

Evaluation of Individual Learning Accounts

*Early Views of Customer & Providers:
National Report*

Jane Owens
York Consulting

**Research Report
No 295**

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Learning Accounts***
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**DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS
in association with
THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION, TRAINING
& EMPLOYMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND, THE SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE
AND THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES**

**Evaluation Of Individual Learning Accounts –
Early Views Of Customers & Providers**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background to ILAs

1. Individual Learning Accounts are a crucial part of the Government's lifelong learning agenda, along with other initiatives such as University for Industry/LearnDirect and UKOnline/ICT Learning Centres.
2. The key objective for Individual Learning Accounts is to provide a vehicle for funding continuous learning. The national Individual Learning Account framework was introduced in September 2000, and was to include the following key elements:
 - universal availability but with specific marketing to key target groups;
 - creation of an Individual Learning Account Centre (to cover England, Scotland and Northern Ireland – the process was managed by the Training and Enterprise Councils in Wales);
 - funding support to encourage individual take-up of learning;
 - encouragement to employers to contribute to Individual Learning Accounts.
3. As part of the first year of the national Individual Learning Account scheme, the home countries require an early evaluation of:
 - the characteristics of Individual Learning Account redeemers and non-redeemers;
 - process;
 - customer satisfaction.
4. The findings will be used to provide initial information on early Individual Learning Account holders and also evidence to inform any recommendations for improving the process. It will also provide an input into DfES's monitoring of its contract with Capita, who are under contract to run the Individual Learning Account Centre.
5. The research was undertaken by York Consulting Ltd and MORI Social Research Institute between 26th February and 4th May 2001.

Methodology

6. This report is based upon a telephone survey of Individual Learning Account redeemers and non-redeemers (people who had opened an account but not yet used it) in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales and providers in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Main findings

Profile of Individual Learning Account Holders

7. The profile of redeemers and non-redeemers, and of their responses, was similar for each of the four countries with the majority of redeemers being:
 - employed or self-employed;
 - already having some form of qualification;
 - and with a higher percentage of women than men opening an Individual Learning Account.
8. The only key difference between the profiles for each country was that women formed an even greater proportion of Individual Learning Account redeemers in Wales (70%).

Marketing

9. Despite each country setting key target groups who they wished to attract towards Individual Learning Account use, any targeted marketing has had little impact.
10. The majority of redeemers first heard about Individual Learning Accounts through learning providers – the other major sources of information were family/friends and newspaper/radio advertisements.
11. A number of training providers expressed confusion about Individual Learning Account eligibility, both for courses and for individuals. This was particularly the case in Wales, where a number of changes had been made to individual eligibility since September 2000.

Process

12. Responses regarding the process for accessing Individual Learning Accounts were generally positive amongst redeemers within the three countries whose ILA system was managed by the Individual Learning Account Centre. For instance:
 - 89-93% of redeemers regarded the overall service of the ILAC as very or fairly good;
 - 93-97% of redeemers regarded ILAC staff as very or fairly helpful.
13. Account holders in Wales were not asked for their opinions on the service offered by the Training and Enterprise Councils, who managed the ILA system in Wales until the end of March 2001, as responsibility was moving to ELWa in April 2001. However, a higher level of provider dissatisfaction was evident with the system in Wales.

Previous learning

14. The majority of redeemers possessed some form of qualification, with approximately one-quarter being educated to degree level. Across the home countries between 9% and 16% of redeemers had no previous qualification with between 17% and 22% having undertaken no form of learning over the past twelve months.

Courses supported by Individual Learning Accounts

15. The majority (between 89% and 97%) of those undertaking courses supported by 80% discounts were undertaking Information & Communication Technology (ICT) courses, with a maximum of 1% undertaking introductory numeracy/Maths courses (England and Scotland) or introductory communication/English (Scotland).
16. Some individuals were receiving Individual Learning Account funding support for ineligible courses e.g. those required for own employment; leisure courses; part-time Higher Education in England.
17. The level of course being undertaken by redeemers varied from those not leading to any qualification, through to those classified as part-time Higher Education.

Contributions to course costs

18. A requirement of the £150 Individual Learning Account incentive is that the individual contributes at least £25 of their own funding, but at least one in ten of the redeemers contacted stated that they were contributing less than this amount. This was particularly the case in Wales, where over 15% stated that they were paying nothing at all.
19. The majority of redeemers stated that their employer was making no contribution towards their course costs. Confusion was also apparent amongst some providers over the implications of any employer contribution i.e. whether the Individual Learning Account discount was applicable to the course cost after or before the employer's contribution had been deducted. This led some providers to say that they positively discouraged employer contributions as it led to increased administrative difficulties.

Deadweight

20. The level of deadweight varied between each country, but indications were – by using responses to the statement “Without the Individual Learning Account I would not have been able to pay for my course” - that for England, Scotland and Wales deadweight was between 44% and 50%. The level of deadweight appeared to be lower in Northern Ireland where the figure was 31%.
21. Groups indicating that they would have been unable to take their course without the support of Individual Learning Accounts included the unemployed, people with no qualifications, and those in social grades D and E.
22. Groups indicating that they would have been able to take their course even without the support of Individual Learning Accounts included those contributing £150 or more of their own funding, people not receiving an 80% discount and those in social grades A and B.

Conclusions

23. Conclusions emerging from this survey are that:
 - Individual Learning Accounts have attracted a wide range of learners, the majority of whom already possess some form of qualification;
 - a higher proportion of women than men have opened and used an Individual Learning Account;
 - the profile for redeemers and non-redeemers is similar, indicating that no one group has experienced particular difficulties in using their Individual Learning Account once opened;

- targeted marketing has had little effect upon attracting members of key target groups within each country;
- the overwhelming majority of account holders in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland were very positive about the support provided to them by the Individual Learning Account Centre (ILAC);
- levels of satisfaction were lower in relation to the service provided by the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) in Wales;
- the majority of those receiving the 80% discount were undertaking an Information & Communication Technology (ICT) course;
- some account holders were receiving Individual Learning Account funding for ineligible courses;
- a significant minority of individuals had contributed below the required amount of £25 towards their course costs;
- the majority of account holders in employment had received no financial contribution from their employer towards their Individual Learning Account supported course costs;
- some providers indicated that the procedures for employer contributions were not straightforward and that, in some cases, they [providers] were actively discouraging such support;
- levels of deadweight appeared to be:
 - highest in Scotland and Wales and lowest in Northern Ireland;
 - highest amongst individuals contributing £150 or more towards their course costs, those not receiving an 80% discount and people in social grades A and B;
 - lowest amongst individuals in social grades D and E, the unemployed, those with no qualifications and people receiving an 80% discount.

Recommendations

24. Recommendations for each of the countries covered by this survey include:
- revisiting key **target groups** to be clear on the rationale behind their selection;
 - offering **incentives** to learning providers if target groups are to form part of the future ILA system;

- reconsidering the **levels of discount** to be made available through Individual Learning Accounts in the future;
- ensuring that providers are clear about **course and individual eligibility for Individual Learning Account** support;
- considering ways of **encouraging employers to contribute** towards their employees' ILA supported learning;
- further development of the **Individual Learning Account Centre website**;
- identifying, and closing, loopholes currently allowing Individual Learning Accounts to be used to support **ineligible courses**;
- continued training for **call-handling staff** on the rules and regulations relating to Individual Learning Accounts;
- continuing to monitor **customer and provider satisfaction**, particularly in relation to the knowledge levels of call-handling staff and the advice that they give;
- in the long-term, to monitor the number of **dormant accounts** i.e. those used once but not in subsequent years;
- to undertake a **longitudinal study** of individuals contacted as part of this survey to identify the impacts of learning undertaken e.g. progression into further learning and/or employment;
- to undertake an evaluation of the current pilots e.g. **Community ILAs** and **The Small Firm Learning Account**.

1 INTRODUCTION

Background to Individual Learning Accounts

- 1.1 Individual Learning Accounts are a crucial part of the Government's lifelong learning agenda, along with other initiatives such as University for Industry/LearnDirect and UKOnline/ICT Learning Centres.
- 1.2 The key objective for Individual Learning Accounts is to provide a vehicle for funding continuous learning, and thereby to:
 - contribute to creating a better-equipped workforce;
 - enable people to have a personal stake in society, with greater control over their own development;
 - increase levels of private (individual and employer) investment in learning;
 - increase levels of participation and achievement in learning activities;
 - repay public investment in Individual Learning Accounts through increased earnings;
 - raise individuals' expectations of the benefits of learning.
- 1.3 In February 1998, the government issued a Green Paper on lifelong learning - *The Learning Age: A Renaissance for a New Britain* – in which they outlined their plans for creating a system that would encourage people to take greater responsibility for their own learning and self-development. These Individual Learning Accounts were to be built upon two key principles of the government's lifelong learning policy, namely:
 - that individuals are best placed to choose what and how they want to learn;
 - that responsibility for investment in learning should be shared by employers, the government and individuals.
- 1.4 Following this Green Paper, a variety of Individual Learning Account models were tested at a local level by Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) working in partnership with key stakeholders such as employers, learning providers and trade unions and by Further Education Colleges.

- 1.5 Initially, the concept was that financial institutions would be actively involved in Individual Learning Accounts, as each individual would have a bank account in which money would be invested for their training. This idea was later replaced by the current 'pay as you go' system outlined at paragraph 1.7 below.
- 1.6 The national Individual Learning Account framework was introduced in September 2000, and was to include the following key elements:
- **universal availability but with specific marketing to key target groups.** These vary slightly between each country but all include labour market returners and new learners. England, Scotland and Northern Ireland also have under 30 year olds with few or no qualifications as a target group; England and Wales have the self-employed as a target group, England has non-teaching school staff and Wales has people with low/no qualifications;
 - **creation of an Individual Learning Account Centre** operated by Capita and contracted to DfES, the Scottish Executive and Northern Ireland to provide a call centre and administrative services;
 - **funding support to encourage individual take-up of learning** i.e. a **£150 incentive** to the first 1 million account holders, on condition that they contribute at least £25 of their own money; a **20% discount** on the cost of a wide-range of courses; an **80% discount** on the cost of certain courses focusing upon core skills activities. The "discounts" were introduced in England, Northern Ireland and Scotland in September 2000 and were introduced in Wales at the start of January 2001. The upper limit for funding available each year through the 20% discount is £100 – the upper limit for the 80% discount is currently £200 except for Scotland where the upper limit is £400;
 - **encouragement to employers to contribute to Individual Learning Accounts**, but not to use them to substitute their own training provision.
- 1.7 To open an Individual Learning Account, an individual first registers with the Individual Learning Account Centre (ILAC) by completing an application form – these forms are available from a wide range of sources including the ILAC Centre, its website and learning providers. Once this form has been completed and returned, the individual is sent an account card which is then presented to their chosen learning provider. If the provider has registered with the ILAC, and the individual has chosen a course that is eligible for an Individual Learning Account incentive/discount, the provider will apply the appropriate discount and then reclaim this funding from the ILAC.

1.8 To be eligible for an Individual Learning Account, individuals must be 19 years of age or over. They must satisfy nationality requirements, although European Economic Area nationals who are working in the United Kingdom are also eligible, as are their spouse, children and stepchildren.

1.9 Certain courses are excluded from Individual Learning Account support. These vary slightly between each country but all countries exclude:

- secondary education;
- learning for which the individual already receives Government support;
- full-time graduate and post-graduate courses (NB part-time graduate and post-graduate courses are also excluded in England);
- leisure or sports courses (unless leading to a coaching/instruction qualification);
- driving lessons for a private car;
- courses that are a requirement of a person's current employment;
- courses that are a reward/inducement from a person's employer;
- Wales also excludes professional qualifications.

1.10 Other exclusions are:

- books and learning materials not included in course fees;
- childcare, travel and other related costs;
- courses already started by the individual.

1.11 Employees are not subject to tax or National Insurance contributions on an employer's contribution to a course supported by an Individual Learning Account, as long as the employer extends the facility to the lowest paid employees in the company. The employer's contribution to such courses is, like other employee training costs, deductible for tax purposes.

1.12 The government anticipated that 1 million accounts would be opened by April 2002, with an estimate of just under 2 million accounts opened by 2005. David Blunkett announced, at the end of April 2001, that the 1 million target had already been met. As at the end of May 2001, the following number of Individual Learning Accounts had been opened in each of the four home countries:

Table 1.1:		
Number of Individual Learning Accounts opened and used		
(at end of May 2001)		
	No. of accounts opened	No. of accounts used
England	923,826	409,581
Scotland	96,292	31,885
N.Ireland	30,320	10,686
Wales	42,750	25,049

1.13 Marketing was commissioned in England by DfES at the end of 2000 which involved a six week local and commercial radio advertising campaign and advertisements in regional/ethnic, and some national, press which was aimed at two key target groups i.e. 19-30 year olds with few or no qualifications and labour market returners. The campaign gave a message that Individual Learning Accounts could help people to realise their individual skills and talents, but was disappointing in terms of the number of calls which resulted from it.

1.14 As an encouragement to certain key target groups, other pilots are now being undertaken across England. These include:

- **The Small Firm Learning Account:** which is operating in the Leicestershire/Lincolnshire area during 2001-2002 with the aim of engaging small firm owner managers and their employees into learning by offering them additional discounts alongside learning needs analysis support, information and easier access to relevant learning. The pilot is open to firms employing between 5 and 49 people. Owner managers who successfully persuade more than half of their workforce to open and use an Individual Learning Account receive £500 towards the cost of a comprehensive learning needs analysis covering both company and individual development needs. Those members of staff who open an account will also qualify for an additional £50 discount off the cost of a wide range of learning, with the owner manager having the final say on what learning should be undertaken;
- **Community ILAs:** a 12-month pilot being undertaken in London, Liverpool, Sheffield and the South-East to identify the added value that community groups and their partner organisations can bring to the promotion of Individual Learning Accounts to people in some of the most disadvantaged communities. These pilots will test the effect of training local community workers who will provide information and advice on learning, and will also encourage individuals to open and use an Individual Learning Account. Two of the pilots are also working with credit unions to manage the £150 incentive with the aim of encouraging financial literacy and the savings habit amongst members of their local communities.

Evaluation

1.15 As part of the first year of the national Individual Learning Account scheme, the home countries required an early evaluation of:

- **the characteristics of Individual Learning Account users and non-redeemers;**
- **process;**
- **customer satisfaction.**

1.16 In addition to the issues listed at 1.15 above, key questions addressed within this report include:

- **the extent to which Individual Learning Accounts have encouraged both take-up from new learners and “additionality”** i.e. has the Individual Learning Account been a real incentive or would individuals have opted and paid for these courses without the discount?
- the extent to which Individual Learning Account users have **prior knowledge or skills** in the topic covered by their course i.e. have Individual Learning Accounts encouraged those with limited skills and knowledge to take up learning? Are they new learners?
- **effectiveness in attracting members of the key target groups** as compared to other members of the community i.e. labour market returners; 19-30 year olds with few or no qualifications; non-teaching school staff; people working within small firms and the self-employed.

1.17 This evaluation was sought to provide initial information on early Individual Learning Account holders and evidence to inform any recommendations for improving the process. It was also intended to provide an input into DfES's monitoring of its contract with Capita who are running the Individual Learning Account Centre.

1.18 As the individuals and providers contacted were those who had been involved during the first five months of the national roll-out of ILAs – in other words, people who had opened their Individual Learning Account, or registered as a course provider, between 1st September 2000 and 31st January 2001 – changes are likely to have occurred in the user profile and also in the efficiency of processes surrounding Individual Learning Accounts in more recent months.

1.19 We have therefore included some more recent information gained from Capita's database e.g. to show the age and gender profile of account holders as at the time of drafting this report.

1.20 Two reports have been prepared for publication. This report, which summarises key similarities and differences between each of the four home countries – and a second report informed by the England findings only.

2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 This report is based upon a telephone survey of Individual Learning Account users, non-redeemers and providers carried out between 26th February and 4th May 2001 by York Consulting Ltd and the MORI Social Research Institute.
- 2.2 A brief description of the methodology used is provided below, with further details available at **Appendix E**.

Redeemers and non-redeemers

Survey design

- 2.3 MORI conducted 4,638 interviews with people who had applied for an Individual Learning Account in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales between September 2000 and February 2001. The interviews were conducted by MORI Telephone Surveys (MTS) between 5th March and 3rd April 2001 using CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing). The questionnaire used to programme the CATI system is shown at **Appendix A**.
- 2.4 The sample was provided by Capita (for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland) and by each of the four Welsh Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). The samples comprised two groups of Individual Learning Account holders:
- **redeemers**: people who had used their Individual Learning Account to help pay for learning;
 - **non-redeemers**: people who had applied for an Individual Learning Account but not used it by the time the sample was drawn.
- 2.5 Those listed as receiving an 80% course discount were prioritised for interviews as an early report was required on this group. Following this, we prioritised non-redeemer calls to take account of possible changes in their status – for example, a proportion of non-redeemers had used their Individual Learning Account by the time they were contacted.

Sample design

- 2.6 The aim was to interview 1,000 redeemers in each country (4,000 in total) and 125 non-redeemers in each country (500 in total). The sample size meant that there were too few non-redeemers to provide robust findings for each country but, taken as a whole group, the sample provided an indication of any key issues and obstacles leading to non-use of Individual Learning Accounts.
- 2.7 Due to reasons detailed in Appendix A, a slightly higher number of redeemer and non-redeemer interviews were achieved i.e. 4109 redeemers and 529 non-redeemers.

Questionnaire design

- 2.8 There was one version of the questionnaire, with appropriate filters for redeemers and non-redeemers. The questionnaire was designed by York Consulting Ltd and MORI in consultation with DfES and, through DfES, the other three countries. The questionnaire is shown at **Appendix A**.
- 2.9 The questionnaire was piloted with 40 redeemers and non-redeemers between 12th and 14th February 2001. A full debrief was held at MTS on 15th February 2001 – the questionnaire had worked well during the pilot stage and consequently only minor amendments were required.

Analysis

- 2.10 The data has been weighted by age and gender for redeemers and non-redeemers (within country) in line with the information held on Capita's database and on the TEC databases.

Interpretation of Data

- 2.11 It should be noted that a sample, and not the entire population, of Individual Learning Account applicants has been interviewed. This means that all the results are subject to sampling tolerances and that not all differences are statistically significant.
- 2.12 Where percentages do not add up to 100%, this is due to computer rounding, the exclusion of "don't know" categories, or multiple responses.

Course providers

Survey design

- 2.13 York Consulting Ltd conducted 100 interviews with providers in England, Northern Ireland and Wales between 26th February and 4th May 2001. The questionnaires used are shown at **Appendix B** – one for use with providers in England and Northern Ireland, and one for use with Welsh providers. Scotland had commissioned its own survey of providers and therefore opted-out of this part of the survey.

Sample design

- 2.14 The survey of learning providers was intended to provide qualitative data as the sample size – i.e. 100 providers across England, Northern Ireland and Wales - was too small to provide statistically robust feedback.
- 2.15 The sample for England and Northern Ireland was provided by Capita and by each of the four Welsh Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) for Wales.

Questionnaire design

- 2.16 The questionnaire for Individual Learning Account providers was designed by York Consulting Ltd in consultation with DfES and, through DfES, the other three countries. The questionnaires - one for England and Northern Ireland and a separate design for Wales – are shown at **Appendix B**.

Interpretation of Data

- 2.17 It should be noted that a sample, and not the entire population, of Individual Learning Account providers was interviewed. This means that all the results are subject to sampling tolerances and that not all differences are statistically significant.

3 MAIN FINDINGS

- 3.1 Apart from paragraphs 3.3 to 3.6 below, this chapter is based upon the responses of people who had redeemed their Individual Learning Account i.e. who had used their Individual Learning Account to help meet their learning costs. However, where any significant differences were apparent between redeemers and non-redeemers these are referred to under the appropriate heading.
- 3.2 There were more similarities than differences between the profile and responses of Individual Learning Account holders within each of the four countries. Where any major differences were apparent, they tended to be between Wales (where the system operated, until recently, through the four Training and Enterprise Councils) and the three countries who had contracted with Capita to run the Individual Learning Account Centre.

Non-redeemers

- 3.3 There were very few differences evident between the profile and responses of redeemers and non-redeemers contacted through this survey.
- 3.4 We were keen to identify the reasons why non-redeemers had not yet chosen to use their Individual Learning Account. The main reasons, as outlined in **Table 3.1** below, were given as:
- time pressures;
 - awaiting a course start date;
 - not having reached a decision upon which course to take/no suitable courses in area.
- 3.5 Financial pressures, and a need for advice and guidance, were mentioned by a small number of respondents along with a wide variety of other reasons given by individuals. These included:
- being too late to use their Individual Learning Account i.e. that the course had progressed too far for them to be able to catch up;
 - the course they wished to take was not eligible for Individual Learning Account support;
 - the course they wanted to take was cancelled due to low student numbers.

	Waiting for course to start (%)	Time pressures (%)	Not decided upon/no suitable course (%)	Financial reasons (%)	Need advice (%)
England (N = 131)	19	25	22	6	7
Scotland (N = 164)	24	32	20	3	2
N.Ireland (N = 147)	33	20	19	6	11
Wales (N = 87)	26	20	6	3	5

Percentages do not add up to 100% as only the most frequently mentioned reasons are given.

3.6 These findings, although not statistically robust as only based upon feedback from 529 non-redeemers across the four home countries, do indicate that the main reasons do not relate to Individual Learning Accounts but to external influences.

Key characteristics of redeemers

3.7 The profile of respondents was broadly similar between each of the four countries in terms of gender, ethnic group and age. The number of non-redeemers contacted was not large enough to provide robust findings, but does show that their profile is similar to that of redeemers. This indicates that no one particular group is experiencing obstacles to the use of their Individual Learning Account.

Gender

3.8 As can be seen from **Table 3.2** below, women outnumbered men amongst the sample, with between 59% and 70% in each country being female. As approximately 51% of the population in each country is female it is apparent that Individual Learning Accounts are proving particularly attractive to this gender.

3.9 This has continued to be the case as, when looking at the data available from the Individual Learning Account Centre (ILAC) at the end of May 2001, the predominance of females amongst redeemers was still evident. See **Table 3.2** below where the ILAC figures are shown in brackets.

Ethnicity

- 3.10 The majority of respondents to this survey were white, although the percentage of non-white respondents was higher in England, reflecting the more diverse ethnic background of its residents. The presence of ethnic minority groups amongst the sample was within 1% of the population profile for each country, and therefore did not indicate that there were any disincentives or obstacles to their participation.
- 3.11 To enable a comparison with more recent data, we have included information from the Individual Learning Account Centre database on people who had redeemed their Individual Learning Account by the end of May 2001. These figures are shown in brackets in **Table 3.2** below. A significant proportion of account holders (20%) had not provided the Individual Learning Account Centre with information on their ethnicity but, despite this gap, there appears to be an increase in account holders from the ethnic minorities.

Age

- 3.12 Over half of the redeemers contacted were within the 31-50 age group with only small proportions being 20 or below – this is not surprising as the lower age limit for Individual Learning Account eligibility is 18 in Scotland and Wales and 19 in England and Northern Ireland.
- 3.13 To enable a comparison with more recent data, we have included data from the Individual Learning Account Centre database on people who had redeemed their Individual Learning Account as at the end of May 2001. These figures are shown in brackets in Table 3.2 below.

	Gender (%)		Ethnicity (%)		Age (%)		
	Male	Female	White	Non-white	18-30	31-50	51+
England (N = 1021)	41 (42)	59 (58)	93 (68)	5 (12)	24 (27)	54 (52)	22 (21)
Scotland (N = 1013)	43 (42)	57 (58)	98 (97)	2 (3)	20 (23)	56 (54)	23 (23)
N.Ireland (N = 1008)	33 (36)	67 (64)	98 (98)	1 (2)	28 (28)	58 (56)	14 (16)
Wales (N = 1067)	30	70	99	-	26	58	15

Social grade

- 3.14 For the purposes of analysis we have grouped social grades A and B together, and D and E together within this report (see Appendix D for Social Grade Definitions used by MORI). The most frequently represented social grade amongst ILA account holders was C1 which includes non-managerial and non-professional administrative and sales staff as well as nurses and technicians.
- 3.15 Differences between the social grades of Individual Learning Account redeemers within the sample for each country were not particularly marked. The figures in **Table 3.3** do not add up to 100% as a small proportion of redeemers refused to answer the questions used to assess social grade.

Social grade	England (N = 1021)	Scotland (N = 1013)	N. Ireland (N = 1008)	Wales (N = 1067)
AB	18	21	15	16
C1	37	38	38	42
C2	25	22	21	26
DE	19	19	20	14

Main occupation

- 3.16 The majority of respondents were in full-time or part-time employment, with smaller proportions being self-employed, unemployed or classifying themselves as labour market returners.
- 3.17 The smaller percentage within the unemployed category in Wales may be due to the fact that they were not eligible for Individual Learning Account funding until later in 2000 than was the case in the other three countries. This change in eligibility had still to be understood by some providers in Wales as some of those contacted as part of this survey still thought that unemployed people were not eligible for ILA support.
- 3.18 To enable a comparison with more recent data, we have included data on ILA redeemers, covering the period up until the end of May 2001, from the Individual Learning Account Centre database. These figures are shown in brackets within **Table 3.4** below. Figures are not currently available on ILA redeemers in Wales.

Table 3.4: ILA redeemers – main current activity (%)*				
	England (N = 1021)	Scotland (N = 1013)	N. Ireland (N = 1008)	Wales (N = 1067)
Full-time/part-time employed	69 (70)	68 (70)	68 (79)	75
Self-employed	5 (10)	5 (9)	4 (7)	9
Unemployed	8 (8)	9 (6)	13 (3)	6
Labour market returner	4 (5)	2 (7)	4 (7)	2
Education/Training	5 (2)	5 (2)	5 (<1)	4
Retired	7 (4)	8 (4)	4 (2)	2
Other	2 (1)	3 (2)	2 (1)	2

* Figures in italics relate to all ILA holders i.e. redeemers and non-redeemers.

Target groups and previous learning experiences

Target groups

- 3.19 It proved difficult to make contact with the desired number of individuals within each of the key target groups. Not only is data not being sought from ILA applicants on their membership of some key target groups but also a significant number of those identified as a member of a target group on Capita's database proved not to be when MORI Telephone Surveys (MTS) made contact with them.
- 3.20 For all countries, the target groups included labour market returners and people working within small firms. For England, Northern Ireland and Scotland they also included under-30 year olds with few or no qualifications and, in England, non-teaching school staff. Target groups in Wales also included people with few or no qualifications and, in Wales and England, the self-employed.
- 3.21 **Table 3.5** provides data on the proportion of respondents who fell into each of these categories within each country. Where the category is a target group in that country, the percentage is placed in **bold**. We have also provided data from the Individual Learning Account Centre database where this falls into the categories shown in Table 3.5 below – this data relates to ILA redeemers as at the end of May 2001 and is shown in brackets.

Table 3.5: Proportion of ILA redeemers within target groups (%)				
	England (N = 1021)	Scotland (N = 1013)	N. Ireland (N = 1008)	Wales (N = 1067)
Labour market returners	4	2 (7)	4 (7)	2
People working within small firms (relates to % of employed respondents)	39 (43)	39	51	46
People with no qualifications	16	16	16	9
Under 30 year olds with no qualifications	11	9	11	6
Non-teaching school staff	7 (6)	3 (0.4)	8	5
Self-employed	5 (10)	5 (9)	4 (7)	9

3.22 It was not possible to provide more up-to-date information on **people with no qualifications** - Individual Learning Account applicants are only asked for their highest qualification and are not asked to state if they have no qualifications. Nor is it feasible to say that the people who did not respond to the “highest qualification” question were those who did not have any qualifications as they were often working towards a qualification equivalent to NVQ level 2 or above.

3.23 The rationale behind the choice of some of these target groups is not clear, with conflicting views being held by some of the home countries about their classification. However, any specific marketing undertaken with target groups, at either a national or a local level, appears to have had little impact upon their recruitment when compared with their presence amongst redeemers in countries where they are not a target group.

Previous learning experiences

3.24 The vast majority of respondents within each country already possessed some form of qualification. As Individual Learning Accounts are open to everyone over 18 or 19 years of age, they are bound to attract a wide range of people but they do appear to be attracting a higher proportion of qualified individuals, many of whom (between 20-26%) had participated in Higher Education.

3.25 In England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, 16% of redeemers had no qualifications, whilst only 9% of the sample in Wales had no qualifications. These figures are slightly lower than that given within the *Labour Force Survey 2000* which found that 16.5% of the UK working age population had no qualifications.

3.26 Whilst the vast majority of redeemers possess some form of qualifications - between 17% (Wales) and 22% (England and Scotland) had not undertaken any form of training or learning in the previous year, as shown in **Table 3.6**.

3.27 It appears that Welsh ILA redeemers are even more qualified than redeemers in the other three home countries (91% of Welsh respondents possessed some form of qualification compared to 84% of respondents in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively) with higher percentages having participated in more training/learning over the past twelve months. These proportions are likely to have been influenced by the fact that the unemployed were not eligible for Individual Learning Account support in Wales until more recently than was the case in the other three home countries.

	England (N = 1021)	Scotland (N = 1013)	N. Ireland (N = 1008)	Wales (N = 1067)
Possessing some form of qualification	84	84	84	91
No qualifications	16	16	16	9
Attended college course in past	61	56	54	72
Attended Higher Education in past	20	26	25	25
Attended taught course leading to a qualification in past 12 months	25	19	38	34
No training/learning undertaken in past 12 months	22	22	19	17

Percentages do not add up to 100 as more than one response could be given

3.28 Within each of the four home countries, the profile of 80% discount holders showed little, if any, variation from the above figures except for Scotland where a marginally higher percentage of those undertaking a course eligible for an 80% discount had no previous qualifications.

3.29 Significant differences between the previous learning experiences of redeemers and non-redeemers were apparent in Northern Ireland and Wales. In **Northern Ireland**, higher proportions of non-redeemers had:

- attended a Further Education or specialist college;
- participated in work-related training paid for by their employer;
- undertaken a taught course not leading to a qualification.

3.30 In **Wales**, fewer non-redeemers had:

- attended a Further Education college;
- undertaken a taught course leading to a qualification;
- participated in work-related training that they had paid for;
- followed a distance-learning course.

3.31 The picture differed when looking at responses from redeemers and non-redeemers to the question relating to learning undertaken over the previous 12 months:

- in **all four countries**, fewer non-redeemers had undertaken a taught course leading to a qualification;
- in **England and Wales**, fewer non-redeemers had attended a Further Education college;
- in **Scotland**, fewer non-redeemers had followed a distance learning course;
- in **Northern Ireland**, a greater proportion of non-redeemers had participated in work-related training paid for by their employer.

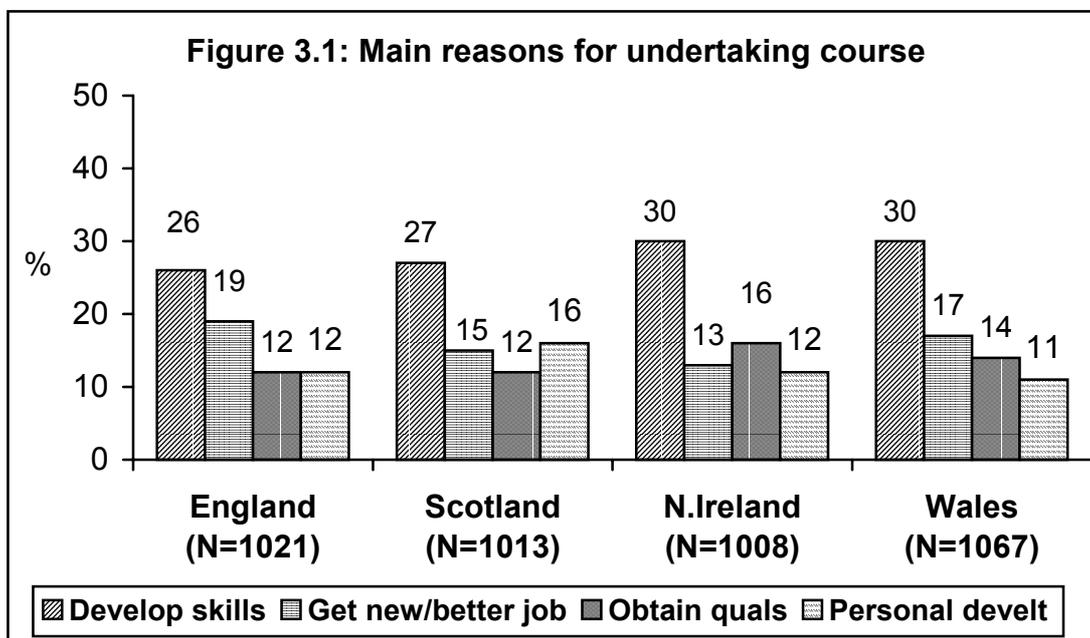
3.32 It is difficult to draw any conclusions from these differences, or to conclude why differences are apparent between these groups in some countries but not in others.

Main reasons for undertaking ILA-supported learning

3.33 Redeemers gave a wide range of reasons for undertaking the learning supported by their Individual Learning Account, but the most frequently mentioned main reasons were, in order of popularity:

- to develop new skills;
- to get a new or better job;
- to obtain qualifications;
- personal development.

3.34 Responses given by non-redeemers showed little variation from the redeemer responses shown at **Figure 3.1** below. The percentages shown do not add up to 100 as only the most frequently mentioned reasons are given.



3.35 There were indications that some members of the key target groups had slightly differing reasons for undertaking the learning supported by their Individual Learning Account. Some of these differences were only apparent in one country, but trends that were identified within two or more countries were as follows:

- a greater proportion of the **unemployed** cited “getting a job”;
- a greater proportion of **non-teaching school staff** cited “to succeed at work”;
- a greater proportion of **labour market returners** cited “to obtain qualifications”;
- a lower proportion of **21-30 year olds** and the **unemployed** cited “to develop skills.”

Learning supported by Individual Learning Accounts

Form of learning undertaken

3.36 We also asked redeemers what form of learning they were undertaking with support from their Individual Learning Account. Individual Learning Accounts are clearly supporting learning via a wide range of delivery methods, and redeemers' responses are outlined in **Table 3.7** below.

	England (N = 1021)	Scotland (N = 1013)	N.Ireland (N = 1008)	Wales (N = 1067)
Further Educ.college course	27	16	18	32
Part-time Higher Education	9	9	14	15
Block study/short course	17	18	20	22
ICT learning centre	21	16	34	12
Distance learning	11	22	6	6
Open learning package	4	9	4	2
Delivered at the workplace	1	3	1	1
Correspondence course	5	4	2	2
Other	5	3	1	8

3.37 It is interesting to note that 9% of redeemers stated that they were undertaking a part-time Higher Education course in England, yet this form of learning is not eligible for Individual Learning Account support in that country. One reason for this may be that, as part-time Higher Education is eligible within the other countries, ILAC staff may have overlooked the fact that the eligibility criteria differ in England. This issue is worthy of further investigation though as the current system is allowing individuals to gain funding for ineligible courses.

3.38 There are clearly variations between the take-up of some forms of learning across the four countries but it is difficult to ascribe any particular reasons for this. One anecdotal suggestion for the higher percentage of redeemers accessing courses through Further Education colleges in Wales was that there are fewer private training providers in that country.

Qualifications being worked towards

3.39 Redeemers were asked to identify which of a range of possible qualification levels they were working towards with support from their Individual Learning Account. We have gathered their responses together into NVQ levels (or equivalent) but these are approximations as, in a number of cases, it was difficult to identify the exact level from the data provided. A number of respondents stated that they were working towards more than one level of qualification and therefore the numbers shown do not always add up to 100%. Also, as can be seen in **Table 3.8** below, between 31% and 49% of respondents said that their course did not fit into any of the classifications suggested to them.

NVQ/SVQ level	England (N = 1021)	Scotland (N = 1013)	N. Ireland (N = 1008)	Wales (N = 1067)
Level 5 and equivalent	1	2	1	3
Level 4 and equivalent	14	25	16	17
Level 3 and equivalent	7	2	4	6
Level 2 and equivalent	7	3	1	5
Level 1 and equivalent	20	10	18	11
Other	37	32	49	31
No qualification	2	9	2	14
Don't know	14	14	10	9

The percentages given in the above table are approximations only.

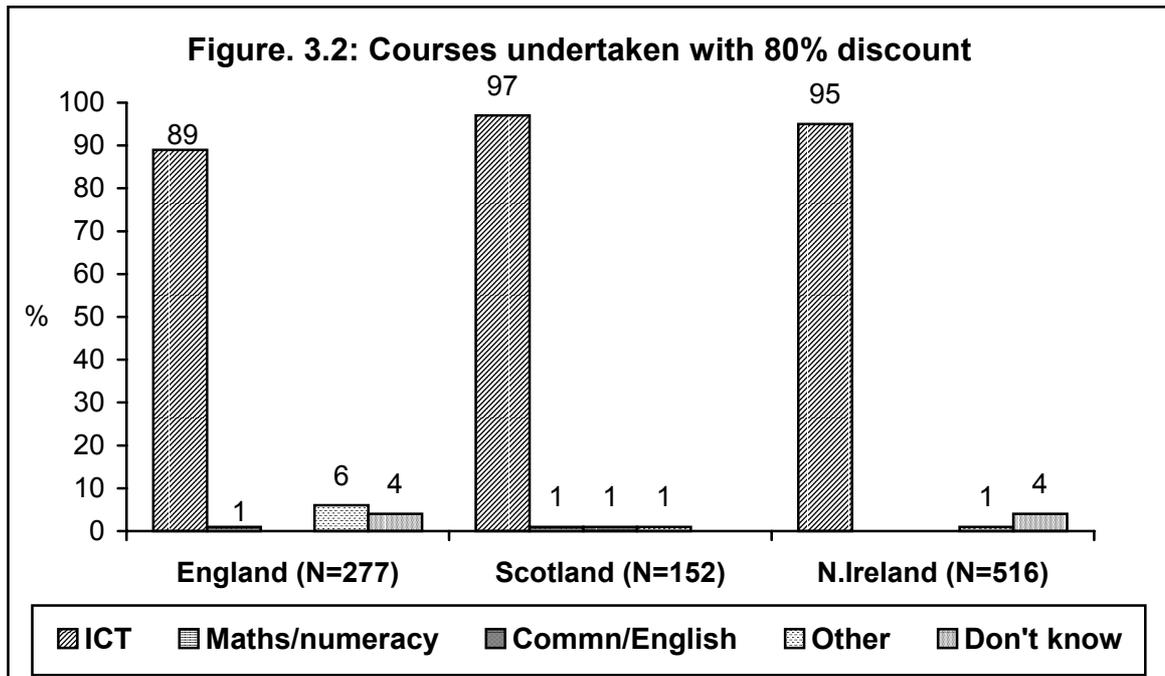
3.40 As can be seen from **Table 3.8** above, some significant differences are apparent between the four countries in relation to the qualifications that redeemers are working towards with support from their Individual Learning Account. For instance:

- one-quarter of respondents in Scotland stated that they were working towards a qualification at SVQ/NVQ Level 4 or equivalent, a proportion which was at least 8 percentage points higher than for each of the other countries;
- only 2% of respondents in England and Northern Ireland stated that their course would not result in any form of qualification, whereas the figure was 9% for Scotland and 14% for Wales.

3.41 This research cannot identify any particular reasons for these variations, but it may be worthy of further consideration and discussion between each of the four countries.

Individuals accessing the 80% discount

3.42 We had intended to make contact with 1,349 individuals who were in receipt of an 80% course discount across England, Scotland and Northern Ireland where the 80% discount had been introduced in September 2000. Wales was not included in this part of the survey as the 80% discount was not introduced there until January 2001.



3.43 MORI Telephone Surveys (MTS) contacted 1,349 individuals who were listed on Capita's database as being in receipt of an 80% discount. Of those contacted, only 945 agreed that this was the discount they were receiving and it is these respondents that have been used to inform the analysis of 80% account holders given below.

3.44 A possible explanation for this misunderstanding emerged during our consultations with providers as many said that they had explained Individual Learning Accounts in terms of the amount of money that they could provide rather than in terms of a percentage discount as many people found this easier to understand.

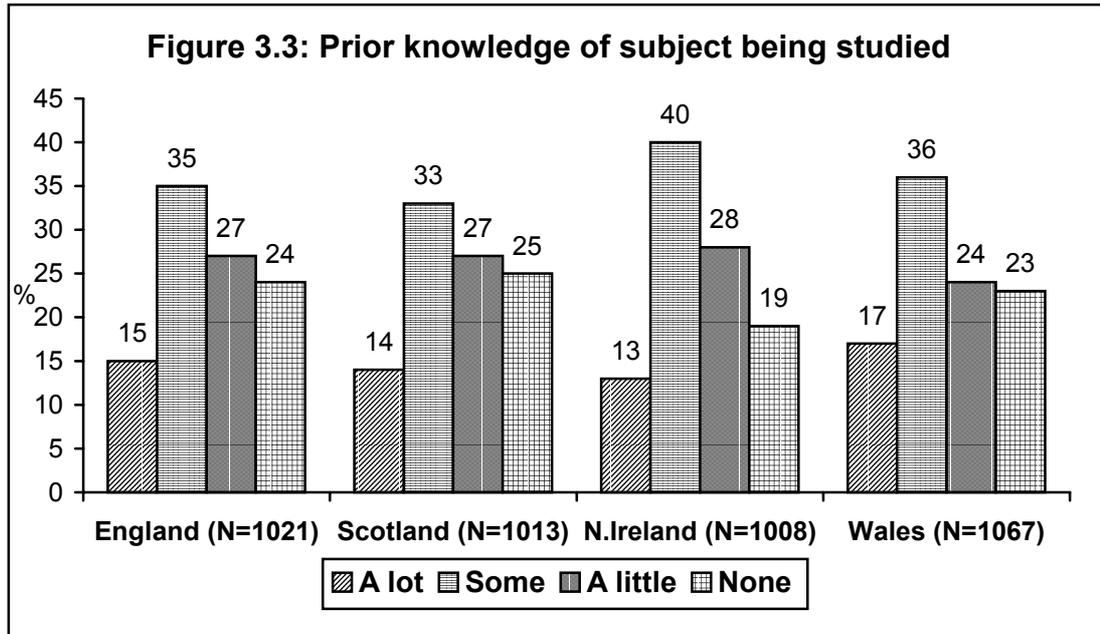
3.45 During their telephone interviews with individuals receiving an 80% discount, MORI Telephone Surveys (MTS) asked if the individual had accessed:

- an "introductory Information Technology/ICT course";
- an "introductory Numeracy/Maths" course (England and Scotland only);
- an "introductory Communication/English course" (Scotland only).

- 3.46 The use of the word “introductory” led to a high proportion of respondents stating that they were not on one of the listed courses as they perceived the IT course that they were attending to be at a higher level e.g. European Computer Driving Licence.
- 3.47 The “other” category shown in **Figure 3.2** reflects the individuals who were receiving 80% discounts for ineligible courses – examples given by respondents included plumbing, police promotion examinations, feng shui and crystal healing. These findings were confirmed by a small number of providers who stated that they were aware of providers who were claiming an 80% discount for ineligible courses.
- 3.48 Irrespective of this, it is clear that the vast majority of those receiving an 80% discount were participating in Information Technology/ICT courses.
- 3.49 The 80% discount was allocated to “introductory” courses with the intention that these courses would be accessed by individuals with lower skill levels. In reality, the profile of 80% discount holders almost exactly mirrored the overall proportions of redeemers with and without qualifications as shown at **Table 3.6**. Similarly, the profile of qualifications previously obtained by 80% discount holders is very similar to the profile shown at **Table 3.6**.
- 3.50 The profile of redeemers receiving an 80% discount, and the feedback that they gave to questions raised during the telephone interview, were similar to those of other redeemers with the only noticeable differences being that:
- a slightly higher proportion of 80% discount holders were unemployed (14%);
 - a lower proportion of 80% discount holders had a lot of prior knowledge of the subject that they were studying with support from their Individual Learning Account (11%);
 - a higher proportion were undertaking a course that cost between £100 and £499 (71%);
 - a higher proportion indicated that they would not have been able to pay for their course without the support of their Individual Learning Account, indicating that there are lower levels of deadweight amongst people receiving an 80% discount.
- 3.51 The above percentages relate to redeemers within the 80% discount sample which covered England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Prior knowledge

3.52 Up to a quarter of redeemers stated that they had **no prior knowledge** of the subject(s) being studied, reinforcing the view that Individual Learning Accounts are tending to attract lifelong learners rather than individuals with no previous experiences of learning.



Deadweight

3.53 We asked redeemers a series of questions to help with the identification of deadweight, which meant, in this case, the proportion of redeemers who would have undertaken the learning without support from their Individual Learning Account. These questions were not intended to provide statistically robust information relating to deadweight, but to provide approximate indications.

3.54 MORI Telephone Surveys (MTS) interviewers therefore asked redeemers for their responses to the following statements:

- **“Without the ILA I would not have been able to pay for my course”**
- **“I would have chosen to take the course even without ILA funding”**
- **“The ILA helped to fund a course that I was already planning to undertake”**

- **“The ILA has increased the training/learning options open to me.”**

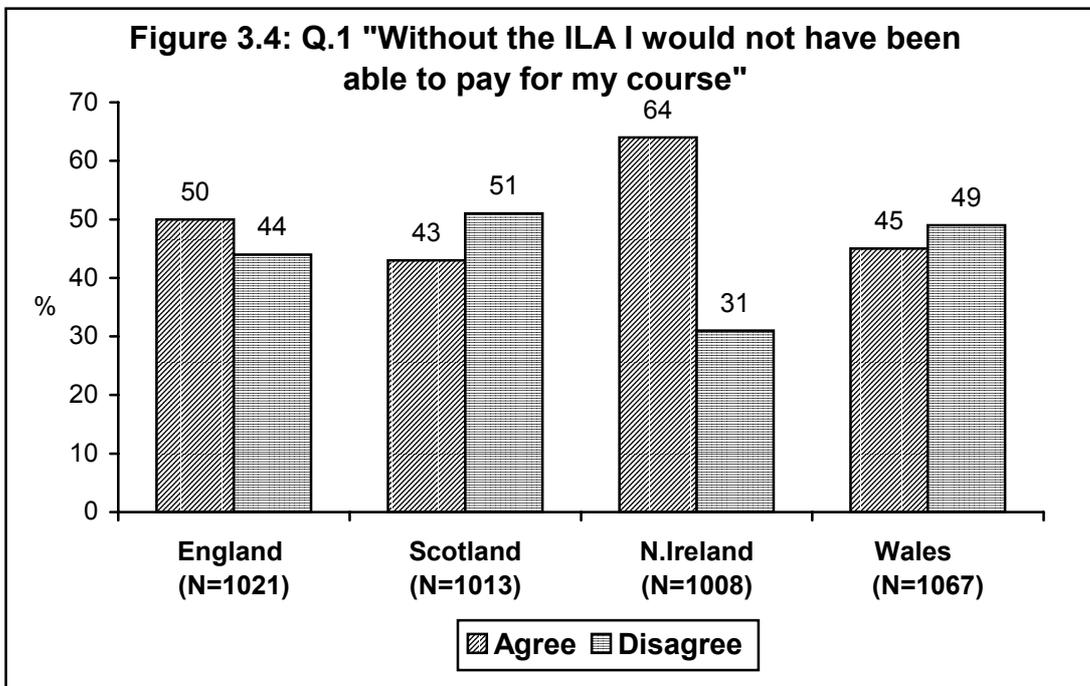
3.55 For each of these statements, redeemers were asked whether they:

- strongly agreed;
- fairly agreed;
- neither agreed nor disagreed;
- fairly disagreed; or
- strongly disagreed.

3.56 The first two and last two categories shown above have been combined for reporting purposes in **Figure 3.4** below with the “neither agreed nor disagreed” category omitted. Responses given by redeemers in England, Scotland and Wales were broadly similar but there appeared to be a lower level of deadweight in Northern Ireland. Details are provided below on the responses given to each of the four statements.

Q1. “Without the ILA I would not have been able to pay for my course”

3.57 The proportions agreeing with this statement varied between each of the four countries. Details are shown in **Figure 3.4** below, and indicate that the highest levels of deadweight are in Scotland and Wales, with the lowest level of deadweight in Northern Ireland.



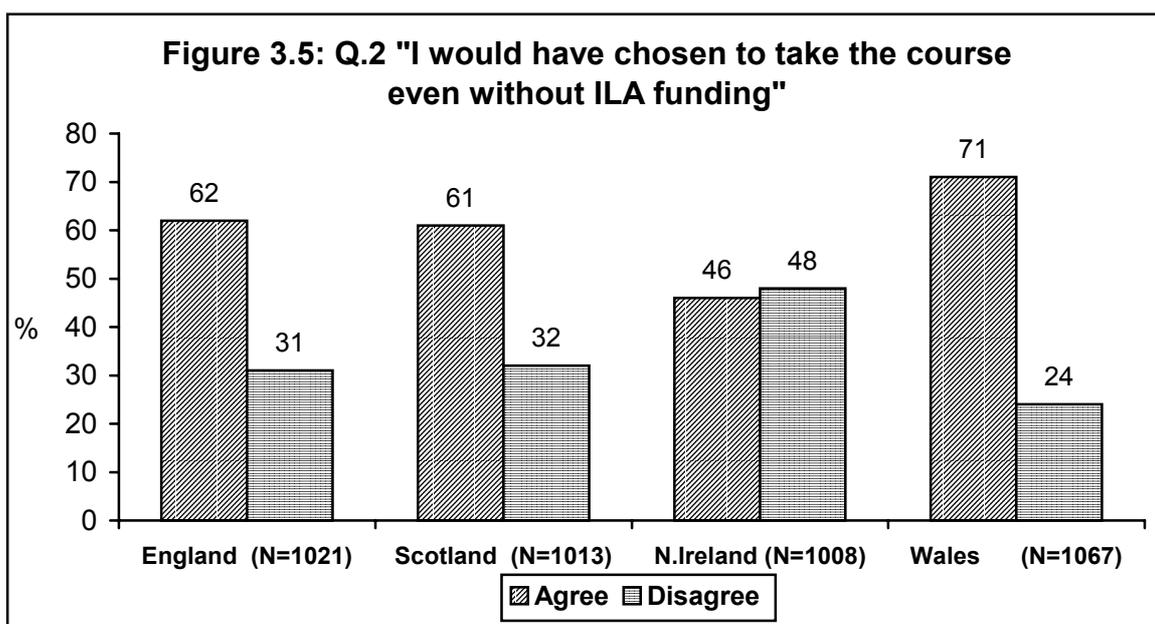
The first two and last two categories in para. 3.55 have been combined in the figure above - nor do they add up to 100 as the “neither agreed nor disagreed” category has been omitted.

3.58 Groups who were more likely to state that they could have paid for their course without Individual Learning Account support included those in social grades A and B, those not receiving an 80% discount and those contributing £150 or more towards their course costs.

3.59 Groups who were less likely to have paid for their course without Individual Learning Account funding support included those in social grades D and E, those with no qualifications, those receiving an 80% discount and those who were unemployed.

Q.2 "I would have chosen to take the course even without ILA funding"

3.60 Responses to this statement appear to confirm that there are lower levels of deadweight in Northern Ireland as fewer people in that country strongly or fairly agreed with it. The highest level of deadweight, as gauged from responses to this question, appears to be in Wales.



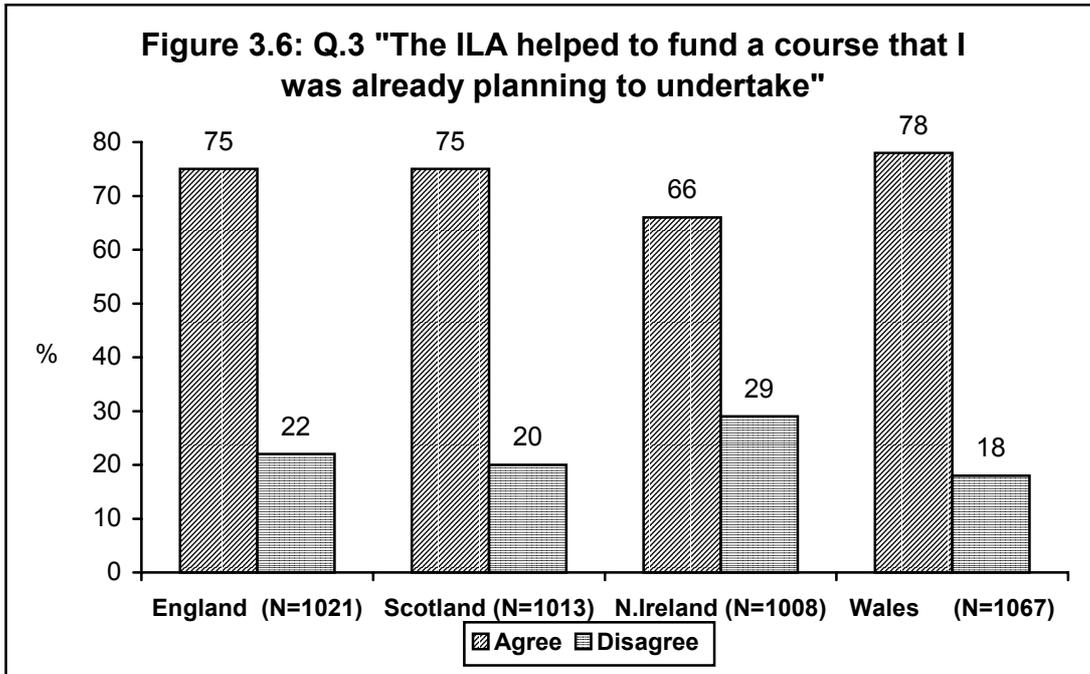
The first two and last two categories in para. 3.55 have been combined in the figure above - nor do they add up to 100 as the "neither agreed nor disagreed" category has been omitted.

3.61 Groups who were more likely to have chosen to take the course even without Individual Learning Account funding include those not receiving an 80% discount and those contributing £150 or more towards their course costs.

3.62 Groups who were less likely to have chosen to take the course without Individual Learning Account funding include those receiving an 80% discount, the unemployed and those contributing less than £50 towards their course costs.

Q.3 "The ILA helped to fund a course that I was already planning to undertake"

3.63 Again, responses to this statement were broadly similar between England, Scotland and Wales with a lower level of deadweight apparent in Northern Ireland.



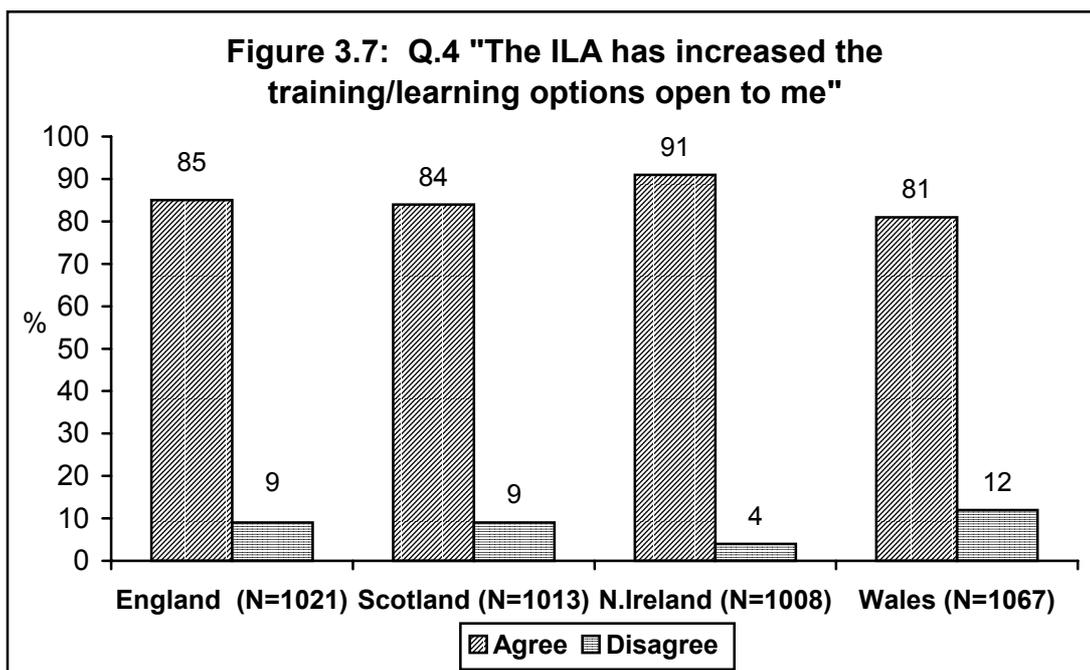
The first two and last two categories in para. 3.55 have been combined in the figure above - nor do they add up to 100 as the "neither agreed nor disagreed" category has been omitted.

3.64 Groups who were more likely to indicate that their Individual Learning Account was helping to fund a course that they were already planning to undertake varied between each country but often included those contributing £150 or more towards their course costs and those not receiving an 80% discount.

3.65 Groups who were more likely to indicate that they had not been planning to undertake the course included those receiving an 80% discount and those who were unemployed.

Q. 4 "The ILA has increased the training/learning options open to me"

3.66 A slightly higher level of deadweight is indicated by responses to the above statement in England, Scotland and Wales. Once again, responses given by redeemers in Northern Ireland imply that there is a lower level of deadweight in that country.



The first two and last two categories in para. 3.55 have been combined in the figure above - nor do they add up to 100 as the "neither agreed nor disagreed" category has been omitted.

3.67 Those groups indicating that the Individual Learning Account had increased their training/learning options varied between each country but most often included those in social grades D and E.

3.68 Those groups indicating that the Individual Learning Account had not increased their training/learning options again varied between each country but tended to include those in social grades A and B and those contributing £150 or more towards their course costs.

3.69 As can be seen from **Figures 3.4 to 3.7** above, a variety of responses were given to questions about deadweight, with responses to Q.4 "*The ILA has increased the training/learning options open to me*" being significantly different to those given to the first three questions. If one takes responses to deadweight questions 1 to 3 as providing a range of potential deadweight within each country, the following picture emerges:

- **England:** 44 - 75%;
- **Scotland:** 51 - 75%;
- **N. Ireland:** 31 - 66%;
- **Wales:** 49 - 78%.

3.70 We regard the responses given by redeemers to Q1: "Without the ILA I would not have been able to pay for my course" as providing the most accurate indication of deadweight with between 31% and 51% of respondents stating that they could have paid for their course without an Individual Learning Account.

3.71 These levels of deadweight are not surprising when you consider that Individual Learning Accounts are not means-tested and are therefore open to everyone over the age of 18-19.

Course costs and contributions

Cost of learning supported by Individual Learning Accounts

3.72 We asked redeemers for the total cost of the course that they were undertaking with support from their Individual Learning Account. Responses to this question are set out in **Table 3.9** below. In all countries, except for Northern Ireland, at least half of all respondents were undertaking a course that cost less than £200.

Table 3.9: Total cost of learning undertaken (%)				
	England (N = 1021)	Scotland (N = 1013)	N. Ireland (N = 1008)	Wales (N = 1067)
Less than £50	3	5	2	3
£51-99	16	12	11	16
£100-199	37	33	24	37
£200-499	22	31	39	25
£500+	15	13	16	13
Don't know	6	6	8	7

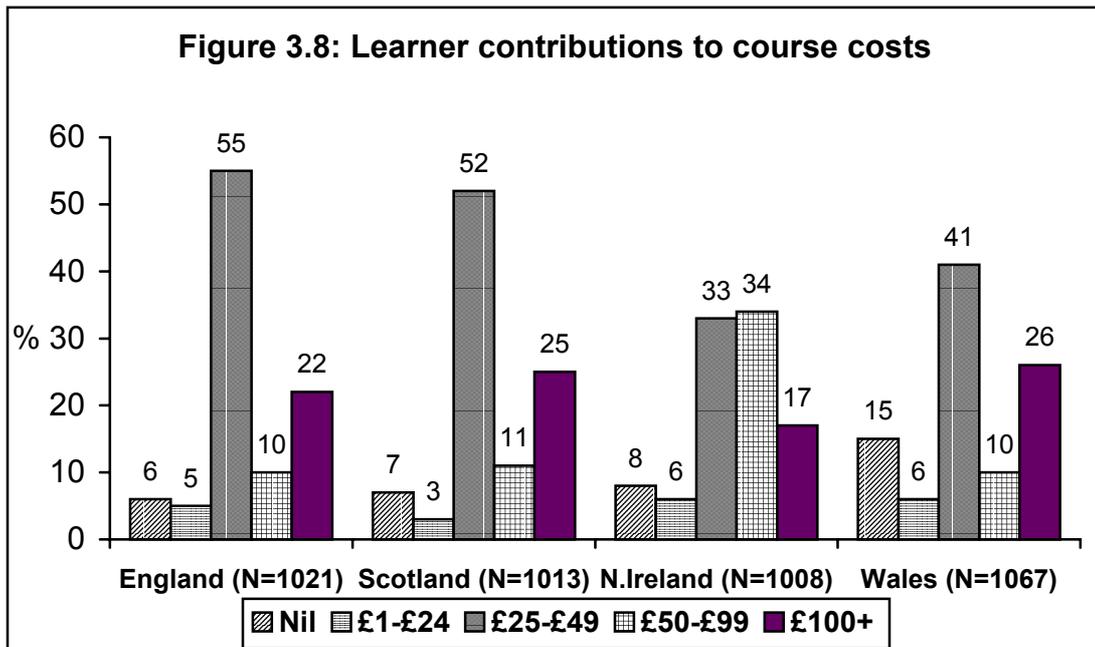
3.73 Some variations are apparent between the four countries, with some of the most significant being in Northern Ireland where:

- fewer redeemers were undertaking a course that cost between £100 and £199;
- a higher proportion of redeemers were undertaking a course that cost between £200 and £499.

3.74 It is difficult to ascribe reasons for these variations as this was not an issue covered by this research, but it may be worthy of debate between the four countries.

Learner contributions to course costs

3.75 The majority of redeemers were paying less than £50 towards their course costs, except in Northern Ireland where the proportion contributing over £50 was slightly higher. The figures shown in **Table 3.8** below do not add up to 100 as 2% of the redeemers in each country could not remember how much they had paid towards their course costs.



3.76 As can be seen from **Figure 3.8**, a significant proportion of redeemers had contributed less than the required £25 towards the learning supported by their Individual Learning Account. The proportion stating that they had contributed between £1-24 was almost identical in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland but was significantly higher in Wales.

3.77 During consultations it became clear that some providers were not fully aware of the regulations surrounding the individual contribution to course costs. This is clearly an issue in all four home countries but appears to be more widespread in Wales.

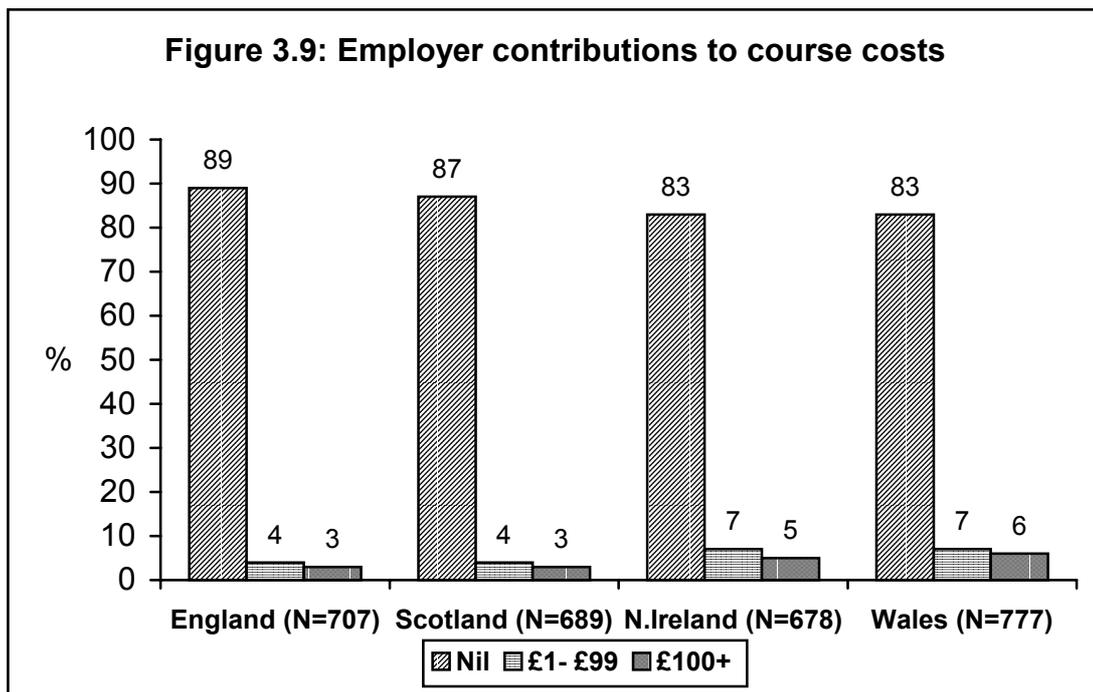
“We’ve had some students on the European Computer Driving Licence course who’ve approached their employer to say that, as they are contributing £175 towards the £200 course cost [i.e. the £150 incentive plus the 80% discount] could the employer pay the remaining £25? They tend to say yes.” (Private training provider, Wales).

“The Council has been paying the £25 so their employees don’t have to contribute anything towards their course costs.” (Local Government training provider, Wales).

Employer contributions to course costs

3.78 The majority of employed redeemers indicated that their employer was not contributing to the costs of their ILA-supported learning although, as can be seen in **Table 3.9** below, the proportion of employers who were contributing was slightly higher in Northern Ireland and Wales. Please note that the figures shown do not add up to 100% for each country as between 4% and 5% of redeemers said that they did not know if their employer had made any contribution to their ILA-supported learning.

3.79 We asked providers if employers tended to be contributing towards certain types of course being undertaken with the support of Individual Learning Accounts. Those providers who were aware of employers making such contributions, commented that they tended to be more interested in ICT courses and health and safety-related courses.

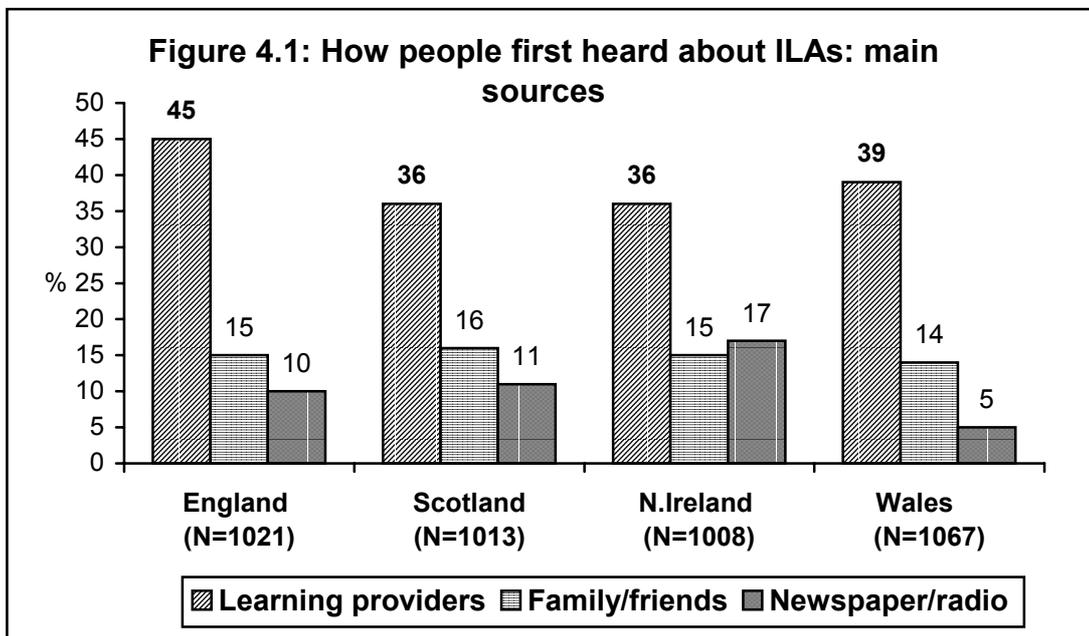


- 3.80 There appeared to be confusion amongst a significant minority of providers over the impact, and implications, of employer contributions. Some were aware of the regulation stating that the discount only applied to the course costs that remained following any employer contribution – this had discouraged some providers from marketing Individual Learning Accounts as they felt that employer contributions only “complicated matters.”
- 3.81 Other providers appeared to be unaware of this regulation in that they were marketing their IT courses to previous business clients, stating that the course would cost £200 per person and that £175 of that amount could be funded through an Individual Learning Account.

4 ACCESSING AND USING AN INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNT

Marketing

- 4.1 Individuals were asked how they had first heard about Individual Learning Accounts. The most common source was learning providers, who were mentioned by over one-third of respondents in each country. The other most common sources, although with significantly fewer responses, were family and friends and newspaper or radio advertisements.



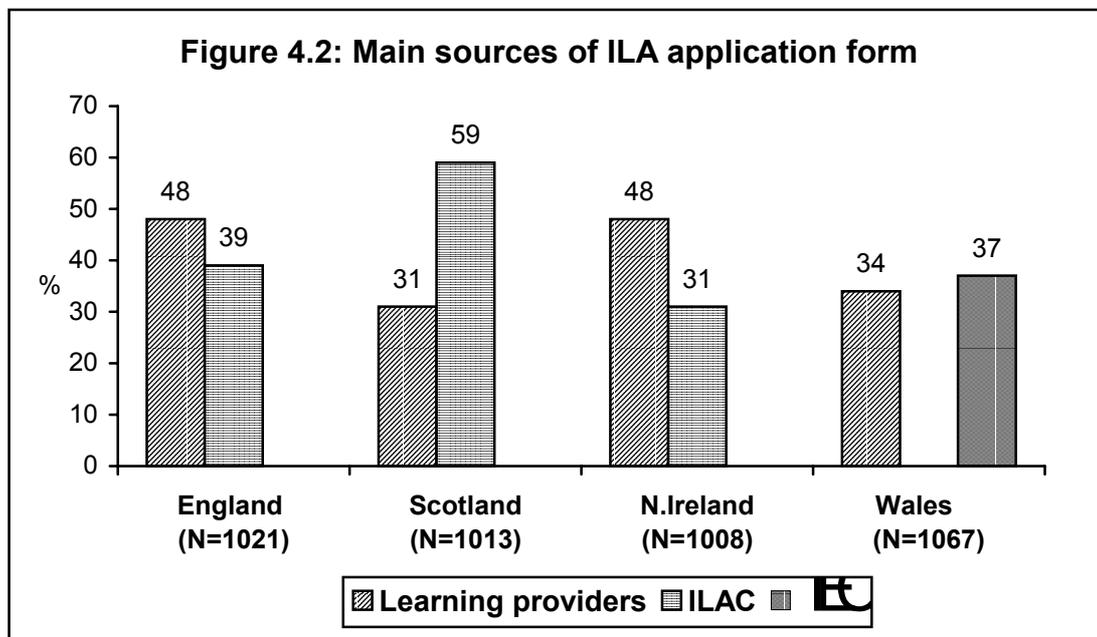
Percentages do not add up to 100 as only the most frequently mentioned reasons are given.

- 4.2 Learning providers had tended to market Individual Learning Accounts by handing out leaflets during admissions sessions, talking to potential learners about the discounts available and/or adding a brief mention in course prospectuses. Very few had undertaken targeted marketing – those who had undertaken targeted marketing had sent marketing literature to companies who had previously sent employees onto their courses.
- 4.3 This helps to explain why the vast majority of Individual Learning Account holders contacted through this survey possessed qualifications and had undertaken some form of learning since leaving school. If the main marketing source is learning providers, and they say that they are marketing Individual Learning Accounts to learners who approach them to enquire about courses, it is not surprising that the majority of redeemers are already lifelong learners.

4.4 A small number of providers asked us where they could access marketing leaflets on Individual Learning Accounts. Others reported that they knew of providers who were marketing Individual Learning Accounts “unethically” by promising the £150 incentive to potential learners within their marketing literature.

Application form

4.5 Learning providers emerged as a major source of the Individual Learning Account application form in each of the four home countries, but particularly so in England and Northern Ireland, as shown in **Figure 4.2**. Understandably, Training and Enterprise Councils emerged as the most common source in Wales where they – at the time of this survey – were handling the application process.



Percentages do not add up to 100 as only the most frequently mentioned reasons are given.

4.6 More surprisingly, the Individual Learning Account Centre (ILAC) was a far more frequently mentioned source in Scotland than in England and Northern Ireland and this may be partly explained by the close working links that have been established in that country between the ILAC, Scottish University for Industry (Sufi) and LearnDirect.

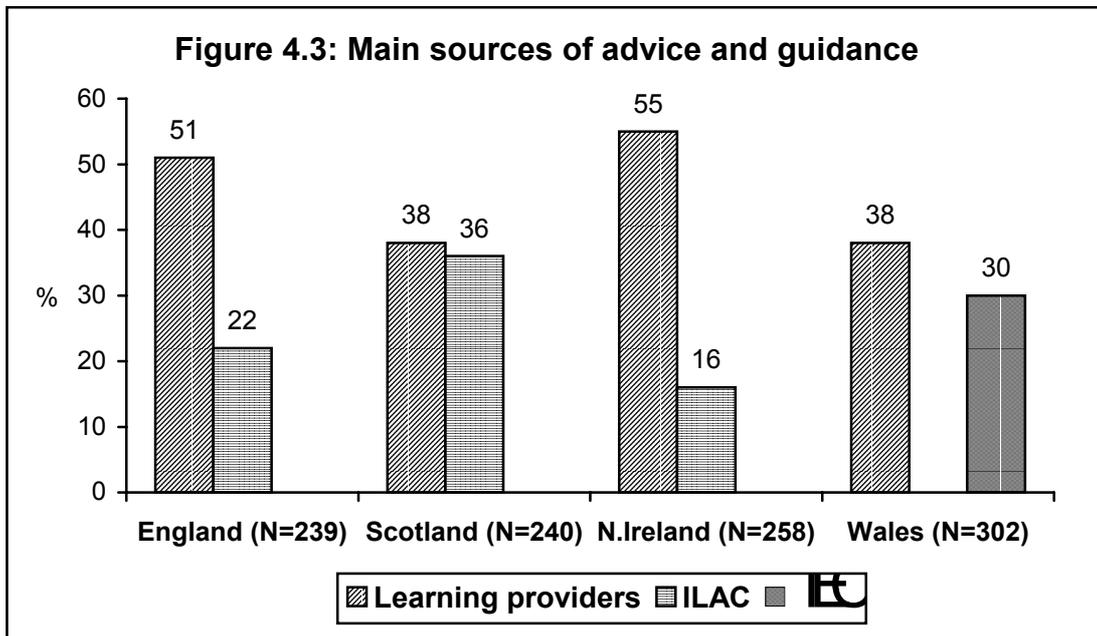
4.7 Between 94% and 99% of respondents said that they found it very or fairly easy to complete their ILA application form, although the proportion experiencing some difficulty was slightly higher in Wales with 3% of Welsh respondents experiencing problems compared with a maximum of 1% within each of the other three countries.

Advice and guidance

4.8 Approximately three-quarters of redeemers in each country stated that they had not required advice or guidance to use their Individual Learning Account. Those respondents more likely to state that they had required advice or guidance were:

- those with no qualifications (England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales);
- those aged 51 or over (England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales);
- labour market returners (Scotland and Northern Ireland);
- those aged 31 or under (England);
- non-redeemers (Wales).

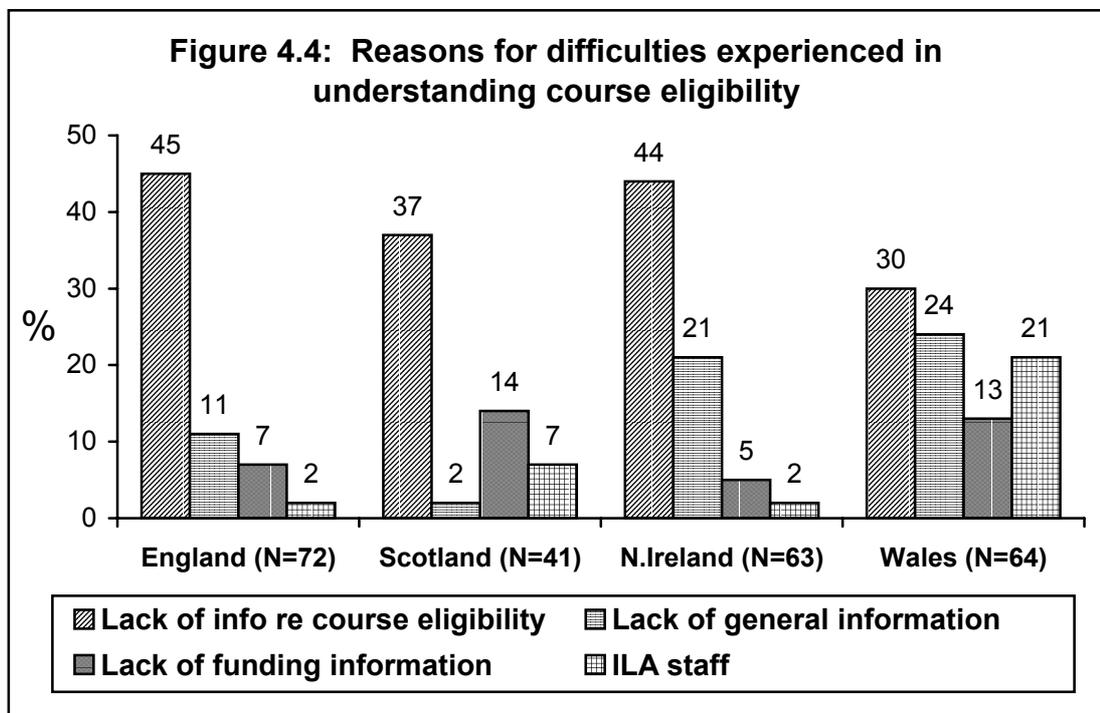
4.9 Learning providers again emerged as a major source of advice and guidance. The other most frequently mentioned sources were the Individual Learning Account Centre for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland and, for Wales, the (TECs). Main sources of advice and guidance are outlined in **Figure 4.3** below.



Percentages do not add up to 100 as only the most frequently mentioned reasons are given.

Course eligibility

- 4.10 Between 81% and 86% of the respondents in each country said that they had found it easy to understand which courses were eligible for Individual Learning Account support, with between 4% and 7% experiencing some difficulties. The remaining percentages of respondents said that they could not remember if they had experienced any difficulties or not.
- 4.11 We asked the redeemers who had experienced problems what had caused them the most difficulty, and the key areas are outlined in **Figure 4.4** below. (Please note the percentages given should be treated with some caution due to the small sample sizes).

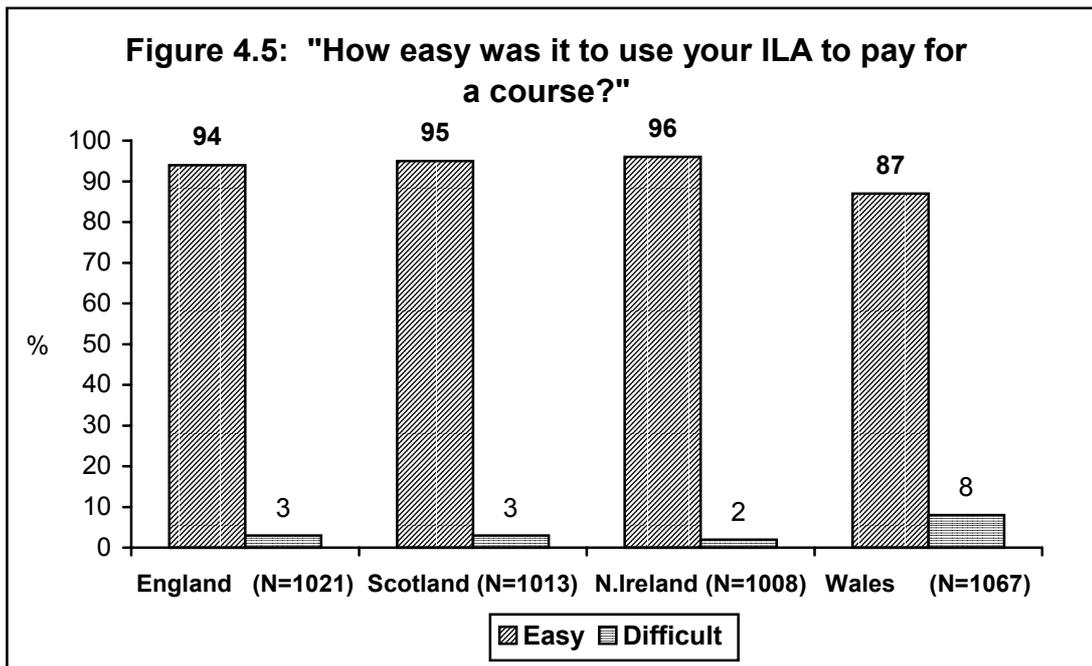


Percentages do not add up to 100 as only the most frequently mentioned reasons are given.

- 4.12 As can be seen, the most frequently cited reason in each country, although less so in Wales, was a lack of, or confusing, information about course eligibility. A lack of general information regarding Individual Learning Accounts was the second most frequently cited reason in Northern Ireland and Wales. A significant minority of Welsh respondents also stated that they had experienced difficulties caused by staff administering Individual Learning Accounts.

Using an Individual Learning Account to pay for learning

4.13 Between 87% and 96% of redeemers indicated that they had found it very or fairly easy to use their Individual Learning Account to pay for learning. However, as can be seen from **Figure 4.5** below, the proportion stating that they had experienced some difficulties was higher in Wales (at 8%) than it was in the countries operating their system through the Individual Learning Account Centre where 2%-3% of redeemers had experienced some problems.



Percentages do not add up to 100 as they do not include those who said that they found it "neither easy nor difficult"

Views on service provided by the Individual Learning Account Centre

4.14 A series of questions were asked of redeemers and non-redeemers in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland to obtain their views on the service provided by the Individual Learning Account Centre. Providers in England and Northern Ireland were also asked for their views of the provider registration and claims service – these are outlined in the following section.

4.15 It is worth bearing in mind that many of the respondents would have opened their Individual Learning Account, or registered as a course provider, as far back as September 2000 when the Individual Learning Account Centre was first established. Certainly, many of those providers who had been in contact with the Centre on a regular basis commented that the service had improved over recent months.

Individual Learning Account holders' responses

4.16 The questions asked of Individual Learning Account holders were:

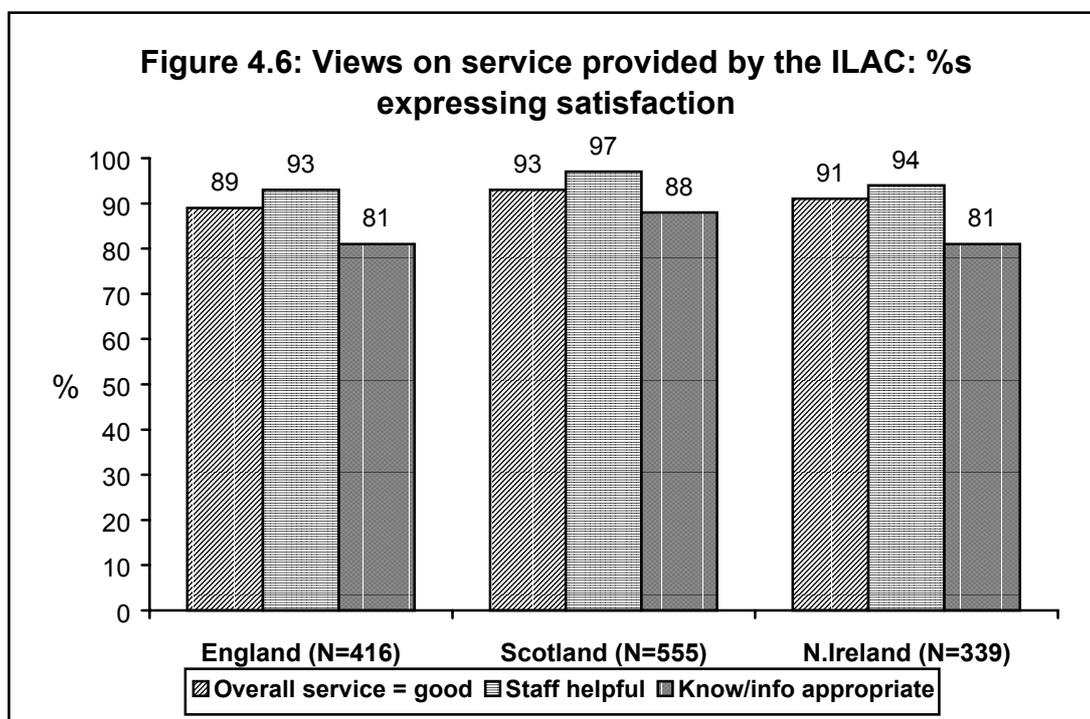
- a) "How would you rate their [ILAC staff] **helpfulness**?"
- b) "How would you rate their **knowledge** of Individual Learning Accounts and the **amount of information** that they gave you?"
- c) "Did you feel that the **pace of their conversations** with you was appropriate?"
- d) "Did you feel that the ILAC staff **listened** to what you had to say?"
- e) "Were the ILAC staff **polite and friendly/impolite and unfriendly**/other?"
- f) "How would you rate the **security measures** used when you contact the ILAC for information on your ILA account?"
- g) "What is your **overall impression** of the service provided by the ILAC?"

4.17 There was a great deal of similarity in the responses given by redeemers within the countries covered by the Individual Learning Account Centre, with a high level of satisfaction being evident. The main areas of general interest have been summarised below – more detailed tables have been provided within the separate reports prepared for each country. (In **Figure 4.6** "expressing satisfaction" refers to respondents who said that the service provided was either very/fairly helpful).

4.18 The numbers expressing dissatisfaction with these aspects of the service provided by the Individual Learning Account Centre were very low – for instance:

- 1%-2% said that the overall service was fairly or very poor;
- 1%-2% said that the staff were fairly or very unhelpful;
- 2%-5% rated staff knowledge of ILAs, and the amount of information provided, as fairly or very poor.

4.19 Similar percentages said that they could not make a statement either way – for instance, that they found the overall service/staff knowledge to be neither good nor poor/ that the staff were neither helpful nor unhelpful.



Provider responses

4.20 A significant minority of providers expressed reservations about the support provided by the Individual Learning Account Centre and the information/advice provided – although, as stated previously, many of these providers had not had much contact with the ILAC since the start of the Autumn term. Concerns expressed by providers mainly related to:

- delays in receiving formal confirmation of registration;
- delays in some Individual Learning Account applicants receiving their account card and number, leading to delays in their course start date;
- confusion regarding the paperwork required to register as a provider, and annoyance with duplication required if they initially register via the website:

“Had to re-register by post after registering on-line. This is a waste of time – you should only have to register once.” (Private training provider, Scotland).

- confusion over course eligibility (particularly those eligible for the £150 incentive and/or 20% discount);

- website operation e.g. slow operation; frequently “crashes” users out; not easy to access details on individuals that the provider has entered onto the database:

“The website could be a lot quicker – it takes too long to key in student details. Getting more information on the number of students enrolled and registered per college would be good.” (Further Education College, England)

“Sometimes Northern Ireland addresses are registered by the computer as England addresses because of the similar postcodes. People are then unable to access the full discount available to Northern Ireland learners.” (Further Education College, Northern Ireland)

4.21 Respondents in Scotland appeared to be even more positive than in the other two countries covered by the Centre but, as the differences amounted to a few percentage points in each case, it is not possible to confirm that this is indicative of anything significant.

4.22 As mentioned previously, some providers reported that other providers/ individuals were able to access Individual Learning Account funding for courses that were not eligible. Suggestions included:

- providing clear and easily accessible information on individual course eligibility:

“More information for providers on the rules would be good.” (Community Centre, Northern Ireland)

- tightening up the application process/provider registration process to ensure that fraudulent claims became easier for the Centre to identify.

“I expected an audit of course results and was surprised that there wasn’t one. The system is very open to abuse by both learners and providers.” (Private training provider, Scotland)

Views on service provided by the Welsh Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs)

4.23 The management of the Individual Learning Account process has now passed from the four Welsh Training and Enterprise Councils to ELWa. ELWa has four locations that are based upon the TEC areas/premises and is building upon the processes used to administer Individual Learning Accounts.

4.24 As Training and Enterprise Councils no longer exist – and the number of provider interviews varied between TEC areas - we have not provided feedback on a TEC by TEC basis but have summarised key issues emerging from Welsh providers.

4.25 The following views also need to be considered in light of the fact that many of the providers were offering courses that had started in September 2000. Their experiences, therefore, related to a period 6 months previously - some providers whose courses had more recent start dates commented that procedures had improved over recent months.

4.26 Issues raised by providers in Wales included:

- the loss of significant numbers of Individual Learning Account application forms - e.g. 25-30 in three providers' cases – in one TEC area. This had led to delayed start dates for some learners and, in a small number of cases, in some learners being refused Individual Learning Account support;
- conflicting advice, and no responses received from TEC staff, relating to queries raised:

“I speak to a different person every time and no follow-up is made as there is no consistency in the link person. I'd like to have a named contact and for whoever it is to respond quickly to my queries rather than telling me that the information is on a website.” (Private training provider, Wales);

- confusion over course eligibility (particularly those eligible for the £150 incentive and/or 20% discount);
- the need for a website service similar to that offered by the Individual Learning Account Centre.

5 FEEDBACK FROM COURSE PROVIDERS

- 5.1 This section contains feedback gained through telephone interviews with 100 providers spread across England, Northern Ireland and Wales. Their comments relating to the administration of Individual Learning Accounts by the ILAC, or by the Training and Enterprise Councils in Wales, were included in the previous section.

Impact of Individual Learning Accounts upon course provision and content

- 5.2 Very few providers reported any impact upon the number of courses provided – the only exceptions to this were some specialist ICT course providers who had increased the number of courses on offer due to increased demand. There were fewer reported effects in Wales, but this was expected as the 80% discount was only introduced there in January 2001. No provider reported any changes to course content as a result of the introduction of Individual Learning Accounts.
- 5.3 A small number of providers commented that the IT courses eligible for the 80% discount were not the ones required to reduce IT skills shortages.

Impact of Individual Learning Accounts upon student numbers/types

- 5.4 Most providers reported little impact upon the number or type of students coming onto their courses. Where there had been a noticeable impact in numbers, this had been experienced by providers of IT courses. More students were expected in the future, but there was a general view that many people had not been aware of Individual Learning Account funding support when applying for courses that started in September 2000.
- 5.5 There was little evidence from providers of changes in the type of students accessing courses because of Individual Learning Accounts. This may be due to the fact that it is often the provider who is informing potential learners about this funding support when they attend the provider's premises for an initial interview.

“We tell people who come to the college to ask about courses.” (Further Education College, Northern Ireland).

Provider understanding of Individual Learning Account eligibility

- 5.6 A significant level of misunderstanding and confusion became evident during our consultations with providers, particularly amongst those offering courses other than those eligible for an 80% discount. Some providers asked if we could provide a comprehensive list of courses that were/were not eligible for £150 incentives/20% discounts as they were uncertain about eligibility.
- 5.7 Some UK-wide providers were particularly confused and one reported that a course was eligible for funding in England but not in Wales. Others reported that they were aware of other providers who were claiming Individual Learning Account discounts for ineligible courses e.g. leisure/arts courses.
- 5.8 Some providers in Wales were confused about individual eligibility for Individual Learning Account support, and thought that unemployed people could not apply for Individual Learning Account funding. There have been a number of changes to individual eligibility in Wales and detailed information was due to be issued to coincide with the handover of Individual Learning Account management from Training and Enterprise Councils to ELWa.

Impact of Individual Learning Accounts upon provider administration

- 5.9 Providers with more than a few Individual Learning Account-supported individuals on their courses reported an increase in their administrative duties, particularly smaller providers who provided ICT courses that were eligible for 80% course discounts. A particular concern was the need to complete two forms at separate times. Further Education colleges appeared to be the most comfortable with the administrative requirements, as they tended to have staff whose major role was to handle course registrations and funding claims.

“It was a minefield at the start – it was very difficult to understand what was going on. Rules seemed to change all the time. One whole day per week has been needed to manage it.” (Further Education College, Northern Ireland).

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Conclusions that we feel to be of the greatest relevance to policy makers are summarised under Key Conclusions below.
- 6.2 Our detailed conclusions are outlined below under the following key headings:
- **Demographics;**
 - **Target groups;**
 - **Promotion;**
 - **Prior learning;**
 - **Administration of Individual Learning Accounts:**
 - Individual Learning Account Centre (England, Scotland and Northern Ireland)
 - Training & Enterprise Councils (Wales);
 - **Learning supported by Individual Learning Accounts;**
 - **Learner/employer contributions;**
 - **Deadweight.**

Key conclusions

- 6.3 Individual Learning Accounts are attracting a wide range of people but are particularly attractive to females, people who are in employment and individuals between 31 and 50 years of age.
- 6.4 Targeted marketing to key target groups has had little impact upon their presence amongst Individual Learning Account holders.
- 6.5 The profile of, and responses from, redeemers and non-redeemers are very similar indicating that there are no inherent obstacles to particular groups once they have opened their Individual Learning Account.
- 6.6 Where any key differences do occur in responses between each of the four countries, they often reflect the different systems in operation i.e. the Individual Learning Account Centre covering three countries and the Training & Enterprise Councils (and now ELWa) running the system in Wales.
- 6.7 The vast majority of Individual Learning Account holders were extremely positive about the service provided by the ILAC (England, Scotland, Northern Ireland) and TEC (Wales), although a higher proportion of course providers expressed some concerns.

- 6.8 A lower level of satisfaction was shown by respondents in Wales – this was particularly evident amongst course providers and also amongst non-redeemers.
- 6.9 Confusion was apparent amongst some providers – particularly those in Wales and those covering more than one country – with regard to course and individual eligibility for Individual Learning Account support.
- 6.10 The majority of Individual Learning Account holders receiving an 80% course discount were undertaking Information & Communication Technology (ICT) courses, with only 1% or lower participating in other eligible courses.
- 6.11 A small number of individuals were receiving discounts for ineligible courses.
- 6.12 A significant minority of individuals were not contributing the required amount towards their course costs, particularly in Wales.
- 6.13 Levels of deadweight were significantly lower in Northern Ireland, amongst individuals receiving an 80% course discount, the unemployed, those with no qualifications and people in social grades D and E.
- 6.14 Levels of deadweight were significantly higher amongst individuals contributing £150 or more towards their course costs, those not receiving an 80% discount and people in social grades A and B.
- 6.15 More detailed conclusions are provided below under the key headings listed at 6.1 above.

Demographics

- 6.16 As can be expected from an initiative which is available to most individuals over 18 or 19 years of age, respondents came from a wide range of backgrounds e.g. by employment status, previous learning, social grades and age groups. A higher proportion of Individual Learning Account holders were female, particularly so in Wales, and over half within each country were between 31 and 50 years of age.
- 6.17 There were few variations between the key characteristics of redeemers and non-redeemers in each country. This indicates that particular groups are not disadvantaged in any way by the systems for Individual Learning Account applications and use.

Target groups

- 6.18 National marketing of Individual Learning Accounts to key target groups has had little impact upon their presence amongst account holders.
- 6.19 In some cases, there was a larger proportion of individuals from key target groups in countries where they were not a target group than in some of the countries where they were.
- 6.20 Awareness of target groups appeared low amongst providers. Those providers who did mention them were not undertaking any specific marketing as there were no incentives for them to do so.

Promotion

- 6.21 Most providers were not undertaking any targeted marketing of Individual Learning Accounts and tended to advertise them to those individuals who enquired about training provision.
- 6.22 Promotion may be hindered by some providers' misunderstanding e.g. over course eligibility and, in a small number of cases, over the eligibility of unemployed people. This confusion/misunderstanding was heightened for those providers who covered more than one country by slightly varying course eligibility, individual eligibility and upper funding limits existing within each of the four home countries.
- 6.23 The majority of redeemers indicated that they had not experienced difficulties with understanding course eligibility criteria, but a slightly higher number of individuals accessing courses not eligible for the 80% discount – and non-redeemers – had experienced problems.
- 6.24 We did not question redeemers about their understanding of the long-term use of their account, but some providers indicated that some individuals did not understand that they could access Individual Learning Account funding on an annual basis.

Prior learning

- 6.25 Individual Learning Accounts are attracting new learners (ie. people who have not participated in learning over the last twelve months), and people with no prior knowledge of the subject that they are studying, but without pre-set targets it is difficult to assess whether these percentages are what each country is aiming for.
- 6.26 The research has shown that the majority of those accessing Individual Learning Accounts are not new learners, that they possessed some form of qualification prior to taking up an ILA and are those who are already actively considering further learning/training. This may, in part, result from learning providers being the most significant sources of information on Individual Learning Accounts, and not undertaking targeted marketing in most cases.

Administration of Individual Learning Accounts

England, Scotland and Northern Ireland

- 6.27 High levels of satisfaction were evident amongst redeemers and non-redeemers both with the service provided by Individual Learning Account Centre staff and the overall service provided by the Centre.
- 6.28 Providers expressed higher levels of dissatisfaction – these were mainly in relation to:
- website operation: seen to be slow and requiring duplication of input;
 - the amount of paperwork;
 - delays in processing individuals' applications and therefore delaying course start dates.
- 6.29 The application system operating through the Individual Learning Account Centre in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and the system operating in Wales, are enabling individuals and providers to access Individual Learning Account funding for ineligible courses.
- 6.30 The Individual Learning Account Centre database does not contain information required to monitor participation of some key target groups e.g. people with no qualifications.

6.31 Where the data did exist, it was incorrect in a significant number of cases. As this data is usually gained from the Individual Learning Account application form it may indicate that the questions are inappropriately worded.

Wales

6.32 Concerns about the Welsh system operating prior to the launch of ELWa focused upon:

- conflicting advice available from Training and Enterprise Council staff in each area;
- lack of follow-up telephone calls to providers when promised;
- loss of individual application forms, and processing delays.
- need for a provider website similar to that established by the Individual Learning Account Centre.

6.33 The processes currently in place appear to be allowing individuals and providers to access funding for ineligible courses.

Learning supported by Individual Learning Accounts

6.34 The vast majority of 80% redeemers were accessing IT courses with an extremely small number opting for introductory numeracy/maths courses (England and Scotland only) or introductory communication/English courses (Scotland only).

6.35 It appears that a small number of redeemers listed as 80% discount holders on the Individual Learning Account Centre database were undertaking ineligible courses e.g. feng shui; plumbing; accountancy.

6.36 A small number of providers also stated that they were aware of providers claiming the 80% discount for courses that they knew were ineligible for this level of Individual Learning Account discount, indicating that investigation needs to be undertaken into the existing application processes.

6.37 A significant minority of redeemers in England were using their Individual Learning Account to help fund part-time Higher Education courses. These are not eligible for support in that country.

Learner/employer contributions

6.38 The operation of Individual Learning Accounts does not easily enable employers to contribute towards their employees' learning except by making a direct payment to the individual or to the provider. It appears that these direct payments are, in some cases, including the £25 that people receiving the £150 incentive are expected to pay.

Deadweight

6.39 Responses to questions relating to deadweight provided some conflicting evidence, but a conservative estimate would be that between 31% (Northern Ireland) and 51% (Scotland) of redeemers would have been able to pay for/would have undertaken their course without Individual Learning Account support.

6.40 Deadweight appeared highest among those in social grades A and B, those contributing £150 or more towards their course costs and people not receiving an 80% discount.

6.41 Groups who appeared to find Individual Learning Account support the most crucial towards funding their learning include the unemployed, those in social grades D and E, those with no qualifications and people receiving an 80% course discount.

6.42 As stated above, these findings indicate that there was a higher level of deadweight amongst people not receiving the 80% discount. As the £150 incentive ended on 31st July 2001 the highest amount of funding available to someone opening an Individual Learning Account, and undertaking a course that is not eligible for an 80% discount, will decrease to £100 per year. It will therefore be interesting to see, in future studies, if this has any impact upon deadweight levels.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 All of the following recommendations are underpinned by the need to keep major changes to a minimum to ensure that levels of confusion are not exacerbated, but are reduced where possible.

Target groups

- 7.2 Each country should revisit its target groups and be clear about the rationale behind their selection. Once this has been done, targeted marketing could be undertaken using methods/venues likely to attract the attention of selected groups e.g. for new learners this could include supermarkets and post offices.
- 7.3 Each country may also wish to consider providing incentives to providers attracting new learners or other target group members.

Promotion

- 7.4 The production of national marketing materials should be considered to provide further clarity on individual and course eligibility – this would be particularly beneficial in Wales.

Administration of Individual Learning Accounts

England, Scotland and Northern Ireland

- 7.5 Further development of the ILAC website may be required to ensure that it makes the process of registration/claim checking as simple and speedy as possible for providers.
- 7.6 As a significant proportion of data on individual membership of target groups is incorrect. The application form should be revisited to identify any ambiguous or confusing questions that may be causing applicants to enter incorrect personal data.

England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales

- 7.7 Processes for checking individual course eligibility should be tightened up to reduce the incidence of people claiming discounts, in particular the 80% discount, for ineligible courses. Further research should also be undertaken with redeemers who appear to be receiving Individual Learning Account support for ineligible courses, and with providers to identify where they perceive loopholes to exist.
- 7.8 Ongoing training should be given to Individual Learning Account call-handling staff to ensure that the advice they give is accurate.

Learner/employer contributions

- 7.9 Procedures surrounding employer contributions need to be revised if an increase is desired in the number of employers contributing towards their employees' ILA supported learning.

Monitoring and performance management

- 7.10 Customer and provider views should continue to be sought to identify levels of satisfaction and to identify any ongoing issues relating to the service provided by the Individual Learning Account Centre (for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland) and by ELWa for Wales.
- 7.11 Such surveys should include questions relating to account holder and provider satisfaction with staff knowledge about Individual Learning Accounts, and the quality of information provided to callers, as these emerged as areas of particular concern during this survey.
- 7.12 The proportion of individuals accessing support for ineligible courses should also be monitored. Clearly, more detailed research would be necessary to identify the current baselines to be followed by ongoing samples to identify if any reduction in inappropriate claims has been achieved.
- 7.13 The Individual Learning Account application forms should be revisited to ensure that the questions are as clear and unambiguous as possible. This includes web-based, as well as paper-based, application forms.

Additionality/Deadweight

- 7.14 To ensure a higher level of “additionality” and a lower proportion of “deadweight”, each country would either need to impose narrower individual eligibility criteria – which may not be a route the countries wish to pursue if they are keen to encourage lifelong learning amongst the population as a whole – or to undertake more targeted marketing.
- 7.15 Levels of deadweight amongst redeemers not receiving an 80% discount suggest that further consideration should be given to discount levels in the future.

Short term evaluation

- 7.16 In the short-term we feel that further research would be valuable in relation to:
- the appropriateness of current target groups along with recommendations for possible changes;
 - the appropriateness of courses currently eligible for 80% discounts and recommendations for possible changes;
 - the processes currently enabling individuals and providers to access Individual Learning Account funding for ineligible courses;
 - individual and employer contributions to course costs, including the impact on courses previously funded by employers;
 - current pilots e.g. The Small Firm Learning Account and Community Group ILAs.

Long term evaluation

- 7.17 In the longer-term we would recommend that research be undertaken into:
- the effectiveness of any changes implemented to the above systems;
 - the impact on deadweight levels of the ending of the £150 incentive;
 - the number of dormant accounts i.e. those used once but not accessed for funding support in future years;

- a longitudinal study of Individual Learning Account redeemers and non-redeemers contacted through this survey, to identify the impact of learning undertaken e.g. progression into further learning and/or employment.

7.18 Findings from any future evaluation projects, where appropriate, should be closely related to data held by Capita to identify any key differences e.g. in the user profile.

APPENDIX A
ILA USER/NON REDEEMER QUESTIONNAIRE

Evaluation of ILAs

Final version (26/2/01)

Introduction

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is . . . and I'm calling from MORI, the Market & Opinion Research company. We're conducting a survey on people's experiences of applying for, and using, the Individual Learning Account. The research is for the Department for Education and Employment and (READ OUT) . . .

- Scottish Executive (FOR SCOTLAND)
- Welsh Assembly (FOR WALES)

ASK ALL

QCHECK: Can I just check, have you used your Individual Learning Accounts (ILA) to pay for training or guidance (if Scotland)?

1. Yes
2. No

ASK ALL NON-REDEEMERS ONLY (CODE 2 AT QCHECK)

QA. What are your main reasons for not using your ILA? MULTI CODE

Course-related

- Waiting for chosen course to start
- Not decided on course yet
- No courses that interest me **in my area**
- No suitable courses available
- Afraid I might waste my money on the wrong course

Lack of time/pressures

- Work pressures
- Don't have enough time
- Haven't got around to it yet

Childcare/family commitments

- Family/childcare commitments
- Lack of suitable childcare
- Cost of childcare

Other personal reasons

- Lack of confidence
- Fear of exams
- Feel I am too old
- Don't want to go back to college as it is full of young people
- Don't want to learn new things
- No guarantee of a job at the end of the course/training might not pay off
- Too expensive/can't afford it

Lack of information/transport

- Problems with travel arrangements
- Need more advice on how my ILA can be used
- Don't know what is available to me

- Other – please describe
- No reason - nothing preventing me
- Don't know

QB) When, if at all, do you think you will use your ILA? SINGLE CODE

1. Next week
2. Next month
3. 2-3 months
4. 4-6 months
5. 6+ months
6. Will not be using it
7. Don't know

Current Work Status

ASK ALL (IE. BOTH REDEEMERS & NON-REDEEMERS)

1) Which of the following best describes your main current activity?

SINGLE CODE. READ OUT

1. In full-time employment (30+ hours per week);
2. In part-time employment (less than 30 hours per week);
3. Self-employed;
4. In full-time education/training;
5. In part-time education/training;
6. Unemployed and looking for work
7. Unemployed and **not** looking for work;
8. Returning to work after caring for family;
9. Returning to work after a break (non-family reasons);
10. On a government training programme;
11. Retired
12. Other – please describe;

ASK IF UNEMPLOYED AT Q1 (CODES 6-7). OTHERS GO TO Q2b

2a) Approximately how long have you been unemployed? SINGLE CODE

1. Less than 1 month
2. 1-<3 months;
3. 3-<6 months;
4. 6 months – <1 year;
5. More than a year.

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ASK IF EMPLOYED/SELF-EMPLOYED AT Q1 (CODES 1-3). OTHERS GO TO Q6a

2b) What is your current occupation? SINGLE CODE

INTERVIEWER: OBTAIN JOB TITLE AND PROBE FOR TYPE OF JOB – MANAGERIAL, PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL, CLERICAL, SKILLED, SEMI-SKILLED, UNSKILLED ETC. CODE RESPONSE TO **ONE** OF THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES. IF UNSURE, CODE “9” AND WRITE IN DESCRIPTION

IF MORE THAN ONE JOB ASK RESPONDENT TO CONSIDER INDUSTRY OF MAIN JOB. IF RESPONDENT CANNOT DECIDE THEN MAIN JOB IS JOB WITH MOST HOURS.

Manager, or senior official (eg production manager, office manager, senior officer in the Police/Fire Services)	1
Professional (e.g. engineer, management consultant, software professional)	2
Associated professional and technical (e.g. nurse, journalist, police officer, sales rep)	3
Administrative and secretarial (e.g. accounts clerk, credit controller)	4
Skilled trades (e.g. bricklayer, plumber, chef)	5
Retail and customer service (e.g. sales assistant, call centre operator)	6
Process, plant or machine operator (e.g. assembly line worker, bus/lorry driver, scaffolder)	7
Elementary occupations (e.g. labourer, catering assistant, bar staff, cleaner, security guard)	8
Other – please describe	9

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ASK IF EMPLOYED/SELF-EMPLOYED AT Q1 (CODES 1-3)

3) What type of industry/business do you currently work in? AGAIN IF MORE THAN ONE JOB ASK RESPONDENT TO CONSIDER INDUSTRY OF MAIN JOB. IF RESPONDENT CANNOT DECIDE THEN MAIN JOB IS JOB WITH MOST HOURS.

SINGLE CODE ONLY

1. Agriculture and Forestry
2. Fishing
3. Mining and quarrying
4. Manufacturing
5. Electricity, gas and water supply
6. Construction
7. Wholesale and Retail
8. Motor repairs
9. Hotels and restaurants
10. Transport and communication
11. Banking, finance and insurance
12. Real estate, renting and other business services
13. Public administration and defence
14. Education: **Schools**
15. Education: **Colleges**
16. Education: **Other**
17. Health and social work
18. Other – please write in

ASK IF EDUCATION: SCHOOLS AT Q3 (CODE 14). OTHERS GO TO Q5

4) You say that you work in a school. Are you a teacher?

1. Yes
2. No

ASK IF EMPLOYED/SELF-EMPLOYED AT Q1 (CODES 1-3)

5) Including yourself, approximately how many people are employed by your organisation? WRITE IN EXACT NUMBER. IF UNSURE, PROBE FOR BEST ESTIMATE AND CODE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. Sole trader
2. 1 to 49
3. 50-99
4. 100-149
5. 150-199
6. 200-249
7. 250-499
8. 500+
9. Don't know

Past Involvement in Learning

ASK ALL

6a) Which of the following types of learning have you done at any time in your life? Please include any learning that you are currently undertaking. MULTI CODE. READ OUT

ASK IF CODES (1-13) AT Q6a

6b) And which have you undertaken during the past 12 months? Please include any learning that you are currently undertaking. MULTI CODE. READ OUT ALL MENTIONS AT Q6b

	6A	6B
1. school up to age 16		
2. school up to age 18		
3. University/degree course		
4. further education/college course		
5. specialist college course (eg music, drama)		
6. taught courses, such as evening classes, leading to a qualification		
7. taught courses, such as evening classes, not leading to a qualification		
8. work-related training provided by an employer		
9. work-related training that you paid for		
10. self-taught courses (eg tapes, CD-Rom, books)		
11. distance learning (eg Open University courses)		
12. government supported programmes (eg New Deal; Modern Apprenticeship)		
13. other – please describe		
14. none of these		

ASK ALL

7a) Do you have any qualifications from school, college or university, or connected with work, or from government schemes? SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

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ASK IF YES AT Q7a (CODE 1). OTHERS GO TO Q7C

7b) What is the highest level of qualification you have? SINGLE CODE.
READ OUT HIGHEST (1) TO LOWEST (26)

(PROBE AS NECESSARY eg, where number or level of qualification affects coding)

ASK ALL REDEEMERS ONLY (CODE 1 AT QCHECK)

7c) What, if any, qualification(s) are you working towards using your ILA? MULTI CODE.

	7b	7c
1. Higher degree (eg Masters or Doctorate) NVQ or SVQ level 5		
2. First (Bachelors) degree NVQ or SVQ level 4		
3. Other degree level qualification including graduate membership of a professional institute or PGCE		
4. Diploma in higher education		
5. Teaching qualification (excluding PGCE)		
6. Nursing or other medical qualification		
7. Other higher education qualifications below degree level		
8. 2 or more A levels Advanced GNVQ/GSVQ 3 or more SCE Highers 4 or more AS levels NVQ or SVQ level 3		
9. One A level 1 or 2 Scottish Highers 2 or 3 AS-levels Intermediate GNVQ/GSVQ NVQ or SVQ level 2		
10. 5 or more GCSE grades A* to C 5 or more O-levels 5 or more CSEs at grade 1 5 or more SCE Standard/Ordinary grades 1-3		
11. One AS level Fewer than 5 GCSE grades A* to C Fewer than 5 O-levels Fewer than 5 CSEs at grade 1 Fewer than 5 SCE Standard/Ordinary grades 1-3		

Final Questionnaire (Redeemer & Non-redeemer)

12. Certificate of Sixth Year Studies (CSYS) Scottish Certificate of Sixth Year Studies		
13. HNC/HND Higher level of BTEC/BEC/TEC Higher level of SCOTEC/SCOTVEC/SCOTBEC		
14. BTEC/BEC/TEC National Certificate SCOTBEC/SCOTEC/SCOTVEC National Certificate ONC/OND		
15. BTEC/BEC/TEC First Diploma or General Diploma SCOTBEC/SCOTEC/SCOTVEC First Diploma or General Diploma		
16. BTEC/BEC/TEC First or General Certificate SCOTBEC/SCOTEC/SCOTVEC First or General Certificate, or modules towards a National Certificate		
17. City and Guilds Advanced Craft		
18. City and Guilds Craft		
19. Other City and Guilds Qualifications		
20. RSA Higher Diploma		
21. RSA Advanced Diploma or Advanced Certificate		
22. RSA Diploma		
23. Other RSA qualifications (including Stage I, II and III)		
24. Recognised Trade Apprenticeship (completed)		
25. YT Certificate		
26. Any other professional/vocational qualification/foreign qualifications		
27. Don't know		

ILA Application Process/Advice & Guidance

ASK ALL

8) How did you first hear about Individual Learning Accounts? SINGLE CODE.

1. LearnDirect/University for Industry - Ufi
2. Individual Learning Account Centre (England, Scotland and Northern Ireland)
3. TEC (Training & Enterprise Councils)/Local Enterprise Council (LEC)
4. employer;
5. learning provider;
6. advice/guidance service;
7. trade union;
8. newspaper/radio advert;
9. TV/teletext
10. leaflet;
11. Internet;
12. friends/family;
13. work colleagues;
14. someone already taking the course;
15. other - please give details.

9) How easy or difficult did you find it to understand which courses were eligible for Individual Learning Account funding? SINGLE CODE. READ OUT

1. Very easy
2. Fairly easy
3. Neither easy nor difficult
4. Fairly difficult
5. Very difficult
6. Can't remember

ASK IF DIFFICULT AT Q9 (CODES 4-5). OTHERS GO TO Q11

10) What caused you the most difficulty? PROBE FULLY. WRITE IN

ASK ALL

11) Did you need any advice to understand how Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) could be used?

1. Yes
2. No

ASK IF YES AT Q11. OTHERS GO TO Q13

12) Who, if anyone, provided you with this advice? MULTI CODE

1. LearnDirect/University for Industry - Ufi
2. Individual Learning Account Centre helpline (England, Scotland and Northern Ireland)
3. TEC (Training & Enterprise Councils)/Local Enterprise Council (LEC)

Final Questionnaire (Redeemer & Non-redeemer)

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4. learning provider;
5. advice/guidance service;
6. trade union;
7. newspaper/radio advert;
8. leaflet;
9. Internet;
10. friends/family;
11. work colleagues;
12. someone already taking the course/who has already taken out an ILA;
13. other - please give details;
14. No one
15. Can't remember

ASK ALL REDEEMERS ONLY

13) How easy or difficult did you find it to use your Individual Learning Account (ILA) to help pay for a course? SINGLECODE. READ OUT

1. Very easy
2. Fairly easy
3. Neither easy nor difficult
4. Fairly difficult
5. Very difficult

ASK ALL (BOTH REDEEMERS & NON-REDEEMERS)

14) How did you get your ILA application form? SINGLE CODE

**CHRIS – (CODES 1-2) SHOULD ONLY APPEAR FOR ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND
(CODE 3) SHOULD ONLY APPEAR FOR WALES**

1. By ringing the Individual Learning Account Centre
2. By filling in a form on the Individual Learning Account Centre website
3. Local Training & Enterprise Council (TEC)
4. From my learning provider
5. From training section/HR at work
6. From work colleague
7. Other – please describe
8. Can't remember

ASK IF (CODE 1 or 2) AT Q14 AND IS IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND OR NORTHERN IRELAND. OTHERS GO TO Q16

15) Approximately how long did it take for the form to arrive? SINGLECODE. IF UNSURE, ASK FOR BEST ESTIMATE

1. Less than a week;
2. 1-<2 weeks;
3. 2-<3 weeks;
4. 3 weeks or more;
5. Can't remember

Final Questionnaire (Redeemer & Non-redeemer)

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ASK ALL (BOTH REDEEMERS & NON-REDEEMERS IN ALL 4 COUNTRIES)

16) How easy or difficult did you find it to complete the ILA application form? SINGLE CODE. READ OUT

1. Very easy
2. Fairly easy
3. Neither easy nor difficult
4. Fairly difficult
5. Very difficult

ASK ALL REDEEMERS IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND ONLY. WALES GO TO Q25

17) Approximately how long did it take for your ILA account card to arrive once you'd returned your application form? SINGLE CODE. IF UNSURE, ASK FOR BEST ESTIMATE

1. Less than a week;
2. 1-<2 weeks;
3. 2-<3 weeks;
4. 3 weeks or more
5. Can't remember

ASK IF **NOT** (CODED 1) AT Q14 AND IS A REDEEMER IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND ONLY. OTHERS GO TO Q18b

18a) Have you ever telephoned the Individual Learning Account Centre helpline for advice or information, or to find out about your ILA application? SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Can't remember

ASK IF CODE 1 AT Q14 OR CODE 1 AT Q18A

18b) When did you last call the ILA Centre? PROMPT IF NECESSARY

1. In the past week
2. In the past month
3. 1-2 months ago
4. 2-3 months ago
5. 3-5 months ago
6. Can't remember

18c) On the occasion(s) that you have called the ILAC, did you speak to a member of staff or did you hear a recorded message? SINGLECODE ONLY

1. Spoke to someone
2. Heard recorded message
3. Both
4. Can't remember

ASK Q18d-Q23 IF SPOKE TO SOMEONE AT THE ILAC (CODE 1 or 3) AT Q18c. OTHERS GO TO Q24

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I would now like to ask you some questions about the service provided to you by ILAC (Individual Learning Account Centre) staff who process your ILA application and ILA funding.

18d) How would you rate their helpfulness? Would you say they were? (READ OUT). SINGLE CODE

1. Very helpful
2. Fairly helpful
3. Neither helpful nor unhelpful
4. Fairly unhelpful
5. Very unhelpful
6. Don't know/can't remember
7. Can't comment – only spoke to them briefly

19) How would you rate their knowledge of ILAs and the amount of information that they gave you? SINGLECODE. READ OUT

1. Very good
2. Fairly good
3. Neither good nor poor
4. Fairly poor
5. Very poor
6. Don't know/can't remember
7. Can't comment – only spoke to them briefly

20) When you called the Individual Learning Account Centre, did you feel that the pace of their conversations with you was . . ? (READ OUT) SINGLECODE

1. Too fast
2. Just right
3. Too slow
4. Don't know/can't remember
5. Can't comment – only spoke to them briefly

21) Did you feel that the ILAC staff listened to what you had to say? SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure
4. Don't know/can't remember
5. Can't comment – only spoke to them briefly

22) Which of the following statements best fits your impression of the ILAC staff overall? SINGLE CODE. READ OUT

1. Polite and friendly
2. Impolite and unfriendly
3. Neither
4. Don't know/can't remember
5. Can't comment – only spoke to them briefly

Final Questionnaire (Redeemer & Non-redeemer)

23) Every caller, once they have opened their account, is asked to provide proof of identity by answering a set of screening questions when they call the Individual Learning Account Centre, for security reasons. How would you rate the security measures used when you contact the ILAC for information on your ILA account? SINGLE CODE.
READ OUT

1. Very good
2. Fairly good
3. Neither good nor poor
4. Fairly poor
5. Very poor
6. Don't know/can't comment – only spoke to them once/briefly

ASK ALL IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND

24) What is your overall impression of the service provided by the ILAC centre? Would you say it is . . . ? (READ OUT). SINGLE CODE

1. Very good
2. Fairly good
3. Neither good nor poor
4. Fairly poor
5. Very poor
6. Don't know/can't remember
7. Can't comment – only spoke to them briefly

ASK ALL REDEEMERS ONLY (IN ALL 4 COUNTRIES)

25) Which of the following amounts/course discounts is your current/most recent ILA providing? SINGLECODE

1. 20% discount
2. 80% discount (*not Wales before January 2001*)
3. £150 contribution
4. £150 contribution and 20% discount (*not Wales before January 2001*)
5. £150 contribution and 80% discount (*not Wales before January 2001*)
6. Other, please specify
7. Don't know

ASK IF 80% DISCOUNT AT Q25 (CODES 2 OR 5). OTHERS GO TO Q27

26) Which of the following types of course are you undertaking with the 80% ILA discount? SINGLE CODE. READ OUT

1. Introductory Numeracy/Maths (England and Scotland)
2. Introductory Information Technology/ICT (England, Scotland and Northern Ireland)
3. Introductory Communication/English (Scotland only)
4. Don't know

(briefing notes will need to state that these are freestanding courses – courses which have maths/IT/communication as part of the course are not eligible for 80% discount)

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ASK ALL REDEEMERS ONLY (IN ALL 4 COUNTRIES)

27) Which type of learning are you undertaking on your current ILA discounted course? PROMPT FROM LIST IF NECESSARY. MULTI CODE

1. further education
2. part-time Higher Education (Scotland and NI only)
3. block study/short course;
4. ICT learning centre course;
5. distance learning;
6. Open Learning package;
7. delivered at the workplace;
8. correspondence course;
9. Other – please describe

28) How many ILA discounted courses have you undertaken?

1. None
2. One
3. Two
4. Three
5. Four or more
6. Can't remember/Don't know

29) How long have you been on your current ILA discounted course?

SINGLE CODE. IF UNSURE, ASK FOR BEST ESTIMATE

1. Course not yet started
2. 1-2 weeks
3. >2-4 weeks
4. >1-3 months
5. More than 3 months
6. Completed
7. Don't know

ASK IF CODE (2-6) at Q29. OTHERS GO TO Q31

30) Which of the following statements best describes your views on the ILA supported learning you are undertaking? SINGLE CODE. READ OUT

1. The course has exceeded my expectations
2. The course has met my expectations
3. It has not been as useful as I had hoped
4. I wish that I hadn't taken this course
5. Don't know

ASK ALL REDEEMERS ONLY (IN ALL 4 COUNTRIES)

31) What previous knowledge/skills, if any, did you have in the main subjects you are studying now/planning to start through your ILA discounted course? Would you say that you had . . . ? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

1. **A lot** of prior knowledge/skills in that area;
2. **Some** prior knowledge/skills in that area;
3. **A little** prior knowledge/skills in that area;
4. **None at all**

Final Questionnaire (Redeemer & Non-redeemer)

Funding

ASK ALL REDEEMERS ONLY (IN ALL 4 COUNTRIES). NON-REDEEMERS GO TO Q35a
32) What is the total cost of the learning (*Scotland* - or guidance) that you are undertaking with support from your ILA? RECORD EXACT AMOUNT & CODE. IF UNSURE, ASK FOR BEST ESTIMATE BY READING OUT CATEGORIES BELOW.

1. less than £49;
2. £50-99;
3. £100-199;
4. £200-499
5. £500 or more;
6. don't know/can't remember

33) How much have you personally paid towards it? RECORD EXACT AMOUNT & CODE. IF UNSURE, ASK FOR BEST ESTIMATE BY READING OUT CATEGORIES BELOW.

1. nothing
2. less than £25
3. £25-49;
4. £50-99;
5. £100-149;
6. £150-249;
7. £250-499;
8. £500 or more;
9. don't know/can't remember

ASK ALL REDEEMERS (IN ALL 4 COUNTRIES) WHO ARE EMPLOYED (CODE 1-2) AT Q1. OTHERS GO TO Q35a

34) How much has your employer paid towards it? SINGLE CODE. IF UNSURE ASK FOR BEST ESTIMATE

1. nothing;
2. £1-24;
3. £25-49;
4. £50-99;
5. £100-149;
6. £150-249;
7. £250-499;
8. £500 or more;
9. don't know/can't remember

Attitudes and Motivation

ASK ALL REDEEMERS & NON-REDEEMERS IN ALL 4 COUNTRIES

35a) What were your reasons for applying for the course supported by your current/most recent ILA? PROBE FULLY. MULTI CODE

ASK IF MORE THAN ONE MENTION AT Q35a

35b) Which was your MAIN reason? SINGLE CODE

	38a	38b
Work related		
• to get a new job/better job;		
• to succeed at work;		
• to earn more money;		
▪ to increase the range of jobs open to me;		
Skills & qualifications		
• to get qualifications;		
• to develop skills;		
▪ do taster course before committing to whole course		
Personal development		
• to increase my self-confidence;		
• for personal development/growth;		
Others		
• because I enjoy learning;		
• to fill in my spare time/as a hobby;		
• to keep up with children/help children with school work		
• for relaxation;		
• to make up for the past;		
• to make new friends/meet people;		
• to help achieve an ambition;		
• other;		
• don't know.		

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ASK ALL REDEEMERS ONLY (IN ALL 4 COUNTRIES)

36) How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements. READ OUT A-D. ROTATE ORDER. SINGLECODE EACH

- A. Without the ILA I would not have been able to pay for my course;
- B. I would have chosen to take the course even without ILA funding
- C. The ILA helped to fund a course that I was already undertaking/planning to take
- D. The ILA has increased the training/learning options open to me;

Q	S. Agree	F. Agree	Neither	F. Disagree	S. Disagree	Don't know
A						
B						
C						
D						

Demographics

ASK ALL (BOTH REDEEMERS & NON-REDEEMERS)

Finally, I would like to ask you a few questions about yourself.

37) (Tick box to show gender)

- 1. Female
- 2. Male

38) Can you tell me your age? WRITE IN EXACT AGE AND CODE THE FOLLOWING

- 1. 18-20;
- 2. 21-30;
- 3. 31-40;
- 4. 41-50;
- 5. 51-60;
- 6. 60+
- 7. Refused

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39) To which of the following ethnic groups do you consider you belong? READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

White:

- British
- Irish
- Irish Travellers” (Northern Ireland only)
- Any other white background (WRITE IN)

Mixed:

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other mixed background (WRITE IN”)

Asian or Asian British:

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Any other Asian background (WRITE IN)

Black or Black British:

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other Black background (WRITE IN)

Chinese or Other Ethnic Group:

- Chinese
- Any other background (WRITE IN)

- Refused

ASK NORTHERN IRELAND ONLY. OTHERS GO TO Q41

40) What is your religious/community background? SINGLECODE

1. Protestant
2. Catholic
3. Neither Protestant nor Catholic
4. Refused

ASK ALL

41) Do you have any health problems or disabilities which you expect will last for more than a year? (these may be continuous or have affected you from time to time)

1. Yes
2. No
3. Refused

ASK IF YES AT Q41(CODE 1). OTHERS GO TO Q43

42) Does this (do these) health problem(s) or disability(ies) substantially limit your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities?

1. Yes
2. No

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ASK ALL

Social Class

43) Please can you tell me the occupation of the Main Wage Earner in your household? WRITE IN

44) What is their position/rank/grade at work? WRITE IN

45) What industry do they work in? WRITE IN

46) Do they have any qualifications that are relevant to their job? WRITE IN

47) IF RETIRED, do they receive a private job-related pension? WRITE IN

1. Yes
2. No

CODE RESPONDENT

1. AB
2. C1
3. C2
4. DE

The government may be conducting some research later in the year to explore the issues we have discussed in more detail.

Would you be willing for your contact details and your responses to be passed to another organisation so that they could ask you some further questions?

- Yes – Check name
- No – THANK & CLOSE

APPENDIX B
COURSE PROVIDER QUESTIONNAIRES

ILA QUESTIONNAIRE: Providers (Wales)

Good morning/afternoon. My name is ???????? from YCL. We are undertaking a survey on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales to seek providers' views on the way in which the Individual Learning Account system works. Feedback gained through this survey will help with the future development of the ILA service. Your contribution will be anonymous as responses are combined for analysis.

Are you (tick as appropriate):

A public organisation?

A private organisation?

1. What is the name of your local TEC?

<i>TEC</i>	<i>Tick as appropriate</i>
West Wales TEC	
South East Wales TEC	
Mid Wales TEC	
CELTEC	

STUDENTS

2. How many learners do you currently have on your courses? (all learners – not just ILA holders)

3. Approximately what percentage of them are ILA account holders?

4. Do you know what percentage of these ILA account holders are receiving the following incentives:

<i>ILA support</i>	<i>Enter % below</i>
£150 contribution	
20% discount	
80% discount	

IMPACT OF ILAs

5. a) What type of courses do you offer? b) Are any of these courses eligible for an 80% ILA discount?

<u>HIGHER DISCOUNT COURSES</u>	Offered? (Y/N)	Eligible for 80% discount? (Y/N)
Introductory IT		
Learning Welsh		
<u>OTHER COURSE AREAS</u> (list below)	Offered? (Y/N)	Eligible for 80% discount? (Y/N)

6. Have you increased or decreased the number of courses you offer because of ILAs?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Tick as appropriate</i>
Yes	
No	

(If yes, go to Q.7 – if no proceed to Q.8)

7. Which course areas have been most affected and in what ways?

Course area	Tick if <u>increase</u> in number of courses	Tick if <u>decrease</u> in number of courses

8. How would you rate the impact of ILAs upon the **CONTENT** of your courses (using a scale of 1-5 with 1 = “very low” and 5 = “very high”)?

(If rated 4-5, go to Q. 9 – if rated 1-3, proceed to Q. 10)

9. Which course areas have had their **CONTENT** affected and in what ways?

Course area	How course content has been affected

10. How would you rate the impact of ILAs upon the **NUMBER OF STUDENTS** on your courses (using a scale of 1-5 with 1 = “very low” and 5 = “very high”)?

(If rated 4-5, go to Q. 11 – if rated 1-3, proceed to Q. 12)

11. Which course areas have seen the greatest increase or decrease in STUDENT NUMBERS? By what approximate percentage?

Course Area	% increase?	% decrease?

12. How would you rate the impact of ILAs upon the TYPE OF STUDENTS enrolling onto your courses (using a scale of 1-5 with 1 = “very low” and 5 = “very high”)?

(If rated 4-5, go to Q. 13 – if rated 1-3, proceed to Q. 14)

13. Which course areas have seen the greatest changes in TYPE OF STUDENTS enrolling?

Course area	Changes in type of student enrolling

14. How would you rate the impact of ILAs upon your ADMINISTRATION (using a scale of 1-5 with 1 = “very low” and 5 = “very high”)?

(If rated 4-5, go to Q. 15 – if rated 1-3, proceed to Q.16)

15. What have the key impacts been upon your ADMINISTRATION?

ILA SERVICE PROVIDED BY LOCAL TEC

16. Which of the following methods have you used to communicate with your local TEC about ILAs?

<i>Methods</i>	<i>Tick as appropriate</i>
Telephone	
Fax	
Internet	
By post	
Other - describe below:	

17. How would you rate the service provided by your TEC when you registered as a provider of courses eligible for ILA discounts? (using a scale of 1-5 with 1 = “very low” and 5 = “very high”)?

(If rated 1-2, go to Q. 18 – if rated 3-5, proceed to Q. 19)

18. How could this registration service be improved?

19. How would you rate the service that your TEC provides for claiming ILA funding (using a scale of 1-5 with 1 = “very low” and 5 = “very high”)?

(If rated 1-2, go to Q. 20 – if rated 3-5, proceed to Q. 21)

20. How could this claims service be improved?

21. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the ILA service that your TEC has provided? (using a scale of 1-5 with 1 = “very low” and 5 = “very high”)?

(If rated 1-2, go to Q. 22 – if rated 3-5, proceed to Q. 23)

22. How could their service be improved?

MARKETING

23. Have you marketed ILAs in any way?

Response	Tick as appropriate
Yes	
No	

(If yes, go to Q24 – if no, proceed to Q.25)

24. What marketing methods have you used and with which target groups?

Marketing methods used? <i>E.g. leaflets; posters; letters; presentations; other</i>	Target group(s)?

25. Why have you chosen not to market ILAs?

--

COURSE COSTS

26. Have any employers contributed towards their employee's course costs?

Response	Tick as appropriate
Yes	
No	
Don't know	

(If yes, go to Q. 27 – if no, proceed to Q. 30)

27. Are there any courses that employers appear more likely to contribute towards? If yes, please give details:

--

28. Is there any evidence that employers are trying to pay for courses that individuals would normally pay for themselves?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Tick as appropriate</i>
Yes	
No	
Don't know	

29. If yes, what courses are affected in this way?

30. How would you rate the impact of ILAs upon the FEES you charge (using a scale of 1-5 with 1 = "very low" and 5 = "very high")?

(If rated 4-5, go to Q. 31 – if rated 1-3, go to Q32)

31. Which course areas have you increased/decreased your FEES for and by what percentage? (circle % as appropriate for each course area)

<i>Course Area</i>	<i>Increase (I) or decrease (D)?</i>	<i>By what % have they changed?</i>			
		Up to 10%	1	51-75%	4
		11-25%	2	76-100%	5
		26-50%	3	over 100%	6
		Up to 10%	1	51-75%	4
		11-25%	2	76-100%	5
		26-50%	3	over 100%	6
		Up to 10%	1	51-75%	4
		11-25%	2	76-100%	5
		26-50%	3	over 100%	6
		Up to 10%	1	51-75%	4
		11-25%	2	76-100%	5
		26-50%	3	over 100%	6
		Up to 10%	1	51-75%	4
		11-25%	2	76-100%	5
		26-50%	3	over 100%	6

32. Have ILAs affected "fee remittal" courses that you provide? (Briefing note: courses can be free of charge to some clients and we need to check if ILAs have affected this in any way).

<i>Response</i>	<i>Tick as appropriate</i>
Yes	
No	
Don't know	

33. If yes, which courses have been affected and in what way?

Course area	How fees have been affected

Thank you for participating in this survey. The National Assembly for Wales may be conducting some research later in the year to explore the issues we have discussed in more detail.

Would you be willing for your contact details and your responses to be passed to another organisation so that they could ask you some further questions?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Tick as appropriate</i>
Yes	
No	

APPENDIX C
SOCIAL CLASS DEFINITIONS

Social Class Definitions

- A** Professionals such as doctors, surgeons, solicitors or dentists; chartered people like architects; fully qualified people with a large degree of responsibility such as senior editors, senior civil servants, town clerks, senior business executives and managers, and high ranking grades of the Services.

- B** People with very responsible jobs such as university lecturers, hospital matrons, heads of local government departments, middle management in business, qualified scientists, bank managers, police inspectors, and upper grades of the Services.

- C1** All others doing non-manual jobs; nurses, technicians, pharmacists, salesmen, publicans, people in clerical positions, police sergeants/ constables, and middle ranks of the Services.

- C2** Skilled manual workers/craftsmen who have served apprenticeships; foremen, manual workers with special qualifications such as long distance lorry drivers, security officers, and lower grades of Services.

- D** Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, including labourers and mates of occupations in the C2 grade and people serving apprenticeships; machine minders, farm labourers, bus and railway conductors, laboratory assistants, postmen, door-to-door and van salesmen.

- E** Those on lowest levels of subsistence including pensioners, casual workers, and others with minimum levels of income.

APPENDIX D
OPT-OUT LETTERS

LETTER FOR WALES

Name
Address

Date

Dear

Survey of Individual Learning Account Holders

As an Individual Learning Account holder you will know that Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) were created to encourage people to learn and to go on developing their skills after completing their formal education.

We are keen to gain early feedback from ILA account holders to ensure that the processes, support and documentation provided are as user-friendly as possible. We are therefore writing to inform you that we have asked MORI to undertake a telephone survey with a sample of Individual Learning Account holders, and they may make contact with you during the coming weeks. Your contribution will be anonymous as all responses will be combined for analysis and no individual responses or details will be published. Feedback gained through this survey will be used to help in the future development of the ILA service.

If you do not wish to be contacted as part of this survey, please tick the box below and return this letter to me (using the enclosed pre-paid envelope?) within 5 days of the date shown on the letter.

If you have any particular queries regarding this survey, please contact -----
at -----

I hope that you feel able to participate in this survey and that you have found your Individual Learning Account to be of help with your learning.

Yours sincerely

Please do not contact me as part of this ILA survey



LETTER FOR ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Name
Address

Date

Dear

Survey of Individual Learning Account Holders

As an Individual Learning Account holder you will know that Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) were created to encourage people to learn and to go on developing their skills after completing their formal education. In September 2000, an Individual Learning Account Centre became operational in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland to help people to access this support.

We are keen to gain early feedback from ILA account holders to ensure that the processes, support and documentation currently in place are as user-friendly as possible. We are therefore writing to inform you that we have asked MORI to undertake a telephone survey with a sample of Individual Learning Account holders, and they may make contact with you during the coming weeks. Your contribution will be anonymous as all responses will be combined for analysis and no individual responses or details will be published. Feedback gained through this survey will be used to help in the future development of the ILA service.

If you do not wish to be contacted as part of this survey, please tick the box below and return this letter to me (using the enclosed pre-paid envelope?) within 5 days of the date shown on the letter.

If you have any particular queries regarding this survey, please contact -----
at -----

I hope that you feel able to participate in this survey and that you have found your Individual Learning Account to be of help with your learning.

Yours sincerely

Please do not contact me as part of this ILA survey

APPENDIX E METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

This report is based upon a telephone survey of Individual Learning Account users, non-redeemers and providers carried out between 26th February and 4th May 2001.

The telephone survey was conducted by York Consulting Ltd and MORI Social Research Institute on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

Individual Learning Account users and non-redeemers

Survey design

MORI conducted 4,638 interviews with people who had applied for an Individual Learning Account in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales between September 2000 and February 2001. The interviews were conducted by MORI Telephone Surveys (MTS) between 5th March and 3rd April 2001 using CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing). The questionnaire used to programme the CATI system is shown at **Appendix A**.

The sample was provided by Capita (for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland) and by each of the four Welsh Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). The samples comprised two groups of Individual Learning Account holders:

- those who had used their Individual Learning Account for learning – we called these individuals “redeemers”;
- those who had successfully applied for an Individual Learning Account but had not used it by the time the sample was drawn – we called these people “non-redeemers”.

From the information provided on the databases, the aim was to interview 4,000 redeemers and 500 non-redeemers. Those listed as receiving an 80% course discount were prioritised for interviews as an early report was required on this group. Following this, we prioritised non-redeemer calls to take account of possible changes in their status – for example, a number of non-redeemers had used their Individual Learning Account at the time of interview.

Opt-out

Prior to the main fieldwork, a personalised letter was sent to all those included in the sample giving them the opportunity to opt out of the survey by contacting MORI. Copies of these letters are provided at **Appendix D**.

Sample design

The aim was to achieve 1,000 interviews with redeemers in each country (4,000 in total) and also 125 interviews with non-redeemers in each country (500 in total). These sample sizes mean that findings from redeemers are robust in terms of sample size but there are too few non-redeemers to provide robust findings for each country. Taken as a whole though, the non-redeemers would provide indications of any key issues and obstacles leading to non-use of their ILA as large numbers of accounts had not yet been used at the time of this study.

Table A below shows the target number of interviews along with the achieved interviews according to:

- information held on Capita's database and;
- interview responses.

As can be seen, there is some discrepancy between Capita's classification and the responses given by interviewees. In the computer tables used for analysis purposes we have used respondents' answers as opposed to information held on the database.

These discrepancies were particularly evident when contacting individuals who were listed on Capita's database as receiving an 80% discount and people who were deemed as falling within one of the key target groups e.g. labour market returners. As data contained within Capita's database is largely based upon completed ILA application forms, it appears that a significant proportion of people applying for an ILA entered the wrong data.

England, Scotland and Northern Ireland

For each of these three countries, a random sample of redeemers was drawn after stratification by discount/contribution type (80% discounts, other discounts/contribution) and within discount/contribution type by gender and age. Similarly, a random sample of non-redeemers was drawn after stratification by gender and age within each country.

	England		Scotland		N. Ireland	
	T/A	A	T/A	A	T/A	A
80% discount	370	277	300	152	679	516
£150 only	651	744	713	861	329	492
Total redeemers	1,021	1,021	1,013	1,013	1,008	1,008
Total non-redeemers	-	131	-	164	-	147

T/A = target and achieved (based on Capita database information);

A = achieved (based upon interview responses).

Wales

The interviews within Wales were equally distributed between the four TEC areas – the aim was to achieve 250 interviews with redeemers (1,000 interviews in total) and 31-32 interviews with non-redeemers per TEC (125 interviews in total). However, the final achieved sample size was 1,067 redeemers and 87 for non-redeemers. The response rate for non-redeemers was lower than that for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland and consequently the sample of non-redeemers was exhausted and no further interviews were possible.

The sampling data for Wales did not contain information on discount/contribution type as the discounts were only introduced in Wales in January 2001. Consequently, for each TEC, a random sample of redeemers was drawn after stratification by gender and age (apart from Mid-Wales TEC for which data on age was not available at the time). Similarly, a random sample of non-redeemers was drawn after stratification by gender and age within TEC area (apart from Mid-Wales TEC for which data on age was not available at the time).

Questionnaire design

There is one version of the questionnaire, with appropriate filters for redeemers and non-redeemers. The questionnaire was designed by York Consulting Ltd and MORI in consultation with DfEE and, through them, the other three countries. The questionnaire is shown at **Appendix A**.

The questionnaire was piloted with 40 redeemers and non-redeemers between 12th and 14th February 2001. A full debrief was held at MTS on 15th February 2001 – the questionnaire had worked well during the pilot stage and consequently only minor amendments were required.

Response rates

Table B below summarises the aggregate response rates achieved:

Table B: Aggregate Response Rates Achieved	
	No of contacts
Sample issued	11,614
Successful interviews	4,638
<i>Unadjusted response rate %</i>	40%
Unsuccessful:	
- number unobtainable/wrong number	1,019
- moved	365
- no reply	2,284
- line busy	133
- not available during fieldwork period	106
- appointments	2,117
- quota fail	99
Refused	833
Terminated	20
<i>Adjusted response rate %</i>	92%

Analysis

The data has been weighted by age and gender for redeemer and non-redeemers (within country) in line with the information held on Capita's database and on the TEC databases. **Table C** provides a breakdown of the weighted and unweighted number of interviews amongst redeemers for each of the four countries.

Table C: Weighted and unweighted number of redeemer interviews												
	England			Scotland			Northern Ireland			Wales		
	Unweighted	Weighted	%	Unweighted	Weighted	N	Unweighted	Weighted	%	Unweighted	Weighted	%
Total	1,021			1,013			1,008			1,067		
Gender:												
Male	412	416	41	430	435	435	346	334	33	366	321	30
Female	609	605	59	583	578	578	662	674	67	701	746	70
Age:												
< 30 yrs	232	244	24	197	209	209	278	284	28	221	275	26
31-40	323	312	31	326	316	316	351	341	34	373	346	32
41-50	247	239	23	253	250	250	241	240	24	300	280	26
51+	219	226	22	237	238	238	138	144	14	173	166	16

Interpretation of Data

It should be noted that a sample, and not the entire population, of Individual Learning Account applicants has been interviewed. This means that all the results are subject to sampling tolerances and that not all differences are statistically significant.

Where percentages do not add up to 100%, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of “don’t know” categories, or multiple responses.

Providers of courses supported by Individual Learning Accounts

Survey design

York Consulting Ltd conducted 100 interviews with providers in England, Northern Ireland and Wales between 26th February and 4th May 2001. Scotland had commissioned its own survey of providers and therefore opted-out of this part of the survey.

Opt-out

Prior to the main fieldwork, a personalised letter was sent to all those included in the sample giving them the opportunity to opt out of the survey by contacting York Consulting Ltd. A copy of this letter is provided at **Appendix D**.

Sample design

The survey of learning providers was intended to provide qualitative data as the sample size – i.e. 100 providers across England, Northern Ireland and Wales - was too small to provide statistically robust feedback.

The sample for England and Northern Ireland was provided by Capita and by each of the four Welsh Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) for Wales. The aim was to contact 33/34 providers in each of the three countries and, for Wales, to contact a similar number of providers in each of the four TEC areas. It was not possible to contact a similar number within each TEC area as data provided by one TEC was incorrect in a significant number of cases i.e. the providers listed were not offering any Individual Learning Account supported courses.

Questionnaire design

The questionnaire for Individual Learning Account providers was designed by York Consulting Ltd in consultation with DfEE and, through them, the other three countries. The questionnaires - one for England and Northern Ireland and a separate design for Wales – are shown at **Appendix A**.

The questionnaire was piloted with three providers on 2nd March 2001. The questionnaire worked well and only minor amendments were required.

Interpretation of Data

It should be noted that a sample, and not the entire population, of Individual Learning Account providers has been interviewed. This means that all the results are subject to sampling tolerances and that not all differences are statistically significant.

