

# Improve Your Connexions Results from Wave 1 of the Connexions Service Customer Satisfaction Survey

Tim Brunwin, Sam Clemens, Gemma Deakin, Geoff Inglis,  
Andrew Jones and Ed Mortimer  
BMRB Social Research

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*Improve Your Connexions*  
*Results from Wave 1 of the Connexions Service*  
*Customer Satisfaction Survey*

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*Andrew Jones and Ed Mortimer*

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## Summary of main findings

This report summarises the key findings from the Connexions Service customer satisfaction survey, carried out by BMRB International on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills. The survey was carried out in all 47 Connexions Partnerships, divided into three fieldwork stages corresponding to the three 'Phases' of Partnership (relating to when the Partnership began delivering the service in their area). Over 52,000 young people, who, according to Connexions Partnership databases, had been in contact with Connexions, were interviewed between January and December 2003, using a range of different methods - face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, postal self-completion and (at Phase 1 only) web self-completion questionnaires. The questionnaire covered awareness of, and contact with, the Connexions Service and related services such as Connexions Direct, the role of Connexions in helping respondents take decisions about their lives, and satisfaction with the service provided by Connexions.

- Awareness of the Connexions Service was very high: 90 per cent were aware of Connexions before the interview. However, this was not unexpected as the sample for the survey consisted of young people who had been in contact with Connexions. Awareness was higher in direct delivery Partnerships than in those with a sub-contracted delivery mode (95 and 87 per cent respectively).
- Of those who were aware of Connexions, 80 per cent reported having had contact with the Service. Again, this was more common in direct delivery Partnerships than in sub-contracted ones (86 and 75 per cent respectively). Young people receiving higher levels of support were unsurprisingly more likely to report having spoken to someone from Connexions: 88 per cent of young people in Priority category 1 reported having spoken to someone, compared with 82 per cent in Priority category 2 and 75 per cent in Priority category 3. They were also more likely to report that this contact had been frequent: 45 per cent of young people in Priority category 1 had contacted someone five times or more, compared with 22 per cent of those in Priority category 3.
- The majority of respondents used Connexions to discuss education- or work-related issues: 86 per cent discussed jobs and careers, 73 per cent discussed education and 55 per cent discussed training or work-based learning.
- There is also evidence that some young people were in contact with Connexions about other issues, such as money and benefits (21 per cent), feeling stressed (12 per cent) and alcohol and drugs (10 per cent). This was especially the case among young people receiving a higher level of support (for instance, 31 per cent of young people in Priority category 1 had received advice on money and benefits, compared with 15 per cent of Priority category 3).
- The advice given by Connexions in all these areas was generally rated as 'very' or 'fairly' useful, with at least 85 per cent of those receiving advice on each topic giving one of these ratings.

- In general, young people rated the Connexions Service highly, and the vast majority of respondents were satisfied with the services provided (90 per cent were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied with the service). Satisfaction was slightly higher amongst those receiving a higher level of support, and dissatisfaction was slightly higher among older respondents.
- Respondents were also satisfied with Connexions staff, who were perceived to be friendly (96 per cent felt they were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ friendly) and knowledgeable (90 per cent agreed this was the case). These results were consistent across age groups, although young people receiving lower levels of support were slightly less likely to consider staff to be ‘very’ friendly.
- Agreement that Connexions staff are easy to get hold of was less high than for other measures, although still as many as 79 per cent agreed with this. Young people receiving a more intensive level of support were more likely to strongly agree with this. However, those in sub-contracted Partnerships were less likely to than those in direct delivery areas (76 per cent and 81 per cent respectively), indicating that branding issues might affect young people’s perceptions of the organisation’s accessibility.
- Young people thought that Connexions had had a positive impact on them: two thirds stated that it had helped them make decisions regarding their future (66 per cent), and half felt their contact with the service had made them more confident (49 per cent; only one per cent said it had made them less confident). This was especially the case for younger respondents and, in terms of increased confidence, those receiving a higher level of support.
- Overall, perceptions of Connexions were positive; the great majority believed that it had a lot to offer (90 per cent) and that it helped young people to see what options were available (85 per cent).
- Awareness of other aspects of the Connexions Service (Connexions Direct, the Connexions Card and the Connexions Youth Charter) was significantly lower than awareness of Connexions overall: 36 per cent were aware of Connexions Direct, 24 per cent were aware of the Card, and just four per cent of the Youth Charter. Awareness of the Connexions Card increased at each stage of the fieldwork, reflecting the roll-out process (from 19 per cent in Phase 1 Partnerships to 28 per cent in Phase 3).
- Just over a third (36 per cent) of young people in Phase 2 and 3 fieldwork said they had heard of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) (EMA was not available in all LEAs covered by the Partnerships at the time of fieldwork), and just over a third of those had heard of EMA had done so through Connexions. Awareness was especially likely to come from Connexions for young people receiving a lower level of support (44 per cent of Priority category 1, compared with 29 per cent of Priority category 3).

- The most significant drivers for determining whether Connexions helped users decide what to do were whether contact with Connexions had increased their confidence, overall satisfaction with the service, the usefulness of advice given on various topics and being helped to see all of the options available to them. These last two were, in turn, key drivers of the first two measures and, since they can be directly targeted for improvement, may be the best areas to concentrate on in terms of maintaining and building upon the positive results seen so far.
- Results did not vary much between Phases; in particular the drivers of satisfaction and motivation were the same for Phase 1 as for the later Phases. Where differences existed, for example in terms of awareness of the Connexions Card, in most cases it seems likely that they were principally a factor of the fieldwork timings.

## **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, the authors would like to thank the many thousands of young people who agreed to be interviewed about Connexions. We would also like to thank the staff in the 47 Connexions Partnerships who provided samples for the survey and helped to ensure the smooth running of this large and complex survey.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 The Connexions Service

In the *Learning to Succeed* White Paper published in 2001, the government committed itself to setting up a single, coherent strategy aimed at all young people – the Connexions strategy. The Connexions Service is central to the delivery of this strategy in England, and offers a range of guidance and support for 13 to 19 year olds (and 20-24 year olds with learning difficulties and disabilities who are yet to make the transition to adult services). The Service is delivered primarily through a network of Personal Advisers (PAs) linking in with specialist support services. The Connexions Service is co-ordinated through Supporting Children and Young People's Group (SCYPG, formerly known as the Connexions Service National Unit (CSNU)), which is based within the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

A range of existing public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations have come together to form Connexions Partnerships, which develop and co-ordinate the delivery of support services for young people. Across England, 47 Connexions partnerships have been established since 2001 (15 'Phase 1 Partnerships' between April and September 2001; 13 'Phase 2 Partnerships' between April and June 2002; and 19 'Phase 3 Partnerships' between September 2002 and April 2003). The objectives of the Connexions Service are:

- to raise the aspirations, participation and achievement levels of all young people (including those outside learning or at risk of under achievement) by providing impartial information, advice, opportunities, for personal development and other support according to their needs;
- to provide all young people outside learning, or otherwise at risk of underachieving, with the support they need to fulfil their potential;
- to provide an integrated support service for young people and their carers to assist young people to engage effectively in learning and employment;
- to influence and improve learning provision and other services for all young people;
- to develop the capacity of the Partnerships to deliver the objectives above.

## 1.2 The purpose of this research

The Connexions Service is an ambitious attempt to provide improved help and support for a wide range of young people. Therefore, it is important to measure the experience and views of the young people who have used the Service. As the Connexions Partnerships came into being at different times, the assessment of the Connexions Service was first conducted among the Phase 1 Partnerships, and then across the Phase 2 and 3 Partnerships.

The overall aims of the research are to:

- assess young peoples' experiences and views of the service they have received from Connexions;
- look at whether the Connexions Service is meeting the needs of young people, and delivering an effective service, and if not what improvements could be made;
- inform the ongoing development of the whole Connexions Service.

In order to provide useful data at a local Partnership level, the research was designed to achieve around 1,000 responses in each Partnership.

This report contains the findings from the interviews conducted across all 47 Connexions Partnerships.

### **1.3 Summary of methodology**

In order to properly test the overall survey strategy, and to ensure that future waves of this survey are carried out in a cost-effective way, the pilot stage used a variety of methodologies to test which worked best. The Technical Appendices provide details of how the survey was conducted. Here, we provide a summary of the approach taken.

#### **1.3.1 Sampling**

Samples of young people aged 13-19 who had had contact with Connexions were drawn from the databases held by the 47 Partnerships. Each Partnership was asked to provide a sample of young people who had had some contact with Connexions in the previous three months.

The sample was drawn with the aim of achieving

- interviews with young people in receipt of intensive or Priority 1<sup>1</sup> support
- interviews with young people in receipt of intermediate or Priority 2 support
- interviews with young people in receipt of Priority 3 support (minimum intervention)

In some Partnerships, the young people selected for the survey were offered the chance to opt out of the research before their names and details were passed to BMRB. In other Partnerships, details were

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<sup>1</sup> For details of Priority categories, please see section 2.1

passed to BMRB who then wrote to the young people in advance of them being contacted by interviewers. Young people then had the opportunity to contact BMRB using a free telephone helpline to find out more about the survey or to opt out of taking part.

### **1.3.2 Methodology**

In order to test the most effective way of interviewing these young people, we tried a variety of different methodologies during fieldwork for the Phase 1 Partnerships.

Priority 1: Half of the young people in Priority 1 (those in receipt of intensive support) were interviewed face-to-face, in their homes. The other half were interviewed by telephone.

Priority 2 and 3: Half of the Priority 2 and 3 young people (those in receipt of medium or minimal support) were interviewed over the telephone. The other half were sent a self-completion questionnaire through the post (which also offered the option of completing the questionnaire on the world wide web).

For Phase 2 and 3, half Priority 1 respondents were interviewed face-to-face and half over the phone (the same approach as Phase 1). However for Priority 2 and 3 respondents postal questionnaires were only used when there was no valid, usable telephone number available.

The questionnaire was kept the same for each mode of interviewing. Details of the outcomes and success of each mode are given in the Appendices.

For all young people aged 13-15, the consent of their parent or guardian was obtained before any interview took place.

52,362 interviews were achieved across the 47 Partnerships.

### **1.3.3 Questionnaire**

There were two versions of the final questionnaire used for the Phase 1 fieldwork.

Version 1 had three questions on the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), and these questions were only asked in Partnerships containing LEAs where this Allowance was available at the time of the research.

Version 2 did not ask the three questions on EMA. Apart from this, the two versions were identical.

For Phases 2 and 3 the questionnaire version including questions on EMA was used.

The questionnaire covered the following issues:

- Awareness of Connexions
- Contact with Connexions
- Issues that the young person had discussed with a Connexions adviser
- Satisfaction with Connexions
- The impact of using Connexions
- Involvement in Connexions
- Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)(in certain areas)
- General demographic details

The self-completion version was an eight-page, A4 booklet.

Fieldwork for Phase 1 took place between January and March 2003

Fieldwork for Phase 2 took place between July and September 2003

Fieldwork for Phase 3 took place between October and December 2003.

#### **1.3.4 Notes on reading the report:**

Except where stated otherwise stated, the data provided have been weighted to reflect the original population of each Partnership and the relative sizes of Partnerships.

The percentages in the report do not always add up to 100 per cent. In some cases this is due to respondents giving more than one answer to the question, but on questions where only one answer is allowed this is due to a small proportion of respondents replying 'don't know'/'not applicable', not responding to the question, or to rounding.

## 2 Profile of respondents

### 2.1 Priority category of respondents

The support that Connexions provides to young people varies according to the needs of the young person. There are three levels of support:

- Priority 1 'Intensive support' for those with multiple problems, or for those not in education, training or employment post 16.
- Priority 2 'Supported'. In-depth guidance and help for those at risk of not participating effectively in education and training.
- Priority 3 'Minimum intervention'. General information, advice and guidance.

Respondents were not asked which Priority category they fell into, as this is not something they would necessarily know. Instead, information on the Priority category each young person was assigned to was attached to the sample files that BMRB received from each Partnership.

Overall 18 per cent of respondents received Priority 1 support, 38 per cent received Priority 2 support, and most, 44 per cent, received Priority 3 support<sup>2</sup>.

However, there were big differences by Partnership. The proportion falling into the Priority 1 category ranged from six per cent in North London to 31 per cent in Cornwall & Devon.

Partnerships can be divided into two types, depending on how they were originally set up:

- Direct delivery
- Sub-contracted delivery

Descriptions of each Partnership type are provided in Appendix H.

**Table 2a: Priority category of respondents**

Base: All respondents

	All (n=52,362) %	Direct delivery (n=23,051) %	Sub-contracted (n=29,311) %
Priority 1	18	18	18
Priority 2	38	37	39
Priority 3	44	45	44

As will be seen in the rest of this report, Priority category is an important variable. Young people in Priority category 1 tend to have far more on-going contact with Connexions advisers than those who

<sup>2</sup> These are weighted figures.

fall into Category 3. It is therefore important to assess the satisfaction of these young people separately, and to look at the impact that Connexions has had on them.

## 2.2 Fieldwork stages

Fieldwork for the Connexions customer satisfaction survey took place in three stages. Stage one fieldwork took place in 15 Phase 1 Partnership areas covering 31 per cent of respondents. Stage two fieldwork took place in 12 of the 13 Phase 2 Partnership areas, which covered 28 per cent of respondents. The third stage of fieldwork took place in the remaining Phase 2 Partnership, and the 19 Phase 3 Partnership areas covering 41 per cent of respondents<sup>3</sup>.

Table 2b shows the breakdown of respondents in each Phase by gender and age.

	All (n=52,362) %	Phase 1 (n=16,150) %	Phase 2 (n=14,202) %	Phase 3 (n=22,010) %
<b>Priority Category</b>				
Priority 1	18	18	19	17
Priority 2	38	37	39	38
Priority 3	44	45	42	45
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	55	55	55	55
Female	44	44	45	44
<b>Age</b>				
13-15	20	14	20	25
16-17	58	62	61	54
18-20	21	24	18	21

## 2.3 Age and gender

Young men were more likely to have had contact with Connexions than were young women. Fifty-five per cent of the respondents were male and 44 per cent were female (one per cent did not answer). There was little difference in this proportion by age, ethnicity, or Partnership type.

The young men in contact with Connexions were slightly more likely than the young women to be defined as Priority 1 or 2 (intensive and medium support), as Figure 2a shows.

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<sup>3</sup> Since sample information was not available in Gloucestershire in time for the second stage of fieldwork, interviewing in this Phase 2 Partnership was conducted alongside that in the Phase 3 Partnerships, during the third stage of fieldwork. Further information is given in the Appendices.

**Figure 2a: Priority category of respondents, by gender**

Base: All respondents (n=52,362)



Most of those in contact with Connexions were aged 16 to 18, which is not surprising, as this is a key time for young people seeking advice about careers and further education. In total, 79 per cent of those in contact with Connexions fell within this age range – with 16 year olds being the most common, accounting for 33 per cent of the total.

The average age of respondents was 16.5 years.

There was a very slight age gradient by category, with those defined as Priority category 2 having a slightly lower average age than those defined as Priority category 1 or 3 (average ages were 16.6, 16.4 and 16.4 respectively).

**Table 2c: Age of respondents**

Base: All respondents

	All (n=52,362)	Priority 1 (n=9,239)	Priority 2 (n=19,405)	Priority 3 (n=23,718)
	%	%	%	%
13-14	7	9	5	8
15	14	15	12	14
16	33	32	33	32
17	26	24	28	24
18	15	14	15	14
19-20	7	5	6	7
<i>Average age</i>	16.5	16.4	16.6	16.4

## 2.4 Ethnicity

Across the whole sample, 87 per cent of respondents were white. However, as would be expected there was a great deal of variation by Partnership. Around 98 per cent of respondents from Cumbria, Northumberland, Cornwall and York & North Yorkshire Partnerships categorised themselves as white ethnic origin. Central London had the lowest proportion of white respondents (35 per cent), but had the highest proportion of black respondents (46 per cent) and respondents who classed themselves as mixed ethnic origin (nine per cent). London West had the highest proportion of respondents of any Asian ethnic origin (25 per cent), although, Merseyside had the highest proportion of Chinese respondents at just over 11 per cent. West Yorkshire had the highest proportion of respondents from Pakistani origin (14 per cent), while East London had the highest proportion of Bangladeshi respondents (nine per cent). London West had the largest proportion of respondents of Indian origin (14 per cent) followed by Leicester Shire with the second highest (10 per cent).

In North London 50 per cent of the young people the Partnership was in contact with defined themselves as white and in South London, 65 per cent did so. At the other extreme, 98 per cent of the young people in Cumbria defined themselves as white.

There was a tendency for those Partnerships in areas with higher proportions of young people from minority ethnic groups to be run as a sub-contracted model, as Table 2d shows.

**Table 2d: Ethnic group of respondents, by mode of delivery**

Base: All respondents

	All (n=16,120) %	Direct delivery (n=8,310) %	Sub-contracted (n=6,007) %
White	87	92	83
Black (Caribbean, African, other)	3	1	4
Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, other)	6	3	8
Mixed and other	3	2	4
Not stated/refused	1	*	1

Young people from Asian backgrounds were less likely than other young people to be assigned to Priority 1 (14 per cent were in this category, compared to 18 per cent of white and 21 per cent of black young people) as shown in Table 2e.

**Table 2e: Priority category of respondents, by ethnic group**

Base: All respondents giving details of their ethnic group

	White (n=45,473) %	Black (n = 4,944) %	Asian (n = 3,214) %	Mixed/other (n = 1,513) %
Priority 1	18	21	14	20
Priority 2	38	40	40	39
Priority 3	44	39	46	41

## 2.5 Occupation

Just over half of the young people in contact with Connexions were in full-time education at school, college or university (57 per cent). Obviously, this varied by age, with nearly all of the 13-15 year olds falling into this category (93 per cent), compared to 53 per cent of those aged 16-17 and 30 per cent of those aged 18-20.

Male respondents aged over 16 were more likely to be in a full time job (16 per cent compared to 12 per cent of female respondents) or involved in Modern Apprenticeships than females of the same age (nine per cent compared to six per cent). Female respondents were more likely to be in full-time education (61 per cent) compared to male respondents (53 per cent).

A quarter (29 per cent) of the 18-20 year olds were in a full-time job, as were 14 per cent of 16-to-17 year olds.

Thirteen per cent of the 16-to-17 year olds were looking for work, a figure which rose to 19 per cent among the 18-20 year olds.

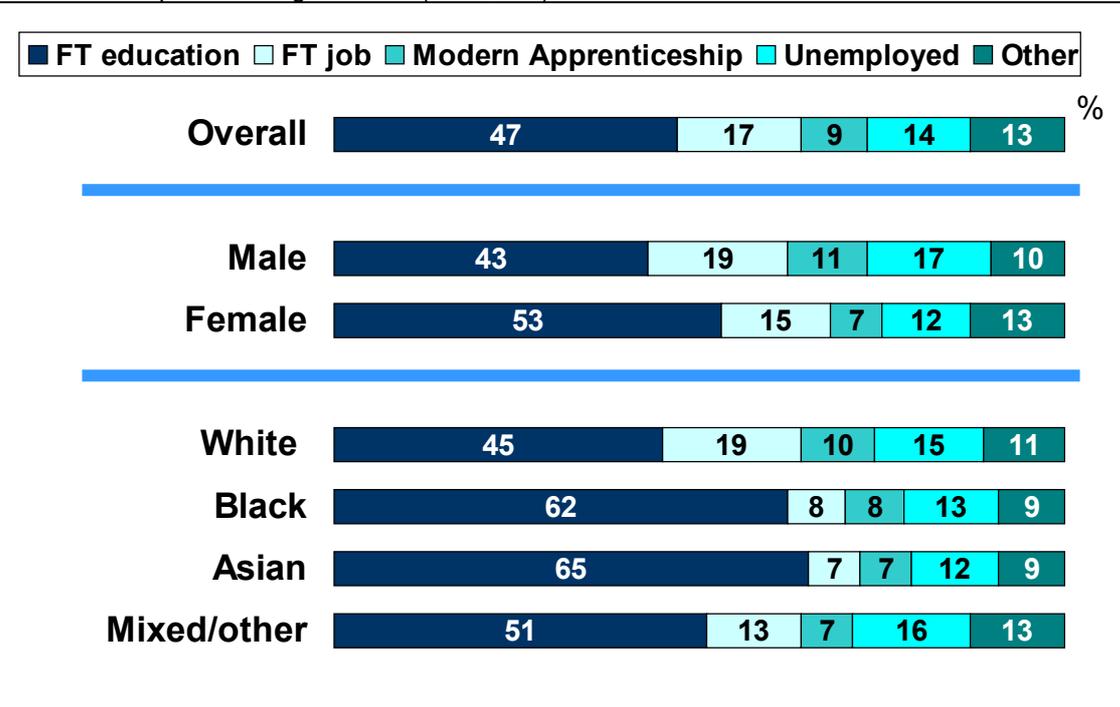
The only other activity to account for a sizeable proportion of the young people in contact with Connexions was being on a Modern Apprenticeship or other Government supported training. Eight per cent of 16-17 year olds were enrolled on a Modern Apprenticeship or other training scheme, as were six per cent of 18-20 year olds. This, again, was slightly more common among young men than women.

Other activities accounted for only small proportions of the young people. One per cent (mainly young women) were looking after the home or family, and one per cent were taking a break from study or work (although, those taking such a break are likely to be away from home and so less likely to have taken part in this research).

Figure 2b shows the working status of 16-20 year olds, broken down by gender and ethnic group.

**Figure 2b: Working status, by gender and ethnic group**

Base: All respondents aged 16-20 (n=41,449)



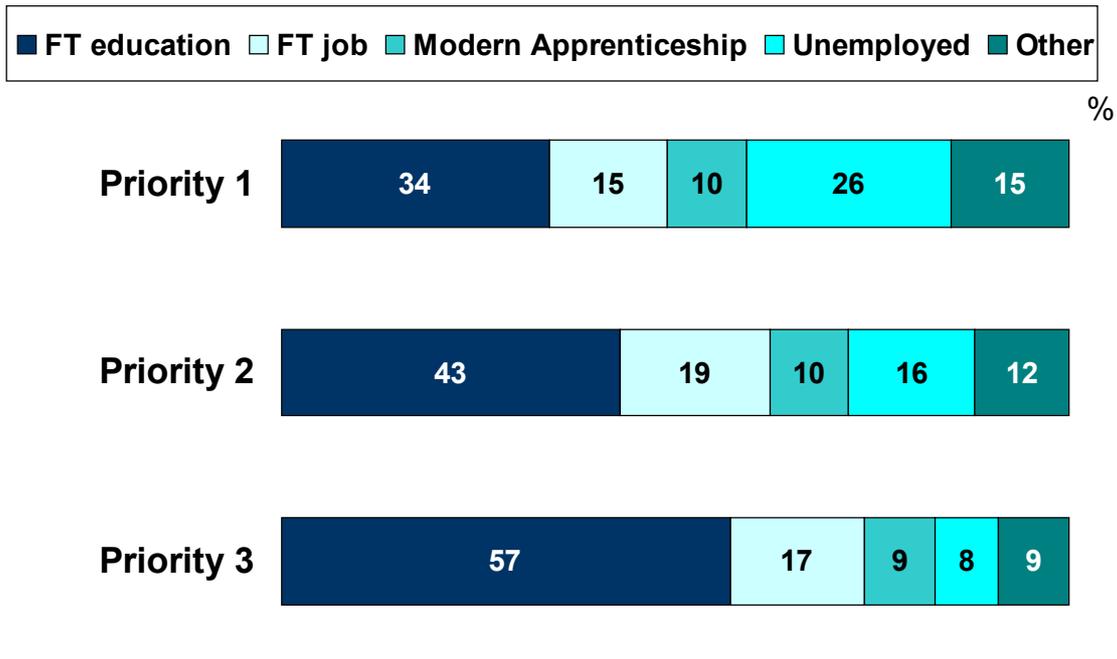
Logically, Priority level ought to be linked with working status, as Priority 1 is designed to target those young people with multiple problems or who are not in education, training or employment post-16.

Although most of the 13-15 year olds were in full-time education, a significant minority of those in Priority 1 (eight per cent) were not. Six per cent of those in Priority 2 were not in full-time education whereas only two per cent of those in Priority 3 were outside full-time education at this age. Those 13-15 year olds in Priority 1 who were not at school were most commonly looking for work, doing nothing or studying part time (each accounts for one to two per cent). Those in Priority 2 were most commonly in part time employment (just over one per cent).

As would be expected, among the 16-20 year olds, those in Priority 1 were far more likely to be unemployed than those in the other two categories, and less likely to be in full-time work or in full-time education. Priority 2 respondents were less likely to be in full-time education than those in Priority 3, but were more likely to have a full-time job. Figure 2c gives the details.

**Figure 2c: Working status, by Priority category**

Base: All respondents aged 16-20 (n=41,449)



When looking at the Priority categories of respondents in relation to their current working or education status, it is clear that those who were unemployed or looking for work were more likely to be receiving intensive support - suggesting that this is an important group for allocating Connexions resources. Of respondents aged 16 and over, 26 per cent of those receiving Priority 1 support were unemployed or looking for work compared to 16 per cent of those receiving Priority 2 support and eight per cent who receive Priority 3 support.

Those receiving minimum support were more likely to be in full-time education, with 57 per cent of those in Priority 3 in full-time education, as opposed to 34 per cent in Priority 1 and 43 per cent in Priority 2 support.

### 3 Awareness of Connexions

Overall nine out of ten respondents had heard of Connexions prior to the interview. Awareness was slightly higher for Phase 2 Partnerships at 92 per cent and was slightly lower for Phase 3 Partnerships at 89 per cent. Awareness among Partnerships in Phase 1 was 91 per cent.

There was no significant difference in awareness level across the three Priority categories of support, while female respondents were only marginally more likely to remember having heard of Connexions prior to the interview than male respondents. Respondents from black ethnic groups had the highest awareness level at 92 per cent and Asian ethnic groups had the lowest at 87 per cent.

**Table 3a: Awareness of Connexions**

Base: All respondents (n=52,362)

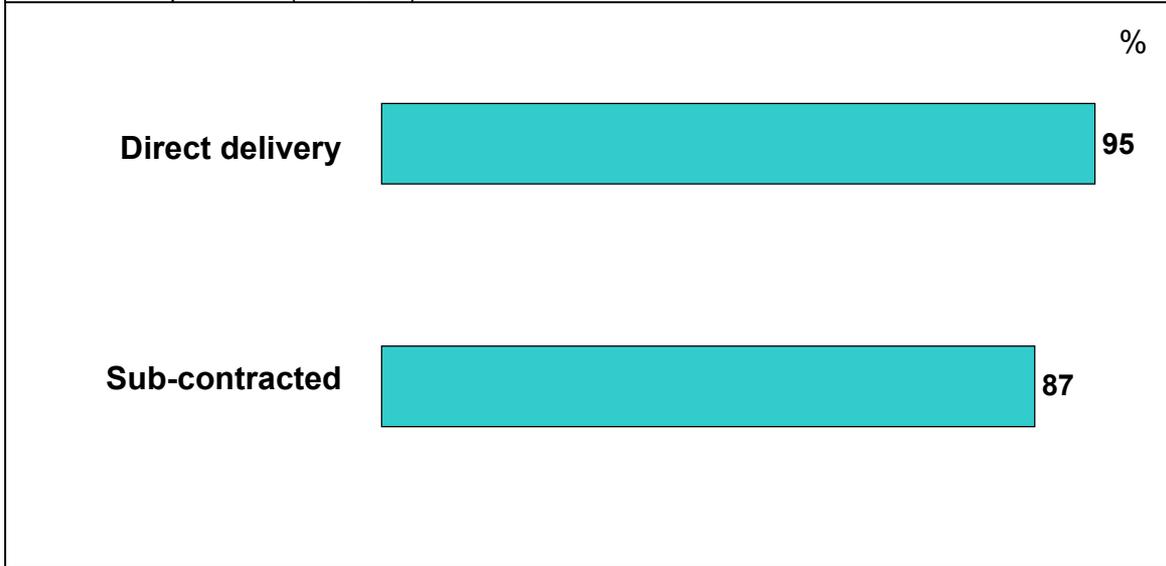
	%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>90</b>
Priority 1	91
Priority 2	90
Priority 3	91
Male	90
Female	91
White	91
Non-white	89

When considering these results it is worth bearing in mind that the sample for this survey consisted of young people who had been in contact with Connexions in some way, thus this does not reflect awareness of Connexions amongst all young people in the relevant areas. It would indeed have been quite surprising had awareness been low amongst this group. However, not all contact with Connexions might be easily identified as such. If a young person had spoken to a careers adviser at school, it may not have been clear whether this was someone from Connexions; likewise the young person may have forgotten receiving a letter or a telephone call. This might explain why awareness was not 100 per cent.

Awareness of Connexions varied considerably between different types of provider. Where the Connexions Service was sub-contracted 13 per cent of respondents stated they had not heard of Connexions before the interview. This compares to four per cent with direct delivery suppliers. This is not surprising, as sub-contracted services may not be clearly branded as Connexions.

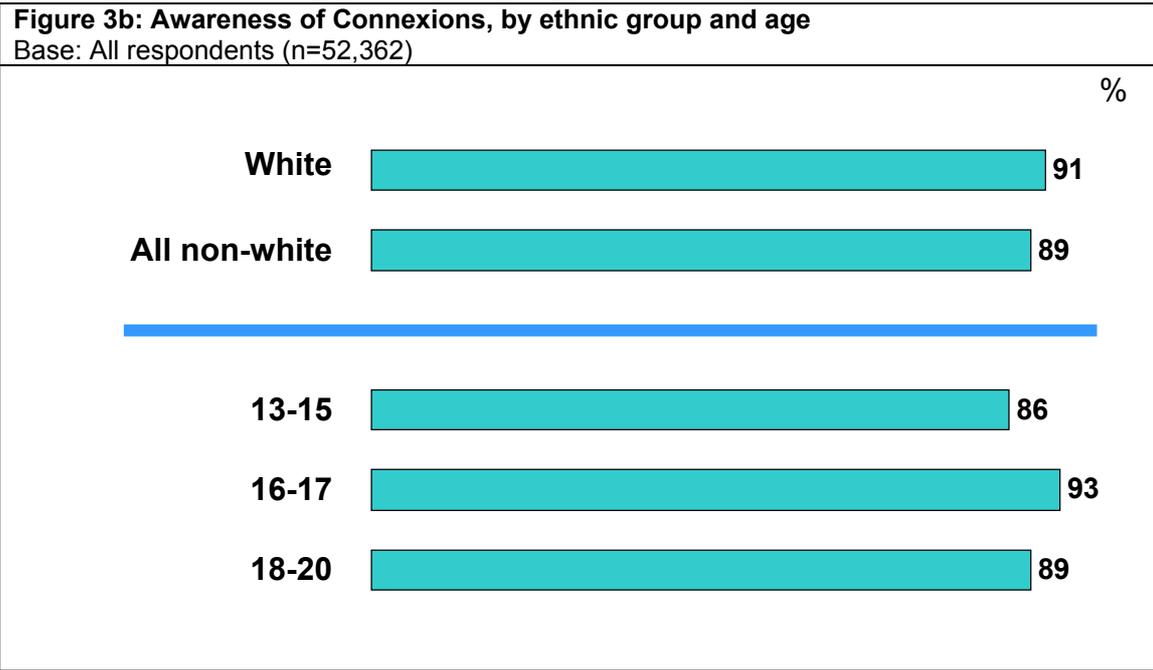
**Figure 3a: Awareness of Connexions, by mode of delivery**

Base: All respondents (n=52,362)



Level of awareness varied considerably between Partnership areas. Level of awareness was over 97 per cent among respondents from Cumbria, Northamptonshire, Cheshire, Merseyside, Lincoln and Tees Valley. Awareness of Connexions was below 80 per cent in West Yorkshire, Kent & Medway, and Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire (MKOB), where 35 per cent of respondents had not heard of Connexions prior to the interview. With the exception of Tees Valley (where the Service is sub-contracted) all Partnerships with over 98 per cent awareness levels provided the Connexions Service through a direct delivery model. Conversely, all Partnerships with less than 80 per cent of respondents being aware provided the Service to young people through sub-contractors.

There was no significant difference in awareness levels between different ethnic groups, even though a much higher proportion of respondents from minority ethnic backgrounds were in sub-contracted Partnership areas. Overall, 91 per cent of white respondents were aware of Connexions prior to the interview compared to 89 per cent of all minority ethnic respondents. Even though 78 per cent of black ethnic respondents were in sub-contracted Partnership areas, awareness was highest among these young people than among any other ethnic group, at 92 per cent. Asian ethnic groups had the lowest awareness, with 12 per cent reporting not having heard of Connexions prior to the interview. Asian respondents were also more likely than average to be in a sub-contracted area, and of the 75 per cent of Asian respondents who were, 14 per cent were unaware of the Connexions brand. This suggests that type of Partnership could be linked to lower awareness levels among Asian respondents, although awareness was still high among respondents from black ethnic groups where their service was provided by a sub-contractor at 91 per cent compared to an awareness level of 87 per cent among white respondents in sub-contracted areas.



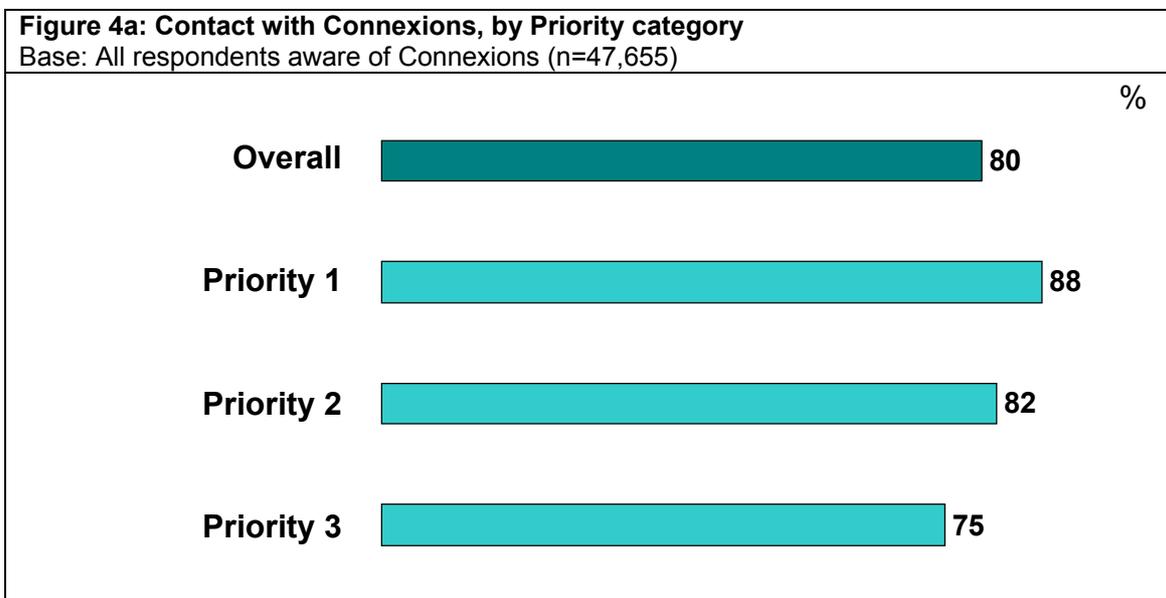
Those aged 16-17 had greater awareness (93 per cent) than respondents aged 13-15 (86 per cent) and 18-20 (89 per cent). The higher level of awareness among 16-17 year olds could be an indication that the service provided is focused on this group. In the 13-15 age group 84 per cent of male respondents were aware of the Connexions Service compared to 88 per cent of females in this age group. Difference in awareness between males and females was negligible in the 16-17 age group and awareness levels were equal in the 18-20 age group. In relation to type of provider, although awareness of Connexions was slightly lower for all age groups where the service was sub-contracted there was still higher awareness among 16-17 year olds than for 13-15 and 18-20 year olds.

## 4 Usage of Connexions

### 4.1 Contact with Connexions

Of the respondents who had heard of Connexions, 80 per cent had spoken to someone at Connexions, such as a Personal Adviser. (This equates to 73 per cent of all respondents interviewed across all three waves of the survey.)

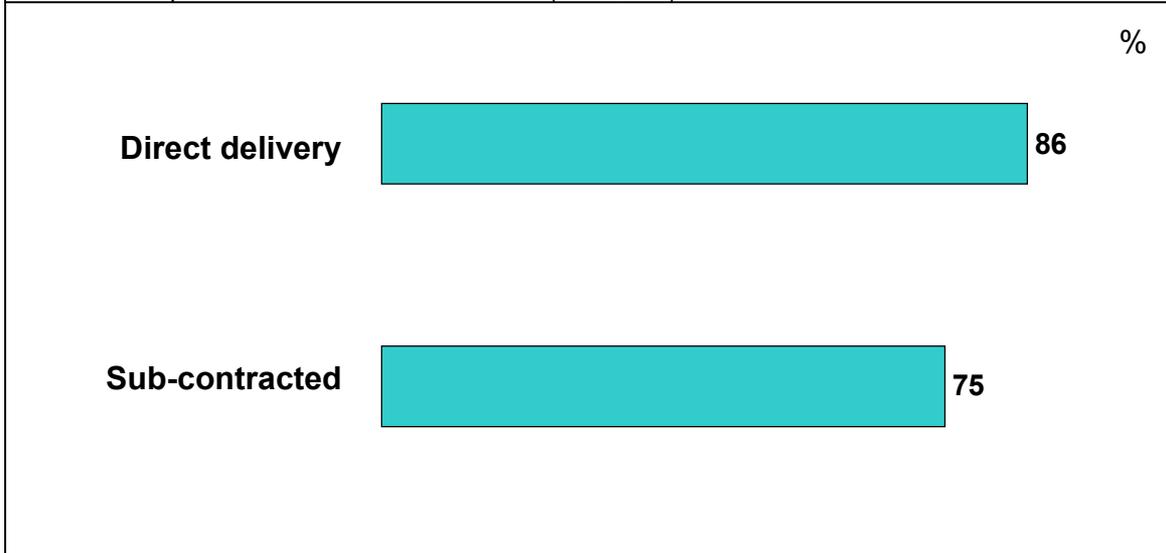
The percentage of Priority 1 respondents who talked to someone from Connexions was higher than the corresponding proportions for the other Priority categories, at 88 per cent as opposed to 82 per cent for Priority 2 and 75 per cent for Priority 3 respondents. (At Phase 1 alone, the figures were 88 per cent for Priority 1, 85 per cent for Priority 2 and 80 per cent for Priority 3 respondents.) This pattern is not surprising as those receiving intensive support should be more likely to remember having contact.



The proportions of respondents who had contact with Connexions varied by type of Partnership delivery. Where the service was delivered by a sub-contractor, 75 per cent of respondents who had heard of Connexions reported having talked to someone at Connexions, whereas in direct delivery Partnerships 86 per cent said they had contact (see Figure 4b).

**Figure 4b: Contact with Connexions, by mode of delivery**

Base: All respondents aware of Connexions (n=47,655)

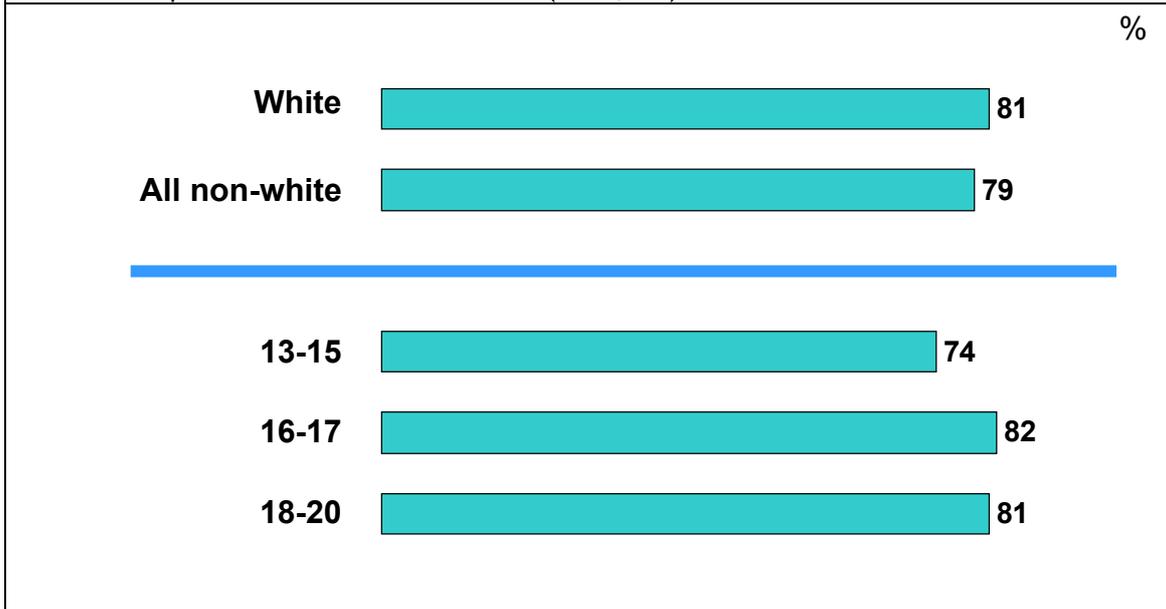


Looking at individual Partnerships, almost all the respondents who had heard of Connexions in Cheshire & Warrington (93 per cent) had talked to someone at Connexions. Conversely, only 56 per cent of respondents in York & North Yorkshire who had heard of Connexions had spoken to someone. Partnerships with lower proportions of respondents having contact with Connexions tended to be sub-contracted Partnerships, suggesting that branding issues could be a contributory factor to these figures, with some Partnerships clearly labelling their services as Connexions while others operate under different names. Northumberland (a direct delivery partnership) was the exception to this, with a notably low proportion of respondents who had remembered having spoken to someone at Connexions (62 per cent). This suggests that type of Partnership is not as reliable a predictor as Figure 4b suggests, and that there is also a great deal of variation between Partnerships of the same type.

Respondents aged 13-15 were less likely to have talked to someone at Connexions (74 per cent) compared to those aged 16-17 (82 per cent) and 18-20 (81 per cent). This results could be because the Connexions Service is focused towards those in this middle age band. White respondents were slightly more likely to have talked to someone at Connexions (81 per cent) than the respondents from minority ethnic backgrounds (79 per cent). Overall, respondents from Asian backgrounds were least likely to have had contact with someone at Connexions (77 per cent), while 81 per cent of black ethnic respondents and 82 per cent of respondents from mixed ethnic backgrounds reported having contact with someone at Connexions. The lower contact figure for Asian respondents could be linked to Priority category as they were more likely to be assigned to Priority categories 2 and 3.

**Figure 4c: Contact with Connexions, by ethnic group and age**

Base: All respondents aware of Connexions (n=47,655)



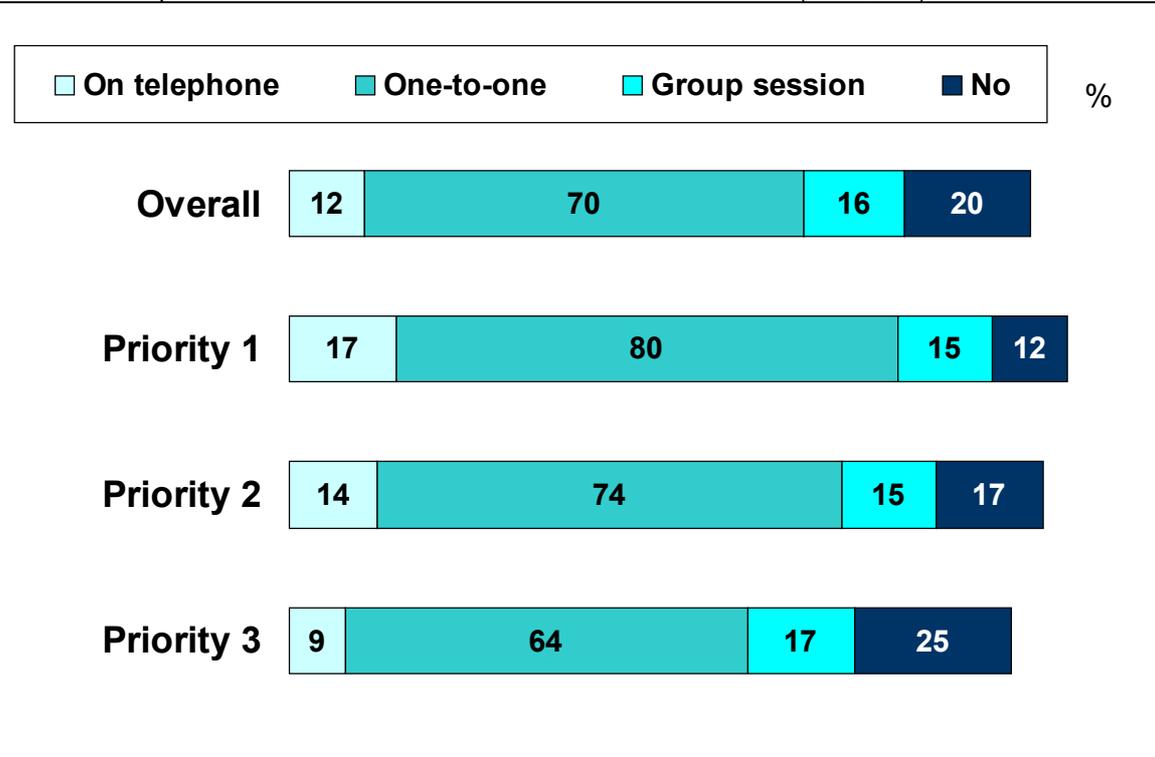
Lower proportions of respondents in full-time education (75 per cent), and those who stated they were doing nothing (76 per cent) reported having spoken to someone at Connexions. Conversely, those who were doing Modern Apprenticeships, voluntary activities and those who stated they were still deciding what to do were more likely than those with other working status to report having spoken to someone at Connexions; respective figures are 90 per cent, 91 per cent, and 97 per cent.

## 4.2 Type of contact with Connexions

For the Phase 2 and 3 Partnership fieldwork, questions on mode of contact with Connexions were introduced. Of all respondents interviewed in Phase 2 and 3 Partnerships who had heard of Connexions 70 per cent had spoken to someone at Connexions on a one-to-one basis, 16 per cent had taken part in a group session with Connexions staff and 12 per cent had spoken to someone from Connexions on the telephone. Respondents receiving maximum support were more likely to have spoken to someone on the telephone (17 per cent of this group had) and also to have spoken to someone on a one-to-one basis, (80 per cent had). There was no significant difference between the priority groups with regard to group sessions.

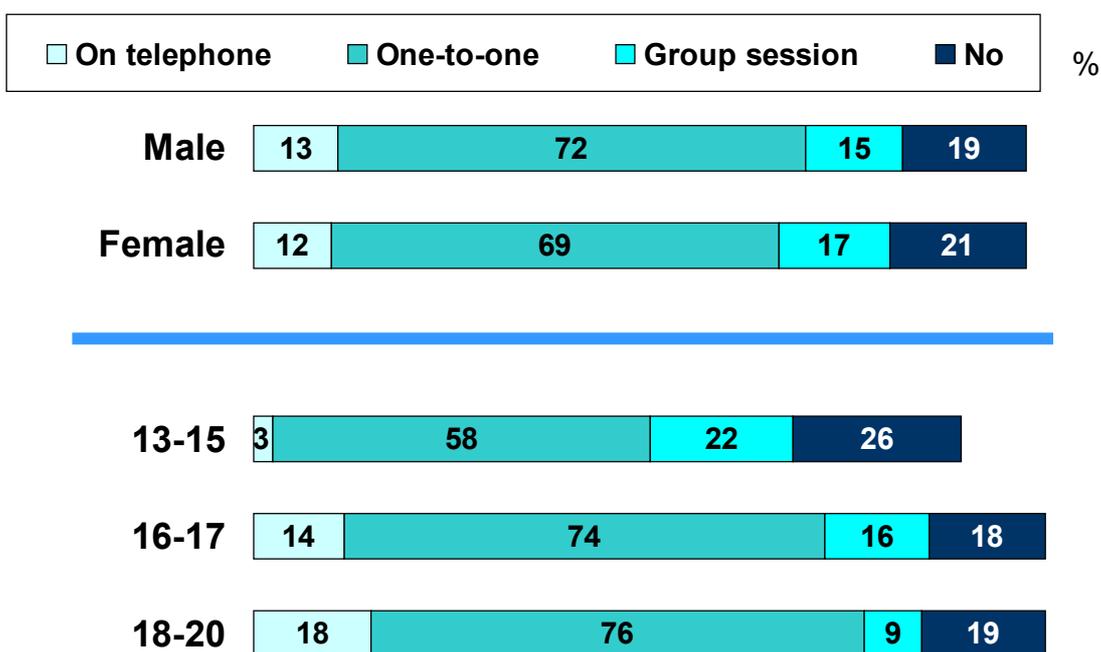
**Figure 4d: Mode of contact, by Priority category**

Base: All respondents in Phase 2/3 who had heard of Connexions (n=32,909)



Male respondents (72 per cent) were slightly more likely than female respondents (69 per cent) to have spoken to someone on a one-to-one basis, whereas female respondents (17 per cent) were marginally more likely to have spoken to someone in a group session than male respondents (15 per cent). Respondents aged 18-20 were more likely to have spoken to someone on the telephone (18 per cent) than those aged 16-17 (14 per cent) and 13-15 (three per cent). Furthermore those aged 13-15 were less likely to have spoken to someone on a one-to-one basis (58 per cent) than those aged 16 and over (74 per cent) but were more likely to have had contact with Connexions through a group session (22 per cent) than those aged 18-20 (nine per cent). Contact with Connexions through group sessions was also more likely among 16 year old respondents (18 per cent) than 17 year olds (12 per cent). This finding could be linked to the working status of the respondent as 19 per cent of those in full-time education had had contact with someone from Connexions in a group session. This corresponds to the most common working status for respondents aged 16 and below.

**Figure 4e: Mode of contact, by gender and age**  
 Base: All respondents in Phase 2/3 who had heard of Connexions (n=32,909)



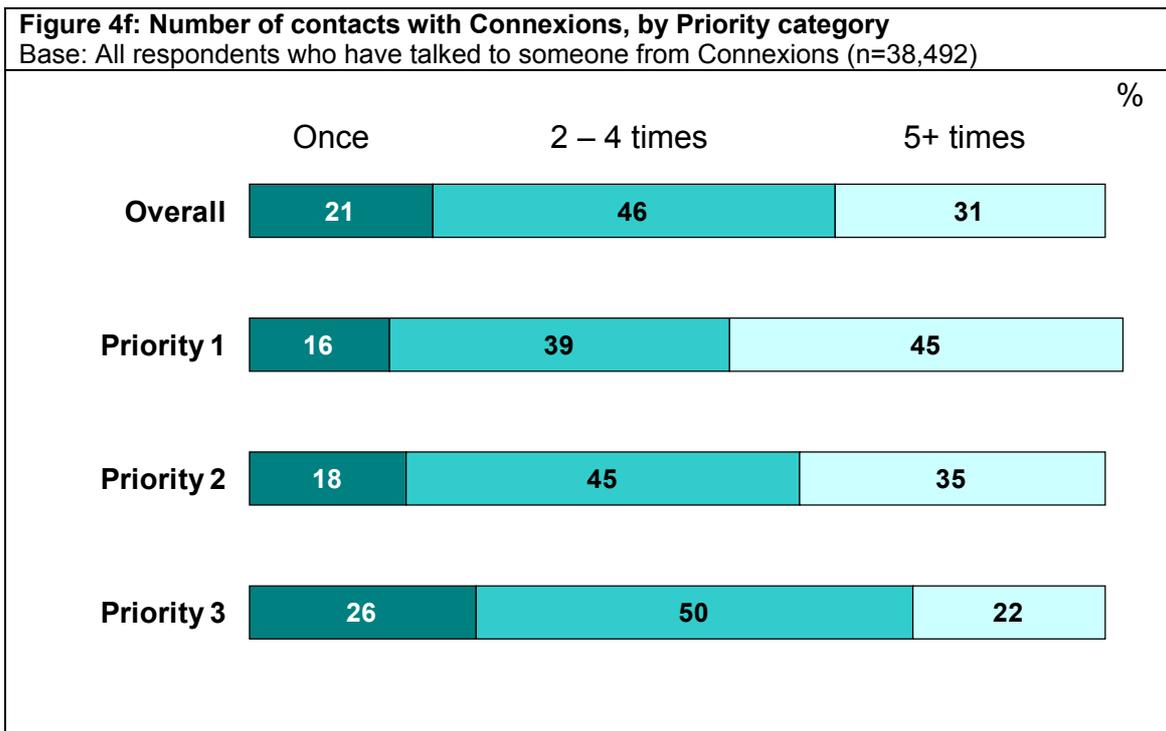
In relation to working status, the following groups were most likely to have spoken to someone at Connexions over the telephone: those doing voluntary activity (31 per cent had), looking after home or family (30 per cent), pregnant (25 per cent), on government-supported training (25 per cent) and those who were unemployed or looking for work (21 per cent). Respondents in full-time education were less likely to have spoken to someone from Connexions over the phone (seven per cent). Furthermore, a lower proportion of respondents in full-time education had talked to Connexions in a one-to-one session (63 per cent), whereas higher proportions of respondents who were on government supported training schemes (87 per cent), on modern apprenticeships (82 per cent) or looking for work or unemployed (82 per cent) had talked to someone in a one-to-one session.

### 4.3 Frequency of contact with Connexions

Of all respondents who have talked to someone at Connexions, such as a Personal Adviser, 21 per cent had had contact only once, 46 per cent had between two and four contacts and 31 per cent had contacted Connexions five times or more.

Respondents receiving maximum support (Priority category 1) tended to have contact with Connexions most often with 45 per cent of them having contacted Connexions five times or more, as opposed to 35 per cent in Priority 2 and 22 per cent in Priority 3, the minimum support group. This

is unsurprising as it is logical for those receiving maximum support to be seen more frequently by Connexions staff.

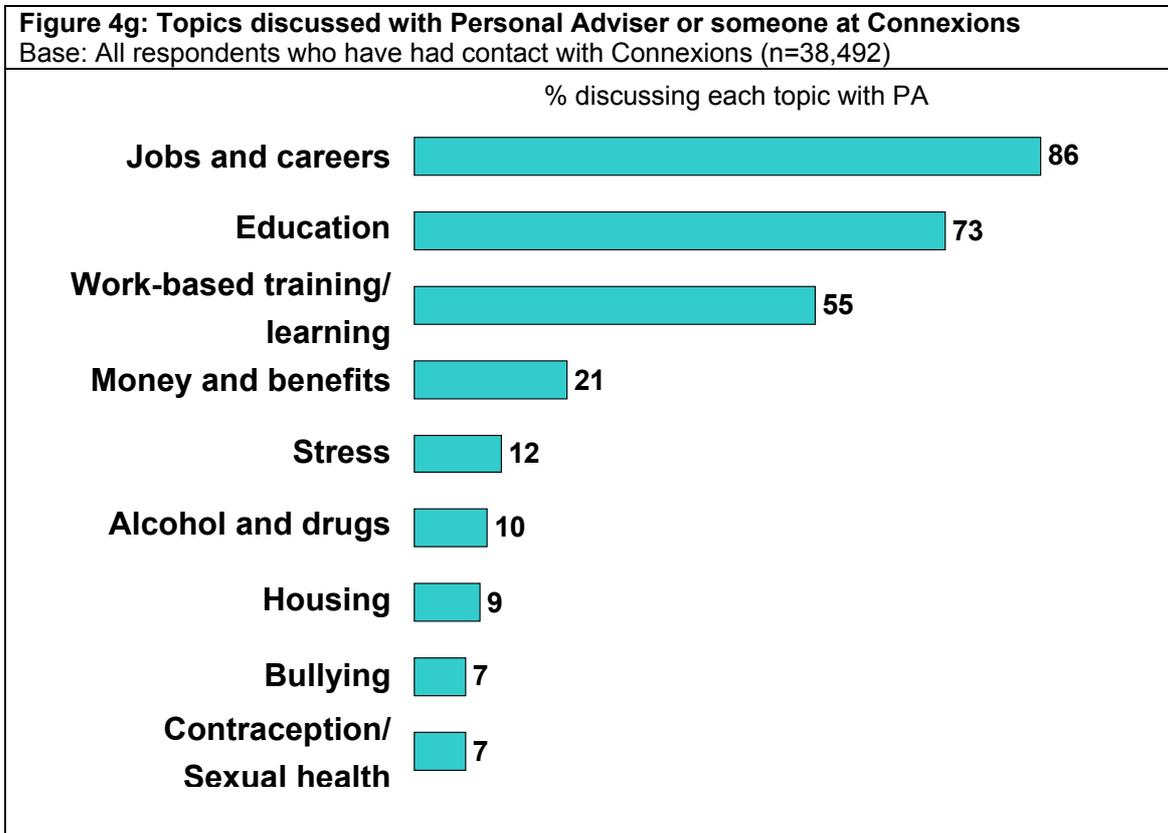


Frequency of contact also increased with age with 42 per cent of 18-20 year olds having five or more contacts compared to 33 per cent of 16-17 year olds and 15 per cent of 13-15 year olds. This finding is not linked to Priority category of respondent as 18-20 year olds in Priority 1 support were still considerably more likely to have had contact Connexions five times or more (58 per cent) than 13-15 year olds receiving Priority 1 support (29 per cent). However, it is important to note that the question asked about contact with Connexions at any time, rather than just within, say, the last 12 months. This limits the number of contacts possible for younger respondents who have had less opportunity to be in contact with Connexions simply because they have not been in the age range covered by the service for as long as older respondents. Another possible explanation may be that younger respondents have less autonomy and therefore fewer opportunities for multiple contacts with Connexions. Being in full-time education may also restrict access to Connexions during office hours.

Frequency of contact with Connexions is linked to slightly higher levels of overall satisfaction with the Connexions Service; 94 per cent of those who had contacted Connexions five times or said they were satisfied with Connexions, compared to 90 per cent of those had contacted someone at Connexions only once.

#### 4.4 Topics discussed with Personal Advisers

Figure 4g summarises the topics discussed by respondents who said they had talked with someone at Connexions. It is clear that education and careers are the key topics of discussion for the majority of users of the Connexions Service.

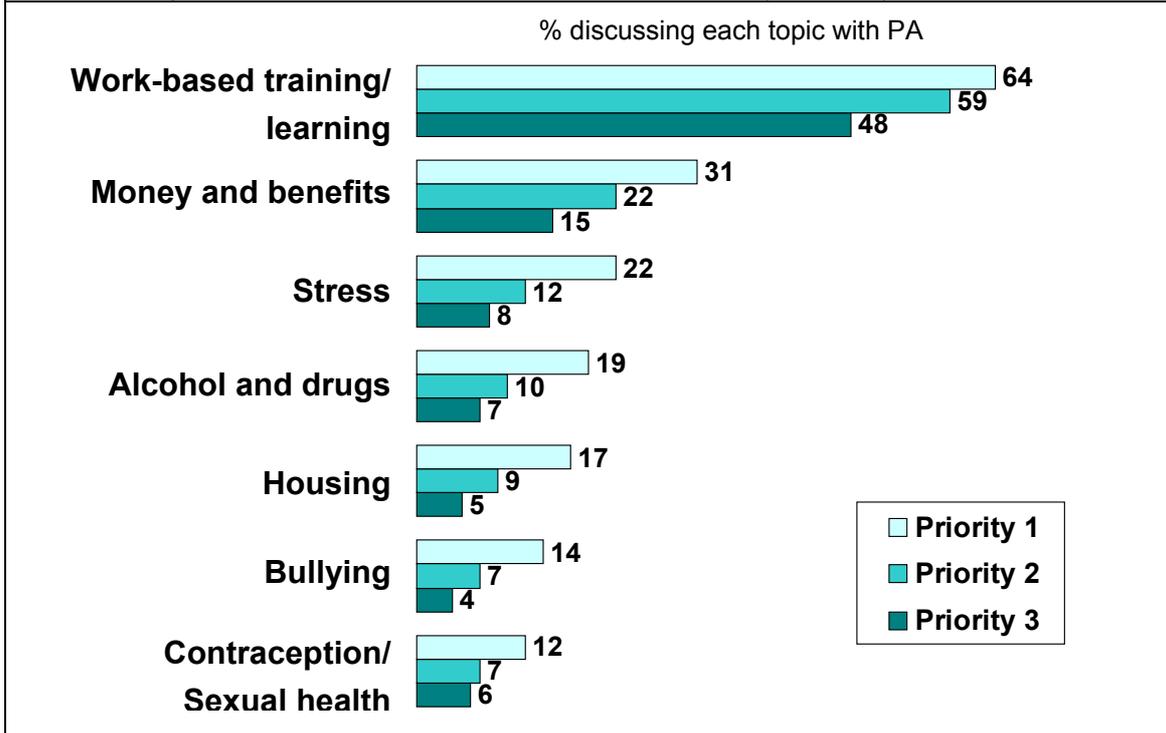


Most young people spoke solely about the most common areas: jobs and careers, education, and work-based training or learning. As the Connexions Service took over the functions of the old Careers Service, it could be that some respondents were unaware that Connexions provided information on broader ‘personal’ as well as career-related issues.

Proportions of respondents who had discussed education, and jobs and careers were relatively consistent across all Priority categories. Young people receiving a higher level of support (Priority category 1 and to a lesser extent Priority category 2 young people) were more likely to report having discussed the less commonly covered topics (see Figure 4h). This is as expected as this wider range of advice is particularly aimed at these young people.

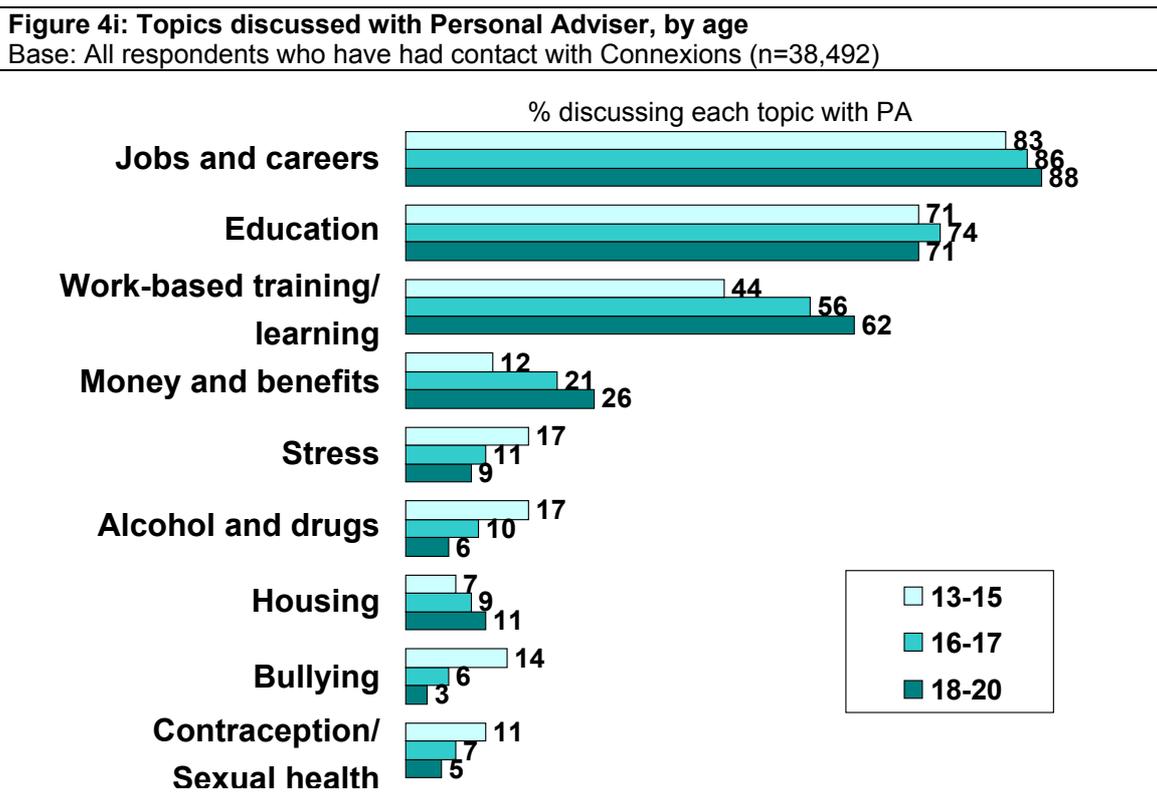
**Figure 4h: Topics discussed with Personal Adviser or someone from Connexions, by Priority category (excluding job-and education-related topics)**

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions (n=38,492)

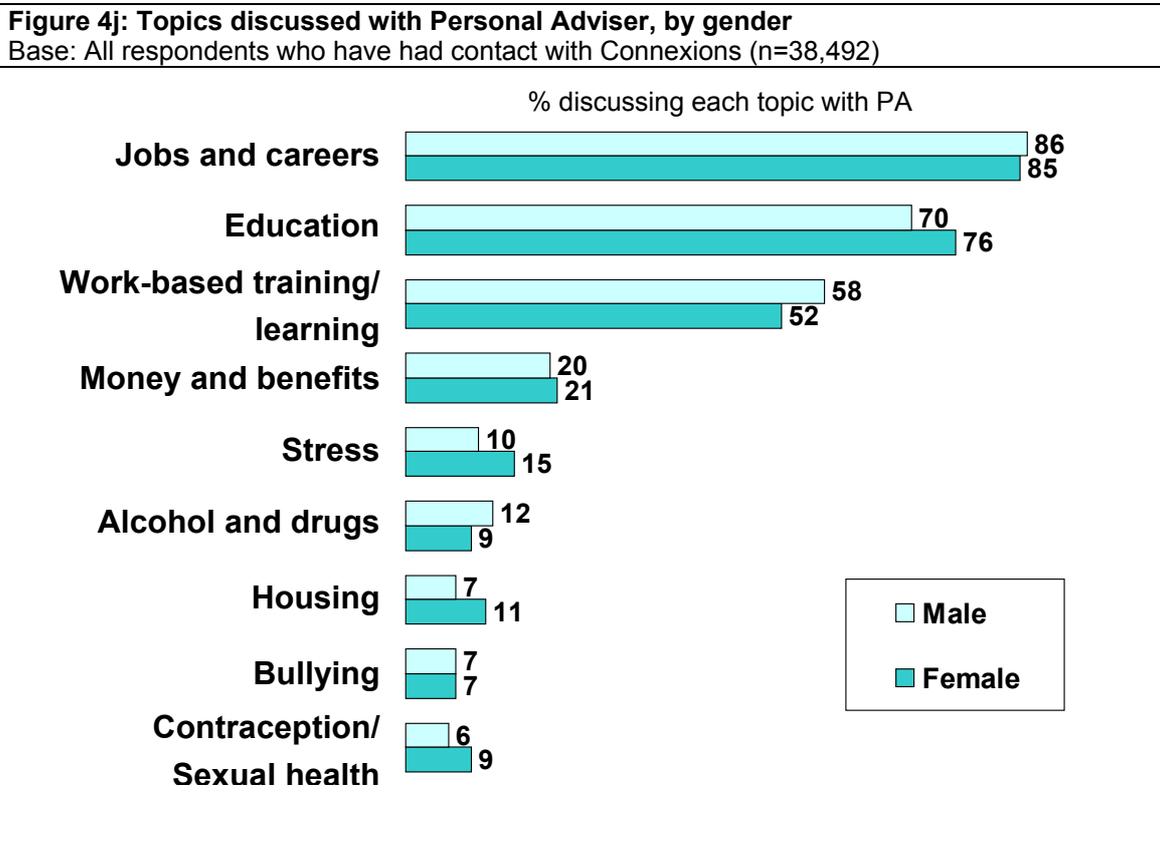


It is not surprising that older respondents were more likely to discuss issues like work, money or benefits and housing, while younger respondents were more likely to mention education or bullying (see Figure 4i). It is interesting to note that younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to discuss more personal issues such as feeling stressed or under pressure, alcohol or drug abuse and contraception or sexual health issues.

Also young people did not solely discuss the subjects immediately related to their current occupation, but seemed to use Connexions to plan their future activities. Even though almost all respondents in the 13-15 age group are in full-time education, 83 per cent of this group who had talked to someone at Connexions had spoken about jobs and careers, and 44 per cent had discussed work-based training.



There were only minor differences between male and female respondents, with female respondents being slightly more likely to discuss sexual health/contraception, housing, stress and education than male respondents (see Figure 4j). Male respondents were slightly more likely to have discussed work-based training or learning and alcohol and drug abuse than females.

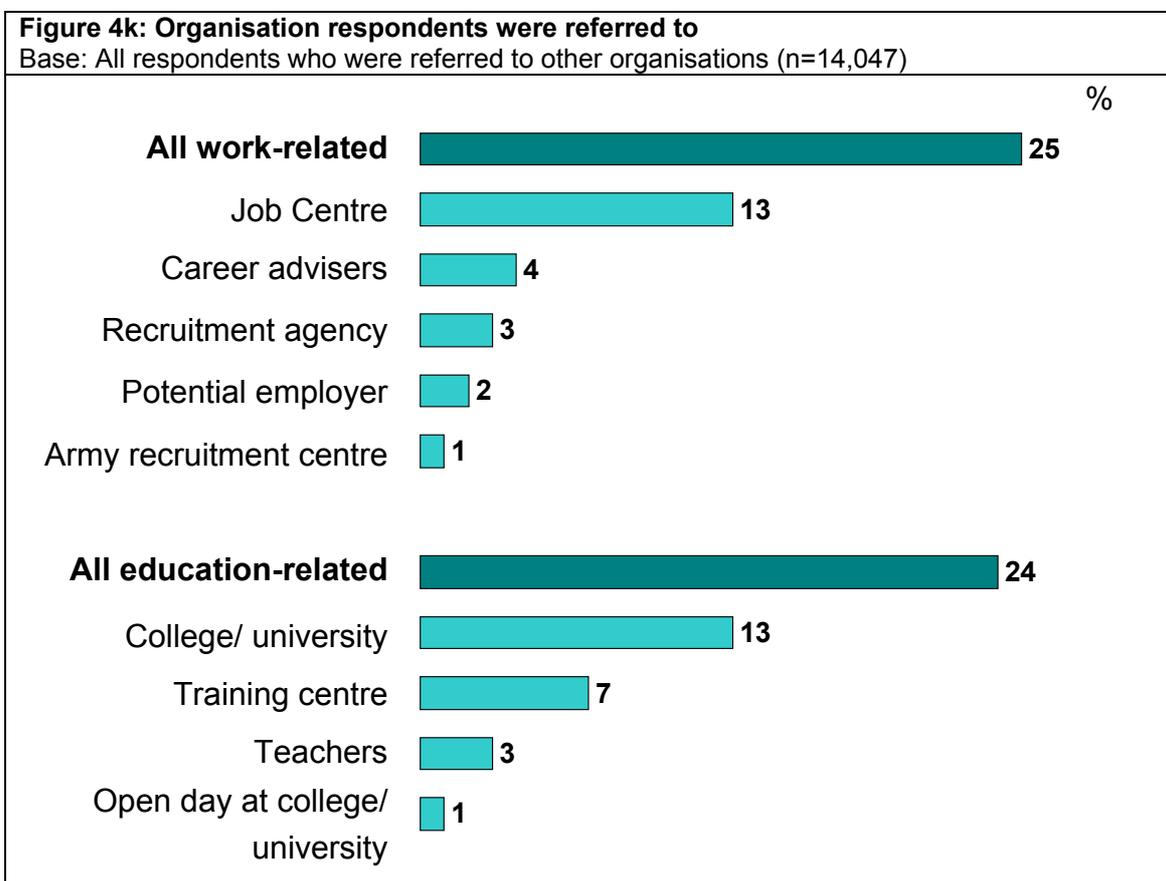


Topics discussed can also be linked to the working status of the respondent as briefly mentioned earlier. The working status groups most likely to discuss education with Personal Advisers were pregnant respondents (79 per cent of this group had), those doing voluntary activity (77 per cent), respondents in part time education (76 per cent) and those who said they were still deciding what to do or awaiting results (75 per cent). A higher proportion of those in full time employment (92 per cent), on modern apprenticeships (92 per cent) and those unemployed or looking for work (91 per cent) spoke to Connexions Personal Advisers about jobs and careers. Furthermore a higher proportion of respondents on modern apprenticeships (80 per cent), doing voluntary activity (74 per cent) and those who were pregnant (74 per cent) reported discussing work based learning and training. As might be expected, respondents who said they were looking after the home or family and those who were pregnant were more likely to have spoken about housing issues (41 per cent and 53 per cent of respondents in each respective group). Unsurprisingly a higher proportion of respondents who were pregnant (70 per cent), looking after the home or family (63 per cent), looking for work or unemployed (35 per cent), and doing voluntary activity (35 per cent) spoke to someone at Connexions about money and benefits.

## 4.5 Referrals to other organisations

Overall, 37 per cent of respondents who had spoken to someone at Connexions reported having been referred to another organisation or service provider. A slightly higher proportion of respondents receiving maximum support (40 per cent) had been referred somewhere else compared to those receiving medium (36 per cent) and minimal support (37 per cent). A marginally higher proportion of male respondents (38 per cent) were referred elsewhere than female respondents (36 per cent). Older respondents were more likely to be referred to another organisation than younger respondents with 41 per cent of 18-20 years being referred compared to 36 per cent of 13-15 and 16-17 year olds. This could be explained by the fact that younger respondents are almost all still at school.

As Figure 4k shows, the most common referral points were Job Centres (16 per cent) and colleges or universities (13 per cent). This is in line with the core subject areas discussed at Connexions.



Young people receiving Priority 2 support (20 per cent), and to a lesser extent Priority 1 (15 per cent) were more likely to be referred to a Job Centre than those receiving Priority 3 support (13 per cent). Respondents receiving minimum support were more likely to be referred to Connexions offices or centres (10 per cent) and websites (11 per cent) than those receiving maximum support (six per cent and two per cent).

There were also differences by age of respondents. For instance, 31 per cent of 18-20 year olds reported having been referred to a Job Centre compared with 14 per cent of 16-17 year olds and three per cent of 13-15 year olds. Respondents aged 16-20 were more likely to be referred to recruitment and employment agencies (three per cent) than respondents aged under 16 (less than one per cent). Respondents under 16 were more likely to be referred to inanimate sources of information like websites (14 per cent), books and leaflets (five per cent) and libraries (five per cent) than respondents aged 16 and over (six per cent, three per cent, and two per cent respectively). It could be that the information required by younger respondents was more for future reference than for immediate action than was the case for older respondents.

When looking at referrals in relation to the ethnic origin of the respondent, those from black (21 per cent) or mixed (20 per cent) ethnic backgrounds were more likely to be referred to Job Centres than respondents from Asian (11 per cent) or white (16 per cent) ethnic backgrounds. Asian respondents were more likely to be referred to careers advisers (seven per cent) and Connexions offices (15 per cent).

Respondents from sub-contracted Partnerships were marginally more likely to be referred to Job Centres (17 per cent) than respondents in direct delivery or lead body Partnerships (both 15 per cent).

## **5 Connexions Direct**

Connexions Direct is an interactive, multi-media service for young people age 13-19 that offers quick access to information and advice on a wide range of topics through the website [www.Connexions-direct.com](http://www.Connexions-direct.com). Connexions Direct advisers are also available via telephone, web chat, email or text message, offering confidential advice and practical help to young people. Access to Connexions Direct advisers is available from 8:00 am to 2:00 am seven days a week.

For the Phase 2 and 3 Partnership fieldwork, questions on awareness and usage of Connexions Direct were introduced.

### **5.1 Awareness of Connexions Direct**

Just over a third of young people were aware of Connexions Direct (36 per cent). Level of support seemed to be the most influential factor in terms of awareness of the service. Priority 1 respondents were least likely to have heard of the service – only 33 per cent were aware - compared to 37 per cent of both Priority 2 and Priority 3 respondents. Female respondents were also slightly more aware of the service than males (38 per cent compared with 35 per cent).

Those satisfied with the Connexions Service were also more likely to be aware of Connexions Direct than those who were not satisfied – 38 per cent compared to 29 per cent.

### **5.2 Usage of Connexions Direct**

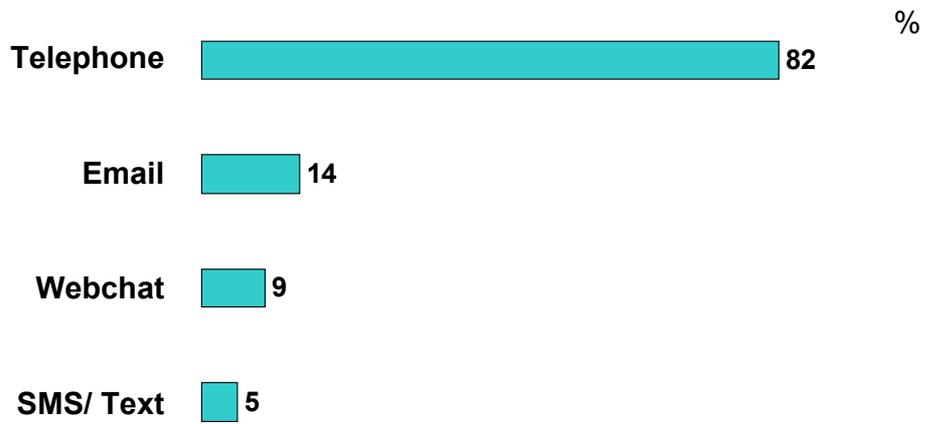
Respondents who were aware of the service were then asked whether they had contacted Connexions Direct and which method(s) they had used to do so.

Almost one in five (19 per cent) of those who had heard of the service had contacted Connexions Direct. (This represents four per cent of all respondents who had been in contact with someone from Connexions).

Telephone was by far the most popular method of contact, with 82 per cent of those who had contacted Connexions Direct saying they had done so by telephone (see Figure 5a). Fourteen per cent of people who had contacted the service had used email, nine per cent had contacted via web chat and five per cent had done so via SMS/text message.

**Figure 5a: Methods used to contact Connexions Direct**

Base: All respondents who have contacted Connexions Direct (1,728)



## 6 Involvement in Connexions

This chapter looks at responses to questions on four main issues indicating levels of active involvement with the Connexions Service:

- whether the respondent thought it was important that people of his/her age were involved in planning and running Connexions;
- whether the respondent had heard of the Connexions Youth Charter;
- whether the respondent had heard of the Connexions Card (including whether s/he had a Connexions Card, and whether s/he heard about the Card from someone at the Connexions Service).

### 6.1 Importance of young people being involved in the planning and delivery of Connexions

Young people were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements about Connexions, including 'It is important that people of my age are involved in the planning and running of Connexions'.

Agreement with this statement was high at 83 per cent (see Table 6a).

**Table 6a: Agreement with 'It is important that people of my age are involved in the planning and running of Connexions'**  
Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions (n=38,492)

	%
Strongly agree	50
Slightly agree	33
Slightly disagree	7
Strongly disagree	2

Agreement with this statement generally remained stable amongst almost all sub-groups. However, within minority ethnic groups, black respondents were more likely to strongly agree that people of their age should be involved in planning and running the service: 58 per cent agreed strongly compared to 50 per cent each for Asian and white respondents, and 52 per cent for respondents from mixed ethnic backgrounds.

Those respondents who were not satisfied overall with the Connexions Service were less likely to agree that it was important that people of their age were involved in planning and running the Service, and were more likely to disagree with the statement and also more likely to reply 'don't know'. Only 67 per cent of those dissatisfied with Connexions overall agreed with the statement, compared to 87 per cent of those who were satisfied, and 20 per cent of dissatisfied respondents disagreed with the statement, compared to just eight per cent of those who were satisfied with the Connexions Service.

## 6.2 Awareness of the Connexions Youth Charter

All Connexions Partnerships are required to have a Connexions Youth Charter setting out the role of the Service and what young people can expect from it. It is defined in a CSNU document ('Connexions Youth Charter: Guidance for Practitioners and Young People', 2002) thus:

'The basic Connexions Youth Charter is the 'label on the tin' for the Connexions Service. So it does three things:

1. It tells young people what the Connexions Service is and what it can do for them.
2. It shows a list of the main 'ingredients' of the Connexions Service. For example: how to get help, how young people should be treated and how they can have their say.
3. It says what young people can do if they aren't happy with the Service.

The Youth Charter will often be a young person's first contact with Connexions. The basic Youth Charter should be something they will want to pick up and keep. It should help them to find out about Connexions and remind them of what they can expect from the Service.'

Respondents were asked whether they had heard of the Connexions Youth Charter. Only four per cent of young people had actually heard of the Charter.

When looking at awareness of the Connexions Youth Charter by sub-group there were few differences. Younger respondents aged 13-15 were slightly more likely to have heard of the Connexion Youth Charter (six per cent) than those aged 16-17 (four per cent), and those aged 18-20 (three per cent).

Young people who had heard of the Connexions Youth Charter appeared to have a somewhat greater sense of the importance of being involved in the planning and running of Connexions. Fifty-eight per cent of young people who had heard of the Charter strongly agreed with the statement 'It is important that people of my age are involved in the planning and running of Connexions' compared with 51 per cent who had not heard of the charter.

## 6.3 Connexions Card

The Connexions Card is a secure smartcard that is available free to all 16-19 year olds in England. The card allows young people to collect points for learning, training and taking part in voluntary activities. The points they collect can then be redeemed for rewards such as '*money can't buy*' experiences (examples include backstage passes at pop concerts and behind-the-scenes days with

Premier Division football clubs) and free or discounted goods and services. The survey contained a series of questions about awareness, ownership and source of awareness of the Connexions Card.

### **6.3.1 Awareness of Connexions Card**

Twenty-four per cent of young people had heard of the Connexions Card. The greatest awareness of the Connexions Card by age was among those aged 16-17 (27 per cent) . By contrast only 21 per cent of both 18-20 year olds and 13-15 year olds had heard of the card. (The Connexions Card is targeted at all young people aged 16 to 19).

There were also differences in awareness of the Connexions Card by Phase. Nineteen per cent of respondents in Phase 1 Partnerships had heard of the Connexions Card compared with 25 per cent of Phase 2 Partnership respondents and 28 per cent of those in Phase 3 Partnerships. This almost certainly reflects the progress of the roll-out of the Connexions Card; when fieldwork was under way in Phase 1 Partnerships, the roll-out was in its early stages, so awareness would not be expected to be so high.

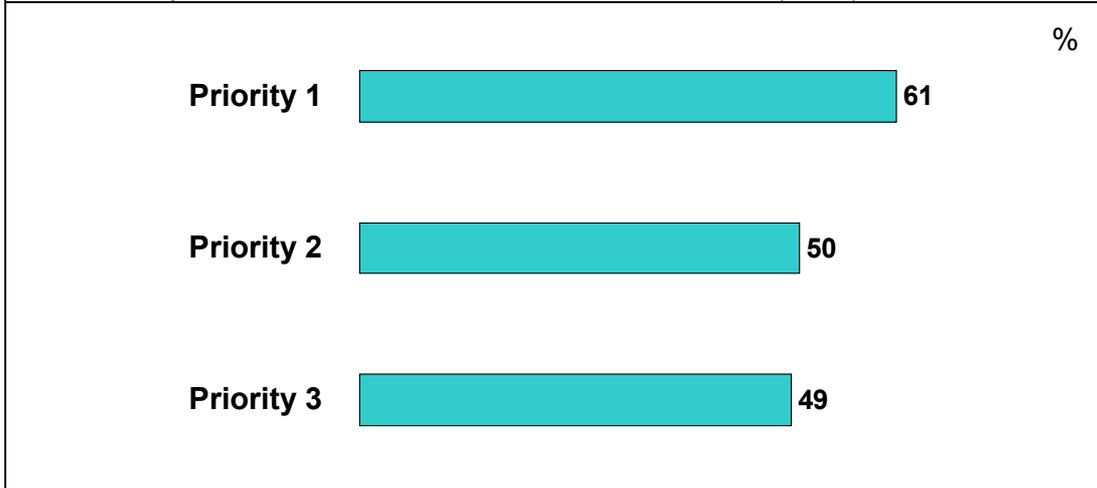
### **6.3.2 Source of awareness of Connexions Card**

Of those young people who had heard of the Connexions Card, 52 per cent had heard of it through someone at Connexions.

As shown in Figure 6a, the proportion of young people who had heard of the card through someone at Connexions decreased with the level of support provided, from 61 per cent in Priority 1 to 49 per cent in Priority 3. This is probably because young people in Priority 3 generally have less direct contact with the Connexions Service.

**Figure 6a: Proportion of respondents who heard of the Connexions Card through someone at Connexions**

Base: All respondents who have heard of the Connexions Card (9,715)



Boys were more likely to have heard about the Connexions Card through someone at Connexions than girls (53 per cent compared with 49 per cent), but this could be linked to the fact that boys were more likely than girls to be assigned to Priority 1. Young people aged 13-15 were more likely to have heard of the Connexions Card through someone at Connexions than those aged 16-20 (58 per cent compared with 50 per cent).

### 6.3.3 Ownership of Connexions Card

All young people who had heard of the Connexions Card were asked if they had one. Forty-two per cent of those who had heard of the card said they had their own card, which equates to 10 per cent of all young people who had talked to a PA or anyone from Connexions. The discrepancy between the number who had heard of the Card and the proportion who actually had one may be explained to some extent by internet usage. Many young people may recall seeing something on the Connexions website about the Connexions Card but not actually obtained one. Also, some young people may know a friend who has the Card.

There were some differences in ownership of the Card by sub-groups. Respondents aged 16-17 were most likely to have one: 11 per cent of all 16-17 year olds had a Card, compared with nine per cent of 18-20 year olds and six per cent of 13-15 year olds. This is in line with the targeting of the Card which technically is only available to those aged 16 or over.

Some respondents who owned a Connexions Card were unclear what it was for or disappointed with it. Below are some verbatim comments from respondents:

*I don't know what it is about, I don't know what my Card is for'*

*I worked for the student council at the college. A lot of people were complaining that a lot of places don't recognise the Connexions Card as a form of I.D.'*

*'The Connexions Card doesn't have one's age on it, so [you] can't use it as ID as promised.'*

*I wish I could use the Card at more shops.'*

In Phase 3 in particular, several respondents commented that they had applied for the Card but not received it:

*I applied for a Connexions Card months ago and I never received it, I received my password but never the actual card.'*

*When I started college in 2002 I ordered a Connexions Card, had a photo taken and I was expecting it in the next two weeks - that was a year ago.'*

It therefore seems that a little more work needs to be done to ensure that awareness of the Connexions Card continues to increase, that those who want one receive one, and that those who have heard of it know how to use it. With the completion of the roll-out, the levels of awareness and ownership of the card should be expected to rise significantly.

## 7 Education Maintenance Allowance

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a payment made to young people to encourage them to continue their education after the age of 16. Young people were asked about their general awareness of EMA, about the source of their awareness and whether they had claimed EMA.

At the time of fieldwork in Phase 1 Partnerships, EMA was only being piloted in a few CXPs. As a result of this, questions regarding EMA were only asked in eight of the 15 Phase 1 CXPs. They were Black Country, Cornwall & Devon, Coventry & Warwickshire, Greater Merseyside, Humber, London North, South Yorkshire and Suffolk. EMA is administered at a Local Education Authority (LEA) level and it is important to note that all Phase 1 Partnerships with at least one EMA LEA were asked the EMA questions. Some of these Partnerships may also include LEAs which did not offer EMA.

In September 2004, EMA will become available to 16 year olds nationally. In anticipation of this, questions regarding EMA were asked in all Phase 2 and Phase 3 CXPs. However, it should be pointed out that during fieldwork for some Phase 2 and Phase 3 CXPs EMA would not have been available in the area and this should be borne in mind when assessing the results.

### 7.1 Awareness of EMA

In Phase 1 CXPs, all young people in the EMA Partnerships were asked whether they had ever heard about EMA. Fifty-six per cent of young people were aware of EMA<sup>4</sup>. In Phase 2 CXPs, 36 per cent had heard about EMA, with a similar proportion - 35 per cent - having heard of EMA in Phase 3 CXPs. In Phase 1 fieldwork, the questions on EMA were only asked in CXPs where at least some of the local education authorities were running EMA pilot schemes. Because of the anticipated roll-out of EMA, the questions were asked in all Partnership areas for Phase 2 and 3 fieldwork, although at the time of fieldwork, the roll-out would not have covered all areas (and indeed, the roll-out was to take until Autumn 2004, so the Allowance was only really available in the EMA pilot areas). It is therefore not surprising that the awareness of EMA was lower for Phase 2 and 3 CXPs.

There were several differences in levels of awareness of EMA among sub-groups in Phase 1 CXPs. Awareness of EMA was greater amongst those young people who received the least amount of

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<sup>4</sup> Due to a programming error, the three questions about EMA were not asked in the face-to-face questionnaire in Connexions Black Country. Therefore, 59 responses to the EMA questions were missing from the data. A projection of the missing data based on the results from the interviews conducted among Priority 1 respondents in Connexions Black Country showed that the overall percentages were not affected by the missing interviews. In addition, in the small number of cases (77) where Phase 1 respondents in EMA Partnerships were re-assigned to Postal questionnaires from other survey modes (including the postal chase of CATI respondents), they were sent the version of the questionnaire without the EMA questions. As this only affects one per cent of the Phase 1 sample, this is unlikely to affect the validity of the results.

support from Connexions than amongst those who received a higher level of support: 60 per cent in Priority 3, 54 per cent in Priority 2 and 50 per cent in Priority 1. This is likely to be due to the fact that young people in Priority 3 (minimum support) are more likely to be in further education than young people receiving higher levels of support.

As you would expect young people between the ages of 16 and 20 were more likely to have heard of EMA than those aged 13-15 years. In Phase 1 CXPs, 58 per cent aged 16-20 had heard of EMA compared with 39 per cent aged 13-15. In Phase 2 and 3 the results were similar, with 39 per cent aged 16-20 having heard of EMA compared to only 23 per cent aged 13-15.

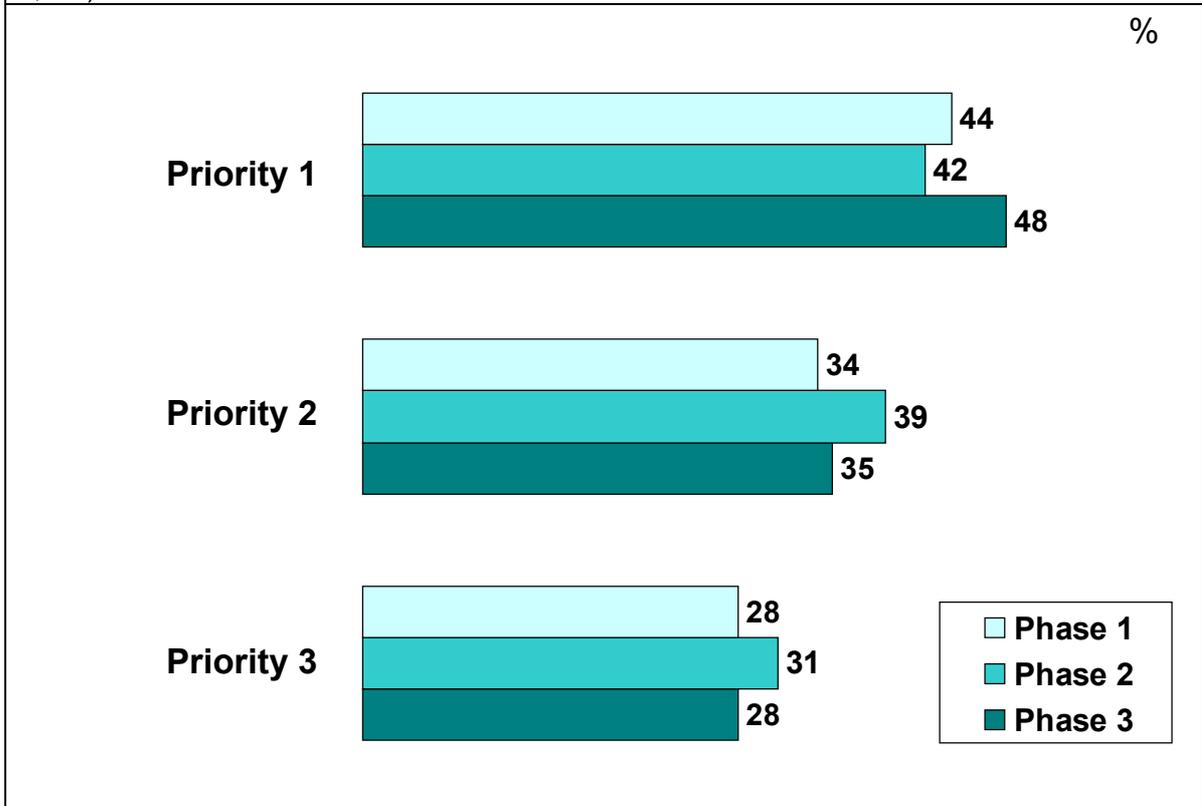
Young people from white backgrounds were less likely to have heard of EMA than young people from minority ethnic groups (55 per cent compared with 65 per cent of minority ethnic young people in Phase 1; 33 per cent compared with 53 per cent in Phase 2 and 3). This may be linked to the fact that minority ethnic young people were more likely to be in further education. Looking at those in full-time education aged 16 and over, the proportional differences between the answers are slightly smaller (69 per cent of white compared with 78 per cent of minority ethnic young people in full-time education aged 16 and over were aware of EMA in Phase 1; 42 per cent compared with 61 per cent in Phase 2 and 3).

### **7.1.1 Source of awareness of EMA**

Young people who had heard of EMA were then asked whether or not they had heard of it through someone at Connexions. Of those who had heard of EMA, 33 per cent in Phase 1 CXPs and 35 per cent in Phase 2 and 3 CXPs had heard about it through someone at Connexions.

As shown in Figure 7a, young people receiving a higher level of support from Connexions were more likely to have heard of EMA through someone at Connexions than those receiving a lower level of support. This may be because young people in Priority 1 have more contact with Connexions than those young people in Priority 2 or 3, or because that work may be more explicitly tackling barriers to young people continuing in education post-16.

**Figure 7a: Proportion of respondents who heard about EMA through someone at Connexions, by Priority category and Phase**  
 Base: All respondents who had heard of EMA (Phase 1 = 3,071; Phase 2 = 4,059; Phase 3 = 4,544)



## 7.2 Claiming EMA

Of those young people who had heard of EMA through someone at Connexions, 27 per cent from Phase 1 CXPs and 23 per cent from Phase 2/3 CXPs went on to claim EMA. A further four per cent across all three Phases applied for EMA but were unsuccessful.

Amongst sub-groups there were some differences between the young people who claimed EMA. As with awareness of EMA, white young people were less likely to have claimed EMA (26 per cent compared with 36 per cent of minority ethnic young people from Phase 1 CXPs; 21 per cent compared to 33 per cent from Phase 2 and 3 CXPs). Again, this may in part be driven by minority ethnic young people's increased likelihood of being in further education. Looking at those in full-time education aged 16 and over, the differences between white and minority ethnic young people are proportionally smaller (44 per cent compared with 48 per cent in Phase 1; 32 per cent compared with 40 per cent in Phase 2 and 3).

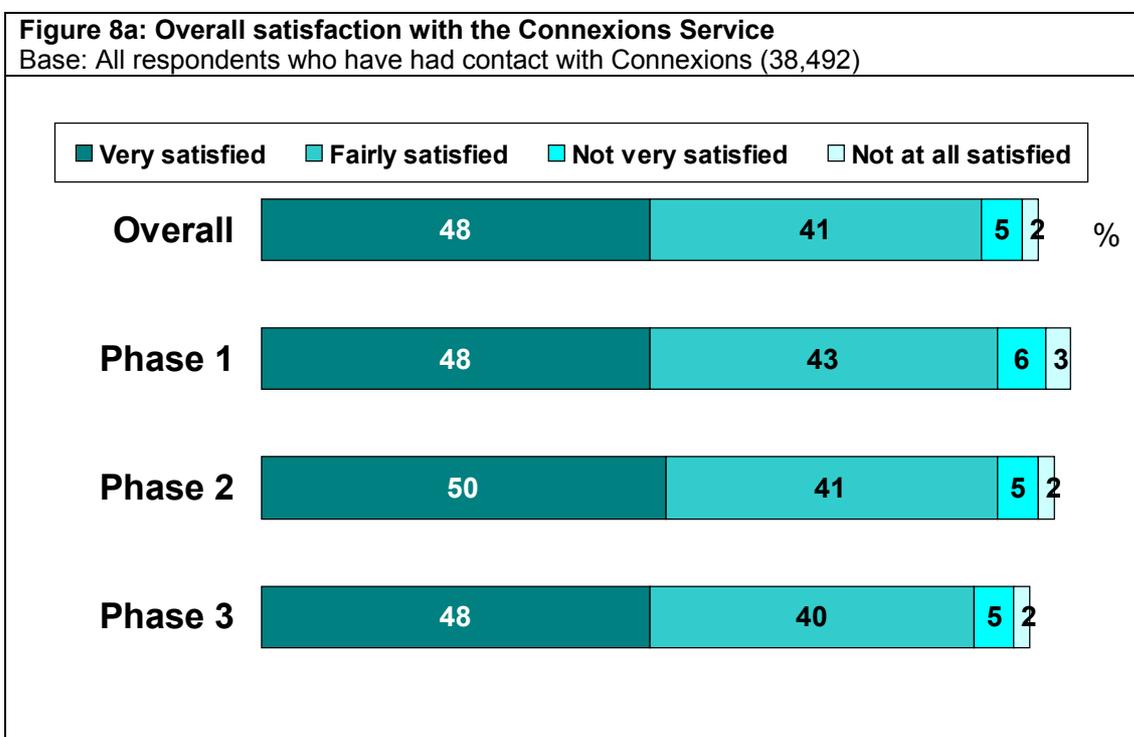
## 8 Satisfaction with the Connexions Service

Several of the questions in the survey dealt with satisfaction with the Connexions survey from different perspectives.

Young people were asked in general terms how satisfied they were with Connexions overall, as well as a series of more detailed questions relating to their opinions of different aspects of the service and the usefulness of the advice they received. This section covers all of these areas.

### 8.1 Overall satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with Connexions was very high, with nine in ten young people who had contact with Connexions saying they were either very or fairly satisfied with the service provided.



Satisfaction was more or less universal and there were few differences by sub-groups. The clearest difference was by age, with dissatisfaction increasing with age: four per cent of 13-15 year olds were dissatisfied, compared with seven per cent of 16-17 year olds and nine per cent of 18-20 year olds. However, these figures are still a very small proportion of the total.

**Table 8a: Overall satisfaction with the Connexions Service, by age group**

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions

	All (n=38,492) %	Age 13-15 (n=7,169) %	Age 16-17 (n=23,280) %	Age 18-20 (n=7,957) %
Very satisfied	48	48	49	47
Fairly satisfied	41	43	41	41
Not very satisfied	5	3	5	6
Not at all satisfied	2	1	2	3

This could be due to a difference in the service provided to these different groups. However, on similar types of surveys we have conducted, younger respondents have also tended to show higher levels of satisfaction. We therefore feel that this difference is more likely to be due to younger teenagers not having come into contact with many services and therefore having less expectation and fewer points of comparison against which to judge the service they have received.

Partnership types seemed to be linked to young people's satisfaction, with those in direct delivery Partnerships being slightly more satisfied (91 per cent) than those in sub-contracted Partnerships (88 per cent satisfied).

Looking at individual Partnerships, there were some variations between areas. The highest level of satisfaction was 94 per cent achieved in Northumberland, Berkshire, Tyne & Wear and Derbyshire. The lowest level of satisfaction was 83 per cent in Leicester Shire.

Although there were no major differences in satisfaction by Priority when looking at the total proportions saying they were 'satisfied' or 'dissatisfied', some different patterns could be observed in the more detailed responses. The proportion of young people saying they were *very satisfied* increased with the level of support young people were receiving, from 46 per cent in Priority 3 to 52 per cent in Priority 1 (see Table 8b).

**Table 8b: Overall satisfaction with the Connexions Service, by Priority category**

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions (n=38,492)

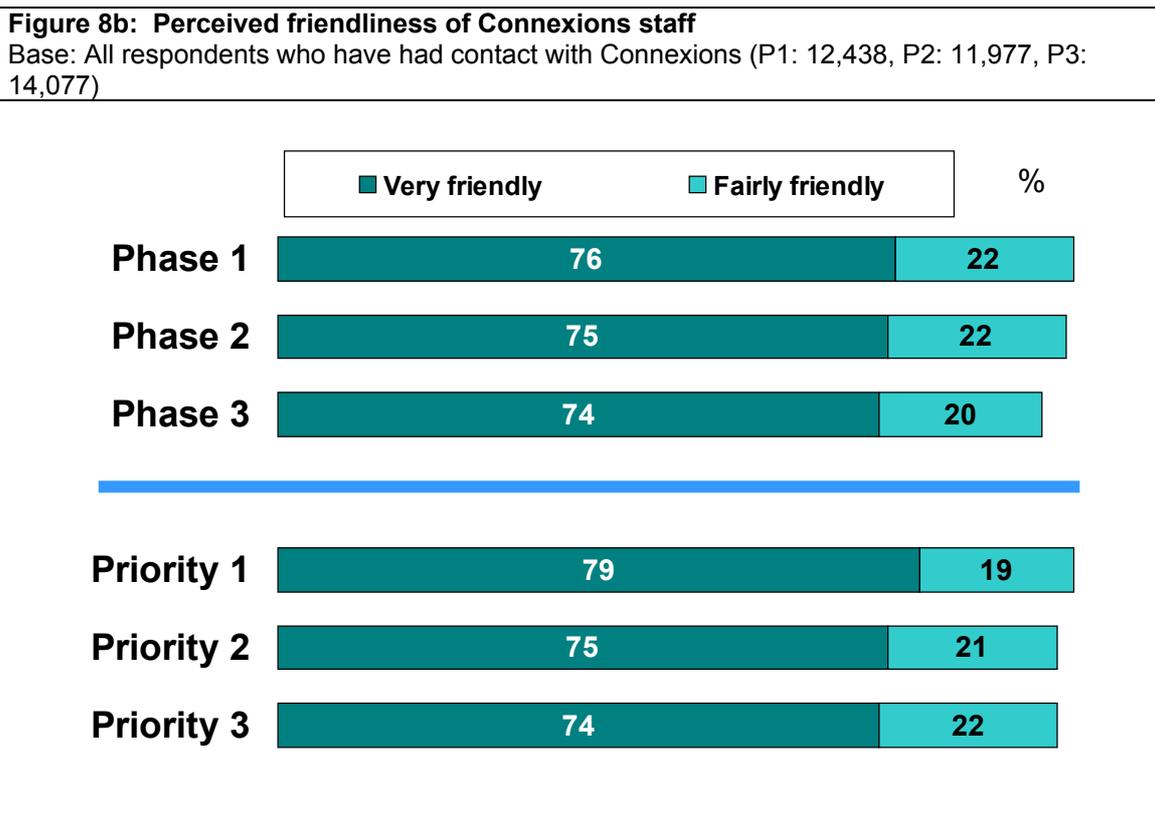
	Priority 1 (n=7,439) %	Priority 2 (n=14,529) %	Priority 3 (n=16,524) %
Very satisfied	52	49	46
Fairly satisfied	39	40	44
Not very satisfied	5	5	5
Not at all satisfied	2	2	2

This could be explained by the fact that young people in the lower Priority levels have been assessed as having relatively less need of support and are therefore getting a less frequent and less intensive service, and may consequently be less likely to have experienced some outstanding service which they might give the highest rating. These findings are encouraging as they suggest that the intensive support provided to young people is appreciated and of a satisfactory level.

## 8.2 Connexions staff

### 8.2.1 Friendliness of staff

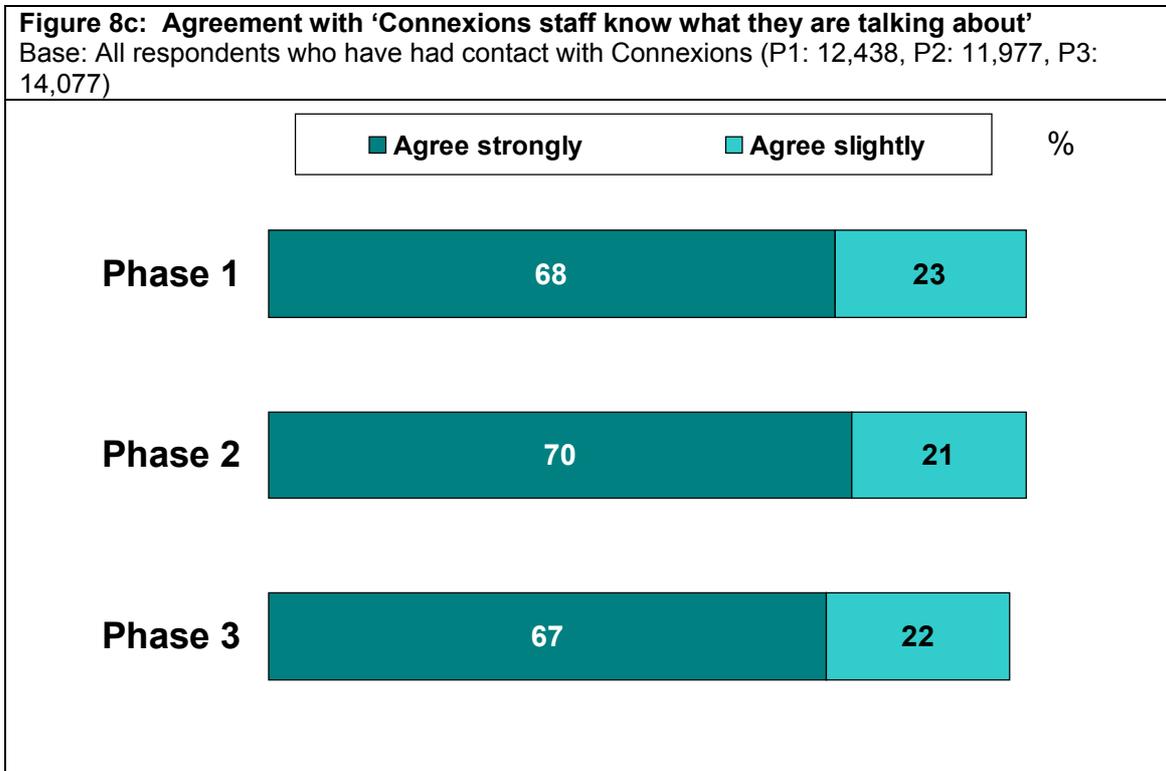
Ratings on the friendliness of Connexions staff were also very positive. Nearly all young people (96 per cent) felt that the staff were either very or fairly friendly (see Figure 8b). Each Partnership had consistently high proportion of young people rating staff as friendly.



Looking at friendliness in more detail, young people receiving a higher level of support were slightly more likely to say that staff were *very friendly* than those in other Priority categories (79% Priority 1, 75% Priority 2, 74% Priority 3), and similarly, those in other lower categories were more likely to give a *fairly friendly* rating. White respondents (76 per cent) were more likely to say that Connexions staff were *very friendly* than other ethnic groups; 71 per cent of black respondents said this, as did 69 per cent of Asian respondents and 73 per cent of those from mixed and other ethnic groups (the corresponding figure for all respondents was 75 per cent).

## 8.2.2 Staff knowledge

Young people were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements about Connexions, including ‘Connexions staff know what they are talking about’. Again, agreement with this statement was very high, with 90 per cent of young people agreeing with it (see Figure 8c).



Overall agreement with this statement (looking at those strongly or slightly agreeing together) was pretty much universal throughout all sub-groups and there were no differences by Priority level or by age.

Although overall agreement with the statement was broadly similar amongst different Partnership types, there were some slight differences when looking at the detailed results: 66 per cent of young people in sub-contracted Partnerships strongly agreed with the statement, compared with 70 per cent in direct delivery Partnerships.

A similar pattern can be noted when looking at young people’s ethnic backgrounds and this can be linked to the finding on Partnership type detailed above: 69 per cent of white respondents strongly agreed with the statement, compared with 61 per cent of respondents from minority ethnic backgrounds. Respondents from minority ethnic groups were not more likely to disagree with the statement, they were just more likely to ‘slightly agree’ with the statement (26%, compared with 21% of white young people).

Looking at the different Partnership areas, agreement with the statement did vary somewhat, ranging from 81 per cent in Leicester Shire to 94 per cent in Tyne & Wear and Northumberland.

### 8.2.3 Availability of Connexions staff

Another staff-related issue included in the survey dealt with the ease of contacting Connexions: young people were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with ‘It is easy to get hold of people at Connexions when you need to’. Again, a high proportion of respondents (79 per cent) agreed with this (see Table 8c). However, agreement was less strong than for staff friendliness and knowledge, indicating that a greater proportion of young people may have experienced difficulty in getting through to Connexions than had encountered problems with lack of knowledge or unfriendliness amongst staff. Results were similar for all three Phases.

**Table 8c: Agreement with ‘It is easy to get hold of people at Connexions when you need to’**  
Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions

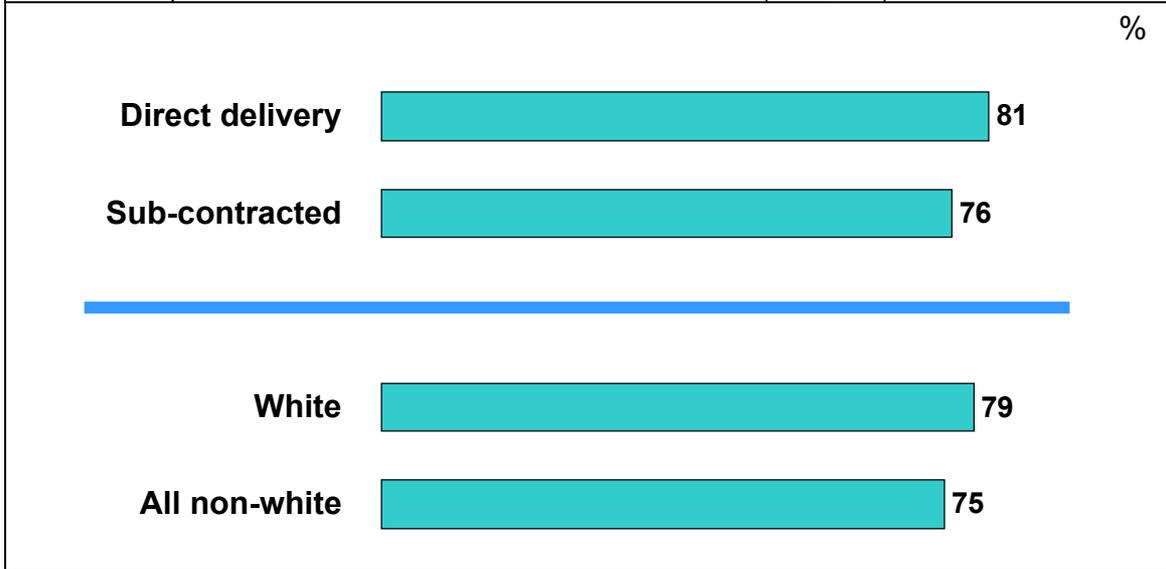
	All (n=38,492) %	Priority 1 (n=7,439) %	Priority 2 (n=14,529) %	Priority 3 (n=16,524) %
Strongly agree	54	55	54	52
Slightly agree	25	24	24	26
Slightly disagree	7	8	8	7
Strongly disagree	4	4	4	3

Young people receiving a higher level of support were slightly more likely to *strongly agree* with the fact that it is easy to get hold of people at Connexions (55 per cent for Priority 1 compared with 54 per cent for Priority 2 and 52 per cent for Priority 3), while those receiving minimal support were more likely to *slightly agree*. This might be expected as young people receiving more intensive support will probably have access to their own Personal Adviser (PA), as well as to the more universal Connexions access points (offices, school visits etc.) and so could therefore find it easier to contact someone.

Interestingly, whereas younger respondents had given more positive ratings than their older counterparts on overall satisfaction, friendliness and knowledge of staff, they were less likely to feel that it was easy to get hold of people at the Connexions. Seventy-one per cent of 13-15 year olds agreed with the statement, compared with 80 per cent of 16-17 year olds and 82 per cent of 18-20 year olds. This could be linked to the fact that older young people might be more comfortable generally with contacting services and therefore might find it easier. They might also have more autonomy than younger respondents enabling them to go into an office more easily.

The type of Partnership young people are in also seemed to have be linked to the ease of getting through to Connexions, with 76 per cent agreeing with the statement in sub-contracted Partnerships, compared with 81 per cent in direct delivery Partnerships (see Figure 8d). This could indicate that Connexions in sub-contracted areas might be slightly harder to identify, perhaps because it might not be so clearly branded, therefore making young people feel that it is less easy to contact the organisation.

**Figure 8d: Ease of getting through to Connexions, by mode of delivery and ethnic group**  
 Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions (n=38,492)



There also seemed to be a slight difference by ethnicity, with young people from minority ethnic groups less likely to agree with the statement (75 per cent) than those from white backgrounds (79 per cent). This difference is not related to the fact that minority ethnic young people are more commonly found in sub-contracted Partnerships - if just sub-contracted Partnerships are looked at, the difference between white and minority ethnic young people agreeing with this statement is just as marked (77 per cent, compared with 72 per cent respectively).

### 8.3 Agreement with individual statements about Connexions

Among the series of agreement-scale statements about Connexions presented to respondents were two about the Service helping young people to see all the options available to them and having a lot to offer young people. Results from these are shown in Table 8d.

**Table 8d: Agreement with statements on Connexions**  
 Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions (n=38,492)

	Connexions helps me see all the options available to me	Connexions has a lot to offer young people
	%	%
Strongly agree	43	67
Slightly agree	42	23
Slightly disagree	7	4
Strongly disagree	3	2

The proportions agreeing with each statement were high, with 85 per cent of young people agreeing that Connexions helped them see all the options available to them, and 90 per cent agreeing that Connexions had a lot to offer young people. However, strong agreement was higher for the more

general statement relating to ‘young people’ (67 per cent) than for that relating to the young person themselves (43 per cent).

Looking at the more personal statement first, white young people were more likely than their counterparts from minority ethnic groups to agree Connexions helps them see all the options available to them (86 and 82 per cent respectively).

Unsurprisingly, young people who were generally satisfied with the Connexions Service were much more likely to agree with the statement (91 per cent) than those who were not satisfied (36 per cent).

Agreement with ‘Connexions has a lot to offer young people’ varied less. Again, as might be expected, satisfied young people were more likely than dissatisfied young people to agree with the statement (95 compared with 49 per cent). White respondents were slightly more likely to agree than non-white groups (90 per cent and 87 per cent respectively).

Looking at the results in greater detail, there was a slight difference in ‘strong agreement’ by type of Partnership: 69 per cent of young people strongly agreed with the statement in direct delivery Partnerships, compared with 64 per cent in sub-contracted Partnerships, indicating a slight difference in service ratings between the Partnership types.

## **8.4 Usefulness of advice given**

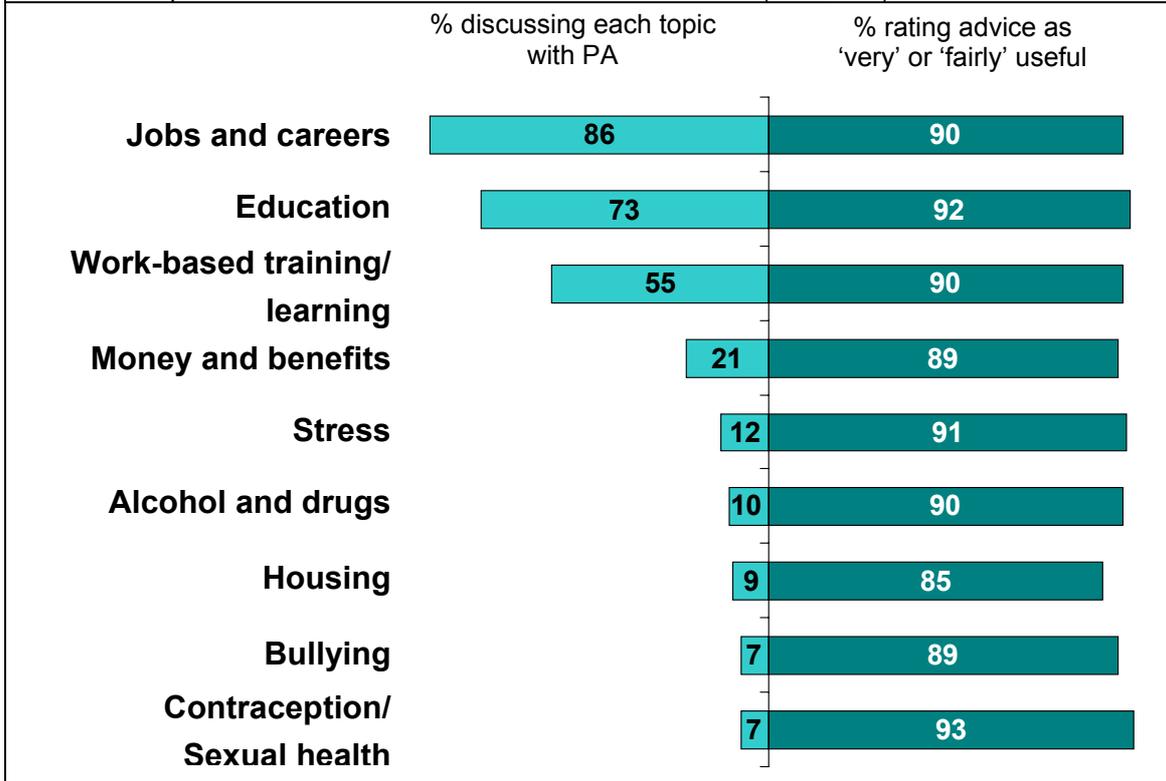
When looking at satisfaction with the Connexions Service, it is also important to look at the perceived usefulness of the advice given to young people.

As mentioned in Chapter Four, many young people spoke to someone about jobs and careers, education or work-based training, but only a minority spoke about other topics. However, ratings for the advice given in all areas were very positive with the percentage rating the advice as very or fairly useful ranging from 85 per cent for housing advice to 93 per cent for advice on contraception and sexual health (see Figure 8e).

Encouragingly, although only a small amount of advice outside the core remit of the former Careers Service has been provided, young people’s ratings of this advice too was very positive.

**Figure 8e: Subjects discussed and usefulness of advice given**

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions (n=38,492)



When looking at sub-group differences, the patterns observed were generally in line with those seen earlier in this section. The advice given was perceived to be more useful by young people in the higher support categories, in the younger age groups and in direct delivery Partnerships. For instance, looking at advice on jobs and careers, 47 per cent of those in Priority 1 felt the advice they received was very useful, compared with 43 per cent in Priority 3. Ninety-three per cent of 13-15 year olds felt that this advice was useful, compared with 89 per cent of 18-20 year olds and 44 per cent of young people in sub-contracted Partnerships felt the advice was very useful, compared with 46 per cent in direct delivery Partnerships. This pattern was repeated in the other core area of education, and also in more specialised areas, such as advice on contraception and sexual health.

#### 8.4.1 Link between different ratings and overall satisfaction

As might be expected, young people's levels of agreement and ratings of staff and other issues were linked to their overall satisfaction with Connexions. For instance, staff ratings by satisfaction are shown in Table 8e.

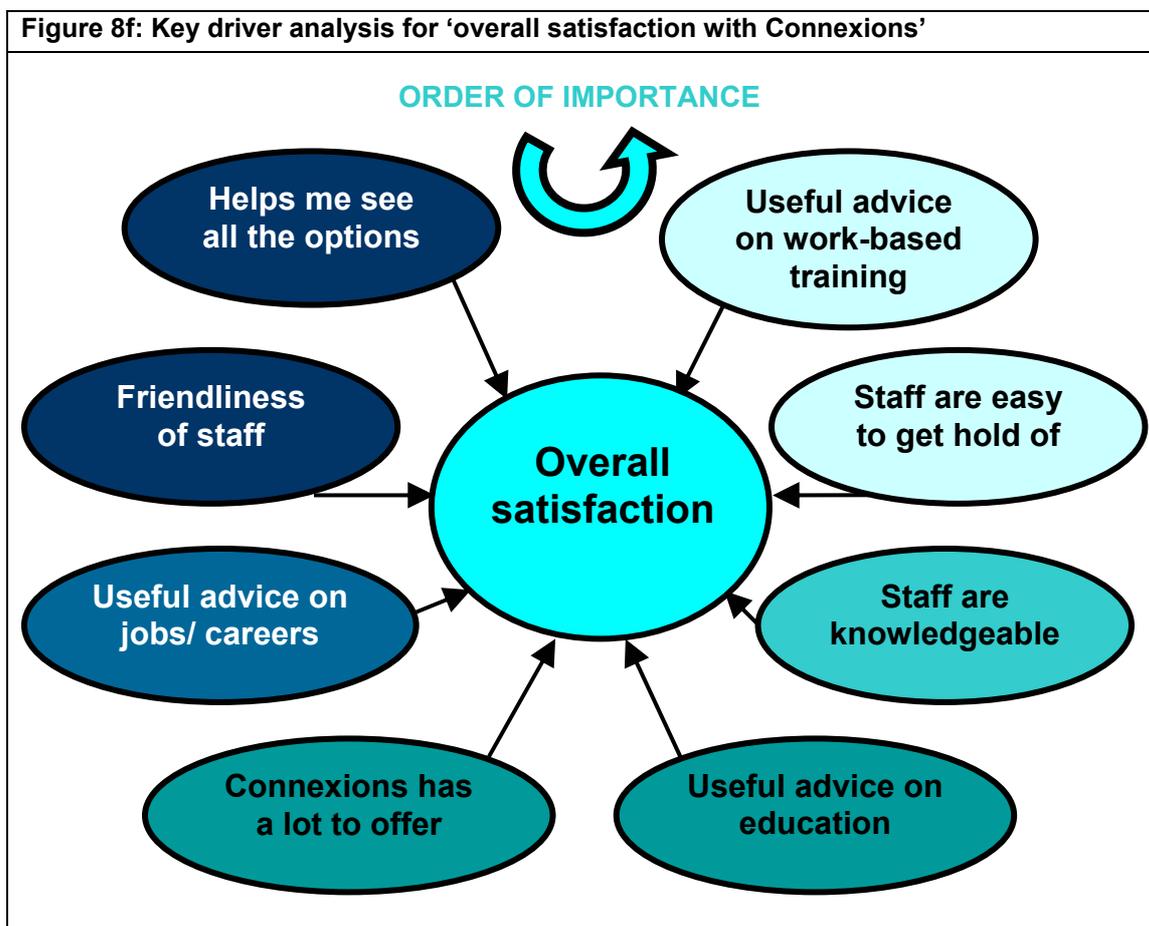
**Table 8e: Perceptions of staff, by overall satisfaction**

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions (n=38,492)

	Satisfied (n=34,756) %	Dissatisfied (n=2,832) %
Feel that staff are very friendly	80	38
Strongly agree that staff know what they are talking about	74	18
Strongly agree that it is easy to get hold of people at Connexions	57	25

In order to probe more fully into the different factors affecting overall satisfaction, we carried out a programme of multivariate analysis. The main technique used was multiple regression (also known as key driver analysis, or MLR). Details of the technique are provided in the Appendices. A summary of results is shown in Figure 8f.

**Figure 8f: Key driver analysis for ‘overall satisfaction with Connexions’**



The eight areas shown in the chart are the key drivers of ‘overall satisfaction’ (in order of importance from left to right, with the most important – helping them to see all the options – on the left). These can be aggregated into three main areas: staff-related issues (friendliness, knowledgeable, easy to contact), general ratings (help see all options, have a lot to offer), and usefulness of the advice given (on jobs and careers, education and work-based training/learning. (Other areas of advice were given to too few respondents to register in the model).

This shows that many of the areas detailed in this section are interrelated and, in terms of maintaining high levels of satisfaction among young people, these key drivers are the most important areas to focus on.

## 8.5 General comments about Connexions

At the end of the questionnaire, young people were given the option of giving any comments they wished in an open-ended question.

Only a small proportion of young people chose to make a comment: 14 per cent gave an answer to this question. Answers were quite general, with four per cent mentioning that Connexions had been helpful and the same proportion describing a good experience with Connexions. All other answers could only be grouped in codes that amounted to one per cent of respondents or fewer.

Looking at the detailed verbatim responses, the issues mentioned generally reflected those dealt with in the rest of the questionnaire. These are therefore included in the relevant sections of the report and only comments relating to young people's satisfaction are included here.

Several comments made were very positive, in line with the overall results:

*'They are very good and [I] would not be in college if it wasn't for them'*

*'The lady from Connexions was very helpful. The lady helped me during my parents' break up and helped me find work experience.'*

*'They keep you off the streets, they give you activities to do such as football. Just ask for anything and they will do it for you'*

*'Very helpful and gave me advice when I needed it with money and when I left school and when I was pregnant they gave me information. No one else would.'*

*'They're really good, I was a bit shy and wouldn't have known what to do without them.'*

*'It's good to have a place where you can get advice from people other than your teachers or parents'*

*'I think Connexions is a good place for the youth community. About ten Asian lads went to the Lake District through Connexions, it was one of the best experiences of my life.'*

*'I would advise anyone to go through Connexions.'*

There were also some less positive comments and suggestions for improvements:

*'They should be easier to contact, and make themselves more known to young people.'*

*'I think if it opened on Saturdays it would be a lot better.'*

*'They don't have enough jobs there. Like they've a book and it has vacancies from eight months ago. They've gone but the vacancy is still in there.'*

*'I just find them to be quite patronising. I don't think they listen and they didn't make me feel comfortable and I didn't get anything out of it.'*

*'They are fairly helpful but they could be a bit more helpful with disabled people... There are communications issues.'*

*'It's quite inefficient in the way it's run. The Youth Charter that were supposed to be distributed in June still has not been.'*

*'They start off good, then when you've been there a few times, they become less interested.'*

*'Stop mailing me with loads of junk.'*

## 9 Impact of using Connexions

This chapter looks at the evidence from the survey for impacts on young people arising from their contacts with Connexions. In particular, the chapter covers:

- young people’s involvement in particular activities, and whether this was involvement as a result of their contact with Connexions;
- whether Connexions had helped respondents to decide what to do in the next couple of years;
- whether young people had done anything as a result of contact with Connexions that they had not considered doing before;
- respondents’ perceptions of the impact of Connexions on personal confidence.

### 9.1 Involvement in activities

Respondents were asked whether they took part in any of the following activities and, if so, whether they had got involved as a result of Connexions:

- a Youth Centre or Youth Project;
- sports or other organised activities in their spare time;
- Millennium Volunteers or any other voluntary or charity work.

Table 9a shows the proportions of respondents who said they were involved in these activities and, for each, whether this involvement was as a result of Connexions. There were almost no differences between different Phases.

**Table 9a: Proportion of respondents involved in each activity**

Base: all respondents who have had contact with Connexions /who are involved in activities

	Youth Centre or Youth Project	Sports or other organised activities in spare time	Millennium Volunteers or any other voluntary or charity work
	(n=38,492)	(n=38,492)	(n=38,492)
% Involved	11	39	7
	(n=4,204)	(n=14,835)	(n=2,861)
% Involved as a result of Connexions	23	5	16

### **9.1.1 Involvement in a Youth Centre or Youth Project**

Only 11 per cent of respondents said that they were involved in a Youth Centre or Youth Project. Of these, 23 per cent said they had got involved as a result of Connexions. Priority 1 respondents were slightly more likely to be involved in these activities (15 per cent, compared with 10 per cent for Priority 2 and nine per cent for Priority 3 respondents), and those in Priority 1 who were involved were more likely than those from other Priority groups to be involved because of Connexions (31 per cent, compared with 24 per cent for Priority 2 and 15 per cent for Priority 3 respondents involved in Youth Centres or Projects).

Males were very slightly more likely than females to be involved (12 per cent versus 10 per cent), although they were no more likely to have become involved due to Connexions.

Involvement with Youth Centres or Projects declined with age. Seventeen per cent of respondents aged 13-to-15 years said they were involved in such an activity. This figure fell to 10 per cent for 16-to-17 year olds, and seven per cent for those aged 18 and over. Where older respondents were involved, however, this was more likely to be due to Connexions; only 15 per cent of 13-to-15 year olds involved in Youth Centres and Projects said this was because of Connexions, rising to 26 per cent of older respondents who took part in them.

There were notable differences in involvement by ethnicity. Seventeen per cent of black respondents said they were involved in a youth centre or youth project, compared to 11 per cent of white respondents, 12 per cent of Asian respondents and 13 per cent of respondents of a mixed ethnic background. However, there was little difference amongst those who were involved as to whether this was due to Connexions, with only the mixed ethnic group (17 per cent) any less likely than the other groups to say this.

There was no overall difference between Partnerships with different modes of delivery or in different Phases, although there was considerable variation at the individual Partnership level. The Partnership with the highest proportion of respondents saying they were involved in a Youth Project or Centre was Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole (17 per cent) and the lowest were Cheshire & Warrington and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (seven per cent each). Connexions Staffordshire had the highest proportion of respondents saying that their involvement was due to Connexions - 36 per cent of those involved with a Youth Centre or Youth Project (although note that the base sizes were very small for involved respondents in individual Partnerships).

### **9.1.2 Involvement in sports or other organised activity in spare time**

Overall, 39 per cent of respondents said they were involved in sport or other organised activities in their spare time - by far the most commonly undertaken activity of the three. However, this was also the activity type where the impact of Connexions on participation was least: only five per cent of those taking part attributed this to the Connexions Service.

Respondents classified as being Priority 3 (minimal intervention) were more likely to be involved in sport than those in the other Priority categories: 43 per cent of those in Priority 3 took part in these activities, compared to 36 per cent of those in Priority 2 and 33 per cent of those in Priority 1. However (as with Youth Centres and Projects), where Priority 1 respondents were involved in sport, this was more likely to be because of Connexions (nine per cent) than was the case for those involved in sport who were in Priority 2 (five per cent) or 3 (three per cent).

One of the key differences in terms of involvement was by gender. Males were nearly twice as likely to take part in sports or other organised activities as females: 48 per cent compared to 27 per cent. However, a similar proportion of those involved in sport from each gender said that their involvement was due to Connexions.

Younger respondents were more likely to take part than their older counterparts: 48 per cent of those aged 13-to-15 years took part in sports or other organised activities, compared to 38 per cent of those aged 16-to-17 and 33 per cent of those aged 18-to-20. Again, participants of all ages were as likely to say they were involved because of Connexions.

Minority ethnic respondents were more likely than white respondents to take part in sport or organised leisure activities (42 per cent of all minority ethnic respondents compared with 38 per cent of white respondents), but were no more likely to say this was due to Connexions.

There was little overall difference between Partnerships from different Phases or modes of delivery, but again there was considerable variation at the individual Partnership level. The highest levels of involvement in sports and other organised activities were seen in Humber and Nottinghamshire (44 per cent each), with the lowest being Staffordshire (28 per cent). However, in Staffordshire (and also Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin) as many as 10 per cent of those who did take part in organised leisure activities said this was due to Connexions, with the lowest being just one per cent of those taking part in organised activities in West Yorkshire.

### **9.1.3 Involvement in volunteering**

The area with which fewest respondents were involved was Millennium Volunteers and other voluntary or charity work. Only seven per cent said they did this, and unlike the other two areas this was not related to Priority group. Of those who were involved, 16 per cent said this was due to Connexions, and this was related to Priority group with those in Priority 1 being most likely to say their involvement was because of Connexions (27 per cent compared with 16 per cent of involved Priority 2 and 10 per cent of involved Priority 3 respondents).

Involvement with voluntary or charity work was not related to age, but the proportion of those involved *due to Connexions* rose slightly from 11 per cent of 13-to-15 year olds to 16 per cent of 16-to-17 year olds and 18 per cent of those aged 18 and over. Females were slightly more likely than males

to be involved in voluntary and charity work (nine per cent compared with six per cent), but were no more or less likely to be involved because of Connexions.

White respondents were slightly less likely than minority ethnic respondents to be involved in charity work and volunteering (seven per cent for white respondents compared with nine per cent and 10 per cent for black and Asian respondents respectively). However, among those who were involved in voluntary or charitable activities, white respondents were most likely to say this was down to Connexions (16 per cent compared with 11 per cent of minority ethnic respondents).

Once again there was no real difference at the Phase or delivery mode level. There was some variation between individual Partnerships, but this was not as marked as in the other two areas of activity. The highest levels of voluntary and charity work were seen in Suffolk and Bournemouth (11 per cent each), with the lowest in Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire and Bedfordshire & Luton (six per cent each).

## 9.2 Did Connexions help respondents decide what to do?

Respondents were asked ‘Have the people at Connexions helped you decide what to do in the next couple of years?’. Responses are shown in Table 9b.

**Table 9b: Whether Connexions helped respondents decide what to do in the next couple of years**

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions (n=12,412)

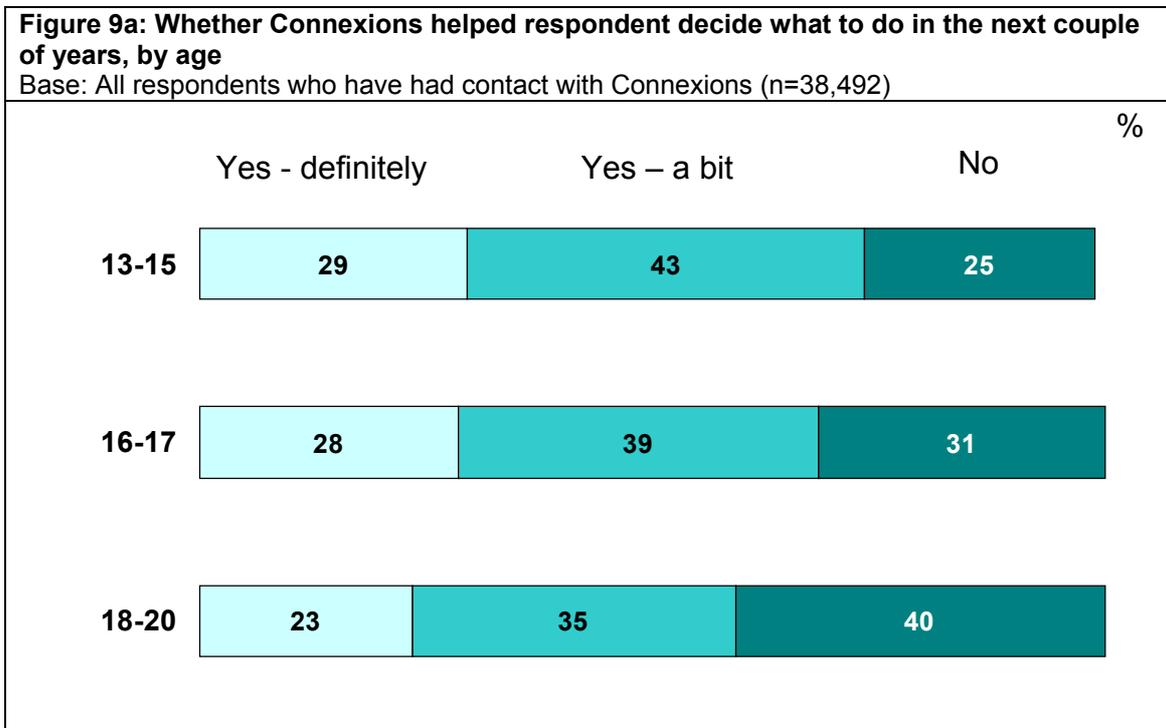
	All (n=38,492) %	Priority 1 (n=7,439) %	Priority 2 (n=14,529) %	Priority 3 (n=16,524) %
Yes – definitely	27	28	28	27
Yes – a bit	39	37	38	40
No	32	34	32	30

There was no real difference between Priority groups in terms of saying this was *definitely* the case, but, perhaps surprisingly, Priority 3 respondents were slightly more likely than the other groups to say they had been helped to decide *a bit*.

Responses did differ significantly by respondent’s age, as shown in Figure 9a. Respondents under the age of 18 were more likely than older respondents to say that the people at Connexions had definitely helped them decide what to do in the next couple of years. In contrast, the proportions saying that Connexions had not helped them decide what to do were higher in the older age groups. This may reflect the fact that respondents in the younger age groups will be taking key decisions about what courses to take and whether to stay on in education or leave to take up work or training.

Male respondents were slightly more likely than females (33 per cent compared to 30 per cent) to say that Connexions had *not* helped them decide what to do. Respondents from black (36 per cent),

mixed and other (37 per cent) ethnic groups were also more likely to say that Connexions had not helped them decide what to do than white or Asian respondents (both 31 per cent).



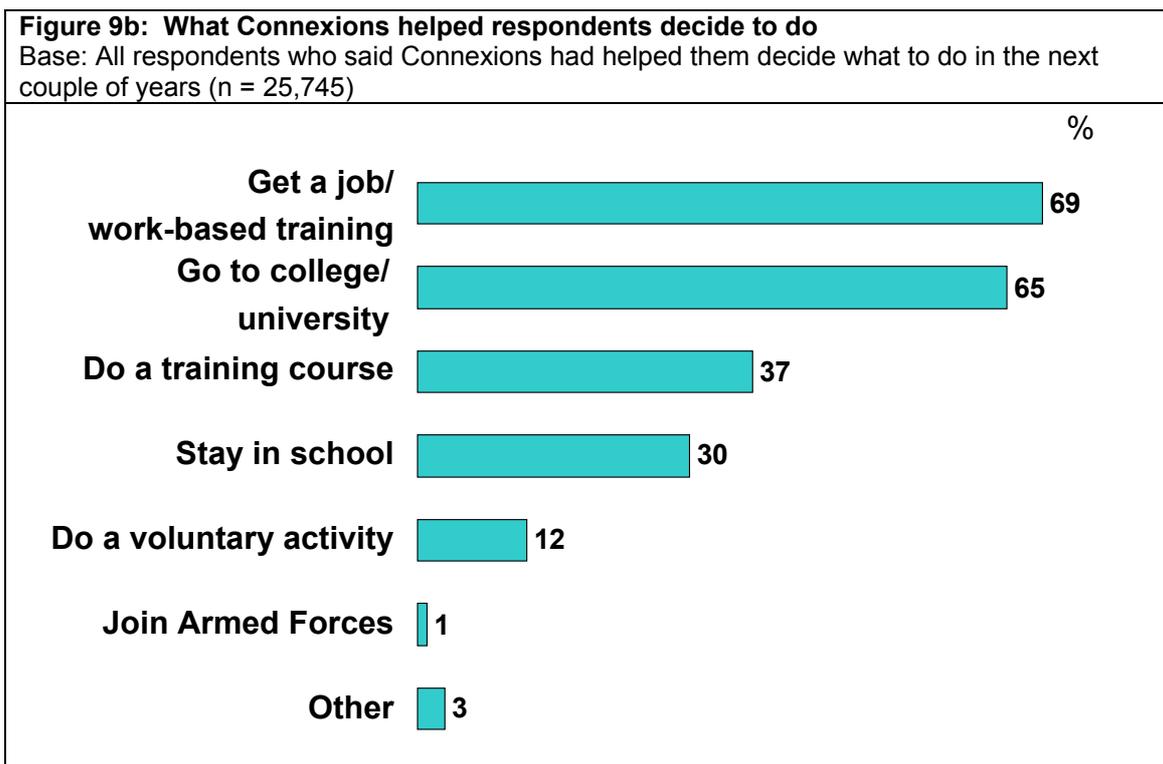
There was a slight difference by mode of Partnership delivery. Young people from direct delivery Partnerships were more likely than sub-contracted Partnerships (29 per cent versus 25 per cent) to say they had *definitely* been helped to decide what to do. The proportion of respondents saying they had been helped *a bit* was almost identical for the two delivery modes (39 per cent in direct delivery Partnerships, 38 per cent in sub-contracted ones), with a higher proportion from sub-contracted Partnerships saying that Connexions had not helped them decide what to do (34 per cent versus 30 per cent).

The Partnership areas with the smallest proportion of young people saying that Connexions had definitely helped them decide what to do were South Yorkshire and Black Country (20 per cent in each case) and the Partnership with the highest proportion was Herefordshire & Worcestershire (36 per cent).

### 9.3 What Connexions helped respondents decide to do

Young people saying that the people at Connexions had helped them decide what to do over the next couple of years (those answering *yes - definitely* or *yes – a bit*) were asked a follow-up question: ‘What have they helped you decide what to do?’ Responses were focused on work, training and education,

as shown in Figure 9b. (Note that respondents could give more than one answer, so percentages total more than 100.)



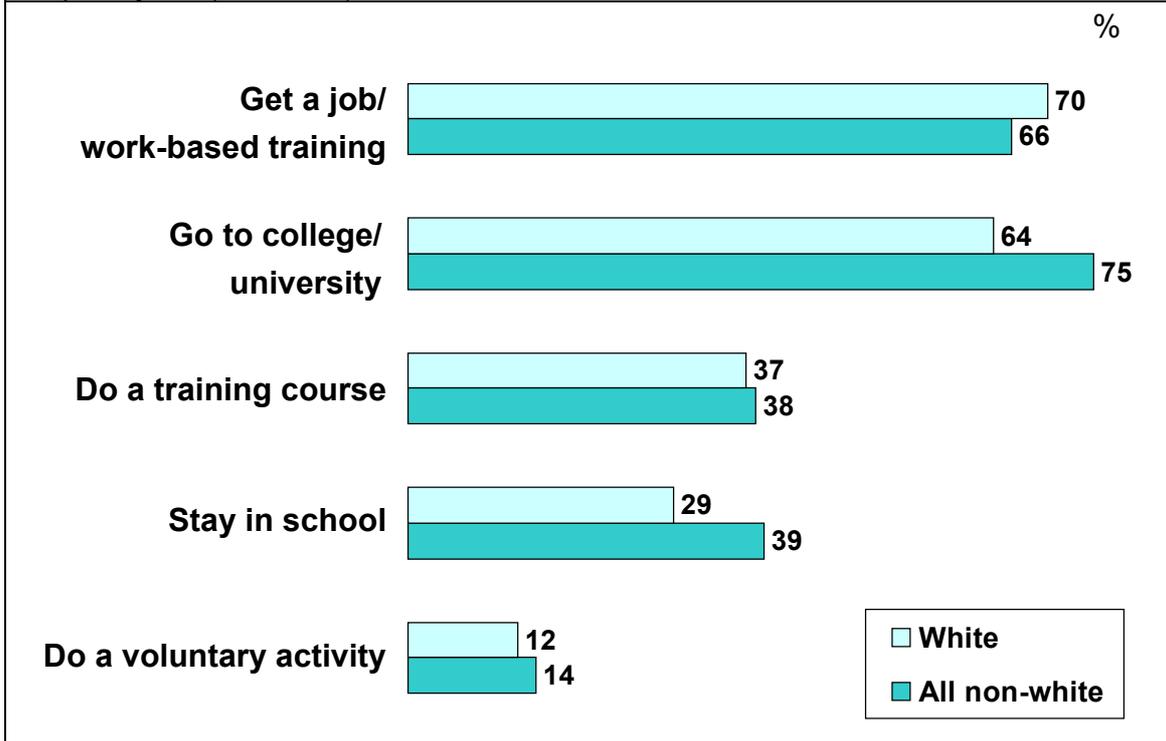
Respondents receiving Priority 3 (minimum) support were the most likely to say they had decided to go to college/university (69 per cent) or to stay in school (36 per cent), whereas Priority 1 respondents were least likely to have decided to do either of these (58 per cent and 19 per cent respectively).

Looking at work and training, Priority 2 respondents were more likely than either of the other two groups to say they had decided to get a job (75 per cent) or do a training course (43 per cent). Male respondents were more likely than females to say they had decided to get a job (73 per cent versus 65 per cent) or do a training course (38 per cent versus 35 per cent).

Younger respondents (ages 13-to-15) were understandably more likely than older ones to choose educational options: 75 per cent deciding to go to college or university, 47 per cent to stay in school. Conversely, respondents aged 18-to-20 were most likely to have decided to get a job or work-based learning (74 per cent).

Respondents from minority ethnic groups were much more likely than their white counterparts to decide on educational options, as shown in Figure 9c. Conversely, white respondents were more likely than those from minority ethnic groups to have decided to get a job or work-based learning/training.

**Figure 9c: What Connexions helped respondents decide to do, by ethnic group.**  
 Base: All respondents who said Connexions had helped them decide what to do in the next couple of years (n = 25,745)



Respondents from Phase 2 and 3 Partnerships were more likely than those from Phase 1 to mention having decided to do most of the items on the list. This may reflect the fact that fieldwork for these Phases took place later in the school year, by which time external circumstances may have made such decisions more important.

#### 9.4 Whether young people had done anything as a result of Connexions that they had not thought of doing before

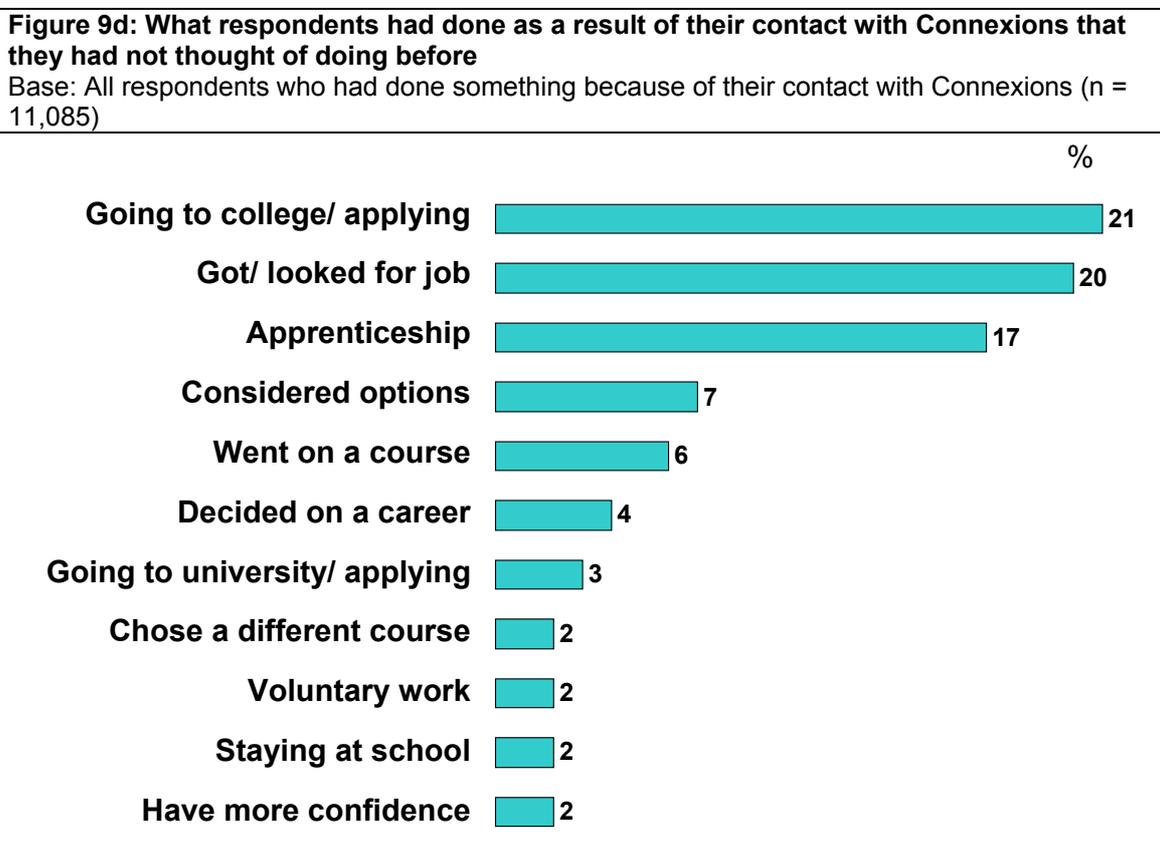
All respondents who had talked to a PA or anyone else from Connexions were asked whether they had done anything as a result of their contact with Connexions that they had not thought of doing before. Twenty-eight per cent said yes, they had done something they had not previously considered as a result of their contact with Connexions, and 68 per cent said they had not.

Priority 1 respondents were the most likely to say *yes*; 30 per cent did so, compared with 27 per cent for Priority 2 and 28 per cent for Priority 3 respondents. Respondents in the youngest age group (13-to-15) were less likely to have done something (24 per cent) than their older counterparts (29 per cent of 16-to-17 year olds and 30 per cent of those aged 18 and over). There was no real difference by gender, and little difference between ethnic groups or between respondents from sub-contracted and direct delivery Partnerships.

Respondents from Cambridge & Peterborough were the most likely to say that they had done something as a result of Connexions they had not thought of before; 35 per cent said this. The lowest proportion was in South Yorkshire, with 22 per cent.

### 9.4.1 What respondents did as a result of their contact with Connexions that they had not thought of doing before

Those respondents who said that they had done something they had not previously considered as a result of their contact with the Connexions Service were asked what they had done. As with decisions made because of Connexions (c.f. Section 9.3), the most common answers were again about education, training and employment, as shown in Figure 9d.



There were only a couple of differences between answers from different Priority groups; Priority 1 respondents were more likely than others to have gone on a course (10 per cent versus six per cent for Priority 2 and four per cent for Priority 3), and those in Priority 3 were more likely to say they had applied or gone to university (five per cent, compared with two per cent for Priority 2 and one per cent for Priority 1 respondents).

Again, male respondents were more likely than female ones to mention job or training-related answers: 22 per cent versus 16 per cent got or looked for a job; 20 per cent versus 14 per cent took an apprenticeship or work-based learning. White respondents who had taken action because of Connexions were more likely than minority ethnic respondents to have decided to get or look for a job (20 per cent compared with 15 per cent).

Age played an unsurprising role in determining what actions respondents had taken. The decision to go or apply to college was more common among younger respondents (22 per cent of under 18s who had done something due to Connexions, compared with 16 per cent of those aged 18 and over), but older respondents were the most likely to have got or looked for a job (23 per cent of those aged 18 and over and 21 per cent of those aged 16-to-17, compared with 11 per cent of those aged under 16), and to have gone on an apprenticeship (21 per cent of those aged over 18 and 18 per cent of those aged 16-to-17, compared with nine per cent of the under 16s).

## **9.5 The impact of Connexions on respondents' confidence**

All young people who had talked to a Personal Adviser or someone else from Connexions were asked whether their contact with the service had: made them more confident overall, less confident overall, or had made no difference. Responses were fairly evenly split between positive improvements and no change:

- 49 per cent of respondents said that their contact with Connexions had made them more confident overall;
- 47 per cent said their contact with Connexions had made no difference to their confidence overall;
- only one per cent of respondents said their contact with Connexions had made them less confident overall.

Given that Partnerships carry out their most intensive support with young people in Priority category 1, it is not surprising that these respondents were more likely than those from Priority 2 and 3 to say that Connexions had made them more confident, as shown in Figure 9e.

**Figure 9e: How Connexions has affected respondents' confidence, by Priority category**  
 Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions (n = 38,492)



There were no real differences by gender of respondent. However, there was a clear variation by age, with younger respondents more likely to say that Connexions had made them more confident, as shown in Figure 9f.

**Figure 9f: How Connexions has affected respondents' confidence, by age**  
 Base: All respondents who have had contact with Connexions (n = 38,492)



Black and Asian respondents were slightly more likely than white respondents to say that contact with Connexions had improved their confidence (53 per cent, 52 per cent and 48 per cent respectively), with mixed race respondents least likely to say this (42 per cent).

Whether confidence was improved by Connexions varied slightly by delivery mode. Among direct delivery Partnerships, 50 per cent said their confidence had been improved, compared with 47 per cent among sub-contracted delivery Partnerships. There was no difference in terms of saying that Connexions had lowered their confidence.

There was a fair amount of variation between individual Partnerships on this measure. The best results were seen in County Durham, Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Berkshire; in each of these areas 56 per cent said contact with the Partnership increased their confidence. The lowest figure was for South Yorkshire, where 37 per cent said that their confidence had improved as a result of their contact with Connexions.

## **9.6 Key driver analysis**

This multiple regression analysis was used to try to identify the factors that had the greatest impact on young people being enabled to make decisions about their future. The idea of this analysis is to identify the influences that make an important contribution to an outcome (e.g. satisfaction with a service) by showing to what extent views about the service overall can be predicted from views about particular aspects of the service. More details of the technique and the approach taken can be found in the Appendices.

The analysis looked at the key drivers for:

- overall satisfaction;
- making respondents more confident overall;
- and helping respondents decide what to do in the next couple of years.

The results in terms of overall satisfaction are reported in Section 8.4.1. The results for the other two measures are given below.

### **9.6.1 Key driver analysis of increase in respondents' confidence**

The multiple regression analysis identified a number of key factors driving whether contact with the Connexions Service improved the confidence of young people. These are listed below, starting with the most important factors:

- overall satisfaction (see Section 8.4.1 for key drivers of overall satisfaction);
- Connexions staff helping respondents to see all the options available;
- the usefulness of advice given about education;
- the usefulness of advice given about jobs/careers;
- agreement with the statement that Connexions has a lot to offer young people.

Of these, overall satisfaction had a much bigger impact than the other factors.

### **9.6.2 Key driver analysis of agreement that Connexions helps respondents decide what to do**

Again, multiple regression analysis was carried out to try to identify what factors are the key drivers for respondents saying that Connexions helped them decide what to do over the next couple of years. The main factors are set out below, in order of importance (most important first) of their total effects on helping respondents to make decisions on their future:

- improvement in respondent's confidence as a result of contact with Connexions (see the section above for key drivers of improved confidence);
- overall satisfaction with Connexions (see Section 8.4.1 for key drivers of overall satisfaction);
- usefulness of advice given about education;
- usefulness of advice given about jobs and careers;
- usefulness of advice given about work-based learning/training;
- Connexions staff helping young people to see all the options available to them;
- agreement that Connexions staff know what they are talking about;
- agreement that Connexions staff are easy to get hold of;
- agreement that Connexions has a lot to offer young people;
- friendliness of Connexions staff.

Improved confidence and overall satisfaction were both among the key factors, so the key drivers of each of those collective ideas are also indirect drivers of respondents saying that Connexions helped

them decide what to do in the next couple of years. These effects have been isolated so that each is counted only once in prioritising the above list.

Apart from these collective ideas, the main driver of Connexions helping young people to take decisions about their future is the usefulness of advice given about jobs, education and training - the three most-commonly given topics of advice. Other areas of advice were given to too few respondents to register in the model.

Analysis was also carried out to identify the total effects by different segments of the achieved sample of young people. Perhaps the only sub-group difference worthy of highlighting was among minority ethnic respondents, where *enabling* ideas (being helped to see all the options, having lot to offer to young people) were even more pronounced as key drivers. Although it had been imagined that there might be differences between the models for direct delivery and sub-contracted delivery Partnerships, the models were in fact very similar.

## 10 Conclusions

Young people who responded to the survey showed very high levels of awareness of the Connexions Service and very high levels of satisfaction with the support and advice they received from the staff of Connexions Partnerships.

While Connexions Personal Advisers (PAs) provided advice on a wide range of topics, this was mostly focused on education, employment and training. Other topics were covered more often amongst those assessed as needing the most support (Priority 1), suggesting that CXPs are targeting their most intensive work where it can have the most impact. This is also supported by the fact that Priority 1 respondents were more likely than those in lower Priority groups to have had any contact in the first place, and to have had a greater number of contacts with Connexions.

The information provided by Connexions was not only seen as very useful, but had a measurable impact on those who used the service. Two-thirds had been helped to make a decision, three in ten had done something they had not thought of before as a result, and half said that their contact with Connexions had made them more confident. Again, those in Priority category 1 were more likely to have done something they had not thought of before, and more likely to report increased confidence compared to those in other Priority groups.

Results did not vary much between Phases; in particular the key drivers of satisfaction and motivation were the same for Phase 1 as for the later Phases (see below). Where differences existed, for example in terms of awareness of the Connexions Card, in most cases it seems probable that they are a factor of the fieldwork timings rather than an inherent reflection of the Partnerships themselves.

Several key results varied between the two modes of delivery, with results for direct delivery Partnerships generally more positive than those for sub-contracted delivery Partnerships. There was a greater awareness of Connexions in direct delivery Partnerships than in sub-contracted delivery areas. Of those young people who were aware of Connexions, those in direct delivery areas were also more likely to have made contact (or to recall having made contact) with the Service. Where contact had been made, young people in direct delivery Partnerships were on average slightly more satisfied with the overall service, more likely to agree that staff were easy to contact, slightly more likely to strongly agree that the staff were knowledgeable and more likely to say they had definitely decided to do something as a result, than were their counterparts in sub-contracted delivery Partnerships.

There were few real differences by ethnicity which could not be attributed to the greater likelihood of minority ethnic respondents living in sub-contracted delivery Partnerships. Asian respondents were slightly less likely than other ethnic groups to be aware of the Connexions Service, or if aware to have contacted it. Black and Asian young people were slightly more likely than white respondents to find that dealing with Connexions raised their confidence, but other than this there were no real differences in levels of satisfaction or the key drivers of this satisfaction between ethnic groups.

Results did not vary much between males and females, but there was considerable variation by age. The 16-to-17 year old group had the greatest awareness of Connexions, and older respondents were more likely than younger ones to recall contacting the service and to have had a greater number of contact (although this could well be simply a result of these respondents having been in the age range served by Connexions for a longer period of time). Older users of Connexions were overall slightly more likely to be dissatisfied, and less likely to have found the information they received useful, or say their confidence had been increased, than younger users; again, this may simply be that younger people have less high expectations, having come into contact with fewer services than their older counterparts.

Interestingly, younger service users were more likely than older ones to say they had been helped to make a decision by Connexions, but older service users were more likely than younger ones to say they had done something they had not previously thought about due to Connexions. This distinction may be reflected in the differing topics discussed by older and younger users – while jobs/careers and education were the most commonly discussed topics for all age groups, older respondents were more likely than younger ones also to discuss topics such as work-based learning, money and benefits, and housing, younger ones were more likely than older ones to use Connexions for help on lifestyle issues such as stress, bullying, alcohol and substance abuse and contraception. Clearly, Connexions plays a different role in young people's lives over the age range covered by the Service, something which should be taken into account in marketing the service to attract new users.

The most significant drivers for determining whether Connexions helped users decide what to do were whether contact had increased their confidence, overall satisfaction with the service, usefulness of advice given on various topics and being helped to see all of the options available to them. These last two were in turn key drivers of the first two measures, and since they can be directly targeted for improvement (unlike confidence and satisfaction, which are more holistically related to the respondent's overall experience), are perhaps the best areas to concentrate on in terms of maintaining and building upon the positive results seen so far.

## APPENDICES

## **Appendix A – Questionnaire design**

The survey questionnaire was developed over a period of several weeks, reflecting the extensive input from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Connexions Service National Unit (CSNU - now Supporting Children & Young People Group), individual Connexions Partnerships, young people in contact with Connexions and the research team at BMRB.

Initially, the questionnaire was planned to fit on four sides of A4 paper, with the intention that approximately three-quarters of the questionnaire would be a common format with the final quarter to be selected by each Partnership from a 'menu' of options. However, the feedback indicated that there were many questions where there was widespread agreement on their importance and it was subsequently agreed by the Department and CSNU that the questionnaire would be doubled in length (to eight pages of A4) and that for this survey and the subsequent main stage (Phases 2 and 3), the questions would be the same for all Partnerships. The only exception to this was questions on Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), which in Phase 1 of the survey (the pilot phase) were only asked in Partnership areas where EMA was available in at least one Local Education Authority covered by the Partnership.

The following sections set out the stages of questionnaire development leading up to Phase 1 fieldwork. This Appendix concludes with a summary of changes made between Phase 1 and Phases 2 and 3.

### **Initial visits to Connexions Partnerships**

The first stage entailed visiting four Partnerships: South London (sub-contracted), Lincolnshire & Rutland (direct delivery), Cheshire & Warrington (direct delivery) and Tyne & Wear (Phase 2, direct delivery). At each visit, members of the research team met with key staff at the CXP to discuss how the service was delivered in practice, what the staff perceived to be the key issues in delivering Connexions, how they defined and measured 'success' in working with young people, and what issues should be included in the questionnaire. In addition, these visits covered practical sampling issues, definitions of a 'contact', opt-out issues, etc.

During the visit to the Gateshead office of Connexions Tyne & Wear, the research team also had a particularly productive meeting with young people from the local Peer Group Project, who contributed many useful comments on questions, language, fieldwork and the like. We were not able to take on all the comments, but the perspective of young people at an early stage of questionnaire development was very helpful.

Subsequently, a number of early drafts of the questionnaire were discussed before agreeing a version for cognitive interviewing.

## **Cognitive interviewing**

An important part of the questionnaire development stage involved cognitive interviewing. Cognitive testing seeks to understand the thought process that a respondent uses in trying to answer a question. The aim is to see whether the respondent understands both the question as a whole and any key specific words and phrases it might contain, what sort of information the respondent needs to retrieve in order to answer the question and what decision processes the respondent uses in order to come up with an answer.

We carried out 20 cognitive interviews with young people in four different areas (Chester, Coventry, Lincolnshire & Rutland and Merseyside). These interviews took place between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> October 2002. All respondents were provided with a £15 token as a thank-you for their time. Interviews were conducted with a range of young people with regards to gender, age and type of support they receive from Connexions.

We used two versions of the questionnaire, and two methods of administration were used (self-completions versus reading out the questions). The researchers who had conducted the interviews held a debrief session where each question was discussed in turn. The results of this were written up in the form of a marked up questionnaire.

## **Amending the questionnaire**

As a result of the cognitive testing the questionnaire was revised to take the findings into account. The main changes revolved around simplifying the question wording to make sure everyone understood the question. There were other instances where the wording needed to be clarified so that all (or almost all) young people could be expected to interpret the question in the same way. Other changes related to clarifying the question and making it shorter as some young people found long questions difficult to understand. Some questions were not working and were entirely removed from the questionnaire.

## **Final Phase 1 questionnaire design issues**

After the cognitive interviewing stage, further drafts of the questions were developed and circulated to Phase 1 Connexions Partnerships for comment. These comments were summarised and sent with recommendations for a final format to DfES and CSNU. The main change was doubling the length of the questionnaire and removing the 'menu' section. It was confirmed that all areas would be asked the same questions, with the exception of those on Education Maintenance Allowance, which were only asked in CXPs containing local education authorities where EMA had been rolled out.

The final questionnaire included sections on:

- awareness of Connexions
- contact with Connexions
- issues raised with Connexions staff
- satisfaction with Connexions
- the impact of using Connexions
- involvement in Connexions
- Education Maintenance Allowance (in certain areas)
- demographic information.

BMRB commissioned a young artist to design an eye-catching cover for the postal questionnaire. After comments from CSNU and DfES, a revised version, incorporating some images from the Connexions website, was designed and approved for use with the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was finally approved in early December 2002, with the next couple of weeks set aside for programming and testing the CATI and CAPI scripts. A telephone pre-pilot was carried out on 18 December to test the questionnaire and respondents' reactions to being contacted before the survey went live, starting on 2 January 2003.

### **Final Phase 1 questionnaire**

The questionnaire administered through all four methods in this survey was identical, apart from minor technical differences relating to the different mode. For instance, the wording for the questionnaire introduction differed a little, as did the formatting.

All routing was controlled electronically in the electronic surveys (CATI, CAPI and web). For the postal survey, most routing was detailed on the paper questionnaire apart from one filter, which depended on region: the three questions relating to the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) were only asked in Partnerships containing at least one LEA where the EMA was in operation. As this would have been too complicated to administer through simple routing on the paper questionnaire, two postal questionnaire versions were created, one including the questions and one excluding them, and these were sent to respondents in the relevant areas.

## **Amendments for Phase 2 and 3 fieldwork**

A small number of changes were made to the questionnaire between fieldwork in Phase 1 and Phase 2 Partnerships.

Two new questions were added about awareness and usage of Connexions Direct. The questions on EMA were asked in *all* Partnerships from Phase 2 onwards (therefore only one version of the paper questionnaire was used for these Phases). Two existing questions (contacting Connexions and current working status) had their answer lists expanded to give a greater amount of detail. Other than this, the only change was a minor wording change on the first question describing the target age range of Connexions in a more easily understood manner.

Where base definitions were different (i.e. the EMA questions), analysis was conducted separately for Phase 1 from Phases 2 and 3. Where answer codes were altered, analysis in Phase 2 and 3 was carried out both on the new versions of the questions, restricted to Phase 2 and 3 respondents, and on the old versions by combining answers back into the original categories, based on all respondents.

No further changes were made between fieldwork in Phase 2 and Phase 3 Partnerships.

## **Appendix B – Sampling**

The aim for the Connexions pilot customer satisfaction survey was to achieve 1,000 responses in each of the 47 Connexions Partnership areas. These were:

### Phase 1 Partnerships

- Black Country
- Cheshire & Warrington
- Cornwall & Devon
- Coventry & Warwickshire
- Cumbria
- Greater Merseyside
- Humber
- Lincolnshire & Rutland
- Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire
- North London
- Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
- South London
- South Yorkshire
- Suffolk
- West of England.

### Phase 2 Partnerships

- Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
- County Durham
- Gloucestershire
- Herefordshire & Worcestershire
- Hertfordshire
- Lancashire

- London East
- Nottinghamshire
- Somerset
- Staffordshire
- Tyne & Wear
- Central London

### Phase 3 Partnerships

- Bedfordshire & Luton
- Birmingham & Solihull
- Derbyshire
- Essex, Southend & Thurrock
- Greater Manchester
- Leicester Shire
- Northamptonshire
- South Central
- Sussex
- Tees Valley
- London West
- Wiltshire & Swindon
- York & North Yorkshire
- West Yorkshire
- Kent & Medway
- Surrey
- Berkshire
- Norfolk
- Northumberland

When work on the project began, the proportions of the three support levels across all Connexions Partnerships were estimated to be 10 per cent in Priority 1, 40 per cent in Priority 2, and 50 per cent in Priority 3. For the survey, it was decided to over-sample those in Priority 1 and to reduce the sample among those receiving minimum support. This was because the Connexions Service was carrying out most work with those receiving intensive support, and these young people therefore constituted the group of greatest interest. Also, because overall the proportion of young people in Priority 1 was estimated to be quite small (around 10 per cent), this would only yield around 100 achieved responses out of a total of 1,000 within each area.

The decision to try and deliver more interviews with young people in Priority 1 would improve the robustness of analyses by Priority category, particularly within individual Partnerships. (Because the proportion of young people in Priority 3 was much higher, the impact of reducing the number of responses for this group was minimal).

Within each area, therefore, the aim was to achieve 200 responses (or 20 per cent) with young people receiving intensive support (Priority 1), and 400 responses (40 per cent) each with those receiving intermediate and minimum support (Priority 2 and 3 respectively).

The samples were taken from Connexions Partnership databases. The sample population was taken as being all contacts within a three-month period. To ensure the freshest possible sample, a different three-month period was used for each fieldwork stage, being the three months closest to the fieldwork dates which allowed sufficient turnaround time for contact and opt-out procedures.

- For the Phase 1 fieldwork, the period was from 1 July to 30 September 2002;
- For the Phase 2 fieldwork, the period was from 1 February to 30 April 2003;
- For the Phase 3 fieldwork, the period was from 1 May to 31 July 2003.

A contact was defined as including all face-to-face and telephone contacts, group sessions and contacts by letter and e-mail. Blanket mailings, e-mailings and text messages (SMS) were excluded where these could be identified.

The total numbers to be sampled from each Partnership area depended on whether the CXP decided to run an opt-out procedure - clearly, in areas running an explicit opt-out (all young people could decline to take part at any stage in any case), a larger number would need to be sampled initially. Where Partnerships were running an opt-out (either because the Partnership's data protection registration precluded contact details being passed on without an opt-out, or because the Partnership felt it was necessary for them to contact young people first), an anonymised file was sent to BMRB containing demographic details of all young people contacted within the relevant period. The cases were then stratified by Priority category, gender and age. From these cases, BMRB randomly sampled 522 cases from young people in Priority 1 and 1,045 each from those in Priority 2 and 3 (i.e. a total of 2,612 for each Partnership). After the opt-out period was complete, the Partnership sent BMRB the

revised sample file with full contact details for all young people who had not opted out. These cases were again stratified by Priority, age and gender and then the final random sample was taken of 380 young people in Priority 1, and 880 each in Priority 2 and 3 (i.e. 2,140 in total).

In areas where the Partnership's data protection registration permitted them to pass contact details to a research contractor of CSNU or the DfES (and where the Partnership was happy to do this), a sample file containing all relevant contacts was sent to BMRB. These cases were stratified by Priority, age and gender and then a random sample was taken of 380 young people in Priority 1 and 880 each in Priority 2 and 3 (i.e. 2,140 in total). In Phase 3 this was raised slightly to 390 in Priority 1 and 890 in each of Priority 2 and 3 (i.e. 2,170 in total), to allow for a greater number of office refusals following the issue of advance letters where this was the first contact with the young people.

In some areas, it was not possible to adhere rigidly to these numbers. For example, in a small number of areas, there were insufficient numbers of contacts with young people in Priority 1 (or occasionally Priority 2). If there was a shortfall in Priority 1 contacts, the numbers of those sampled from Priority 2 were boosted; if there was a shortfall in the numbers in Priority 2, the numbers sampled from young people in Priority 3 were boosted.

A more complex situation occurred with the North and South London Partnerships. In the North London Partnership area, many of the records relating to young people in Priority 1 and 2 were still held on paper, and it was not practical to sample from these. Also, one borough within the North London area decided they could not take part without an opt-in procedure - as this would be different to all other Partnerships and would bias responses, it was decided to exclude that part of the Partnership area. As a result of these factors, there were insufficient cases in Priority 1 (effectively we were taking a census of all Priority 1 contacts in the sampling period). Priority 2 and 3 cases were boosted as much as possible although in the end the numbers were still insufficient and a decision was taken to boost numbers from South London to try to give a better picture for London overall.

The sample from Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin was also short of numbers, and a decision was taken exceptionally to extend the sampling window to five months (i.e. May to September).

In the Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire area, one local authority was very reluctant for interviews to take place with young people receiving intensive support (Priority 1) under the Connexions 'umbrella'. These young people were therefore excluded from the sample files passed to BMRB, with the result that young people in contact with Connexions in that local authority were not represented among the Priority 1 sample.

Due to delays in the process of carrying out initial assessments after the launch of the local Connexions Partnership, Gloucestershire was unable to produce sample in time for the Phase 2 fieldwork dates, and so fieldwork was carried out in Gloucestershire as part of the Phase 3 fieldwork, using the same sampling dates as used by the Phase 3 Partnerships.

## Appendix C – Fieldwork

### Fieldwork method

Interviewing took place between the following dates:

- Phase 1 fieldwork: 2 January to 17 March 2003,
- Phase 2 fieldwork: 21 July to 29 September 2003,
- Phase 3 fieldwork: 14 October 2003 to 3 January 2004.

For the Phase 1 fieldwork, four different data collection methods were used: CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing), CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing), Postal self-completion and web. Due to the low take-up of web interviews, this method was dropped for Phase 2 and Phase 3 fieldwork.

Half of Priority 1 young people were interviewed face-to-face and half by telephone. The Priority 2 and 3 young people sample in Phase 1 were split evenly between telephone and postal fieldwork methods. A number of measures aimed at maximising response rates were implemented:

- At least five attempts were made to contact respondents who took part in the face-to-face survey;
- At least 10 attempts were made to contact respondents who took part in the telephone survey;
- Respondents who were sent the paper version of the questionnaire (and in Phase 1 an invitation to take part in the web survey) were sent two reminders to invite them to participate in the survey, with a duplicate questionnaire included in the second reminder;
- During Phase 1 fieldwork, respondents who had not been successfully contacted on the telephone after ten attempts were sent a postal questionnaire in a 'postal chase';
- During Phase 1 fieldwork, respondents who had not responded to the self-completion survey after two reminders, but had provided a telephone number, were contacted by telephone to remind them to complete the questionnaire or to offer them the option to complete the questionnaire over the telephone in a 'telephone chase'.

The last two methods were dropped after Phase 1 fieldwork as they did not prove cost effective. Instead, since the telephone response rate was much higher than the postal response rate (see below), the decision was taken for Phase 2 and 3 fieldwork to maximise response by assigning all Priority 2 and 3 young people where a valid telephone number was available to the telephone fieldwork method.

Advance letters about the survey were sent prior to the start of interviewing and parental consent was sought for all interviews with young people aged under 16. The advance letters and postal questionnaires for this age group were sent initially to the young person's parent or guardian with a

request for the parent to pass the information on to the young person if they were happy to. Parental consent was also sought at the beginning of the actual interview, both face-to-face and on the telephone. Parents/guardians of under 16s who received postal questionnaires were asked to show their consent by signing the top of the first page of the questionnaire.

In total, 52,362 responses were obtained across the three stages of fieldwork and the split between data collection methods is shown in Table C1. As discussed in Appendix B, fieldwork for the Phase 2 Partnership of Gloucestershire was included in with the overall Phase 3 fieldwork; here, though, the figures are included in with the Phase 2 totals to give an accurate picture of the achieved sample.

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Overall
Main telephone interviewing (CATI)	8,735	12,792	15,586	<b>37,113</b>
Telephone chase from postal non-responders (CATI)	1,623	-	-	<b>1,623</b>
Face-to-face interviewing (CAPI)	1,568	1,713	1,975	<b>5,256</b>
Postal self-completion questionnaire	3,855	1,219	2,957	<b>8,031</b>
Postal chase from CATI non-responders	116	-	-	<b>116</b>
Web self-completion questionnaire	223	-	-	<b>223</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>16,120</b>	<b>15,724</b>	<b>20,518</b>	<b>52,362</b>

The self-completion version was an 8 page, A3 booklet.

The length of the electronic interviews varied significantly: those respondents who had not heard of Connexions before the interview would not have been asked most of the questions. Conversely, the interview was considerably longer than average for those respondents who spent a long time commenting on Connexions or generally took longer to answer the questions.

Phase 1 telephone interviews took around 6 minutes 50 seconds on average, whilst Phase 1 face-to-face interviews took around eight minutes on average. The revised questionnaire used in Phases 2 and 3 took slightly longer, with an average of around 7 minutes 20 seconds on the telephone, and around nine minutes face-to-face. These figures in all cases exclude the contact time needed by the interviewers to get through to the respondents or to reach them.

A further factor that would have impacted on the total length of the interview was the age of the respondent, as the introduction text for respondents aged 13-to-15 was considerably longer than the introduction for respondents aged 16-to-19.

## **Response rates**

Tables C2a-c (over the page) show the numbers of interviews achieved from each initial sample batch in the fieldwork at each Phase. As discussed in Appendix B, fieldwork for the Phase 2 Partnership of Gloucestershire was included in with the overall Phase 3 fieldwork; here, the response figures for Gloucestershire are included with the rest of the Phase 3 fieldwork in Table C2c, to give the most accurate indicator of response rate at each stage of the fieldwork.

Note that the column headings for Table C2a refer to the initial sample batch young people were allocated to, rather than to the survey completion method. The completed interviews in the Telephone column include 116 completed on paper in the postal chase, and those in the 'postal/web' column include 1,623 interviews conducted in the CATI chase. This CATI chase is where the greater amount of information on ineligible Postal/web sample comes from in Phase 1; for Phases 2 and 3 the only available information was cases where someone at that address voluntarily returned information.

Note also that the figure in the 'Overall' column of the 'Total sample' row is slightly higher than the combined figures from the first three rows. This is because a number of records were discovered, after selection, to have insufficient contact details (in general, a missing or partial address) for mode assignment to be possible. They therefore appear only in the 'Overall' column, added to the 'Invalid contact details' row. This affects Phase 1 and Phase 3 fieldwork. In Phase 2, an office mistake led to too much sample being issued in certain areas (In areas conducting their own opt-outs, all returned sample was issued, rather than a subset of this). Sample in these areas was fully worked, and so the response rates were not affected, but for this reason higher numbers of interviews were conducted in these areas.

**Table C2a: Numbers of interviews achieved by data collection method (Phase 1)**

	Telephone	Face-to-face	Postal/web	Overall
<b>Total sample</b>	<b>14,793</b>	<b>2,557</b>	<b>12,745</b>	<b>32,100</b>
Invalid contact details	1,898	52	1,052	5,007
Moved	553	421	205	1,179
Unknown at address	513	0	106	619
<i>All ineligibles</i>	<i>2,964</i>	<i>473</i>	<i>1,363</i>	<i>6,805</i>
<b>Eligible sample</b>	<b>11,829</b>	<b>2,084</b>	<b>11,382</b>	<b>25,295</b>
<b>Completed interviews</b>	<b>8,851</b>	<b>1,568</b>	<b>5,701</b>	<b>16,120</b>
% completed on initial sample	60%	61%	45%	50%
% completed on eligible sample	75%	75%	50%	64%
= response rate				

**Table C2b: Numbers of interviews achieved by data collection method (Phase 2 excluding Gloucestershire)**

	Telephone	Face-to-face	Postal	Overall
<b>Total sample</b>	<b>21,172</b>	<b>2,674</b>	<b>4,262</b>	<b>28,108</b>
Invalid contact details	3,231	37	6	3,274
Moved	578	368	61	1,007
Unknown at address	818	0	10	828
<i>All ineligibles</i>	<i>4,627</i>	<i>405</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>5,109</i>
<b>Eligible sample</b>	<b>16,545</b>	<b>2,269</b>	<b>4,185</b>	<b>22,999</b>
<b>Completed interviews</b>	<b>12,141</b>	<b>1,612</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>14,742</b>
% completed on initial sample	57%	60%	23%	52%
% completed on eligible sample	73%	71%	24%	64%
= response rate				

**Table C2c: Numbers of interviews achieved by data collection method (Phase 3 plus Gloucestershire)**

	Telephone	Face-to-face	Postal	Overall
<b>Total sample</b>	<b>28,044</b>	<b>3,458</b>	<b>11,407</b>	<b>43,280</b>
Invalid contact details	4,039	42	68	4,520
Moved	776	477	101	1,354
Unknown at address	1,631	0	112	1,743
<i>All ineligibles</i>	<i>6,446</i>	<i>519</i>	<i>281</i>	<i>7,617</i>
<b>Eligible sample</b>	<b>21,598</b>	<b>2,939</b>	<b>11,126</b>	<b>35,663</b>
<b>Completed interviews</b>	<b>16,237</b>	<b>2,076</b>	<b>3,187</b>	<b>21,500</b>
% completed on initial sample	58%	60%	28%	50%
% completed on eligible sample	75%	71%	29%	60%
= response rate				

The overall response rate achieved was 64 per cent in Phases 1 and 2, and 60 per cent in Phase 3 after excluding those with incorrect contact details and those who had moved.

Response rates were higher in the interviewer-administered parts of the survey. In fact, the response rate in Phase 3 matches or exceeds that for Phase 2 in each component area; the overall response rate is lower due a greater proportion of respondents falling into the postal survey, due in turn to a greater number of sampled young people at this stage of fieldwork not having valid telephone numbers attached to their sample records.

As would be expected the response rate for the postal/web survey was much higher in Phase 1 when the 'telephone chase' was used. Having said this, if one excludes the telephone chase interviews from the 'postal sample' column in Phase 1, some 4,078 questionnaires were returned by post or on the web, a response rate of 36 per cent, compared with 24 per cent and 29 per cent in Phase 2 and 3 respectively. The telephone chase contributes to the response rate in another way too, by increasing the proportion of addresses that can be identified as ineligible; if we assume the same proportion of ineligible addresses would have been found in Phase 2 and 3, this raises the postal response rates at these Phases to 26 per cent and 31 per cent respectively. These are closer to the Phase 1 result but still some way off, so not all of the drop in postal response rate can be attributed to the lack of telephone chase.

One possible external influence was the spate of postal strikes which took place in the last quarter of 2003, although this would only substantially affect the Phase 3 fieldwork. It is possible there is also a general seasonal effect involved, with respondents who were in full-time education being contacted during their Summer break (in Phase 2) or early in the academic year (in Phase 3) perhaps being less likely to respond to a questionnaire partially related (and easily perceived as being strongly related) to their school behaviour, without the motivating presence of an interviewer.

Combining the results from the three stages of fieldwork (see Table C2d), the overall response rate for the survey was 62 per cent.

<b>Table C2d: Numbers of interviews achieved by data collection method (Total)</b>				
	Telephone	Face-to-face	Postal/web	Overall
<b>Total sample</b>	<b>64,009</b>	<b>8,689</b>	<b>28,414</b>	<b>103,488</b>
Invalid contact details	9,168	131	1,126	12,801
Moved	1,907	1,266	367	3,540
Unknown at address	2,962	0	228	3,190
<i>All ineligibles</i>	<i>14,037</i>	<i>1,397</i>	<i>1,721</i>	<i>19,531</i>
<b>Eligible sample</b>	<b>49,972</b>	<b>7,292</b>	<b>26,693</b>	<b>83,957</b>
<b>Completed interviews</b>	<b>37,229</b>	<b>5,256</b>	<b>9,877</b>	<b>52,362</b>
% completed on initial sample	58%	60%	35%	51%
% completed on eligible sample = response rate	74%	72%	37%	62%

### Non-response analysis

Overall, the profile of the respondents who actually took part in the survey did not differ from the overall sample in relation to gender, at each of the three fieldwork stages. As shown in Tables C3a-c, the percentages of respondents interviewed were very similar to those in the original sample files.

There were some slight differences by respondent's age and Priority category, however. In terms of age, there was little difference between the sample files and final profile in Phase 1, but there were small differences at the other two stages. For Phase 2 fieldwork, a higher proportion of young people in the 16-17 age group took part in the survey than were represented in the sample, with correspondingly lower proportions in the younger and older age groups. In Phase 3, the oldest age group was underrepresented among respondents, with the other two age groups correspondingly slightly overrepresented.

In each of the three fieldwork periods, proportionately more Priority 3 respondents took part in the survey compared to the original sample. Conversely, the proportion of Priority 2 respondents who took part was in each case slightly lower than in the original sample. Again, the differences were small.

**Table C3a: Profile of respondents, by gender, age and level of support (Phase 1)**

	% in the original sample (n=32,100)	% of completed interviews (n=16,120)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	55	55
Female	45	44
<b>Age</b>		
13-15	14	15
16-17	61	61
18-20	25	25
<b>Priority category</b>		
Priority 1	18	18
Priority 2	40	37
Priority 3	42	45

**Table C3b: Profile of respondents, by gender, age and level of support (Phase 2 excluding Gloucestershire)**

	% in the original sample (n=28,108)	% of completed interviews (n=14,742)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	56	55
Female	44	45
<b>Age</b>		
13-15	23	19
16-17	55	62
18-20	21	18
<b>Priority category</b>		
Priority 1	19	20
Priority 2	40	38
Priority 3	40	42

**Table C3c: Profile of respondents, by gender, age and level of support (Phase 3 plus Gloucestershire)**

	% in the original sample (n=43,280)	% of completed interviews (n=21,500)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	57	55
Female	43	44
<b>Age</b>		
13-15	25	27
16-17	51	53
18-20	24	20
<b>Priority category</b>		
Priority 1	15	16
Priority 2	39	36
Priority 3	46	48

The weighting that was applied to the data took account of both the sample selection bias (i.e. whereby the same total number of young people were sampled from each Partnership regardless of the size of the cohort in that area), and the non-response bias (whereby we weighted back to the original eligible population to account for the fact that some groups were less likely to have responded than others). The non-response analysis suggests that the element of non-response correction in the weighting was relatively small, and that the weighting therefore mainly corrected for the intentional sampling design. (Further details on weighting are contained in Appendix F.)

### Mode effects

As this project was run using multiple data-collection methods, it was important to look at any effect these might have had on the responses given in the survey. To a degree, the survey mode was dictated by respondent Priority level, and as that variable has such a big impact on responses given, mode effects could only be analysed *within* Priority category.

Thus, we could compare the face-to-face and telephone responses given by Priority 1 young people, and the telephone and self-completion (postal/web) responses given by young people from Priority 2 and 3. As the web survey was completed by such a small number of respondents, it could not be considered on its own and was therefore analysed with the postal data.

Analyses were run looking at answers to several key variables by Priority within mode and results are shown in tables C4 and C5. The modes referred to here are the actual modes in which the questionnaires were completed, not necessarily the originally modes assigned to the respondents.

**Table C4 – Telephone vs. Self-completion**

Base: All respondents in Priority categories 2 and 3

	Base	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
		Postal/ web	CATI	Postal	CATI	Postal	CATI
Heard of Connexions before today		4,173 94%	9,002 90%	1,217 88%	11,471 93%	2,954 86%	14,305 89%
Spoken to someone from Connexions		3,883 85%	8,145 79%	1,076 82%	10,644 81%	2,571 82%	12,883 74%
Connexions definitely helped them make decisions for next couple of years		3,422 16%	6,602 28%	903 14%	8,567 33%	2,120 13%	9,438 31%
Connexions made them more confident overall			36% 49%	29% 52%		29% 52%	
Very satisfied with Connexions			40% 51%	27% 51%		30% 51%	
Not at all satisfied with Connexions			7% 2%	2% 2%		2% 2%	

Looking at the differences in response by mode amongst the young people in Priority 2 and 3 during Phase 1 fieldwork, there were very few differences between the two CATI modes (i.e. between those originally assigned to telephone interviewing, and those re-assigned to it in the ‘telephone chase’), so we could mainly compare results from the self-completion questionnaires (postal and, in Phase 1, web) and CATI as a whole.

The young people responding to the self-completion questionnaires in Phase 1 were more likely than their counterparts in the CATI survey to have heard of Connexions and spoken to someone. It is possible that the higher reported awareness of Connexions is linked in some way to the respondent being able to see the name ‘Connexions’ on the paper questionnaire or on-line. The unusual spelling could also make the name more recognisable. The same thing would not have been possible in the telephone interviews. This explanation, while plausible, was speculative, but it was made a briefing point for telephone interviewers at the start of Phase 2 fieldwork that they should read the question on awareness with particular care. The comparable figures for Phase 2 and 3 fieldwork imply that this might have had an effect, particularly in Phase 2. Another possible factor is that young people who were unaware of Connexions, or aware of it but weren’t aware that they had ‘used’ the service, would conceivably be less likely to put in the time and effort to complete and return a questionnaire for a service they had not heard of or consciously used; this may help to explain the higher proportion of self-completion respondents saying they had been in touch with Connexions, even when the overall awareness of the service was lower.

At all stages of fieldwork, young people returning self-completion questionnaires were much less likely than those completing telephone interviews to say Connexions had helped them make decisions or made them more confident overall, and their ratings of Connexions were much less positive. One important factor to bear in mind when looking at these results is the difference in response rates between the two modes. Response was much lower on self-completion (37 per cent over all Phases, compared with 74 per cent on the telephone). It therefore seems that the smaller proportion of

young people who were prompted to respond to the self-completion surveys might have done so because of a bad experience with Connexions – thus we find young people who are more likely to have had interaction with Connexions, but are less happy with the Service. This is something that is often found where response is lower; people are more likely to respond if they have something to complain about.

Table C5 compares results from each Phase for CAPI (face-to-face) and CATI (telephone) responses. At all stages of fieldwork, young people from Priority 1 who completed the interview on CAPI were more likely than those completing the survey on CATI to say they had heard of Connexions before today and had spoken to someone. However, when looking at the impact of the service and young people’s ratings, these young people were less likely to report increased confidence, help in making decisions and satisfaction with the service.

**Table C5 – Face-to-face vs. Telephone**

Base: All respondents in Priority category 1

	Base	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
		CAPI	CATI	CAPI	CATI	CAPI	CATI
Heard of Connexions before today	1,568 95%	1,356 88%	1,713 94%	1,321 90%	1,974 91%	1,281 85%	
Spoken to someone from Connexions	1,492 90%	1,205 83%	1,624 91%	1,194 87%	1,813 89%	1,102 83%	
Connexions definitely helped them make decisions for next couple of years	1,357 22%	1,036 33%	1,471 26%	1,036 31%	1,619 25%	898 35%	
Connexions made them more confident overall	50%	54%	51%	60%	52%	56%	
Very satisfied with Connexions	48%	53%	49%	55%	51%	58%	
Not at all satisfied with Connexions	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	

Again, it is possible that the higher reported awareness of Connexions is linked in some way to the respondent being able to see the name ‘Connexions’ on the screen of the interviewer’s laptop. However, in this case highlighting this in the telephone briefing does not seem to have had an impact on the results in Phases 2 and 3.

One possible, though speculative, explanation for the less positive ratings of the Service among the face-to-face respondents lies in the mode-assignment process. Young people in Priority 1 whose contact details did not include a telephone number were automatically assigned to the face-to-face sample (as it was not possible to telephone them), with the remaining face-to-face capacity allocated at random among all records including a valid telephone number. While in some cases this may be down to how the Partnership recorded their details, the lack of a telephone number is a potential indicator of a young person either living in an area of higher deprivation, or being in a transient state (e.g. recently moved, or in short-term accommodation). We might therefore predict a higher-than-

average presence of such young people in the face-to-face sample compared with the telephone sample. As such factors can be indicators of social exclusion, this might provide a partial explanation of the less positive views among this sample; the young people in question have greater needs, which therefore stand a greater chance of not being met completely by Connexions.

## **Appendix D – Coding and Editing**

### **Coding**

Answers to partially or fully open-ended questions in the questionnaire were coded by BMRB's coding department in consultation with the research team. Answers to partially open-ended questions were back-coded where appropriate and extra codes were added where needed. Researchers in the team reviewed listings to the open-ended questions and added codes if necessary.

### **Editing**

Editing was not required for the electronic parts of the survey (CATI, CAPI and web questionnaires) as all routing was controlled within the questionnaire, and controls were set preventing respondents from giving more than one answer to single-coded questions.

However, no such controls were possible on the postal questionnaire and edits were therefore applied to the data after fieldwork end to correct for any inconsistencies.

### **Routing errors**

The first stage of editing dealt with routing errors. Thus unanswered questions which should have been answered were given a missing value code. Conversely, questions answered which shouldn't have been (according to the routing) were blanked out.

### **Multi-coding single-coded questions**

For all questions using a rating scale (e.g. strongly agree, slightly agree, slightly disagree, strongly disagree) if two 'positive' answers were multi-coded, the less strong positive rating was taken (i.e. slightly agree, in this example). Similarly, if two negative answers were multi-coded, the less strong negative rating was taken (e.g. slightly disagree). If a positive and a negative answer were multi-coded, the data for that case was forced to 'not stated'. All other questions were treated on an individual basis.

## Appendix E – Key driver analysis

We carried out a programme of multivariate analysis, as part of the analysis process, to identify the factors that had most impact on the young people being enabled to make decisions about their future. These were carried out by BMRB's Added Value Analysis department, working with the research team. The main technique used was **multiple regression (also known as key driver analysis, or MLR)**.

Multiple regression analysis is a statistical technique regularly used by BMRB in customer satisfaction research. It seeks to identify the influences which make an important contribution to, for example, overall satisfaction with a service, by showing to what extent views about the service overall can be predicted from views about particular aspects of the service.

### The technique

The technique requires:

- A **dependent variable** which is to be explained, for example overall satisfaction with Connexions, or changes in the ability to make decisions about one's future.
- A number of **independent variables** (e.g. aspects of the interactions between the users and Connexions, which are potentially able to explain variation in the dependent variable).

The procedure looks at the patterns of answers for the dependent versus the independent variables. The closer the pattern of answers, the more likely an independent variable is to be a key driver.

**Beta scores** (standardised regression coefficients) are produced by the analysis for each of the independent variables to show the influence each one has in explaining the dependent variable. The Betas show how influential a predictor each one is relative to each other (this is sometimes called *derived importance*). The relatively small number of factors that emerge as the most effective predictors of the dependent are called **key drivers**.

### Underlying Philosophy

We use statistical techniques like key driver analysis to test out our underlying beliefs on causes and effects. The statistics themselves do not show causation, they simply indicate degrees of association.

Our underlying theory would go as follows. The stated purpose of Connexions is to help young people make decisions about their future. A key 'dependent variable' question would be the one that asks users how much Connexions have helped them decide what they want to do in the next couple of years. Thus we used key driver analysis to find out which aspects of users' interactions with Connexions best explained how much it helped them make decisions.

Candidate 'independent' (or explanatory) variables were how much Connexions had affected their confidence (Q19), their overall satisfaction with Connexions (Q28), and other beliefs about

Connexions such as the five agree-statements (Q22-26), the perceived friendliness of Connexions (Q27) and the belief in the usefulness of contacts with Connexions for a number of areas (Q5a-5i).

The questions on confidence and overall satisfaction are both collective ideas; in other words we can use the same key driver analysis to drill down into the constituent causes of these by using almost the same set of independent variables.

We therefore had three regression equations:

Q17 Decision-Making vs. Q19, Q28, Q5a-5i, Q22-26, Q27  
 Q19 Confidence vs. Q28, Q5a-5i, Q22-26, Q27  
 Q28 Satisfaction vs. Q5a-5i, Q22-26, Q27

Both the direct effects (via Q17) and the indirect effects on Decision-Making (through Q28 and Q19) were aggregated to form Total Effects: a single list of relative importances (see Table E1).

**Table E1 – Total effects for Connexions models on helping decide**

	Total all Phases	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Non-white*	Direct delivery	Sub-contracted
Confidence q19	0.18	0.20	0.17	0.16	0.19	0.17	0.19
Satisfaction q28	0.20	0.20	0.19	0.20	0.14	0.21	0.19
Usefulness of education advice q5a	0.16	0.16	0.13	0.15	0.13	0.16	0.16
Usefulness of jobs/careers advice q5b	0.17	0.17	0.19	0.17	0.11	0.18	0.17
Usefulness of work-based learning advice q5c	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.01
Help to see all options q22	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.23	0.25	0.22	0.23
Know what they are talking about q23	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.05	0.02
Easy to get hold of q24	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02
Lot to offer young people q26	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.08	0.01	0.04
Friendliness of staff q27	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03

\* Not much difference between Asian and black groups.

## **Appendix F – Weighting and confidence intervals**

Two different stages of weighting were applied to the data to compensate for differential non-response to the survey and for differences in the probability of selection of young people in different Partnerships.

### **Stage 1 – non-response and design weighting**

The first stage of weighting was applied within each Partnership area. The demographic profile of respondents to the survey was compared to that in the sample population provided by the Connexions Partnerships. Results were weighted by gender, age and category to the target proportions taken from each initial sample file of young people who had been in contact with Connexions in the sampling reference period in the Partnership area (July – September 2002 for Phase 1 fieldwork; February – April 2003 for Phase 2 fieldwork, excluding Gloucestershire; May – July 2003 for Phase 3 fieldwork plus Gloucestershire). This corrected both for sample design (caused by over-sampling in some categories) and for non-response.

When results for each Partnership are analysed separately, only the first stage of weighting is applied.

### **Stage 2 – sample bias weighting**

An equal number of young people were sampled in each Connexions Partnership with the aim of achieving 1,000 interviews per Partnership. However, Partnerships differ in size quite considerably, therefore a second stage of weighting was applied to rebalance Partnerships in terms of their relative sizes (see Table F1).

Target proportions for this stage of weighting were taken from the relative sizes of databases provided by the different Partnerships, not from separate information about the relative population sizes in each area. This means that the overall weighted sample is representative of all young people contacted within the 47 Partnership areas during their respective sampling reference periods (see Stage 1 above).

**Table F1: Weighting – stage 2**

	Unweighted proportion %	Weighted proportion %
Black Country	2.0	2.9
Cheshire & Warrington	2.5	2.3
Cornwall & Devon	2.4	3.1
Coventry & Warwickshire	2.1	2.0
Cumbria	2.2	1.8
Greater Merseyside	2.1	4.3
Humber	2.0	0.6
Lincolnshire & Rutland	2.2	1.6
Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire	2.0	1.5
North London	1.6	0.9
Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin	1.8	0.7
South London	2.0	1.2
South Yorkshire	1.9	6.2
Suffolk	2.2	1.1
West of England	1.8	0.6
Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole	1.9	1.6
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	2.2	1.3
County Durham	2.4	2.3
Gloucestershire	1.9	0.8
Herefordshire & Worcestershire	2.5	1.9
Hertfordshire	2.5	1.9
Lancashire	2.5	3.9
London East	2.2	4.6
Nottinghamshire	2.5	3.2
Somerset	2.6	1.1
Staffordshire	2.1	0.7
Tyne & Wear	2.6	3.2
Central London	2.2	0.6
Bedfordshire & Luton	1.8	1.5
Birmingham & Solihull	2.3	2.4
Derbyshire	2.0	1.2
Essex, Southend & Thurrock	2.3	2.9
Greater Manchester	1.7	6.8
Leicester Shire	1.8	0.6
Northamptonshire	2.0	1.3
South Central	1.9	3.7
Sussex	1.7	2.4
Tees Valley	2.0	1.4
London West	1.9	2.4
Wiltshire & Swindon	2.3	2.0
York & North Yorkshire	2.2	1.8
West Yorkshire	2.0	3.5
Kent & Medway	1.9	3.7
Surrey	2.2	1.7
Berkshire	2.5	1.2
Norfolk	2.1	0.7
Northumberland	2.6	0.8

**Weighting effects**

The overall weighting efficiency when both stages of weighting were applied (for the overall results) was 55%, giving an effective sample size of 28,611.

## Design effects

Standard errors, 95% confidence intervals and design factors were calculated for the variables listed below:

kvheard	Whether heard of Connexions
kvevtalk	Whether ever talked to PA
kvdecide	Whether Connexions helped young people decide what to do
kvconfid	Impact of Connexions on Confidence
kvsatif1	Overall satisfaction (very satis)
kvsatif2	Overall satisfaction (satis)

Estimates were made both for whole sample estimates and for age, area-type (in terms of mode of delivery) and Priority category sub-groups. Sub-groups were defined as shown in the tables below.

<b>Table F2: Design effect sub-groups – Age</b>	
<i>Age in years</i>	<i>Number of cases</i>
13	310
14	3,240
15	7,389
16	16,758
17	13,490
18	7,619
19	2,989
20	367
<b>Overall</b>	<b>52,162</b>

<b>Table F3: Design effect sub-groups – Area type</b>	
<i>Mode of delivery</i>	<i>Number of cases</i>
Direct delivery	27,826
Sub-contracted delivery	24,536
<b>Overall</b>	<b>52,362</b>

<b>Table F4: Design effect sub-groups – Priority</b>	
<i>Priority category</i>	<i>Number of cases</i>
1	9,239
2	19,405
3	23,718
<b>Overall</b>	<b>52,362</b>

Standard errors were estimated using the STATA statistical package. STATA uses a ‘linearization’ variance estimator which takes account of weighting, stratification and clustering (although it should be noted that clustering is not relevant to the current survey). It is generally accepted as producing acceptable and robust estimates.

Overall confidence intervals for our key variables are detailed in table F5.

**Table F5: Overall confidence intervals for key variables**

	Estimate	Confidence Interval		Design Effect
% having heard of Connexions	91.0	90.7	91.3	1.45
% having talked to someone from Connexions	81.0	80.5	81.4	1.42
% saying Connexions helped them decide what to do (definitely or a bit)	67.6	67.0	68.2	1.50
% saying Connexions increased their confidence	49.9	49.3	50.5	1.49
% very satisfied with Connexions	49.7	49.1	50.3	1.53
% satisfied with Connexions	92.3	91.9	92.6	1.53

## Appendix G – Survey documents

### Letters to respondents

Several different letters to respondents were used in the course of the survey. Respondents being interviewed either face-to-face or on the telephone received an advance letter prior to fieldwork start. Those included in the postal survey received a covering letter with their postal questionnaire; the version of this letter sent before Phase 1 fieldwork included an invitation to complete the survey on-line, which was removed from the version sent for Phase 2 and 3 fieldwork.

All these letters introduced the survey in a similar way, but contained different paragraphs regarding the logistics of the survey from the respondent's point of view (i.e. whether they were to expect a telephone call, a visit from an interviewer, or whether they were to fill in the questionnaire attached). All letters included a freephone telephone number that respondents (or their parents/guardians) could call for more information on the survey, as well as a contact person at the Connexions Service National Unit.

The main other factor impacting on the letter content was the respondent's age. Young people aged 16 or over received a letter addressed directly to them. For those aged 15 or under, on the other hand, letters were sent to the young person's parent or guardian. These letters had one side addressed to the parent or guardian and another to pass on to the young person once the responsible adult had read their part of the letter.

In addition to the removal of the invitation to postal respondents to complete the survey on-line, a number of minor changes were made to the advance letters following Phase 1 fieldwork. The main change was that in areas where the Connexions Partnership had not run its own opt-out before the final sample was drawn, a sentence was included explicitly stating that the respondent could opt out by calling the helpline. Other changes included adding in the name of the Partnership to increase the perceived relevance of the survey, changing the contact names and emails for BMRB and DfES, and modifying the presentation of the reference number to make it easier for the respondent to identify.

Four letters have been appended here:

- A (double-sided) advance letter addressed to 13-15 year olds and their parents/guardians about the face-to-face survey (Phase 1)
- An advance letter addressed to 16-19 year olds about the telephone survey, including an invitation to opt-out (Phase 2)
- A covering letter sent to 16-19 year olds with a postal questionnaire/invitation to fill in the web survey (Phase 1) and
- A covering letter sent to 16-19 year olds with a postal questionnaire, without an invitation to opt-out (Phase 3).



The best start in life for every young person

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to ask for your help. Connexions is a new service that offers a range of guidance and support for all young people aged 13 to 19. You may have heard of us. We are asking young people what they think about Connexions - whether they have heard of it, whether they have used it, what they think of the service, etc. We have commissioned an independent research organisation, *BMRB Social Research*, to carry out this survey on our behalf.

Your child's name has been chosen at random from young people in your area who are in the age range covered by Connexions. **An interviewer will call on you within the next few weeks to ask your permission to carry out a short interview (10 minutes) with <name>.** The interviewer will show you an identification card and will answer any questions you may have about the survey. If you or your child are busy when the interviewer calls, he or she will be happy to call again at a more convenient time.

The information that your child gives will be treated in the strictest confidence. No information that can identify your child or your household will be passed to Connexions or to any other organisation. <name > does not have to take part and does not have to answer any questions he/she does not want to.

If you would like to know more about the survey or want to get a message to an interviewer who has already contacted you, please telephone the free BMRB helpline on 0800 015 4030 between 9.15 a.m. and 5.15pm Monday to Friday (you can leave a message at other times), or email [tara.mackey@bmr.co.uk](mailto:tara.mackey@bmr.co.uk). Please quote the reference number in the top left hand corner of this letter when contacting BMRB.

Connexions is run by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). If you would like to talk to someone from DfES about this survey, please call the Department's main switchboard on 0870 00 12345 and ask for Derren Payton on extension 24036.

I hope you agree to allow your child to take part in this important survey and thank you in advance for your help. Please pass the letter overleaf, which explains all about the survey, to <name>.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Chapman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "I" and a long, sweeping tail.

Ian Chapman

Connexions Service National Unit

100

Your reference number is 1151-503 / <serial  
no>



The best start in life for every young person



<Name>

<Address 1>

<Postcode>

<Date>



The best start in life for every young person

Dear <Name>,

We are writing to ask for your help. Connexions is a service that offers a range of guidance and support for all young people aged 13 and over. You may have heard of us. We are asking young people what they think about Connexions in <partnership name>. We have commissioned an independent research organisation, *BMRB Social Research*, to carry out this survey on our behalf.

Your name has been chosen at random from young people in your area who are in the age range covered by Connexions. BMRB would like to contact you to ask some questions about your awareness of Connexions, whether you have used it, and if so, how satisfied you were with the service. **A BMRB interviewer will try to call you within the next few weeks to carry out a short telephone interview.** He or she will answer any questions you may have about the survey. If you are busy when the interviewer telephones then he or she will be happy to call back at a more convenient time. The interview should take no more than ten minutes.

The information that you give will be treated in the strictest confidence. No information that can identify you will be passed to Connexions or to any other organisation outside the BMRB research team. You do not have to take part and do not have to answer any questions you do not want to. If you do not want to take part in the survey, please contact the research team at BMRB on the freephone 0800 015 0634.

If you would like to know more about the survey or want to get a message to an interviewer who has already contacted you, please telephone the free BMRB helpline on 0800 015 0634 between 9.15 a.m. and 5.15pm Monday to Friday (you can leave a message at other times), or email [connexions@bmr.co.uk](mailto:connexions@bmr.co.uk). Please quote the reference number in the top left hand corner of this letter when contacting BMRB.

Connexions is run by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). If you would like to talk to someone from DfES about this survey, please either email [connexions.evaluation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:connexions.evaluation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk) or call the Department's main switchboard on 0870 00 12345 and ask for Beverley Bishop on extension 23912.

I hope you agree to take part in this important survey and thank you in advance for your help. Thank you very much for your time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Chapman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "I" and a long, sweeping underline.

Ian Chapman  
Connexions Service National Unit

<Name>

<Address 1>

<Date>



The best start in life for every young person

Dear <Name>,

We are writing to ask for your help. Connexions is a new service that offers a range of guidance and support for all young people aged 13 to 19. You may have heard of us. We want to ask your opinion of the Connexions Service. We have commissioned an independent research organisation, *BMRB Social Research*, to carry out this survey on our behalf.

Your name has been chosen at random from young people in your area who are in the age range covered by Connexions. The enclosed questionnaire asks some questions about your awareness of Connexions, whether you have used it, and if so, how satisfied you were with the service. We would be very grateful if you could complete the questionnaire and return it to us using the enclosed pre-paid envelope. It should take no more than about ten minutes to complete.

Alternatively, you can complete the survey on the internet by going to <http://www.connexions-survey.co.uk> and entering your reference number: <reference number>. If you take part in the survey on-line, you do not need to return the paper version.

The information that you give will be treated in the strictest confidence. No information that can identify you will be passed to Connexions or to any other organisation outside the BMRB research team. Please note that the reference number (in the top left hand corner of this letter and at the back of the questionnaire) is only used to by us to check which questionnaires we have had back. You do not have to take part and do not have to answer any questions you do not want to.

If you would like to know more about the survey, please telephone the free BMRB helpline on 0800 015 4030 between 9.15 a.m. and 5.15pm Monday to Friday (you can leave a message at other times), or email [tara.mackey@bmr.co.uk](mailto:tara.mackey@bmr.co.uk). Please quote the reference number in the top left hand corner of this letter when contacting BMRB.

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I hope you agree to take part in this important survey and thank you in advance for your help.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Chapman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "I" and a long, sweeping underline.

Ian Chapman Connexions Service National Unit

<Name>



<Address 1>

<Date>

The best start in life for every young person

Dear <Name>,

We are writing to ask for your help. Connexions is a service that offers a range of guidance and support for all young people aged 13 and over. You may have heard of us. We want to ask your opinion of the Connexions Service in Staffordshire. We have commissioned an independent research organisation, *BMRB Social Research*, to carry out this survey on our behalf.

Your name has been chosen at random from young people in your area who are in the age range covered by Connexions. The enclosed questionnaire asks some questions about your awareness of Connexions, whether you have used it, and if so, how satisfied you were with the service. We would be very grateful if you could complete the questionnaire and return it to us using the enclosed pre-paid envelope. It should take no more than about ten minutes to complete.

The information that you give will be treated in the strictest confidence. No information that can identify you will be passed to Connexions or to any other organisation outside the BMRB research team. Please note that the reference number (in the top left hand corner of this letter and at the back of the questionnaire) is only used to by us to check which questionnaires we have had back. You do not have to take part and do not have to answer any questions you do not want to.

If you would like to know more about the survey, please telephone the free BMRB helpline on 0800 015 0634 between 9.15 a.m. and 5.15 p.m. Monday to Friday (you can leave a message at other times), or email [connexions@bmr.co.uk](mailto:connexions@bmr.co.uk). Please quote the reference number in the top left hand corner of this letter when contacting BMRB.

Connexions is run by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). If you would like to talk to someone from DfES about this survey, please either email [connexions.evaluation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:connexions.evaluation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk) or call the Department's main switchboard on 0870 00 12345 and ask for Beverley Bishop on extension 23912.

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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Chapman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "I" and a long, sweeping underline.

Ian Chapman  
Connexions Service National Unit

## **Appendix H – Connexions Partnership types**

### **Direct delivery**

Direct delivery Partnerships are typified by a transmuted Partnership careers company or a merger of such companies, with the majority of their resources forming the delivery capability of the Connexions Partnership. Significant changes are needed to Memorandum and Articles of Association, Board membership and the extended local arrangements to reflect the broader remit of Connexions. These Partnerships are primarily companies limited by guarantee.

Experience of this model has shown that they are often in a strong position to deliver from day 1, but where the Board is based on a transmuted careers company it needs to take a lead in changing the culture to meet the demands of the new service, and be committed to widening the provider base.

### **Sub-contracting**

Sub-contracting Connexions Partnerships are newly formed companies, limited by guarantee, which deliver through sub-contracting services to providers. In most cases the major front-line services are delivered by ex-Careers Service companies, which may be either private sector or ex-Partnership companies which have retained their former status.

The Partnership itself cannot make surpluses or profit, but any contracted profit-making company has the potential to do so. Partnerships should work closely with their suppliers to ensure that value for money is obtained. Experience of this model has shown that a strong central contracting function needs to be in place in advance of commencing services, and attention needs to be paid to service specification including issues such as branding.

## Appendix I – Connexions Partnership start dates and delivery models

Phase 1 (April 2001)	Model	Phase 2 (April 2002)	Model	Phase 3 (September 2002)	Model
Black Country	SC	Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole	DD	Bedfordshire & Luton	SC (due to change to DD 01/10/04)
Cheshire & Warrington	DD	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	DD	Birmingham & Solihull	DD
Cornwall & Devon	DD	County Durham	DD	Derbyshire	DD from 01/04/04 (previously SC)
Coventry & Warwickshire	DD	East London	SC	Essex, Southend & Thurrock	DD from 01/04/04 (previously SC)
Cumbria	DD	Gloucestershire	DD	Greater Manchester	SC
Lincolnshire & Rutland	DD	Hereford & Worcester	DD	Leicestershire	DD
Milton Keynes, Oxford & Buckinghamshire	SC	Hertfordshire	SC	Northamptonshire	DD
North London	SC	Lancashire	DD	South Central	SC
Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin	DD	Nottinghamshire	DD	Sussex	SC
South London	SC	Somerset	DD	Tees Valley	DD
South Yorkshire	SC	Staffordshire	DD	West London	SC
West of England	DD	Tyne & Wear	DD	Wiltshire & Swindon	SC
				York & North Yorkshire	SC
				(13)	
<b>Phase 1 (Sept 2001)</b>		<b>Phase 2 (June 2002)</b>		<b>Phase 3 (October 2002)</b>	
Humber	SC	Central London	SC	West Yorkshire	SC
Greater Merseyside	DD				
Suffolk	DD			<b>Phase 3 (November 2002)</b>	
				Kent & Medway	SC
				Surrey	SC
				<b>Phase 3 (January 2003)</b>	
				Berkshire	SC
				Norfolk	SC
				<b>Phase 3 (April 2003)</b>	
				Northumberland	DD

DD = direct delivery      SC = sub-contracted

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