392	5	876	4	180	5	117*	4*
	North West	104,335	13	2,913	15	634	16	420	16
	South East	137,232	17	4,133	21	954	24	303	12
	South West	79,034	10	1,741	9	351	9	225	9
	West Midlands	80,937	10	1,842	9	248	6	209	8
	Yorkshire and the Humber	86,426	11	1,561	8	253	6	199	8
	Weighted base totals	802,136		19,489		3,906		2,613	

\* Data in italics are based on low numbers and should be treated with caution (example: of all those in employment in the lifelong learning sector in England, nine per cent are employed in the East of England).

Establishments in the South East and Greater London have by far the highest levels of recruitment activity, with many more total vacancies reported than in the other regions, both in absolute terms and relative to employment. The North West is next, accounting for 16 per cent of reported skills shortage vacancies.

#### 4.4.1 Vacancies across England as a whole

There is a large difference in reporting of total vacancies compared with reporting of hard-to-fill vacancies and skills shortage vacancies between the lifelong learning sector and all establishments. This is not unusual across all of the individual Sector Skills Councils. Lifelong Learning UK is ranked third highest out of the 25 Sector Skills Councils in percentage of employers reporting vacancies. Lifelong Learning UK is also one of the five Sector Skills Councils that rank higher than the all England average for percentage of employers reporting hard-to-fill vacancies and skills shortage vacancies. The ranking of recruitment difficulties amongst the Sector Skills Councils is summarised in Appendix 9.

In general, lifelong learning establishments report a high number of vacancies but relatively few report this as a problem, suggesting a reasonably active turnover in the workforce. Further research (such as applicants' history or establishment-leaver destination data) would be required to determine if this reflects a 'churn effect', recycling workers throughout the

sectors. It is noted in the NESS07 report that employers covered by Lifelong Learning UK (along with Improve and Skills for Health) have far fewer problems in finding suitably skilled candidates for vacancies arising, although at least one in ten vacancies is proving hard to fill because of a lack of appropriate skills amongst applicants.

Lifelong learning establishments report a high number of vacancies but relatively few report this as a problem

## 4.4.2 Vacancies across the UK

Table 4.10 Comparison of vacancy findings across the four nations

		Vacancies as percentage of total employed	Hard-to-fill vacancies as percentage of total employed	Skills shortage vacancies as percentage of total employed	Skills shortage vacancies as percentage of hard-to-fill vacancies
England (brackets show NESS05 value)	All sectors	2.8 (2.7)	0.8 (0.9)	0.6 (0.7)	71 (70)
	Lifelong learning sector	2.4 (2.2)	0.5 (0.5)	0.3 (0.3)	67 (71)
Northern Ireland	All sectors	2.1	1.1	0.4	–
	Lifelong learning sector	2.6	0.7	0.1	–
Scotland	All sectors	4	2	–	61
	Lifelong learning sector	2	1	–	48
Wales	All sectors	3.5	1.2	0.5	–
	Lifelong learning sector	1.6	0.4	–	–

(Example: The reported vacancy rate in the lifelong learning sector in Northern Ireland is 2.6 per cent.) Data reproduced from DELNI (2008), Futureskills Scotland (2007), Future Skills Wales (2005).

Table 4.10 compares the findings from research across the four nations. It is important to note that the data from Northern Ireland and Wales was collected in 2005 and the data from Scotland collected in 2006. For England, the NESS07 data is presented alongside the NESS05 data (bracketed) for comparison. In most cases there has not been significant variation in the NESS key figures since 2005.

In England, Scotland and Wales the lifelong learning sector reports fewer vacancies as a percentage of total employed than the average across all sectors in each respective nation. This is not the case in Northern Ireland, which reports a lifelong learning sector vacancy rate of 2.6 per cent, the highest of the four nations, and higher than the average across all sectors in Northern Ireland (2.1 per cent). Employers in Scotland report a higher vacancy rate across all sectors than the other three nations (4.0 per cent) but this rate is halved for the lifelong learning sector.

The hard-to-fill vacancy rate in the lifelong learning sector is lower than the rate for all sectors. This finding is consistent across all four nations. The difference between the two is most marked in Wales where the hard-to-fill vacancy rate for lifelong learning is less than half the rate for all sectors across Wales.

Across all of the four nations, the hard-to-fill vacancy rate in the lifelong learning sector is lower than the rate for all sectors

In England more than two thirds of hard-to-fill vacancies are skills shortage vacancies (i.e. applicants lack the required skills, work experience or qualifications to fulfil the requirements of the vacant post). The percentage of hard-to-fill vacancies that are skills shortage vacancies in England is 71 per cent for all sectors and 67 per cent for the lifelong learning sector. Across the other three nations the picture is quite different. In Wales less than half of hard-to-fill vacancies across all sectors are skills shortage vacancies. The figure is even lower for the lifelong learning sector in Northern Ireland. In Scotland across all sectors, 61 per cent of hard-to-fill vacancies are skills shortage vacancies, but for the lifelong learning sector this proportion again drops to less than half.

## 5. Skills gaps

Section 4 examined how skill shortages are affecting employers in their recruitment activity. This section looks at the extent to which employers are experiencing skills deficiencies or gaps amongst their existing workforce.

### Definitions

Employers are described as having a skills gap in cases where they employ staff whom they believe are not fully proficient in their job. For the purposes of NESS a member of staff is defined as either fully proficient or not fully proficient, but the degree of proficiency is not investigated.

### Key findings and actions

The data presented in this section highlights specific skills gaps amongst employees in the lifelong learning workforce in England. This evidence base should be used to underpin the solution areas put forward in Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Skills Agreement for England, specifically exploring options for **professionalising the workforce and development and implementation of frameworks for continuing professional development and skills for learning professionals (Lifelong Learning UK Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five, solution areas one, two and three)**.

A significant skills gap identified by employers in lifelong learning is management skills, which, unsurprisingly, is having the greatest negative impact amongst managers. A major solution area from Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Skills Agreement is the development of a UK-wide leadership and management strategy. To this end **Lifelong Learning UK is working with partners to produce a framework of training programmes and standards for leadership and management best practice (Lifelong Learning UK Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five, solution area nine and Business Plan 2008–2009, Deliverable 4.1)**.

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### 5.1 Reporting of skills gaps

Skills gaps were reported by 17 per cent of lifelong learning establishments, slightly higher than the all sector average of 15 per cent. Reporting of skills gaps (in both the lifelong learning sector and all sectors) has been dropping since 2003.

Employers reporting skills gaps also estimated the number of employees not fully proficient. In total seven per cent of staff in the lifelong learning workforce were reported to be not fully proficient, compared to six per cent across all sectors.

### 5.2 Skills gaps by occupation and region

Table 5.1 below shows an analysis of staff reported as not fully proficient by occupation and region, expressed as a percentage of the total employed in each grouping.

Table 5.1 Percentage of lifelong learning sector employees not fully proficient by occupation and region

	East of England	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire and The Humber	Overall
Managers	15.9	4.4	7.8	2.6	2.3	5.7	6.3	4.9	2.4	6.1
Professionals	15.8	24.7	3.9	3.8	1.0	11.4	4.5	4.6	3.9	7.4
Associate professionals	8.1	0.8	10.4	4.2	1.8	10.2	2.5	1.1	2.1	5.1
Administrative/ clerical staff	20.3	6.8	6.4	2.3	4.4	5.1	4.9	7.1	0.8	6.1
Skilled trades	5.1*	3.3*	10.7	58.2*	3.8	23.8	2.6*	0.3	33.2*	15.9
Personal service staff	23.2	1.4*	5.0	1.7	6.6	5.1	5.3	0.3	8.8	6.1
Sales/customer service staff	4.8	24.8	6.7	4.9	3.4	11.2	16	4.1	5.0	8.7
Machine operatives	8.2*	–	2.0*	–	26.9*	–	–	–	–	3.5
Elementary staff	17.8	3.1	3.6	0.4*	5.5	6.1	8.8	0.8	0.3	5.5
Overall	15.2	12.6	5.8	4.7	2.6	8.7	5.3	4.5	4.1	6.9

\* Data in italics are based on low numbers and should be treated with caution. Weighted base: All those staff not fully proficient as a proportion of all employed (example: 15.9 per cent of managers in the lifelong learning sector in East of England are reported to be not fully proficient).

In general, skills gaps are greater in the East of England region than elsewhere, particularly amongst administrative/clerical staff and personal service staff. There are significant gaps amongst professionals and sales/customer service staff in the East Midlands and amongst skilled trades in the South East. The North West has the lowest overall incidence of skills gaps. In the West Midlands reporting of skills gaps is consistently lower across the range of occupational groups.

Across all sectors in England, there is a low incidence of reported skills gaps amongst managers and professionals. This is not the case in the lifelong learning sector, as Table 5.1 above and Table 5.2 both demonstrate. This is either because there is

a greater percentage of managers who are not fully proficient working in lifelong learning, or employers in the lifelong learning sector are more likely to acknowledge skills gaps and report on them than across all sectors.

The most significant skills gaps reported are amongst professionals and sales/customer service staff in the East Midlands, and skilled trades staff in the South East

### 5.3 Skills gaps by occupation and area of work

Table 5.2 Percentage of lifelong learning sector employees not fully proficient by occupation and area of work (defined by standard industrial classification code)

	Technical and vocational	HE	Adult and other	Libraries and archives	Overall
Managers	2.0	8.0	4.2	5.4	6.1
Professionals	2.3	8.7	4.3	6.8	7.4
Associate professionals	13.9	5.5	3.8	1.3	5.1
Administrative/ clerical staff	2.4	6.4	6.0	4.3	6.1
Skilled trades	–	9.6	28.0*	1.5*	15.9
Personal service staff	3.5	5.0	8.5	10.8	6.1
Sales/ customer service staff	5.7*	6.7	8.2	9.7	8.7
Machine operatives	15.8*	10.1	–	0.4*	3.5
Elementary staff	13.4	6.5	1.5	–	5.5
Overall	4.3	7.6	6.1	5.9	6.9

\* Data in italics are based on low numbers and should be treated with caution. Weighted base: All those staff not fully proficient as a proportion of all employed (example: 2.0 per cent of managers in technical and vocational education are reported to be not fully proficient).

When examined by area of work and occupation the reporting of skills gaps reveals further complexity that is masked by national averages. The percentage of associate professionals and elementary staff that are not fully proficient is a particular issue for employers in technical and vocational secondary education. In higher education establishments reporting of skills gaps is relatively high across the range of occupations, although machine operatives are reported as having a particularly high proportion of skills gaps. For both adult and other education, and libraries and archives the greatest proportion of skills gaps is reported amongst personal service and sales/customer service staff.

There is a direct relationship between the incidence and density of skills gaps and the size of establishment; the larger establishments are more prone to skills gaps. This is reflected in the findings

above, since the higher education establishments responding to NESS07 were more likely to employ larger numbers of staff than other employers in the lifelong learning sector.

### 5.4 Causes and impacts of skills gaps

Table 5.3 Main causes of lack of proficiency

	Percentage of lifelong learning establishments	Percentage of all sector establishments
Failure to train and develop staff	18	20
Recruitment problems	12	15
High staff turnover	10	15
Inability of workforce to keep up with change	22	19
Lack of experience/ recently recruited	71	68
Lack of staff motivation	19	28

Weighted base: All establishments reporting skills gaps (example: 18 per cent of lifelong learning establishments with skills gaps reported failure to train and develop staff as a cause).

Reporting on the main causes of skills gaps has been consistent since 2003. It is worth noting that in almost one fifth of cases where skills gaps exist, lifelong learning employers admit that they have failed to provide adequate training to their staff (this is in line with the overall result across all sectors).

In almost one fifth of cases where skills gaps exist, lifelong learning employers admit that they have failed to provide adequate training to their staff

As in previous years the most frequently cited cause of skills gaps (for both the lifelong learning sector and across all sectors) is that staff lack experience or have been recently recruited. 15 per cent of employers across all sectors cite high staff turnover as a cause. The implication is that a fully proficient member of staff has left, creating a vacancy that was filled by a person who was not fully proficient. Lifelong learning establishments are less likely to cite this cause (10 per cent).

Table 5.4 Main impact of skills gaps

Reported impact	Lose business or orders to competitors	Delay developing new products or services	Have difficulties meeting quality standards	Increase operating costs	Have difficulties introducing new working practices	Increase workload for other staff	Outsource work	No particular problems/ none of the above	Don't know	
Lifelong learning sector	15	26	29	25	32	56	10	22	3	
All sectors	20	17	26	28	25	55	10	26	3	
Region	East of England	15	19	25	20	34	66	2	22	2
	East Midlands	13	13	24	16	15	51	2	30	4
	Greater London	23	34	42	35	42	69	15	16	3
	North East	17	29	47	31	51	80	13	11	–
	North West	15	31	37	27	31	66	11	13	2
	South East	15	28	21	29	28	43	6	21	4
	South West	8	19	21	17	22	50	11	31	5
	West Midlands	11	19	14	14	21	31	13	35	3
	Yorkshire and The Humber	13	35	34	31	46	52	12	20	5

Weighted base: All establishments reporting skills gaps (example: 15 per cent of lifelong learning establishments in the East of England with skills gaps reported that they lose business or orders to competitors as a result).

The impact of skills gaps follows similar trends to the impact of hard-to-fill vacancies. Establishments are most likely to report increased workload of other staff. This is reported far more frequently in the North East than in other regions. As before, establishments in the lifelong learning sector are more likely to report a delay in developing new products or services than establishments in all sectors across England.

It is interesting to note that the reporting of negative impacts of skills gaps is significantly lower than the reporting of negative impacts of hard-to-fill vacancies. 22 per cent of lifelong learning establishments with skills gaps reported that they do not cause any particular problem (or none of the above problems) as opposed to 10 per cent reporting no impact of hard-to-fill vacancies. The difference between these two figures for all sectors is even greater, with 26 per cent of all establishments reporting no problems arising from skills gaps and nine per cent reporting no impact from hard-to-fill vacancies. Employers clearly find it easier to 'make do' with a member of staff in post who is not fully proficient, rather than the post being unfilled.

Lifelong learning establishments in the North East are least likely to report no impact of skills gaps, with only 11 per cent of establishments compared to the lifelong learning sector average of 22 per cent.

A full analysis of the skills gaps identified by employers as having the greatest negative impact in each occupational group is shown in Appendix 10. This reveals which occupational groups are most affected by each specific skill in need of improving (as identified by employers with skills gaps). An important skills gap identified by employers in lifelong learning is management skills, unsurprisingly having the greatest negative impact amongst managers. There is currently no cohesive approach to the leadership and management training across the wider lifelong learning sector. Lifelong Learning UK is working with partners in all four nations to produce a framework of training programmes and standards for leadership and management best practice. This commitment is outlined in the Business Plan 2008–2009 (Deliverable 4.1) and the Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five (Solution nine).

## 5.5 Action taken to overcome skills gaps

Table 5.5 Action taken to overcome non-proficiency in staff

Action taken to overcome non-proficiency in staff	Increase training activity/spend or expand trainee programme	Increase recruitment activity/spend	Increase staff appraisals/performance reviews	Implement mentoring/buddying scheme	Increase supervision of staff	Other	None	Don't know	
Lifelong learning sector	76	4	15	10	13	6	5	2	
All sectors	72	5	9	6	11	4	9	2	
Region	East of England	80	2	9	12	14	2	6	2
	East Midlands	69	10	12	16	13	15	4	5
	Greater London	80	4	16	10	17	3	2	1
	North East	88	2	27	16	27	–	–	–
	North West	77	2	12	18	17	2	6	5
	South East	61	3	20	5	7	11	13	5
	South West	77	6	10	6	5	7	–	–
	West Midlands	84	–	22	2	13	7	2	3
	Yorkshire and The Humber	76	9	12	17	12	–	9	–

Weighted base: All establishments reporting skills gaps (example: 80 per cent of lifelong learning establishments in the East of England with skills gaps reported that they increase training activity/spend or increase/expand trainee programmes to overcome non-proficiency in staff).

Employers in lifelong learning are slightly more likely than employers across all sectors to increase training activity or spend to overcome skills gaps in their workforce, probably due in part to their ready access to training facilities or resources in-house. They are also slightly more likely to undertake staff appraisals, implement mentoring and increase supervision of staff, thereby using the skills of more experienced staff to oversee and improve the skills of those staff lacking in experience or skills.

In general lifelong learning establishments in the North East report more steps to improve the skills of existing staff than establishments in other regions. Lifelong learning establishments in the East Midlands are twice as likely as all other establishments to report increased recruitment activity or spend.

Nine per cent of employers across all sectors and five per cent of lifelong learning employers report taking no action to overcome lack of proficiency in staff.

A year-on-year comparison of the specific skills that need improving in the existing workforce is shown in Appendix 11. The most significant skills gap in the lifelong learning sector in 2007 is technical, practical or job specific skills, which was reported as having the greatest negative impact across all occupational levels except managers (see Appendix 10). Reporting of this particular skills gap has been increasing steadily since 2004, as opposed to the equivalent skills shortage amongst applicants (see Section 4.3.2) which has reduced since 2005. In theory, if this downward trend in the skills shortage continues it should have beneficial effects on the skills gaps in the existing workforce, although this is not to say that training and staff development efforts should be reduced or stopped.

There are several action points from Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Skills Agreement to address this issue. Lifelong Learning UK is currently exploring options for professionalising all parts of the lifelong learning workforce, involving the development of National Occupational Standards. An integrated framework for continuing professional development is being explored as a further tool for reducing skills gaps in the workforce. Ultimately Lifelong Learning UK would like to promote collaborative working across the lifelong learning sector and disseminate good working practice to all employers in the sector. Where particular similarities between areas of work and their needs have been identified, joined-up solutions would reduce duplication of effort.

## 5.6 Skills gaps comparisons

### 5.6.1 Skills gaps findings across England as a whole

It is a concern that although the percentage of establishments in England reporting any skills gaps has fallen consistently since 2003, the percentage of lifelong learning employees described as having a skills gap has risen since 2005. This has serious implications for the professional development of staff and related training to fully develop the workforce and reduce the incidence and density of skills gaps.

Table 5.6 Trends in reporting of skills gaps

		2003	2004	2005	2007
All sectors	Percentage of all establishments with a skills gap	22	20	16	15
	Percentage of staff described as having a skills gap	11	7	6	6
Lifelong learning sectors	Percentage of all establishments with a skills gap	23	21	19	17
	Percentage of staff described as having a skills gap	10	5	5	7

The percentage of staff described as having a skills gap has risen since 2005

The proportion of establishments in the lifelong learning sector that suffer from internal skills gaps has been consistently higher than those across all sectors in England. The percentage of establishments reporting a skills gap has decreased year-on-year, not only in the lifelong learning sector, but across all sectors as well. However, in the lifelong learning sector this decrease has not been mirrored in the percentage of staff overall who are described as having a skills gap, as this figure has increased since 2005, while the all sector figure has levelled out.

The data shows that skills gaps are, in terms of numbers, a more significant issue than recruitment problems in both the lifelong learning sector and across all sectors nationally. It is evident from this data and the data presented in Section 4 that the volume of skill gaps far exceeds that of recruitment problems, which is also the case in other sectors across England.

Despite this, employers are more likely to report specific negative impacts as a result of vacancies rather than as a result of skills gaps. They are also more likely to report that no negative impact results from skills gaps rather than skills shortages. Employers are also less likely to report that no action has been taken to overcome skills gaps. Action taken to overcome hard-to-fill vacancies is reported slightly more highly.

Employers are more likely to report specific negative impacts as a result of vacancies than as a result of skills gaps

This would suggest that there is a need for emphasis on workforce development to address these gaps (which employers see as less of a problem) whilst still addressing skill supply and the quality of entrants into the sector (which causes employers greater concern).



## 5.6.2 Skills gaps findings across the UK

Table 5.7 Comparison of skills gaps findings across the four nations

		Percentage of establishments reporting skills gaps	Skills gaps as percentage of number employed
England (brackets show NESS05 value)	All sectors, England	15 (16)	6 (6)
	Lifelong learning sector, England	17 (19)	7 (5)
Northern Ireland	All sectors, Northern Ireland	9	8.9
	Lifelong learning sector, Northern Ireland	10	8.7
Scotland	All sectors, Scotland	22	8
	Lifelong learning sector, Scotland	20	–
Wales	All sectors, Wales	18	6
	Lifelong learning sector, Wales	17	3

(Example: the percentage of lifelong learning establishments reporting skills gaps in Northern Ireland is 10 per cent.) Data reproduced from DELNI (2008), *Futureskills Scotland (2007)*, *Future Skills Wales (2005)*.

Table 5.7 shows the density of skills gaps (i.e. staff not fully proficient expressed as a percentage of all employed). It is interesting to note that the contrast between the density of skills gaps and the density of skills shortage vacancies is relatively constant across the four nations, in that the density of skills gaps is much higher than the density of skills shortages.

In England and Northern Ireland there is a greater incidence of establishments in the lifelong learning sector reporting skills gaps than there is in all sectors. This is not the case in Scotland and Wales.

The percentage of establishments reporting the incidence of skills gaps is far greater across all sectors in Scotland than in the other three nations. This difference is mirrored in the lifelong learning sector in Scotland. However, the reported percentage of staff not fully proficient in Scotland is closer to the results from the rest of the UK. Therefore, the incidence of skills gaps in establishments is comparatively high, but the actual density of skills gaps throughout the workforce is not. No figure is available for the percentage of lifelong learning sector staff not fully proficient in Scotland as the numbers involved were too small. The lowest robust figure for percentage of staff not fully proficient in the lifelong learning sector is for Wales (three per cent).

In England and Northern Ireland there is a greater incidence of establishments in the lifelong learning sector reporting skills gaps than there is in all sectors

In Northern Ireland and Wales the percentage of lifelong learning staff reported to have skills gaps is lower than the figure for all sectors. In England the percentage of staff with skills gaps is higher in the lifelong learning sector (seven per cent) than it is across all sectors (six per cent), a situation that has reversed since 2005 (five and six per cent respectively). This suggests that addressing skills gaps amongst the existing workforce should be a priority for lifelong learning providers in England.

## 6. Training and workforce development

The provision of training and development is central to the development of skills within the workforce. This section investigates employers' training and development activity, with particular focus on the extent and nature of the training provided and the proportion of staff receiving these development opportunities. More specifically we investigate:

- the percentage of employers that provide training, the proportion of their workforce that they train and the differences by occupational group
- reasons for not training
- barriers to providing more training
- the extent to which further education colleges, universities and other training providers are used to provide teaching or training.

These issues are explored at the national level, with accompanying analysis of regional variations and differences across different types of organisation by area of work and funding.

### Definitions

Off-the-job training and development takes place away from the individual's immediate work position, whether on the employer's premises or elsewhere.

On-the-job-training and development is any other training or development activity that an employee would recognise as training, rather than learning gained through the day-to-day execution of their role.

### Key findings and actions

This section reveals that the majority of lifelong learning establishments across England are actively engaging in staff training and other positive measures to overcome skills issues in their workforce. Most use private training providers and external consultants rather than those associated with further education and higher education establishments as their main source of teaching and training.

The analysis of training indicators by region, area of work and funding type presented in this section reveals groups of employers reporting exemplary practice in terms of training their workforce. **A key action for Lifelong Learning UK is to promote collaborative working and to recognise and disseminate good practice across the lifelong learning sector.** Further research with specific groups of employers identified in this section, investigating the effects of their activities on business and efficiency may help to build a business case for workforce development. This would then be presented to those employers who are not currently engaging in workforce development (**Lifelong Learning UK Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five, solution area four**).

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## 6.1 Summary of training practice

### 6.1.1 Analysis by region

Table 6.1 Regional analysis of training indicators and sources of training

		Training indicators				Training sources		
		Establishment has funded or arranged either on-the-job training or off-the-job training over the past 12 months	Establishment has funded or arranged any off-the-job training for staff over the past 12 months	Percentage of establishments with a training plan	Percentage of establishments with a training budget	Establishment has used FE colleges to provide teaching or training in the past 12 months	Establishment has used universities to provide teaching or training in the past 12 months	Establishment has used other providers (i.e. other than FE college) to provide teaching or training in the past 12 months
Region	East of England	84	66	69	61	36	17	68
	East Midlands	81	65	68	60	42	12	61
	Greater London	87	71	60	63	36	16	66
	North East	93	84	78	71	50	26	71
	North West	90	78	83	72	49	21	72
	South East	87	70	73	61	30	14	64
	South West	84	74	69	63	37	10	64
	West Midlands	89	75	80	68	43	16	65
	Yorkshire and The Humber	87	77	75	68	48	16	62
Totals (Lifelong learning sector)		86	72	72	64	40	16	66
Totals (All England)		67	46	48	35	26	7	51
Weighted base		All establishments				Establishments who have provided training		

Weighted base for training indicators: all establishments (example: 84 per cent of lifelong learning establishments in the East of England have funded/arranged some training in the past 12 months).

Weighted base for training sources: all establishments who have provided training (example: 36 per cent of lifelong learning establishments who have provided training in the past 12 months in the East of England used further education colleges).

More than 90 per cent of lifelong learning establishments in the North East reported having arranged or funded some training for their staff in the past 12 months

Table 6.1 summarises the training indicators and how they vary from region to region. Establishments in the lifelong learning sector are stronger in all these indicators than the all sectors average. Particularly worthy of note are the lifelong learning establishments in the North East. More than nine out of every ten establishments in this region reported having arranged or funded some training for their staff in the 12 months before the survey.

Half of the lifelong learning establishments in the North East had used further education colleges to provide training, which is twice the all sector average. This correlates with the findings that lifelong learning establishments in the North East are least likely to report no impact from skills gaps, and are most likely to report increasing training activity or spend (see Sections 5.3 and 5.4). A similar picture emerges in the North West where 83 per cent of lifelong learning establishments have a training plan in place, and 72 per cent have the budget allocated to deliver. This latter statistic is again twice the all sector average.

### 6.1.2 Analysis by area of work

Table 6.2 Analysis of training indicators and training sources by area of work

		Training indicators				Training sources		
		Establishment has funded or arranged either on-the-job training or off-the-job training over the past 12 months	Establishment has funded or arranged any off-the-job training for staff over the past 12 months	Percentage of establishments with a training plan	Percentage of establishments with a training budget	Establishment has used further education colleges to provide teaching or training in the past 12 months	Establishment has used universities to provide teaching or training in the past 12 months	Establishment has used other providers (i.e. other than further education colleges) to provide teaching or training in the past 12 months
Area of work	Technical and vocational	74	58	63	56	36	18	67
	Higher education	88	76	76	76	56	26	68
	Adult and other education	86	73	69	61	40	14	65
	Libraries and archives	91	73	82	67	20	10	67
Totals (Lifelong learning sector)		86	72	72	64	40	16	66
Totals (All England)		67	46	48	35	26	7	51

Weighted bases: see Table 6.1

Table 6.2 above shows that the staff working in libraries and archives are most likely to have received training in the 12 months before the survey. Establishments in this area of work are also most likely to have a training plan in place. Three quarters of higher education establishments have a training plan and training budget. It is interesting to note that higher education

establishments are more likely than other lifelong learning establishments to have used further education colleges as a source of teaching or training. The percentage of establishments using sources other than colleges or universities, for example private consultants, is consistently high across all lifelong learning establishments.

### 6.1.3 Analysis by type of establishment (funding)

Table 6.3 Analysis of training indicators by funding type

		Training indicators				Training sources		
		Establishment has funded or arranged either on-the-job training or off-the-job training over the past 12 months	Establishment has funded or arranged any off-the-job training for staff over the past 12 months	Percentage of establishments with a training plan	Percentage of establishments with a training budget	Establishment has used further education colleges to provide teaching or training in the past 12 months	Establishment has used universities to provide teaching or training in the past 12 months	Establishment has used other providers (i.e. other than further education colleges) to provide teaching or training in the past 12 months
Funding type	Seeking a profit	81	66	65	54	33	10	60
	Charity/voluntary sector	92	81	69	71	54	24	74
	Local government financed body	93	78	86	78	40	17	68
	Central government financed body	88	78	83	85	52	33	76
	None of the above/other	85	75	78	70	38	18	67
Totals (Lifelong learning sector)		86	72	72	64	40	16	66
Totals (All England)		67	46	48	35	26	7	51

Weighted bases: see Table 6.1

Lifelong learning establishments seeking a profit are consistently less likely to report positively on the training indicators above than other lifelong learning establishments. It is important to note that these establishments are still well above the all sector average for these indicators.

Teaching or training is most frequently sourced from external consultants and private training providers

The sourcing of training from private consultants is the indicator that is consistently high across the different types and locations of lifelong learning establishments. These learning providers are clearly a vital part of the lifelong learning sector, being as they are involved in the teaching and training of staff across all sectors, but also improving the skills of other learning providers within the sector.

## 6.2 Training by occupation

Table 6.4 Lifelong learning staff training off-the-job and on-the-job by occupation

	Percentage trained off-the-job in the past 12 months (weighted base – total trained off-the-job)	Percentage trained off-the-job in the past 12 months (weighted base – total employed)	Percentage trained on-the-job in the past 12 months (weighted base – total trained on-the-job)	Percentage trained on-the-job in the past 12 months (weighted base – total employed)
Managers	15	49	15	57
Professional occupations	40	49	40	58
Associate professional/technical occupations	9	53	7	47
Administrative and secretarial occupations	19	38	19	48
Skilled trades occupations	3	42	4	58
Personal service occupations	3	49	3	59
Sales and customer service occupations	4	45	5	61
Process, plant and machine operatives	–	19*	–	15*
Elementary occupations	4	32	5	49
Overall		45		55

\* Data in italics are based on low numbers and should be treated with caution (example: 15 per cent of lifelong learning sector staff who received off-the-job training in the past 12 months were managers. 49 per cent of all managers employed in the lifelong learning sector received off-the-job training in the past 12 months.)

### 6.2.1 Off-the-job

Figure 6.4 above shows that in absolute terms professionals are far more likely to receive off-the-job training than any other occupational group. 40 per cent of all those staff trained off-the-job in the past 12 months were professionals. Administrative and secretarial staff account for 19 per cent of those trained off-the-job, followed by managers at 15 per cent. However, relative to the numbers employed in each occupation, managers are equally likely to receive training as professionals. Associate professionals, whose comparatively low numbers account for only nine per cent of all those trained off-the-job, are most likely to receive training (53 per cent of those employed at that occupational level). Overall 45 per cent of the lifelong learning workforce in England received off-the-job training in the 12 months prior to the NESS07 data collection. A full regional analysis of the numbers of staff receiving training is included in Appendix 12.

### 6.2.2 On-the-job

The type of staff (by occupational group) trained on-the-job follows a very similar pattern than that of staff trained off-the-job. However, relative to the numbers employed in each occupation the picture is somewhat different. Managers and professionals are again equally likely to receive training, but in this case skilled trades, personal service staff, sales staff and customer service staff are all as likely to have received on-the-job training. Overall 55 per cent of the lifelong learning workforce in England received on-the-job training in the 12 months prior to the survey, 10 per cent more than received off-the-job training.

It is interesting to note that administrative and clerical staff are as likely as managers to have skills gaps (see Table 5.1), but Table 6.1 shows that they are far less likely than managers to receive either on- or off-the-job training to address the problem.

It should be noted that the figures for those who receive training included any staff that had since left. This means employers could give a figure for the number of staff trained over the previous 12 months which is higher than their current number of employees.

55 per cent of the lifelong learning workforce in England received on-the-job training in the past 12 months

One implication is that the overall number of staff trained as a proportion of the workforce could be a slight overestimate; employees who were trained by one employer in the previous 12 months, then changed employer and received training in their new position, will have been counted twice.

### 6.3 Sources of training

As shown in Section 6.1.1 the most commonly used source of training is providers other than further and higher education, such as external consultants or private training providers. 66 per cent of establishments in the lifelong learning sector in England specified that they had sourced training this way (51 per cent across all sectors in England). This statistic serves to emphasise the importance of work based learning, which is largely comprised of these providers. It is frequently noted that 75 per cent of the 2020 workforce has already left compulsory education. For those already in employment, work based learning is by definition the most accessible and apparently the most frequently used form of staff development.

The proportion of lifelong learning establishments reporting that they have used further education colleges or universities (40 per cent and 16 per cent of those that had provided training respectively) is far greater than the equivalent statistic for all respondents from all sectors across England (26 per cent and 7 per cent). This is almost certainly indicative of the fact that many of the respondents from the lifelong learning sector are further education colleges and universities, and therefore staff training is performed in-house.

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## 6.4 Reasons for not training

Table 6.5 Reasons for not providing training at all over the past 12 months

	Percentage of lifelong learning establishments	Percentage of all sector establishments
The courses you are interested in are not available locally	4	4
The quality of the courses or providers locally is not satisfactory	2	1
It is difficult to get information about the courses that are available locally	1	1
I don't know what provision is available locally	2	1
The start dates or times of the courses are inconvenient	1	1
External courses are too expensive	2	2
Managers have lacked the time to organise training	3	2
Employees are too busy to give training	2	2
Employees are too busy to go on training courses	3	2
All our staff are fully proficient	54	64
Learn by experience/learn as you go	3	6
Business not operating long enough/new business (inc. takeover transition)	2	2
Lack of time	1	1
Haven't got round to it/planning for future	1	–
Lack of budget/funding for training	3	2
Small firm/training not needed due to size of establishment	6	5
Training is arranged by head office	4	1
Other	7	6
No particular reason	11	8
Don't know	–	–
<i>Weighted base: Establishments who have not provided training</i>	N = 2,452	N = 454,071

*Weighted base: Establishments who have not provided training in the past 12 months (example: four per cent of lifelong learning establishments who have not provided training stated that it was because the courses they were interested in were not available locally).*





More than half of establishments in the lifelong learning sector who did not provide training in the 12 months before the survey specified that this was because all their staff were fully proficient. Amongst those lifelong learning establishments who report having non-proficient staff, 35 per cent report that training is not required because their staff are all fully proficient. This figure is similar to the result from all sectors across England (34 per cent) and suggests a serious disconnection between these employers' thinking when assessing their workforce development needs and their general opinion of the proficiency of their staff.

Eleven per cent of establishments gave no particular reason for not training, which is higher than the equivalent response from all sectors across England (eight per cent). This apparent indifference towards staff development amongst some lifelong

learning providers and the disconnection revealed above are both a concern and should be addressed by Lifelong Learning UK and indeed all Sector Skills Councils.

The findings suggest a serious disconnection between some employers' thinking when assessing their workforce development needs and their general opinion of the proficiency of their staff

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## 6.5 Barriers to further training

Table 6.6 Barriers preventing organisations (who have trained staff in the past 12 months) from providing more training for staff over the past 12 months

	Percentage of lifelong learning establishments	Percentage of all sector establishments
Lack of funds for training/training expensive	61	49
Can't spare more staff time (having them away on training)	45	42
Staff now fully proficient/don't need it	2	2
Staff not keen	2	3
A lack of good local training providers	2	3
Lack of provision (e.g. courses are full up)	1	2
Difficulty finding training providers who can deliver training where or when we want it	2	2
A lack of appropriate training/qualifications in the subject areas we need	4	5
Hard to find the time to organise training	9	10
Lack of knowledge about training opportunities and/or suitable courses	1	2
High staff turnover	–	–
Such decisions are taken at head office/company policy	1	1
Other	3	5
None	4	5
Don't know	2	2
<i>Weighted base: Establishments who have provided training and would have provided more</i>	N = 8,607	N = 400,541

*Weighted base: Establishments who have provided training in the past 12 months and would have provided more (example: 61 per cent of lifelong learning establishments who would have liked to provide more training stated that they did not because of lack of funds or the training was too expensive).*

The barriers that prevented further training within the group of establishments who did provide training in the past 12 months mainly reflect internal issues to be addressed within the establishment, rather than any fault on the part of the learning providers from whom training was sourced. Barriers related to inaction by these learning providers are not frequently reported

by lifelong learning establishments or indeed by establishments across all sectors. 61 per cent of lifelong learning establishments stated that more training would have been too costly in financial terms and 45 per cent reported that they could not spare the time involved in staff being away on training.

## Funding

Further analysis of the two most frequently reported barriers to further training above reveals how these issues vary across differently funded establishments.

**Table 6.7 Main funding barriers to further training**

	Lack of funds for training/training expensive	Can't spare more staff time (having them away on training)
	Percentage of lifelong learning establishments	
Seeking a profit	55	43
Charity/voluntary sector	67	46
Local government financed body	64	47
Central government financed body	62	60
None of the above/other	55	30
Overall	61	45

*Weighted base: Lifelong learning establishments who have provided training and would have provided more (example: 55 per cent of profit seeking lifelong learning establishments who would have provided more training stated that they did not because of lack of funds or the training was too expensive).*

A lack of funds for training or that training was too expensive was more frequently reported by charity or voluntary sector organisations, and less often by establishments seeking a profit.

Not being able to spare more staff time was reported more frequently by central government financed bodies, and less often by establishments seeking a profit.

## 6.6 Comparison of training across the UK

**Table 6.8 Key findings across the four nations**

		Percentage of establishments providing off-the-job training	Percentage of establishments providing both on and off-the-job training
England (brackets show NESS05 value)	All sectors	46 (46)	67 (65)
	Lifelong learning sector	72 (77)	86 (89)
Northern Ireland	All sectors	34	–
	Lifelong learning sector	67	–
Scotland	All sectors	–	57
	Lifelong learning sector	–	70
Wales	All sectors	58	–
	Lifelong learning sector	54	–

*(Example: The percentage of lifelong learning establishments in Northern Ireland reporting that they trained staff off-the-job in the past 12 months is 34 per cent.) Data reproduced from DELNI (2008), Futureskills Scotland (2007), Future Skills Wales (2005).*

The percentage of lifelong learning establishments in England reporting that they had provided training in the past 12 months has fallen since 2005, effectively reducing the gap between this figure and the percentage of all sector establishments providing training, which has increased slightly. It appears that lifelong learning establishments in Northern Ireland and Scotland are also more likely than all sector establishments to provide training. Lifelong learning establishments in Wales are slightly less likely than all sector establishments in Wales to have provided off-the-job training. Gaps in this table are due to the numbers of respondents being too low to provide robust data in some cases.

## 7. Conclusion and recommendations

This report highlights the fact that the lifelong learning workforce, so vital in upskilling and training the rest of the workforce across the four nations of the UK, is not immune to the problems associated with recruitment, skills shortages and skills gaps. Lifelong Learning UK is committed to overcoming these issues by taking forward the solution areas developed in the Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five report. The findings outlined below will help to identify specific areas of work or regions where particular concerns need to be addressed.

In general, employers in the lifelong learning sector are more likely than other employers across all sectors to be taking positive action to overcome recruitment and skills issues.

There are some important themes that can be taken forward from this report, in particular:

- There is a relatively high rate of vacancies for associate professional level posts, especially in the North East and North West of England. Forecasts for both Europe and the UK predict an increase in demand for learning providers at this occupational level over the next five years, so this issue is likely to be of significant importance. **Solution area seven from Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five report is to develop a knowledge bank for use by Information, Advice and Guidance professionals who are in a position to advise new entrants to the sector.**
- Correspondingly, the findings of this report suggest that associate professional vacancies are likely to be hard-to-fill because of a low number of applicants with the right skills or work experience. **Solution area eight from Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five report proposes specifically targeted recruitment programmes. This is also recognised in Lifelong Learning UK's Business Plan 2008–2009 under Deliverable 2.1. When combined with Lifelong Learning UK's commitment to professionalising the workforce (Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five, solution area one) these actions should begin to address the issue of skills shortages in the lifelong learning workforce,** particularly in regions such as Greater London, where skills shortages are a particular problem.
- There is a continuing need for information and communication technology skills in the lifelong learning sector, to address both skills shortages amongst applicants and to a lesser extent skills gaps amongst existing staff. **Lifelong Learning UK is committed to developing the business case and resources to support the use of information and communication technology in the lifelong learning sector (Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five, solution area ten), particularly towards the use of new and emerging technologies in learning**

**delivery. This is included in the Lifelong Learning UK Business Plan 2008–2009 under Deliverable 7.8.**

- This report shows that the different types of vacancies comprising the overall recruitment situation differ across the four nations. The percentage of hard-to-fill vacancies that are skills shortage vacancies is significantly lower in Northern Ireland, Wales and (to a lesser extent) Scotland than it is in England. **Lifelong Learning UK must continue to engage with the devolved administrations to support the implementation of the appropriate skills strategy in each of the four nations (Lifelong Learning UK Business Plan 2008–2009, Deliverable 7.1).**
- The data presented in this report highlights specific skills gaps in the lifelong learning workforce in England. **This evidence base should be used to underpin the actions put forward in Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Skills Agreement for England,** specifically exploring options for professionalising the workforce and development and implementation of frameworks for continuing professional development (CPD) and skills for learning professionals. These actions steer Lifelong Learning UK's specific strategies within the Lifelong Learning sector, such as the Workforce Strategy for the Further Education Sector in England, 2007–2012<sup>9</sup>.
- A specific and significant skills gap identified by employers in lifelong learning is management skills, unsurprisingly having the greatest negative impact amongst managers. A major solution area from Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Skills Agreement is the development of a UK-wide leadership and management strategy. **Lifelong Learning UK is working with partners in all four nations to produce a framework of training programmes and standards for leadership and management best practice. This work was proposed as solution area nine in the Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five report and is a key part of the Business Plan 2008–2009 (Deliverable 4.1).**
- The analysis of training indicators by region, area of work and funding type presented in this report reveals groups of employers reporting exemplary practice in terms of training their workforce (i.e. Libraries and archives, establishments in the North East of England). **Solution area four from Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five report is to promote collaborative working across the lifelong learning sector and recognise and disseminate good practice.** Further research with specific groups of employers identified in this report to investigate the effects of their activities on business and efficiency may help to build a business case for workforce development. This would then be presented to those employers who are not currently engaging in workforce development.

<sup>9</sup> The Strategy sets out ambitions for workforce development for the Further Education Sector in England. Working in partnership with colleges, learning providers and partner agencies, Lifelong Learning UK has facilitated the development of the Implementation Plan which was published in March 2008. The Strategy will be reviewed and the associated Implementation Plan updated in subsequent years. A progress report will be published annually. Further details available at: <http://www.lluk.org/3263.htm> [Accessed 9 October 2008]

This report reveals that most establishments across England use private training providers and external consultants other than those associated with further and higher education establishments as their main source of teaching and training. The importance of this part of the lifelong learning sector cannot be underestimated and yet it is not satisfactorily represented by a standard industrial classification code. Sector specific research carried out by Lifelong Learning UK has also highlighted the importance of youth workers in the community learning and development area of work.<sup>10</sup> These areas of work are classified as occupations rather than industries and therefore are unlikely to gain recognition under any subsequent revision of standard industrial classification codes. **Lifelong Learning UK will continue to ensure that these areas of work are fully represented in any evidence base as part of the ongoing research strategy.**

Lifelong Learning UK holds a unique position amongst the other Sector Skills Councils as it has responsibility for the skills and professional development of the workforce that is in turn responsible for teaching and training the workforce across all sectors. Lifelong Learning UK undertook a Sector Skills Agreement Impact Review<sup>11</sup> in 2007 and 2008, to assess the impact of all the other Sector Skills Agreements on the lifelong learning workforce. This now informs Lifelong Learning UK's Sector Skills Agreement Stage Five report which supports the lifelong learning sector in becoming more demand-led. Understanding the nature of the demand for training across all sectors is essential, and further analysis of the complete NESS07 data set will provide robust intelligence on the skills needs of each sector workforce in England. Regional reports on specific skills requirements would provide valuable intelligence to learning providers who are tailoring their courses to match local demand.

Many of the issues identified regarding recruitment issues may be overcome in part by movement of the workforce within Europe or indeed globally. In order to facilitate this goal the

European Commission formulated the Lisbon strategy, intended to develop a European framework for basic skills to be provided through lifelong learning.<sup>12</sup> The Commission has identified key competencies to be addressed during the implementation process. These should be regarded as policy drivers for lifelong learning across Europe and are closely related to various subjects covered by this report, not least the increasing demand over supply for applicants with foreign language skills. The particular skills needs of those learning providers working with learners from across Europe and the rest of the world will need to be addressed. Lifelong Learning UK intends to work closely with employers and stakeholders to ensure that the UK-wide lifelong learning workforce has the skills required to operate in a global context.

There are other wide-ranging issues identified in the report, such as the small minority of employers taking no action over skills shortages and skills gaps and the apparent disconnection between employers' attitudes to staff proficiency when identifying skills gaps and when identifying training needs. These issues together with the specific action points outlined above must be addressed through Lifelong Learning UK's future work with the sector.

<sup>10</sup> Community Learning and Development in Scotland, workforce profile. Available at: <http://www.lluk.org/3483.htm> [Accessed 9 October 2008]

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<sup>11</sup> LLUK Sector Skills Agreement Impact Review. Available at: <http://www.lluk.org/3026.htm> [Accessed 9 October 2008]

<sup>12</sup> The Education and Training 2010 work programme integrates all actions in the fields of education and training at European level, including vocational education and training. Education and Training 2010, The Success of the Lisbon Strategy Hinges on Urgent Reforms, available at: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/et\\_2010\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/et_2010_en.html) [Accessed 9 October 2008]

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1. Data weighting

Two weights were used in this analysis:

- **Regional Unit Weight** – used when running analysis at a national or regional level. This weight was applied where data needs to be grossed up to the population of establishments (when looking at the proportion of establishments that have skills gaps, for example). The non-weighted and weighted establishment returns are shown in Appendix 3.
- **Regional Employment Weight** – used when running analysis at a national or regional level. This weight was applied where data needs to be grossed up to total employment population figures. The employment weight was applied for any employee-based measure (for example, the number of staff reported as not fully proficient).

## Appendix 2. Defining the lifelong learning workforce by standard industrial classification (SIC) code

The five standard industrial classification (SIC) codes that were assigned to define the lifelong learning sector are:

- **80.22** technical and vocational secondary education
- **80.30/1** sub-degree level HE
- **80.30/2 & 3** first- and postgraduate-degree level HE
- **80.42** adult and other education not elsewhere classified
- **92.51** library and archives activities.

However, there is considerable overlap and interplay between these standard industrial classification codes, and they do not align exactly with the sector footprint and individual areas of work as described in Section 2.1 of this report. This is a common difficulty experienced by more than one Sector Skills Council. The specific difficulties include:

- **SIC 80.22** (technical and vocational secondary education) and **SIC 80.30/1** (sub-degree level HE) correspond to further education, but this area of work should also include an amount from **SIC 80.21** (general secondary education). This code also includes school teachers and is therefore not included.
- **SIC 80.42** (adult and other education not elsewhere classified) corresponds to part of the community learning and development area of work, but can also include private work based learning providers; it does not include youth workers who make up a significant portion of the lifelong learning workforce.
- There is no corresponding standard industrial classification code for work based learning, although **SIC 80.42** (adult and other education not elsewhere classified) can include private work based learning training providers.
- **SIC 92.51** (library and archives activities) does not include records managers as these information professionals are generally embedded across the other occupational standard industrial classification codes.

## Appendix 3. Returns from the lifelong learning sector

Table A3.1 The number of establishments returning the NESS07 survey (unweighted and weighted) by region

	Returns (Count)	Percent	Returns (Weighted)	Percent (Weighted)
East of England	229	10	2,266	11
East Midlands	226	9	1,802	9
Greater London	430	18	3,141	15
North East	213	9	879	4
North West	240	10	2,510	12
South East	345	14	3,613	18
South West	257	11	2,370	12
West Midlands	239	10	2,000	10
Yorkshire and the Humber	206	9	1,899	9
Total	2,385		20,480	

Table A3.2 The number of establishments returning the NESS07 survey, unweighted and weighted, by area of work (defined by standard industrial classification code)

	Returns (Count)	Percent	Returns (Weighted)	Percent (Weighted)
Technical and vocational	151	6	1,342	7
Higher education	469	20	3,605	18
Adult and other education	1,410	59	12,629	62
Libraries and archives	355	15	2,904	14
Total	2,385		20,480	



## Appendix 4. Sectoral analysis of the incidence of vacancies by region

Table A4.1 Percentage of all establishments within each sector that report vacancies by region

		Asset Skills	Automotive Skills	Cogent	Construction Skills	Creative and Cultural	Energy & Utility Skills	e-skills UK	Financial Services	Goskills	Government Skills	Improve	Lantra	Lifelong Learning UK	People 1st	Proskills	SEMTA	SkillsActive	Skillfast-UK	Skills for Care and Development	Skills for Health	Skills for Justice	Skills for Logistics	Skillset	Skillsmart Retail	SummitSkills	Non-SSC employers	Total
Region	East of England	14	13	20	14	16	19	15	25	19	42	21	12	25	23	13	20	17	13	30	25	39	18	6	18	19	20	18
	East Midlands	13	15	15	10	11	19	14	19	22	21	16	7	24	20	14	19	14	14	28	20	43	15	12	12	11	17	15
	Greater London	20	13	21	24	20	2	24	24	24	27	20	16	31	20	14	17	30	12	29	20	26	13	18	15	16	24	21
	North East	21	17	17	15	15	12	19	17	29	18	18	8	24	21	15	28	15	16	25	20	27	17	20	13	13	21	18
	North West	16	15	15	15	14	11	16	21	20	27	18	7	30	19	11	19	15	14	25	23	25	12	14	12	7	19	17
	South East	16	16	19	15	14	18	14	26	23	51	19	14	21	20	12	21	22	14	27	28	37	14	11	16	11	18	18
	South West	14	17	23	16	18	15	19	21	22	30	23	7	20	20	15	19	18	12	28	29	40	14	8	17	11	18	17
	West Midlands	16	12	17	11	11	11	17	19	23	26	19	7	24	19	10	14	17	13	25	21	19	11	9	15	12	19	16
	Yorkshire and the Humber	11	15	17	18	11	20	25	21	21	38	18	9	26	19	19	21	17	15	31	24	20	13	6	13	17	19	18
	Total	16	15	18	16	16	15	18	22	22	32	19	9	25	20	13	19	19	13	28	24	30	14	13	15	13	20	18

Base: All establishments in each sector (example: 14 per cent of establishments in the East of England that are within Asset Skills' remit stated they have vacancies).

An equivalent table showing the incidence of hard-to-fill vacancies and skills shortage vacancies is not possible, as the numbers involved at this level of analysis are too low to produce robust data.

## Appendix 5. Main causes of having a hard-to-fill vacancy in the lifelong learning sector by occupation

Table A5.1 Occupational analysis of the main causes of having a hard-to-fill vacancy in the lifelong learning sector

	Managers		Professionals		Associate professionals	
		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage
Too much competition from other employers	6	4	15	2	22	3
Not enough people interested in doing this type of job			100	10	61	8
Poor terms and conditions (e.g. pay) offered for post	10	6	81	8	18	3
Low number of applicants with the required skills	49	31	216	22	188	26
Low number of applicants with the required attitude, motivation or personality	20	12	62	6	49	7
Low number of applicants generally	7	4	112	11	28	4
Lack of work experience the company demands	25	15	91	9	147	20
Lack of qualifications the company demands	20	12	144	15	91	13
Poor career progression/lack of prospects			12	1	7	1
Job entails shift work/unsociable hours			34	3	14	2
Seasonal work			24	2		
Remote location/poor public transport			37	4	24	3
Government legislation (e.g. security clearance needed)			7	1	11	2
Difficulty with work permits immigration issues for non-EU staff						
Poor recruitment channels/mechanisms	5	3			4	
Bad time of year to recruit						
Not full-time work			4		3	
Unattractive site/location (inc. want to work in London)			7	1	7	1
Other	15	9	28	3	46	6
No particular reason – (any mention)			7	1		
Don't know	3	2	6	1		
Weighted Totals	159	6	987	36	719	26

Base: all establishments in the lifelong learning sector who have hard-to-fill vacancies at each occupational level (example: 10 per cent of establishments with hard-to-fill vacancies for professionals state that one cause is not enough people interested in doing this kind of job).

Administrative/ clerical staff		Skilled trades occupations		Personal services staff		Sales and customer services staff		Elementary occupations		Unclassified occupations		Total	
	Percentage		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage
15	4							11	10	6	14	75	3
17	4	7	11			14	13	16	15	6	14	221	8
43	11	4	6	16	12			16	14			188	7
103	27	19	29	41	31	27	25	11	10	13	29	667	25
46	12			10	8	15	14					202	7
23	6			21	16	14	13	15	14			220	8
60	15	16	25	7	5	7	6			20	44	372	14
37	10	15	23	24	18	17	16					348	13
9	2			4	3			6	5			39	1
11	3			9	7			11	10			78	3
												24	1
								11	10			72	3
5	1											23	1
													–
												9	–
													–
		3	4					15	13			24	1
7	2											22	1
5	1					15	14					108	4
6	2											14	1
												8	–
388	14	64	2	133	5	108	4	110	4	46	2	2,714	

## Appendix 6. Skills found difficult to obtain from applicants in the lifelong learning sector by occupation

Table A6.1 Occupational analysis of skills found difficult to obtain from applicants in the lifelong learning sector

	Managers		Professionals		Associate professionals	
		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage
General IT user skills			101	6	86	6
IT professional skills	6	4	98	6	82	6
Oral communication skills			99	6	122	8
Written communication skills	6	4	129	8	155	10
Customer handling skills	5	3	135	9	94	6
Team working skills	5	3	74	5	101	7
Foreign language skills			60	4	66	4
Problem solving skills	15	10	134	9	142	10
Management skills	23	15	108	7	99	7
Numeracy skills	8	5	105	7	68	5
Literacy skills			129	8	108	7
Office administration skills	5	3	97	6	96	6
Technical, practical or job-specific skills	33	21	193	12	190	13
Sales/marketing/promotional/PR skills	5	3				
Experience/lack of product knowledge			10	1		
Relevant qualifications						
Personal attributes			19	1		
Other	23	15	21	1	34	2
No particular skills difficulties	20	13	43	3	37	2
Don't know					10	1
Weighted total	155	3	1,554	34	1,489	32

Base: all establishments in the lifelong learning sector who have skills shortage vacancies at each occupational level (example: 6 per cent of establishments in the lifelong learning sector with skills shortage vacancies for professionals state that general IT user skills were difficult to obtain from applicants.)

Administrative/ clerical staff		Skilled trade occupations		Personal services staff		Sales/customer services		Elementary occupations		Unclassified occupations		Total	
	Percentage		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage
78	10			9	4	7	4			13	11	294	6
65	8	9	11	9	4	22	14			6	5	297	6
51	6	9	11	17	8	5	3	11	18	6	5	320	7
56	7			18	9	12	8					377	8
73	9	9	11	7	3	27	17	11	18	13	10	374	8
55	7	9	11	7	3			11	18	6	5	269	6
50	6							11	18	13	10	199	4
66	8			7	3	27	17			13	10	404	9
21	3	9	11	9	4	12	8	11	18	13	10	304	7
50	6			27	13	5	3					263	6
58	7			27	13	5	3					326	7
40	5			9	4					6	5	253	5
83	11	19	25	50	24	10	6			34	27	611	13
												5	–
				4	2							14	–
													–
												19	–
13	2	4	5	7	3	15	9					116	3
33	4	11	14			9	6	6	10			159	3
												10	–
792	17	77	2	206	4	157	3	59	1	124	3	4,614	

## Appendix 7. Trends in the key findings of the National Employers Skills Survey for the lifelong learning sector

Table A7.1 Trends in the key findings of the National Employers Skills Survey for the lifelong learning sector by occupational level

Occupational level	Percentage not fully proficient				Vacancies as percentage of total employed				Percentage vacancies which are hard-to-fill				Percentage vacancies which are skill shortage vacancies			
	2003	2004	2005	2007	2003	2004	2005	2007	2003	2004	2005	2007	2003	2004	2005	2007
Managers	10	6	3	6	1	1	1	1	33	17	18	18	23	13	15	16
Professionals	10	4	5	7	2	2	2	3	27	24	25	24	16	17	21	13
Associate professionals	7	5	7	5	4	6	4	6	29	29	33	22	23	24	26	18
Administrative/clerical staff	13	4	5	6	4	3	3	2	12	11	8	12	7	5	5	9
Skilled trades	10	3	7	16	1	1	1	3	33	51	64	8	–	43	64	6
Personal service staff	9	3	6	6	3	1	3	4	29	1	28	12	23	1	8	12
Sales/customer service staff	11	9	10	9	2	1	1	1	19	16	46	37	10	3	33	31
Machine operatives	9	1	4	3	11	4	3	1	83	52	26	–	3	46	26	–
Elementary staff	12	8	7	5	1	1	1	1	25	49	26	27	14	12	4	15
Unclassified staff									11	12	39	18	–	12	8	11
Overall	10	5	5	7	2	2	2	2	24	22	23	20	14	15	16	13

Table A7.2 Trends in the key findings of the National Employers Skills Survey for the lifelong learning sector by region

Region	Percentage not fully proficient				Vacancies as percentage of total employed				Percentage vacancies which are hard-to-fill				Percentage vacancies which are skill shortage vacancies			
	2003	2004	2005	2007	2003	2004	2005	2007	2003	2004	2005	2007	2003	2004	2005	2007
East of England	14	5	7	15	3	2	2	2	27	28	29	22	14	19	15	18
East Midlands	2	4	3	13	2	4	2	2	19	10	24	9	15	8	21	8
Greater London	14	4	4	6	2	2	3	3	35	9	18	23	27	9	15	21
North East	2	2	4	5	3	1	1	2	22	49	21	21	18	41	21	13
North West	6	4	3	3	1	2	2	3	6	26	21	22	10	21	13	14
South East	8	7	7	9	3	3	2	3	20	26	30	23	7	15	20	7
South West	4	4	6	5	2	1	3	2	8	9	17	20	11	9	15	13
West Midlands	25	5	5	4	2	2	2	2	18	23	25	13	14	11	16	11
Yorkshire and The Humber	10	3	6	4	3	2	2	2	5	22	19	16	9	15	12	13
Overall	10	5	5	7	2	2	2	2	21	21	22	20	14	15	16	13

Table A7.3 Trends in the key findings of the National Employers Skills Survey for the lifelong learning sector by area of work (defined by standard industrial classification code)

Area of work	Percentage not fully proficient				Vacancies as percentage of total employed				Percentage vacancies which are hard-to-fill				Percentage vacancies which are skill shortage vacancies			
	2003	2004	2005	2007	2003	2004	2005	2007	2003	2004	2005	2007	2003	2004	2005	2007
Technical and vocational	10	4	5	4	2	1	2	3	30	21	22	21	37	11	15	11
Higher education	12	4	5	8	1	2	1	2	16	17	17	11	8	12	11	9
Adult and other education	9	6	7	6	3	2	3	4	26	27	31	28	19	20	23	18
Libraries and archives	6	3	4	6	3	4	4	3	13	22	7	16	12	11	4	12
Overall	10	5	5	7	2	2	2	2	21	21	22	20	14	15	16	13

## Appendix 8. Sectoral analysis of potential policy driver skills shortages

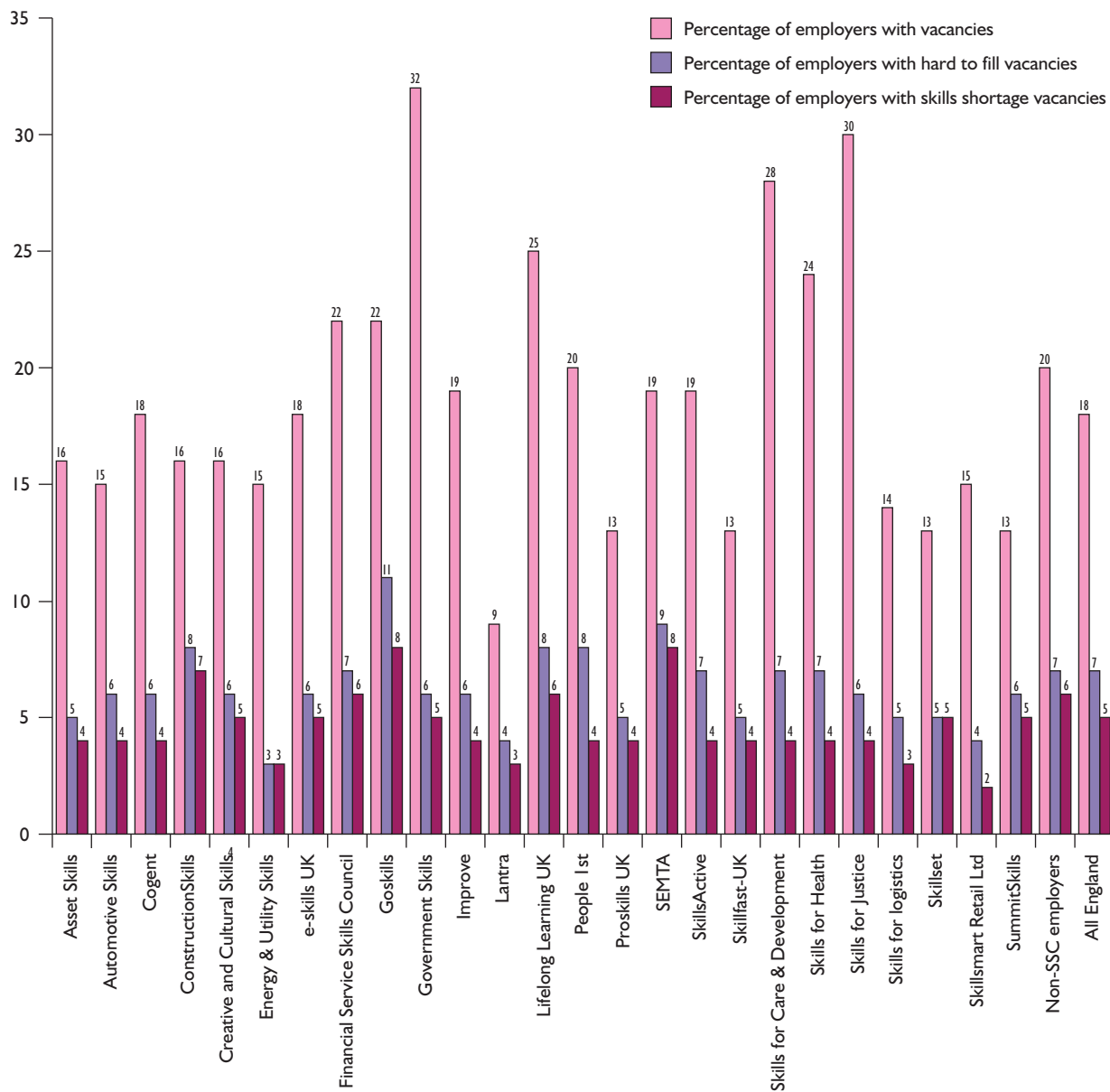
Table A8.1 Potential policy driver skills shortages by Sector Skills Council

	Problem solving skills	Numeracy skills	Literacy skills	Technical, practical or job-specific skills
Asset Skills	33	17	25	56
Automotive Skills	37	23	27	68
Cogent	30	21	22	61
ConstructionSkills	23	17	20	59
Creative and Cultural	41	25	30	51
Energy & Utility Skills	12	12	8	62
e-skills UK	32	16	20	58
Financial Services	29	20	20	56
Goskills	19	16	24	40
Government Skills	9	10	24	54
Improve	19	14	3	53
Lantra	27	21	21	62
Lifelong Learning UK	32	21	27	47
People 1st	35	22	25	45
Proskills	26	15	19	54
SEMTA	27	23	21	65
Skillfast-UK	32	15	20	48
Skills for Care and Development	32	17	27	50
Skills for Health	21	16	24	44
Skills for Justice	54	28	54	66
Skills for Logistics	33	24	37	49
SkillsActive	37	17	20	47
Skillset	32	29	24	54
Skillsmart Retail	35	30	28	47
SummitSkills	44	28	24	70
Non-SSC employers	26	19	25	50
Overall	29	20	24	53

Base: All establishments within each sector that have skills shortages (example: 32 per cent of establishments with skills shortages within Lifelong Learning UK's remit stated that problem solving skills was an issue).



Appendix 9. Incidence of vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies and skills shortage vacancies by Sector Skills Council



## Appendix 10. Analysis of skills gaps that are having the greatest negative impact by occupational level

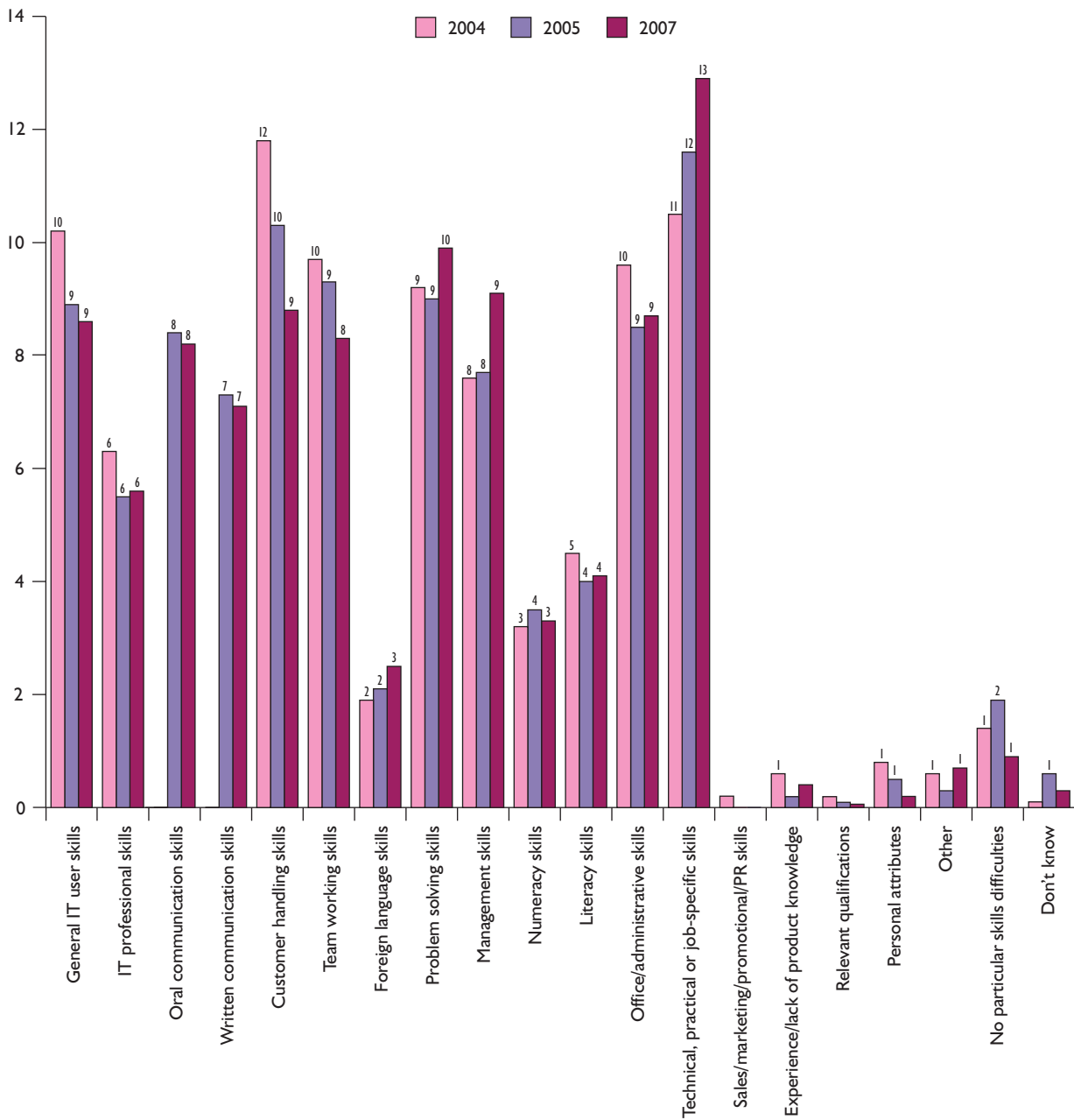
Table A10.1 Occupational analysis of skills gaps that are having the greatest negative impact in the lifelong learning sector

	Managers		Professionals		Associate professionals	
		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage
General IT user skills	29	3	71	8	7	2
IT professional skills	35	3	19	2	14	5
Oral communication skills	67	6	40	5	32	11
Written communication skills	34	3	30	3	12	4
Customer handling skills	39	4	45	5	22	7
Team working skills	58	5	81	9	14	5
Problem solving skills	81	8	12	1	8	3
Management skills	421	39	37	4	17	6
Office administration skills	28	3	19	2	9	3
Technical, practical or job-specific skills	88	8	332	37	125	42
Weighted base (establishments with skills gaps at each occupational level)	1,079		895		298	

\* Data in italics are based on low numbers and should be treated with caution. Weighted base: establishments with skills gaps at each occupational level (example: three per cent of establishments in the lifelong learning sector with managers who are not fully proficient state that non-proficiency in general IT user skills have the greatest negative impact).

Administrative/ clerical staff		Skilled trades		Personal services		Sales/customer services		Elementary		Overall	
	Percentage		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage		Percentage
153	11	13*	12*	17	10	34	7			324	7
59	4			5	3	22	5			155	3
100	7			32	18	9	2	17	11	297	6
38	3			10	6	16	3	12	8	153	3
133	9			5	3	110	22	4	3	358	8
90	6	9*	9*			35	7	24	15	312	7
106	7	16*	15*	9	5	24	5	28	18	284	6
45	3			6	3	23	5			548	12
157	11					23	5			235	5
303	21	39*	36*	45	25	167	34	51	32	1,149	25
1,429		109*		176		498		158		4,643	

Appendix I I. Trends in skills that need improving (skills gaps)



## Appendix 12. Regional analysis of the numbers of staff receiving training

Table A12.1 Regional analysis of the total numbers in employment in the lifelong learning sector, and numbers receiving training in the last 12 months.

	Number in employment	Number of staff trained off-the-job in the last 12 months	Percentage trained off-the-job in the last 12 months	Number of staff trained on-the-job in the last 12 months	Percentage trained on-the-job in the last 12 months
East of England	74,200	27,313	37	32,101	43
East Midlands	66,071	26,812	41	32,420	49
Greater London	131,509	61,771	47	67,682	51
North East	42,392	19,471	46	66,740	157 <sup>13</sup>
North West	104,335	66,013	63	21,650	21
South East	137,232	42,919	31	70,523	51
South West	79,034	37,292	47	57,622	73
West Midlands	80,937	47,631	59	52,489	65
Yorkshire and The Humber	86,426	34,329	40	38,429	44
Weighted Total	802,136	363,551	45	439,656	55

<sup>13</sup> Employers were asked how many staff at the establishment they had funded or arranged training for in the previous 12 months *including any staff that had since left*. This means employers can give a figure for the number of staff trained over the previous 12 months which is higher than their current number of employees. There is a chance of double counting, since staff may have moved from one job to another in the previous 12 months and received training in both.







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Lifelong Learning UK is a registered charity in  
England, Wales and Northern Ireland, number 1113104  
and in Scotland, number SC038804

Ref: NESS07 analysis v1,  
Published December 2008



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