

i For information

>lsc

Leading learning and skills

Impact of Learning on Employability

Main Report

January 2008

Of interest to everyone involved in adult
further education, skills and employability

Contents

	Paragraph number
Acknowledgements	–
Key Findings	1
Overall findings from the survey	3
The impact of learning on employment and benefit outcomes	9
Employability, skills, social and personal outcomes	34
Further learning outcomes	40
Entering learning	46
Learners' situations before the course	51
Introduction and Methodology	58
Research aims and objectives	59
Background to the research	66
Methodology	71
Presentation of the findings	94
Structure of the report	98
Understanding Learners' Situations Before the Course	99
Types of learning	100
Benefits received at the start of the course	101

Employment situation before the start of the course	106
Level of motivation to work	130
Entering Learning	136
Main motivations for starting the course	137
Reasons for choosing the particular course	149
Main triggers for starting the course	153
Level of learning (whether higher or lower than previous learning)	157
Previous subjects taken	160
Where learners had first heard about the course	162
Immediate Learning Outcomes	166
Learners completing the course and reasons for them dropping out	167
Qualifications achieved	176
Employability, Skills, Social and Personal Outcomes of Learning	186
Overarching findings	190
Employability outcomes	195
Cognitive and communication skills gained	226
Social outcomes	239
Personal outcomes	248

Participation in Further Learning	269
Doing further learning	270
Reasons for doing further learning	281
Achieving qualifications	289
Predisposition towards taking part in learning in the next two years	299
Employment and Benefit Outcomes	307
Employment outcomes	308
Benefit outcomes	401
Help and guidance received in addition to undertaking learning	452
Concluding Remarks: Measuring the Impact of Learning	456
Annex A: Description of the Sample	–
Annex B: References	–

Acknowledgements

This research was conducted by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (*Inclusion*), and was managed by Dr Jo Casebourne. Paul Bivand, Michela Franceschelli and Lora Forsythe of *Inclusion* also worked on the study. The fieldwork was undertaken by the British Market Research Bureau (BMRB), and managed by Nick Coleman, Mark Peters, Lorraine Sims and Helen Lambert. Jim Hillage from the Institute for Employment Studies provided valuable consultancy support on the project.

The project manager at the LSC was Charlotte Beckford.

We would like to thank all the learners who took part in the research.

Key Findings

- 1 The Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (*Inclusion*), the British Market Research Bureau (BMRB) and the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) were commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in 2007 to undertake a survey on the impact of learning on employability.
- 2 The survey was conducted between June and August 2007, using learners selected from the LSC's individualised learner record (ILR) database, who had undertaken a range of learning programmes in further education (FE), had had fee remission because they were receiving out-of-work benefits, and were aged 20 to 55 when they started their course of learning. Some 10,000 interviews were conducted using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). This report presents the key findings of the survey.

Overall findings from the survey

- 3 The results of this survey represent a positive first attempt to quantify the benefits of FE learning for welfare benefit recipients in England. The findings show statistically significant positive effects from learning for welfare benefit recipients, in terms both of moving into work and of improving employability.
- 4 This research has shown how FE learning contributes to both economic and social inclusion objectives. Only 10 per cent of all learners in the survey had been in work prior to the start of their course (for less than 16 hours per week). However, 38 per cent had gone on to work at some point after finishing their course. Among those who had not moved into work, many had still benefited from social and personal outcomes of learning that may yet move them closer to the labour market and may also contribute to their wider social inclusion.

- 5 It was harder for some of the more disadvantaged groups in the survey to move into work after learning. A consistent pattern that emerges from this research is of a number of factors that significantly negatively affect the chances of a positive job outcome after learning. These are seen in learners who:
- had experienced multiple disadvantage (note: this refers to *Inclusion's* measure of multiple disadvantage among learners. It takes account of the following attributes of a learner: disability affecting the type of learning and/or work, the presence of financially dependent children, ethnicity, and no or low level of prior qualifications. It does **not** refer to the LSC's measurement of disadvantage, which uses learners' and providers' postcodes to calculate a 'disadvantage uplift' in funding);
 - had caring responsibilities;
 - were from an older age group;
 - were 'far' from the labour market;
 - undertook non-vocational or basic skills learning; and
 - attended lower-level courses.
- 6 The length of time that a person had been out of work also significantly negatively affected their chances of starting work.
- 7 However, those who were less likely to have found work or to have moved off benefits after learning were more likely to have had 'softer' personal or social outcomes from learning. These personal and social outcomes included being more involved in their local community, having improved social skills and confidence, and also seeing improvements in the communication, literacy and numeracy skills that employers value.
- 8 We recommend conducting further research using matched control groups, to compare those taking part in learning with those not taking part in learning, in order to show definitively whether participation in learning is

more effective in moving people into work and improving their employability than non-participation in learning. Evidence of this kind would add to the evidence base for targeting government funding and activity towards learning or human capital-based approaches to securing advancement for individuals claiming welfare benefits.

The impact of learning on employment and benefit outcomes

Moving into work after learning

- 9 Only 10 per cent of all learners had been working immediately prior to the start of their course, and all of those had been working for less than 16 hours per week. After learning, 38 per cent had worked at some point since they finished their course.
- 10 Multivariate analysis found that the fewer disadvantages a learner had, the more likely they were to have found work.
- 11 Learners who had been working part time before embarking on a programme of learning were significantly more likely to be working after learning than the reference category of those who had not worked for one to two years. Learners who had not worked for three years or more were increasingly less likely to start work after learning.
- 12 The further the learner was from the labour market before learning, the less likely they were to start work after learning. Distance from the labour market includes three factors: the number of reasons given for not being in work before learning, the motivation to move into work, and the learner's description of their work history.
- 13 Older learners were less likely to start work than those under 34.
- 14 Those who had undertaken learning for non-career-related reasons were significantly less likely to start work after learning than those who had embarked on learning for career-related reasons.

Effect of learning on progression in employment

- 15 There was little change in the structure of employment following learning. Just 3 per cent of all learners in the survey moved from part-time to full-time employment after learning. After the end of the course, 3 per cent of all learners moved from temporary to permanent positions. However, there was more significant change in terms of occupational position.
- 16 Some 16 per cent of all learners in the survey improved their occupational position, 10 per cent remained at the same level, and 9 per cent moved to a lower occupation after learning. Learners in process plant and machine operative occupations and elementary occupations (based on the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code) were the ones who improved the most, with 26 per cent and 24 per cent of them, respectively, moving to higher-level jobs. These were followed by learners in sales and customer service occupations (where 22 per cent moved to higher-level jobs).
- 17 Multivariate analysis shows that learners with the fewest disadvantages are most likely to improve their occupational position.
- 18 Those with longer periods out of work are significantly more likely to improve their occupational position if they return to work after learning, all other factors being equal. This may be due to changes in the occupational structure of the economy.
- 19 Older people are less likely (other factors being equal) to improve their occupational position.
- 20 Compared to vocational learning and, particularly, non-vocational learning, basic skills learning is shown to be strongly positive in terms of moving up the occupational scale.
- 21 It is vital that learning should not only help people to enter employment, but should also improve their prospects of progression in work. This research does show some positive effect of learning on both the

employment **and** the progression outcomes of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants. Around one in five of those who had been claiming JSA at the start of the course reported that the learning had had a positive impact when it came to finding a better-paid job or a job with more responsibility.

- 22 Overall, 44 per cent of the 3,910 learners who had had a paid job since completing the course or who were working when surveyed (18 per cent of all learners in the survey) felt that their job outcome was the result of having undertaken the course. It is important to note that the courses that learners followed were **not** necessarily designed to lead directly to a job. Therefore, it is encouraging that more than four learners in ten felt that their job was linked to their learning in FE.
- 23 While learners may have achieved positive employment and benefit outcomes as a result of having participated in learning, they may also have received help from other sources that contributed to these outcomes. Learners used a variety of sources for additional help or support in improving their skills and employment situation. A multiple-response question revealed that the top three sources of additional support were:
- friends and family (22 per cent);
 - Jobcentre Plus (18 per cent); and
 - community and voluntary organisations (9 per cent).

Moving off benefits into work

- 24 A third (33 per cent) of all learners in the survey had moved from benefits into work after the end of the course.
- 25 Multivariate analysis shows that learners with few or no disadvantages are much more likely than those with three or four disadvantages to move from benefits into work.

- 26 The length of time since a learner last worked is also strongly related to moves from benefits into work. Those who have relatively recent work experience are much more likely to move from benefits to work, all other factors being equal. The effect of this factor decreases as the length of time since the learner last worked increases.
- 27 Distance from the labour market is strongly related to moves from benefit to work, with those closer to the labour market more likely to move from benefits to work and those further from the labour market less likely to achieve this outcome.
- 28 Older learners are significantly less likely to move from benefits to work than are younger learners.
- 29 The benefit that learners were claiming before learning makes a significant difference as to whether they move from benefits to work. Those claiming the 'main' Jobcentre Plus benefits (Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support and Incapacity Benefit) are much more likely to move from benefits into work than are claimants of Carer's Allowance and Pension Credit.
- 30 Those who undertake learning at Level 3 and above are more likely to move from benefits into work.
- 31 Those who undertake learning for personal learning-related reasons and those who embark on learning in order to help their children with their education are significantly less likely to move into work than those approaching learning with career-related reasons in mind.
- 32 The findings therefore indicate that the economic benefits of learning (in terms of finding work and moving off benefits) are stronger for the following groups of learners:
 - JSA claimants;
 - those who are closer to the labour market;

- people with no, or relatively few, disadvantages; and
- those who are learning with a particular career aim in mind.

33 Learners requiring more support to move into employment include the longer-term unemployed, females, older learners and those receiving Carer's Allowance.

Employability, skills, social and personal outcomes

34 There were a number of key findings in terms of employability skills.

Overall:

- 63 per cent of learners felt clearer about their career aims after the end of the course;
- 56 per cent of learners felt nearer to getting a job as a result of the course;
- 64 per cent of learners felt they had improved their job-related skills as a direct result of the course; and
- 44 per cent of learners felt they had acquired better job-search skills as a direct result of the course.

35 Those who had been claiming JSA at the start of the course had positive employment outcomes – 60 per cent had worked since completing their learning. Moreover, the learning had had a particularly positive impact on JSA claimants' employability skills – they were more likely than other claimant groups to report that their job-related and job-search skills had improved. Overall:

- 66 per cent of all learners reported feeling that their communication skills had improved as a direct result of learning;
- 60 per cent of all learners felt their team-working skills had improved as a direct result of the course;

- 57 per cent of all learners felt their problem-solving skills had improved as a direct result of the course;
- 50 per cent of all learners felt their literacy skills had improved as a direct result of the course;
- 41 per cent of all learners reported that their numeracy skills had improved as a direct result of the course; and
- 55 per cent said that learning had contributed to the progress of their IT skills.

36 The skills listed above are valued by employers, and may help unemployed learners progress on the road to employment. The effect of learning on communication, literacy and numeracy skills is particularly marked among groups of learners who were less likely to actually move into work – females, people from minority ethnic groups, those with multiple disadvantages and those further from the labour market.

37 The impact on team-working skills was stronger among younger learners, who would have had fewer opportunities to develop these skills in the workplace.

38 Learners also experienced a number of social and personal outcomes after taking part in learning. Of those learners who took part in the survey:

- 51 per cent felt that attending the course had encouraged them to take part in voluntary and community activities;
- 83 per cent agreed that learning had improved their social relationships and helped them to meet new people;
- 70 per cent agreed that the course had improved their personal and social skills;
- 86 per cent claimed they felt better about themselves because of the course;

- 84 per cent agreed that the course had given them a sense of more opportunities;
- 75 per cent felt their motivation had increased because of the course;
- 70 per cent said they felt more confident as a result of the course;
- 83 per cent agreed that the course had contributed to their doing something useful with their spare time;
- 32 per cent agreed that the course had helped them to support their children with their school work.

39 For all of the above social and personal outcomes of learning, women were more likely than men to feel that they had gained these outcomes through learning. The same is true of those with multiple disadvantages compared to those with few or no disadvantages, and of those who were furthest from the labour market compared to those who were nearer. Therefore, the personal and social benefits of learning are stronger for learners who are less likely to have experienced economic benefits (such as finding a job or moving off benefits).

Further learning outcomes

- 40 42 per cent of all the learners in the survey undertook further learning after the end of the original course. Of those, 32 per cent learnt in their own time, 6 per cent undertook learning as part of their job, and 5 per cent undertook learning both at work and outside work.
- 41 Some 81 per cent of those who went on to further learning felt that the original course had helped them do so, indicating the value of learning in encouraging further study.
- 42 Not only had a significant number of learners enrolled in further study, but four in ten subsequent learners had paid their course fees – so a good proportion of learners do make a personal financial contribution towards any further learning that they undertake.

- 43 In all, 20 per cent of learners had achieved a further qualification since completing the original course.
- 44 All learners were asked how likely or unlikely they thought it was that they would undertake further learning in the next two years. Four learners in five thought it likely, with 54 per cent saying it was very likely and 25 per cent saying it was fairly likely.
- 45 Two-thirds of learners (66 per cent) planned to study for a new qualification in the next two years.

Entering learning

- 46 Four learners in ten (41 per cent) said that they had started their original FE course in order to improve their labour market chances. These learners felt that the course had helped them to get a job or a better-paid job, and had helped them to change career.
- 47 The most important factor in starting the course had been 'to get new skills or update my skills' (20 per cent). This was followed by 'to help get a job' (15 per cent) and 'wanting to learn something new or for personal interest' (16 per cent). The need to improve skills is, therefore, high on learners' agendas when they enrol on FE courses. Acquiring new skills and updating skills becomes more important with age, with older learners more likely than younger ones to want to improve their skills.
- 48 The most popular reason for choosing a particular course was to get new skills that the learner thought they needed (cited by 81 per cent of all learners). The next most commonly cited reason was 'it related to the job that you wanted to do' (66 per cent), which reveals the importance for the majority of learners of choosing learning to improve their employability.
- 49 Learners were asked a number of questions about whether certain factors had triggered their decision to embark on learning. Over three-fifths of all learners (62 per cent) agreed that they wanted to return to work after caring for children, while 44 per cent agreed that a change in their caring

responsibilities had been a trigger. This reveals that caring responsibilities are a major factor in preventing people from taking up learning.

- 50 Very few learners found out about the course through information, advice and guidance services (2 per cent), local community centres or voluntary organisations (3 per cent in both cases). Some 8 per cent heard about the course through Jobcentre Plus. This shows that, when individuals are looking for learning opportunities, they may not automatically think of these as places to go to find out about learning. Learners prefer, it seems, to go through more direct channels, such as colleges (where 34 per cent of learners had heard about their course).

Learners' situations before the course

- 51 More than eight learners in ten (81 per cent) had attended vocational courses; 11 per cent had attended basic skills and 8 per cent non-vocational courses. Of all the learners in the survey, 81 per cent had studied part time, and 19 per cent full time.
- 52 Almost a third (32 per cent) of all the learners in the survey had attended courses leading to Level 1 qualifications; 29 per cent undertook learning at Level 2; and only 21 per cent attended courses at Levels 3 and 4.
- 53 Before starting the course, the majority of the learners had been in receipt of Council Tax Benefit (55 per cent); Income Support (53 per cent) and Housing Benefit (52 per cent). Looking only at primary income-replacement benefits, Jobseeker's Allowance claimants made up just under one-third of learners (31 per cent), and were outnumbered by claimants of 'inactive benefits', including Income Support (53 per cent), Incapacity Benefit (17 per cent) and Carer's Allowance (7 per cent).
- 54 Overall, 70 per cent of all learners in the survey had been in paid employment at some point before their course began.
- 55 Family and caring responsibilities were the main barrier to employment, cited by 41 per cent of the learners who had not been in work immediately

prior to the start of their course. This was followed by health reasons (35 per cent), lack of experience (29 per cent), lack of qualifications and skills (27 per cent), lack of jobs (23 per cent) and lack of childcare (20 per cent). Personal barriers – such as caring responsibilities and ill health – are therefore more significant than labour market barriers, such as lack of jobs.

- 56 In all, 42 per cent of the learners in the survey had been looking for work immediately before their course started. Despite the barriers to working listed above, over three-quarters (78 per cent) of the learners who had been out of work when the course started were motivated to move into work, with over half being 'very motivated'.
- 57 The groups of learners who were most motivated to find work were JSA claimants, those studying for higher-level qualifications, those with dependent children and younger learners.

Introduction and Methodology

58 The Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (*Inclusion*), the British Market Research Bureau (BMRB) and the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) were commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in 2007 to undertake a survey on the impact of learning on employability. This report presents the findings of the survey.

Research aims and objectives

59 The LSC plans and invests in high-quality education and training for young people and adults that will build a skilled and competitive workforce. Working at national, regional and local levels, from a network of offices across the country, the LSC has a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults and ensure that we have a workforce of world-class standard.

60 The LSC has three national priorities:

1. to create demand for learning and skills: all young people should have the opportunity to gain skills and qualifications and to participate in learning that excites and motivates them; more adults should participate in the learning they wish to invest in, so that those adults most excluded from the labour market and society are enabled to progress into learning and employment; more employers should invest in training and in raising the skills of their workforce;
2. to transform the further education (FE) system to meet demand; and
3. to deliver better skills, better jobs and better lives.

61 This piece of work supports the work of the LSC towards achieving priority 1 and priority 3.

62 There is currently a knowledge gap in understanding the effect that completing an LSC-funded qualification has on an individual's employment

prospects, and hence the return on investment for the economy, as well as the effects on 'softer' skills and outcomes.

- 63 This research, therefore, aims to fill that knowledge gap, by interviewing a robust national sample of learners who have completed a course of further education and were not working for more than 16 hours a week at the start of their course.
- 64 The main aim of the research is to understand what impact there may be on the employability of individuals who have undertaken an FE course. There are likely to be subsequent waves of research, looking at groups of individuals with different characteristics; but this initial work focuses on those who were not in employment at the start of their course, and specifically on those who were claiming income-related benefits and Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA).
- 65 The specific objectives of the survey were to:
- understand what the reasons were that the interviewed group felt had led them to be out of employment before they started their course;
 - analyse why they had decided to enter learning – whether it was to improve their employability or for other reasons – and gain an understanding of what had made them choose the course they did;
 - analyse the nature of the immediate destinations of learners who were not employed at the start of the course, differentiated by level: employment, further learning or training;
 - assess the wider impact of learning, in terms of individuals' motivation and other personal/social benefits; and
 - assess whether certain groups of learners benefit from learning in different ways.

Background to the research

Defining employability

66 The term ‘employability’ has been used in different contexts and with various meanings. In the late 1990s, a definition of the concept of employability was developed that has since underpinned many aspects of labour market policy on this issue. Hillage and Pollard (1998), combine a supply-side approach with an element of demand-side factors to create their definition. They suggest that the main components of employability are: possession of the skills and characteristics desired by employers, knowledge of how to use and market those skills effectively to employers, and a suitable relationship between the individual and their labour market environment. The key elements of employability highlighted were:

- assets – an individual’s assets in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitudes they possess;
- deployment – the way an individual uses those assets;
- presentation – how an individual appears to employers; and
- the personal and labour market context – an individual’s personal circumstances and the labour market environment in which they seek work.

Measuring employability

67 Employability outcomes can be measured in terms of ‘hard’ outcomes, such as movement into jobs. However, it is often the case with more disadvantaged groups that hard outcome measures are not the most appropriate. In these instances, measuring ‘soft’ outcomes, such as the ‘distance travelled’ by participants towards employment entry (which may subsequently result in ‘harder’ outcomes), might be more applicable.

- 68 The literature and research evidence shows that both 'hard' and 'soft' measures of employability are necessary to capture the full impact of interventions on individuals.
- 69 Lloyd and OSullivan (2004), a literature review commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), studied the different methods available for the measurement of 'soft' outcomes and 'distance travelled'. This research identified some key elements of existing employability measurement methodologies:
- a set of target indicators relating to the 'soft' outcomes that need to be tracked;
 - a scoring system: for example, a system by means of which clients rate how confident they feel before and after the advice and guidance/training they receive; and
 - baseline and subsequent interviews, used to assess progress.
- 70 Table 1 shows some examples of soft outcome indicators.

Table 1: Examples of ‘core’ soft outcome indicators

Types of ‘soft’ outcomes	Examples of indicators
Key work skills	The acquisition of key skills, for example team working, problem solving, numeracy skills, information technology Numbers of work placements The acquisition of language and communication skills Completion of work placements Lower rates of sickness-related absence
Attitudinal skills	Increased levels of motivation Increased levels of confidence Recognition of prior skills Increased feelings of responsibility Increased levels of self-esteem Higher personal and career aspirations
Personal skills	Improved personal appearance/presentability Improved levels of attendance Improved timekeeping Improved personal hygiene Greater levels of self-awareness Better health and fitness Greater levels of concentration and/or engagement
Practical skills	Ability to complete forms Ability to write a CV Improved ability to manage money Improved awareness of rights and responsibilities

Source: Dewson et al., 2000

Methodology

71 This report presents findings from a survey on the impact of learning on employability. The survey was conducted between June and August 2007 among learners selected from the individualised learner record (ILR) database who had had fee remission, were aged between 20 and 55 at the end of August 2005, and who had completed their course between 1 August 2005 and 31 July 2006. All of the learners interviewed had either been out of work, or working for less than 16 hours a week, when they started their course. Interviews were conducted using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). The final number of interviews completed was 10,000.

Questionnaire design

72 The questionnaire was developed to ensure that both hard and soft impacts of learning were measured. It was structured into six main substantive sections:

- course details;
- background prior to the course;
- reasons for starting an FE course;
- learner destinations;
- impact of learning; and
- demographics.

73 The section on course details covered whether the course was full time or part time, where it was based, and how long the learner was on the course.

- 74 The section on background prior to the course covered the learner's benefit and employment status before the course and their employment history.
- 75 The section on reasons for starting an FE course covered the factors that had motivated learners to enrol on the course, and why they had chosen that particular course.
- 76 The section on learner destinations covered whether learners had completed the course, whether they had got a qualification, whether the course had met their expectations and whether they had found it helpful.
- 77 The section on the impact of learning covered what the learner had done since completing the course in terms of employment, whether they had gained skills as a result of doing the course, what outcomes and benefits they had gained from the course, and whether they had done any further learning and achieved any qualifications since finishing the course.
- 78 The section on demographics covered learners' gender, age, ethnicity, whether they had a disability or health problem, and whether they had dependent children.

Sampling

- 79 The ILR database held by the LSC was used as the sampling frame. The sampling process involved two stages: the first stage sampled eligible learners, and the second stage sampled up to four courses for each eligible learner, if the learner had been on five or more eligible courses.
- 80 A learner was eligible if they had taken a course and fulfilled the following conditions:
- fees had been waived because the learner was on JSA or income-based benefits; and
 - the actual completion date fell between 1 August 2005 and 31 July 2006. If the actual completion date was missing, then the expected

completion date could be used, but that still had to have been between 1 August 2005 and 31 July 2006.

- 81 Adult and community and non-LSC funded courses were excluded.
- 82 Two further conditions applied.
- Learners had to have been aged between 20 and 55 inclusive on 31 August 2005.
 - Learners had to have given their permission to be contacted for research purposes.

Stage 1 – Learner selection

- 83 First of all, for each learner the file was ordered using the prioritisation described below:
1. the highest notional level of the learner;
 2. the most recent actual end date (if the actual end date was missing, the planned end date was used);
 3. the longest course.
- 84 Where necessary, one course was sampled at random from the first four courses of the prioritised list for each learner. The completion status and guided learning hours for that course for each learner were used as the indicator for the completion status and guided learning hours of the learner.
- 85 The sample was then stratified by:
- Government Office Region (GOR);
 - boost region (West Midlands, Manchester, other regions);
 - boost area (towns within boost regions);

- completion status of course (completed and continuing versus withdrawn);
- highest notional level of the learner; and
- guided learning hours.

86 A telephone number search was carried out for all learners. Eligible learners with a valid telephone number were sub-sampled to provide 40,000 cases that were to be issued for the main stage of the fieldwork. A further 10,000 cases were selected as a reserve sample, but were not issued.

87 There was a target of at least 1,000 interviews for the Manchester and West Midlands City Regions. Therefore the sample was boosted by selecting a minimum of 4,000 learners to be issued in each of those two areas, while the remainder were sampled to give a geographically representative sample.

Stage 2 – Course selection

88 Once the learners had been sampled, the courses that would form the focus of the interview were then selected for each learner who had been on more than one course during the specified time period. A maximum of four courses were sampled per person. The courses were prioritised for each learner according to the same three points outlined at stage 1. If a learner had been on four courses or fewer, all those courses were selected. If a learner had been on five or more courses, only the top four after prioritisation were selected.

89 Before any of the 40,000 sampled learners were contacted, their details were checked against the publicly available mortality register. As a result, 65 people were removed from the sample and a total of 39,935 learners were issued.

Piloting

- 90 A pilot study was carried out to test – and subsequently refine – the approach to be used in the main fieldwork. The exercise replicated the approach to the main fieldwork, and incorporated monitoring of telephone interviews and an assessment of sample quality and levels of response. It also helped to inform detailed question wording, instructions and guidance. The pilot sample was drawn from the 2004/05 and 2005/06 ILR datasets. The pilot study was carried out during a two-week period in May 2007. In all, 191 interviews were carried out in this time, from an issued sample of 1,000 learners.

Response rates

- 91 The final fieldwork outcomes are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Fieldwork outcomes

Total sample issued/advance letters sent	39,935
Learner contacted agency to opt out of research	1,852
Out of scope	17,626
Moved/unknown at number	3,921
Respondent died	31
Invalid telephone number	9,683
Still on course	1,749
Working full time at start of course	758
Never enrolled/enrolled but never started	372
Respondent incapable of interview	1,112
Interviews	10,000
Unsuccessful	10,457
Refusals	3,454
Guardian/carer refused interview	223
Unavailable during fieldwork	550
15+ unsuccessful calls	2,510
Abandoned Interview	1,034
Non -contact*	2,686

* These were cases without a final outcome at the end of the fieldwork period.

- 92 These fieldwork figures show an overall response rate of 25 per cent. Some 44 per cent of the selected sample was 'out of scope' – that is,

could not be contacted due to an invalid telephone number, or did not meet the eligibility criteria. Among the remaining sample that was eligible and contactable, the fieldwork response rate was 45 per cent.

Weighting

- 93 Three stages of weighting were carried out: design, non-response and population weighting. The first stage was design weighting, which accounted for the probability of a learner being issued in the sample. These realigned the issued sample to take into account the boost City Regions of Manchester and the West Midlands. The second stage was non-response weighting, which tried to account for lower levels of response among some sub-groups in the sample. Owing to the rich administrative data available from the ILR, these sub-groups were identified using chi-square automatic interaction detection (CHAID) in SPSS, and non-response weights were applied accordingly. Finally, population weights were applied, so that the sample profile was similar to that of the population on the ILR in terms of age, sex, ethnicity and learner level.

Presentation of the findings

- 94 The results presented in the report are based on simple bivariate cross-tabulations of survey variables and some multiple regression analysis. Respondents are referred to as 'learners' throughout the report.

Key break variables

- 95 All the questions were examined by a number of key break variables and were tested for statistical significance. The key break variables were:
- gender;
 - age;
 - LSC region;

- multiple disadvantage score (where a point is given if a learner had a disability, financially dependent children, was from a Black, Pakistani or Bangladeshi ethnic group, and had no or low qualifications prior to the course). This does not refer to the LSC's measurement of disadvantage, which uses learners' and providers' postcodes to calculate a 'disadvantage uplift' in funding;
- distance from the labour market score (calculated by responses to questions on reasons for not working, motivation to work and work history);
- type of provider;
- type of learning (vocational, non-vocational or basic skills);
- level of learning;
- guided learning hours;
- care issues (learners with a dependent child and/or who received Carer's Allowance); and
- benefits received.

Statistical significance

96 Relationships are only reported in the text of the report if they are statistically significant and if the relationship is thought to be relevant/interesting to the topic under discussion (not all relationships that are statistically significant will be discussed in the text, as the report needs to be readable and fairly concise). Relationships that are not significant will not be discussed in the text (except in the case of multiple-response questions, where significance is not tested but some differences between groups are discussed). Significance is measured at a cut-off of 95 per cent

significance in a two-sided test. Pearson's chi-square has been used to test significance on cross-tabulations.

Treatment of 'don't knows' and 'other' responses

- 97 Where there are five learners or fewer in any cell, the cell is marked with an asterisk; and if there are no learners in a cell, the cell is marked with a dash. The 'don't know' and 'other' responses are included within the unweighted bases of tables and figures, and are included as bars in the figures or as columns in the tables throughout the report, unless they accounted for 1 per cent or less. Notes to the tables explain what is included in the bases. Where responses are recoded, 'others' and 'don't knows' will be included in the base.

Structure of the report

- 98 The findings from the survey are presented as follows, chapter by chapter:
- an analysis of the situation learners were in before the course;
 - a discussion of why they embarked on learning;
 - a description of the immediate learning outcomes on completion of the course;
 - an examination of the employability, skills, social and personal outcomes of learning;
 - an analysis of participation in further learning after the original course;
 - presentation of the data on employment and benefit outcomes;
 - some concluding remarks about measuring the impact of learning;
 - a description of the sample (Annex A);
 - details of the publications that are referenced (Annex B).

Understanding Learners' Situations Before the Course

- 99 This chapter explores the situation of learners before they enrolled on the course. It includes an overview of the types of courses attended, the workless benefits that learners were claiming before their course began, their employment situation before the start of the course (how many of them had ever worked, the main reasons for their being out of work before the course started, why they exited the labour market) and their level of motivation to work.

Types of learning

- 100 Learners were asked about the main characteristics of the course they had attended, and the results are shown in Table 3 below. It was found that most learners had a vocational learning aim (81 per cent). Almost a third (32 per cent) of all the learners in the survey had attended courses leading to Level 1 qualifications; this was followed closely by the number of learners who had undertaken Level 2 (29 per cent). Most of the courses had been held in colleges (70 per cent). There was generally an equal distribution of learners who had attended courses that were over 135 hours in total, that were between 60 and 135 hours, that were between 30 and 60 hours and that were under 30 hours. A third of learners (33 per cent) had attended the course for one to two years.

Table 3: Types of learning

Type of learning aim	Total %
Non-vocational	8
Vocational	81
Basic skills	11
Course level	
Not available or not permitted	10
Level 0	8
Level 1	32
Level 2	29
Level 3	20
Level 4	1
Where course was based	
College	70
Community centre	9
Training centre	11
Home – distance learning	1
Adult education centre	1
School	2
Library	1
Learning centre	1
Other venues	4
Guided learning hours of course	
Not permitted or no information	11
30 hours and under	25
30.1 – 60 hours	21
60.1 – 135 hours	20
135.1 hours and over	23
Length of course	
No information	5
Three months or under	21
Three to six months	13
Six to nine months	12
Nine months to one year	6
One to two years	33

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Benefits received at the start of the course

101 Learners were asked a multiple-response question:

We understand that immediately before you started the course you were claiming benefits. Which of the following benefit(s) or tax credits were you receiving?

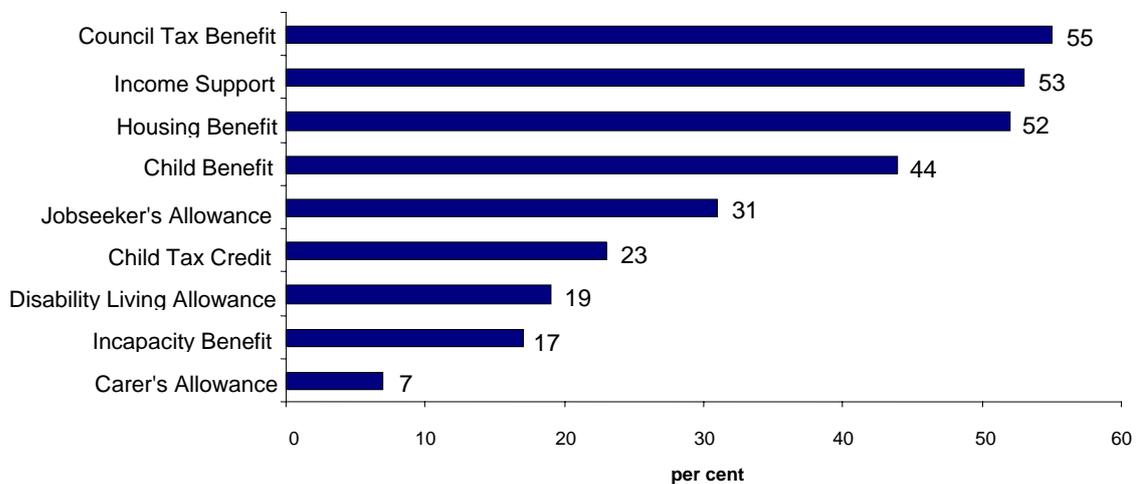
102 They could have been receiving several benefits at the same time, so responses total more than 100 per cent. Learners could select one or more of the following options:

1. Jobseeker's Allowance;
2. Incapacity Benefit;
3. Income Support;
4. Housing Benefit;
5. Council Tax Benefit;
6. Disability Living Allowance;
7. Carer's Allowance;
8. Child Benefit;
9. Child Tax Credit;
10. Don't know;
11. Others (PLEASE WRITE IN);
12. None of these.

103 As Figure 1 below shows, before they started the course just over half of the learners had been receiving Council Tax Benefit (55 per cent); Income

Support (53 per cent) and Housing Benefit (52 per cent). If we look only at primary, income-replacement benefits, Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) claimants constituted just under one-third (31 per cent) of respondents, and were outnumbered by claimants of ‘inactive benefits’, including Income Support (53 per cent), Incapacity Benefit (17 per cent) and Carer’s Allowance (7 per cent).

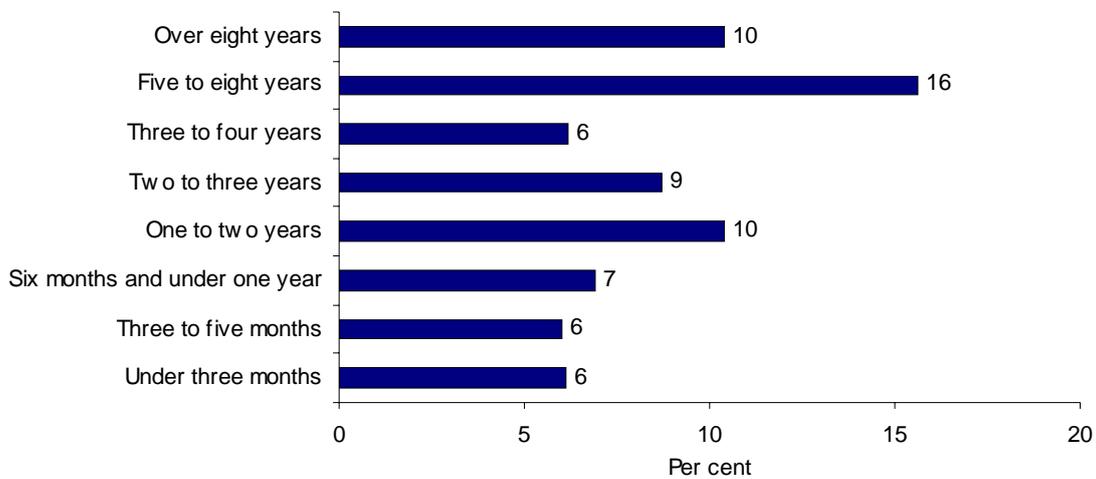
Figure 1: Social security benefits and tax credits obtained before the course



Unweighted base: 10,000
 Source: Inclusion, 2007

104 Learners were asked for how long they had been on benefits. Just over a quarter of learners (26 per cent) had been on benefits for five years or more; a similar proportion (25 per cent) had been claiming for one to four years; and just under one-fifth (19 per cent) had been on benefits for less than one year.

Figure 2: Length of time on benefits prior to learning



Unweighted base: 10,000
Source: Inclusion, 2007

105 There were some significant differences between groups in terms of duration of benefit claim. For example:

- women were almost twice as likely as men to have claimed benefits for five to eight years (19 per cent compared to 10 per cent); and
- learners claiming JSA were significantly less likely to have claimed benefits for a longer period (five to eight years) than learners receiving Incapacity Benefit (19 per cent), Income Support (25 per cent) or Carer's Allowance (28 per cent).

Employment situation before the start of the course

How many learners had ever worked

106 In the survey, learners were asked:

Before you started the course, had you ever had paid work, apart from casual or holiday work? Please exclude government schemes but include self-employment.

107 Overall, 70 per cent of learners had been in paid employment at some point before they began their course.

Types of previous employment

108 Of those learners who had had at least one paid job before starting their course, 93 per cent had been working as employees (68 per cent of all learners in the survey) and 6 per cent (5 per cent of all learners) had been self-employed. Of those who had had at least one paid job before learning, men were twice as likely as women to have been self-employed (10 per cent, compared to 5 per cent).

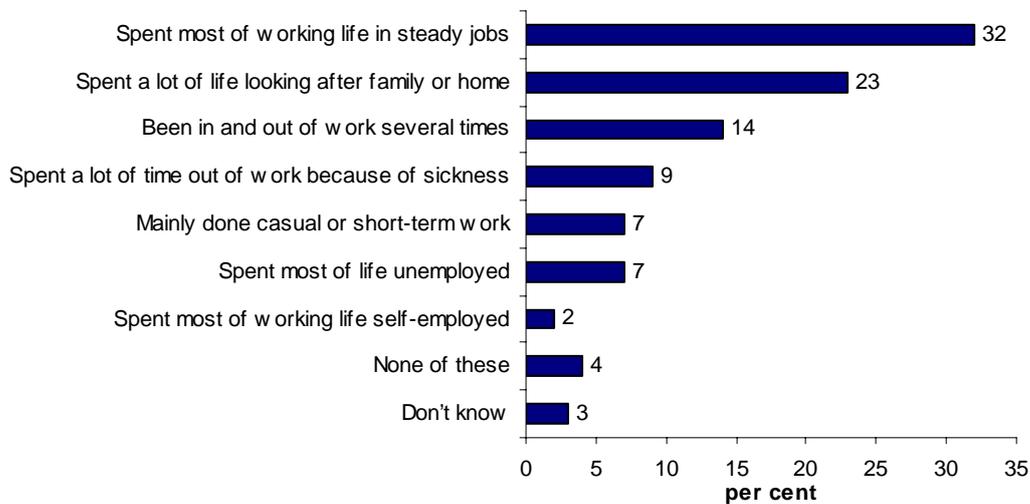
109 Of the 445 learners who had been self-employed in their last job, the majority (77 per cent, or 3 per cent of all the learners in the survey) had worked alone or with partners, but had not had employees.

110 Almost three-quarters (74 per cent) of those who had been employees in the past had been in permanent jobs, while 17 per cent had been in seasonal or temporary jobs.

111 In addition, young learners (20 to 24 years) were more likely than older learners (45 to 55 years) to have had temporary, seasonal jobs (32 per cent of younger learners, compared to 12 per cent of older learners).

112 Learners were asked about their pre-course work history. Figure 3 shows that only 7 per cent of all the learners in the survey had spent most of their working lives unemployed. A similar proportion had spent most of their working lives doing casual/short-term work (7 per cent) or being out of work because of sickness (9 per cent). The majority of learners had either been in steady jobs (32 per cent), looking after their family (22 per cent) or 'in and out of work' (14 per cent).

Figure 3: Work history of learners



Unweighted base: 10,000
 Source: Inclusion, 2007

113 The majority (60 per cent) of all learners who had had at least one paid job and who had been working as an employee in their last job had been working 30 hours or more per week; 22 per cent had been working 16 to 29 hours; and 16 per cent fewer than 16 hours. Men were considerably more likely than women to have been working more than 30 hours a week (79 per cent compared to 50 per cent). There were further significant differences.

- Learners with dependent children and those who did not have dependent children but who claimed Carer's Allowance were less likely (52 per cent and 53 per cent, respectively) to have worked 30 hours or more in their last paid job than those not caring for children or family (68 per cent).
- More than three-quarters (77 per cent) of learners on Incapacity Benefit, almost three-quarters (72 per cent) of those claiming JSA, and over half (53 per cent) of those claiming Income Support had been working more than 30 hours per week in their last job. This shows that

the majority of those on workless benefits did have some full-time work experience.

- 114 Overall, 10 per cent of learners in the survey had been working fewer than 16 hours a week when the course started. Of those, at the time of interview, 45 per cent were still in the same job as they had been before the course began. Women were more likely than men to have stayed in the same job they had before learning (45 per cent, compared to 39 per cent for men).
- 115 Consistent differences in the length of unemployment prior to learning were found between learners with no disadvantages and those who had experienced multiple disadvantage. Only 6 per cent of learners with no disadvantages had been out of work for between eight and ten years, compared to 27 per cent of those who experienced three or more disadvantages.

Main reasons for being out work before the course

- 116 Learners who were not working when the course started (7,978) were asked:

What were the reasons you were not in employment when you started the course?

- 117 This question was a multiple-response one, and learners could select one or more of the following options:

Was it because:

- 1. Of health reasons;*
- 2. Of family or caring responsibilities;*
- 3. Of a lack of qualifications or skills;*
- 4. Of a lack of experience;*

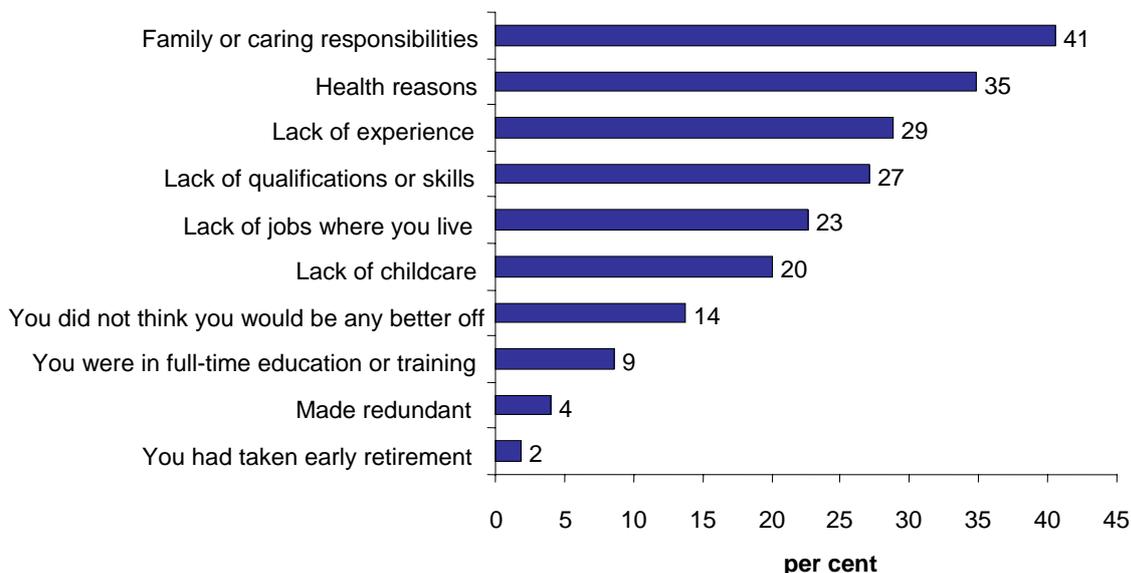
5. *Of a lack of childcare;*
6. *Of a lack of jobs where you live;*
7. *You did not think you would be any better off in work;*
8. *You had taken early retirement;*
9. *You were in full-time education or training;*
10. *Other reason.*

118 As learners could choose more than one option, the sum of percentages may exceed 100 per cent. Significance testing was not applied to multiple-response questions, and therefore the following analysis is based on a discussion of percentage differences only.

119 In this survey, 89 per cent of all the learners interviewed had not been in work immediately before they started the course. Those who were in work had worked for fewer than 16 hours a week, and so were eligible for certain benefits and for fee remission.

120 As is shown below, caring responsibilities (41 per cent) and health reasons (35 per cent) were the two main reasons why learners had been out of work before the course started. Other cited reasons were lack of experience (29 per cent), lack of qualifications and skills (27 per cent), lacks of jobs (23 per cent) and lack of childcare (20 per cent). This indicates that the majority of reasons for being out of work involved personal barriers, not labour market barriers.

Figure 4: Reasons for being out of work before the course started



Unweighted base: 8,929

Source: Inclusion, 2007

121 The main reasons for women being out of work were family or caring responsibilities and lack of childcare, qualifications/skills and experience. The reasons for men were more varied; however, the main reasons were ill health, lack of jobs where they lived, lack of skills and qualifications, and lack of experience.

Table 4: Reasons for being out of work, by gender

	Gender	
	Male	Female
All learners	2921	7079
	%	%
Health reasons	27	14
Family or caring responsibilities	7	26
Lack of qualifications or skills	17	13
Lack of experience	18	13
Lack of childcare	2	13
Lack of jobs where you live	17	9
You did not think you would be any better off in work	6	7
You had taken early retirement	1	1
You were in full-time education or training	6	4

Reasons for exiting the labour market

- 122 Learners who had worked as employees at some time before starting learning (6,094 overall) were asked why their last job had ended.
- 123 Some 17 per cent of them (10 per cent of all learners in the survey) were made redundant or took voluntary redundancy; 4 per cent (2 per cent of all learners) had experienced other forms of dismissal; 12 per cent (7 per cent of all learners) had been in temporary jobs that came to an end; 16 per cent (10 per cent of all learners) resigned; and 50 per cent (30 per cent of all learners) had left the job for other reasons.
- 124 Learners who had resigned or left their job for other reasons (401, or 4 per cent of all learners) were asked the following question:

Did you give up work for any of these reasons?

- 125 They could choose the following options:
- your health;
 - caring for children; or
 - caring for adult relatives or friends.
- 126 Almost half (49 per cent) of these learners cited caring responsibilities as the main reason for exiting work. Some 43 per cent had left work because of health problems, and 8 per cent because they had been caring for adult relatives or friends.

Job-seeking before learning

- 127 Just over four in ten (42 per cent) of all the learners in the survey had actively been looking for work immediately before the course started. Learners were more likely to have been seeking work if they had no disadvantages (75 per cent) than if they had multiple disadvantages (34 per cent with three disadvantages), and if they were:

- men rather than women (58 per cent, compared to 34 per cent);
- mainly aged 20 to 34 (54 per cent of learners aged 20 to 24, compared to 39 per cent of learners over 55);
- studying for vocational qualifications (43 per cent) rather than non-vocational (33 per cent) or basic skills (39 per cent);
- without caring responsibilities (51 per cent, compared to 43 per cent of learners with dependent children); and
- claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (82 per cent of those claiming JSA said that they had been looking for work prior to learning, though it should be noted that **all** should have been looking for work as a condition of claiming JSA).

128 Only 6 per cent of all the learners in the survey had received a training allowance from the Jobcentre while attending the course, and another 11 per cent had received a training allowance from the college or training provider.

129 Some 15 per cent of all learners in the survey said that Jobcentre Plus had required them to give up or rearrange their studies if they found a job, as a condition of keeping their benefits (the JSA 16-hour rule).

Level of motivation to work

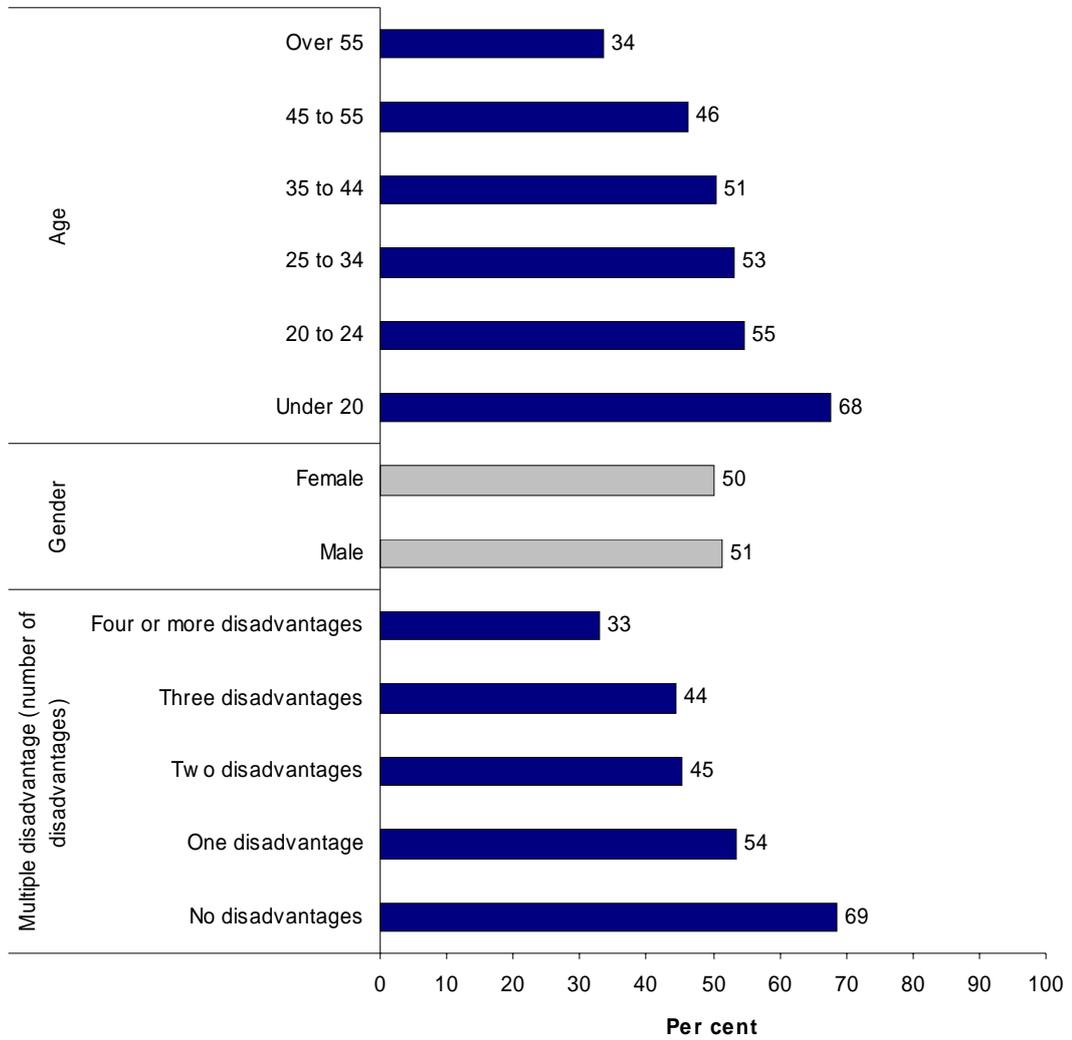
130 Learners were asked:

At the time you started the course, how motivated were you to move into work in the near future?

131 The vast majority (78 per cent) of those learners who had not been working when the course started had been motivated to move into work: 51 per cent of them had been very motivated and 27 per cent quite motivated.

- 132 As Figure 5 shows, multiple disadvantage had a negative impact on the level of motivation to move into work: motivation was higher for learners with no or only one disadvantage and lower for learners experiencing multiple disadvantages. Some 69 per cent of learners who did not experience any disadvantages said they were very motivated to go back into work, while only 33 per cent of those experiencing multiple disadvantages answered that they were very motivated.
- 133 When embarking on their course, younger learners were more motivated to move into work than older ones (55 per cent of learners aged 20 to 24 were very motivated, compared to 33 per cent of learners aged over 55).
- 134 Learners studying for higher qualifications had tended to be more motivated to find work than those who were going to attend courses leading to lower-level qualifications: 76 per cent of learners studying at Level 4 had been very motivated to find employment, compared to 44 per cent of learners studying at Level 1.
- 135 Finally, those learners with dependent children and those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance were among those most motivated to move into work (54 per cent and 67 per cent, respectively).

Figure 5: How motivated learners were to move into work at the start of the course



Unweighted base: 10,000
Source: Inclusion, 2007

Entering Learning

136 This chapter examines the factors that led individuals to take up learning. It begins by examining the primary motivations of learners to take up learning, and reasons for choosing the particular course they followed. The next section identifies whether learners had experienced a ‘trigger’ to move them into learning, and what those triggers might have been. The following section identifies whether learners had participated in learning that was at a higher or a lower level than previous learning, and whether it was in a subject that the learner had done before or was in a new subject area. The last section in this chapter looks at the main sources of referrals to learning.

Main motivations for starting the course

137 Learners were asked:

Which factors were involved in your decision to take up the course?

138 The learners were given a list of eight possible factors that could have been involved in their decision to take up the course. Some of the reasons could be described as learning for learning’s sake, and others had more to do with employability. Learners could also reply ‘none of the above’ or ‘other’ (such responses are not included here on account of the low figures – both 0.2 per cent). Learners were able to give more than one answer to this question, so reasons cited add up to more than 100 per cent.

Figure 6: Reasons for starting the course



139 The motivations for learners starting a further education (FE) course were wide ranging. The most popularly cited reasons were to get new skills or update skills (89 per cent), wanting to learn something new or for personal interest (81 per cent), and to get a qualification (80 per cent). Taking the course to help get a job was cited by almost three learners in four (73 per cent).

140 This question was recoded to show all those who gave a reason connected to improving their labour market chances: these learners felt that they had started the course to help them to get a job, to get a better-paid job or to change career. In all, four learners in ten (41 per cent) said that they had embarked on their course to improve their labour market chances.

141 Learners were asked:

Which of these factors was the most important?

142 The most important factor behind taking up learning was to improve their skills (20 per cent). This response was followed by ‘to help get a job’ (15 per cent) and ‘wanted to learn something new or for personal interest’ (16 per cent).

Figure 7: Most important factor behind taking up learning



Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

- 143 Learning to improve skills was particularly important for less disadvantaged learners, as was helping with a change of career and gaining a qualification. Learners with four or more disadvantages were much more likely to report that they were taking up learning ‘to help my children with their education’ (13 per cent).
- 144 Surprisingly, as Table 5 below shows, there were not many differences in the main motivations for taking up learning between those who had caring responsibilities and those who did not. For instance, learners who had dependent children were most likely to take up learning ‘to get new skills or update my skills’ (18 per cent) and ‘to help get a job’ (16 per cent). Similarly, those with dependent children and in receipt of Carer’s Allowance also reported that they had taken up learning ‘to get new skills or update my skills’ (21 per cent); however, their highest reported factor was ‘to learn something new or for personal interest’ (24 per cent). Learners who were not carers also reported ‘to get new skills or update my skills’ and ‘to learn something new or for personal interest’ as the main

factor in their decision to take up learning (22 and 20 per cent, respectively).

- 145 The survey also found that different age groups had different reasons for entering learning. Table 5 also shows that younger learners are more likely to report 'to get a qualification' as having been the most important reason for taking up a course (21 per cent, compared to 9 per cent in the 45 to 55 age group).
- 146 Furthermore, as the table demonstrates, acquiring new skills and updating skills becomes more important with age: from 15 per cent in the 20 to 24 age group to 24 per cent in the over-55 age group. This is also the same for 'wanted to learn something new or for personal interest': from 13 per cent in the 20 to 24 age group to 30 per cent in the over-55 age group.
- 147 Depending on their type of learning aim, there were also differences among learners as to the main factor cited for taking up a course. For those with a vocational learning aim, the majority cited 'to get new skills or update my skills' as the main reason (22 per cent). By contrast, only 10 per cent of non-vocational learners cited new or refreshed skills as the most important factor. Instead, non-vocational learners mainly took the course to move on to further education, training or learning (24 per cent), compared to learners with a vocational aim (5 per cent), or learners with a basic skills aim (9 per cent).
- 148 Learners on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) mainly decided to take up the course to help them get a job (21 per cent, compared to the 15 per cent average). Learners on Incapacity Benefit (including Severe Disablement Allowance or SDA) mainly decided to take up the course to 'learn something new or for personal interest' (27 per cent, compared to the 16 per cent average).

Table 5: Main factor involved in decision to take up course

		To get new skills or update my skills %	To help get a job %	To help get a better-paid job than before %	To help change career %	To get a qualification %	Wanted to learn something new or for personal interest %	To move on to further education, training or learning %	To help my children with their education %	Other %	Unweighted count
All learners		20	15	10	9	13	16	7	4	6	10000
Multiple disadvantage (number of disadvantages)	No disadvantages	21	17	10	13	14	14	5	*	6	1059
	One disadvantage	21	15	10	11	13	15	8	2	6	4173
	Two disadvantages	20	15	10	8	13	18	6	4	7	3581
	Three disadvantages	19	16	11	5	12	15	8	9	6	1083
	Four or more disadvantages	16	15	11	9	10	13	4	13	8	104
Gender	Male	22	17	10	10	12	16	6	1	6	2921
	Female	19	15	10	9	13	16	8	5	6	7079
Age*	20 to 24	15	16	11	8	21	13	11	1	4	908
	25 to 34	18	14	12	10	13	14	9	4	6	2724
	35 to 44	21	15	10	10	12	15	6	4	6	3580
	45 to 55	25	17	8	8	9	20	3	3	7	2389
	Over 55	24	15	3	5	8	30	2	*	13	337
Distance from labour market	Far from labour market	18	15	9	4	14	19	8	6	7	2627
	Fairly far from labour market	20	14	10	8	13	17	7	4	7	3030
	Fairly close to labour market	20	18	11	11	13	14	6	2	5	2491
	Close to labour market	23	15	11	15	10	13	7	2	5	1852

Impact of Learning on Employability

Continued from previous page		To get new skills or update my skills %	To help get a job %	To help get a better-paid job than before %	To help change career %	To get a qualification %	Wanted to learn something new or for personal interest %	To move on to further education, training or learning %	To help my children with their education %	Other %	Unweighted count
All learners		20	15	10	9	13	16	7	4	6	10000
Type of learning aim	Non-vocational	10	8	11	11	16	11	24	3	5	781
	Vocational	22	16	10	9	12	17	5	3	7	8075
	Basic skills	17	17	11	8	16	11	9	6	6	1144
Whether caring for child(ren) or other family	Not a carer	22	15	8	9	12	20	6	1	8	4604
	Has dependent child(ren)	18	16	12	10	13	12	8	6	5	5262
	No dependent children but receives Carer's Allowance	26	9	–	*	20	22	*	–	14	59
	Has dependent child(ren) and receives Carer's Allowance	21	*	8	10	11	24	*	13	8	75
Benefits claimed at start of learning**	No workless benefit claimed	20	13	10	10	11	19	7	5	7	1202
	Jobseeker's Allowance	20	21	12	12	14	11	5	1	5	2836
	Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	24	10	7	9	7	27	5	2	9	702
	Income Support	20	14	10	7	13	16	8	5	7	5122
	Carer's Allowance	24	6	4	7	15	23	4	7	10	134

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

* 20 to 24 years and those who refused were omitted due to low cell count.

** Pension credit was omitted due to low cell count.

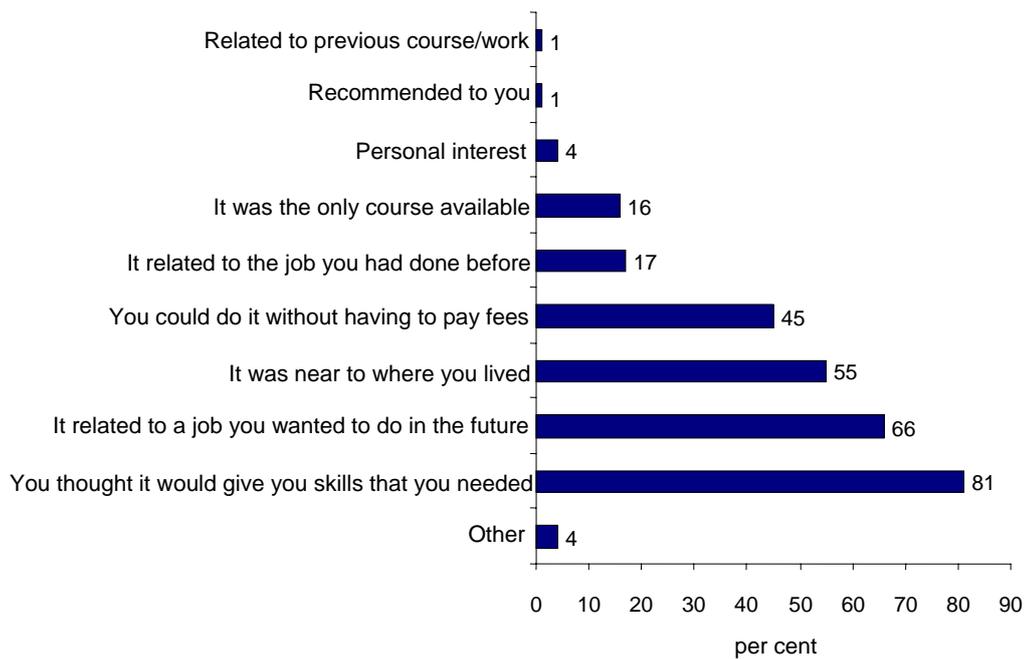
Reasons for choosing the particular course

149 Learners were asked:

Why did you choose that particular course?

150 The results are shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Reasons for choosing the course



Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

151 The most popularly cited reason for choosing the particular course was to get new skills that the learner had thought they needed (81 per cent). This reason closely reflects the discussion in the previous section of why learning in general was taken up. The next popularly cited reason was 'it related to a job you wanted to do' (66 per cent), which reveals the importance for the majority of the learners of choosing learning to improve their employability.

152 Interestingly, the third most commonly cited reason for choosing the particular course was that it had been close to where the learner lived (55

per cent). This reflects wide research evidence, which shows that the location of a course is an important factor in influencing people's decision about what and where to learn.

Main triggers for starting the course

153 All learners were asked:

Did any of the following changes in your personal circumstances lead to you deciding to start the course at that time?

154 The learners were given four statements, to which they could respond 'yes' or 'no'. They gave the following responses:

- wanted to return to work after a long break caring for children (62 per cent);
- caring responsibilities had changed (44 per cent);
- health had improved (43 per cent);
- had to start the course as a requirement of claiming benefits (12 per cent).

155 This implies that caring responsibilities may be a significant factor in preventing learners from taking up learning.

156 There are significant differences in the triggers for men and women to take up learning. For women, a change in caring for children is the most significant trigger. For men, the most significant trigger to take up learning is their health improving (see Table 6 below).

Table 6: Changes in personal circumstances to trigger learning

		Gender		Unweighted count
		Male %	Female %	
All learners		2921	7079	10000
Personal circumstances to trigger learning	Requirement to claim benefits	9	5	537
	Return to work after long break caring for children	9	45	3506
	Health improved	23	23	2230
	Caring responsibilities changed	13	29	2462

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Level of learning (whether higher or lower than previous learning)

157 Learners were asked:

Compared with your previous education/qualifications you have, was the course at a lower level, the same level, a higher level and/or you don't know?

158 The learners were given four choices to respond to the question and they responded thus:

- lower level – 27 per cent;
- same level – 27 per cent;
- higher level – 38 per cent;
- don't know – 9 per cent.

159 Around one in four learners said that the course they had participated in was of a higher level than their previous courses, showing that they were upgrading their qualifications and building on their learning base.

Previous subjects taken

160 All learners were asked:

Was the course in a subject you had done before?

161 The survey found that most learners had been learning in a subject area that was different from the area they had studied in the past. According to what the learners reported:

- 60 per cent had been studying a different subject from before;
- 31 per cent had been studying the same subject as before;
- 7 per cent had been studying in the same subject area as some of their previous learning, but in a different subject area from other previous learning.

Where learners had first heard about the course

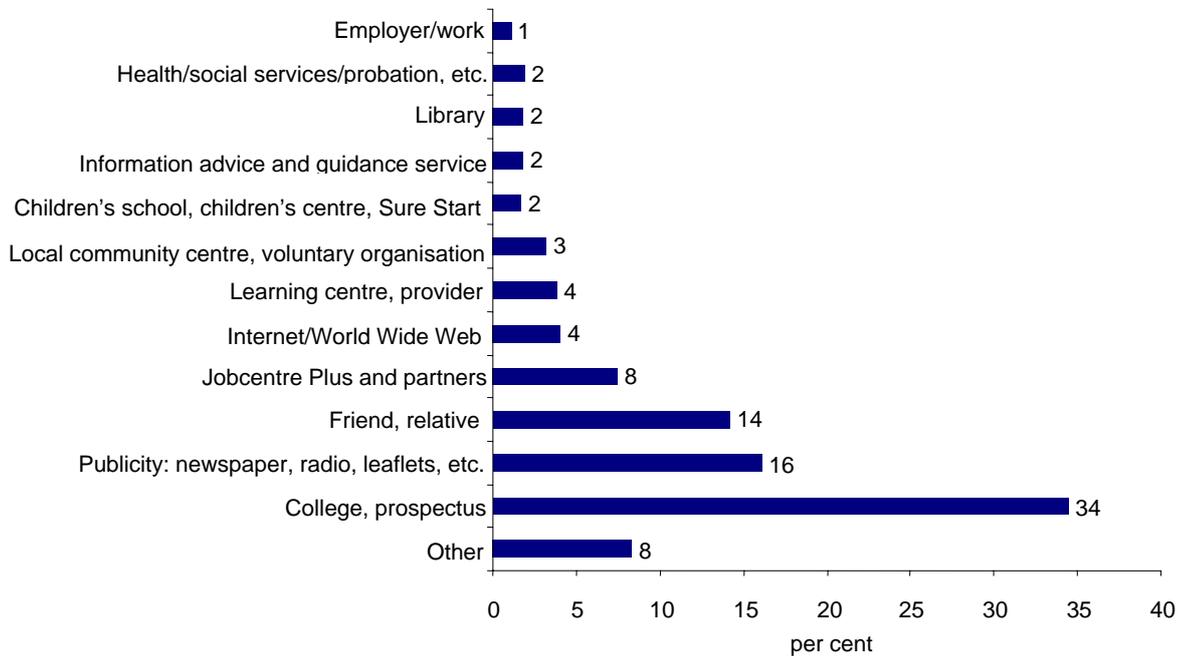
162 Learners were asked:

Where or from whom did you first hear about the opportunity to do this course?

163 The question was open ended, and allowed learners to cite exactly where or from whom they had first heard about the course.

164 Over a third of learners had heard about the course through colleges (34 per cent). This was followed by publicity, including newspapers, radio, leaflets, and so on (16 per cent); and friends and relatives (14 per cent).

Figure 9: Where learners first heard about the opportunity to do the course



Unweighted base: 10,000
Source: Inclusion, 2007

165 Very few learners had found out about the course through Jobcentre Plus (8 per cent), information, advice and guidance (IAG) services (2 per cent), or through local community centres and voluntary organisations (3 per cent). This shows that, when individuals are looking for learning opportunities, they may not automatically think of these as places to go to find out about learning. Learners tend, it seems, to go through more direct channels, such as colleges.

Immediate Learning Outcomes

166 This chapter examines immediate learning outcomes for learners participating in further education. It starts by looking at the number of learners who completed a course, and explores why learners sometimes drop out. It then identifies the types of qualifications that were achieved.

Learners completing the course and reasons for them dropping out

167 Learners were asked:

Did you complete the course?

168 Out of the 10,000 learners surveyed, the majority (86 per cent) had achieved a positive learning outcome by completing the course. The 14 per cent of learners who had not completed the course were then asked:

Why didn't you complete the course?

169 Table 7 shows all the reasons given by learners for why they did not complete the course (learners were able to give more than one answer to this question).

170 The top three reasons for why learners did not complete the course involved personal circumstances (family/personal circumstances, ill health/disability, or left to start a job). The remaining responses were all relatively small in number, and did not tend to relate to the course or learning provider.

Table 7: Reasons for not completing the course

Reason for not completing the course	%	Unweighted count
Family/personal circumstances	25	286
Ill health/disability	23	279
Left to start a job	17	188
Course did not meet expectations	7	80
Course too advanced	6	73
Problems accessing course	5	60
Lack of time	5	62
Course cancelled	5	54
Course content was not what I wanted	5	62
Problem with tutor	3	48
Childcare difficulties	4	46
Lack of support	4	47
Lack of funding	3	32
Course too easy	2	19
Lack of information	1	11
Other	14	192
Don't know	3	27

Unweighted base: 1,452
Source: Inclusion, 2007

- 171 The survey also investigated multiple disadvantage. Multiple disadvantage here refers to *Inclusion's* measure of multiple disadvantage among learners. It takes account of the following attributes of a learner: disability affecting the type of learning and/or work, the presence of financially dependent children, ethnicity, and no or low level of prior qualifications (for further information, please refer to paragraph 71 on methodology). It does not refer to the LSC's measurement of disadvantage, which uses learners' and providers' postcodes to calculate a 'disadvantage uplift' in funding.
- 172 The survey found that multiple disadvantage had played a role in whether learners completed their courses. Learners who experienced three or

more disadvantages were found to have had lower completion rates than other learners. When a learner had:

- no disadvantages – 86 per cent completed the course;
- one disadvantage – 87 per cent completed;
- two disadvantages – 86 per cent completed;
- three disadvantages – 83 per cent completed; and
- four or more disadvantages – 73 per cent completed.

173 The fact that those with a higher number of disadvantages have lower completion rates may reflect the fact that this group of learners faces a number of barriers to their participation and persistence in learning.

174 The most commonly cited reasons for why learners with three or more disadvantages had not completed the course were:

- family and personal circumstances; and
- ill health.

175 This was in contrast to learners with no disadvantages, among whom the most commonly cited reason for not completing the course was 'left to start a job' (34 per cent).

Table 8: Level of disadvantage, by reasons for not completing a course

	Multiple disadvantage (number of disadvantages)				
	No disadvantages %	One disadvantage %	Two disadvantages %	Three disadvantages %	Four or more disadvantages %
Left to start a job	34	17	12	9	3
Course too advanced	10	5	6	4	0
Course too easy	4	2	2	1	9
Problems accessing course	2	5	5	5	–
Course did not meet expectations	5	8	5	6	–
Lack of support/ help	2	5	3	5	–
Lack of time/ too busy	5	6	5	3	–
Family/ personal circumstances	13	20	26	22	11
Ill health/ disability	8	17	22	25	59
Lack of information	2	1	1	–	–
Course content was not what I wanted	7	6	4	2	2
Childcare difficulties	–	2	4	9	9
Course cancelled/ closed down	4	4	4	6	7
Lack of funding	5	4	2	1	0

Unweighted base: 1,149

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Qualifications achieved

176 Learners were asked:

Did you complete the course and/or receive a qualification?

177 Of the 10,000 learners surveyed:

- 74 per cent had completed the course and achieved a qualification;
- 11 per cent had completed the course but had not achieved a qualification;
- 15 per cent had neither completed the course nor achieved a qualification.

178 In terms of ethnicity, White Irish were the most likely of all the learners (81 per cent) in the survey to have achieved a qualification and to have completed the course. Then came Black African (76 per cent); White British, Pakistani, Chinese and Mixed background (75 per cent); Indian (73 per cent); Bangladeshi, Black Other and White Other (72 per cent); and Black Caribbean (71 per cent).

179 While the differences in Table 9 are not statistically significant, it is noteworthy that Black Caribbean learners had the lowest achievement rates, followed by Bangladeshi learners. Pakistani learners, on the other hand, had achievement rates similar to White British learners.

Table 9: Ethnic group, by learning completion and qualification achievement

Learning completion and qualification achievement					
	Neither completed course nor achieved qualification %	Completed course but did not achieve qualification %	Completed course and achieved qualification %	Unweighted count	
All learners	15	11	74	10000	
Ethnic group					
White – British	14	11	75	6443	
White – Irish	13	7	81	103	
White – Other	15	12	72	386	
Black or Black British – Caribbean	18	11	71	593	
Black or Black British – African	14	10	76	739	
Black or Black British – Other	15	13	72	108	
Asian or Asian British – Indian	15	12	73	341	
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	15	10	75	333	
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	17	11	72	107	
Chinese	10	15	75	52	
Other groups	16	10	73	440	
Mixed	12	13	75	212	
Refused	19	16	65	143	

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

- 180 When we examine qualification achievement, it becomes apparent that level of disadvantage again played a role in the outcomes for learners. The survey found that the greater the number of disadvantages experienced by a learner, the higher the level of non-completion and the lower the number of learners who achieved a qualification. Some 61 per cent of those with four or more disadvantages achieved a qualification, compared to an average of 74 per cent.
- 181 Age was a factor in the probability of a learner achieving a qualification: the higher the age group, the less likely learners were to have achieved a qualification. Those in the over-55 age group were less likely to have achieved a qualification (67 per cent) than the overall average (74 per

cent). Correspondingly, the rate of non-completion was higher for this age group – 20 per cent, compared to the average of 15 per cent.

182 The percentage of learners who had achieved qualifications varied according to where the course had been based. The learning venues that had high levels of qualifications obtained (compared to the 74 per cent average rate of qualification achievement) were:

- adult education centres (80 per cent); and
- learning centres (82 per cent).

183 The locations that had lower levels of learners achieving qualifications were:

- distance learning (68 per cent);
- libraries (68 per cent);
- schools (67 per cent).

184 Learners with a non-vocational learning aim had higher levels of learning outcomes. Some 81 per cent of non-vocational learners achieved a qualification. By contrast, 74 per cent of learners with a vocational aim and 78 per cent of learners with a basic skills aim achieved qualifications.

185 Interestingly, the relationship between care responsibilities and qualification achievement shows that learners with dependent children have higher rates of qualification achievement. Non-carers had a rate of qualification achievement of 71 per cent. In comparison, qualifications were achieved by:

Impact of Learning on Employability

- 82 per cent of learners with dependent children and in receipt of Carer's Allowance;
- 78 per cent of learners with dependent children;
- 71 per cent of learners with no dependent children but in receipt of Carer's Allowance.

Employability, Skills, Social and Personal Outcomes of Learning

186 This chapter examines:

- employability outcomes;
- skills gained;
- social outcomes; and
- personal outcomes.

187 Learners were asked whether they felt their original course had helped them to improve their employability, their job-related skills, their attitude toward learning, and their personal and social skills, and whether it had been helpful in increasing their motivation and confidence.

188 Learners were asked to think about whether the course may or may not have helped them in general. The key questions were:

Thinking now about how the course may or may not have helped you in general, which of the following skills do you think you have actually gained so far from undertaking the course.

Which of the following outcomes do you think you have actually gained as a direct result of undertaking the course.

[ASK ALL] I'm now going to read out some wider benefits people say they have gained from taking part in courses. Thinking about the [INSERT COURSE TITLE AND START DATE FROM ILR], do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

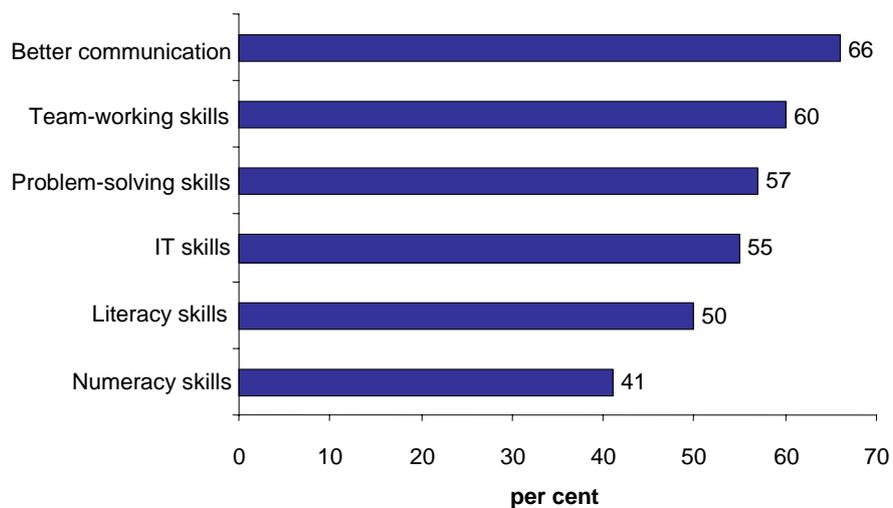
189 The questions were applied to a list of skills and outcomes, and learners were also asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about the wider benefits of learning.

Overarching findings

Skills gained and other outcomes of learning according to learners

190 Figure 10 below summarises the above findings about whether learners felt they had improved their communication, team-working, problem-solving, numeracy, literacy and information technology (IT) skills as a result of learning. Some 66 per cent of all learners in the survey said they had improved their communication skills as a result of the course; 60 per cent their team-working skills; 57 per cent their problem-solving skills; 55 per cent their IT skills; 50 per cent their literacy skills, and 41 per cent their numeracy skills.

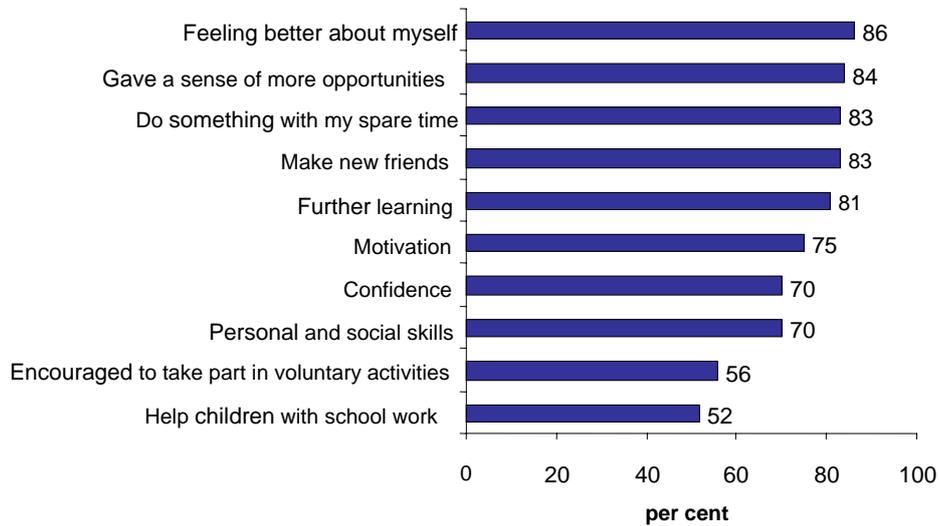
Figure 10: Extent to which learners felt they had gained skills as a result of the course



Unweighted base: 10,000
Source, *Inclusion*, 2007

191 Figure 11 below summarises the extent to which learners felt they had improved their personal and social skills as a result of learning. Some 70 per cent of all learners in the survey felt that their personal and social skills had improved because of learning; 86 per cent claimed they felt better about themselves because of the course; 83 per cent said they had made new friends; 84 per cent felt that the course had given them a sense of more opportunities; 75 per cent said that it had increased their motivation; 83 per cent felt that it had helped them do something useful with their spare time.

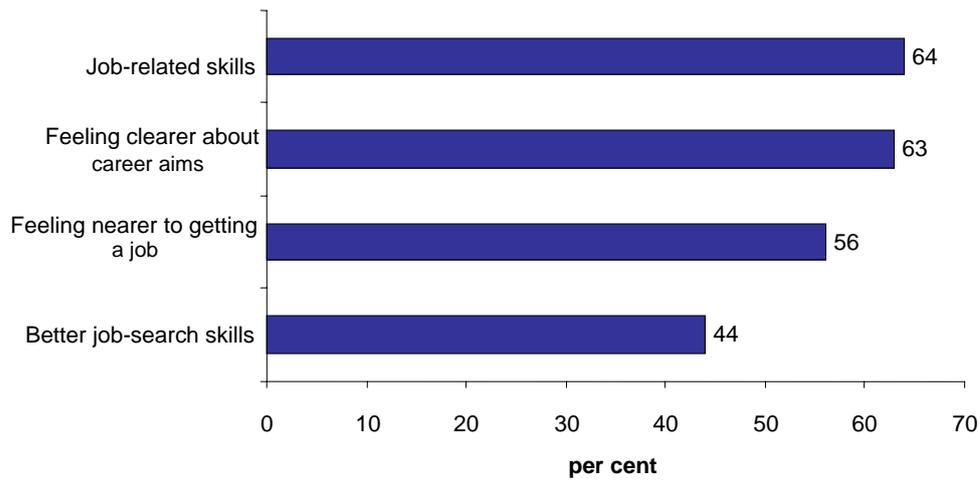
Figure 11: Personal and social skills gained as result of the course



Source: Inclusion, 2007

192 Figure 12 below summarises the findings on the extent to which learners felt they had improved their employability skills as a result of learning.

Figure 12: Extent to which learners thought their employability skills had improved as a result of the course



Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

193 Analysis shows that those most likely to benefit from the ‘softer’ outcomes of learning are women with dependent children, learners who have experienced multiple disadvantage, those studying on non-vocational and basic skills courses, and those who were further from the labour market.

194 By contrast, those closer to the labour market, who have experienced less or no disadvantage, or who were studying for vocational qualifications tended to have achieved ‘harder’, economic outcomes, such as finding work and moving off benefits. Those learners were also more likely to have claimed Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) before the course, as JSA claimants tend to be closer to getting a job than those claiming other workless benefits.

Employability outcomes

195 This section examines employability outcomes by looking at the following questions:

Which of the following outcomes do you think you have actually gained as a direct result of undertaking the [INSERT COURSE TITLE AND START DATE FROM ILR]?

Feeling clearer about career aims

Feeling nearer to getting a job.

And:

Which of the following skills do you think you have actually gained from undertaking the course?

Job-related skills

Job-search skills.

Feeling clearer about career aims

- 196 The survey found that 63 per cent of the 10,000 learners had felt clearer about their career aims after the end of their course.
- 197 The impact of their course on the way learners felt about their career aims was stronger for women than for men: 65 per cent of women were more likely to have said that the course had left them feeling clearer about their career aims, compared to 58 per cent of men.
- 198 The variations between different age groups were significant: young learners (aged 20 to 24) were more likely than those aged 45 to 55 to acknowledge that the course had left them feeling clearer about their career aims.

- 199 Learners closer to the labour market were also more likely to value the contribution of learning to their career aims (65 per cent of those close to the labour market, compared to 61 per cent of those defined as far away).
- 200 Other findings were that the majority of learners in all types of learning felt that their course had provided a clearer understanding of their career aims. Of all vocational learners, 61 per cent had obtained an improved understanding. The figure was 72 per cent for all non-vocational learners and 71 per cent for all learners in basic skills. The smaller proportion of vocational learners who had gained a clearer understanding of their career aims could indicate that vocational learners had a relatively high level of understanding at the outset of the course, so the course itself had less of an impact on this outcome.
- 201 Learners who had studied higher-level courses were also more likely than those studying at lower levels to value the impact of learning on their career aims (76 per cent of learners at Levels 3 and 4, compared to 57 per cent at Level 1).
- 202 The length of the course affected learners' perception of the impact of the course on their career aims. Learners attending longer courses (135 hours or more in total) were consistently more likely than those attending shorter courses (30 hours and under) to feel that the learning had left them clearer about their career aims (75 per cent, compared to 58 per cent).
- 203 Learners with caring responsibilities were more likely than non-carers or learners with non-child-related caring responsibilities to report that the course had left them feeling clearer about their career aims (70 per cent, compared to 56 per cent of non-carers and 48 per cent of those receiving Carer's Allowance but with no dependent children).
- 204 Finally, learners claiming JSA at the start of the course were more likely than those claiming other workless benefits to acknowledge that the course had helped clarify their career aims.

- 205 In order to analyse whether learners felt clearer about their career aims after learning, logistic regression was used. Logistic regression estimates the effect of each variable on the odds of the outcome being achieved. Odds are understood in the same way as they are in betting. Positive coefficients shorten the odds (so a respondent who has that factor is more likely to undertake further learning) and negative coefficients lengthen the odds.
- 206 Each factor has a 'reference category' that is included within the 'base model'. In this case, these reference categories are: having four or more disadvantages; last worked between one and two years ago; female; aged 20 to 24; close to the labour market; receiving Carer's Allowance; in the East Midlands; undertaking basic skills learning at Level 1; on a course lasting nine months to one year; and undertaking the learning for career-related reasons (the reference categories). The other categories show the effects of variation in that category, relative to the reference category, assuming all the other factors stay the same. The 'estimates' show what effect the factors have on the odds (or in fact, on the logarithm of the odds) of undertaking further learning.
- 207 Statistical significance is shown by stars, with three stars indicating significance at the 0.001 level, two stars at the 0.01 level, a single star at the 0.05 level, and a dot at the 0.1 level. Where significance levels are better than 0.05, the factor level is shown in bold type.
- 208 The logistic regression analysis below examines learners' responses to being asked about whether they were clearer about their career aims following learning.

Table 10: Extent to which learners felt clearer about their career aims after learning

	Estimate	Significance
(Intercept)	0.95	
Multiple disadvantages		
Reference category: Four disadvantages		
No disadvantages	-0.22	
One disadvantage	-0.29	
Three disadvantages	-0.22	
Two disadvantages	-0.32	
Time since last in work (or could have been)		
Reference category: 1 year		
2 years	-0.25	.
3 years	0.08	
4 years	0.08	
5 years	0.07	
6–10 years	0.10	
10–20 years	0.14	
Less than one year	1.01	
More than 20 years ago	0.32	*
Unknown	-0.03	
Working under 16 hours	0.27	
Gender		
Reference category: Female		
Male	-0.23	***
Age		
Reference category: 20 to 24		
25 to 34	-0.21	*
35 to 44	-0.51	***
45 to 55	-0.68	***
Refused, under 20 or over 55	-0.86	***
Distance from the labour market		
Reference category: Close to the labour market		
Fairly close to labour market	0.09	
Fairly far from labour market	-0.05	
Far from labour market	-0.17	.
Benefits claimed before learning		
Reference category: Carer's Allowance or Pension Credit		
Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	1.42	
Income Support	1.49	
Jobseeker's Allowance	1.77	.
No personal claim for workless benefit	1.35	
Whether has care responsibilities		
Reference category: Claims Carer's Allowance		
Has dependent children and does not claim Carer's Allowance	-1.23	
Not a carer	-1.64	
NVQ level of learner before learning		
Reference category: Refused survey linkage to LSC data		
Level 1	0.39	

Impact of Learning on Employability

Level 2	0.66	
Level 3	0.81	
Level 4 or more	0.86	
Unknown	0.28	
Region of learning provider		
Reference category: East Midlands		
East of England	-0.10	
Greater London	0.28	*
North East	-0.19	
North West	-0.09	
South East	-0.07	
South West	-0.27	*
Unknown	0.61	
West Midlands	0.09	
Yorkshire & the Humber	-0.02	
Learning type		
Reference category: Basic skills		
Non-vocational	-0.41	***
Vocational	-0.29	***
Course level		
Reference category: Level 1		
Level 2	0.10	
Level 3 or above	0.24	.
Not permitted or unknown	-0.26	
Under Level 1	0.07	
Course length		
Reference category: Nine months to one year		
No information	-0.49	***
One to two years	0.01	
Over two years	0.10	
Six months to nine months	-0.05	
Three months or under	-0.33	**
Three to six months	-0.23	.
Whether achieved a qualification		
Reference category: No		
Yes	0.59	***
Reason for undertaking learning		
Reference category: Career-related reasons		
Helping my children with their education	-0.63	***
Other	-0.95	***
Wanting more learning	-0.66	***

209 Looking at the 'starting position' factors influencing whether learners felt clearer about their career aims, gender showed up strongly, with females (the reference category) being much more likely than men to say that they were clearer about their career aims. Younger learners (the reference

category of 20- to 24-year-olds) were also significantly more positive than all older age groups.

- 210 Learning type showed significant differences. Those undertaking basic skills learning (the reference category) were significantly more likely to report being clearer about their career aims after learning than were other categories. Learners undertaking vocational learning were less positive than basic skills learners, but more positive than those undertaking non-vocational courses. Please note that these figures are different from the findings in paragraphs 196 to 204. This is because regression takes into account other factors (such as age or gender) and holds them equal, in order to find a truer correlation between variables without interference from other issues.
- 211 Qualification achievement was significantly positively related to learners reporting that they were clearer about their career aims.
- 212 The reasons behind learners undertaking learning were strongly related to feeling clearer about career aims. Those undertaking learning for career-related reasons (the reference category) showed a strong positive effect relative to those undertaking learning for other reasons.

Feeling nearer to getting a job

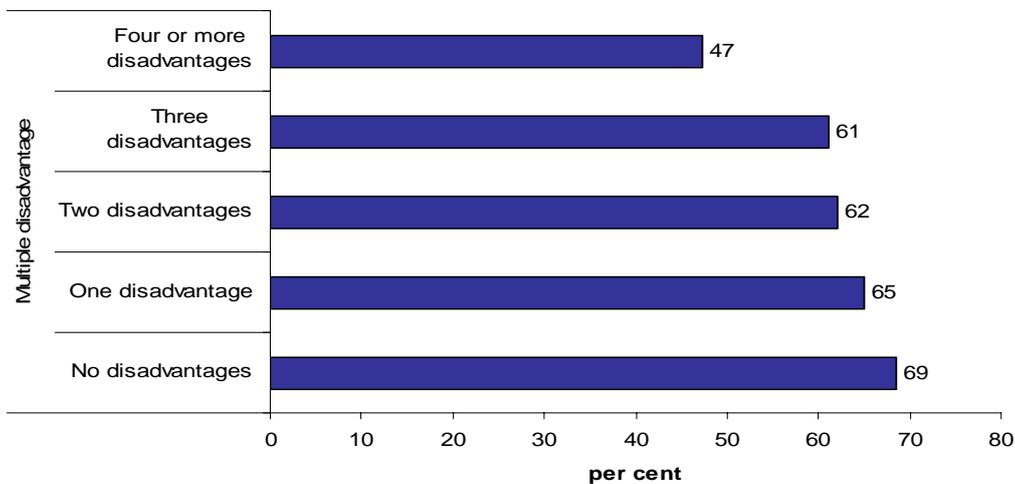
- 213 Overall, 56 per cent of learners in the survey felt they were nearer to getting a job as a result of the course. This shows that, although some learners had not moved into work after learning, they did feel closer to the labour market than they had before they took the course.
- 214 Those learners more likely to have reported that the course made them feel closer to the labour market:
- were women rather than men (57 per cent, compared to 52 per cent);
 - were younger (aged 20 to 24) rather than aged 45 to 55 (62 per cent, compared to 46 per cent);

- were fairly close to the labour market rather than close or far (60 per cent, compared to 53 per cent and 52 per cent, respectively);
- had been attending basic skills (63 per cent) and non-vocational courses (61 per cent) rather than vocational courses (54 per cent);
- had been studying at Level 4 or Level 3 (63 per cent and 65 per cent) rather than at Level 1 or Level 2 (51 per cent and 52 per cent);
- had been in longer courses, over 135 hours in total, rather than short ones under 30 hours (64 per cent, compared to 51 per cent);
- had dependent children (61 per cent) or had dependent children and received Carer's Allowance (53 per cent) rather than having care duties but no dependent children (38 per cent) or not being a carer (38 per cent);
- had been claiming JSA at the start of the course (61 per cent) rather than any other workless benefits – such as Income Support (55 per cent) – or Incapacity Benefit (51 per cent) or Carer's Allowance (46 per cent).

Job-related skills

- 215 Nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) of all learners in the survey felt they had improved their job-related skills as a direct result of the course.
- 216 The barriers experienced by learners with multiple disadvantage affected the way they felt about the impact of learning on their job-related skills.
- 217 As Figure 13 below shows, there are significant differences between the responses of learners who have experienced four disadvantages and those with fewer.

Figure 13: Improved job-related skills, by multiple disadvantage



Unweighted base: 10,000
Source: Inclusion, 2007

218 The following include some other findings.

- Women were slightly more likely than men to report that they had improved their job-related skills because of learning (65 per cent, compared to 61 per cent).
- Younger learners were more likely to think that their job-related skills had improved because of learning (63 per cent of those aged 20 to 24, compared to 59 per cent of those aged 45 to 55).
- Proximity to the labour market significantly affected learners' perception of the impact of learning on their job-related skills, as demonstrated by the 70 per cent of learners close to the labour market who reported that their job-related skills had improved, compared to only 57 per cent of those defined as far from the labour market.
- Reassuringly, vocational learners and those attending basic skills were the most likely to acknowledge the positive impact of learning on their job-related skills (64 per cent, compared to 57 per cent of non-vocational learners).

- 219 Interestingly, learners with dependent children were more likely to recognise the impact of learning on their job-related skills: 68 per cent of learners with dependent children felt their job-related skills had improved because of the course, compared to 59 per cent of non-carers.
- 220 Those more likely to report that the course had had a positive impact on their job-related skills were those claiming JSA (68 per cent), compared to 62 per cent of those on Income Support, 55 per cent of learners receiving Carer's Allowance and 53 per cent of those on Incapacity Benefit.

Job-search skills

- 221 Learners were also asked whether they thought the course had had a positive impact on the way they searched for jobs. Some 44 per cent of all learners in the survey felt they had improved their job-search skills as a result of the course.
- 222 Women were more likely than men to acknowledge that the course had helped them to improve their job-search skills (46 per cent, compared to 40 per cent). Learners experiencing multiple disadvantage were more likely than those with no disadvantages to think that learning had helped them with their job-search skills (51 per cent, compared to 38 per cent).
- 223 Interestingly, learners doing basic skills were more likely than vocational and non-vocational learners to feel that the course had had a positive impact on their job-search skills (56 per cent, compared to 43 per cent of vocational and non-vocational learners alike).
- 224 Learners with dependent children were more likely than non-carers to say that the course had improved their job-search skills (49 per cent, compared to 40 per cent).
- 225 Importantly, among learners claiming different workless benefits before the start of the course, those who had been claiming JSA were the most likely to acknowledge that their job-search skills had improved as a result of the course (47 per cent, compared to 43 per cent of those on Income Support,

35 per cent of those on Incapacity Benefit, and 41 per cent of those receiving Carer's Allowance).

Cognitive and communication skills gained

226 The learners were given the following list of skills and asked if they felt they had gained them as a direct result of the course:

- communication skills;
- team-working skills;
- problem-solving skills;
- literacy skills;
- numeracy skills;
- information technology (IT) skills.

Communication skills

- 227 Overall, 66 per cent of learners reported feeling that their communication skills had improved as a direct result of learning. Women were more likely than men to think they had gained better communication skills because of the course (69 per cent, compared to 61 per cent).
- 228 The positive impact of learning on communication skills is particularly noticeable among minority ethnic groups. Black African learners were the most likely to report that their communication skills had improved (83 per cent). This was followed by the Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic group, with 76 per cent, compared to 63 per cent of the White ethnic group.
- 229 It was also noted that learners with dependent children were more likely to value the positive impact of the course on their communication skills (71 per cent, compared to 69 per cent of non-carers).
- 230 Interestingly, learners who experienced multiple disadvantage were more likely than those who had no disadvantage to think that learning had improved their communication skills (72 per cent of learners with three disadvantages, compared to 68 per cent of those with two, 63 per cent of those with one, and 57 per cent of those with no disadvantages).
- 231 Distance from the labour market affected learners' perceptions of the impact of learning on their communication skills. It was noted that the further they were from the labour market the more likely they were to value the impact of learning on their communication skills (70 per cent of learners defined as far from the labour market, compared to 60 per cent of those described as close to it).
- 232 Other findings showed that vocational learners were the least likely to think the course had improved their communication skills: 63 per cent, compared to 78 per cent of basic skills learners and 73 per cent of non-vocational learners.

233 Importantly, learners who had been claiming JSA at the start of the course were the least likely to report that their communication skills had improved because of learning. Therefore, although their learning did have a positive impact on 'employability' skills, it had relatively less impact on their communication capabilities.

Team-working and problem-solving skills

234 Some 60 per cent of all learners in the survey felt their team-working skills had improved as a direct result of the course. As previously identified for other types of skills, those reporting improved team-working skills were more likely to:

- be Black Caribbean learners (66 per cent, compared to 61 per cent for Black African and Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups, 54 per cent for other ethnic and Indian groups, and 56 per cent for the White group);
- be women (62 per cent);
- have been aged 20 to 24 (70 per cent, compared to 58 per cent of those aged 25 to 34, and 54 per cent of those between 45 and 55);
- have been far from the labour market (63 per cent, compared to 55 per cent of those close to the labour market);
- have been non-vocational and basic skills learners (both 68 per cent, compared to 59 per cent of vocational learners);
- have had dependent children (64 per cent) rather than no caring responsibilities (57 per cent).

235 When learners were asked whether they felt their problem-solving skills had improved as a result of the course, it was found that 57 per cent of all learners agreed that the course had played a positive role.

Literacy skills

236 Half of all learners felt that their literacy skills had improved as a result of the course. Learners who felt their literacy skills had improved included:

- Black African learners (74 per cent) and Bangladeshi and Pakistani learners (66 per cent), compared to the Indian group (58 per cent), Black Caribbean group (57 per cent), other ethnic groups (54 per cent) and the White group (45 per cent);
- those experiencing multiple disadvantage (61 per cent of those with three disadvantages, compared to 40 per cent of those with no disadvantages);
- women rather than men (52 per cent, compared to 46 per cent);
- learners aged 20 to 24 (58 per cent), compared to those aged 45 to 55 (46 per cent);
- learners far from the labour market (54 per cent) rather than those close to the labour market (44 per cent);
- non-vocational or basic skills learners rather than vocational learners (60 per cent and 67 per cent, respectively, compared to 46 per cent);
- learners with dependent children (54 per cent, compared to 47 per cent of non-carers).

Numeracy skills and IT skills

237 A similar pattern of variation emerged when learners were asked their opinion on whether the course had improved their numeracy skills. Overall, 41 per cent of learners in the survey reported that their numeracy skills had improved as a result of the course. Learners who felt that their numeracy and IT skills had improved were more likely to:

- be Black African learners (63 per cent for numeracy and 72 per cent for IT skills);
- be women (42 per cent);
- have been aged 20 to 24 (50 per cent);
- have experienced multiple disadvantage (48 per cent of those with three disadvantages, compared to 34 per cent of those with none);
- have been far from the labour market (43 per cent, compared to 37 per cent of those close to the labour market);
- have been non-vocational or basic skills learners rather than vocational (56 per cent and 59 per cent, respectively, compared to 38 per cent);
- have been carers with dependent children (52 per cent, compared to 44 per cent of non-carers).

238 Learners were also asked what they thought the impact of learning had been on their IT skills. Some 55 per cent claimed that learning had helped their IT skills. Generally, the pattern was the same as that identified above for job-related skills (paragraph 215).

Social outcomes

Taking part in voluntary and community activities

239 Overall, 51 per cent of learners in the survey agreed that attending the course had encouraged them to take part in voluntary and community activities. The positive effect on voluntary/community engagement was particularly marked among:

- those far from the labour market (55 per cent of the learners far from the labour market, compared to 44 per cent of those defined as close);
- learners with three disadvantages (61 per cent, compared to 35 per cent of learners with no disadvantages);
- women rather than men (53 per cent, compared to 45 per cent);
- people receiving Pension Credit (73 per cent) and Carer's Allowance (60 per cent) rather than other workless benefits;
- learners who had attended basic skills courses rather than courses leading to vocational or non-vocational qualifications (59 per cent, compared to 50 per cent and 46 per cent, respectively).

240 These findings suggest that proximity to the labour market increases the chances of accessing paid employment, and therefore learners defined as close to the labour market tend to benefit more from 'hard' outcomes of learning, such as getting a job, than from more indirect outcomes ('soft'), such as engaging in volunteering and community activities.

Making new friends

241 Learners were asked whether they felt the course had helped them to make new friends. A large proportion (83 per cent) of all learners in the survey agreed that learning had improved their social relationships and helped them to make new friends.

- 242 In this case, the variation of responses across different categories of learners was quite low, which indicates that there is general agreement about learning as a means of extending social networks.
- 243 However, learners with multiple disadvantages were more likely than those without any disadvantage to think that learning had helped them to make new friends.
- 244 Moreover, women were more likely than men to think that learning had helped them to make new friends (86 per cent of women, compared to 77 per cent of men).
- 245 Learners defined as far from the labour market were more likely than those described as close to recognise the impact of learning on their social networks (86 per cent, compared to 79 per cent).
- 246 Among learners who had been claiming workless benefit when the course started, those claiming JSA were the least likely to say that the course had helped them to make new friends (77 per cent, compared to 86 per cent of those on Income Support and Carer's Allowance).
- 247 This is consistent with the above findings concerning the impact of learning on participation in voluntary and community activities. Learners who are closer to the labour market may be more likely to have been affected by direct outcomes of learning, such as getting a job, whereas those who are less likely to be able to move into work do report positive effects on their non-work-related activities and social interactions.

Personal outcomes

Personal and social skills

248 Overall, 70 per cent of learners in the survey agreed that the course had improved their personal and social skills. Those learners most likely to say that the course had improved their personal and social skills were:

- learners experiencing multiple disadvantage (74 per cent of learners with three disadvantages, compared to 60 per cent of learners with no disadvantage);
- women rather than men (73 per cent, compared to 64 per cent);
- learners defined as far from the labour market (75 per cent) rather than close (63 per cent);
- learners with dependent children (73 per cent) or with no dependent children but in receipt of Carer's Allowance (62 per cent);
- learners who, at the start of the course, had been claiming Carer's Allowance (79 per cent), Income Support (76 per cent) and Pension Credit (73 per cent), rather than Jobseeker's Allowance (62 per cent).

Making learners feel better about themselves

249 All learners in the survey were also asked whether the course had made them feel better about themselves. There was less variation in the responses to this question.

250 The impact of learning on 'feeling better about myself generally' was stronger for women than for men (88 per cent, compared to 82 per cent) and for those far from the labour market rather than close to it (88 per cent, compared to 82 per cent).

251 Once again, the impact is higher among groups of learners who are less likely to access paid employment because of multiple disadvantage or caring responsibilities. Those groups seemed more likely to value the 'soft'

and indirect outcomes of learning more than learners who had achieved more direct outcomes.

Feeling they had more opportunities as a result of learning

- 252 Overall, 84 per cent of learners agreed that the course had given them an awareness of more opportunities. When examining the different groups of learners, it was noted that disadvantage played a role in the way learners felt that the course had given them a sense of greater opportunities. In fact, 85 per cent of learners with three disadvantages said that the course had given them a sense of more opportunities, compared to 79 per cent of learners with no disadvantage.
- 253 Women were also more likely to think that the course had given them a sense of more opportunities (86 per cent, compared to 77 per cent of men).

Motivation

- 254 Learners were asked for their perception of the impact that learning had had on their level of motivation and whether this had increased because of the course. Three learners in four felt that their motivation had increased because of the course.
- 255 Significant differences were found in learners' opinions as to the impact of learning on their motivation.
- Motivation was stronger for learners experiencing disadvantage (78 per cent of learners with three disadvantages, compared to 70 per cent of learners with no disadvantages).
 - Women were more likely than men to think that the course had improved their motivation (77 per cent, compared to 69 per cent).
 - Learners far from the labour market were more likely than those described as close to think that the course had improved their motivation (77 per cent, compared to 69 per cent).

- 256 Learners with dependent children were more likely than those with no caring responsibilities to value the impact of the course on their motivation (78 per cent, compared to 71 per cent).
- 257 Finally, learners who had been claiming JSA and Incapacity Benefit at the start of the course were less likely than learners claiming other benefits to say that the course had improved their motivation (72 per cent of learners claiming JSA and 69 per cent of learners on Incapacity Benefit, compared to 78 per cent of learners on Income Support, 72 per cent of learners receiving Carer's Allowance, and 73 per cent of those receiving Pension Credit).

Confidence

- 258 Learners were also asked whether the course had had any impact on their confidence. Overall, 70 per cent of learners in the survey said they felt more confident as a result of the course. Those defined as far from the labour market were more likely to acknowledge that learning had had a positive impact on their confidence than those described as close to the labour market (83 per cent, compared to 72 per cent).
- 259 Basic skills and non-vocational learners were more likely to value the impact that the original course had had on their confidence than were vocational learners.
- 260 Learners with caring responsibilities were more likely than non-carers to say that the course had improved their confidence.
- 261 Among learners who had been claiming different workless benefits at the beginning of the course, those who had been claiming JSA were the least likely to report that the course had had a positive impact on their confidence (73 per cent, compared to 82 per cent of those on Income Support, 85 per cent of those receiving Carer's Allowance, and 79 per cent of those on Incapacity Benefit).

Doing something useful with their spare time

- 262 A further question asked in the survey was whether the course had helped learners to do something useful with their spare time. Overall, 83 per cent of learners in the survey agreed that the course had helped them do something useful with their spare time.
- 263 The pattern remains consistent, whereby learners who experience multiple disadvantage, who are far from the labour market, who have caring responsibilities, or who are women are more likely to value indirect outcomes of learning.
- 264 Some 88 per cent of learners with multiple disadvantages said that the course had helped them do something useful with their spare time, compared to 74 per cent of learners with no disadvantages. Women were also more likely than men (85 per cent, compared to 79 per cent) to agree that the course had had a positive impact on their use of spare time.
- 265 Learners defined as being far from the labour market were more likely to agree with the proposition than those described as being close (86 per cent, compared to 76 per cent).
- 266 Some 91 per cent of learners with dependent children agreed that their course had helped them do something useful with their spare time, compared to 81 per cent of learners with no caring responsibilities.
- 267 Given the nature of the question, focused as it is on 'spare time', it is not surprising that the responses are generally more positive on the part of learners who were less career focused.
- 268 Finally, the proposition found greater agreement among learners claiming Carer's Allowance (87 per cent), Income Support and Incapacity Benefit (both 86 per cent) than among those who had been claiming JSA at the start of the course (79 per cent).

Participation in Further Learning

269 This chapter starts by examining how many learners embarked on additional learning after their original course. It then looks at their reasons for doing further learning and whether they achieved a qualification, before examining whether learners felt they would continue with learning in the near future.

Doing further learning

270 All learners were asked:

Have you started any more education or training courses since the course?

271 Learners who had worked since the original course were asked the following questions:

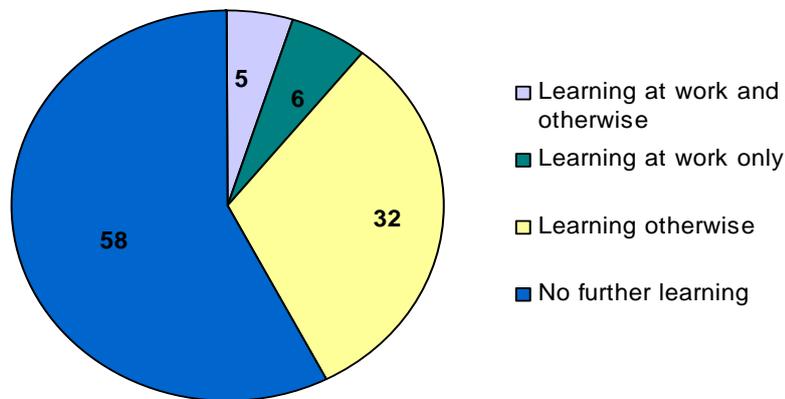
Are you doing any learning/training as part of this job?

Were you able to continue learning/training as part of this job?

272 The questions were brought together and a new variable was introduced: *Whether undertaken more learning either at work or with learning provider.* The findings are reported below.

273 Overall, 42 per cent of the learners in the survey had undertaken further learning after the end of the course – 32 per cent outside work, 6 per cent as part of their job, and 5 per cent both at work and outside work.

Figure 14: Percentage of learners undertaking further learning



Unweighted base: 10,000
Source: Inclusion, 2007

- 274 Learners with multiple disadvantages (three, four or more) were slightly less likely than those with no or one disadvantage to undertake further learning: 44 per cent of learners without any disadvantages had moved into further learning, compared to 41 per cent of those with three disadvantages.
- 275 Women were more likely than men to have undertaken further learning after the end of the course. Some 34 per cent of women went on learning outside work, compared to 27 per cent of men.
- 276 Younger learners were also more likely to have continued learning, as shown by the 45 per cent of learners aged 25 to 44 who had moved into further learning, compared to the 38 per cent of those aged 45 to 55.
- 277 Learners studying for non-vocational qualifications were more likely to have continued learning (59 per cent) than learners on basic skills courses (45 per cent) and learners studying for vocational qualifications (41 per cent).
- 278 Learners who had attended lower-level courses were less likely to have moved into further learning than those who had attended higher-level

courses (39 per cent for Level 1; 46 per cent for Level 2; 52 per cent for Level 3 and 48 per cent for Level 4 had moved into further learning).

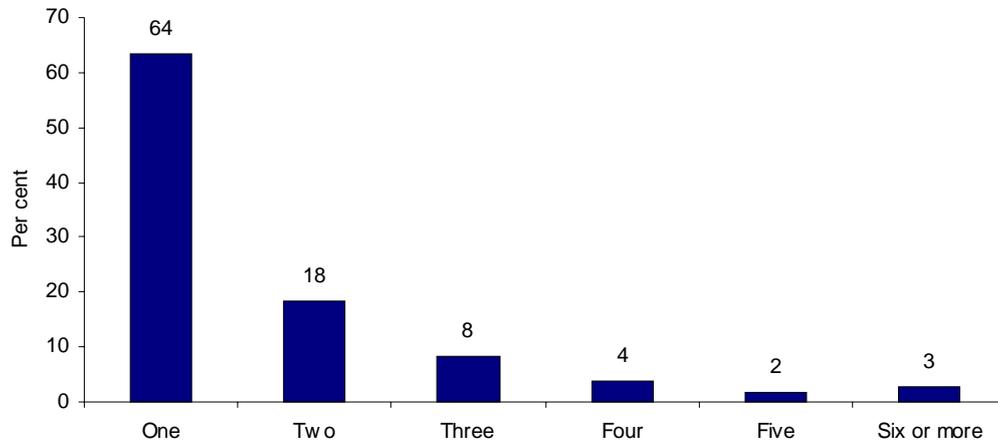
279 Among learners who had been claiming social security benefits, those on Income Support were the most likely to have moved into further learning, either in work or otherwise (43 per cent). These were followed by learners claiming JSA (41 per cent) and learners claiming Carer's Allowance and Incapacity Benefit (39 per cent each).

280 Learners were asked whether they had undertaken further learning as a result of the original course. Some 80 per cent of those who had undertaken further learning reported that the original course had had an impact on their decision to move into further learning.

Reasons for doing further learning

281 The majority of those who had participated in further learning had started one course only (64 per cent). However, 35 per cent (equivalent to 13 per cent of the total sample) had started more than one course (see Figure 15).

Figure 15: Number of courses taken after main course

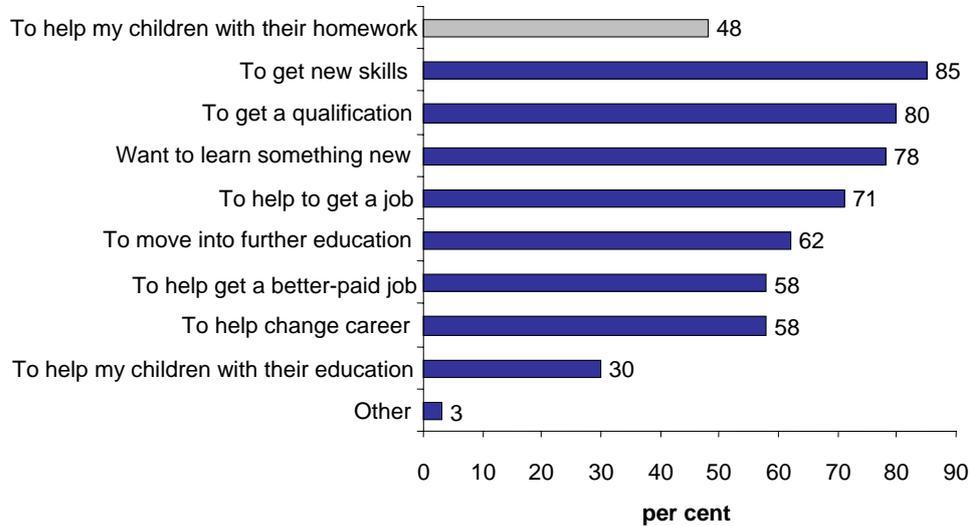


Unweighted base: 3,708
Source: Inclusion, 2007

282 Learners who had undertaken further learning after their original course were asked why they had chosen to do the additional course (they were able to give more than one answer to this question).

283 The top three reasons for learners taking further education after their course were to 'get new skills' (85 per cent), 'get a qualification' (80 per cent), and 'learn something new' (78 per cent). To 'help to get a job' came after these three reasons, with 71 per cent. This reveals that the main focus for learners undertaking further courses may be on learning itself and on generally improving their skills, and not necessarily on employability.

Figure 16: Reasons for choosing another course



Unweighted base: 3,633

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Note: 48 per cent of learners with dependent children undertook further learning to help their children with their homework.

284 There were various 'other' reasons why learners took up further education after their original course. The main 'other' reasons were (all at 1 per cent):

- a continuation of a course following their previous one;
- to gain confidence;
- a requirement of their job;
- they enjoyed it;
- it enabled them to get the job they wanted.

285 Learners who had undertaken further learning courses after the original course (37 per cent of all learners) were asked if they were currently on

that course. Some 42 per cent (of the 3,708 learners who undertook further education after the original course) were currently on that course.

- 286 Learners who had taken further learning courses after the original course and were not currently on a new course (2,137 learners) were then asked if they had completed the subsequent course.
- 287 A very high number of learners had completed the additional courses: 87 per cent of learners who had taken a further course of education (37 per cent of all learners) had completed that course.
- 288 Non-vocational learners who had undertaken further education after the original course were less likely to have completed the subsequent course: 79 per cent of non-vocational learners had completed the new course, compared to 87 per cent of vocational learners and 86 per cent of basic skills learners.

Achieving qualifications

- 289 Learners who had taken a further education course after their course were then asked:

Was the new course designed to lead to a qualification?

- 290 The majority of learners who had started a further learning course (3,708 learners) stated that the course was designed to lead to a qualification (88 per cent).
- 291 Learners with dependent children were more likely to have taken a further education course that led to a qualification: 90 per cent of learners with dependent children and 89 per cent with dependent children and in receipt of a Carer's Allowance had taken a course leading to a qualification, compared to 84 per cent of non-carers.
- 292 The learners who had taken a new further learning course were asked:

Did you pay for all or any of the course fees yourself for this later course?

293 Some 40 per cent of learners who took up a new course (3,708 learners) paid for some or all of their fees. Given the fact that none of these learners had paid for their original course, it is encouraging that four 'repeat learners' in ten were now making a contribution to subsequent course fees.

294 Learners with fewer disadvantages were more likely to pay for their subsequent courses: 47 per cent of learners with no disadvantages paid some or all of their fees, while 36 per cent of those with three disadvantages and 38 per cent of those with four or more disadvantages paid fees.

295 Learners who undertook further learning after the course were asked:

Do you feel that the course has helped you move onto the other learning you have undertaken?

296 The majority of these learners responded that the original course had helped (81 per cent).

297 All learners were asked:

Since you have finished the course have you got any more qualifications (other than from the original course)?

298 The majority of learners responded that they had not yet received additional qualifications since taking the course (79 per cent). However, bearing in mind that most learners doing further learning were taking courses designed to lead to qualifications, we can infer that they may be likely to achieve additional qualifications in the future.

Predisposition towards taking part in learning in the next two years

299 All learners were asked:

How likely or unlikely do you think it is that you will undertake further learning in the next two years?

300 The learners responded positively:

- very likely – 54 per cent;
- fairly likely – 25 per cent;
- fairly unlikely – 9 per cent;
- very unlikely – 8 per cent;
- don't know – 4 per cent.

301 Learners with multiple disadvantages were more likely to respond that they would take additional learning courses. Among learners with four or more disadvantages, 54 per cent stated that they were 'very likely' to continue learning, compared to 49 per cent of those with no disadvantages.

302 All learners were asked:

Do you plan to study for a new qualification in the next two years?

303 Again, the majority of the learners responded positively: 66 per cent of learners planned to study for a new qualification in the next two years. However, a relatively large group of learners did not intend to get further qualifications (26 per cent).

304 Learners with more disadvantages were more likely to be planning to study for a new qualification in the next two years: 73 per cent of those with three disadvantages and 66 per cent of those with four or more

disadvantages stated that they would be studying for an additional qualification, compared to 59 per cent of those with no disadvantages.

305 Learners in the younger age groups were also more likely to be planning to study for a new qualification in the next two years: 71 per cent of those in the 25 to 34 age group stated that they were planning to study for additional qualifications, compared to 45 per cent in the over-55 age group.

306 Learners with dependent children were also likely to be planning to study for new qualifications in the next two years (71 per cent).

Employment and Benefit Outcomes

307 This chapter examines the economic outcomes of learning in terms of individuals' progression off benefit and into employment. It is based on descriptive and multivariate analysis, and includes sections on:

- **Employment outcomes:** The first section of the chapter examines the job outcomes of learners after the end of the course. It reports the findings of multivariate and descriptive analyses aimed at estimating the impact of a range of factors on learners' job outcomes. There follows a descriptive analysis of how jobs are sourced. Then comes an examination of the changes in learners' occupational position (as defined by the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)), sector of activity, working hours and possible occupational shifts from employment to self-employment. Finally, the learners' economic activity at the time of the survey is analysed, including reasons for being out of work.
- **Benefit outcomes:** The second section of the chapter provides findings on the benefit outcomes of learners after the course ended. It provides findings from multivariate analysis, and looks at the type of benefits claimed after learning, at learners moving off benefits, and at those moving off benefits and into work.
- **Help and guidance received in addition to undertaking learning:** The final section examines whether learners have received any additional support. While learners may have achieved positive employment and benefit outcomes as a result of their participation in learning, they may also have received help from other sources, and these may have contributed to the outcomes.

Employment outcomes

Moving into work after learning

308 Learners were asked:

Have you had a paid job since completing the course?

I would like to get a few details about what you are doing at the moment. Can I just check, are you doing any paid work at the moment?

309 The two questions were brought together in order to examine whether learners were in work at the time of the interview, or if they had worked since learning but were not in work at the time of the interview, or, finally, if they had not worked since learning.

310 Overall, 32 per cent of the learners were working at the time of the interview and 6 per cent had worked since learning but were out of work when interviewed. Therefore, nearly four in ten (38 per cent) of all learners interviewed had moved into employment after their course.

311 Some 13 per cent of all the learners interviewed had found work within one to six months after learning, 10 per cent had moved into work immediately after the course, 6 per cent after more than a year, and 4 per cent had gained employment seven to twelve months after the course (see table below).

Table 11: Length of time for learners to gain employment

	%	Unweighted count
Immediately	10	1054
After 1–6 months	13	1252
After 7–12 months	4	424
After more than a year	6	545
Don't know	2	181
No information or not worked since	65	6544

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Multivariate analysis

- 312 The following analysis covers whether learners moved into employment after learning by considering a wide range of factors at the same time. This is known as multivariate analysis. The basic model is that the outcome – in this case finding work – may depend on a combination of a person's starting point, or characteristics, the learning input measured in different ways, and the reasons they had for undertaking the learning.
- 313 The starting point for each individual includes a range of the measures included in the descriptive analysis in this report, with the addition of one other factor that is normally included in similar analyses of the impact of Jobcentre Plus provision – the *length of time since the individual was in paid work (if ever)*. The factors included under the 'starting point' group are: the extent of multiple disadvantage; gender; age; the distance from the labour market measure; which benefits they were receiving; whether they had care responsibilities; the length of time since they last worked (or could have worked, if they have not done so) and the LSC's notional NVQ level for the learner. The region in which learning is provided is also included.
- 314 The learning input for each individual includes a range of measures. These are: whether the learning was vocational, basic skills or non-vocational, the level of learning as sourced from the LSC data, the length of time over which learning was provided, and whether a qualification was achieved. The reasons for undertaking learning are included in an abbreviated form

– whether the main reasons for undertaking learning were career related, related to wanting more learning, to helping their own children with their education, or any other reason.

- 315 The analysis has been performed using logistic regression, with the outcome factor being *moves into work*. Logistic regression estimates the effect of each variable on the odds of the outcome being achieved. Odds are understood in the same way as they are in betting. Positive coefficients lengthen the odds (so a respondent who has that factor is less likely to start work) and negative coefficients shorten the odds.
- 316 Each factor has a ‘reference category’ that is included within the ‘base model’. In this case, the reference categories are: having four or more disadvantages; last worked between one and two years ago; female; aged 20 to 24; close to the labour market; receiving Carer’s Allowance; learning in the East Midlands; undertaking basic skills learning (at Level 1) on a course lasting nine months to one year; and undertaking the learning for career-related reasons. The other categories show the effects of variation in the given category relative to the reference category, assuming all the other factors stay the same. The ‘estimates’ show what effect the factors have on the odds of starting work.
- 317 Table 12 shows how changes in those factors affect a respondent’s chances of moving into work. Statistical significance is shown by stars, with three stars indicating significant at the 0.001 level, two stars at the 0.01 level, a single star at the 0.05 level, and a dot at the 0.1 level. Where significance levels are better than 0.05, the factor level is shown in bold type.

Table 12: Job outcomes

	Estimate	Significance
(Intercept)	0.11	
Multiple disadvantages		
Reference category: Four disadvantages		
No disadvantages	-2.24	***
One disadvantage	-1.50	***
Three disadvantages	-0.49	
Two disadvantages	-0.98	***
Time since last in work (or could have been)		
Reference category: 1 year		
2 years	0.20	
3 years	0.73	***
4 years	0.90	***
5 years	1.24	***
6–10 years	1.13	***
10–20 years	1.28	***
Less than one year	-0.67	
More than 20 years ago	1.39	***
Unknown	0.64	***
Working under 16 hours	-0.43	*
Gender		
Reference category: Female		
Male	0.02	
Age		
Reference category: 20 to 24		
25 to 34	0.14	
35 to 44	0.20	*
45 to 55	0.37	***
Refused, under 20 or over 55	0.80	***
Distance from the labour market		
Reference category: Close to the labour market		
Fairly close to labour market	0.46	***
Fairly far from labour market	0.85	***
Far from labour market	1.12	***
Benefits claimed before learning		
Reference category: Carer's Allowance or Pension Credit		
Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	-0.25	
Income Support	-0.25	
Jobseeker's Allowance	-1.34	.
No personal claim for workless benefit	-0.86	
Whether has care responsibilities		
Reference category: Claims Carer's Allowance		
Has dependent children and does not claim Carer's Allowance	-0.19	
Not a carer	0.63	

Impact of Learning on Employability

<i>NVQ level of learner before learning</i>		
Reference category: Refused survey linkage to LSC data		
Level 1	0.18	
Level 2	0.49	
Level 3	0.55	
Level 4 or more	-0.28	
Unknown	0.54	
<i>Region of learning provider</i>		
Reference category: East Midlands		
East of England	-0.03	
Greater London	0.16	
North East	0.00	
North West	0.01	
South East	0.03	
South West	-0.09	
Unknown	0.29	
West Midlands	-0.02	
Yorkshire & the Humber	0.01	
<i>Learning type</i>		
Reference category: Basic skills		
Non-vocational	0.69	***
Vocational	0.19	*
<i>Course level</i>		
Reference category: Level 1		
Level 2	-0.19	.
Level 3 or above	-0.30	.
Not permitted or unknown	0.33	.
Under Level 1	0.36	.
<i>Course length</i>		
Reference category: Nine months to one year		
No information	-0.01	
One to two years	0.02	
Over two years	0.06	
Six months to nine months	-0.10	
Three months or under	-0.44	***
Three to six months	-0.06	
<i>Whether achieved a qualification</i>		
Reference category: No		
Yes	-0.16	**
<i>Reason for undertaking learning</i>		
Reference category: Career-related reasons		
Helping my children with their education	0.58	***
Other	0.21	.
Wanting more learning	0.18	**

- 318 Some of the 'starting position' factors show very strong relationships with the chances of working after learning. The direction of these effects is substantially similar to those in other analyses of the likelihood of benefit claimants finding work, such as those for the Department for Work and Pensions.
- 319 The number of multiple disadvantage factors that a person presents shows up strongly: the fewer disadvantages a learner has the more likely they are to have moved into employment. The multiple disadvantage score includes disability, ethnicity, having low qualifications before learning and having dependent children.
- 320 The time since last in work also shows up strongly. Learners who had been working part time before starting learning were significantly more likely to be working after learning than the reference category of those who had not worked for one to two years. Learners who had not worked for three or more years were increasingly less likely to start work after learning.
- 321 Distance from the labour market is very significant. It has an effect that is independent of the other factors, such as number of disadvantages. Distance from the labour market includes three factors: the number of reasons given for not being in work before learning, the motivation to move into work, and the learner's description of their work history. The further the learner was from the labour market before learning, the less likely they were to start work after learning.
- 322 Gender has no significant impact on the likelihood of moving into employment, all other factors being equal. If care responsibilities are not included in the analysis, then being female has a significantly positive impact on the chances of starting work.
- 323 Age is a significant factor, with older learners less likely to start work than those under 34.

- 324 Given all the factors so far considered, the benefits learners had been claiming and their care responsibilities did not show independent, significant effects on the chances of starting work.
- 325 The most significant effect when the level of learning is considered is that learners on courses defined by the LSC as under Level 1 were significantly less likely to move into employment than the reference category of Level 1. Higher-level courses showed no significant difference in job starts from Level 1 courses, all other factors being equal.
- 326 The length of course analysis showed that those undertaking courses of three months or less were significantly more likely to start work than the reference category of nine months to one year. Other course durations showed no significant difference in job starts from the reference.
- 327 Qualification achievement is seen to have a significant positive effect on the chances of moving into employment, all other factors being equal.
- 328 The reasons for undertaking learning showed up strongly as having an independent effect on the chances of starting work after learning. Those who were learning for non-career-related reasons were significantly less likely to start work after learning than those who had undertaken learning for career-related reasons. Within that picture, those who undertook learning in order to help their children with their education were the least likely to start work.

Descriptive analysis

- 329 In the following section a descriptive analysis was conducted to see the impact of a number of factors on whether learners had progressed into employment after the course.
- 330 Employment outcomes differed by ethnic group. The Indian ethnic group was more likely to have had paid work since learning (51 per cent), and the Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups were the least likely (30 per cent).

Table 13: Whether learner has had paid work since learning, by ethnic group

	No paid work %	Has had paid work %	Unweighted count
All learners	61	39	10000
White – British	60	40	6830
Black or Black British – Caribbean	64	37	505
Black or Black British – African	67	33	606
Asian or Asian British – Indian	49	51	325
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani or Bangladeshi	70	30	397
Other groups	65	36	1205
Refused	55	45	132

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

331 As discussed previously, it is evident that multiple disadvantage reduces the likelihood of achieving a positive job outcome. In fact, 55 per cent of learners without any disadvantages achieved a positive job outcome after learning. This contrasts with the 37 per cent of learners with one disadvantage, 27 per cent of those with two and 21 per cent of those with three disadvantages, and only 14 per cent of those with four or more disadvantages (see Table 14 below).

Table 14: Job outcome, by multiple disadvantage

		In work at interview date %	Has worked since learning but not in work at interview date %	Has not worked since learning %	Unweighted count
	All learners	32	6	61	10000
Multiple disadvantage	No disadvantages	55	11	35	1059
	One disadvantage	37	7	57	4173
	Two disadvantages	27	5	68	3581
	Three disadvantages	21	4	76	1083
	Four or more disadvantages	14	*	86	104

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

- 332 As shown in Table 15 below, men were slightly more likely than women to have been in work at the interview date (36 per cent, compared to 31 per cent).
- 333 In addition, younger learners were more likely than older learners to have been in work since the end of the course (37 per cent of those aged 20 to 24, compared to 31 per cent aged 45 to 55).

Table 15: Job outcome, by gender and age

		In work at interview date %	Has worked since learning but not in work at interview date %	Has not worked since learning %	Unweighted count
	All learners	32	6	61	10000
Gender	Male	36	9	55	2921
	Female	31	5	65	7079
Age	20 to 24	37	11	52	908
	25 to 34	32	7	61	2724
	35 to 44	32	5	63	3580
	45 to 55	31	4	64	2389
	Over 55	23	3	74	337
	Refused	41	2	57	59

Unweighted base 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

334 There were also differences in job outcomes according to the learners' proximity to the labour market, as Table 16 below demonstrates. Thus, learners defined as close to the labour market were more likely to have had a positive job outcome after learning than those fairly close or those fairly far (63 per cent, 37 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively, in work at the time of the interview, compared to 15 per cent of those who were defined as far from the labour market).

Table 16: Job outcome, by distance from the labour market

		In work at interview date %	Has worked since learning but not in work at interview date %	Has not worked since learning %	Unweighted count
	All learners	32	6	61	10000
Distance from labour market	Far from labour market	15	3	82	2627
	Fairly far from labour market	26	5	70	3030
	Fairly close to labour market	37	9	54	2491
	Close to labour market	63	8	29	1852

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

335 It was also found that the percentage of learners who had achieved a positive job outcome after learning varied according to where the course was based. Learners who had attended training centres were the most likely to achieve positive job outcomes (37 per cent), followed by those learning in schools (36 per cent).

336 In a related finding, vocational learning had a higher likelihood of a positive job outcome. Learners who had attended vocational courses had better job outcomes (33 per cent) than non-vocational and basic skills learners (28 per cent and 29 per cent, respectively).

337 In addition, studying for higher levels of qualifications increased the likelihood of getting a job outcome. Other findings about levels of qualification and length of the course and their relationship to job outcomes are reported in Table 17 below.

Table 17: Job outcomes, by location of the course, type of learning, level of qualification, length of the course, and caring responsibility

		In work at interview date %	Has worked since learning but not in work at interview date %	Has not worked since learning	Unweighted count
	All learners	32	6	61	10000
Where course based	College	32	6	62	7105
	Community centre	29	7	64	835
	Training centre	37	8	56	1060
	At home – distance learning	33	11	56	75
	Adult education centre	30	6	64	141
	School	36	5	59	249
	Library	30	3	67	98
	Learning centre	33	4	64	74
	All other venues	30	6	64	363
	Type of learning aim (derived from ILR)	Non-vocational	28	6	66
Vocational		33	6	60	8075
Basic skills		29	4	67	1144
Not available		28	5	67	216
Course level – from ILR data	Not currently available	19	4	77	34
	Not permitted	30	6	64	794
	0	29	5	66	571
	1	28	6	66	3451
	2	38	6	56	2929
	3	35	8	57	1858
	4	58	9	34	147
Guided learning hours of course	Not permitted or no information	30	6	65	1044
	30 hours and under	32	6	62	2528
	30.1 – 60 hours	34	7	58	2104
	60.1 – 135 hours	35	5	59	1984
	135.1 hours and over	30	6	64	2340

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

- 338 Interestingly, learners with no dependent children but in receipt of Carer's Allowance were the least likely to move into employment, with only 12 per cent in work at the time of the interview.
- 339 Learners claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) at the start of their course were considerably more likely to have had a positive job outcome since finishing learning (60 per cent) than learners claiming Carer's Allowance (26 per cent), Income Support (25 per cent) or Incapacity Benefit (23 per cent). This is consistent with the findings (paragraph 435) that JSA claimants were more likely to move off benefits into work.

Table 18: Job outcome, by type of benefits claimed at start of learning

	In work at interview date %	Has worked since learning but not in work at interview date %	Has not worked since learning %	Unweighted count
All learners	32	6	61	10000
Benefits claimed at start of learning				
No personal claim for workless benefit	44	5	51	1202
Jobseeker's Allowance	48	12	40	2836
Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	19	4	77	702
Income Support	22	3	75	5122
Carer's Allowance	24	2	74	134
Pension Credit	20	–	80	4

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

- 340 Regional differences were only marginal, with learners in Greater London being the least likely to have had a positive job outcome: 28 per cent of the learners in Greater London had a job when surveyed. This compares with the other regions, where the range was from 32 per cent in the North West, to 37 per cent in the South West, the region with the highest job outcomes.

Table 19: Job outcome by region

	In work at interview date %	Has worked since learning but not in work at interview date %	Has not worked since learning %	Unweighted count
All learners	32	6	61	10000
Unknown	31	6	63	823
East of England	36	8	56	492
East Midlands	35	6	60	558
Greater London	28	5	67	2403
Region of LSC provider				
North East	36	8	57	521
North West	32	7	61	1718
South East	35	7	59	662
South West	37	8	56	658
West Midlands	34	6	60	1356
Yorkshire & the Humber	35	6	59	809

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

341 Learners were asked the following questions:

I would like to get a few details about what you are doing at the moment. Can I just check, are you doing any paid work at the moment?

How many jobs have you had since you finished the course? Just this, or more than one?

342 The questions were recoded into a new variable, with four categories for learners who had had one, two, three or four paid jobs since the end of the course. Of those in work at the time of the survey, 84 per cent had had only one job, their current one, at the time of the interview; 12 per cent had had two jobs since the end of the course; 2 per cent had had three; and 1 per cent had had four jobs since the end of the course. The average (mean) number of jobs held was 1.2.

How jobs were sourced

343 Learners were asked the question:

How did you get this job?

344 They could choose from the following options, and were able to select more than one response:

- replying to a job advertisement;
- a Jobcentre;
- a careers office;
- advice or information from another organisation;
- a private employment agency or business;
- hearing from a friend or relative;
- a direct application;
- the internet;
- other (specify).

345 Overall, of the learners who were paid employees at the time of the interview, 22 per cent had got their job by replying to an advertisement; 12 per cent had found it through Jobcentre Plus; 16 per cent had heard about it from a friend or applied directly; and 10 per cent had found the job through a private employment agency. The majority had, therefore, sourced their current employment through independent job-search activity, rather than through providers such as Jobcentre Plus.

Whether learners improved their occupational position or changed the type of employment

Descriptive analysis

346 Several new variables were created through recoding, in order to assess the employment progression of learners in the survey.

347 Learners were asked:

Were/are you working as an employee or were you self-employed in that job?

Are you? 1. An employee (in paid employment) 2. Self-employed (in paid employment).

How many hours a week did you usually work, excluding meal breaks but including any paid overtime? Was it: 30 hours or more per week; 16 to 29 hours per week; Under 16 hours per week; Refused; Don't know.

348 The first question referred to the learner's last job before the course started, while the second was asked before and after learning. Overall, only a small proportion of the learners who had had at least one paid job before learning (6 per cent, which equates to 5 per cent of all the learners in the survey) had been self-employed in their last paid job. Some 4 per cent of all the learners in the survey became self-employed after the course, with men more likely than women to move to self-employment (4 per cent, compared to 1 per cent).

349 Overall, 3 per cent of the learners in the survey moved from part-time to full-time employment after learning. Therefore, there was little change in the type or pattern of employment that learners were involved in before and after learning.

350 Learners were also asked whether they had been in a permanent or temporary job before or after learning:

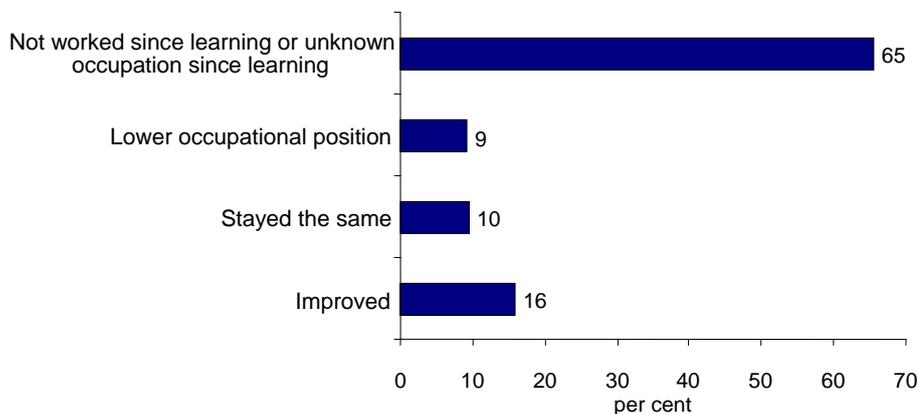
Was/is this job?: A permanent one; A seasonal, temporary or casual one; A job done under contract for a limited period; Other type of job that was not permanent; Don't know.

351 Before learning, 74 per cent of the learners who had had at least one paid job were in a permanent position (which equates to 48 per cent of all learners in the survey). After the end of the course, 3 per cent of all learners moved from temporary to permanent positions.

352 A new variable, *Whether improved occupational position*, was introduced to analyse possible changes in the occupational levels of learners before and after their course. The score included four categories: improved; stayed the same; not worked since learning or unknown occupation since learning.

353 As is shown in Figure 17 below, 16 per cent of all learners in the survey had improved their occupational position; 10 per cent remained at the same level; and 9 per cent had moved to a lower occupation after learning.

Figure 17: Changes in learners' occupational position



Unweighted base: 10,000
Source: Inclusion, 2007

354 Learners in some types of occupation were more likely to improve their occupational position after learning. Those who improved most were the process plant and machine operatives (from the SOC code), with 26 per cent of them moving into higher-level jobs. This was followed by learners

in elementary occupations (24 per cent), sales and customer service (22 per cent), personal services (10 per cent), skilled trade occupations (10 per cent), administrative and support occupations (6 per cent), and associate and professional professions (5 per cent).

Table 20: Occupational change, by occupation after learning

	Improved %	Stayed the same %	Lower occupational position %	Not worked since learning or unknown occupation %	Unweighted count
All learners	16	10	9	65	10000
Unknown	–	–	38	62	189
Managers and senior	–	10	39	51	584
Professional	*	23	24	52	288
Associate professional	5	15	25	56	606
Administrative	6	18	16	60	1154
Skilled trades	10	20	17	53	520
Personal services	10	15	7	68	922
Sales and customer services	22	12	7	59	970
Process, plant, and machine operatives	26	10	9	56	610
Elementary	24	12	–	65	1514
Not worked	21	–	–	79	2643

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

355 One possible explanation for 9 per cent of all learners in the survey moving to lower occupations after learning is that they were moving back into work after not having been in employment for a period of time, for example lone parents moving back into work after caring for children.

Multivariate analysis

- 356 Logistic regression analysis was also conducted to look at whether learners had improved their occupational classification. This assumes that the occupational classification (categories 1 to 9) is ordered according to skill demands, which is broadly the case. Those with no previous occupation who were working after learning were classed as improving their occupational position. In a logistic regression, the outcome variable has two categories, positive and negative, so for this analysis all other outcomes – including those returning to the same occupational level, those moving down the occupational scale and those not returning to work – are all classed as negative outcomes. It should also be recalled that learners will all have had an intervening period out of work and claiming benefits between their previous occupation and learning, with the exception of the small number who had been working fewer than 16 hours a week before they embarked on their learning.
- 357 Some of the analyses in this group reflect learners' responses to the occupational changes that have taken place in England over the past generation. These include a reduction in unskilled (SOC group 9) and semi-skilled (SOC group 8) occupations. Learners who had previously worked in these groups and had moved after learning into the growing occupational groups of personal services (SOC group 7) and sales occupations (SOC group 6) will be shown as having improved their occupational position.

Table 21: Whether moved up in occupational category

	Estimate	Significance
(Intercept)	-3.13	**
Multiple disadvantages		
Reference category: Four disadvantages		
No disadvantages	1.54	***
One disadvantage	1.30	**
Three disadvantages	0.33	
Two disadvantages	0.82	*
Time since last in work (or could have been)		
Reference category: 1 year		
2 years	0.19	
3 years	0.14	
4 years	0.26	
5 years	0.10	
6–10 years	0.54	**
10–20 years	0.73	***
Less than one year	-1.85	.
More than 20 years ago	1.10	***
Unknown	0.41	.
Working under 16 hours	-0.19	
Gender		
Reference category: Female		
Male	0.00	
Age		
Reference category: 20 to 24		
25 to 34	-0.36	***
35 to 44	-0.73	***
45 to 55	-1.11	***
Refused, under 20 or over 55	-1.13	***
Distance from the labour market		
Reference category: Close to the labour market		
Fairly close to labour market	-0.03	
Fairly far from labour market	-0.16	
Far from labour market	-0.51	***
Benefits claimed before learning		
Reference category: Carer's Allowance or Pension Credit		
Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	9.98	***
Income Support	10.01	***
Jobseeker's Allowance	10.95	***
No personal claim for workless benefit	10.29	***
Whether has care responsibilities		
Reference category: Claims Carer's Allowance		
Has dependent children and does not claim Carer's Allowance	-9.41	***

Impact of Learning on Employability

Not a carer	-9.90	***
<i>NVQ level of learner before learning</i>		
Reference category: Refused survey linkage to LSC data		
Level 1	0.23	
Level 2	0.06	
Level 3	0.01	
Level 4 or more	1.01	
Unknown	-0.05	
<i>Region of learning provider</i>		
Reference category: East Midlands		
East of England	-0.09	
Greater London	-0.20	
North East	-0.11	
North West	-0.04	
South East	0.08	
South West	0.02	
Unknown	0.03	
West Midlands	-0.02	
Yorkshire & the Humber	-0.08	
<i>Learning type</i>		
Reference category: Basic skills		
Non-vocational	-0.50	**
Vocational	-0.26	*
<i>Course level</i>		
Reference category: Level 1		
Level 2	0.22	.
Level 3 or above	0.29	
Not permitted or unknown	0.06	
Under Level 1	-0.25	
<i>Course length</i>		
Reference category: Nine months to one year		
No information	0.02	
One to two years	0.05	
Over two years	0.10	
Six months to nine months	0.19	
Three months or under	0.33	*
Three to six months	0.05	
<i>Whether achieved a qualification</i>		
Reference category: No		
Yes	0.14	.
<i>Reason for undertaking learning</i>		
Reference category: Career-related reasons		
Helping my children with their education	-0.50	*
Other	-0.14	
Wanting more learning	-0.24	***

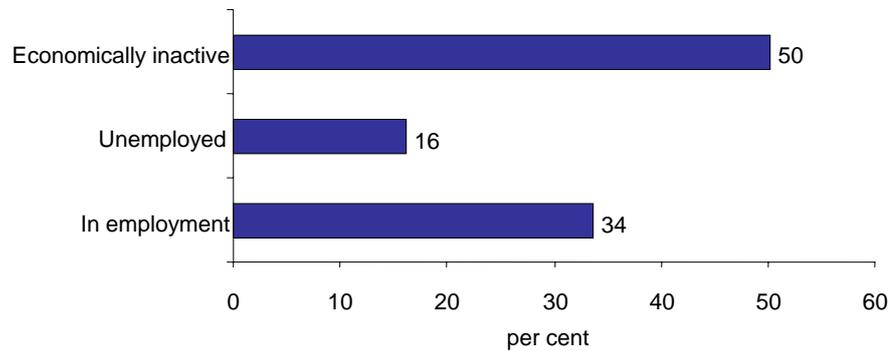
- 358 Those with the fewest disadvantages are the most likely to have improved their occupational position.
- 359 The length of time out of work analysis shows that those with longer periods out of work are significantly more likely to have improved their occupational position if they have returned to work after learning, other factors being equal. In this case, it is likely that this improvement relates to occupational changes over time in the wider economy.
- 360 Gender has no effect on this analysis, but age does, with older people being less likely (other factors being equal) to improve their occupational position.
- 361 In this analysis, distance from the labour market has some effect, but the only significant difference is that those furthest from the labour market are significantly less likely to have improved their occupational position than those closest to the labour market.
- 362 The benefits claimed before learning have a strong independent effect on whether learners improved their occupational position. All the major employment-related benefits show positive effects, with Jobseeker's Allowance claimants having the strongest positive effect, followed by Income Support and Incapacity Benefit claimants.
- 363 The NVQ level of the learner and the LSC region have no significant independent effects on this outcome.
- 364 Compared to vocational learning and, particularly, non-vocational learning, basic skills learning is shown to be strongly positive in terms of moving up the occupational scale.
- 365 The course level has no independent effect on this outcome, and nor does the factor of whether a qualification was achieved. The course length analysis shows that the shortest courses are more likely to lead to an improvement in the occupational position.

366 The reason for learning is significantly related to improvement in the occupational position. Those undertaking learning for career-related reasons were significantly more likely to have improved their occupational position than those undertaking learning for learning-related reasons or those who wanted to help their children with their education.

Economic activity at the time of the survey

367 Just over one-third (34 per cent) of all learners in the survey were in employment when surveyed (this could include both paid and unpaid work, and so it differs from the 32 per cent who had moved into paid employment since learning), 16 per cent were unemployed and 50 per cent were economically inactive (see Figure 18).

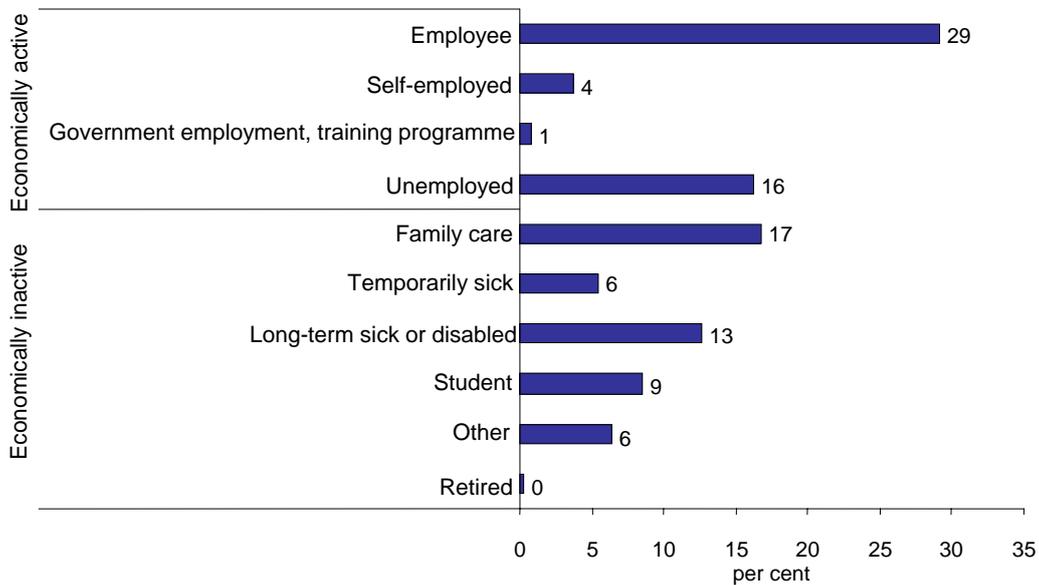
Figure 18: Employment and activity status of learners



Unweighted base: 10,000
Source: Inclusion, 2007

368 Figure 19 below shows the main activity of all learners interviewed.

Figure 19: Economically active and inactive learners, by activity



Unweighted base: 10,000
 Source: Inclusion, 2007

Reasons for not working at the time of the survey

369 Those who had three or four disadvantages were more likely to cite long- or short-term sickness or disability and family or caring responsibilities than people with no disadvantages, who were more likely to be either in work or unemployed and seeking work.

370 Women were most likely to say that family or caring responsibilities were the main reason why they were out of work, while men were most likely to give health reasons. Learners who were 45 years or older were also more likely to be out of work due to health reasons.

371 Learners who had been on Jobseeker’s Allowance before learning were more likely to be either in work or unemployed after learning. Learners on Income Support, Incapacity Benefit or Carer’s Allowance were more likely to cite health reasons and family and caring responsibilities.

372 White British learners were much more likely to cite being out of work for health reasons than other groups. Pakistani or Bangladeshi learners were much more likely to be occupied in caring for family than other groups.

Table 22: Activity at the time of the survey

		Employee %	Self- employed %	Unemployed %	Student %	Family care %	Temporarily sick %	Long-term sick or disabled %	Other %	Unweighted count
	All learners	29	4	16	9	17	6	13	6	10000
Disadvantage	One disadvantage	33	5	17	9	14	5	11	6	4173
	Two disadvantages	24	3	14	9	20	6	16	7	3581
	Three disadvantages	20	2	16	9	23	8	15	7	1083
	Four or more disadvantages	11	4	13	7	28	15	16	6	104
Gender	Male	30	6	22	6	4	7	17	7	2921
	Female	29	3	13	10	23	5	10	6	7079
Age	20 to 24	35	3	22	14	10	4	6	6	908
	25 to 34	30	3	16	11	20	4	9	7	2724
	35 to 44	28	4	15	8	19	6	12	6	3580
	45 to 55	28	4	17	4	13	8	21	6	2389
	Over 55	20	3	13	3	9	9	33	7	337
	Refused	38	5	14	5	12	2	15	10	59
Region of LSC provider	Unknown	28	3	17	8	15	5	15	8	823
	East of England	33	4	17	8	15	4	12	7	492
	East Midlands	33	3	16	7	17	4	13	7	558
	Greater London	25	4	19	10	19	6	10	7	2403
	North East	31	5	16	4	15	4	16	6	521
	North West	28	4	14	9	16	7	16	6	1718
	South East	31	5	14	11	16	6	11	7	662
	South West	33	5	13	7	16	5	14	7	658
	West Midlands	32	3	16	8	17	5	13	6	1356
	Yorkshire & the Humber	33	3	14	9	17	6	11	6	809

Impact of Learning on Employability

		Employee %	Self- employed %	Unemployed %	Student %	Family care %	Temporarily sick %	Long- term sick or disabled %	Other %	Unweighted count
Distance from labour market	Far from the labour market	14	2	12	11	30	6	19	7	2627
	Fairly far from labour market	23	3	18	9	14	7	17	8	3030
	Fairly close to labour market	34	4	21	8	13	5	8	6	2491
	Close to labour market	55	8	13	6	7	3	3	3	1852
Where course based	College	29	4	16	10	16	6	12	7	7105
	Community centre	26	3	14	5	23	6	16	7	835
	Training centre	34	4	19	3	16	7	11	6	1060
	At home – distance learning	32	1	13	11	22	0	11	7	75
	Adult education centre	28	3	11	6	26	4	14	7	141
	School	33	4	10	6	23	2	17	5	249
	Library	30	*	15	5	19	5	19	5	98
	Learning centre	33	*	14	5	14	11	17	6	74
All other venues	28	1	17	4	15	5	22	6	363	
Type of learning aim (derived from ILR)	Non-vocational	26	2	10	29	15	5	6	7	781
	Vocational	30	4	17	6	17	6	13	7	8075
	Basic skills	27	2	16	13	20	5	11	6	1144

Impact of Learning on Employability

		Employee %	Self- employed %	Unemployed %	Student %	Family care %	Temporarily sick %	Long- term sick or disabled %	Other %	Unweighted count
Course level – from ILR data	Not available	27	2	15	16	19	5	10	6	216
	Not Permitted	28	3	17	8	15	5	15	8	794
	0	25	5	15	7	13	6	22	7	571
	1	26	3	17	6	18	6	17	6	3451
	2	34	5	17	7	18	5	8	6	2929
	3	32	4	13	18	15	5	6	6	1858
	4	47	11	18	4	7	3	6	5	147
Guided learning hours of course	Not permitted or no information	27	3	17	10	16	5	14	8	1044
	30 hours and under	29	4	16	5	18	7	14	6	2528
	30.1 – 60 hours	31	3	16	5	18	6	13	6	2104
	60.1 – 135 hours	32	4	15	7	17	6	13	6	1984
	135.1 hours and over	26	4	17	17	15	4	10	7	2340
Whether caring for child(ren) or other family	Not a carer	29	3	20	6	4	8	21	8	4604
	Has dependent child(ren)	30	4	13	11	29	3	5	5	5262
	No dependent children but receives Carer's Allowance	10	2	6	7	24	7	32	11	59
	Has dependent child(ren) and receives Carer's Allowance	30	6	2	8	41	1	9	4	75

Impact of Learning on Employability

		Employee %	Self- employed %	Unemployed %	Student %	Family care %	Temporarily sick %	Long-term sick or disabled %	Other %	Unweighted count
Benefits claimed at start of learning	No personal claim for workless benefit	39	5	9	8	19	2	10	6	1202
	Jobseeker's Allowance	43	6	28	6	6	3	2	4	2836
	Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	16	3	10	5	3	17	35	9	702
	Income Support	20	2	12	11	24	6	17	8	5122
	Carer's Allowance	21	4	4	7	33	4	20	7	134
Ethnicity reported by learner (survey), simplified	White – British	30	4	14	7	16	6	16	6	6830
	Black or Black British – Caribbean	28	2	23	9	14	5	8	8	505
	Black or Black British – African	24	2	26	16	16	4	4	7	606
	Asian or Asian British – Indian	37	3	23	7	11	5	6	7	325
	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani or Bangladeshi	24	2	18	10	30	4	6	5	397
	Other groups	26	5	17	10	18	6	8	8	1205
	Refused	35	7	17	5	13	4	12	6	132

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Views of learners on the impact of learning on moving into work

373 In the survey, the following question was asked of all learners **except** those who were not working at the time of the interview and who had not had a job since the course (3,910 learners):

Which of the following outcomes do you think you have actually gained as a direct result of undertaking the course: A job

A better-paid job

A job with more responsibilities.

374 Overall, 44 per cent of the 3,910 learners who had had a paid job since completing the course or who were working when surveyed (which equates to 18 per cent of all learners) felt their job outcome was the result of undertaking the course, while 55 per cent (21 per cent of all learners) felt the course had not had an impact on their job outcome. (Less than 1 per cent answered 'don't know'.)

375 Variation among the responses was, in this case, low. However, there were some differences between learners defined as far from the labour market and those described as close. Among the learners who had been far from the labour market at the start of the course, 53 per cent felt their job outcome was a result of the course. This compared to 44 per cent of those defined as fairly close to the labour market, and 41 per cent of those defined as close.

Views of learners on the impact of learning on getting a job with more responsibilities

Descriptive analysis

376 The list of outcomes included whether learners felt they had 'got a job with more responsibilities as an outcome of learning'.

377 Some 37 per cent of those who had worked since finishing the course reported that they had gained a job with more responsibilities as a direct outcome of learning.

- 378 Experiencing multiple disadvantage was a factor that affected the way learners felt about the impact of the course on getting a job with more responsibilities. In fact, only 6 per cent of the learners with three disadvantages felt they had moved to a job with more responsibilities because of learning, compared to 20 per cent of those with no disadvantages.
- 379 Learners described as close to the market were three times more likely than those defined as far from the market to think that getting a job with more responsibilities had been a direct outcome of learning (24 per cent, compared to 8 per cent).
- 380 The variation among groups of learners claiming different workless benefits at the start of the course was substantial. Learners claiming JSA at the start of the course were more than twice as likely to think they had progressed to a job with more responsibilities as an outcome of learning (22 per cent) as those on Incapacity Benefit (7 per cent), Income Support (10 per cent) or Carer's Allowance (9 per cent).

Table 23: Whether learners felt they had gained the following outcome as a direct result of learning

	% Yes	Unweighted count
A job	44	1765
A better-paid job	34	1320
A job with more responsibilities	37	1456

Unweighted base: 3,910

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Multivariate analysis

- 381 Logistic regression analysis was undertaken of the factors that affected whether or not learners said they had a more responsible job after learning. In this analysis, all those who said they had a more responsible job were counted as positive, and all other learners, whether or not they had a job, were counted as negative.

Table 24: Whether learners had a more responsible job

	Estimate	Significance
(Intercept)	-1.53	
Multiple disadvantages		
Reference category: Four disadvantages		
No disadvantages	0.84	.
One disadvantage	0.71	.
Three disadvantages	0.32	
Two disadvantages	0.50	
Time since last in work (or could have been)		
Reference category: 1 year		
2 years	-0.50	**
3 years	-0.55	**
4 years	-0.67	**
5 years	-0.59	*
6–10 years	-0.61	**
10–20 years	-0.54	**
Less than one year	-0.07	
More than 20 years ago	-0.47	*
Unknown	-0.36	.
Working under 16 hours	0.24	
Gender		
Reference category: Female		
Male	-0.04	
Age		
Reference category: 20 to 24		
25 to 34	-0.10	
35 to 44	-0.23	*
45 to 55	-0.59	***
Refused, under 20 or over 55	-0.78	***
Distance from the labour market		
Reference category: Close to the labour market		
Fairly close to labour market	-0.09	
Fairly far from labour market	-0.25	*
Far from labour market	-0.64	***
Benefits claimed before learning		
Reference category: Carer's Allowance or Pension Credit		
Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	-1.52	.
Income Support	-1.43	
Jobseeker's Allowance	-0.65	
No personal claim for workless benefit	-0.98	
Whether has care responsibilities		
Reference category: Claims Carer's Allowance		
Has dependent children and does not claim Carer's Allowance	1.63	.
Not a carer	1.22	
NVQ level of learner before learning		

Impact of Learning on Employability

Reference category: Refused survey linkage to LSC data	
Level 1	-0.60
Level 2	-0.51
Level 3	-0.61
Level 4 or more	0.24
Unknown	-1.38
<i>Region of learning provider</i>	
Reference category: East Midlands	
East of England	0.02
Greater London	0.14
North East	0.00
North West	0.00
South East	-0.07
South West	-0.41 *
Unknown	-0.16
West Midlands	0.15
Yorkshire & the Humber	0.15
<i>Learning type</i>	
Reference category: Basic skills	
Non-vocational	-1.08 ***
Vocational	-0.15
Course level	
Reference category: Level 1	
Level 2	0.16
Level 3 or above	0.32 .
Not permitted or unknown	-0.51 .
Under Level 1	0.20
<i>Course length</i>	
Reference category: Nine months to one year	
No information	-0.11
One to two years	0.24 .
Over two years	0.38 *
Six months to nine months	0.22
Three months or under	0.27 .
Three to six months	0.00
<i>Whether achieved a qualification</i>	
Reference category: No	
Yes	0.51 ***
<i>Reason for undertaking learning</i>	
Reference category: Career-related reasons	
Helping my children with their education	-0.38 *
Other	-0.50 ***
Wanting more learning	-0.47 ***

- 382 In this analysis, multiple disadvantage had no significant effect on the outcome, but the length of time out of work did, with all those out of work for two years or more being significantly less likely to report having a more responsible job than the reference category of out of work for one year. Age followed a related pattern, with older learners being significantly less likely to report having a more responsible job after learning.
- 383 Distance from the labour market had a significant independent effect on whether or not learners felt that they had a more responsible job as a result of learning, with those further from the labour market being less likely to report this, all other factors being equal.
- 384 Benefits received, the NVQ level of the learner, and care responsibilities had no significant effect on this outcome.
- 385 Learners who had undertaken non-vocational learning were significantly less likely to report having a more responsible job than learners who had undertaken basic skills learning.
- 386 This analysis shows that learners who had undertaken longer courses of two years or more were significantly more likely to report being in a more responsible job than other learners.
- 387 Learners who had achieved a qualification were significantly more likely to report having a more responsible job.
- 388 The reason for undertaking learning was significant in whether or not learners had a more responsible job. Those who undertook learning for career-related reasons were significantly more likely to report having a more responsible job after learning than those who undertook learning for all other reasons.

Views of learners on the impact of learning on getting a better paid job

Descriptive analysis

- 389 Learners were also asked whether they thought they had got a better-paid job as a direct outcome of learning. Out of all the learners in the survey, 13 per cent thought that they had moved to a better-paid job as result of undertaking the course. Of those who had had paid work since the course, 37 per cent stated that they had moved into a better-paid job since taking the course.
- 390 The number of disadvantages experienced by learners had an impact on the way they answered this question. Some 20 per cent of those learners who had not experienced disadvantage felt they had got a better-paid job because of the course, compared to 8 per cent among learners with three disadvantages.
- 391 Some 23 per cent of those learners defined as having been close to the labour market at the start of their course also thought that getting a better-paid job had been a direct outcome of learning, compared to 7 per cent of those described as far from the market.
- 392 Learners claiming JSA at the beginning of the course were also the most likely, among the groups of learners claiming different workless benefits when the course started, to think they had moved to a better-paid job as an outcome of learning (20 per cent of learners claiming JSA, compared to 7 per cent of those on Incapacity Benefit or receiving Carer's Allowance, and 9 per cent of those on Income Support).

Multivariate analysis

- 393 Logistic regression analysis was carried out of the factors impacting on whether learners said they were better paid when they had a job after learning. All other outcomes were analysed as negative, including if a learner did not have a job after learning.
- 394 As this question is based on learners' statements, rather than on any measurement of actual earnings received, it was not possible to discover whether learners had made any implicit adjustment for inflation or the purchasing power of earnings. This is more important as an issue for those with relatively long periods since they had last worked.

Table 25: Whether learners felt they were better paid after learning

	Estimate	Significance
(Intercept)	-2.50	*
Multiple disadvantages		
Reference category: Four disadvantages		
No disadvantages	0.77	.
One disadvantage	0.63	
Three disadvantages	-0.23	
Two disadvantages	0.18	
Time since last in work (or could have been)		
Reference category: 1 year		
2 years	-0.34	.
3 years	-0.36	.
4 years	-0.42	.
5 years	-0.44	.
6–10 years	-0.47	*
10–20 years	-0.43	*
Less than one year	0.16	
More than 20 years ago	-0.45	*
Unknown	-0.24	
Working under 16 hours	0.35	.
Gender		
Reference category: Female		
Male	0.00	
Age		
Reference category: 20 to 24		
25 to 34	-0.06	
35 to 44	-0.39	***
45 to 55	-0.80	***
Refused, under 20 or over 55	-1.14	***
Distance from the labour market		
Reference category: Close to the labour market		
Fairly close to labour market	-0.15	
Fairly far from labour market	-0.27	*
Far from labour market	-0.61	***
Benefits claimed before learning		
Reference category: Carer's Allowance or Pension Credit		
Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	9.49	***
Income Support	9.41	***
Jobseeker's Allowance	10.14	***
No personal claim for workless benefit	9.81	***
Whether has care responsibilities		
Reference category: Claims Carer's Allowance		
Has dependent children and does not claim Carer's Allowance	-8.97	***
Not a carer	-9.43	***
NVQ level of learner before learning		

Impact of Learning on Employability

Reference category: Refused survey linkage to LSC data	
Level 1	0.69
Level 2	0.81
Level 3	0.76
Level 4 or more	1.73 .
Unknown	0.02
<i>Region of learning provider</i>	
Reference category: East Midlands	
East of England	-0.14
Greater London	-0.08
North East	-0.25
North West	-0.19
South East	-0.21
South West	-0.62 **
Unknown	0.65
West Midlands	-0.14
Yorkshire & the Humber	-0.12
<i>Learning type</i>	
Reference category: Basic skills	
Non-vocational	-0.93 ***
Vocational	-0.20 .
<i>Course level</i>	
Reference category: Level 1	
Level 2	0.02
Level 3 or above	0.01
Not permitted or unknown	-0.38
Under Level 1	0.04
<i>Course length</i>	
Reference category: Nine months to one year	
No information	-0.20
One to two years	0.10
Over two years	0.26
Six months to nine months	0.11
Three months or under	0.16
Three to six months	-0.14
<i>Whether achieved a qualification</i>	
Reference category: No	
Yes	0.50 ***
<i>Reason for undertaking learning</i>	
Reference category: Career-related reasons	
Helping my children with their education	-0.77 **
Other	-0.52 ***
Wanting more learning	-0.52 ***

- 395 In this analysis, multiple disadvantage did not have any significant effect on this outcome. The length of time out of work, however, did, with those out of work for the longest periods less likely to report increases in pay. Age had a related effect, with older learners less likely to report being better paid after learning.
- 396 Distance from the labour market was a significant factor, with those further from the labour market at the start of their course much less likely to report being better paid.
- 397 The benefits received before learning had a significant effect on whether people felt they were better paid, with those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance showing the largest positive effect.
- 398 Learners who had undertaken non-vocational learning (GCSEs, A- or AS-level, Access to Higher Education courses) were less likely to report positive earnings rises than were learners who had undertaken basic skills learning.
- 399 Course level and length had no significant impact on this outcome, but qualification achievement was significantly positive.
- 400 *Reason for undertaking learning* had a strong effect on this outcome, with those undertaking learning for career-related reasons being significantly more likely to report being better paid after learning than any of those who had undertaken learning for other reasons.

Benefit outcomes

- 401 This section will look at the benefit outcomes of learners after the end of the course. As well as a multivariate analysis, which looks at the impact of several factors on the benefit outcomes of learners, it contains a descriptive analysis that looks at learners still receiving benefits after learning and the type of benefits received, learners who moved off benefits, and learners who moved off benefits and into work.

Receiving workless benefits after learning

402 Learners were asked the following question:

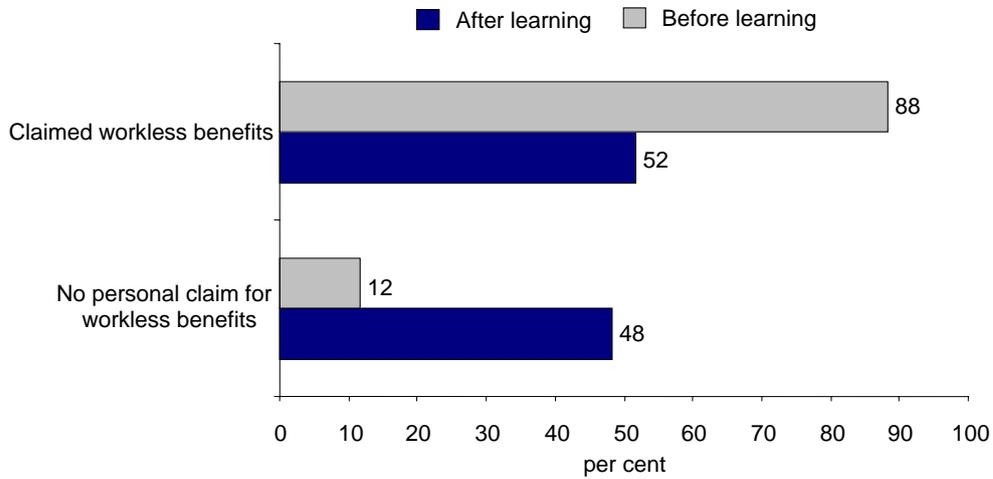
Can I just check, are you now receiving any social security benefits or tax credits at the moment?

403 They could choose from the following:

- Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Incapacity Benefit;
- Income Support;
- Housing Benefit;
- Council Tax Benefit;
- Disability Living Allowance;
- Carer's Allowance;
- Child Benefit;
- Child Tax Credit;
- don't know;
- other;
- none of these.

404 Overall, 71 per cent of learners (7,073) in the survey were receiving some social security benefits or tax credits when they were surveyed after taking part in learning. This was a multiple-response question, so the total percentages do not add up to 100 per cent.

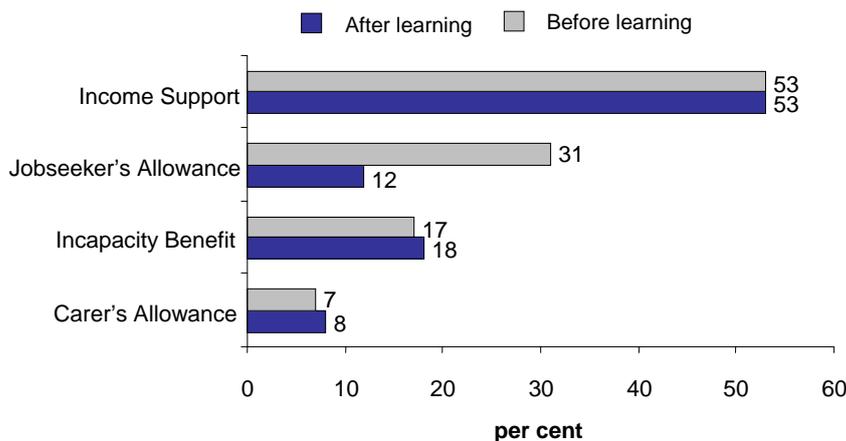
Figure 20: Learners claiming Jobcentre Plus workless benefits before and after learning



Unweighted base: 10,000
 Source: Inclusion, 2007

405 The following chart shows the breakdown of workless benefits claimed before and after learning. The proportion of learners claiming JSA dropped from 31 per cent before learning to 12 per cent after.

Figure 21: Percentages of learners claiming different workless benefits before and after learning



Unweighted base: 10,000
 Source: Inclusion, 2007
 Note: this chart is based on multiple-response questions.

406 Learners with dependent children were consistently more likely to claim Income Support after the end of the course, rather than other benefits (46 per cent of learners with dependent children claimed Income Support, compared to 5 per cent who claimed JSA, 2 per cent who claimed Incapacity Benefit, and less than 1 per cent who claimed Carer's Allowance).

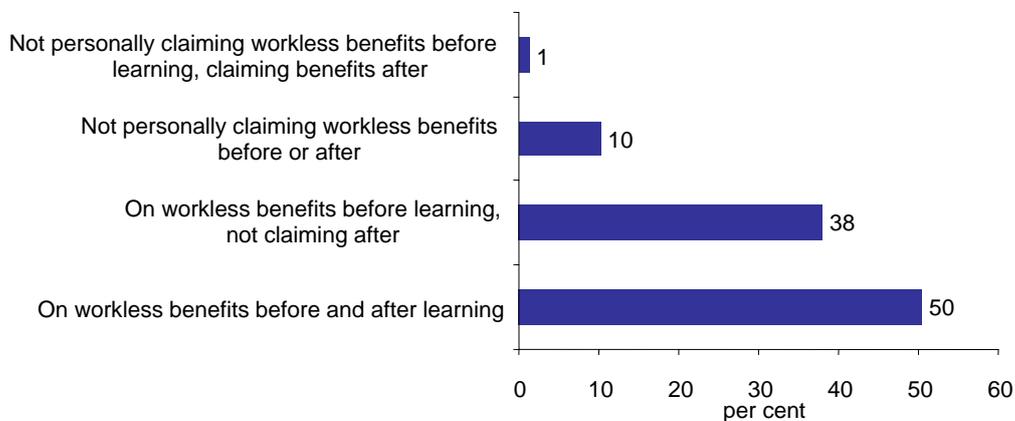
Moving off benefits after the course

407 The section above examined the situation of learners who were still on benefits after the course. This section looks at the situation of learners who had moved off benefits, by comparing benefits received before and after the course.

Descriptive analysis

408 As Figure 22 shows, 38 per cent of all learners in the survey were on workless benefits before learning, but stopped claiming after the course had ended; 10 per cent were not on benefits before or after, half of all learners in the survey kept on claiming workless benefits after the end of the course, and only 1 per cent had not been on benefits before and started claiming after the end of the course.

Figure 22: Percentages of learners moving off workless benefits after learning



Unweighted base: 10,000
Source: Inclusion, 2007

409 As Table 26 below shows, those more likely to move off workless benefits after learning were:

- those with no disadvantages (65 per cent moved off benefits) or with one disadvantage (42 per cent), compared to those with two (32 per cent), three (23 per cent) or four (24 per cent);
- men rather than women (47 per cent, compared to 34 per cent);
- younger learners aged 20 to 34 rather than those aged 35 to 44 or those aged over 45 (36 per cent, 34 per cent and 27 per cent, respectively);
- learners close (53 per cent) or fairly close to the labour market (48 per cent) rather than those fairly far (33 per cent) or far (25 per cent).

410 Other categories who were more likely to move off workless benefits after learning included:

- learners who had studied at home or through distance learning (43 per cent) and in training centres (41 per cent) rather than those who attended colleges (39 per cent), learning centres (36 per cent), schools (33 per cent), adult education centres (33 per cent) and libraries (32 per cent);
- those who had studied for non-vocational qualifications (42 per cent) rather than those attending vocational courses (38 per cent) or basic skills (34 per cent);
- learners studying at Level 4 (53 per cent) and Level 3 (43 per cent) rather than Level 2 (41 per cent) or Level 1 (33 per cent).

411 Learners with no care responsibilities were more likely to move off benefits after learning: 43 per cent of them moved off benefits after learning, compared to 33 per cent of learners with dependent children and 29 per cent of learners with caring responsibilities but no dependent children.

412 The most positive outcomes in terms of moving off benefits after learning were, therefore, found for:

- less disadvantaged learners;
- those closer to the labour market at the start of their course;
- male learners and younger learners;
- those studying for higher-level and non-vocational qualifications; and
- learners with no caring responsibilities.

Table 26: Percentage of learners moving off workless benefits after learning

		On workless benefits before and after learning %	On workless benefits before learning, not claiming after %	Not personally claiming workless benefits before or after %	Not personally claiming workless benefits before learning, claiming benefits after %	Unweighted count
	All learners	50	38	10	1	10000
Number of disadvantages	No disadvantages	26	65	9	0	1059
	One disadvantage	45	42	11	1	4173
	Two disadvantages	57	32	10	2	3581
	Three disadvantages	64	23	11	2	1083
	Four or more disadvantages	72	24	4	1	104
Gender	Male	45	47	7	1	2921
	Female	53	34	12	1	7079
Age	20 to 24	36	54	9	1	908
	25 to 34	49	39	10	1	2724
	35 to 44	54	34	11	1	3580
	45 to 55	55	34	10	2	2389
	Over 55	51	33	14	2	337
	Refused	41	34	22	2	59
Distance from the labour market	Far from labour market	65	25	9	2	2627
	Fairly far from labour market	57	33	9	1	3030
	Fairly close to labour market	43	48	8	1	2491
	Close to labour market	28	53	18	1	1852
Whether caring for child(ren) or other family	Not a carer	47	43	8	1	4604
	Has dependent child(ren)	53	33	12	2	5262
	No dependent children but receives Carer's Allowance	71	29	0	–	59
	Has dependent child(ren) and receives Carer's Allowance	59	41	–	–	75

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

413 Importantly, learners who had been claiming JSA at the beginning of the course were more likely to move off benefits after the end of the course than were learners who had been claiming any other workless benefits, as is shown in Table 27 below.

Table 27: Percentages of learners moving off benefits after learning, by type of workless benefit claimed before the start of the course

	On workless benefits before and after learning %	On workless benefits before learning, not claiming after %	Not personally claiming workless benefits before or after %	Not personally claiming workless benefits before learning, claiming benefits after %	Unweighted count
All learners	50	38	10	1	10000
Jobseeker's Allowance	32	68	*	*	2836
Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	67	33	*	*	702
Income Support	71	29	*	*	5122
Carer's Allowance	65	35	*	*	134

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Multivariate analysis

414 A multivariate analysis – similar to the one applied to the job outcome – was undertaken in relation to moves off benefit. The outcome measured here is whether a learner was claiming a Jobcentre Plus workless benefit before learning, and was not doing so afterwards. In this case, a positive result (not claiming benefit afterwards) is associated with a higher figure in the 'estimate' column.

Table 28: Moves off benefit

	Estimate	Significance
(Intercept)	0.94	
Multiple disadvantages		
Reference category: Four disadvantages		
No disadvantages	1.49	***
One disadvantage	0.90	***
Three disadvantages	0.00	
Two disadvantages	0.43	.
Time since last in work (or could have been)		
Reference category: 1 year		
2 years	-0.20	
3 years	-0.62	***
4 years	-0.66	***
5 years	-0.73	***
6–10 years	-0.74	***
10–20 years	-0.80	***
Less than one year	-0.89	
More than 20 years ago	-0.60	***
Unknown	-0.61	***
Working under 16 hours	-0.72	***
Gender		
Reference category: Female		
Male	-0.11	.
Age		
Reference category: 20 to 24		
25 to 34	-0.31	**
35 to 44	-0.56	***
45 to 55	-0.71	***
Refused, under 20 or over 55	-0.66	***
Distance from the labour market		
Reference category: Close to the labour market		
Fairly close to labour market	-0.43	***
Fairly far from labour market	-0.72	***
Far from labour market	-0.92	***
Benefits claimed before learning		
Reference category: Carer's Allowance or Pension Credit		
Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	17.71	***
Income Support	17.35	***
Jobseeker's Allowance	18.69	***
No personal claim for workless benefit	-0.31	
Whether has care responsibilities		
Reference category: Claims Carer's Allowance		
Has dependent children and does not claim Carer's Allowance	-17.51	***
Not a carer	-18.03	***
NVQ level of learner before learning		

Impact of Learning on Employability

Reference category: Refused survey linkage to LSC data	
Level 1	-0.06
Level 2	-0.40
Level 3	-0.28
Level 4 or more	-0.04
Unknown	-0.64
<i>Region of learning provider</i>	
Reference category: East Midlands	
East of England	0.28 .
Greater London	0.14
North East	-0.01
North West	0.08
South East	0.04
South West	0.30 *
Unknown	-0.04
West Midlands	0.14
Yorkshire & the Humber	0.06
<i>Learning type</i>	
Reference category: Basic skills	
Non-vocational	-0.21 .
Vocational	-0.20 *
<i>Course level</i>	
Reference category: Level 1	
Level 2	0.12
Level 3 or above	0.31 *
Not permitted or unknown	0.01
Under Level 1	0.15
<i>Course length</i>	
Reference category: Nine months to one year	
No information	-0.10
One to two years	-0.09
Over two years	-0.08
Six months to nine months	-0.06
Three months or under	0.00
Three to six months	-0.23 .
<i>Whether achieved a qualification</i>	
Reference category: No	
Yes	0.08
<i>Reason for undertaking learning</i>	
Reference category: Career-related reasons	
Helping my children with their education	-0.36 *
Other	-0.28 *
Wanting more learning	-0.10 .

415 Having fewer or no multiple disadvantages made learners significantly more likely to move off benefit.

- 416 The length of time out of work was significantly related to the chances of moving off benefit, with those with longer periods since they last worked being less likely to move off benefit.
- 417 Gender was not significantly related to moves off benefit, other factors being equal, but age was, with all groups other than the 20 to 24 reference category being less likely to move off benefit.
- 418 Distance from the labour market was significant, with all categories other than the reference category of those closest to the labour market being significantly less likely to move off benefit. The estimate becomes increasingly negative as the distance from the labour market increases.
- 419 Learners undertaking vocational learning were significantly less likely to move off benefits than those undertaking basic skills learning, all other factors being equal.
- 420 The original NVQ level of the learner shows an effect, with those qualified to NVQ Level 3 and above being more likely to move off benefit.
- 421 Qualification achievement did not have an independent significant effect on the chances of moving off benefit.
- 422 Learners who had started their course with the aim of helping their children with their education were significantly less likely to move off benefit than those with career-related aims.

Moving off benefits and into work

- 423 The two previous sections reported the benefits that learners were receiving after the end of the course and examined learners who had moved off benefits. This section will examine learners who had moved off benefits **and found a job** after the course had ended.

Descriptive analysis

- 424 As was mentioned above, learners were asked about the social security benefits they may have been receiving:

Can you tell me which of the following benefit(s) or tax credits you are receiving at the present time?

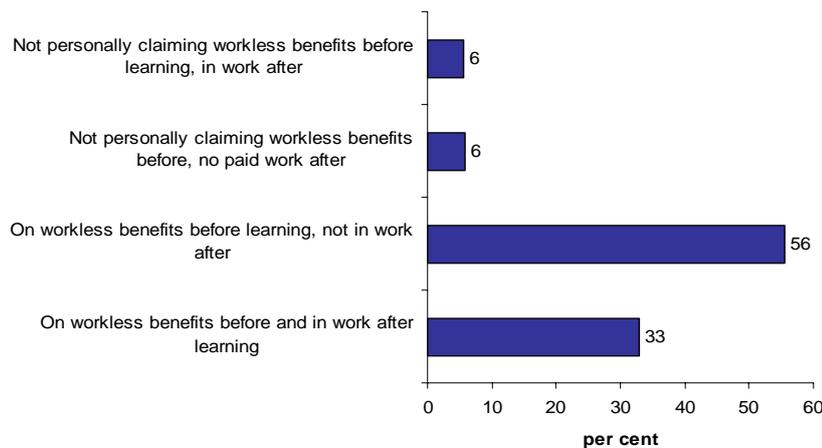
425 They were also asked the following questions regarding their employment situation after the course:

I would like to get a few details about what you are doing at the moment. Can I just check, are you doing any paid work at the moment?

Have you had a paid job since completing the course?

426 These questions were brought together into a new variable to assess the impact of learning on moving off benefits **and into employment** after the end of the course, as reported below.

Figure 23: Percentage of learners moving off benefits into work



Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

427 As is shown in Figure 23 above, 33 per cent of all learners in the survey moved from benefits into work after the end of the course, 56 per cent were in workless benefits before learning but not in work after; 6 per cent were not claiming benefits before learning and were not in work after; and finally 6 per cent were not claiming benefits before but had got a job after learning.

428 As can be seen from Figure 24 below, the highest rates for moving into work from benefits were among the Asian or Asian British–Indian group

(38 per cent), followed by the White British group (34 per cent), and the Black Caribbean group (33 per cent). Those from the Black African (28 per cent) and Pakistani or Bangladeshi group (25 per cent) were less likely to have moved off benefits and into work.

- 429 Having one disadvantage or more had a negative impact on moving off benefits into work. In fact, learners with no disadvantages were considerably more likely (59 per cent) than those with one (37 per cent), two (27 per cent), three (19 per cent) or four (14 per cent) disadvantages to have moved off benefit and to have got a job after the end of the course.
- 430 Another significant difference was between men and women, with 40 per cent of men moving off benefits and into work after learning, compared to 29 per cent of women.
- 431 Furthermore, there were gender differences within the ethnic groups in terms of those moving off benefits and into work. For both men and women, the Indian group performed the best (47 per cent for men and 32 per cent for women, compared to the 40 per cent and 29 per cent averages). However, for men, the groups that performed least well were the Black Caribbean and White British groups (39 per cent and 40 per cent, respectively), whereas for women it was the Pakistani or Bangladeshi group (18 per cent).
- 432 Learners defined as close to the labour market were consistently more likely to move off benefit into work (55 per cent) than learners defined as fairly far (26 per cent) or far from the labour market (16 per cent).
- 433 Importantly, learners in Greater London were the least likely to move off benefits into work after learning. In fact, only 28 per cent of learners in Greater London moved off benefits and into work, compared to other regions, where percentages of learners who moved off benefits and into work ranged from 33 to 38 per cent, as shown in Table 29 below.

Table 29: Percentages of learners moving off workless benefits by region

		On workless benefits before and in work after learning %	On workless benefits before learning, not in work after %	Not personally claiming workless benefits before, no paid work after %	Not personally claiming workless benefits before learning, in work after %	Unweighted count
	All learners	33	56	6	6	10000
Region of LSC provider	Unknown	30	56	7	7	823
	East of England	36	50	6	8	492
	East Midlands	33	54	6	8	558
	Greater London	28	61	6	5	2403
	North East	37	51	6	7	521
	North West	34	56	6	5	1718
	South East	35	53	6	6	662
	South West	38	50	6	7	658
	West Midlands	36	54	5	5	1356
	Yorkshire & the Humber	35	54	5	6	809

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

- 434 Learners who had attended vocational courses (34 per cent) were more likely to have moved off benefits and into employment than those attending basic skills (29 per cent) or non-vocational courses (28 per cent).
- 435 A significant difference was found between groups of learners who had been claiming different workless benefits before learning. Importantly, learners who had been claiming JSA at the start of the course were consistently more likely to have moved off benefits and into work after learning (60 per cent, compared to 23 per cent of learners on Incapacity Benefit, 25 per cent of those on Income Support and 26 per cent of those receiving Carer's Allowance).

Table 30: Moving off workless benefits, by benefit claimed at start of learning

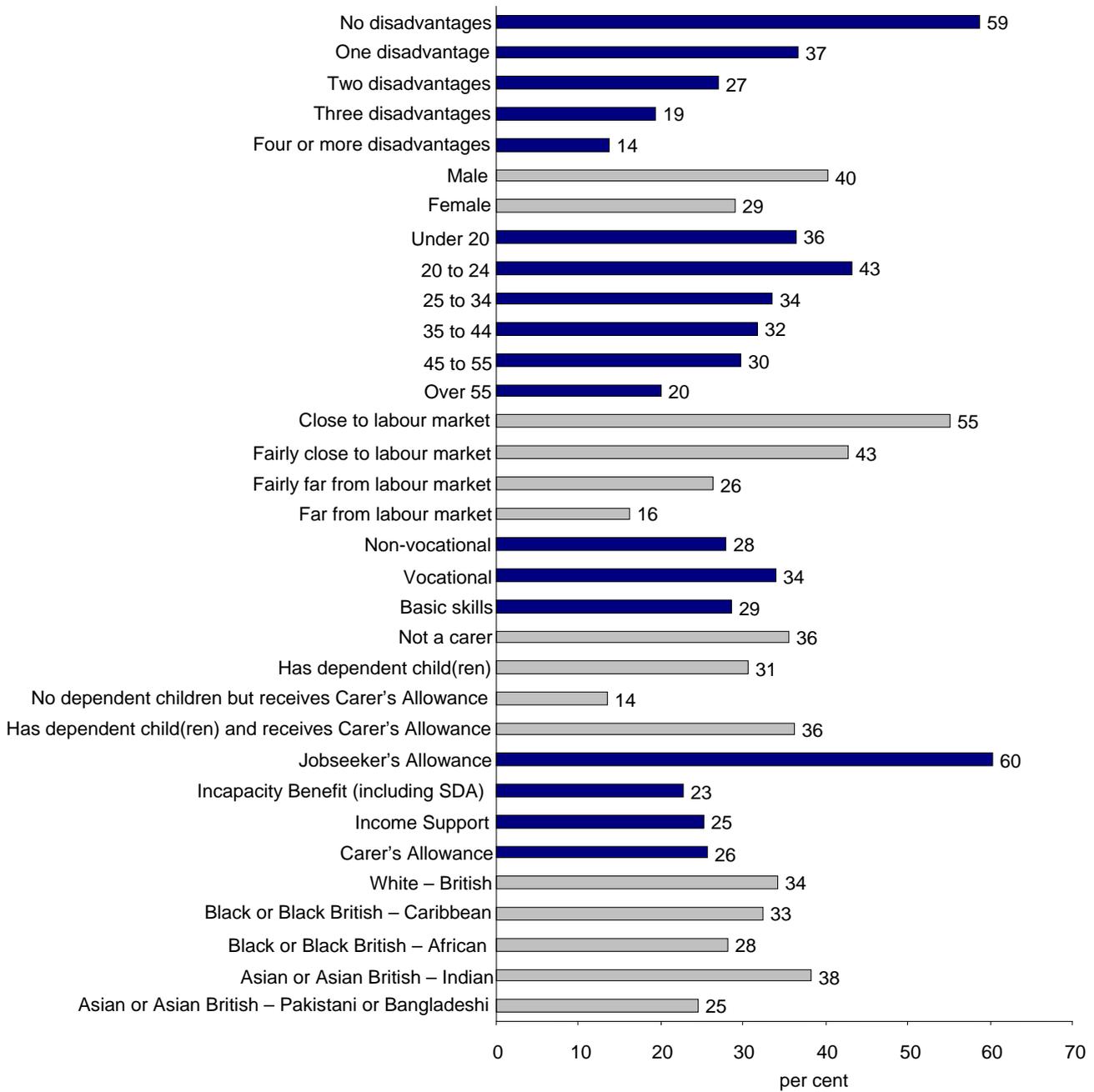
		Whether learner has had paid work since learning		
		No paid work %	Has had paid work %	Unweighted count
All learners		61	39	10000
Benefits claimed at start of learning	No personal claim for workless benefit	51	49	1202
	Jobseeker's Allowance	40	60	2836
	Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	77	23	702
	Income Support	75	25	5122
	Carer's Allowance	75	25	134
	Pension Credit	75	25	4

Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

436 Figure 24 below summarises the survey's findings about learners moving off benefits and into work by ethnicity, multiple disadvantage, gender, age, distance from the labour market and caring responsibilities.

Figure 24: Moving off benefits into work



Unweighted base: 10,000

Source: *Inclusion*, 2007

Multivariate analysis

- 437 We analysed the factors impacting on whether or not a learner had moved from claiming a workless benefit before learning to being in a job after learning. This analysis was undertaken using the same logistic regression method discussed earlier, in which all factors are taken into account in the same analysis, so that the result shows the effect of each factor, independent of all other factors.

Table 31: Moves to work from benefits

	Estimate	Significance
(Intercept)	-1.27	
Multiple disadvantages		
Reference category: Four disadvantages		
No disadvantages	2.16	***
One disadvantage	1.45	***
Three disadvantages	0.41	
Two disadvantages	0.95	**
Time since last in work (or could have been)		
Reference category: 1 year		
2 years	-0.11	
3 years	-0.62	***
4 years	-0.90	***
5 years	-1.15	***
6–10 years	-1.04	***
10–20 years	-1.20	***
Less than one year	0.80	
More than 20 years ago	-1.32	***
Unknown	-0.61	***
Working under 16 hours	0.31	.
Gender		
Reference category: Female		
Male	-0.06	
Age		
Reference category: 20 to 24		
25 to 34	-0.16	
35 to 44	-0.20	*
45 to 55	-0.40	***
Refused, under 20 or over 55	-0.86	***
Distance from the labour market		
Reference category: Close to the labour market		
Fairly close to labour market	-0.39	***
Fairly far from labour market	-0.80	***
Far from labour market	-1.09	***
Benefits claimed before learning		
Reference category: Carer's Allowance or Pension Credit		
Incapacity Benefit (including SDA)	11.17	***
Income Support	11.14	***
Jobseeker's Allowance	12.27	***
No personal claim for workless benefit	3.77	**
Whether has care responsibilities		
Reference category: Claims Carer's Allowance		
Has dependent children and does not claim Carer's Allowance	-10.71	***
Not a carer	-11.56	***
NVQ level of learner before learning		

Impact of Learning on Employability

Reference category: Refused survey linkage to LSC data	
Level 1	0.97
Level 2	0.65
Level 3	0.56
Level 4 or more	1.36 .
Unknown	0.51
<i>Region of learning provider</i>	
Reference category: East Midlands	
East of England	0.07
Greater London	-0.12
North East	0.00
North West	0.07
South East	0.02
South West	0.17
Unknown	0.91
West Midlands	0.05
Yorkshire & the Humber	0.02
<i>Learning type</i>	
Reference category: Basic skills	
Non-vocational	-0.75 ***
Vocational	-0.19 *
<i>Course level</i>	
Reference category: Level 1	
Level 2	0.20 .
Level 3 or above	0.35 *
Not permitted or unknown	-0.41 *
Under Level 1	-0.20
<i>Course length</i>	
Reference category: Nine months to one year	
No information	0.05
One to two years	-0.02
Over two years	-0.13
Six months to nine months	0.03
Three months or under	0.42 ***
Three to six months	0.00
<i>Whether achieved a qualification</i>	
Reference category: No	
Yes	0.15 *
<i>Reason for undertaking learning</i>	
Reference category: Career-related reasons	
Helping my children with their education	-0.56 **
Other	-0.25 *
Wanting more learning	-0.19 **

438 This analysis differs from the analysis of moves off benefits, in that it isolates moves to work, and therefore other moves off benefits are not

considered positive. Other moves off benefits include those lone parents who become personally ineligible for Income Support because they are in a new relationship (whether or not their new partner is working).

- 439 In this analysis, a positive move (that is, the learner does move from benefits to work) is related to a positive 'estimate', and the larger the effect of the factor, the larger the estimate. As was outlined in paragraphs 312 to 314, covering moving into employment, we discuss groups of factors that have an effect on moving from benefits to work, although the table provides the full detail. Those factors reflecting the learner's 'starting position' are strongly related to whether a positive outcome was achieved, although they do vary, as is discussed in detail in paragraphs 440 to 451 below. The factors measuring the 'learning input' have, in general, smaller effects, and the reasons for undertaking learning have significant independent effects on the chances of achievement of this outcome. Further detail is given below.
- 440 Learners with fewer multiple disadvantages are much more likely to move from benefits into work than are those with three or four disadvantages.
- 441 The length of time since a learner last worked is also strongly related to moves from benefits to work. Those who have relatively recent work experience are much more likely to move from benefits to work, all other factors being equal. The effect of this factor decreases as the length of time since the learner last worked increases.
- 442 Gender makes no significant difference when all other factors are considered, but age does, with older learners being significantly less likely to move from benefits to work than younger learners.
- 443 Distance from the labour market is strongly related to moves from benefit to work, all other factors being equal, with those closer to the labour market at the start of their course being more likely to move from benefits to work, and those further from the labour market less likely to secure this outcome.

- 444 The benefit that learners were claiming before learning makes a significant difference to whether they move from benefits to work. Those claiming the 'main' Jobcentre Plus benefits (Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support and Incapacity Benefit) are much more likely to move from benefits to work than are claimants of Carer's Allowance and Pension Credit.
- 445 Having dependent children (without being on Carer's Allowance) is shown as having a strongly negative effect on moving off benefits. This is probably because in the regression model there are a few variables controlling for closely related factors, and this is causing the effect to be stronger on other elements.
- 446 The NVQ level before learning and the LSC region of the provider are shown as having no significant effect, all other factors being equal.
- 447 Non-vocational learners are less likely to move from benefits into work than are basic skills learners. Vocational learning, which has the largest number of learners, has less of an effect than is felt among basic skills learners, all other factors being equal.
- 448 Given the previous analysis, the course level analysis shows that those who had undertaken learning at Level 3 and above were more likely to move from benefits into work.
- 449 Course length appears to be inversely related to the chances of moving from benefits to work, with those studying on the shortest courses (three months or under) significantly more likely to move from benefits to work than those attending longer courses.
- 450 Qualification achievement does have an independent positive effect on moves from benefits to work, and this is significant; but the effect is small compared to most of the significant effects in the 'starting position' group of factors.
- 451 The reason for undertaking learning is strongly related to moves from benefits to work. Those undertaking learning for personal learning-related reasons and those learning to help their children with their education were

significantly less likely to move off benefits into employment than those approaching learning with career-related reasons in mind.

Help and guidance received in addition to undertaking learning

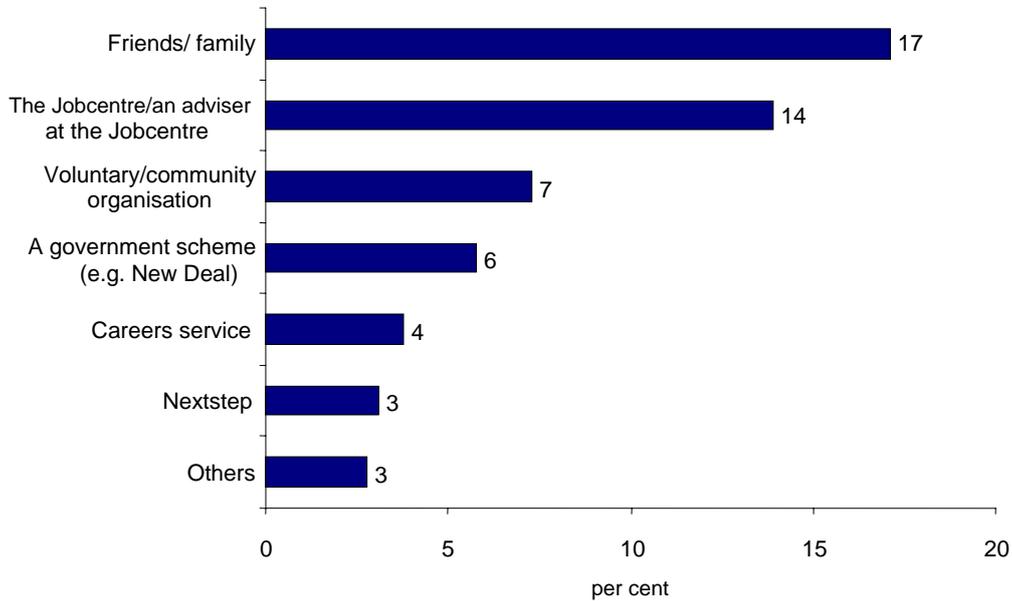
452 While learners may have achieved positive employment and benefit outcomes as a result of participating in learning, they may also have received help from other sources that contributed to these outcomes. All learners were therefore asked:

Have you had any other help or support to improve your skills/qualifications or to move into work since the course?

453 Learners used a variety of sources for additional help or support to improve their skills and employment situation (this was a multiple-response question). The top three sources were:

- friends and family (22 per cent);
- Jobcentre Plus (18 per cent); and
- community and voluntary organisations (9 per cent).

Figure 25: Other help or support to improve skills/qualifications or to move into work since the course



Unweighted base: 3,835
Source: *Inclusion*, 2007

- 454 In the 'others' category, only a few sources emerged as an important source of support: colleges (1 per cent) and the learner's current employer (0.5 per cent).
- 455 Over one quarter (29 per cent) of those who had been claiming JSA at the start of their course had also received help from advisers at a Jobcentre Plus. Some 16 per cent had accessed a government scheme such as New Deal.

Concluding Remarks: Measuring the Impact of Learning

- 456 This survey is the first major survey of further education (FE) learners who, at the time they embarked on their learning, were benefit claimants (and therefore exempt from payment of fees). It is a large survey, involving 10,000 learners, and this fact makes many of the analyses presented here statistically significant. The LSC may conduct subsequent waves of research to look at the impact of learning on groups of individuals with different characteristics.
- 457 As with all research, there are certain limiting factors that affect the way these findings can be used to make the case that learning has a positive impact on employability.
- 458 A highly significant body of research that has underpinned much UK government policy on interventions in the case of welfare benefit recipients is the set of evaluations conducted in the USA as part of the National Evaluation of Welfare to Work Strategies (NEWWS), summarised in Gregg, Harkness and Macmillan (2006).
- 459 This US research has been very influential in the UK, in part due to its methodology. The US authorities required evaluations to be undertaken using a randomised controlled trial methodology, in which welfare recipients were assigned randomly to work-first programmes, to learning-based programmes, or to no programme. The outcomes of all recipients were researched. The strength of the random assignment method is that researchers and policy makers can be confident that the difference in the outcomes between the three groups is due to the intervention delivered, rather than simply to the passage of time or other external factors. This is known as difference-in-difference analysis.
- 460 The same team that conducted much of the US work is currently doing work in the UK for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), conducting an evaluation of the Employment Retention and Advancement

Demonstration initiative, using the same random assignment and difference-in-difference methods.

- 461 While random assignment is commonly regarded as the ‘gold standard’ method for determining whether or not an initiative, a learning programme or, indeed, medical treatment is effective, UK social researchers tend to regard it as having some ethical issues. In this case, with potential learners seeking to enrol at a college, one would have to randomly refuse entry to the course and persuade both those who had started learning and those who were refused access to co-operate with a lengthy process of research (to see if they achieved outcomes one or two years later). In the US, where individual tax records are public documents, researchers can access records showing people’s income levels and whether they were paying income taxes (and hence were employed) and have no need to secure informed consent. This is not the case in the UK.
- 462 The main alternative method (which has also been used in the US) is to provide a matched comparison group. This involves recruiting for research purposes a sample from official records that matches as closely as possible those who take up the initiative to be evaluated. It is then possible to assess the impact of an intervention (in this case learning) by comparing the outcomes for those who did not engage in learning and those who did.
- 463 In the context of learning, DWP has published a study using these methods (Speckesser and Bewley, 2006).
- 464 The research team considers that the survey results set out in the current report represent a positive first attempt to quantify the benefits of FE learning for welfare benefit recipients in England. The findings of this survey on the impact of learning on employability show that there are statistically significant positive effects from learning for welfare benefit recipients. However, there is no control group, neither randomised nor matched, and therefore the research cannot show, at standard significance levels, that the learning was more effective in producing positive effects than if the learner had not taken part in learning.

465 We recommend that, in future research, the opportunity should be taken to liaise with DWP to conduct a study with matched control groups, including a comparison of voluntary LSC-led learning and whichever DWP provision is currently on offer at the time. It would then be possible to show whether voluntary activity via LSC-funded learning, or voluntary or mandatory DWP-led activity, was more effective. This would add to the evidence base for targeting government funding and activity towards learning or human capital-based approaches to securing advancement for individuals claiming welfare benefits.

Annex A: Description of the Sample

1 In this annex, the key characteristics of the survey of learners are summarised in tables below, distinguishing between:

- personal characteristics:
 - gender;
 - age;
 - disabilities/long-term health problems;
 - ethnic group, ethnic group by region and by age;
- region of LSC provider;
- caring for child(ren) or other family;
- living with dependent children under 16 years;
- living with dependent children 16–18 in full-time education;
- benefits claimed at start of learning;
- distance from labour market;
- level of disadvantage;
- where course based;
- type of learning aim (derived from ILR);
- course level (from ILR data);
- guided learning hours of the course.

Table A1: Gender

	%
Male	34
Female	66

Unweighted N = 10,000
Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A2: Age

	%
Under 20	*
20 to 24	12
25 to 34	32
35 to 44	33
45 to 55	20
Over 55	3
Refused	1

Unweighted N = 10,000
Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A3: Disabilities/long-term health problems

	%
Yes	36
No	63
Don't know	1

Unweighted N = 10,000
Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A4: Ethnic group

	%
White – British	64
White – Irish	1
White – Other	4
Black or Black British – Caribbean	6
Black or Black British – African	7
Black or Black British – Other	1
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
Other groups	4
Mixed	2
Refused	1

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A5: Region of LSC provider

	%
Unknown	9
East of England	5
East Midlands	5
Greater London	26
North East	5
North West	16
South East	6
South West	6
West Midlands	14
Yorkshire & the Humber	8

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A6: Caring for child(ren) or other family

	%
Not a carer	49
Has dependent child(ren)	50
No dependent children but receives Carer's Allowance	1
Has dependent child(ren) and receives Carer's Allowance	1

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A7: Living with dependent children under 16

	%
Yes	48
No	52
Don't know	1

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A8: Living with dependent children 16–18 in full-time education

	%
Yes	11
No	88
Don't know	1

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A9: Benefits claimed at start of learning

	%
No personal claim for workless benefit	12
Jobseeker's Allowance	31
Incapacity Benefit (including Severe Disablement Allowance – SDA)	7
Income Support	50
Carer's Allowance	1
Pension Credit	*

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A10: Distance from the labour market

	%
Far from labour market	26
Fairly far from labour market	31
Fairly close to labour market	25
Close to labour market	18

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A11: Level of disadvantage

	%
No disadvantage	10
One disadvantage	39
Two disadvantages	37
Three disadvantages	12
Four or more disadvantages	1

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A12: Where course based

	%
College	70
Community centre	9
Training centre	11
Home - distance learning	1
Adult education centre	1
School	2
Library	1
Learning centre	1
Other venues	4

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A13: Type of learning aim (derived from individualised learner record)

	%
Non-vocational	7
Vocational	82
Basic skills	12

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A14: Course level (from individualised learner record data)

	%
Not available	2
Not permitted	8
Level 0	8
Level 1	39
Level 2	26
Level 3	15
Level 4	1

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Table A15: Guided learning hours of course

	%
Not permitted or no information	11
30 hours and under	27
30.1 – 60 hours	21
60.1 – 135 hours	19
135.1 hours and over	23

Unweighted N = 10,000

Source: Inclusion, 2007

Annex B: References

Dewson, S., Eccles, J., Tackey, N. D. and Jackson, A. (2000) *Measuring Soft Outcomes and Distance Travelled: a review of current practice*, Research Report RR219, Brighton: Institute for Employment Studies, DfEE.

(www.employment-studies.co.uk/summary/summary.php?id=rr219)

Gregg, P., Harkness, S., and Macmillan, L. (2006) *Welfare to Work Policies and Child Poverty*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

(www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/9781859355107.pdf)

Hillage, J. and Pollard, E. (1998) *Employability: Developing a framework for policy analysis*, Research Report RR85, Brighton: Institute for Employment Studies, DfEE.

(www.employment-studies.co.uk/summary/summary.php?id=emplblty)

Lloyd, R. and OSullivan, F. (2004) *Measuring Soft Outcomes and Distance Travelled: a Methodology for Developing a Guidance Document*, London: Department for Work and Pensions.

([www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/WP8\(2\).pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/WP8(2).pdf))

Speckesser, S. and Bewley, H. (2006) *The longer term outcomes of Work-Based Learning for Adults: Evidence from administrative data*, DWP Research Report No. 390, London: Department for Work and Pensions.

(www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep390.pdf)

