



Education & Skills  
Funding Agency

# **Employer Satisfaction Survey 2018 Provider Guidance**

**February 2018**

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# 1 Introduction and overview

The Employer Satisfaction Survey 2018 will take place from February to July 2018. Building on the success of the 'Provider-led' phase used in recent years, we (the Education and Skills Funding Agency) will again ask colleges and training organisations to administer the survey to your employer customers in the first instance, followed by an 'ESFA-led' phase, if needed.

Ipsos MORI and RCU Limited – two independent research organisations, will administer the survey and analyse the results on behalf of the ESFA.

## 1.1 Provider-led phase

### Overview

**The Provider-led phase will run from 26 March to 4 May 2018** with survey results available to colleges and providers on the [Provider Extranet](#) by **29 May 2018**.

Colleges and providers who have **do not** meet their minimum number of employer responses required during the Provider-led phase will need to wait until September 2018, after the ESFA-led phase is completed, to access their full survey results. Therefore, we would urge you to take actions during the Provider-led phase to meet your minimum response targets.

**From 26 March to 4 May 2018**, please do the following to invite your employer customers to take part in the Employer Satisfaction Survey.

1. **Email your employer customers the survey link:** (<http://www.ipsos-mori.com/employersatisfaction>) and provide them with their unique Employer ID which they will need to access the online survey. The Employer ID will be included on your employer list which will be available for you to [download from the Provider Extranet](#) on 26 March. **This is the best method for surveying your employers.** The results are instant and you will get more data compared to the paper method. The online survey allows employers to comment about specific courses giving you extra detailed data.
2. **If you feel your employer customers are more likely to respond by paper give/send your employers a paper questionnaire** (download from the Provider Extranet –section 4). Each questionnaire will need to include an Employer ID which is unique to each of your employers. You can find the Employer ID on your employer list. Please add your Employer ID to each questionnaire you send out. Without this unique ID, we will not be able to allocate the employer response to your organisation.

**IMPORTANT: Please do not interview your employers over the telephone or in person.** Employer confidentiality must be protected: your employer customers must be reassured that the college or training organisation will not see their results, unless they have given permission for Ipsos MORI to share them with you.

Employers must physically complete the online or paper survey themselves in order for the ESFA to accept their response as valid. We will monitor this regular through our quality assurance processes (see Section 2).

## 1.2 ESFA-led phase

This phase will run from 14 May to 31 July 2018. During this period, Ipsos MORI will survey employers who have yet to respond by post, online and in exceptional circumstance by telephone.

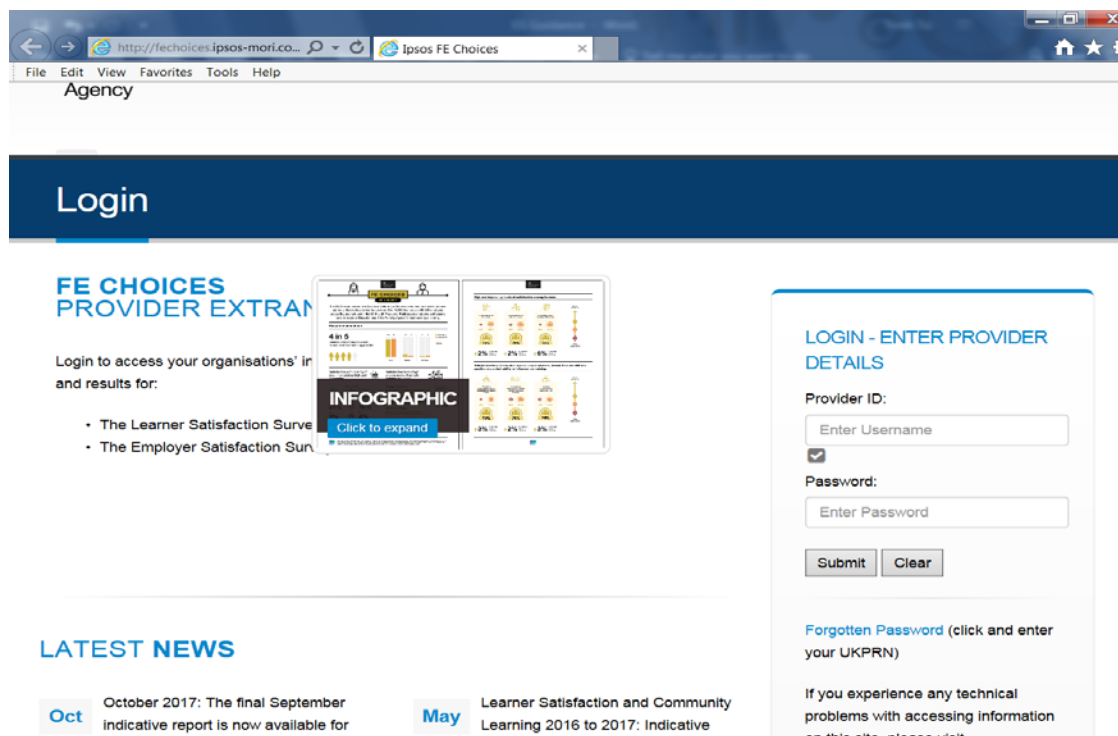
Providers who have a reasonable chance of meeting their minimum sample size will be included in the ESFA-led phase. You must provide Ipsos MORI with the contact names and email addresses for your employers by 4 May 2018, so they can be contacted (see Section 3).

## 1.3 Key resources

The information and resources that you need to administer the survey and monitor your results can be accessed from the Provider Extranet (below) <http://fechoices.ipsos-mori.com/login.aspx>

Your login details have been sent to your contact who liaises with the ESFA Provider Management team. If you need any help in accessing your login details contact us at the [Service Desk](#). If your organisation is in-scope for the Learner Satisfaction Survey, you will be able to access the site using the same login and password.

If you are unable to access your account, please send an email to: [employersatisfaction@ipsos.com](mailto:employersatisfaction@ipsos.com).



## 2 Key changes to the 2018 survey

### 2.1 Key changes

The ESFA is making these key changes to this year's survey:

- 1 **Updating the survey questionnaire to ensure the survey continues to provide information that employers find useful.** The final questions will be published on the Provider Extranet in March 2018.
- 2 **Undertaking additional quality assurance to ensure that the survey responses are comparable between colleges and training organisations.** Specifically, the ESFA wants to ensure that colleges and training organisations are using the prescribed methods to survey their employer customers (set out in Section 1.1).

### 2.2 What does quality assurance involve?

Ipsos MORI will be analysing employer response patterns throughout fieldwork. Based on this analysis, they will contact a sample of employers, across all colleges and training organisations, to confirm **how** they took part in the survey. As set out in section 1.1, employers must **physically** complete the online or paper survey themselves in order for the ESFA to accept their response as valid.

Where the correct methods have **not** been used by a college or training organisation, the survey results will **not** be used to generate an Employer Satisfaction score. The ESFA will follow-up with colleges and training organisations that failed this quality assurance.

### 3 Timetable for key actions and deadlines

The key actions that colleges and training organisations need to take are summarised below.

When?	What?	How?
<b>From 30 January - until the deadline on 18 February</b>	Tell us your contact details so we can send you important information about the survey including your results.	Log onto the Provider Extranet and complete this page: <a href="http://fechoices.ipsos-mori.com/contact.aspx">http://fechoices.ipsos-mori.com/contact.aspx</a>
<b>From 30 January until the deadline on 28 February</b>	Tell us if you would like to link your employer survey with the ESFA Employer Satisfaction Survey so that your employer customers may complete both surveys at the same time.	Log onto the Provider Extranet and provide us with the URL for your employer survey on this page: <a href="http://fechoices.ipsos-mori.com/default.aspx?id=20">http://fechoices.ipsos-mori.com/default.aspx?id=20</a>
<b>THE PROVIDER-LED PHASE WILL START FROM 26 MARCH AND END ON 4 MAY. PLEASE SURVEY YOUR EMPLOYERS DURING THIS PERIOD.</b>		
<b>As soon as possible from 26 March</b>	Download your employer list and survey your employers by paper or online. Do not administer the survey to your employers by telephone.	Log onto the Provider Extranet and download your employer list from this page: <a href="http://fechoices.ipsos-mori.com/default.aspx?id=31">http://fechoices.ipsos-mori.com/default.aspx?id=31</a>
<b>Available from 2 April</b>	Check your Daily Response Rate updates to make sure you have achieved your minimum sample size to qualify for an Employer Satisfaction score.	Log onto the Provider Extranet and download daily response reports from this page: <a href="http://fechoices.ipsos-mori.com/default.aspx?id=21">http://fechoices.ipsos-mori.com/default.aspx?id=21</a>
<b>By no later than 4 May</b>	If you do <b>not</b> achieve your minimum number of responses during the Provider-led phase, you will need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete your employer list. <b>Please follow the instruction in Section 5.</b></li> <li>• DO NOT add or delete rows/columns from this spreadsheet. You will <b>not</b> be able to upload the spreadsheet if you make changes to its structure.</li> <li>• Upload your list to Ipsos MORI by no later than 4 May so your employers may be included in the ESFA-led phase.</li> </ul>	Log onto the Provider Extranet and upload your completed employer list on this page:  The link will be provided once available.
<b>THE ESFA-LED PHASE WILL START FROM 14 MAY TO 31 JULY. DURING THIS PERIOD, YOU CAN STILL VIEW YOUR DAILY RESPONSE RATE REPORTS AND ENCOURAGE YOUR EMPLOYERS TO TAKE PART.</b>		

## 4 Step-by-step guidance on how to survey your employers

Please follow the steps below to invite your employers to take part in the Employer Satisfaction Survey during the Provider-led phase.

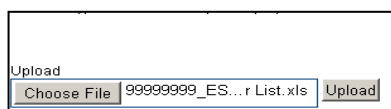
**NOTE:** Colleges and training organisations which **meet their minimum response level** during the 'Provider-led' phase will **not be required to update and submit their employer list**.

**Step 1:** Plan your strategy for contacting employers. Send a survey invitation to all employers on your list.

**Step 2: Email your employers customers** the survey link: (<http://www.ipsos-mori.com/employersatisfaction>) and provide them with their unique Employer ID (**Column A on the employer list**) which they will need to access the online survey.

**Step 3:** If you wish to generate **paper-based surveys** for all, or some of your employers, please follow the steps below to make use of the mail merge function, (use this function as many times as you wish to generate paper based questionnaires). **NB. questionnaires should be generated in batches of no more than 100.**

- a. Save a new version of your employer list for use with the mail merge tool, you may give this a new name such as: 99999999\_ES\_EmployerList\_Paper.
- b. Indicate 'Yes' in **Column Q (Postal Questionnaire)** to identify those employers for which you wish to print questionnaires. Use the 'Salutation' field (**Column J**) to indicate how you would like the letter to be addressed, such as Mr Smith, or John.
- c. Once you have done this, **upload your employer list** on the 'Create paper questionnaires' page as follows:



The image shows a web form for uploading a file. It features a text input field containing the filename '99999999\_ES...r List.xls'. To the left of the input field is a 'Choose File' button, and to the right is an 'Upload' button. The word 'Upload' is also written above the input field.

- d. **Please write** the text you wish to add to the core message by putting this into the boxes provided to personalise the letter, and add a signature (you can add an electronic signature, in addition to name and/or job title). An example of the cover letter that will be generated **is provided at the end** of this document.
- e. Press the "Generate" button to create your questionnaires.



The image shows a rectangular button with a dark background and the word 'Generate' written in white text.

- f. Check that the unique Employer ID (**Column A**) for each of your employers is printed on each questionnaire.
- g. Check the wording of the letter. Does it convey what you want it to say? Please ensure you have not duplicated the sign off. We include:

Thank you in advance for your help. Yours sincerely

- h. When you have finished, print off your questionnaires. **NOTE: If you are using older versions of Microsoft Office, then you will need to download Microsoft Word Viewer from the following link:** <http://www.microsoft.com/en-GB/download/details.aspx?id=4>

**If you are on a network, then you may need administrator rights to download and install this programme, in which case you should contact your IT Support Team.**

- i. As a final check, read your printed questionnaires before distributing them. Please remember that we cannot allocate any responses to you for any questionnaires issued to employers without a **unique Employer ID**. Please also make sure that you use the correct unique Employer ID for each employer so that their responses count towards your score.
- j. Post the questionnaires to your employers. You will need to pay for the postage. Alternatively, you can give them the paper versions of the survey when you visit them.
- k. Employers should return their questionnaire to **“FREEPOST Employer Satisfaction Survey 2018” (You do not need to pay postage or write in an address)**. You can either print this address onto labels or envelopes for your employers, or simply ask them to write it onto a blank envelope into which the questionnaire can be placed. Please **do not** use last year’s envelopes because these will not be accepted.

**Step 5:** Please monitor your organisation’s Daily Response Rate Update, which will appear on the [Provider Extranet](#) throughout the survey period, and encourage your employer customers to respond.



## 5 Step-by-step guidance on how to upload your employer list

At the end of the 'Provider-led' phase on **4 May 2018**, the ESFA working in partnership with our survey contractor Ipsos MORI, will identify colleges and training organisations to be included in the 'ESFA-led' phase of the Employer Satisfaction Survey. These organisations which have insufficient employer responses to gain a valid score immediately will have a reasonable chance, with some further activity, of meeting their minimum sample size.

**It is therefore imperative that you upload your amended employer list by the deadline of 4 May 2018.**

This applies if you **have not** met the minimum response level required for the 'Provider-led' survey period or if you have had to remove some employers participating in the survey, for example if they have ceased trading. This information will be needed to support Ipsos MORI in contacting those employers yet to participate.

**You should follow these instructions to review and update your employer list:**

### Step One:

**Download** your employer list from the Employer Satisfaction Survey homepage on the [Provider Extranet](#) by selecting the file

- Save** the Excel spreadsheet to your own network or PC **without changing the file name**. NOTE: We will not accept your file if the file name differs from that downloaded.

### Step Two:

- Check your spreadsheet** against the information in the fields listed in Table A below. NOTE: Where necessary, add in the correct information.

**Table A: List of fields you need to check and update/populate**

Title (column K)	Title of the person receiving the survey questionnaire (Mr/Miss/Mrs/Ms).
First name (column L)	First name of the person receiving the survey questionnaire.
Surname (column M)	Surname of the person receiving the survey questionnaire.
Job Title (column N)	Job title of the person receiving the survey questionnaire.
Telephone number (column S)	Telephone number for the person receiving the questionnaire including area codes.
Email (column T)	Email contact for the person receiving the questionnaire.
Recognised as name (column B)	If your organisation subcontracted the training, please supply us with the name of the subcontractor organisation that delivered the training. If your organisation is known to the employer under a different name, please write in this name. Please note that the name that appears in the 'Recognised as' column in the employer list you download is the name that will appear in the online survey.

**Please do not alter the structure of your files. We cannot accept files that have been structurally altered.**

- Identify and exclude ineligible employers.** Follow the instructions in the 'What you need to do' column in Table B below to mark these employers on your employer list spreadsheet.
- Please do not remove or add any employers to the list.**
- Columns A, C-I, O, P, R and U **cannot** be edited.

**Table B: Identifying and excluding ineligible employers**

Reasons for wanting to remove an employer	What you need to do on the employer list spreadsheet
The employer is no longer trading.	Select 'Ceased trading' from the drop- down menu in column V 'Reason for removing employer.'
The employer is also the college or training provider (that is you are delivering training to your own staff).	Select 'Training own staff' from the drop down menu in column V 'Reason for removing employer.'
Duplicate records for exactly the same workplace. (This must have exactly the same address).	Select 'Duplicate site' from the drop- down menu in column V 'Reason for removing employer'. If there are two identical records, flag one only. If there are three identical records, flag two records only. Make sure you keep one record un-flagged.

**Step Three:**

- Validate** your spreadsheet.

The employer spreadsheet contains a validation script to help you check the data is suitable for the survey. It will highlight errors or missing information in the following fields:

- Title and Contact Names
- Job title
- Email address
- Telephone number

Any errors found during the validation will appear in column W on the spreadsheet.

- Check** the error showing in column W and correct it.

**Step Four:**

- Upload** your employer spreadsheet and provide a contact name for any queries by:

- a. **Selecting the 'Browse' button**; this can be found immediately below your employer list.

Locate your file and send it to us by clicking on the 'Upload' button. The uploaded file must have the same name as the file you downloaded.

- b. **Providing us with contact details** for the appropriate person to contact in your organisation should we need to contact you about the Employer Satisfaction Survey. To do this, select 'Add/amend my contact details' tab on the [Provider Extranet](#).

## **Data Protection**

The Data Protection Act covers the use of personal data only and does not apply to organisations or limited companies. Therefore, you are able to share the name and contact details of an individual occupying a given position with an organisation or limited company.

In some cases, the contact information we require may be classed as personal data; for example, the name and address of an individual operating as a sole trader. This personal data will be processed solely for the research purposes permitted to be undertaken by, or on behalf of, the Secretary of State for the Department for Education, acting through the Education and Skills Funding Agency. It will only be kept as long as necessary and then will be securely destroyed.

## 6 Commonly asked Questions and Answers

If you have any questions about the Employer Satisfaction survey, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions below or the [Contact Us](#) page to select a query. If you require further information, follow the instructions on this page and you will be able to submit a query to us directly.

### **Q: Who do I contact if I am having trouble downloading my employer list?**

A: Please refer to the [Contact Us](#) page on the Provider Extranet to select a query. If you require further information, follow the instructions and you will be able to submit a query to Ipsos MORI directly.

### **Q: Why can't I just send you our own employer list?**

A: For the survey, we are dealing with more than 200,000 records for over 900 colleges and providers and so we need to work in a systematic way, which is why it is essential you use our spreadsheet format.

### **Q: Why can't I change your spreadsheet format?**

A: We need to understand the changes you have made and so it is essential you use our spreadsheet format.

### **Q: Do I need to supply a contact name for each employer on the list?**

A: Yes, this is essential to ensure your questionnaire reaches the right person. Following the provider-led phase, Ipsos MORI will be conducting follow-up survey work among providers with insufficient employer responses. Therefore, it is important to make sure that the information provided is correct. Without a contact name, the questionnaire is likely to go astray. (Employers respond well to receiving personalised correspondence as it conveys providers are interested in their views. It is proven that non-personalised correspondence generates less response.)

### **Q: The contact person we dealt with has left the employer and there is no-one appropriate to comment on the training. What do I need to do?**

A: Please include an alternative contact name and/or job title, if possible. We will still invite the employer to take part in the survey.

### **Q: We deliver training to a number of sites for the same business but the contact name is the same across all the sites. Can I delete some of the sites so that our contact does not get more than one survey invitation?**

No. Each site may have different experiences and we want employers to have the opportunity to express this.

**Q: My list contains employers whose learners did not complete the training/dropped out early on. Can I remove them?**

A: No. Some questions in the survey will still be relevant to the employer.

**Q: My list contains employers who do not want to be contacted. How do I remove them?**

A: The survey is voluntary so employers do not have to complete it if they do not want to. The survey questionnaire will contain information on how employers can notify Ipsos MORI that they do not want to take part.

**Q: Can I add additional employers to my list?**

A: No. Additional entries are not permissible. The list is compiled from the Individual Learner Records (ILR) 2017 to 2018 of all employers notified by eligible providers to the Education and Skills Funding Agency as having received full or part funded training delivered to them by a college/training organisation funded under the Adult Education Budget, or under apprenticeships, including the apprenticeship levy between August 2017 and January 2018.

**Q: What does Employer ID refer to on the spreadsheet?**

A: Employer ID is the unique reference number that Ipsos MORI has allocated to each employer, to enable them to track their participation in the survey. This number is also used to provide you with daily update reports during field work.

**Q: Why can't I delete the Employer ID?**

A: The field is protected and cannot be changed. It is important that the unique Employer ID is retained so it can be used as detailed in the question above.

**Q: What is the EDS (Employer Data Service) number?**

A: The number identifies each workplace and is sourced from the 'Employer Identifier' field on the ILR

**Q: How do I update an employer's address?**

A: If the address provided for any of your employers is incorrect, then you should notify the [EDS helpdesk](#). For the purposes of the Employer Satisfaction Survey, Ipsos MORI will not be able to use updated addresses. Instead, you can follow the instructions in Section 1.2 to either send the employer the link to the online survey, or generate a paper-based version of the questionnaire to send out to them.

**Q: What do I do if there are employers on my list who fall under the exempt categories in Table B?**

A: As indicated in Table B, you should flag them in column V 'Reason for Employer Removal.' Ipsos MORI will then ensure they are not included in the survey. We ask that you do not delete them from the list, as we need to have a record of the employers that you wish us to remove.

**Q: Do I include multiple sites of the same organisation?**

A: Yes. It is valid to include multiple sites of the same organisation if you have delivered training to different sites and each site has a separate EDS number.

**Q: Why do you need me to list the name of our subcontractors on the spreadsheet?**

A: It is important you list the name of your subcontractor. We can then indicate to the employer the name of the provider that may have delivered the training. In many cases, this name is more recognisable to the employer and so they are more likely to respond to the questionnaire. Without correct information here, we are unlikely to get a response.

**Q: What do I need to do to correct errors found on my employer list spreadsheet after I have pressed save?**

A: Please check these errors in column W and then make the appropriate corrections.

**Q: Do I need to worry about spelling the employers' details correctly?**

A: Yes. We will use the exact information you provide. So if you make spelling mistakes these will appear in the mailing to employers.

**Q: Have you included the information I provided last year?**

A: Yes, where possible we have included the information you provided last year in your employer list. Please check that the details are still relevant and that the contact names are in the format required for this year's survey.