Newham’s educational and training 16-19: understanding Newham’s vocational needs

Submitted to
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April 20 2010
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About ORC International

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Summary report

Introduction

Research aims

This report presents relevant available data concerning London Borough of Newham’s (LBN’s) 16-19 education and related employment. It is intended to inform the local authority commissioning process for this phase. It draws upon a range of local, regional and national literature and two follow-up quantitative surveys with young people and employers in Newham.

The brief for the project was set out under four main areas:

- Understanding young people’s choices and employability
- Understanding young people’s destinations
- Responding to the needs of local employers (with particular reference to business & finance; construction; customer services; hospitality; leisure; public sector; & retail)
- Understanding the needs of different groups

See page 22 for more detailed research objectives.

Context

From April 2010 local authorities (LAs) will take over from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) responsibility for securing suitable education and training provision for young people aged 16-19. This responsibility extends to young offenders in custody and those with learning difficulties up to the age of 25. When the participation age increases to 17 from 2013 and 18 from 2015 it will mean securing appropriate provision for all young people, including those currently not in education, training or employment (NEET) or choosing jobs without training (JWT). Because of significant flows of learners across boundaries, LAs will need to co-operate in sub-regional and regional groupings to achieve their objectives.

Key commissioning principles include that the system will operate in the interests of learners, addressing learner choice but also taking into account the needs of employers and employability. The commissioning process takes place against the background of government policy on curriculum and qualifications for the 14-19 phase of education as developed since 2005. Amongst other things this involves:

- an entitlement curriculum to be fully introduced in 2013;
- an emphasis on greater personalisation and choice;
- new learning routes, including Diplomas;
- heightened emphasis on personal and employability skills; and
- new national standards for information, advice and guidance (IAG).

Learning for 14–19 year olds will lead to qualifications from one of four routes:

- Apprenticeships: all learners with appropriate entry qualifications will be entitled to access this route.
• Foundation Learning Tier: this will provide clear progression pathways for learners working at Entry level and Level 1.
• General qualifications such as GCSEs and A levels.
• Diplomas: these will cover each occupational sector of the economy with an entitlement, by 2013, for all 14–16 year olds to the first 14 Diplomas and for 16–18 year olds to all 17 Diplomas. Diplomas will be available at three levels: Foundation (Level 1), Higher (Level 2) and Advanced (Level 3).

Learners will be able to study qualifications that do not fall under one of the four routes where there is a clear rationale to maintain the qualifications in learners' interests. Some learners will study informal, unaccredited provision to re-engage them. Local authorities will be charged with providing a 14–19 prospectus in every area, setting out the courses and support available, and a common application process, linked to the 14–19 prospectus, that will make it easier to apply for education and training. Under the so-called “September Guarantee” all 16 and 17 year olds must be offered a suitable place in learning, with support targeted towards those who need it most.

Key findings – desk-based evidence

Understanding young people's choices and employability

Factors influence young people in their choice of education and training courses between the ages of 16 and 19

1. Firstly, it is very important to state that the structure of education and training provision in LBN reflects the types that are associated nationally with the best possible rates of 16-19 participation and achievement.¹

2. Choices at 16-19 are heavily influenced by experiences from age 14 and even earlier. There is a deep-seated and persistent link between social class / socio-economic status and attainment. Relatively, young people from the least well off backgrounds perform least well at school, and at 16 are most likely to seek full-time employment and to withdraw from education or training. They are also most likely take vocational options at school, including the Diplomas, and to continue in the vocational route after leaving. Choice at 16+ is considerably affected by the extent to which young people aspire to progress to higher education. Note that irrational choices from the viewpoint of policy makers and planners may be entirely rational when seen from the perspective of individual circumstances.

Why do students decide to study out of the Borough post-16?

3. General FE and sixth form colleges operate within a competitive recruitment system. Students are usually faced with a choice of a number of colleges. For some living on the periphery of the local authority boundaries, colleges in other boroughs are nearer and /

¹ As explained more fully in the desk research (chapter 2) research by NFER has shown that in general local areas with more colleges and fewer separate school sixth forms have higher rates of 16-19 participation and achievement rates that are at least as good as areas with fewer colleges and more school sixth forms.
or easier to reach. Reputation also plays a part, influenced not just by objective measures of performance but also by the socio-economic and ethnic profile of the area in which a college is located and the students who attend. LBN’s current policy is to not market provision outside the borough. Some young people who have under-achieved at school deliberately seek out post-compulsory education away from their immediate area of residence in order to free themselves from negative peer group pressures.

Choice of 16-19 learning courses and young people’s abilities to find and keep jobs

4. Nationally, the level of qualification appears more relevant to employability than specific vocational subjects and qualifications. Young people possessing qualifications at Level 3 and above are generally attractive to employers, whilst those qualified at Level 2 or below appear to be less advantaged. Except for Advanced Apprenticeships (level 3), vocational qualifications rarely give advantages over their academic equivalents. This is because employers place the main stress on basic communication skills, numeracy, and inter-personal attributes.

Young people’s accessing of information on which they base their learning and career decisions

5. Young people value and benefit from independent and personalised information, advice and guidance, particularly those contemplating vocational pathways. They are also influenced strongly by parents / carers and subject teachers. Few young people make choices at 16+ to which their parents are opposed. Subject teachers have greater day-to-day contact with students than guidance professionals, as do supervisors for those in full-time employment. Young people tend to be better informed and equipped to make vocational choices aged 16-19 if part of their timetable aged 14-16 was spent in college and in work experience, rather than always in school.

Provision of information, advice and guidance facilitating young people’s decisions on education and training pathways that lead to sustainable local employment choices

6. Lack of support and comprehensive careers advice in compulsory education is linked to instability and uncertainty in decisions at 16+. Lower attainment bands are least likely to have a clear, confident view of the future. Schools and colleges with comprehensive advice, guidance and support develop young people with more positive and effective decision-making skills. FE colleges are often effective in supplying IAG, linked to a wide range of academic and vocational options within the same organisation. Support is enhanced by involving parents, carers and former students with experience of routes of onward progression. Students appear to be least clear about WBL routes.

7. Features of effective IAG are:
   - provision of support throughout a programme;
   - delivered by expert individuals;
   - diverse, wide-ranging and individually-tailored guidance;
   - collaboration between providers;
   - genuine interest by the individual student in the pathway concerned;
   - full facts, including information on potential progression routes.
Understanding young people’s destinations

Destinations of students once they have finished their 16-19 learning courses

8. Within secondary education in Newham year cohorts are relatively stable around 3,600 pupils with a slightly downward trend. Assuming it is implemented, the planned raising of the compulsory leaving age (ROCLA) to 17 and then 18 in 2013 and 2015 should ensure that there will be no decline in the demand for post-16 education and training in the foreseeable future.

9. First destinations of Newham Year 11 school leavers in 2008 were as follows:

- 89.9% in some form of learning;
- 87.7% in FT education or training – 21% of these in a school Sixth Form, 48% in a Sixth Form College, and 31% in an FE college;
- 62% of Newham leavers remaining in education or training entered Level 3 programmes – almost half of these on AS/A level programmes, with BTEC First and National Diplomas the next most popular;
- Only 3.8% were recorded as NEETs.

10. 2008/09 data for 16-18 year olds on LSC-funded programmes indicate that out of a total cohort of 8,173, 57% studied in Newham and 43% out-of-Borough. A total of 6,389 16-18 year olds were educated in-Borough, almost three-quarters being Newham residents. Flow out-of-Borough was slightly below the East London average, though notably higher than the in-flow. Main flows out were to Waltham Forest (9.0% of cohort); Redbridge (8.0%); Barking and Dagenham (6.6%); Havering (5.6%); and Tower Hamlets (4.0%). Primary flows in were from Redbridge (5.2% of 16-18 delivery in Newham), Tower Hamlets (4.7%); Barking & Dagenham (4.3%); Waltham Forest (3.4%).

11. Nationally 26.5% of 16-17 year olds have some form of paid employment and 58.5% of 18-24 year olds – some nine and five percentage points below last year’s figures. Information about progression to employment in Newham is sparse. Most Landmark Training trainees progress to employment, but as with other providers no details are available of its nature or level.

12. Nationally, destinations analysis is being undertaken centrally by the LSC’s contractor, Ipsos MORI. The results will include an employment rate which will measure the proportion of learners achieving a qualification who subsequently achieve an improved sustained labour market outcome. This rate was due to be published at both national and provider level in spring 2010 on the Framework for Excellence website. These arrangements only extend to post-16 providers delivering LSC-funded learning.

Destinations after three months and a year of finishing the course and after three years

13. Currently, reliable data of this type is limited, especially for individuals not continuing with qualification-bearing education or training, though the arrangements outlined above

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2 Not yet published at time of writing the report in mid-April 2010. There may be a delay due to the general election.
should improve matters. The national Labour Force Survey and Jobcentre Plus data provide some data useful for identifying trends at regional level. Considerable instability exists over the timescale in question, with considerable movement in and out of employment, education and training, and between jobs.

14. On the assumption that the Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA) continues the LSC’s Framework for Excellence arrangements, Ipsos MORI will provide relevant data for courses leading to accredited qualifications. At the time of writing this report in April 2010 it is not yet clear what form the reporting will take, but the ambition is to measure progression into both further qualifications and into ‘sustainable employment’. Otherwise, cost-effective solutions include “reverse tracer studies” which survey people in employment to gather data about their previous education and its perceived relevance.

15. Even where comprehensive and accurate destinations data is available, the absence or presence of a link between posts held and the subject areas of previous qualifications cannot be taken as any kind of automatic indicator of the latter’s relevance and appropriateness.

How do young people who do not go through further education find their jobs and are there any significant differences between ethnic groups?

16. Young people often use effective informal mechanisms to weigh up immediate job prospects, though such judgements tend to be narrower once separated from IAG support.

17. Job opportunities for young people from ethnic minority groups tend in practice to be more limited than for their white counterparts. A number from Asian backgrounds are typically engaged in work in family businesses that may not be recorded as paid full-time employment in official statistics.

Responding to the needs of employers

Significant industries in Newham and the local sub-region

18. Significant sectors the Newham economy as compared to London as a whole include ‘supporting transport activities’, ‘post and courier activities’, ‘primary education’, ‘health and social work’ and ‘manufacturing’, plus a large number of SMEs especially in the retail and service industries. See Figure 2.1.

19. Large employers in the area include University of East London, and City Airport. Coming out of recession, growth is anticipated locally in retail; construction; leisure; hospitality; business and finance sectors. The Olympic Games account for almost 3% of the construction related jobs in the London area, though opportunities for the current 16-19 cohort are relatively restricted by the preference to hire experienced employees.

Key skills required by local employers

20. During the Games about 100,000 jobs will be required, 70,000 likely to be filled by volunteers, an opportunity for work experience placements. Permanently there will be a continuing though reduced requirement for staff including in catering; administration;
transport & ancillary services; customer service; maintenance and sport-related occupations.

21. Nationally, employers want young people entering their first job to be good at timekeeping, possess literacy and numeracy skills, and show enthusiasm and commitment. Later they expect employees to have developed a more sophisticated set of skills, including job-specific technical skills, team-working and problem-solving, for which they are prepared to fund training. Sectors including retail and hospitality also require "skills" including body language, emotional intelligence, dress sense and style, personal grooming, and the voice and accents of existing and potential customers. Employers looking for such characteristics frequently only employ young people who already display them.3

Qualifications in most in demand amongst employers

22. London-wide data shows that skill-shortage vacancies (SSVs) were falling even before the recession. London employers being most likely of any English region to report recruitment problems. No comparable data for Newham was available. Technical, practical and job-specific skills are at a premium, including IT professional skills were rising at the time the recession took hold. SSVs are highest in the sectors covered by the public bodies GoSkills (passenger transport), Semta (science, engineering and technology) and ConstructionSkills. Over a third of staff in sales and customer service and elementary positions lack proficiency.

Extent to which 16-19 learning equips young people with the skills they need to find and keep jobs

23. In all cases, the majority of grades awarded by recent Ofsted inspections of Newham’s providers of 16-19 education and training were at least good. In respect of Newham College of FE and St Angela’s Ursuline Convent, almost all areas were rated as outstanding. St Angela’s was noted as having excellent levels of attainment in A/AS level Science and in Mathematics.

24. Nationally, employers have been critical of young people’s levels of skill, literacy and numeracy being the main problem areas, followed by attitudinal reasons and general communication skills. Overall, some 14% of employers offer Apprenticeships to their staff, 8% having staff taking one at any one point. Around a quarter of employers providing training have done so via a FE college, with 84% of those that do so expressing satisfaction. Some employers remain critical of perceived lack of flexibility and responsiveness in the system, related to the requirements of national qualifications, or the eligibility criteria for Train to Gain.

25. In Newham, the Games represent both an opportunity to raise the aspirations of Newham’s young people, and also lasting benefits to those having done related jobs, even if only as volunteers. Other opportunities being pursued include relevant Diploma and regeneration partnerships, initiatives including Stratford City Development, the

3 For more information, see the final report of the Nuffield 14-19 Review by Pring et al, the full reference for which can be found in the Appendix of this report.
Stratford Euro terminal, the Canning Town Development and the continuing development of the Royal Dock.

26. The two major groupings that constitute the Newham 14-19 Partnership represent a major source of expertise and support in improving young people’s pathways into employment and / or continued education and training.

Why is it that some courses do not equip young people to succeed in the local jobs market?

27. The acquisition of a qualification at Level 2 or below is by no means a passport to employment. High levels of competition in the job market look set to continue for some time as the effects of the recession persist, and many young people are likely to struggle to find work whatever their programme of study.

28. Ofsted has identified the following features as applying to the quality of vocational provision at the best performing colleges:
   - careful placement of learners on courses that are appropriate to their individual needs, and encouragement to females to apply for some types of course;
   - close links with industry;
   - high quality industry-standard equipment and working practices;
   - teachers with direct knowledge of the vocational areas concerned; and
   - varied learning activities imaginatively mixing practical and knowledge-based work.

What are the aims of employers in engaging in education and training?

29. UK-wide, only a minority of employers engage directly with further education to train employees or recruit staff, but those that do generally report good levels of satisfaction. Employers have wide-ranging and high requirements from training provision, some common to all some varying by sector and occupation. In construction most training is apprenticeship-style, a smaller amount relating to updating driven largely by legislative requirements. In media there has been an increase in small niche companies with ‘freelance’ staffing. Engineering has a well-established range of training programmes on offer, especially for large companies.

What is preventing more employer engagement and what barriers are faced?

30. National evidence suggests that colleges need to set out clearly for employers what they can and cannot do. Colleges are widely recommended to set service-level agreements with their business clients to ensure that expectations are clearly understood from the outset. Further, employers need to appreciate that some of the issues they raise are outside the control of the colleges. For example, national policies for unitisation of qualifications, which many employers are seeking, is not yet rolled out but would allow employers to accredit training that is specific to their company.

Effective employer engagement

31. Ofsted’s recent inspection reports provide important evidence relating to Newham College of FE, NEWVIC and Landmark training.

31.3 Ofsted notes a strong awareness of local labour market needs, with effective partnerships with business. Relevant courses are provided in a wide variety of niche
sectors, employers’ needs being well met. The college has five Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs). There is an extensive Train to Gain programme including successful Skills for Life provision. Good facilities and training programmes are available to local enterprises, though only a narrow range of apprenticeships is offered. Ofsted also reports that NEWVIC responds well to employer needs.

31.4 Where Landmark training is concerned, Ofsted notes imaginative ESF programmes offered under the ELTA partnership, including a pre-E2E programme and a vocational entry routes programme for 16–19 year olds. Landmark is also involved in the local development of the foundation learning tier. Recently, links have been established with voluntary mentors from commercial organisations to provide support for learners in career and life choices. Other links with employers are also good, ensuring quality placements and work opportunities.

Understanding the needs of different groups

Adequacy of the curriculum offer for the needs of NEETs

32. There is no evidence from Newham to-date that the recession has solidified the hard-core NEETs group, and we note that those in JWT may be relatively easier to reach. Nationally, at least 12% of 16-19 year olds are estimated as NEET: latest available figures for Newham NEETs are just 6.7%.

33. Most susceptible to remedial action are the sustenance of retention and progression in the education and training system post-16, and the prevention of withdrawal, part of the answer here lying in compulsory education. College managements and staff have generally acted effectively to bring about a steady improvement in retention and achievement rates.

34. Where progression at 17+ is concerned, rates have been shown to be at their best where the full range of appropriate pathways is provided from foundation level through to Level 3 and beyond, supported by clear and personalised IAG that is provided regularly throughout a learner's course, and by effective links with employers.

35. Ofsted’s recent inspection of Newham College of FE reported that the college’s response to educational and social inclusion and to meeting the needs and interests of learners is outstanding. The college’s progression and employability framework attracts learners from exceptionally diverse and often disadvantaged backgrounds. Where NEWVIC is concerned, Ofsted notes a wide range of vocational courses at levels 2 and 3, though the range of level 1 courses is more limited. The college has outstanding links with schools and community organisations, and has a lead role in the planning and delivery of the new 14-19 Diplomas at levels 2 and 3. At St Angela’s School, Ofsted reports the attention paid to the achievement and attendance of looked after children, ensuring that this group has a high profile in the school.

Are the excessive demands of vocational courses, including for maths and English, alienating young people from education and training?

36. The effects of the recession make the possession of the Functional skills of English, ICT and Mathematics ever more important. Ofsted further notes that core skills of literacy and numeracy remain problematic. Barriers include shortage of suitable staff in some WBL providers and reluctance among employers to tackle basic skills issues.
How do we develop a curriculum offer that engages young people NEET in education and training that leads to sustainable employment?

37. Entry to Employment (e2E) programmes, Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs), and Activity Agreement pilots have all been shown to have a positive impact in encouraging participation. Evidence here points to the importance of the small scale, flexible voluntary sector provision. Vulnerable young people need to progress by means of small steps, supported by confidence-building activities, often involving youth workers. See also Hodgson et al 2009 (see references section) and contact Central London Connexions about their work in developing their programme Xtra4U into Activity Agreements.

38. Recent work in colleges in inner London boroughs identified four critical characteristics of the best types of provision:
   - partnership arrangements;
   - effective management and organisation;
   - personalised learning; and
   - IAG and progression routes, signposted via clear and meaningful destinations.

Sustainable employment and the curriculum offer for young people with English as a second or other language

39. The aim of ESOL provision is not specifically vocational, being focused more on social and citizenship aspects. In practice, though, it often signals a clear route into further study leading to national qualifications. Many in ESOL classes have a strong vocational motivation, and younger ESOL students commonly act as mediators via which parents and other relatives acquire employability. We note that relevant statistics for Newham, if they exist, were not accessed by researchers and that the diversity in racial and socio-economic backgrounds in Newham mean that such aggregated figures would be of very limited use: provision needs tailoring to individual needs. Ofsted reports a good range of community-based provision at Newham College of FE, including extensive ESOL programmes. At St Angela’s Ursuline Convent School, Ofsted notes the successful support provided in literacy-based subjects for otherwise high-attaining bilingual students.

Sustainable employment and the curriculum offer for young people with disabilities and learning difficulties

40. The overall college learning experience of students with learning difficulties and disabilities appears positive. For example, the small number of such learners surveyed tended to be more satisfied with their college experience than other learners. However, precise judgements are made difficult because of problems of correct identification and measurement., but nationally, young disabled people appear twice to three times as likely to be NEET, have no qualifications and enter HE.

41. Ofsted reports good provision at Newham College of FE for learners with disabilities and / or learning difficulties. However, nationally, there is a discrepancy between the high numbers of people with disabilities and learning difficulties who want a job and the numbers who actually manage to get one, which Newham providers and LBN should be aware of. Non-vocational education helps enable first steps back into learning before moving onto vocational training. Employer engagement includes raising employers'
awareness of their duty towards disabled employees and support to them in carrying it out. Expert advice also needs to be available to disabled people and their families to guide them through the complexities of the benefit situation when they are considering entering employment. All this requires effective Inter-agency collaboration.

Are there special provisions that employers need addressing for these specific groups of young people?

42. Ofsted has indicated that colleges with good and outstanding grades are generally excellent at furthering equality of opportunity. They give a high profile to issues of equality and diversity, which are formally evaluated through impact assessments. Provision is designed well to meet the needs of a broad range of learners and the performance of different groups is closely monitored. This kind of expertise represents a rich resource from which local employers can benefit, especially where effective partnership arrangements are in place.

Key findings – quantitative survey with young people

43. The majority of respondents were in full time education. 69% in full time education overall, with 59% attending a Sixth Form or Further Education College. Ten percent of respondents were classed as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

44. A significant proportion of respondents (39%) currently attend, or previously attended a school or college outside the Newham Borough. Reasons were varied, although 18% felt the quality of the course and/or the college would be better.

45. The majority of respondents were aiming to achieve a Level 3 qualification by the time they are 20. Further, 30% of respondents were studying, or had previously been studying for a Level 3 Academic qualification and 16% were studying, or had previously been studying for a Level 3 Vocational qualification. White respondents were least likely to be studying Level 3 qualifications: Significantly fewer whites were studying for a Level 3 qualification (23%) compared to all other ethnic groups in the survey.

46. Employers have lower needs for qualifications than the level young people currently study. 76% of the young people are studying for at least a Level 2 qualification, whereas only 40% of employers are looking for these higher levels.

47. Young people’s are most influenced in their choice of education, training, jobs and career by parents or carers, teachers and friends. 55% of respondents were influenced by parents or carers, 44% by teachers and 43% by friends. Also, the majority of young people chose their current/previous course simply because they enjoy the subject. Other reasons given by many respondents included ‘helping them to get to University’, ‘helping them to get a job’ and ‘next step on desired career path’.

48. Satisfaction with vocational courses is very high. 92% of respondents who were currently studying/had last studied on a vocational course were very or quite satisfied. A third of respondents on vocational courses found them difficult, particularly those studying higher level qualifications. The majority of these respondents felt they coped well with both the literacy and numeracy aspects of the vocational course.
49. Encouragingly, the majority of respondents classed as NEETs were looking for work or looking into further education/training. Two-thirds of this small group had been NEET for less than a year, and just over a quarter (26%) had been NEET for between one to two years.

50. Respondents with a disability and/or a learning difficulty wanted more one-to-one support and for help to be tailored more to the individual's needs. A minority also mentioned that the physical facilities in their place of study/work need improving.

51. Awareness of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is high. 94% of respondents have heard of the EMA, and 44% of these are claiming EMA payments. Half of these respondents (51%) felt the EMA had been an important factor in their decision to stay in education or training after leaving school.

52. Just over half of respondents want to be employed in Newham in the next few years (53%). 22% had no preference to whether they work inside or outside the Newham area, and 13% specifically wanted to work elsewhere.

53. Awareness of jobs in Newham for young people was only high for 'retail'. 44% of young people were aware that there are employment opportunities in Newham in the retail sector. Fourteen percent of respondents were aware of opportunities within the Public Sector, and 27% did not know what jobs were available.

54. Young people feel both 'basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills' and 'employability skills' (such as communication, team working, professionalism) are the most helpful in getting a job. 62% of respondents felt both these skills would be the most helpful.

55. The main perceived barriers to doing well in employment, education or training are relate to a lack of awareness of opportunities or courses available, and issues surrounding money. 34% saw the main barrier was a 'lack of training opportunities', 24% feel they don’t know what skills and qualifications are needed to get the job or course they want. 28% felt the costs of courses are too high.

Key findings – quantitative survey with employers

Skills

56. The top three skills that the majority of employers look for when employing young people were employability skills, basic literary, numeracy and IT skills and technical and practical skills. 73% look for employability skills, 63% look for basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills and 50% look for technical and practical skills. Employers in the Construction and Manufacturing sectors were more likely to look for technical and practical skills than employers from most other sectors.

57. ‘Employability skills’: Team working skills, oral communication skills and motivation most desirable (mentioned by more than nine out of ten of the respondents looking for employability skills. ‘Basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills’ English/literacy skills most desirable (90% of respondents who look for these skills at recruitment)

58. The skills needed by employers did not match the skills young people perceived to be necessary. Significantly higher numbers of employers were looking for employability
skills than young people thought, whereas significantly higher numbers of young people felt employers would be looking for managerial skills than is actually the case.

Qualifications

59. Almost half of respondents (48%) were looking academic qualifications from applicants who come straight from education or training, and just over a third (34%) were looking for vocational qualifications. A quarter of respondents were not looking for any qualifications, 30% looked for Level 1 qualifications, 29% looked for Level 2 and 13% looked for a Level 3 qualification. Somewhat surprisingly because the figure is so high, three-quarters of employers claimed they understood both the content and the level of different qualifications. 29% felt they understood both the content and level ‘very well’. 4

Employment of young people in Newham

60. Over half of respondents had not given any young people (under the age of 20) a job in the previous 12 months (54%). 38% had employed between one and ten young people and five percent had employed more than ten. The reasons for not appointing the young people who had applied to them were varied. A small minority (31%) did not have any vacancies, a very small minority (14%) felt young people did not have sufficient knowledge and practical or technical skills. Several employers only employ people with experience, and several mentioned that young people have not been applying for jobs within their company.

Employer engagement

61. In general, those with more direct experience of working with young people and education/training providers were more positive than those with less experience. Overall, however, employer engagement with schools and colleges is low. 62% of employers had had no contact with colleges to help with education or training and 74% no contact with secondary schools. Only 32% of companies reported involvement in the ‘Train to Gain’ scheme. The main reason for non-engagement by employers was the lack of a business case for learning. Also, they did not feel that the young people were well prepared to work in their company (31% felt they were not prepared and 28% unsure), and notable numbers expressed negative views about the work ethic of young people in general.

62. Of those employers who had helped education providers, the most popular method was by taking students on work placements. 70% of respondents who had helped at least one college had taken students on work placements. Awareness amongst employers of courses run by local providers was fairly low. Half of the employers were not aware of any courses at the Newham College of Further Education, 54% were not aware of courses at the Newham Sixth Form College, and 77% of respondents were not aware of any courses run by either St Angela’s or the Landmark training company.

63. Encouragingly, 43% of employers would be happy to be contacted by local education and training providers to see if they could help them to recruit young people. 57% of

4 For national data, see page 7 of the National Employer Skills Survey for 2009 at http://www.ukces.org.uk/upload/pdf/NESS%20Key%20findings%202009_2.pdf
respondents also agreed for their details to be passed on to enable this to happen. Details have been passed on the LBN.
1 Introduction and methodology

1.1 The context for commissioning

The commissioning process

From April 2010 local authorities (LAs) will take over from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) responsibility for securing suitable education and training provision for young people aged 16-19. This responsibility extends to young offenders in custody and those with learning difficulties up to the age of 25. When the participation age increases to 17 from 2013 and 18 from 2015 it will mean securing appropriate provision for all young people including those currently not in education, training or employment (NEET) or choosing jobs without training (JWT).

In April 2010 LSC officers passed formally responsible for the process that will determine financial allocations to providers for the 20010/11 academic year to local authorities across England. Key LSC staff have transferred to Newham local authority to help secure the necessary expertise in relation to commissioning 16-19 provision.

The core requirements of the commissioning process will be set out in a National Commissioning Framework (NCF), a draft of which was issued for consultation in October 2009. Guidance available to LAs also includes a manual and toolkit developed by London Councils5.

According to the draft guidance the main objectives for the commissioning process are to:

- Determine the education and training needs of all young people in each area.
- Ensure that provision is made available to enable all young people to progress in learning, including delivery of the learner entitlements.
- Ensure that the quality of provision at least meets minimum standards (e.g. of accreditation), and continues to improve.
- Ensure that provision is commissioned within the framework of the national funding system.
- Ensure that provision is affordable within national and regional budgets.
- Enable the respective parties in the commissioning process to deliver their responsibilities for handling and accounting for the revenue and capital funds invested in young people’s learning.

Local authorities will be responsible for the young people who are resident in their area and for commissioning provision from institutions based in their area. Some young people will choose provision that is based in another LA area and the home authority is expected to act as an advocate on their behalf. The flow of learners across boundaries is considerable,

5 See http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/children/education14to19/16to19manual.htm
particularly in London, and it is therefore expected that LAs will need to co-operate in sub-regional and regional groupings to achieve their objectives.

A key principle of the NCF, relevant to the current enquiry, is that “the system will operate in the interests of learners”. It will “address… learner choice” but also “take into account the needs of employers and employability”. In other words local authorities will have the difficult task of reconciling what learners might want with what might be thought best for them and to do so in an uncertain and changing world.

The complexity of the task is further illustrated by another key principle: “Decisions on provision must be based on analysis of future needs, and the requirements of the reformed curriculum, ensuring that there is sufficient and appropriate provision for all young people”. The analysis of future needs must take account of the changing industrial and occupational structure. What counts as ‘sufficient and appropriate provision’ needs to be interpreted in the light of national entitlements as well as local aspirations.

An improved understanding of the choices currently made by young people in respect of both work and education and training can assist in reconciling these objectives. So too can an understanding of the reasons for those choices, the sources of information drawn on and the outcomes of their decisions. A necessary counterpart to the views of young people and those who advise them is the view of employers on their future needs for employees and the skills which young people bring with them.

The scope of the commissioning role shapes the requirement to understand more about young people, courses and employment in the following ways.

• There is a need to plan for all young people in the borough, not just those who conventionally continue at school or college. This means devoting equal attention to the needs of those whose aspirations are at foundation level as those who undertake level 3. It also means engaging with those who are NEET and, almost by definition, hard to reach.

• There is a need to begin a process of engagement with those young people who are in, or likely to opt for, jobs without training since under the RPA proposals such a choice will not be an option after 2013. It is probable that wholly new forms of provision will be needed to meet their needs.

• The local authority must be as concerned with those young people who choose to enter education or training outside the confines of the Borough as within. It is not presumed that the choice to travel out of Borough should be restricted; rather that out of Borough provision must be subject to the same tests of quality and relevance as more local programmes. The continued or even increased availability of out of Borough options will need to be factored into projections of future participation.

• In the same way it will be important to assess the extent of employment opportunities in the wider travel-to-work area around the Borough and know the views of employers in this wider region concerning skill needs and the preparation of young people. It is even possible that a change in provision within the Borough could enable some young people to access employment opportunities at some distance.

• All local authorities will need to plan with their neighbours trajectories towards 100% participation in 2013/2015. This will require careful estimates of the likely response to new provision as well as to extra support to encourage access to existing programmes.
• There will be a need to keep under review the implications of curriculum reform. As the roll-out of Diplomas proceeds there will be a need to predict take up in order to consider the impact on current patterns of provision. It is most unlikely, for example, that growth at level 3 will be from new learners.

The policy context for curriculum and qualifications

The commissioning process takes place against the background of government policy on curriculum and qualifications for the 14-19 phase of education as developed since 2005. Amongst other things this involves:

• an entitlement curriculum to be fully introduced in 2013;
• an emphasis on greater personalisation and choice;
• new learning routes, including Diplomas;
• heightened emphasis on personal and employability skills; and
• new national standards for information, advice and guidance (IAG).

Overall the system is intended to deliver:

• qualifications available to a wide range of learners to meet their individual needs;
• effective collaboration with other providers to enhance the opportunities available to learners;
• learners’ access to high-quality, impartial IAG about learning choices;
• coherent progression routes from qualification into employment and further / higher education;
• the right conditions for high-quality learning, including adequate staffing and resources, high-quality teaching that engages learners, and constructive assessment that promotes learning;
• preparation for employability and economic well-being provided through work placements and enterprise education;
• a safe and secure learning environment; and
• an open and explicit commitment to quality and a rigorous approach to sustaining and improving standards, both within the organisation and across partnerships.

These goals are closely linked to the DCFS Every Child Matters framework and Ofsted’s Common Inspection Framework.

From 2013, all learners should have access to an entitlement curriculum that will suit their needs and interests and which will provide them with the skills they need for adulthood. Participation in education will be through one of the following pathways:

• full-time education or training;
• work-based learning (WBL);
• part-time education or training and employment, or voluntary work.

Learning for 14–19 year olds will lead to qualifications from one of four routes:

• Apprenticeships: all learners with appropriate entry qualifications will be entitled to access this route.
• Foundation Learning Tier: this will provide clear progression pathways for learners working at Entry level and Level 1.
• General qualifications: such as GCSEs and A levels.
• Diplomas: these will cover each occupational sector of the economy with an entitlement, by 2013, for all 14–16 year olds to the first 14 Diplomas and for 16–18 year olds to all 17 Diplomas. Diplomas will be available at three levels: Foundation (Level 1), Higher (Level 2) and Advanced (Level 3).

Learners will be able to study qualifications that do not fall under one of the four routes where there is a clear rationale to maintain the qualifications in learners’ interests. Some learners will study informal, unaccredited provision to re-engage them.

Local authorities (LAs) will be charged with providing a 14–19 prospectus in every area, setting out the courses and support available, and a common application process, linked to the 14–19 prospectus, that will make it easier to apply for education and training. Under the so-called “September Guarantee” all 16 and 17 year olds must be offered a suitable place in learning, with support targeted towards those who need it most, to be followed by a ‘January Guarantee’ offering a place in learning to all 16 and 17-year-olds who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) in January 2010.

We should note, however, that there is some uncertainty concerning the extent to which the ambitions of these policies will be realised. A future Conservative government is likely to be less enthusiastic in promoting or extending the Diploma route, and may also row back from an extension of the compulsory participation age. In any event, learners may not choose the new opportunities available to them to the extent envisaged, as we discuss further in Section 3 of this report. Nonetheless, for the time being it makes sense to move forward with actions aimed at fulfilling the various criteria we have outlined above.

1.2 Research aims and objectives

Research aims and objectives were developed by the London Borough of Newham at the research commissioning stage. Four main themes were each accompanied by a number of questions.

Figure 1.1 Research aims and objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding young people’s choices and employability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What factors influence young people in the Borough in their choice on education and training courses between the ages of 16 and 19?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Why do students decide to study out of the Borough post-16?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How is the choice of 16-19 learning courses affecting young people’s abilities to find and keep jobs in the area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Where and how are young people accessing the information on which they base their learning and career decisions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How is the current provision of information, advice and guidance facilitating young people’s decisions on education and training pathways that lead to sustainable local employment choices?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding young people’s destinations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What do we know about the destination of students (both those who live in Newham and those who study in Newham) including into work, training and further study, once they have finished their 16-19 learning courses?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do we know about these students after three months and a year of finishing the course and after three years?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• What do we need to put in place to be able to effectively track destinations from September 2010 onwards and to understand which courses / training leads to sustainable employment?
• How do young people who do not go through further education find their jobs and are there any significant differences between ethnic groups?

Responding to the needs of local employers (with particular reference to business& finance; construction; customer services; hospitality; leisure; public sector; and retail)

• What are the most significant industries in Newham and the local sub-region?
• What are the key skills required by local employers?
• What qualifications are most in demand amongst local employers?
• To what extent is 16-19 learning in Newham and the surrounding area equipping young people with the skills they need to find and keep jobs in the regional economy?
• How do post-16 providers identify & respond to employer needs?
• Why is it that some courses do not equip young people to succeed in the local jobs market?
• What are the aims of employers in engaging in employment and training?
• What is preventing more employer engagement and what barriers have they faced in engaging with the Council and local education and training providers?
• What might effective employer engagement look like in Newham?

Understanding the needs of different groups

• Is the curriculum offer adequately catering for the needs of young people not in education, employment or training?
• Are the excessive demands of vocational courses, including for maths and English, alienating young people from education and training?
• How do we develop a curriculum offer that engages young people NEET in education & training that leads to sustainable employment?
• Is the curriculum offer for young people with English as a second or other language leading to sustainable employment?
• Is the curriculum offer for young people with disabilities and learning difficulties leading to sustainable employment?
• Are there special provisions that employers need addressing for these specific groups of young people?

1.3 Approach to the desk-based research

Chapter 2 of the report comprises the outcomes of the secondary (desk) research stage of the project commissioned from by London Borough of Newham (LBN) in October 2009. It is intended to summarise the relevant already available data concerning LBN’s 16-19 education and related employment, and thereby inform the commissioning process for this phase when LBN, along with other local authorities, which took over responsibility for it from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in April 2010.

Our synthesis of the desk research evidence is set out as follows in the remainder of the report:

• a summary of the context for the commissioning process;
• key findings, with a particular emphasis on LBN-specific data but where appropriate drawing upon national evidence;
• case studies of effective practice by 16-19 providers;
• conclusions and recommendations, the latter relating both to the implications for the commissioning process, and our recommendations for the following primary research phase of the project.
• Appendix A – a literature review of the relevant generic evidence drawn from national and London-wide sources.

A wide range of sources was drawn upon in compiling this report. Where a national perspective is concerned, we were able to benefit in particular from the final report of the Nuffield Review of 14-19 Education and Training, which was published last year, and the rich resource of contributory papers which formed its basis. Where LBN-specific data are concerned, data was gathered from a variety of sources including:

• the local LSC;
• Newham College of Further Education (FE);
• Newham VIth Form College, known as NEWVIC;
• Landmark Training;
• the Connexions Service;
• Newham Council Economic Regeneration Unit;
• Newham Council’s Children’s Services Department;
• Newham Household Survey.

Additional sources included the relevant Ofsted reports on the principal Newham post-16 providers; materials from their websites; an Experian report for the LSC and the London Development Agency on Employment and Skills for the 2012 Games; and an RCU report on NCFE student destinations.

We understand that the Council is awaiting results from business surveys currently being undertaken for the Local Development Framework Retail Study which, once available, should inform the next phase of the project. A survey of current Year 9 students in the Borough, covering educational and employment aspirations, should also become available later this month.

We would like to express our gratitude to all those who supplied data or otherwise assisted with this phase of the project, in particular the Borough’s officers and the members of the project advisory group.

1.4 Quantitative surveys with young people

Research design and rationale: Data were collected via a quantitative computer-aided telephone interviews (CATI). Telephone numbers were made available from the Core database from the Connexions service, via LBN, for the young people survey and an external database supplier for employers. Using CATI enabled a certain number of interviews to be achieved and provided high quality data collection due to the mix of automated and human activities involved. Most importantly, the questionnaire was closely linked to the needs of LBN and was informed by the desk-based research; it aimed to ask questions the answers to which were not available elsewhere.
Questionnaire design: The two questionnaires were developed by ORC International in partnership with LBN. The questionnaire for young people found out about their current employment/educational status, qualifications, perceptions of education and employment in and beyond Newham and their aspirations for the future. The employers survey included attitudes and experiences of recruiting young people and on any work they had done with local providers. In addition to the quantitative ‘closed’ questions, there were a small number of open-ended questions were asked, allowing respondents to expand on their answers.

Fieldwork: 380 young people and 380 employers were telephoned to ask if they wished to take part in the survey. They were interviewed either at that time or an appointment was made for a time convenient to them. Interviews took place in February and March 2010. Whenever potential interviewees could not be reached, up to six phone calls were made or messages left before marking a contact as unobtainable. Only a small minority of people refused to take part; a few said that this was because of low confidence in speaking English.

Sampling and reliability: Using a sample frame and quota targets, the telephone surveys sought interviews with a range of young people. For the employer survey, background information such as company size and standard industry classification (SIC code) were unavailable so a sample frame could not be created. More details can be found in sections 3.2 and 4.2, for young people and employers, respectively.

380 interviews were achieved with each group, making the results statistically reliable at the overall level. This means that if, say, 50% of employers (or young people) responded to a certain question in a particular way then we can be 95% sure that the wider population of employers in Newham (or young people) would have responded the same way. See Analysis and interpretation below for more information on the reliability of the data.

Analysis and interpretation of data: Analysis for the questionnaire survey data was done using a set of data tables showing overall results for each question and cross-tabulations of the results with variables and other questions. Results are reported in percentages. Note that ‘don’t know’ and ‘not applicable’ responses are included before percentages are calculated. Also unless otherwise stated, any references to ‘overall positive’ percentages in relation to 5-point scale questions refer to the total of the two highest ratings combined (ie ‘very satisfied’ and ‘satisfied’). Occasionally, the total combined percentage adds up to more or less than 100 as a result of rounding fractions to the nearest whole number.
2 Choice, provision and employability in Newham: desk-based research findings

2.1 Context

The national labour market

Labour market statistics for July-September 2009 – at the time of writing the last quarter for which figures are available – indicate that nationally 26.5% of 16-17 year olds have some form of paid employment and 58.5% of 18-24 year olds. These levels are respectively some nine and five percentage points below those for the equivalent period last year. Also:

- For 16-17 year olds the female employment rate is higher than that for males, though this is accounted for by part-time employment.
- For both age bands (16-17 and 18-24), the employment rate for males has fallen by a notably larger amount over the past year than it has for females.
- Just fewer than 83% of 16-17 year olds are in full-time education and training, as are 30% of 18-24 year olds.
- Of the remaining 17% of 16-17 year olds, around 40% are in work, just under a third unemployed but seeking work, and 40% are economically inactive. The equivalent figures for 18-24 year olds are 69%, 18% and 16%.

Employer surveys indicate that skill-shortage vacancies (SSVs) were falling even before the recession. Compared with the rest of England, though, employers based in the London region are relatively more likely to report recruitment problems, reflecting higher levels of competition for skilled workers in the capital. Technical, practical and job-specific skills are at a premium where SSVs exist. There has been a decrease in the reporting of literacy and numeracy shortages amongst job applicants, though these areas remain a concern for employers. However, SSVs attributed to a lack of IT professional skills were rising at the time the recession took hold. Employers in sector skills council (SSC) sectors composed of public sector establishments were the most likely to report vacancies, though the proportion of establishments reporting SSVs is highest in the sectors covered by GoSkills (passenger transport), Semta (science, engineering and technology) and ConstructionSkills.

Skills gaps are most likely to be found in “lower-level” occupational groups, particularly sales and customer service and elementary positions, where up to the recession over a third of staff were described as lacking proficiency.

The local labour market

Newham residents have employment opportunities both within the Borough and, by virtue of radial transport links, across the wider region. Figure 3.1 below uses a Location Quotient, comparing Newham and five other Borough Averages to the London average (= 1.00) for an analysis of 3 digit SIC industries employing more than 1000 people to identify industrial activities which are disproportionately significant sectors for employment in Newham.
As can be seen, significant strengths in the Newham economy as compared to the wider London economy include ‘supporting transport activities’, ‘post and courier activities’, ‘primary education’, ‘health and social work’ and ‘manufacturing’.

Figure 2.1 Significant employment sectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPLOYMENT SECTOR</th>
<th>Newham LQ</th>
<th>Employee Numbers</th>
<th>Five Host Borough LQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other supporting transport activities (632)</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>1,762</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post and courier activities (641)</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>2,082</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary education (801)</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>5,564</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous business activities not elsewhere classified (748)</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>2,712</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteens and Catering (555)</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1,094</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration of the State and the economic and social policy of the community (751)</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>3,422</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of services to the community as a whole (752)</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>2,028</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education (803)</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>2,092</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human health activities (851)</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>6,586</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social work activities (853)</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>3,663</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other retail sale of new goods in specialised stores (524)</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>3,796</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour recruitment and provision of personnel (745)</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>2,711</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail sale in non-specialised stores (521)</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>3,730</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial cleaning (747)</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1,292</td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building of complete construction or parts thereof; civil engineering (452)</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1,914</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants (553)</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1,763</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Newham Borough Council

We should note, though, that this chart takes no account of the many thousands of SMEs and family run businesses in the Borough, very largely in the retail and service industries. Neither, at the time of writing, was Travel to Work data available for Newham residents, so it is impossible here to outline the scale of outflow from the Borough to employment in other parts of London, though it can be assumed to be significant.

The preparations for, staging of and the legacy of the 2012 Olympic Games will obviously have a significant impact on employment opportunities in the Borough. An Experian report prepared for the LSC and the London Development Agency notes that with construction well advanced, the Games account for almost 3% of the construction related jobs in the London area, although opportunities for the current 16-19 cohort are relatively restricted given the understandable preference to hire already experienced employees. It is estimated that all in all the Games will briefly generate a requirement for about 100,000 jobs of whom it is thought that 70,000 will be volunteers, the latter figure in itself indicative of significant work experience opportunities. The report makes no mention of the Games legacy. However, this will no doubt continue to feed a requirement for staff – albeit at reduced levels – across a broad range of job types including catering; administration; ancillary services such as transport; customer service; maintenance and sport related occupations.
Experian recommended that local employers should work with local schools, colleges and universities through partnerships and to help develop appropriate vocational pathways. In particular they point out that:

The number of Games jobs is small compared to the potential workforce capacity of the 5 Host Boroughs, a rich multi-cultural area marked by high unemployment and low skills. It is vital that the Games are not felt to be a disappointment in terms of jobs creation and economic inclusion – the fact that this would be largely a consequence of unrealistically high expectations, resulting from exaggerated and unsubstantiated claims that have been made with regard to job creation from previous Games, would be little comfort.

However, we believe that there are grounds for considerable optimism, because of the opportunity for using the Games to benefit the nation, the capital, local people, women, disabled people and members of BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) communities, in several ways. Indeed, perhaps the main impact of hosting the Games comes, not so much through schemes designed to get people into work or onto training courses, but through a deeper shift in people’s aspirations.

First, the Games add credibility and visibility to the much wider regeneration that is taking place in East London, and they make that regeneration far more likely to succeed. Many businesses will be drawn to the area, simply because they perceive it to be lively and a place of rapid growth, a self-reinforcing process from which local people can benefit. In this context one crucial point is that the Games can only help. While they cannot create the underlying regeneration, they can act as a catalyst for it.

Second, the build-up towards the Games can be used to help local people rethink their own ambitions and assets, and can be used to encourage them to invest in themselves and to access the opportunities available to them.

Third, even though many Games jobs will not themselves last, the experience of having done those jobs will carry forwards. People will have the experience, not just of a few weeks or months of work, but of participating in something hugely successful. This participation effect, if it is properly harnessed, will have a lasting impact on London’s vibrant and growing economy.

Doubtless local education and training providers are already looking to the opportunities associated with the Games, and indeed the last available Newham 14-19 Education Strategy documents (published in November 2007) specifies the Olympic Games as a source of a number of opportunities. These include the development of relevant Diploma and regeneration partnerships, and other initiatives including Stratford City Development, the Stratford Euro terminal, the Canning Town Development and the continuing development of the Royal Dock. In addition, there are also the longer-standing employment opportunities that arise from the presence of the larger employers in the area, including the University of East London, and City Airport. Coming out of recession, growth is also anticipated in LBN and adjoining Boroughs in retail; construction; leisure; hospitality; business and finance sectors.

14-19 partnership

The Newham 14-19 Partnership consists of two major groupings.
A partnership of schools, colleges and key local services, all with legal responsibilities for 14-19 provision, which consists of:

- All secondary schools in Newham, including NewDirections and The Tunmarsh Centre.
- Newham College of FE, NEWVIC and the St Angela’s Ursuline Convent School and St Bonaventura’s 6th forms.
- The BCC and Landmark Training (representing a very large number of work-related and work-based training organisations).
- The University of East London.
- The London Borough of Newham, including its 14-19, Lifelong Learning, Economic Wellbeing, Integrated Youth Support Service (including Connexions), Learning & Schools and Regeneration teams.
- The Learning and Skills Council.

A wider partnership of organisations and people, who have roles to play and/or contributions to make in ensuring our work is successful. This includes:

- Employers, who have key roles to play and, in Newham, are keen to make extensive contributions to our work.
- A wide-range of organisations playing key roles in the regeneration of Newham, the build-up to the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.
- A wide-range of organisations who work with young people to extend opportunities for learning, leisure and involvement in shaping the future of Newham.
- Young people themselves and organisations by which young people are already able to influence what affects their lives.
- A wide-range of people, provision and policy shapers engaged with education and training; governors, staff working in all the organisations mentioned above, parent groups, advocates for particular groups of young people, local councillors, etc.

As presently constituted, they represent two valuable for a of considerable local knowledge and expertise.

National attitudes to education and training

There is evidence that choices between the ages of 16-19 cannot be divorced from the experiences of young people from age 14 or even earlier. This has become even more the case in recent years with the establishment of a deliberate policy focus on the 14-19 phase of education. It is too soon to judge the full impact of these developments on 16-19 choices, but early indications do not suggest significant changes in the patterns that have been identified by research over the past 15 years and more. Attempts to achieve “parity of esteem” between vocational and academic routes of progression appear to be little further towards realisation. Furthermore, what seems to be irrational choices from the viewpoint of policy makers and planners may be entirely rational when seen from the perspective of individual circumstances.

The key influence on opportunity and choice remains the deep-seated link between social class / socio-economic status and attainment. There is a vast array of relevant literature and government policy going back many years, which is beyond the scope of this research. Generally speaking, young people from the least well off family backgrounds perform least well at school, and at 16 are most likely to seek full-time employment and to withdraw from education or training. They are also most likely to choose and be directed towards vocational
options at school, including the Diplomas, and to continue in the vocational route after leaving.

Choice at 16+ is considerably affected by the extent to which young people aspire to progress to higher education. Those for whom this is a definite goal overwhelmingly follow the A/AS level route. Even amongst those for whom university entry is only a possible ambition, some are deterred from choosing the vocational route that they might otherwise have followed because of a genuine fear that it might close off this option. Others who are motivated primarily by the desire to find full-time employment may also reason that their prospects will be improved, or at least not jeopardised, by acquiring good GCSEs and A levels rather than vocational qualifications. This helps to account for the fact that the Diplomas are still some distance from reaching their recruitment targets and also that the learners who are involved tend overwhelmingly to be those with average and below average prior attainment.

There are gender differences in the patterns of education and training for 16-19. Females generally achieve higher levels of attainment than males, have higher aspirations, are somewhat more likely to remain in full-time education at 16, are more likely to follow the academic route, and are notably less likely to engage in work-based learning (WBL). Differences by ethnicity are likewise apparent, linked to attainment and social class. In general, ethnic minority groups are more likely than their White counterparts with similar levels of attainment to stay on in full-time education, and are proportionately less well represented in WBL. At least part of the explanation for this pattern appears to lie in the relatively higher educational aspirations of many ethnic groups, combined with the poorer labour market opportunities that sometimes apply to them.

Evidence suggests that young people value and benefit from independent and personalised advice and guidance, particularly those contemplating vocational pathways. Young people are also influenced strongly by their parents / carers and their subject teachers. In practice few young people make choices at 16+ to which their parents are opposed, and mothers appear to be especially influential. Subject teachers have greater day-to-day contact with students than guidance professionals, as do supervisors for those in full-time employment. Friends also exert an influence, but on balance seem to be less significant in their impact than guidance professionals, teachers and parents. There is evidence that young people tend to be better informed and equipped to make vocational choices aged 16-19 if during their 14-16 phase of education part of their timetable was spent in college and in work experience.

Attitudes to education and training in Newham

The findings of the Newham Household Panel Survey (Wave 2 Report D) suggest that attitudes to education and training amongst young people and their parents in Newham are remarkably positive, though there is a clear distinction between the attitudes and aspirations of students from different ethnic groups, with young white students markedly less motivated than their counterparts in other ethnic groups. Regrettably, however, the survey appears to assume that A levels are the only logical progression route from GCSE study. The assumptions it makes relating to progression to “A level” are therefore questionable, to say the least. In summary the report concludes:

On the whole, young people in Newham have a fairly positive view of education and their current school. Three quarters agreed or strongly agreed with the statement ‘I like most of my teachers’ but on the other hand one quarter also agreed or strongly agreed that ‘Teachers are always getting at me’.
The majority (94%) said that it meant ‘a great deal’ or ‘quite a lot’ to them to do well at school, something which did not differ by gender, age, ethnic background or parental social class.

The 11-15 year olds were asked whether they were happy with their school and parents were also asked how satisfied they were with their child’s current school. When we compare the responses of parents and children there is some correspondence between the child being happy and the parent being satisfied with their school. Just over a quarter (27%) of children were “completely happy” with their school, whilst just under a quarter of their fathers (24.5%) and almost one third of their mothers (31%) were “very satisfied” with the child’s current school. At the other end of the scale, 3.4 percent of fathers and 4.1 percent of mothers were not at all satisfied with their child’s school, and the proportion of their children who were completely unhappy with their school was 3.3 percent. So overall, parents and children tend to rate the child’s school in a similar way.

When asked about intentions to stay on in education after turning 16, 93 percent of 11-15 year olds said they intended to stay on and complete their A levels\(^6\). This did not vary by gender or age but ethnic background was associated with leaving school at 16. Of those from a White background, 22 percent said they would leave at 16 compared to only 1 percent of youngsters from an Asian background and 6 percent from a Black background. When asked how important it was to get their GCSE exams, 96 percent said it was important or very important. Those who intended to carry on and do their A levels were more likely to say that getting their GCSE’s was very important but even those who intended to leave school at the age of sixteen recognised the importance of getting their GCSE’s with 60 percent agreeing that they were very important.

Around half the 11-15 year olds had received advice about what to do after leaving school with the proportion of 15 year olds being slightly higher at 58 percent. Whether or not youngsters received advice was not associated with any of their own characteristics but was associated with their family background. Children with parents in intermediate occupations were significantly more likely to have received advice (72%) than those with parents in managerial or professional occupations (53%) or routine manual occupations (32%). This may reflect the concerns and expectations parents have for their children with those in intermediate occupations being most concerned to ensure that their children make the right choices in terms of their education and future career options.

The main source of advice for young people was parents. However, as the young people turned 14 and 15, they were more likely to report more formal sources of advice, in particular a school or college advisor or a teacher or tutor. Only 24 percent of 14-15 year olds mentioned their parents as the first source of advice compared to 56 percent who had received advice from school or college or a teacher\(^7\).

When asked whether they wanted to go to university or college once they finished school, 80.5 percent said they would like to go to university or college, 3.4 percent said

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\(^6\) This figure appears unrealistically high, and is probably influenced by the apparent assumption in the questioning that A levels are the only route of progression at 16+.

\(^7\) As we have noted earlier, though, national research evidence suggests that in practice the majority of young people do not make choices at 16+ of which their parents disapprove.
they did not want to go to university or college and 16.1 percent were undecided and not sure yet. The older children aged 14 to 15 were more certain about their intentions with 88 percent of this aged group saying they wanted to go to university or college and just 6.8 percent still being undecided.

Children from a White background were significantly more likely than those from either an Asian or Black background to be undecided and not sure yet, and also less likely to say that they wanted to go to university or college. Just 60.9 percent of White children wanted to go on to further education compared to 85 percent of children from an Asian background and 89.5 percent of those from a Black background.

As elsewhere in the UK, therefore, the choices and aspirations of ethnic minority students seem to be more emphatically defined than those of their white contemporaries.

It is also the case that the expressed aspirations of the young people surveyed in Newham are no reliable guide to their actual choices and destinations later.

Youngsters were also asked what job they would like to do when they finished their education. Overall, 70 percent knew what job they wanted to do and the remainder were still undecided. There were no clear differences by age group in whether young people knew what they wanted to do as a job in the future, suggesting that other factors apart from age may be important in understanding how young people reach these decisions. The majority of youngsters who knew the job they were aiming for wanted to do a managerial or professional job of some kind (36.8% professional/managerial and 30.3% associate professional occupation), 8.6 percent who wanted to do a skilled trade or manual occupation, 5.9 percent administrative or secretarial jobs, 4.6 percent a personal service occupation, and 1 percent a sales or retail occupation.

2.2 The cohort and their choices

The national picture

General FE and sixth form colleges operate within a competitive recruitment system. In urban areas especially students are faced with a choice of a number of colleges within easy travelling distance. For some living on the periphery of the local authority boundaries, colleges in other boroughs are actually nearer and/or easier to reach. Reputation also plays a part, influenced not just by objective measures of performance but also by the socio-economic and ethnic profile of the area in which a college is located and the students who attend. Some young people who have under-achieved at school deliberately seek out post-compulsory education away from their immediate area of residence in order to free themselves from negative peer group pressures.

The structure of education that applies in LBN corresponds to the types that nationally appear to be associated with optimum rates of 16-19 participation and achievement.

NEETs

Nationally, at least 12% of 16-19 year olds are estimated as currently not in education, employment or training (NEET). A further six to seven per cent of young people are commonly unaccounted for. Jobs without training (JWT) involve even larger numbers. NEETs is by no means a homogeneous group. There is considerable “churn” within the group, so that some 17% of young people are NEET at some time between 16-19, but only around 1% is NEET throughout.
When those in JWT are included as well, the proportions within the NEET / JWT group at any one time are believed to break down as follows:

- **JWT transitional (9%)**: Typically drop-outs from full-time education at 16+ who are likely to re-engage;
- **JWT sustained (25%)**: Content with current situation and difficult to re-engage;
- **JWT at risk of NEET (18%)**: Low levels of attainment & negative school experience, lacking capability to plan future but recognising they are insufficiently qualified;
- **NEET open to learning (19%)**: Often qualified at Level 2, with more positive past educational experience & more optimistic view of future;
- **NEET undecided (10%)**: Typically qualified at Level 1, but dissatisfied with available opportunities;
- **NEET sustained (18%)**: Few or no qualifications and negative school experiences – parents also often unemployed.

Recession is likely to solidify the hard-core NEETs group.

### Newham numbers and destinations

Pupil-Level Annual School Census (PLASC) data supplied by LBN shows that there are presently 49,632 children (of all ages) in Newham schools and that year group cohorts are relatively stable. Within secondary education the figures are currently as follows:

- Year 7: 3,398
- Year 8: 3,588
- Year 9: 3,583
- Year 10: 3,801
- Year 11: 3,629

Although the trend is slightly downwards over the next four years, assuming it is implemented the planned raising of the compulsory leaving age (ROCLA) to 18 should ensure that in the foreseeable future the demand for post-16 education and training in the Borough will not decline.

Progression routes from Key Stage 4 are, of course, of paramount interest for this project. The data supplied by Connexions reveal that the overwhelming majority of Newham Year 11 school leavers progress to full-time education and training (3,307 in 2008). The Newham Connexions 2008 Activity Survey (or Destinations Survey) produced headline findings as follows:

- 89.9% of Year 11 leavers entered learning of one type or another, an increase of 1.4% over 2007;
- 87.7% entered FT education or training, an increase from 84.4% in 2007;
- 62% of those remaining in education or training entered a Level 3 Programme;
- 56% of those remaining in education were studying in Newham;
- only 3.8% (146) were known to be NEET.

Almost half of those progressing into post 16 education or training were on AS/A level programmes (1,514), with BTEC First and National Diplomas in vocational subjects the next most popular choices (526 and 317 respectively). Of the overall cohort, 700 (18.6%) were in
a school Sixth Form, 1,590 (42.2%) in a Sixth Form College and 1,017 (27.0%) in an FE college (Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.2 Destinations of Newham school-leavers 2008**

The above figures include those studying out-of-Borough. Connexions figures also breakdown destinations within Newham, but the figure quoted for Newham College of FE appears unrealistically low, both in relation to the total numbers quoted as studying at an FE college, and in relation to the almost 2,000 16-19 year old Newham residents identified in Newham College’s own data.

2008/09 data for 16-18 year olds on LSC-funded programmes indicate that out of a total cohort of 8,173, 57% studied in Newham and 43% out-of-Borough. A total of 6,389 16-18 year olds were educated in-Borough, almost three-quarters being Newham residents. Flow out-of-Borough was slightly below the East London average, though notably higher than the in-flow. Main flows out were to Waltham Forest (9.0% of cohort); Redbridge (8.0%); Barking & Dagenham (6.6%); Havering (5.6%); and Tower Hamlets (4.0%). Primary flows in were from Redbridge (5.2% of 16-18 delivery in Newham), Tower Hamlets (4.7%); Barking & Dagenham (4.3%); Waltham Forest (3.4%) (Figures 2.3-2.5).

**Figure 2.3 Overall destinations of Newham residents and delivery in Newham to residents from elsewhere aged 16-18**
From the Connexions data it is not currently possible to identify the programme areas which the cohort has elected to study and, therefore, whether or not there is any noticeable correlation between choice of course and sustainable employability. The data in the LSC 16-19 Commissioning Intelligence Pack broadly indicates the Programme Area recruitment by local providers, but fails to distinguish between Newham resident and non-residents.

LSC data suggests that the most popular Programme Areas with Newham providers are:

- Science and Mathematics (792);
- Arts Media and Publishing (376);
- Language Literature and Culture (318);
- Engineering and Manufacturing Technology (145); and
- Preparation for Work and Life (142).
Newham College of FE figures indicate that they have a total of 1,984 Newham resident 16-19 year olds in their cohort with a further 146 in the 14-16 age range (i.e. Years 10 and 11 students). At the time of writing no comparable figures were available to us from the other in-Borough providers.

Information about progression to employment is almost completely absent. Landmark Training figures suggest that most of their trainees progress to employment, but in no case are details available of the nature or level of employment for any Newham leaver at 18/19+. Such data are notoriously hard to come by, by virtue of the intensive work required to follow up students once they leave education and training. In any case, the first employment destination is often but a stepping stone to further and different employment opportunities.

Although outside the scope of the project, information received about progression to HE reveals that 11,800 Newham residents entered university courses in 2007/08, an increase of almost 54% since 1999/2000. This figure, which is not broken down by age, includes many adults progressing from Access courses or other provision. The University of East London is the most popular destination (2,301), although this is amongst 146 destination universities. Figures from HESA do not identify the type of courses undertaken, however.

An RCU report for Newham College of FE which tracked the destinations of learners (October 2008) revealed that, of the a sample selected, 81% of 18-19 year olds were engaged in further training, most on higher level courses at Newham College of FE. Only 14% of completers had returned to the NEET category, with 5% moving directly to employment.

2.3 Provision and employability

National evidence relating to education and employment

Nationally, the level of qualification obtained appears a more important factor in employability than specific vocational subjects and qualifications. Young people possessing qualifications at Level 3 and above are generally attractive to employers, whilst those qualified at Level 2 or below appear to be less advantaged. Except for Advanced Apprenticeships, vocational qualifications rarely appear to command any advantage over their academic equivalents at the same level. Employers invariably place the main stress on basic communication skills and numeracy, plus the “softer” inter-personal attributes.

Employers want young people entering their first job to be good at timekeeping, possess literacy and numeracy skills, and show enthusiasm and commitment. After around five years of employment employers expect employees to have developed a more sophisticated set of skills, including job-specific technical skills, team-working and problem-solving. In general, employers are prepared to fund training for these further skills. Employers in certain sectors, including retail and hospitality, require not only technical and social skills, but also “aesthetic” skills, including body language, dress sense and style, personal grooming, and the voice and accents of existing and potential customers. Employers looking for such characteristics and dispositions may only employ young people who already display them.

Employers have been critical of the levels of skill they had found when recruiting recent school or college leavers, to a declining extent in recent years. Literacy and numeracy problems are reported as the main problem areas, followed by attitudinal reasons, such as motivation and work ethics, and other general communication skills. Overall, some 14% of employers offer Apprenticeships to their staff, though only 8% have staff taking one at any
one point. Around a quarter of employers providing training have done so via a FE college, with some 84% of those that do so expressing themselves satisfied with this provision.

Some remain critical of what they perceive as a lack of flexibility and responsiveness in the system, though this seems to reflect on the requirements imposed by national qualifications, or by the government eligibility criteria for Train to Gain.

Reducing NEETs

The aspect of NEETs that is most susceptible to remedial action is the sustenance of retention and progression in the education and training system post-16, and the prevention of withdrawal. Part of the answer here lies in compulsory education, as regular truancy during the secondary education phase is strongly associated with a later propensity to be NEET. College managements and staff have generally acted effectively to bring about a steady improvement in retention and achievement rates. Where progression at 17+ is concerned, rates have been shown to be at their best where the full range of appropriate pathways is provided from foundation level through to Level 3 and beyond, supported by clear and personalised IAG that is provided regularly throughout a learner’s course, and effective links with employers.

Entry to Employment (e2E) programmes, Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs), and Activity Agreement pilots have all been shown to have a positive impact in encouraging participation amongst those who might otherwise be NEET. Evidence here points to the importance of the small scale and flexible voluntary sector provision. Vulnerable young people normally need to progress by means of very small steps, supported by confidence-building activities, often involving youth workers.

Range and quality of Newham 16-19 provision

Ofsted inspections were carried out in the LBN’s two colleges and single school sixth form in 2009, and in the Borough’s major provider of WBL in 2007. In all cases the majority of grades awarded were good or better, and in respect of Newham College of FE and St Angela’s Ursuline Convent, almost all areas were rated as outstanding. Relevant comments from the inspection reports are as follows:

Newham College of Further Education – The overall effectiveness of provision is outstanding and the college has outstanding capacity to make further improvement. Achievement and standards are good. Overall success rates have improved significantly since the last inspection. They are now often above the most recently available national comparators for similar colleges and well above for learners aged 16 to 18 and for adults on level 1 courses. Learners’ progress, relative to their prior attainment, is good overall. Success rates for Train to Gain programmes in Skills are good and they are satisfactory for apprenticeship programmes.

The college’s response to educational and social inclusion and to meeting the needs and interests of learners is outstanding. An extensive, innovative and inclusive curriculum successfully widens participation in education and training.

The college’s own progression and employability framework very effectively attracts learners from exceptionally diverse and often disadvantaged backgrounds. Awareness of local labour market needs is particularly strong. Relevant courses are provided in an unusually wide variety of niche sectors. Partnerships with business and the local authority are strong. Employers’ needs are well met.
The college’s response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is outstanding. The curriculum is extensive, with courses from entry level to higher education. Awareness of local labour market needs is particularly strong.

Relevant courses are provided in an unusually wide variety of niche sectors. The college has achieved part A of the Training Quality Standard and is applying for part B in its five CoVE areas. It leads on the development of an NSA and other innovative schemes. Good facilities and training programmes are available to local enterprises, including three successful commercial enterprises.

An extensive Train to Gain programme includes large and successful Skills for Life provision. The range of apprenticeships offered is narrow.

Educational and social inclusion are outstanding. The college’s own progression and employability framework is particularly effective in attracting learners from exceptionally diverse and often disadvantaged backgrounds. Progression routes are very clear and used effectively. Provision for learners with disabilities and/or learning difficulties is good. Learners make an outstanding contribution to the college and external communities and they are very well prepared to achieve economic well-being.

Partnerships with the local authority are particularly strong, leading to a good range of community-based provision, including extensive ESOL programmes. A varied curriculum for learners aged 14 to 16 includes the first five 14-19 Diploma lines and provision for excluded and unplaced pupils.

**NEWVIC** – The college’s response to meeting the needs and interests of students is outstanding. The breadth of courses is extensive and includes a wide range of vocational courses at levels 2 and 3. Students choose from over 50 A- and AS level courses, 14 advanced and 13 intermediate level vocational courses and an access to higher education programme. The range of level 1 courses is more limited. The college has a lead role in the planning and delivery of the new 14-19 Diplomas at levels 2 and 3. The college has outstanding and highly productive links with schools and community organisations. It responds to employers’ needs well.

**St Angela’s Ursuline Convent School** – When students join the school, they start with standards that are average. They make excellent progress so, by the time they leave Year 11, the standards they reach are exceptionally high. All groups, including those with learning difficulties, share in this success. When compared to the progress of similar students nationally, students at St Angela’s make progress comparable to the top 2% in the country. Virtually all groups surpass the standards reached by their peers nationally, bucking national trends of underachievement for some groups. An example of teachers’ high expectations is in mathematics where the vast majority of students sit the higher-tier paper and an impressive 91% achieve a grade C or above. In this subject, students’ rates of progress are in the top 1% in the country and reflect the impact of one of the school's specialisms. Through the subject specialisms of science and mathematics, the school has been able to develop fast track courses for high attainers. The increased number of girls taking mathematics and science at A level, and the excellent use of information and communication

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8 Centre of Vocational Excellence.
technology (ICT) across the school are further examples of the impact of the specialist subjects.

Students’ progress is outstanding because senior leaders place rigorous emphasis on ensuring teaching and learning is of high quality. In addition, detailed and frequent analysis of the progress students are making right through their time in school informs targeted and timely intervention programmes. This includes timetabled study support and Saturday classes, ensuring students have plenty of guidance in areas where they need it. Attention is also paid to higher-attaining students to ensure they are challenged to reach the highest grade. For example, from the analysis undertaken of the progress of bilingual learners, senior leaders identified that high-attaining students achieve very well in some subjects but not as well in other literacy-based subjects. Intensive support by senior leaders is enabling these students to achieve consistently across the school. Another example is the report to governors detailing the good achievement and attendance of looked after children, ensuring that this group has a high profile in the school and that all are responsible for their progress.

Landmark Training – Landmark has significantly enhanced the offer available to young learners in the London Borough of Newham and nearby areas through imaginative proposals for additional ESF programmes. These are offered as part of the ELTA partnership. The three projects offer programmes for 14–16 year olds, a pre-E2E programme and a vocational entry routes programme for 16–19 year olds who have participated in education or training but have not progressed into further education, employment or training. All three programmes have had a significant impact on both E2E and the apprenticeship programmes. The effective partnership arrangements with the local education authority and school partners has enabled Landmark to play an active part in the local 14–19 partnership. Landmark is also involved in the local development of the foundation learning tier. Recently, Landmark has established links with voluntary mentors from commercial organisations to provide support for learners in career and life choices. Links with employers are good and ensure good quality placements and work opportunities.

2.4 Case studies of effective practice

Skills into Savile Row – Newham College of FE has a major role in helping master tailors on Savile Row - home to the world’s finest tailors - as it works to make sure that new recruits have a standard of skills in place that means they can earn a company money, rather than lose it.

It normally takes ten years to become a master tailor, as the specialist skills required take this length of time to learn. Because only the finest, high quality cloth is used, tailors cannot afford to take on new recruits who don’t already have a basic level of tailoring skills.

A new four year programme, launched on Savile Row on 30th January 2009, requires students to study the basics of tailoring at Newham College of FE – a CoVE for Textiles Manufacturing and Design – before they are employed by a master tailor to complete their advanced apprenticeship.

Not only does the new course help students to develop their skills, it also means that tailors benefit from a new recruit who has a working standard of skills, and can therefore help in the production of garments. As well as providing the training, Newham College of FE also assisted in developing the course’s content. The Foundation programme ensures that young people from Newham get the best possible chance to move up to a modern
apprenticeship in Savile Row, the College having been chosen to train people at the very top end of the fashion industry.

**Work experience** – NEWVIC has a dedicated department to help local businesses and those in the Greater London area that are looking to place students in their organisation on a work experience placement. Whether an employer is looking for someone on a short- or long-term basis, the college assists them in finding the perfect student.

Work experience students can bring new ideas, energy and enthusiasm to a role. Other benefits for any organisation wanting to explore this area of work include:

- support for the future workforce;
- experience of how to tap into the student market;
- a new perspective in the workplace;
- the skills of motivated students who are willing and eager to learn and who can make a worthwhile contribution to an organisation;
- development of staff line management skills through supervising a work experience student;
- raising the organisation’s profile with NEWVIC staff, students and parents;
- assist in the production of highly motivated people with the necessary skills and knowledge for an increasingly competitive marketplace;
- the opportunity to participate in and influence the educational process.

NEWVIC encourages its students to take part in work experience as it helps them to:

- develop and practice a range of new skills;
- relate their college studies to the workplace;
- make informed decisions about their future;
- add value to their university or job applications;
- work as part of a team;
- develop a realistic idea of the rewards and demands of work.

**Salesforce Bizacademy** – Four years ago, Landmark Training started an annual 1 week “Bizacademy” programme with Salesforce.com, a world leading cloud computing company who create bespoke Customer Relations Management systems. Working with the Salesforce Foundation, the CSR arm of the organisation, Landmark Training created a one week programme which focussed on raising the aspirations of E2E learners and gave them presentation and sales skills to help them market themselves successfully. The programme took place in the Salesforce offices in Tower 42 in central London.

Based on the success of this ongoing programme further developments have taken place. A cohort of 15 young people are currently undergoing a 22 week E2E course which is training them to become Salesforce administrators. They are following the fully certified Salesforce training programme as well as Functional English, Maths and ICT and a Technical Certificate in Customer Service.

Upon successful completion of this first stage of the programme, the young people will proceed to a 4-week work taster with an organisation using the Salesforce CRM system, leading to a full apprenticeship in Customer Service, which they will gain whilst working as a Salesforce Administrator.
When they complete their apprenticeships they will be equipped to enter the job market as fully qualified Salesforce Administrators with the necessary functional and customer service skills, ideally working with the companies where they completed their apprenticeships. The starting salary for such a role is between £30-40K.

This programme is tailor made to meet the needs of the employer and offers the learners an incredible opportunity to become economically independent. Landmark Training is currently in discussions with Microsoft to create a similar programme to train young people to become Microsoft engineers.

Other London Boroughs – Recent work in colleges in inner London boroughs identified nine key elements that characterised the best types of provision, the four most critical of which are:

- Partnership arrangements, involving staff at strategic and operational levels, plus employers and representatives of young people.
- Effective management and organization, with the whole of the college management structure engaged, with related provision planned and funded as an integral part of the curriculum.
- Personalised learning that is flexible and responsive to individual needs, often involving non-formal learning in the first instance.
- IAG and progression routes, signposted via clear and meaningful destinations, with progression seen in the context of the partnership as a whole rather than the individual institution.

The remaining five elements identified are outreach, marketing and recruitment; assessment and review; student support; celebrating success; and monitoring and evaluation. (For a fuller description, see Hodgson A. et al (2009) as referenced in the Appendix (page 127).

2.5 Conclusions and next steps

The overall purpose of this study is to inform Newham’s approach to commissioning education and training provision for young people aged 16-19. In order to undertake this role effectively LBN needs to know more about the choices young people currently make concerning their education, their destinations upon leaving it and the needs of employers in the local area. They particularly need to know whether current arrangements are equally effective for all groups of young people.

A study of the available literature, together with an analysis of existing data about provision in Newham enables initial answers to be made to some of these important questions. It also highlights where further work, including surveys with young people and employers, might usefully be done.

The overall conclusion is that for the great majority of young people in the Borough the system is working well, but for those who are NEET or in Jobs without Training (JwT) new approaches are probably needed.

Understanding young people’s choices and employability.

In Newham young people have a wide choice of education and training opportunities and the quality is uniformly high. While some travel out of the Borough for education and training purposes this is unlikely to be because of quality concerns that need to be addressed
through the commissioning process. The nature of employment and travel to study patterns in LBN mean that realistic and effective commissioning of 16-19 provision needs to be based on the whole East London region – at the very least – and cannot sensibly be confined to the boundaries of LBN itself.

Most young people progress from education in to work or further study suggesting that the pattern of provision is reasonably well aligned with opportunities available locally. It is possible that there are some employment opportunities available locally that are not well-served by local training provision but there is no evidence of significant discrepancies in existing published material.

Understanding young people’s destinations

While most young people progress into employment or higher education there is a lack of detail on the sectors or types of jobs that they undertake. Further information on this issue may be available from providers or from further work that the Borough might undertake. Beyond the scope of phase 2 of this project, but potentially useful nevertheless, we recommend that consideration is given to:

- carrying out a matching analysis across successive years of the national ILR and PLASC datasets in order to track movement of 16-19 year olds into and between programmes, including both Newham residents studying outside the Borough, and residents of other Boroughs who study in Newham;
- undertaking a “reverse tracer study” of employed persons in the Borough aged 16-30 to identify the extent of relationship between their current post and where and what they studied aged 16-19, and their perceived relevance of the latter.

In the longer term this may suggest areas where the LBN wishes to commission new areas of provision. It is more likely however that it will be of use to providers seeking to ‘fine tune’ their programmes.

Responding to the needs of local employers.

The published evidence suggests that educational institutions and young people are reasonably well informed about the needs of employers. Ofsted reports describe effective working relationships between institutions and employers, and a high proportion of young people in education are also in part time employment. Most progress from their school or college programmes to a job or to higher education.

Nevertheless it would be useful to LBN and to institutions to understand better the views of local employers. Gaps in the currently available data suggest that the next phase of the project can usefully be directed at gathering primary data relating to young people’s aims and aspirations in Newham and, in particular, employers’ opinions and actual usage of current education and training provision. However, it has also become apparent in this phase of the project both that there is other secondary data in existence that we have not so far been able to access. Such data could also usefully be synthesised within the next phase of the project.

Understanding the needs of different groups

It is clear from the data that some young people are not engaged by the current offer; some are NEET and some are in employment that does not offer them training (Jobs without Training, JwT). It ought to be a priority for LBN to identify and commission provision likely to
re-engage these two categories. It is worth noting here that the national data suggests that there are many reasons for being NEET and any response will require a varied and tailored offer.

The forthcoming Olympics and other local regeneration projects afford opportunities for further employer engagement and sustainable employment progression routes. Nonetheless, the continued effective tackling of the NEETs issue requires a wholehearted commitment to effective partnership working, involving the local authority, its post-16 providers, the voluntary sector and local employers. Newham Connexions and post-16 providers may also wish to give further consideration to their outreach strategies, especially where young white students are concerned.

Next steps

With regard to the next phase of the project we have developed proposals for telephone-administered questionnaire surveys of young people and local employers, in line with our original proposal. Draft questionnaires are in the process of finalisation. We further recommend that:

- Data gathered in the next phase takes account of and builds upon the Newham Connexions 2008 Activity Survey.
- Further attempts should be made to identify and synthesise secondary data not available at the time of writing. Where possible MIS data from local providers might also be examined to match Newham based students against vocational programme codes.

Further recommendations can be found in chapter 5.
3. Quantitative survey with young people

3.1 Introduction

The independent researcher agency ORC International conducted a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) survey with 380 young people aged 16-19 living in the Newham Borough. This chapter presents findings from this survey.

3.2 Methodology

See section 1.3 for an introduction to the methodological approach used for the survey with young people. Important further details about respondents’ backgrounds, the questionnaire and analysis are provided here.

A total of 381 young people from across Newham were interviewed by telephone and the breakdown of the interviews achieved is as follows:

- Age: Split equally amongst 16, 17, 18 and 19 year olds (25% of respondents interviewed were aged 16, 25% aged 17, 25% aged 18 and 25% aged 19).
- Gender: 49% male respondents; 51% female.
- Ethnicity: 18% white respondents; 18% black respondents; 18% Bangladeshi respondents; 14% Pakistani respondents; 13% Indian respondents; 18% ‘Other’.
- Disability: Seven percent of respondents were classed as disabled.

The questionnaire was ten minutes in length, with eight open questions, and covered the following areas:

- Background information on current/previous education, training or employment
- Young People’s choices: reasons for choices made and influences on choice
- Understanding the needs of different groups: Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET); Disability and/or learning difficulty; Education and Maintenance Allowance
- Young People’s Perceptions of Employability
- Understanding Young People’s Destinations
- Consent to take part in further research

The data are statistically reliable. The confidence interval is less than +/-5%, the research industry standard for reliability. We can be 95% sure that the findings reported at the overall level (i.e. out of 380) in this survey are representative of the wider population of young people in Newham. Further, having achieved 380 interviews in total, it was possible to break down the data by demographic details or other variables such as ethnicity and age and then
calculate any statistically significant differences between these sub-groups. Only statistically robust differences are reported, identified by use of the word ‘significant’.

3.3 Current education/employment status of respondents

All respondents were asked what to choose from a list the activity that would best describe what they were ‘mainly doing at the moment’.

The majority of young people interviewed were currently attending a Sixth Form or Further Education College (59%). A further 10% were still in full time education (up to Year 11) giving a total of 69% of respondents in full time education. As reported in the desk-based research (chapter 2), 10% of the young people surveyed were classed as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), a similar proportion to the national figure of 12% of 16-19 currently estimated as NEET. The main activity of six percent was some kind of employment and four percent were currently in a training programme. The majority of respondents saying ‘something else’ were attending a University. Figure 3.1 shows the full breakdown of results.

Figure 3.1 Current activities of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sixth form/FE College</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing something else</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full time education (up to Year 11)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking for work/unemployed</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training programme with an employer</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full time job</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part time job</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On break from study/work</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking after home/family</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary activity</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base size 381

There were statistically significant differences amongst the activities of these young people by ethnic group. Significantly more black respondents (79%) and slightly more Pakistani respondents (71%) were in full time education than white respondents (61%) and Bangladeshi respondents (63%).

Looking further at ethnicity, the highest numbers of NEET respondents were white (29%), slightly more than black and Indian respondents (8% and 5% respectively). 24% of the NEET group were Pakistani respondents, which potentially reflects the point made in the desk-based research that some young people from ‘Asian backgrounds…are typically

9 Please note low base size of the NEET group (38).
engaged in work in family businesses that may not be recorded as paid full-time employment in official statistics’.

3.4 Schools/colleges attended

At the time of the survey in Spring 2010, 61% of young people either attended or previously attended a school or college within Newham Borough.

The young people who attended a Sixth Form or FE College at the time of the survey were asked which college. The colleges/sixth forms most often mentioned were NEWVIC (21%) and Newham College (15%) and 13% attended a college outside of Newham.

Respondents who were classed as either NEET or doing something else outside of education or training were asked which school they last attended. Again the top three colleges/sixth forms were NEWVIC (24%), Newham College (16%) and a college/sixth form outside of Newham (19%). Figure 3.2 shows the full breakdown of results.

Figure 3.2 College/Sixth Form/School currently attended/previously attended

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider current attended</th>
<th>Previously attended education/training provider (NEET/something else at time of survey)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEWVIC</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newham College</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College/Sixth Form/secondary school outside of Newham</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Angela’s Ursuline Convent School</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another college or school in Newham</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training centre outside of Newham</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training centre in Newham</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base size 381; 83

Thirty-seven individual respondents still in full time education up to Year 11 were asked the school they currently attend. Four-fifths (81%) attended school in Newham Borough, with the top three schools being Langdon (16%), Little Ilford (11%) and Stratford (11%).10 None of these respondents attended a special school and none were disabled.

14 individuals were doing training programmes, 13 of whom gave the names of an employer or another training centre – most commonly ‘Quest Training’ and ‘Landmark Training Centre’. The remaining one young person did not know the name of their trainer.

10 See Appendix A for the full breakdown of results.
3.5 Reasons for studying outside of Newham Borough

All respondents who were studying, or had previously studied outside of Newham Borough were asked their reasons for doing so. Answers were quite wide ranging but closely mirror those identified in the desk-based research. Of this group, 18% felt the quality of the course and/or college would be better, 15% wanted to leave the area and 13% felt there wasn’t anywhere doing the course they wanted in Newham. An additional 10% chose to study outside of Newham because they had been recommended to do so by their parents (or someone else they respected), and seven percent went outside the borough to go to the same place as their friends.

There were some significant differences between young people studying a vocational course compared to those studying for an academic qualification. A quarter of respondents on a vocational course chose to study outside Newham Borough because there wasn’t anywhere doing the course they wanted within the Borough, compared to only seven percent of those on an academic course. Those on a vocational course were also significantly more likely to have chosen to follow their friends and study outside Newham (13% on vocational courses compared to 4% on academic courses).

The majority of respondents (62%) gave a reason for studying outside of Newham Borough that was not included in the prescribed list on the questionnaire. There were many varied reasons given by these respondents. Many chose their particular college simply because they “liked” the college (presumably the atmosphere and physical environment), and a large number also felt that the college had a very good reputation and that it was the “best college in their area”, which confirms the desk-based research finding that Newham residents’ see their local area as extending beyond Newham’s boundaries. Only a minority of respondents deliberately chose to study outside of Newham as they did not feel the Borough offered good colleges or a good choice of colleges, for example: “Because Newham Borough has not got any good sixth forms. [There are] no facilities…Monarchs is better for academic [studies].”

It is worthwhile noting that sport was important to several respondents who specifically mentioned that they chose to study outside of the Newham Borough as the college they attended had what they perceived to be much better sports facilities and sports science courses.

From a more social perspective, some of the young people wanted to get away from their friends and start afresh, or they simply wanted a change. For example: “My mum wanted

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11 This supports the findings of the Literature Review: In London, also, there is evidence that some young people who have under-achieved at school deliberately seek out post-compulsory education away from their immediate area of residence in order to free themselves from negative peer group pressures while they continue their studies.
me to go. She did not want me to mix with my school friends, [but] to start afresh. I did not want to go to college in the Borough.”

Some respondents had previously studied in another area, or used to live outside the Borough and therefore wanted to go to a college there. A minority chose their college because other family members attended, and a few respondents had not been accepted into a college in Newham and so had chosen to go outside the Borough to study.

3.5 Qualification levels

All young people interviewed were asked if their current course, or the last course they did, was either academic (such as GCSEs or A-Levels), vocational (such as an NVQ or Apprenticeship) or a mixed course (50% vocational 50% academic). Just over half of the young people viewed their course as being academic (55%), with 28% studying a vocational course and 7% on a mixed course. Ten percent were not sure, and stated ‘don’t know’.

Respondents were then asked which qualification they were doing, or they did previously. Their answers were subsequently grouped into vocational/academic courses and qualifications levels. Just over half of respondents (51%) gave the names of qualifications that the learning and skills sector would classify as academic qualifications and 38% were doing /had previously done a vocational qualification. (Comparing these results to those in the paragraph above, approximately 10% of young people were doing a vocational qualification but did not recognise it as such.) Three quarters of young people were studying/had previously studied for a qualification at a Level 2 or above (76%), with the majority studying for a Level 3 qualification (46% overall). Figure 3.3 shows the full breakdown of results based on the qualification level.

Figure 3.3 Current/last qualification level of respondents

Base: All respondents (381). Note: ‘Level 0’ means Entry Level.

12 See Appendix Figure 21 for breakdown of qualification equivalents for each Level.
Looking into these results by sub-group, there are some interesting differences between both the ethnic groups and gender. Figure 3.4 illustrates the differences between the ethnic groups with regards to the levels of qualifications studied. The most notable difference is that significantly less numbers of white respondents are studying Level 3 qualifications compared to all other ethnic groups in the survey.

**Figure 3.4 Qualification level by ethnic group**

![Chart showing qualification level by ethnic group](image)

Base: All respondents (381)

There are also significant differences between the different ethnic groups depending on whether the qualification studied is academic or vocational, as illustrated by Figure 3.6 below. Of particular note is that significantly more Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi respondents were studying for an academic qualification than the white respondents. The differences between the white and black ethnic groups for academic or vocational qualifications were statistically insignificant.

**Figure 3.5 Qualification type by ethnic group**

![Chart showing qualification type by ethnic group](image)
With regards to gender, there were significant differences according to the levels of qualification studied: more males were studying a Level 3 vocational course than females (22% compared to 10% of females). However, significantly more females were studying for an academic qualification (58% compared to 43% of males), and significantly more males were studying for a vocational qualification overall (45% compared to 31% of females). These results support the findings from the literature review that “Females … are more likely to follow the academic route, and are notably less likely to engage in work-based learning (WBL) (Wright, 2005)\(^{13}\).

It was possible to compare the level of qualifications taken by the young people with the levels employers would actually like employees to have by comparing the results from the young people survey with those from the employer survey. While we recognise that employers in a wider geographic area would look for young people living in Newham (or elsewhere) to have an extremely wide range of qualifications types and levels, this comparison reveals some interesting differences. Notably, in general, young people in the Borough are taking higher levels of qualification than employers are looking for:

- Almost a third of employers would like employees to have a Level 1 qualification (31%) whereas three-quarters of the young people interviewed (76%) are studying for a qualification that is Level 2 or above.

- 46% of young people are studying for a Level 3 qualification whereas only 14% of employers in the Borough were looking for this higher level from employees.

- 23% of employers would only be looking for employees to have Level 0 qualifications, whereas only 1% of the young people were studying at this level.

### 3.6 Young people’s choices

The young people were asked various questions regarding their current or previous course(s), in particular the reasons behind choosing particular course(s), satisfaction with course(s), levels of difficulty with vocational course(s) and influences on their choice(s).

#### Reasons for choosing courses

The reason the majority of young people chose their current course (or their previous course if they are not currently studying) is because they enjoy the subject (43%). The next most cited reasons were to help them get in to University (22%) or to help them get a job (18%).

\(^{13}\) Literature review, p28
Almost a half of respondents (46%) gave a reason for choosing their course that was not on the prescribed list in the questionnaire. Of these respondents, a fifth chose their course as it was the next step towards the specific career of their choice, such as childcare, medicine, IT. For example, as one respondent said:

“I have an interest in the public service and I am in the Police Cadets as well, so I asked them on what courses could I do to get more information on policing and [they] said the best course to take is a public service course.”

The next most often mentioned reason given by respondents who fell into this ‘Other reason’ category was that the course they had chosen was the subject/s the young people either enjoyed the most or in which they were strongest.

Most common other reasons were:

- the course was recommended to them, either by teachers, friends and family or a careers adviser;
- the course was a pre-requisite of the actual course/training programme they wanted to do (e.g. Foundation course, English GCSE);
- they wanted to do something more practical; and
- it was an area they were interested in/they ‘just wanted to’.
Looking into these results in more detail, there are some interesting differences between subgroups:

- Not surprisingly, young people studying an academic qualification were significantly more likely to have chosen their course to help them get in to University (33%) compared to those who had chosen a vocational course (12%). Conversely, those taking a vocational course were significantly more likely to have chosen this to help them get a job (21%) compared to those studying an academic qualification (11%).

- Young people studying for an academic qualification were significantly more likely to have chosen their course to help them progress to a higher level qualification; 8% compared to 3% on a vocational course.

- Respondents choosing higher levels of the courses, and specifically Level 3 courses, were significantly more likely to have done so because they enjoy the subject; 52% of young people studying Level 3 courses compared to 40% of those studying at Level 2 and 28% of those at Level 1.

- There were some differences amongst ethnic groups, notably that significantly fewer white respondents chose a course in order to get into University (10%) compared to Pakistanis (27%), Bangladeshis (26%) and blacks (23%).

Respondents were also asked an open question about why they chose their academic or vocational course. The majority of reasons were to do with:

- personal preferences, expressed either as enjoyment or interest in a subject/industrial area or a strong view about how certain teaching, learning and assessment methods suit or don’t suit them. For example, ‘to avoid examinations’ (vocational), ‘it’s more involved, more challenging and I’m interested’ (academic).

- perceived progression opportunities, for example, ‘because it helps to get ready for working life’ (vocational), ‘so I can go to university’ (academic). The ambition to go to university was the single most common driver of choices.

The young people’s comments also revealed a good number of misunderstandings about choice and progression. For example, ‘young people have to do academic courses’ and ‘at my schools they only do GCSEs so that’s what I had to do – there was no choice’. Also, ‘it is the highest qualification in College so I thought A levels would be best’.

**Reasons for choosing different/same course next time**

Reasons for saying they would choose the same course again were frequently to do with feeling the course was helping them get where they wanted to go or be, whether that was gaining particular experience or into College/University or a suitable job, giving them the knowledge, skills or confidence they wanted, or just benefitting them generally. Several stated that they had identified quite early on what future path they wanted to take and had
chosen the necessary courses or training to get there. Others stated that it was the right course because they were enjoying it, they were good at the subject or comfortable with the level of difficulty it was taught at.

By contrast, in terms of those who would make different choices, a common theme was not having worked hard enough or not being ambitious enough in their choices and decisions. Thus, for example, several would have stayed longer in education rather than leaving or tried harder with the subjects they were studying, or done more A levels.

Many others would have chosen subjects more related to a particular job. However, these respondents often felt they could have received better career guidance to enable them to make better choices at the time – in particular about what qualifications different jobs required or more about the nature and pay of different jobs, rather than, say choosing on the basis of enjoying a subject alone. A few said they would make a different choice in order to gain work experience to help them find future employment, or choose a different company for their work experience. Some would have chosen different subjects to match their current interests, such as keeping up sports and more creative subjects. There were odd mentions of the course not being fully recognised as a qualification. The following quotes give a little further insight into these issues:

“Because I picked some GCSEs that I thought would help me but due to lack of information from my tutors they have not helped my progress towards the course that I want to do”

“Because I was not paying enough attention to my studies”

“Until I started my GCSEs I didn’t realise how important education was in terms of achieving the highest grades”

“If I knew at the time what career I wanted to go to I would have made different choices”

### 3.7 Satisfaction with course

All young people who were studying, or had previously studied a vocational course were asked to rate their levels of satisfaction on a five-point scale ranging from ‘very satisfied’ to ‘very dissatisfied’. The vast majority were satisfied (92% very/quite satisfied) with 57% stating they were ‘very satisfied’ with their course.
Note that there were no significant differences in satisfaction levels amongst sub-groups.

These young people were then asked to explain their reasons for the satisfaction rating they chose for their vocational course. Reasons for satisfaction with the chosen vocational course were:

- Finding it enjoyable, interesting or fun
- The feeling that they were learning new things, learning what they wanted to learn, or even learning from the best
- Feeling that they have improved in the subject or gained confidence generally
- Feeling that the course will help them get on, progress, make money in the future, give them skills they can put into practice. Or actual experience, once in work, that the course did help them in a work situation
- Getting lots of help and support, good teaching
- Being able to relate the course to one’s daily life
- The way they get treated/being treated like an adult
- Met their expectations
- The work placement

Reasons for dissatisfaction were:

- Not being given sufficient help or support
- Teachers’ favouritism in terms of support or help offered
- The teaching or equipment not being very good or the course not helping them
- Not being warned that their work was below the standard required to stay on the course
- Feeling that they had no choice over which course they did
3.8 Perceived difficulty levels of courses

The young people who were doing, or had taken a vocational course were asked a couple of questions regarding how easy or difficult they perceived their course. Firstly, they were asked ‘how easy or difficult was/is the course?’ Overall 44% found their course easy and almost a third (31%) felt their course was difficult. Figure 8 shows the full breakdown:

**Figure 3.8 Perceived difficulty levels of vocational course**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>% respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very easy</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite easy</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither easy nor difficult</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite difficult</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very difficult</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The perceived levels of difficulty generally increased in line with the qualification levels that were being studied. For example, of the young people who were studying for a Level 1 qualification only 15% felt it was a difficult course whereas 21% of those studying for Level 2 found it difficult and 46% of those studying for a Level 3 qualification (a significant difference). Figure 3.9 illustrates these findings in full.

**Figure 3.9 Perceived level of difficulty of vocational course by level of qualification**

Base: All respondents who are doing or had taken a vocational course (124)
This group of respondents were also asked how they coped with the numeracy and literacy on their vocational course. Overall 69% felt they coped well with the numeracy aspects of their course and 77% felt they coped well with the literacy aspects. Figure 3.10 shows the full breakdown.

**Figure 3.10 How respondents felt they coped with the numeracy and literacy on their vocational course**

![Bar chart showing numeracy and literacy coping levels](chart.png)

The only notable significant difference between the sub-groups is that significantly more male respondents (8%) felt they did not cope well with the literacy on their vocational course compared to female respondents (zero percent).

### 3.9 Influences on young people’s choices

All respondents were asked to choose which three sources have had the strongest influence on their choice of education, training, jobs and career. As found from the evidence of the literature review, parents or carers, teachers and friends have the strongest influence on the choices made by young people (parents/carers mentioned by 55% of respondents, teachers by 44% and friends by 43%). Over a quarter of respondents were also influenced by universities (26%). Over a fifth of respondents (22%) felt that Connexions had been a strong influence on their choices, with another 17% mentioning ‘another careers adviser’. A significant number of young people (22%) felt that the ‘media’ was one of their top three influences on their choice of education, training, jobs and career. Figure 3.11 shows the full breakdown of results.
There were several significant differences within these results by subgroup.

- Connexions/career adviser influence:
  - Significantly higher numbers of male respondents (26%) were influenced by Connexions than female respondents (18%).
  - Significantly higher numbers of female respondents (24%) were influenced by 'another career adviser' than males (9%).
  - Young people studying a vocational course were significantly more likely to feel Connexions had a strong influence on choice than those studying an academic course (28% on vocational courses compared to 15% on academic courses). This is in line with the findings from the literature review, which found that: "evidence suggests that young people value and benefit from independent and personalised Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) from guidance professionals such as Connexions personal advisors. This applies particularly to those contemplating vocational pathways…" (desk-based review).

- University influence:
  - Universities were significantly less likely to be an influence on the white respondents than any other ethnic group surveyed. This follows the trend
seen with the reasons for choosing a course where fewer white respondents chose a course in order to help them get into university.

- Young people on academic courses were significantly more likely to be strongly influenced by universities (34% compared to 22% on vocational courses).

- Respondents who were studying a Level 3 qualification were significantly more likely to say that universities had a strong influence on their choice of education, training, jobs and career (36%) than those studying either Level 2 (23%) or Level 1 qualifications (14%).

### 3.10 Understanding the needs of different groups: NEETs

All respondents who were classed as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) were asked a series of questions to establish whether they perceive themselves as NEET, the length of time they have been NEET and the reasons behind this situation.

The first question of the survey established the main activity of the young people at present. This found the following:

- Looking for work/unemployed (28 respondents; 7% of total)
- Looking after the home or family/caring for a child or other family member (2 respondents; 1%)
- Doing voluntary activity (2 respondents; 1%)
- Taking a break from study or work/taking a gap year (6 respondents; 2%)
- Doing something else (45 respondents; 12%)

Almost all of the 45 respondents saying ‘something else’ were attending a University and would therefore not be classed as NEET so have been excluded from analysis. This left a small group of 38 individual respondents who we can confidently class as ‘Not in Education, Employment or Training’.14

These respondents were asked to confirm that they were Not in Education, Employment or Training at the moment. The large majority of the 38 respondents (71%) agreed that they were NEET. However 29% did not see themselves as NEET, which makes an interesting

14 This is a small base size, and care should therefore be taken when looking at the results.
point about self-perception and self-classification and could help explain why some young people do not access support aimed at NEETs.

The majority of the 38 NEET respondents were 18 or 19 years old (37% and 45% respectively), with 16% being 17 years old and only three percent age 16. 61% were male respondents and 39% female, and 18% were disabled and/or had a learning difficulty. By ethnic group, 29% were white, 24% Pakistani, 16% Bangladeshi, eight percent black and five percent Indian.

The young people that were classed as NEET for the purposes of this survey were asked how long it since they left their last education or training course. Two-thirds have been NEET for less than one year, just over a quarter (26%) have been NEET for between one to two years and eight percent have been NEET for more than two years. Figure 3.12 shows the full breakdown of results.

**Figure 3.12 Length of time since respondent attended last education or training course**

![Figure 3.12](image)

Base: 38 (all respondents classed as NEET from Q1, excluding those who said ‘something else’)

These 38 respondents were then asked two open questions to establish how they have been spending their time since they left their last education or training course or job, and the main reasons behind their current situation. In line with the findings from the first question, which showed that 28 respondents were ‘looking for work/unemployed’, the majority of these young people said they have been either looking for work or looking into further education courses. There appears to be a lack of focus on one particular route however, with several respondents both looking for work and looking into courses at the same time. Several of these young people also mentioned using careers services to help them in their employment search, for example:

“I joined Connexions and they [have] been helping me look for jobs and training places. The same with the Job Centre, been going there and they’ve been helping me look for jobs. Looking for jobs over the net and handing out CVs in Oxford Street.”
“I have been looking for jobs and signing on, been looking locally at garages, coffee shops, retail. I have applied at different colleges but there were no places for me. I was on a waiting list for a year at two different colleges (Stratford and Barking colleges).”

Similarly, the main reason that respondents gave for not being in education, employment or training at the moment was that they are unable to find work or that they are looking for work. Several respondents also mentioned that they no longer want to study or train, but would prefer to find some paid employment, for example:

“Employment? Nothing to find at the moment. And education? I have had enough pen and paper, training again. It’s pen and paper, it’s too much for me.”

A couple of respondents were no longer in education or training due to the high costs of the course or the transport to college, for example:

“I will love go to college but the course that I am interested in are not taught. The prices of the course are too high and I cannot afford it on job seekers at the moment I want to go to university and do my course…around my area there too many bad people.”

A few respondents were on a gap year, two were looking after their children or pregnant, and a couple mentioned family/personal problems as the main reason for being NEET.

Respondents who claimed not to be currently in full time school education, FE college or training nor full time or part time work only were asked how they had spent their time since leaving the last education/training or job. Many were either now at University or preparing to go to University but also working at least part time. (Due to question wording respondents did not include University as an FE college). And many who did not mention going to University were looking for further courses, some of these said they were on job seekers allowance or income support. A few said they had done “nothing” or had spent the time socialising with friends or family, or going to the gym/park. A very small minority had been working but the job had not worked out, either due to not liking the job or being made redundant, one had dropped out of University because they did not relate to the other students. One had been pregnant and given birth.

“I started at Thames Valley University. Studying music, technology and radio broadcasting and working in JD sports part time”.

Reasons respondents gave for being in neither education, employment or training, were quite varied and disparate, and included:

- At University (due to question wording)
- Having a stammer
- Being between courses
• Doing work experience
• Looking for a course to attend
• Having had family problems
• Missing the University round through holiday
• Wanting a break/time off
• Being pregnant
• Not knowing what to do/not being able to decide
• Having gone to a bad school with fights, racism and poor teaching
• Not wanting to go back to college and lacking the experience to get a job

3.11 Understanding the needs of different groups: disability and/or learning difficulty

Twenty-seven respondents (7%) were classed as disabled and/or having a learning difficulty. These respondents were asked the following open question: How could schools, colleges and training companies be improved for people with a disability and/or learning difficulties? Three main themes emerged from these students on aspects that could be improved:

• Increase one-to-one support: The majority of respondents felt schools, colleges and training companies need more teachers and support staff to help students with a disability and/or learning difficulties. Examples of the comments made included:
  
  o “More helpers and more carers and they should listen to the needs and help them so that they would feel comfortable.”
  
  o “More help, just have somebody support you when you don’t understand things”.

• Listen to the individual and adapt help accordingly: Some of the respondents felt that schools and colleges should be asking the individual students what help they needed specifically. There was a sense that some students felt their needs were ignored. For example:
  
  o “I think they should be more aware of them, some colleges some schools, they don’t see if the child needs help on anything….I think staff should ask that particular child if they need any help…They should put focus on that particular child because some children do not speak up.”

• Improve physical facilities: A few of disabled respondents mentioned a need for more lifts and stair ramps in establishments.

3.12 Claiming the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
All respondents were asked a series of questions on the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

Awareness of the EMA was extremely high with 94% of all respondents stating they had heard of the allowance, and only five percent being unaware of it. Within the five percent who had not heard of the EMA, there were some significant differences by sub-group:

- Young people studying a Level 1 qualification were significantly more likely to be unaware of the EMA (14%) compared to those studying at Level 2 (4%) or Level 3 (2%)
- All the black respondents had heard of the EMA; 99% of the Bangladeshi respondents, 96% of the Indian respondents and 90% of the Pakistani respondents were also aware of the EMA, however only 86% of the white respondents had heard of the allowance.

All young people who had heard of the EMA were asked if they were claiming EMA payments at the moment. 44% of these respondents were claiming EMA payments and with 56% had not claimed. The majority of those claiming payments were 17 years old (62%), with 48% of 16 year olds claiming and 43% of 18 year olds. Significantly fewer 19 year olds were claiming EMA payments (20%), which is to be expected as young people need to be aged 16-18 on application to be eligible. The only other significant difference by subgroup was that fewer Indian respondents were claiming EMA payments compared to other ethnic groups (24% compared to 36% of whites group, 51% Pakistani group, 51% black group and 52% Bangladeshi group).

The young people who stated they were not currently claiming EMAs were asked an open question regarding their reasons for not claiming.

Many not claiming said this was due to their parents or, less commonly, themselves earning over the threshold. Many others said it was because they were not in education, or were still at school (rather than college). Some said they were too old/too young/the wrong age. A few said they couldn’t be bothered, had not had time or were still deciding about filling in the forms. Another few said they had applied or were about to, but not heard back and a few had had their applications rejected several times but weren’t sure why, possibly due to errors in completion. Some said they weren’t eligible because they were on an apprenticeship and some weren’t sure whether they were eligible.

“Because I am not in college or training I am on Activity Agreement, which is equivalent to EMA.”

“My parents are earning more than the required amounts”

15 www.ema.directgov.uk
The young people who were aware of the EMA were asked how important the allowance was in their decision to stay in education or training after leaving school. Just over half of respondents said that it was important (51%), with 14% stating it was ‘extremely important’. Almost a third (32%) felt the EMA had not been an important factor in their decision. Figure 4.13 shows the full breakdown.

Figure 4.13 Importance of EMA in decision to stay in education or training after leaving school

![Importance of EMA in decision to stay in education or training after leaving school chart](chart)

The importance of the EMA on the decision of young people to stay in education or training after leaving school is highest for those respondents studying lower levels of qualifications. 65% of respondents studying a Level 1 qualification felt the EMA was important compared to 54% of Level 2 respondents and 44% of those studying at Level 3. In addition, significantly more respondents studying a vocational course felt the EMA was important in their decision to study (60%) than those choosing an academic course (42%).

### 3.13 Young people’s perceptions of employability

All respondents were asked whether they anticipated being employed in a job in Newham over the next few years. This was not asked because there is an expectation or desire from the borough for young residents to be employed in Newham. Rather, it was asked to find out what proportion envisioned staying in Newham, to give a snapshot of young people’s perception of Newham as a place in which they could get a job, if wanted.

Over half of respondents felt they would like to be employed in Newham (53%). Five percent wanted to continue studying or training without employment and only 13% specifically preferred to work ‘somewhere else’. Over a fifth of the young people (22%) had no preference to working inside or outside of the Newham area.

The data also reveals a couple of interesting significant differences between subgroups:
Significantly more respondents on vocational courses want to work in Newham (61%) compared to those on academic courses (46%).

Significantly fewer respondents studying Level 3 qualifications (41%) want to work in Newham compared to those studying at Level 1 (72%) or Level 2 (60%). However, even more interestingly, young people studying at Level 3 were also significantly more likely to say they did not mind whether they worked inside or outside of Newham.

Taken as a whole, the results reported above indicate that young people perceive little difference between Newham and elsewhere as places to work in future, which is probably a very healthy way to be.

### 3.14 Perceptions of Employability in Newham

Respondents were asked what jobs they were aware of in Newham for young people like them. 44% of the young people interviewed were aware of jobs being available in Newham in the retail sector, and this is clearly seen as the main area of employment opportunity. Following this, 14% of respondents knew that opportunities within the public sector existed, in particular within Education (9%). A noteworthy number of respondents (27%) did not know what jobs were available for young people in the area. The top nine sectors mentioned correspond with the large and growth sectors in Newham. Figure 3.14 shows the full breakdown of results.

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16 A list of sectors was read out to each respondent, with no limit to the number of answers allowed.
Figure 3.14 Awareness of jobs in Newham for young people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail - shops</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector - education</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector - other</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction - building</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Financial Services</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Sector - Health</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer services</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, gas or water supply</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents (381)

Within the 28% of respondents who mentioned some ‘other’ sector, the three main sectors were ‘general administration jobs’, ‘volunteer work’ and ‘working as a carer’. Interestingly nine respondents also mentioned that the 2012 Olympics will bring more opportunities, either as paid employment or as a volunteer.

A significantly higher percentage of male respondents (7%) were aware of jobs being available within the construction sector compared females (1%), which is perhaps not surprising given this is traditionally a male industry. Similarly, significantly more female respondents (6%) were aware of jobs within the Health sector (Public Sector) than male respondents (1%). The construction sector was also mentioned by significantly more young people studying for either Level 1 (8%) or Level 2 (7%) qualifications than those studying at Level 3 (1%).

There were some interesting differences by ethnic group. Of particular note are:

- the significantly higher percentages of Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents (65% and 56% respectively) who mentioned ‘retail’ (compared to 39% blacks, 35% whites and 27% Indians);
- the significantly higher number of white respondents who mentioned ‘construction’ (13% compared to three percent blacks, two percent Pakistanis and one percent Bangladeshis);
• the higher numbers of Bangladeshi respondents who mentioned any Public Sector job (23% compared to 16% Indians, 13% Pakistanis, 12% whites and six percent blacks);

• the large percentage of Indian respondents who were not aware of any employment opportunities (39% compared to 28% whites, 24% Bangladeshis, 22% Indians and 13% Pakistanis).

3.15 Perceptions of desirable skills and knowledge

All respondents were asked which three types of skills and knowledge (from a prescribed list) they thought would be most helpful in getting the type of job they wanted. The majority of respondents recognized the importance of both ‘basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills’ and ‘employability skills’ with 62% mentioning both of these aspects (see Figure 15 for the full results). Significantly more females felt the latter, ‘employability skills’ would be helpful compared to males (68% of females compared to 56% of males), whereas male respondents were significantly more likely than females to feel ‘technical and practical skills’ would be helpful (45% males, 27% females). These gender differences are perhaps not too surprising as they reflect some of the more traditional gender trends within employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills and knowledge</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employability skills – team working, organising/planning,</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professionalism, problem solving, communicating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and leadership skills</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical and practical skills</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject knowledge</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT skills to a professional level</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative skills</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language skills</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base size 381</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In reality there are several significant differences between what skills employers actually want compared to the young people’s perceptions of what employers want, potentially suggesting skills gaps may exist. Employers were asked what skills they saw as desirable in employees, and comparing these with the perceptions of the young people reveals:
• Almost two-thirds (73%) of employers are looking for ‘employability skills’, whereas significantly fewer young people (62%) thought these were desirable.  

• Over half of employers (52%) are looking for ‘technical and practical skills’ compared to 36% of young people feeling these are desirable.

• 30% of employers are looking for ‘administrative skills’, whereas 19% of young people thought these were desirable.

Respondents were asked about the levels of qualification they felt employers were looking for. The majority of respondents felt employers would be looking for Level 3 (27%) followed by Level 2 (15%), Level 5 (14%) and Level 4 (13%). Only five percent felt that employers would be looking for ‘subject knowledge’ and three percent mentioned Level 1 qualifications and ‘IT skills to a professional level’. One percent felt employers would be looking for ‘Entry Level’ qualifications.

There appears to be a belief that employers are looking for higher levels of qualification than is actually the case. This is particularly true amongst respondents studying, or who had previously studied for Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications. For example, 70% of respondents who are or were studying for Level 1 qualifications felt that employers would be looking for at least a Level 2 qualification. Similarly, 59% of those studying, or who had last studied for a Level 2 qualification felt that employers would be looking for at Level 3 or above. On the other hand, 27% of Level 3 respondents felt their standard of qualification is what employers want.

When asked what qualification they were realistically aiming to get by the time they are 20, the majority of respondents felt they would achieve a Level 3 qualification.

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17 This supports the findings from the literature review that: Nationally, survey evidence repeatedly emphasises the fact that employers want young people entering their first job to be good at timekeeping, possess literacy and numeracy skills, and show enthusiasm and commitment.
70% of the young people currently studying a Level 1 qualification are planning on continuing their study to achieve a higher level, particularly Level 3 (34%), and only two percent are stopping once they have achieved their current level of qualification. Similarly, 69% of those studying Level 2 qualifications intend to achieve a Level 3 or above by the time they are 20, with 9% stopping at Level 2. Of those respondents currently studying for a Level 3 qualification, the majority (41%) felt this was the level they would achieve by age 20, and a third felt they would carry on to achieve either a Level 4 or Level 5.

Age appears to influence the young people’s aspirations of the qualification level they will achieve. Significantly higher numbers of 16 and 17 year olds aspire to achieve a Level 4 qualification (22% and 23% respectively) compared to 18 and 19 year olds (16% and 11%). On the other hand, 18 and 19 year olds are significantly higher to feel they will realistically achieve a Level 3 qualification (46% and 45% respectively) compared to 16 and 17 year olds (28% and 31%).

### 3.16 Understanding young people’s destinations: perceived barriers to doing well in employment, education or training

The young people were asked what barriers they feel exist that are preventing them from getting on well in their employment, education or training\(^{18}\). Encouragingly, a sizeable number of respondents (29%) did not feel there any barriers existed, and they felt they are

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\(^{18}\) A list of potential barriers was read out to each respondent (no limit on choice).
getting on very well at present. However, amongst the rest of the respondents, a couple of themes emerged with regards to the perceived barriers to furthering their employment, education or training:

- **Lack of awareness/communication:**
  - Just over a third of the young people felt a ‘lack of training opportunities’ was a barrier at present.
  - Almost a quarter did not know what skills and qualifications they would need to do the job or course they want.

- **Money:**
  - 28% of respondents felt they were prevented from doing well because the costs of the courses is too high, and a quarter also mentioned they were ‘not getting enough money’.

There therefore appears to be some opportunity provide further communication to the young people in Newham about the opportunities that exist within training and education.

Figure 3.17 shows the full breakdown of results.

**Figure 3.17 Perceived barriers to getting on well in employment, education or training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of training opportunities</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs of courses is too high</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not getting enough money</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know what skills and qualifications are needed to get the job I want</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not have the right skills or qualifications to do the course or job that I want</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know what skills and qualifications are needed to get on the course that I want</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of college/training company/job/Transport is a problem</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of guidance/support from employer</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No recognised or accredited courses in the subject or area of work that I want to do</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t want to progress on to something higher or more challenging – happy with what I’m doing now</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would lose benefits</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English is an additional language for me</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No barriers – I’m getting on very well</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base size 381

The report now turns its attention to findings from employers working in Newham.
4. Quantitative survey with employers

4.1 Introduction

ORC International conducted a CATI (Computer-assisted telephone interviewing) survey with employers located in Newham Borough and a few from just outside the Newham boundary who employ young people from Newham. 380 employers were interviewed in February and March 2010. This chapter reports the findings from this survey.

4.2 Method

This section adds further important information relevant to the employer survey to the methodology section in chapter 1 that is applicable to both surveys.

Questionnaire – The questionnaire was designed to take approximately seven minutes on average for employers to complete, which was an important maximum length to reduce the burden and increase completion rates. There were mainly closed questions but also six open questions for deeper insights into employer's thinking and experience. The questionnaire covered the following areas:

- background information – size and sector of company and role of respondent
- employing young people – skills, knowledge and qualifications desired
- employer engagement – contact with schools and colleges and awareness of courses

Note that after 35 interviews had been completed, the questionnaire had to be amended in order to keep within the seven minute timeframe, and two questions covering overall satisfaction with courses offered by colleges in Newham were removed.

Statistical reliability and sampling – As with the young people's survey, the 380 interviews with employers were statistically reliable, that is, representative of the wider population of employers in Newham. Not enough information was available about the employers to construct a sample frame and therefore set precise quota targets for different industrial types and sizes of businesses and from different wards. However, a spread of types of industry and business sizes were interviewed. See immediately below.

Respondent profile

All respondents were either managers or had responsibility for business development and/or the recruitment of new staff. Just over three quarters of employers surveyed worked in an independent (single unit) business (76%) and 21% were employed in a business that was part of a chain or a franchise. Two percent said 'other', which included charities and companies within the voluntary sector, and one percent did not know.
Respondents were asked to classify their business sector from a prescribed list. The largest group amongst the employers was ‘retail’ accounting for just over a quarter of respondents (26%). The same number of respondents (26%) named a sector that was not on the list. These included sectors such as private education, private healthcare, voluntary organisations and charities. Figure 4.1 has the full breakdown of results.

**Figure 4.1 Sectors**

- Retail: 26%
- Business and Financial Services: 11%
- Construction: 9%
- Hospitality: 8%
- Manufacturing: 7%
- Transport, storage and communication: 4%
- Wholesale: 3%
- Public Sector - Health: 3%
- Public Sector - Other: 3%
- Leisure: 2%
- Customer Services: 2%
- Public Sector - Education: 2%
- Electricity, gas or water supply: 1%
- Other: 26%

Base: All respondents (380)

All employers surveyed were classed into three business sizes depending on how many people they employed:

- **Micro**: Ten or less employees (65% of respondents)
- **Small**: 11-50 employees (23% of respondents)
- **Medium**: 51-250 employees (8% of respondents)
- **Large**: Over 250 employees (3% of respondents).

Please note that due to the small base size of eleven respondents who employed over 250 employees, any sub-group analysis by size of business throughout the report does not include these ‘large’ businesses.
Respondents were also asked to give their job role or job title. Almost half of the respondents (49%) were the company owner or manager, and a further 29% classed themselves as ‘another general manager’. Four percent were in HR, personnel or training and development, and one percent was in ‘sales’ or ‘technical’. The remaining 15% stated ‘other’ which included roles such as Director, Assistant Manager, Company Secretary and Senior Administrator.

4.3 Employing young people

All respondents were asked a series of questions to attempt to establish the key skills Newham employers require from young people, and what qualifications are most in demand amongst local employers.

Skills and knowledge

Firstly, respondents were given a list of skills and knowledge and asked to choose which three they most look for when recruiting people straight from education or training. For clarification purposes, respondents were told by interviewers that “we are most interested in people in their first or second jobs after leaving school, college, training company or university”, and that “these skills and knowledge could be gained through education or training, voluntary work and part- of full-time employment”.

The literature review found that “nationally, survey evidence repeatedly emphasises the fact that employers want young people entering their first job to be good at timekeeping, possess literacy and numeracy skills, and show enthusiasm and commitment”. Furthermore, it was found that “compared with the rest of England…employers based in the London region are relatively more likely to report recruitment problems, reflecting higher levels of competition for skilled workers in the capital. Technical, practical and job-specific skills are at a premium.

The results from the survey amongst Newham employers appear to support these findings: the top three most desired skills at recruitment were ‘employability skills’ (73% of respondents) ‘basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills’ (63%) and ‘technical and practical skills’ (50%).¹⁹ Figure 4.2 shows the full breakdown of results.

¹⁹ ‘Employability skills’ include, team working, organising/planning, professionalism, problem solving, communicating
Figure 4.2 Most desirable skills and knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employability skills</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic literary, numeracy and IT skills</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical and practical skills</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject knowledge</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative skills</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT skills to a professional level</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language skills</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and leadership skills</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents (380)

Looking at the business types of the employers surveyed, significantly more employers from a chain look most for employability skills (81%) than the independent employers (70%).

Within the specific business types there were several significant, but potentially not surprising differences:

- Significantly more employers in the Construction sector would look most for ‘technical and practical skills’ (71%) compared to respondents from either the Retail (57%), Hospitality (45%) or Business and Financial Services sector (43%).

- Respondents in the Business and Financial Services sector were significantly more likely to look for administrative skills (45%) and IT skills to a professional level (24%) than the Retail, Construction or Hospitality sectors (23%, 21% and 16% respectively for administrative skills and 8%, 6% and 3% respectively for IT skills).

There are also some interesting differences in the results by employer size. In particular, significantly fewer micro employers look most for employability skills (70%) or basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills (60%) than the medium sized employers (90% for employability and 80% for basic skills). Figure 3 shows the full breakdown of results by employer size.
All employers who had included either ‘basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills’, management skills’ or ‘employability skills’ in the top three skills they most looked for were then asked about these skills in more detail.

- Employability skills: A very large majority of respondents looking for ‘employability skills’ usually looked for team working skills (93%), oral communication skills (92%) and motivation (92%) in particular. Figure 5 has the full breakdown of results.
### Figure 4.4 Employability skills in detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team working skills</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral communication skills</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer service skills</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving skills</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written communication skills</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General IT user skills</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales skills</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents looking for ‘employability skills’ (279)

- Basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills: Breaking this down by each skill reveals that 90% of employers would usually look for English/Literacy skills, 77% would be looking for Maths/Numeracy skills and 65% would be looking for IT skills.\(^{20}\)

- Management and Leadership skills: Of the 11 employers looking for these skills, ten would usually look for ‘commercial awareness’, nine would look for ‘personal effectiveness’ and ‘leadership’, eight looked for ‘strategic thinking’, seven looked for ‘financial management’ and six looked for ‘project management’.

As reported in the results from the survey amongst young people, it is possible to look at the skills and knowledge *employers* in Newham find most desirable when recruiting people straight from education or training compared to the perceptions young people have of sought-after skills.\(^{21}\) The results are shown in Figure 4.5.

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\(^{20}\) Base of 241 employers looking for ‘basic skills’

\(^{21}\) Results from the telephone survey amongst young people, Chapter 3.
The data identified a clear gap between the skills employers in Newham actually want from young people and the skills the young people in Newham feel would be necessary or valuable when looking for a job. For example, significantly higher numbers of employers were looking for employability skills than young people seem to realize: 73% of employers look for these skills most whereas 62% of the young people felt these skills would be highly desirable. In addition, significant numbers of young people (44%) feel employers would be looking for management skills compared to only three percent of employers who actually felt these skills were most desirable.

### 4.4 Qualifications

Respondents were asked a series of questions on the importance of qualifications and the qualification levels they look for in new recruits.

Firstly they were asked to rate how important it was to them that young people had done a vocational or academic course. This was rated on a five-point scale where one was very important and five was not at all important. Figure 4.6 shows the full breakdown of results.
Overall, around half of respondents felt it was important that young people had done these courses, with slightly more respondents rating academic courses as important (52%) compared to vocational courses (49%). This difference is not statistically significant, which supports the finding in the desk-based review that “vocational qualifications do not appear to command any advantage over their academic equivalents at the same level, except in sectors such as Construction where initial technical skills may be valued (Pring et al, 2009)”.

Respondents from the Construction sector were slightly less likely to feel academic courses were important (38% compared to 52% overall) and were significantly more likely to value ‘technical and practical skills’ (please see results in section 3.1 for more detail).

Respondents were then asked specifically about the levels and types of qualifications they are looking for in applicants who come straight from education or training. Almost half of respondents (48%) were looking for academic qualifications, and just over a third (34%) were looking for vocational qualifications. 30% wanted young people to have a Level 1 qualification, 29% wanted a Level 2 qualification and 13% wanted a Level 3 qualification. A quarter of respondents were not looking for any qualification at all. Figure 4.7 has the full breakdown of results.
Figure 4.7 Level and type of qualifications desired by employers from applicants coming straight from education or training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Academic/vocational qualification</th>
<th>% respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 0 / Entry</td>
<td>No qualifications</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Academic: GCSE grades D to G (or fewer than 5 at grades A to C)</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocational: BTEC General Certificate / BTEC Diploma / BTEC First Certificate / City and Guilds Operative Awards / CPVE Year 1 (Technician) / GNVQ Foundation / LCCI Elementary or First Level / PEI Elementary or First Level / RSA Elementary or First Level / RSA Vocational Certificate</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Academic: GCSE (5 or more at grades A to C) / 1 A Level / 2 or 3 AS Levels</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocational: BEC General Certificate with Credit / BEC Diploma with Credit / BTEC First Diploma / City and Guilds Higher Operative or Craft / GNVQ Intermediate / LCCI Certificate (Second Level) / PEI Stage 2 / Pitman’s Intermediate Level 2 Diploma Certificate / RSA Diploma</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Academic: 2 or more A Levels / 4 or more AS Levels</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocational: BTEC National ONC or OND / BTEC National ONC or OND / City and Guilds Advanced Craft / GNVQ Advanced / LCCI Diploma (Third Level) / Pitman’s Level 3 Advanced Higher Certificate / RSA Stage 3 Advanced Diploma / TEC Certificate or Diploma / Access to Higher Education Courses / ESOL and Foreign Languages Advanced Awards</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at this data by business size revealed some interesting significant differences. Respondents from small sized businesses were significantly more likely to want Level 2 qualifications (37%) compared to those from micro sized businesses (25%). Conversely, respondents from micro businesses were significantly more likely to want applicants to have Level 3 qualifications (15%) compared to those from small sized businesses (7%).

Respondents looking for more advanced skills when employing young people, such as ‘IT skills to a professional level’ were significantly more likely to want applicants to have a Level 3 qualification than those looking for skills such as ‘basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills’ and ‘employability skills’.

Perhaps not surprisingly, respondents who felt that it was important for young people to have an academic qualification overall were significantly more likely to want applicants to have either a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification, than those who did not feel an academic qualification was important.
It is useful to compare the qualification levels employers are looking for with the levels of qualifications the young people surveyed are actually taking. In general, the young people surveyed were studying for higher levels of qualifications than the employers in Newham were looking for. For example, 46% of the young people surveyed were studying for a Level 3 qualification whereas only 13% of employers were looking for this high level. In fact over three-quarters (76%) of young people surveyed were taking a qualification at Level 2 or above, whereas only 40% of employers stated they were looking for these levels.

Employers were also asked how well they felt they understood the content and level of different qualifications young people now do. It is encouraging to see that three-quarters of respondents felt they understood both the content and level of the different qualifications well, as shown by Figure 4.8:

**Figure 4.8 How well respondents feel they understand qualifications of young people**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Content of qualifications</th>
<th>Level of qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite well</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very well</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all well</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Bases: content 380; level 380

Looking at significant differences between the sub-groups of respondents, one of the most notable was between employers who felt it was important for young people to have an academic qualification compared to those who did not this was important. Employers who value academic qualifications were significantly more likely to feel they understood both the content and level of qualifications (80% stating they felt they understood the content very/quite well, 79% the level) compared to those who did not feel an academic qualification was important (66% content, 65% level). This perhaps suggests that a more detailed knowledge of the content of qualifications increases its perceived importance.

Employers from medium-sized businesses were also more likely to feel they understood the content of the qualifications (90% stating very/quite well) compared to those from micro-sized businesses (71% very/quite well). Respondents who look for more advanced skills when employing young people were significantly more likely to feel they understood the level of qualifications; for example those who look for ‘IT skills at a professional level’ were more likely to feel they understood the qualification levels (89% very/quite well) compared to employers looking for almost all other skills.

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22 These results are also presented in the chapter on the results of the telephone survey amongst young people but are presented here again for ease.
Finally, respondents were asked an open question to establish why they value some courses and qualifications more than others. Responses were very varied but a theme running through the large majority was relevance of knowledge and skills to the sector. Beyond this broad theme, the largest number making the same point were that it depended what the vacancy was. Other common answers were that practical and work-place experience were valued as much as qualifications, and that certain industries have requirements (in cultural practice if not legislation). Also, basic skills and key skills were also popular. Examples of each of these types of response are below.

Practice workplace experience matters:

“I do not value the qualifications as much as the experience”.

“Practical on the job experience rather than being in a classroom all the time.”

Industry requires certain qualifications, usually for safety purposes:

“We are a childcare provider and so we put childcare qualifications above others”.

Looking for people with job-specific skills:

“It depends on the nature of the job. If the job requires related qualifications then we have to specify them.”

“We require qualifications related to the business”

“Well, for me it would mean [the candidate] going to the London School of Printing in Elephant and Castle and getting qualifications there.”

Basic skills are important:

“Value English, maths and communication because they are the very basics in trying to sell goods.”

“I think it is very important that someone applying for a job is able to communicate with his employer and the general public so this, I feel, can only be attained if they have reached a good level of literacy and also numeracy. … Most important aspect of our business survival is … to be able to attract the general public into the area.”

Attitude is important:

“We value degree level simply because they show the level of determination and commitment they put themselves through. GCSE and A level show the basic skills; no reflection on the industry. Vocational courses that are related to my industry, so related to sales, they would hold higher merit than other [qualifications]”
4.5 Employment of young people in Newham

All respondents were asked approximately how many young people (under the age of 20) they had given jobs to in the past 12 months. Over half of respondents had not given any young people a job (54%) and a large majority of respondents had given ten or less people a job (91%). Figure 4.9 shows the full breakdown of results.

**Figure 4.9 Numbers of jobs given to young people in the past 12 months**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of respondents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>More than 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54%</td>
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<tr>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>11%</td>
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<td>1%</td>
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<td>3%</td>
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Base 380

Significantly fewer independent employers had not employed any young people in the previous 12 months compared to those from a chain (58% to 40% of chains). Similarly, significantly more employers from a chain had given more than ten young people jobs than independent employers (10% of chains compared to 4% of independents). Unsurprisingly, there were also some significant differences in the numbers of young people employed by the size of business of the respondents, as shown by Figure 4.10.

**Figure 4.10 Numbers of jobs given to young people in the past 12 months by size of business**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Micro</th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
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<td>More than 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>64%</td>
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<td>46%</td>
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<td>28%</td>
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<td>13%</td>
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<tr>
<td>7%</td>
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<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>27%</td>
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Base 246; 87; 30

These results are perhaps not surprising given the depressed and uncertain nature of the economic climate in 2009/2010. In fact the recession, and the resulting lack of job vacancies, was mentioned by several respondents as the main reason for not employing young people who had applied for jobs at their company.

Respondents who had recruited more than six young people were then asked an open question to establish what roles these young people had been recruited for. Below is a comprehensive listing of broad types of role, the full range of actual job titles provided and number of companies that have employed over six young people.
• Administration – Administrator, Office support/ general administration, General assistant, General administration, Receptionist, Filing and general admin, Assistant to a manager, Resourcer/administrator, Office administration, Audit clerk, Administration in accounting, Sales administration, Administration reception, Office administration, Basic book keeping and administrator, Team member, PA to the MD/Trainee underwriter, General office duties, Secretary, Administrator and warehouser, Court attender/assistant administrator, Centre administrator, Assistant administrator, Administration and customer service (typing, filing, serving customers) Travel clerks 38

• Customer service and cashiers – Customer service, Counter staff, Counter assistant, Office assistant- front of house, Customer service assistants, General customer roles, Customer advisers, Customer service officer, Cashier, Cashier trainee 29

• Sales (mainly retail) – Sales, Shop assistant, Retail positions, Sales advisor, Tele sales, Sales assistant, Sales or letting negotiator, Shop replenishment/sales, Sales consultant, Sales person, Book shop work 24

• Care, social and health (public and private sector) – Support worker, Key worker, Healthy eating campaign worker, Youth worker, Outreach project delivery, Transport and daycare, Care workers, Children's play scheme, Operations in our care business, Nursery assistant, Nursery nurse subject to qualifications, Nursery practitioner, Childcare/crèche workers, Childcare practitioner, Trainee housing management trainees 15

• Catering, hospitality and food preparation – Waiters and waitresses, Commis chef, Bar or kitchen associates, Chef, Grillers, Crew member (serve customers at the till), Work in the kitchen dining areas, Assistant in catering. 14

• Site maintenance/security – Security officer, Yard work, Warehousing, Security services, Stock control, Apprentices and storeman, Security, Guard, Controller. 13

• Creative and media (mainly high tech) – Programme editing and marketing, IT (CAD) engineer, Production assistants, Editor/director (for promotional film for a project / scheme run by Burberry to teach about the fashion world and a 6 week placement), update the website/email/communication/designing, Website developer, Assistant workshop leader/artist, Trainee admin/researchers/presenters of a radio show, IT systems administration 7

• Technical and engineering (mechanical/electrical) – Engineering (plant) apprentice, Technical engineer, Electrical insulation worker, Technicians, Security installers, Technical, Technical assistants 7
• Construction – Skilled labourers, Labourers, Unskilled construction industry workers (doing admin and support mainly), Building workers, Construction, Electrical and mechanical labouring. 6

• Other jobs, with five or less companies employing at least six young people:
  o Manual labour (manufacture/services) – Factory worker, Cleaning and laundry. T-shirt printers, Trainee mechanics, Weekly general yard work 5
  o General assistance / operatives – General duties trainees, Support staff, General assistants 4
  o Medical – Optical assistant, Dental nurse 3
  o Logistics/transport – Delivery of parcels, Prescription pick up and delivery 2
  o Hair and beauty – Trainee hair dresser, Work experience (tea, shampoo, customer greeting, some hair cutting) 2
  o Trainee negotiators in estate agents 1
  o Trainee surveyors 1
  o Fitness instructors 1

All respondents were also asked to give the main reasons why they did not appoint young people who applied to them for jobs. A high proportion of reasons given by respondents were not on the list contained within the questionnaire, and these were therefore classified as ‘Other’ (44%).23 Within this category, a large number of respondents didn’t recruit young people as they lacked the necessary experience. For example:

“Life experience, because we provide services to social care clients in the community in their own homes and it requires a level of maturity and experience.”

Another reason mentioned by several respondents was that no young people had applied, and that they did not seem interested in the sector. For example (from a respondent in the manufacturing sector):

“I tried to get a hold of young but could not. Went to the colleges but got little response. It seems they are not interested in the industry.”

“They just don’t have the experience. To do what we do you need at least 2-3 years experience and they just don’t have it.”

And from an independent employer in the hospitality sector:

23 This list was not read out to respondents but included some anticipated answers to aid analysis.
“It is not [that] we don't hire them, they don't apply for it. We don't attract them this is what I think. We hardly get any applications from young people.”

Several respondents did not feel that age was an issue in recruitment, but that the characteristics and capabilities of the individual are the driving factors, for example:

“We would be more inclined to employee young people. The age is not the issue, it’s whether they are focused to do the job they are required to do. Age does not come into it, it’s their drive to work in a retail environment and that they are capable”.

Some respondents did mention that the short-term attitude of young people can be detrimental to business, especially for small businesses who cannot afford to fund training for young employees who may leave after a short period of time. Other issues respondents mentioned included the inability of employers to take on people under the age of 21 due to reasons of health and safety or higher insurance for example.

Looking at the results from the list in the questionnaire, almost a third of respondents said the main reason for not employing young people was that they had no vacancies (31%), and a further 14% said the main reason was that the young people 'didn't have sufficient knowledge and practical or technical skills'.

4.6 Employer Engagement

The aim of this section of the questionnaire was to establish the extent to which the employers were engaged with further education and training providers. Respondents were asked a series of questions covering the contact they have had with specific providers in the Newham Borough, the potential for increased involvement in future, their awareness of courses run by these providers and the involvement of their company in the Train to Gain scheme.

4.7 Contact with schools, colleges and training companies

The majority of employers had not had any contact with schools, colleges and training companies over the last year with regards to helping education and training (62% of employers had had no contact with colleges and 74% had had no contact with secondary schools). The two schools/colleges which had received the most help from employers were Newham College (the Further Education College) and NEWVIC Sixth Form College which received help from 15% and ten percent of employers respectively.

The low levels of employer engagement in Newham are in line with the national trend, as reported in the literature review: "It remains a matter of concern throughout the UK that only a minority of employers engage directly with further education to train their employees or to...

All other colleges/schools mentioned by respondents had been helped by less than four percent of respondents.
recruit new staff. This is especially regrettable as those that do generally report good levels of satisfaction (LSC, 2008).25

A significantly higher number of independent employers were aware of the extent to which their company helped education providers compared to those from a chain: 10% of respondents from a chain were unaware if they had had any contact with schools or colleges compared to between four and five percent of independent employers.26

Larger businesses were more likely to have had contact with providers than the independent employers. Almost a quarter of medium-sized employers (7 out of 30) had had contact with NEWVIC Sixth Form College, a significantly higher number than the independent employers (8% or 20 out of 246 employers). Similarly, a large majority of micro-sized employers had no contact at all with colleges (70%), significantly more than those from both small-sized and medium-sized businesses (57% and 33% respectively).

Those respondents who felt that it was important for young people to hold an academic and/or vocational qualification were significantly more likely to have had contact with at least one college to help with education or training over the last 12 months.

All respondents who had made contact with at least one school or college were then asked about the type of help they had offered. The most popular help offered to schools and colleges from employers was giving work placements to students (70%). Figure 4.11 has the full breakdown of results.

**Figure 4.11 Help offered to schools and colleges**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% respondents</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taken students on work placements</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had students visit your company (short visits, tours)</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had employees mentor individual young people</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had employees visit schools/colleges/training companies</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed Apprentices</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had employees help teachers and trainers to design and develop materials about your business that they can use in classrooms</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met with employers and others to discuss education and training in Newham</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of these</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Larger employers were more likely to have sent employees to help teachers and trainers design and develop materials about their business that can be used in classrooms, with 18%

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25 Desk-based review, chapter 2.
26 Four percent of independent employers were unaware of any contact with colleges, and five percent were unaware of contact with secondary schools.
of micro-sized businesses, 38% of small businesses and 53% of medium-sized businesses having done so.

Potential future involvement with schools, colleges and training companies

All respondents were asked two open questions in order to establish both how they would like to get involved with Newham schools, colleges or training companies within the next 12 months and what the perceived barriers were to becoming more involved. See below for examples of responses, which were categorised into themes.

a. Ways of getting involved

Run courses for provider staff and learners

- “We would like to do courses for them both for teachers and students/ we can design courses specifically for different organisations or colleges / we are available to do all levels of training in film and animation”.

Training for provider staff on application of employers’ products and understanding of skills needs

- “In a particular way products are integrated into their needs and the skills for manufacturing those products are passed on”.

Work shadowing for provider staff to understand employers’ needs

- “They could send someone to my office to see how we work and the kind of training that would be needed for our business”.

Any way possible – a lot of different opportunities as long as they are relevant to the business

- “Any way possible because for being a radio station there is lot of opportunities for young children to express their talent from music to writing dramas.”

- “I have no problem working in partnership with schools, colleges or training companies as long as it applies to the work we deliver which is health care.”

- “By work experience and good communication, having meetings and going to schools for fare days.”

- “Just to see what they are offering and how to see how we can input as well. It’s more a conversation with us about what they cover and what we cover and how we can help. Especially for those that are outside the mainstream education. So that it’s more of a relationship.”
• “Just never thought about it. Yes, I would like to do work experience with them but it’s
depending on how I can help and what is on offer. The only thing that would stop me
is the time that would be involved and Health and Safety issues because of where I
work…”

Offer work experience

• “I would offer work experience if youngsters wanted it.”

• “Whatever we can do to help young people to have a better future/ If someone wants
to be an optician they can come and see how we work here they can decide for themselves whether they
want to be an optician or not.” “We are willing to work with all colleges and schools / I
think maybe we would consider offering work placement for students.”

Help deliver learning

• “We can help colleges to help youngsters learn or do some technical work especially
if they are interested in the motor trade or mechanics.”

• “Carry on supporting Diploma courses and also to work with Headteachers to make
them understand what industry is about and what the industry requires.”

Hosting learner visits to the employer’s site

• “…if the schools [do] manufacturing training, if they come see the whole process.
…we are more than happy to help.”

Input to information, advice and guidance and support transition from education/training to
work

• “Facilitate the transition from school to the work environment and to give practical
advice.”

b. Main barriers that get in the way of doing more work with local schools,
colleges and training companies

No clear business case

• Willingness to work together if it improved the quality of young people’s lives.

• Not unless the company gets busier / has more financial security.
• Unknown why the employer would want to be involved / nothing in common or to offer.

• “There is only two 2 people here. The business only warrants 2 people being here.”

• “Problem is that we have a lot of cash handling so the people must be trustworthy and know the seriousness of what is going on here. They must know the importance of confidentiality.”

• “The level of training would be inconsequential, the level in the industry is based on commitment. We need a high level of commitment. We employ people for the long term so we can develop them in our business. The industry has high turnover… we are very reluctant to train to the point where they could open their own business”.

• “I need someone with the experience to do the job.”

Already got an equivalent arrangement

• For example, “we've got an arrangement with Trident and we go with them”.

Don’t recruit young people

• For example, “we don't really recruit straight form college / just because this is the way we work”.

Paperwork

• “Reduce the amount of paperwork required”.

Availability of funding

• “If they are prepared to give me a contract they have to pay me money we can deliver basic skills training and business skill with literacy and numeracy if the college is willing to part fund my staff salary and overhead costs the reason is we have time but not enough money the college have time but not enough money and we would like to marry the two for the best interest for the community.”

Doubts over suitability of the industry

• “I would be happy for any suggestions about how the best way forward would be. I work with autistic adults so I don't know whether it would be the best environment for school leavers to be coming into.”

• “Nothing here for young people to learn.” (ventilation company)

Central office policy
“Nothing planned; we work centrally.”

No time

“I don’t have the time.”

Negative previous experience

“Only this year we have stopped giving the training we had some student, they don’t take it seriously they are not regular this is why we are doing that. They are talking and wasting other people’s time… they are not our employees we cannot say anything to them.”

Awareness of courses amongst employers

In order to establish awareness of courses run by local providers, respondents were asked: ‘The following institutions run courses for young people that may be relevant to your recruitment needs. For each institution, please could you rate your awareness of the courses that are run?’

The Newham College of Further Education (NCFE) had the highest awareness amongst the employers with 45% stating they were either very aware of all courses or aware of some courses. The Newham sixth form college, NEWVIC, had similar levels of awareness (41% aware), however only a very small minority of respondents were aware of the courses at St Angela’s or the Landmark training company. Figure 4.12 has the full breakdown.

Figure 4.12 Awareness of courses run by local institutions

Base: All respondents (380)
Respondents were also asked if they would like to be contacted in the future by these organizations to see if they could help them to recruit young people for their companies. It is encouraging that a sizeable proportion of employers would be interested in this option (43% said they would want to be contacted), and that slightly more respondents (57%) said they were happy for their details to be passed on to these organizations.

Overall, independent employers were significantly more likely to be happy to be contacted and to pass on their details than those from a chain. In addition, significantly more company managers or owners were for their details to be passed on than ‘other general managers’. These two results suggest that the people in higher positions within a company may be more receptive to approaches from colleges and training companies than those who have lower levels of responsibility.

The final question in this section established whether employers were aware of their company’s involvement in ‘Train to Gain’, “a Government scheme that gives funding to employers so that they can get the training and education they want for their staff”. Just less than a third of employers stated that their company did take part in Train to Gain (32%), with 63% stating ‘no’ and the remaining five percent were unsure.

Employers from the public sector were most likely to have taken part in the scheme with 59% of all public sector employers stating they had taken part, and in particular eight of the eleven ‘Public sector – Other’ respondents and six out of the nine ‘Public Sector – Education’ respondents.

Independent employers were significantly more likely to know whether or not their company took part in Train to Gain than those from a chain, with only 2% of independent employers stating ‘don’t know’ compared to 12% of those from a chain.

Size of business also appeared to have an impact on whether a company takes part in Train to Gain; the larger the company the more likely they are to take part. Almost three-quarters of the micro-sized businesses (73%) said they did not take part in the scheme, whereas only 53% of small-sized and 47% of medium-sized businesses said ‘no’.

4.8 Education and training in Newham: present and future

All respondents were asked if they felt young people from Newham schools, colleges and training courses were well prepared to work in their company. Overall, the opinions of employers were split with 31% feeling the young people are prepared, and another 31% feeling they are not prepared. A further 28% were unsure. Figure 13 has the full breakdown of results.

27 As read out in the questionnaire (Q21).
It is possible to compare the proportion of Newham employers who felt young people were not prepared to work to the national number of employers, as reported in the literature review: “Nationally, sizeable numbers of employers have been critical of the levels of skill they had found when recruiting recent school or college leavers. Over a quarter of employers say they find 16 year old school leavers to be poorly or very poorly prepared for employment, and around a fifth in respect of 17-18 year old school and college leavers.”

Interestingly, employers who are looking specifically for ‘technical and practical skills’ in applicants were significantly less likely to feel the young people are prepared (26% overall) than employers who are looking for ‘administrative skills’ (37%), ‘IT skills to a professional level’ (44%) or ‘Foreign language skills’ (48%).

It is encouraging that employers who have actually employed young people in the past year were more likely to feel they were well prepared to work in their company compared to those who had not employed any young people. For example 41% of employers who had employed between three and five young people in the last 12 months felt they were prepared compared to only 26% of those who had not employed any young people.

There was also a significant difference between the views of those employers who took part in Train to Gain, with 40% of these respondents feeling the young people are prepared compared to 27% of respondents whose company does not take part in the Train to Gain scheme.

Respondents were then asked an open question to establish the reasons for their answer to this question.
On the positive side:

“When they came here they were full of enthusiasm, had the right passes in English and Maths and the right attitude. They were here a month after they left school. They did very well, were with me for five years… Absolutely fantastic.”

“Because a few of them are coming for a job vacancy and the way they present themselves is good.”

“The quality of teaching is good and the student are willing to learn.”

However, a relative few were negative, mostly about attitudes displayed in the workplace and a perceived lack of willingness for young people to work hard for their money:

“They don’t want to work, they just want your money.”

“Lack of discipline and lack of responsibility and no respect.”

“The work ethic of young people is not geared up to the retail environment.”

“I don’t know the range of subjects they offer. All the adverts we offer are open to the public.”

“Usually young people coming from school don’t have the skills that we need.”

In the original questionnaire, before the minor amendments were made, respondents were asked how satisfied they were overall with the courses run by the local college or sixth form. Thirty-five respondents were asked this question before it was removed. Of these, eleven were satisfied overall (two were very satisfied), seven were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, one was very dissatisfied and the remaining sixteen did not know. These respondents were also asked to explain the reasons for their satisfaction levels.

The two respondents who were ‘very satisfied’ based their answers on positive personal experiences from children or friends who had attended Newham schools and colleges.

In general, the respondents who were ‘fairly satisfied’ overall felt that the young people from Newham schools and colleges were well trained and educated, and they were happy with the courses offered. For example,

“The people we sent on the licensing course found it very interesting and passed. They did food and hygiene courses as well and they got the certificates and they were happy.”

Most of the respondents who did not have a strong opinion (either stating ‘neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’ or ‘do not know’) did not feel they knew enough about the courses run by local providers. The reason given by a few respondents was that the schools and colleges had made no attempts to contact them or work with them, for example:
“Because none of the institutes have taken benefit of our skills or have done a joint venture with us”.

The reason given by the one employer who was very dissatisfied overall was that “they don’t train people for what we require.”

Finally, all respondents were asked the following open question regarding suggested improvements to education and training in Newham: “In your view, how can education and training in Newham be improved in the future so that young people have the skills and attributes that employers like you will really benefit from?”

The most common and strongest request was for teaching and learning that helps young people understand industry requirements, and for providers to communicate what they ‘offer’ local businesses who may be interested in engaging with them. In the main, companies wanted help to make their own business a success; they wanted providers to reach out to them to find out their needs. ‘Life skills’ (basic skills/functional skills) were also wanted in young people. Discipline was also raised as an issue, as employers had seen young people ‘hanging about’, ‘mucking about’ in the local environment or talking too much or disrespectfully and not demonstrating a strong work ethic in workplaces.
5 Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

Overall
The evidence that we have gathered from our review of national and Newham-specific documentation, and from our surveys of young people and employers in Newham, does not suggest that radical remedial action is required in London Borough of Newham’s commissioning of education and training provision for young people aged 16-19. Between them, the school sixth form, the two colleges and the WBL providers offer a wide range of education and training opportunities in the main of very high quality. Young people’s participation, achievement and progression are on average better than might be expected for the Borough’s socio-economic profile. In slightly more detail, Ofsted reports say that NCFE has Level 1 success rates that are well above the national average and Level 2 and 3 just above, and retention rates are also above average. NEWVIC’s retention and success rates are around the national average. Across Newham, participation post-16 is in line with the national average and NEET rates are better (i.e. lower) than the national average. Our survey findings are broadly in line with those arising from the desk research phase.

Nonetheless, the evidence we have gathered also provides indications to help inform priorities in the commissioning process and the future delivery and marketing of provision. The forthcoming raising of the participation age raises challenges in terms of addressing the needs of the minority of young people who are either NEET or in JWT. The findings of our surveys suggest a need to raise mutual awareness of provision and employability requirements amongst young people, their parents and employers, together with those responsible for provision and accompanying IAG. There are also pointers to the potentially fruitful direction of future data analysis and research in order to improve the monitoring of the effectiveness of 16-19 provision in the borough.

Many of our findings are encouraging and suggest that there are considerable strengths within existing provision. Attitudes to education and training amongst young people and their parents in Newham appear positive, albeit that white students and their families are relatively less aspirational than those from minority ethnic groups, which is in line with national trends. Satisfaction levels amongst 16-19 year olds who study in Newham are good. There is a high rate of continuation into full-time education at 16+, with almost two-thirds of the cohort entering level 3 programmes. Quality of provision is generally very high, based on the evidence of achievement rates and the judgements of Ofsted. A wide choice of education and training opportunities is provided for young people, and our research has not revealed obvious and significant gaps in provision in relation to young people’s aspirations and choices.
Choices of young people

In line with the long-established national pattern, young people with the higher levels of attainment pre-16 are relatively more likely to remain in full-time study at 16+, to opt for academic rather than vocational pathways, and to aspire to university entry. We should note here that many of those who are seeking to progress to HE have strong vocational motivations, albeit in the longer-term. There are also indications that more might choose vocational options at 16+ if they could have realistic reassurance that in doing so they are not reducing their chances of university entry. In this respect some may well be unaware of the track record of Newham College of FE and NEWVIC in facilitating progression to HE from qualifications including BTEC Nationals and Diplomas.

It is well known that a sizeable minority of Newham’s young people study out of borough, with notably fewer travelling into Newham to study from other boroughs. This pattern needs to be viewed in context, however. The proportion travelling out of Newham to study is actually slightly below the average for the London East region. Further we have found little evidence to suggest that outflow can be connected to any significant extent to objective measures of the quality and range of Newham’s 16-19 provision. For those living near to the boundaries of the borough, it is often at least as convenient to travel to provision in a neighbouring borough than to that in Newham itself. A minority of those we surveyed travel to another borough for highly specialised provision not currently available in Newham. For others there is indeed a perception that better quality and choice is available elsewhere. However, we believe that this is likely to be a manifestation of the long-established trend by which travel to boroughs furthest from London outweighs the inwards movement from them. This pattern is linked to vague but deep-seated perceptions that providers located in more prosperous and more desirable residential areas attract a higher standard of student and deliver a better education. Taken overall, though, we conclude that the nature of employment and travel to study patterns in LBN mean that realistic and effective commissioning of 16-19 provision needs to continue through existing bodies such as the North East London Cluster Group and must be based on the whole London East region – at the very least – and cannot sensibly be confined to the boundaries of LBN itself.

Information, advice and guidance (IAG)

It is clear from the national evidence that young people value and benefit from independent and personalised information, advice and guidance. Conversely, lack of support and comprehensive careers advice in compulsory education is linked to instability and uncertainty in decisions at 16+. Lower attainment bands are least likely to have a clear, confident view of the future, and in any case students and their parents are relatively less familiar with the more recently introduced vocational pathways for progression, and with WBL options generally. In this respect it is notable that young people across the country tend to be better informed and equipped to make vocational choices aged 16-19 if part of their timetable aged 14-16 is spent in college and in work experience.
In Newham, IAG is acknowledged by many as important influence on young people’s decisions. Connexions and other careers advisor services were mentioned by 39% of young people surveyed. However effective the provision of IAG, we should take account as well of the evidence from both desk and survey research that students are influenced in their choices by parents / carers and subject teachers. IAG support is therefore enhanced if these parties can be actively engaged.

**Employment opportunities**

Where employment opportunities in the borough are concerned, the research has identified a number of significant sectors plus a large number of SMEs, especially in the retail and service industries. We also note that growth is anticipated locally in retail; construction; leisure; hospitality; business and finance sectors. The Olympic Games likewise present an opportunity. Though chances for employment in Construction are relatively restricted for the current 16-19 cohort by the preference to hire experienced employees, many jobs will be created during the Games, most of which will be filled by volunteers – an excellent opportunity for work experience placements, as we have noted. Permanently there will be a continuing though reduced requirement for staff including in catering; administration; transport & ancillary services; customer service; maintenance and sport-related occupations.

Our survey of young people in the borough provides evidence that the majority would like to find employment within Newham in the next few years, and only a small minority are definitely seeking to work elsewhere. Their apparently low level of awareness of the associated job opportunities, especially outside the retail sector. This suggests that there is plenty of scope for more focussed IAG in this respect.

**Labour market information and learner destinations**

National evidence suggests that we should be wary of assuming that it is either feasible or sensible to attempt to determine commissioning requirements in relation to the labour market with any precision. There has been criticism, most notably by the Leitch review of skills, of previous policies that have focused on asking employers collectively to articulate their future skills needs and then to try to plan to meet them needs. Too often, this has led to ineffective and inefficient mechanisms, with too much provision being supply driven, and insufficiently responsive to actual demand from students and from employers as it manifests itself over time.

While most of Newham’s young people progress into employment or higher education there is a lack of detail on the sectors or types of jobs that they undertake. As we have noted, there is currently a dearth of reliable data concerning specific destinations at the level of individual learners, especially beyond first destinations for those individuals who do not continue with qualification-bearing education or training. Data is likely to become more accurate and comprehensive in future as electronic recording systems involving unique identifiers enable more effective tracking to be carried out. On the assumption that the Young People’s Learning Agency continues the Framework for Excellence arrangements...
previously put in place by LSC, an external contractor (currently MORI) will provide detailed national provider-level data on first destinations on an annual basis, at least where publicly funded courses leading to accredited qualifications are concerned. Otherwise, the most cost-effective solutions are likely to lie in periodic surveys of those no longer in full-time education or training, including via so-called “reverse tracer studies” which sample people in employment and gather data and opinion about their previous education and its perceived relevance. However, even with such improvements in place we suggest caution in the way the data they generate are used. The absence or presence of a clear link between the subject areas of previous qualifications and posts now held, should not be taken as any kind of automatic indicator of the former’s degree of relevance and appropriateness.

Employment-related provision, employment requirements and young people’s perceptions

As we have noted, Ofsted reports positively on the employment-related provision of the borough’s providers, and on their efforts to engage employers. Newham College of FE, NEWVIC and Landmark Training are all commended for aspects of effective practice in these respects. The borough also has other successful small, specialist WBL providers such as the Building Crafts College, and NEWTEC. Further, the borough’s Adult Learning Service provides 300 16-19 learning places annually, which is targeted at NEETs and delivered in partnership with range of voluntary sector training and youth providers.

Additionally the borough has an effective EBP, the Newham Education Business Partnership. This is a key member of the 14-19 Partnership, engaging 3500 employers in contributing to education & training provisions and has recently received an outstanding Award for Business Education Excellence. The NEBP is a key partner in further improving work-related learning, links with employers and IAG.

The key partners constituting the Newham 14-19 Partnership represent a major source of expertise and support in improving young people’s pathways into employment and / or continued education and training. As such they represent an important vehicle for channelling any actions resulting from this research.

At first sight the results from our survey of employers appear to conflict somewhat with the positive picture outlined above. In particular, the majority of those employers who responded have had no contact with colleges or schools in the borough, and have not employed any young people in the past year, with only around a third feeling that young people leaving Newham colleges and schools are well prepared for employment. Awareness of local provision, including Train to Gain, also appears low. These findings should be seen in context, however. For one thing, they are broadly in line with the national

28 ‘National provider-level data’ will be produced which is reported in two formats: aggregated together to provide national averages and data for each provider. Gradings for individual providers will then be provided on the following basis: 85% or above progressing into further learning or sustainable employment = outstanding; 72.5-85% = good; 60-72.5% = satisfactory; less than 60% = inadequate.
picture, where many employers have been critical of young people’s levels of skill – literacy and numeracy being the main problem areas, followed by attitudinal reasons and general communication skills. And as with the national picture, those employers who we surveyed who have experienced direct contact with Newham’s colleges and schools, and / or have employed young people recently, are much more positive in their attitude. Likewise, some areas of employer dissatisfaction are related to a perceived lack of flexibility and responsiveness in the system, concerning such aspects as the requirements of national qualifications, or the eligibility criteria for Train to Gain, rather than the quality and range of local provision. Our survey of employers did not suggest that areas of dissatisfaction are linked to specific education and training requirements not currently available in Newham.

More reassuring is the fact that all but a quarter of those we surveyed require job applicants to possess qualifications, though in practice there appears to be some preference for academic rather than vocational qualifications. A large majority feel that they understand the content and level of the different qualifications on offer to young people. We feel this finding must be treated with some scepticism, however, especially where the more recently introduced Diplomas and the Foundation Learning Tier are concerned. Also encouraging is the fact that around half of those employers we contacted indicated that they would be happy for their details to be passed on to local providers of education and training with a view to assisting the recruitment of young people. This offers a potentially excellent opportunity for gaining direct contact and influence with some of those employers who currently have no direct experience of Newham’s schools, colleges and WBL providers. Here there will be a need to counter doubts that involvement in the training and recruitment of young people will provide any net benefit to the organisations concerned, rather than adding to workload and cost. The business case for involvement could involve reassurance on sources of funding and other support, plus evidence of the experience of those employers who currently recruit young people in Newham and are satisfied with the outcomes.

Perhaps the most notable finding from our surveys is the discrepancy from employers’ own immediate skills requirements from young people the might seek to employ, and those perceived as necessary by young people. Employers tend to emphasise basic employability skills and attitudes, literacy, numeracy and IT, though those in the Construction and Manufacturing sectors also highlight technical and practical skills. Whilst young people are not unaware of these requirements, they place more emphasis on the technical and managerial competences denoted by higher level qualifications. These perceptions appear illustrative of the “U” shaped modern labour market in the UK that some analysts have identified, with job opportunities concentrated at the low skill and high skill ends. In the case of the latter, employers are prepared to pay for training, and / or to recruit staff who already have the requisite experience. In the case of the former, employers expect the state education system to deliver young people possessing the commitment and inter-personal attributes to perform as reliable employees. Our findings suggest that there is a need to raise young people’s awareness of employers’ expectations in these respects, and of the likelihood of having to gain experience in low skill posts as a means of proving their
capability to progress to the more demanding roles that provide the opportunity to exercise the technical skills and knowledge they have acquired at school, college or university.

**Not in education, employment or training (NEET) and jobs without training (JWT)**

It is clear from the data that some young people are not engaged by the current offer; some are NEET and some are in employment that does not offer them training (JWT). Nationally, the overall proportion of 16-19 year olds NEET at any one time is around 12%, while data from Newham show the local figures have decreased over time and are currently at 6.7%. The national data indicates that NEETs and JWT are by no means homogeneous groupings, and that there is considerable movement in and out of education, training and employment. This picture is replicated in our survey of young people in Newham, where the majority who were NEET when we contacted them were actively looking for work and/or education/training, and where two-thirds had been NEET for less than a year.

Nevertheless, it is clearly important to address the needs of these groups wherever practicably possible. The well-established national evidence we have identified suggests areas where preventative methods can have a significant impact in retaining young people in education and training in the first place. These include rigorous efforts to tackle truancy during compulsory education, and strategies to support student retention and progression thereafter. The latter include the provision of the full range of pathways from foundation level through to level 3 and beyond, supported by clear and personalised IAG provided regularly throughout a learner’s course. Newham’s current providers are generally commended by Ofsted in these areas. JWT represents another potentially fruitful area for cost-effective action, especially via engaging those employers – including many SMEs – who currently have no contact with providers and who do not deliver any training themselves.

In terms of re-engaging those already NEET, we note the evidence that Entry to Employment (e2E) programmes, Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs), and Activity Agreement pilots have all been shown to have a positive impact in encouraging participation. Data shows Newham has the highest percentage take up of EMAs of any East London borough. Our survey of young people in Newham offers reassurance in that almost all those we contacted are aware of the EMA, and almost half claim payments. Most of this latter group indicated that the availability of the EMA has been an important factor in their decision to stay on in education or training. However, a few of those eligible for EMAs in Newham do not claim payment.

For longer term NEETs in particular, we emphasise the evidence of the importance to their re-engagement of small scale, flexible voluntary sector provision. Vulnerable young people need to progress by means of small steps, supported by confidence-building activities, often

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involving youth workers. We further note the recent work in colleges in inner London boroughs that identified four critical characteristics of the best types of provision:

- partnership arrangements;
- effective management and organisation;
- personalised learning; and
- IAG and progression routes, signposted via clear and meaningful destinations.

Learning difficulties and disabilities and ESOL

As we have seen from the national data, at age 16, young disabled people appear twice as likely to be NEET – two-thirds as likely across the 16-19 age range. They are also over twice as likely to have no qualifications, and less than half as likely to enter HE at 18. Far more young people with disabilities and learning difficulties want a job than the numbers who actually manage to get one. Here, we have noted that non-vocational education helps enable first steps back into learning before moving onto vocational training. Effective employer engagement in this respect includes raising employers’ awareness of their duty towards disabled employees and support to them in carrying it out. Expert advice also needs to be available to disabled people and their families to guide them through the complexities of the benefit situation when they are considering entering employment. All this requires effective Inter-agency collaboration.

It is reassuring that in general, the educational experience of those with learning difficulties and disabilities appears positive, and that the Ofsted inspection reports of Newham providers report good practice in this area, in particular at Newham College of FE. However, we also note that our survey respondents with a disability and / or a learning difficulty want more one-to-one and tailored support, with some also feeling a need for improvement in the physical facilities at their place of study or employment.

Though the aims of ESOL provision are not specifically vocational, being focused more social and citizenship aspects, we have seen that in practice they often lead to further study leading to national qualifications. Many in ESOL classes have a strong vocational motivation, and Ofsted reports associated good practice at Newham College of FE and at St Angela’s Ursuline Convent School.

Adaptability in the light of potential future policy changes

Lastly in our conclusions, we feel it important to flag the likelihood of further policy changes impinging directly or indirectly on the 16-19 commissioning process, irrespective of the result of the forthcoming general election. Even if a Labour government in returned on 6th May, there may well be some refinements to current policy though the main direction of the current 14-19 strategy is likely to remain intact. However, a future Conservative government promises to put FE back under a revised FE funding council – that is a funding body with no remit for planning. Commitments to extend institutional autonomy, and the rights of individual and groups to establish schools may ultimately place limits on LA’s abilities to plan.
or commission. These moves, in conjunction with a distinctly lukewarm attitude to the current concept of the 14-19 Diplomas, seem likely to herald a return to a more “traditional” curriculum. The Conservatives have also announced that their approach to the raising of the participation age will be in the form of a voluntary scheme. There have additionally been suggestions from some right-leaning think-tanks that EMAs should be scrapped because of the extensive “dead-weight” involved in funding those who would have participated in full-time education and training in any case, though official policy as yet contains no pronouncement on this issue. On the other hand Conservative commitments include a significant extension in apprenticeship places, a rationalisation of Train to Gain to become more responsive to employer needs, and the introduction of a system of Lifelong Learning Accounts. Commissioning plans therefore need to be capable of adapting to the potential impacts of these policies from 2011 onwards.

5.2 Recommendations

Recommendations arising from our research are intended to build on the many strengths of Newham’s existing 16-19 provision, to focus attention on those areas where the commissioning process can have the most cost-effective impact in the immediate future, and to flag other areas where further data analysis and research could add value.

Our key recommendations are as follows:

- Support the Newham school, college and WBL providers to maintain, develop and promote their many strengths as outlined in the latest Ofsted Inspection reports. The commissioning process should seek to avoid changes that would cut across or unnecessarily duplicate such provision.

- In conjunction with the Newham 14-19 Partnership:
  - Review and strengthen IAG arrangements with a view to raising young people’s awareness of pathways other than GCE / A levels – including evidence of the routes into HE that they can provide, and of opportunities in WBL – and also of employer’s requirements of young people seeking work.
  - Prioritise collaborative action to review, improve and fill any gaps in provision for NEET and JWT in anticipation of the raising of the participation age, taking account of the effective practice that we have identified.
  - Support initiatives for the collaborative involvement of providers, careers advisers, young people, parents and employers to raise mutual awareness. Here we suggest that early action is taken to follow-up the employers in our survey who indicated that they are happy to be contacted again. When this is done, it is important that tangible advantages of involvement are offered, drawing on the experience of those employers who are already successfully engaged.
  - Likewise, it is important to continue to work together to raise awareness of the duty to support young people with learning difficulties and
disabilities, and to respond to their needs for more personalised provision and better employment opportunities.

- Work with neighbouring boroughs to ensure that overall provision is appropriately responsive to cross-boundary flows. In parallel with this activity, we recommend that where necessary further analysis of ILR data is commissioned in order to establish more fully the extent to which significant outflow from the borough can be connected to gaps in Newham’s existing offer. Similarly, the data on inflow from other boroughs should be analysed further to identify any instances where the Newham offer appears more extensive or appealing compared with that of neighbouring LAs.

- Use the opportunity presented by the production of the 14-19 prospectus to promote the range and quality of current 14-19 provision in Newham. Here the aim should be to raise public awareness of the offer. Success in this area could be expected to reduce out of borough travel to study where currently it is motivated primarily by misguided assumptions about relative quality. Consideration should also be given to selective promotion beyond Newham’s boundaries in instances where the borough offers high quality provision which could accommodate additional learners.

Longer term, we suggest that there could also be benefit in further data analysis and research aimed at illuminating further the relationship between education, training and onward progression, as follows:

- The undertaking of a matching analysis across successive years of the national ILR and PLASC datasets in order to track movement of 16-19 year olds into and between programmes, including both Newham residents studying outside the Borough, and residents of other Boroughs who study in Newham.

- The commissioning of a “reverse tracer study” of employed persons in the Borough aged 16-30 to identify the extent of relationship between their current post and where and what they studied aged 16-19, and their perceived relevance concerning the latter. Adaptation of the existing Newham household survey would allow this to be done to at least a partial extent.

The outcomes of further analysis and research along these lines could be expected to help monitor the success of the implementation of the commissioning process, to inform providers’ review and revision of their existing programmes, and to suggest potential areas where the borough might wish to commission new areas of provision.

Though strictly speaking outside the remit of this piece of research, it is quite clear that a number of our findings have significant implications for provision in Newham pre-16. In this regard we further suggest that:
• Truancy rates in Newham secondary schools are reviewed to identify the scope for more rigorous follow-up and re-engagement of persistent absentees. Success in reducing rates of long-term truancy from school can be expected to have a direct impact in reducing the incidence of NEETs at 16+.

• Continued efforts are made to strengthen IAG – from 14+ at least – with a view to raising awareness of the full range of full-time post-16 education pathways, plus opportunities in WBL. The 14-19 prospectus is a key document in this respect.

Lastly, we recommend that the Executive Summary of the findings from this research is made more widely available. It could prove very useful if the local authority were to help communicate to Newham residents, especially young people, parents and employers, the very good track record of Newham College of FE, NEWVIC and other post-16 providers, including in facilitating progression to HE from qualifications including BTEC Nationals and Diplomas. School, college and WBL provider managements and staff should find the evidence presented useful in reviewing and strengthening approaches in areas including:

• marketing of provision to young people, parents and employers;
• the delivery of IAG that emphasises the full range of pathways and progression opportunities, backed by case study evidence of former students and of the requirements of employers;
• strategies to maintain and improve student retention and achievement;
• support for progression at 17+ and beyond, especially from level 2 to level 3 in vocational areas.
Appendix A. Literature review of generic evidence of 16-19 education, training and employment

Understanding young people’s choices and employability: Factors influencing young people in their choice on education and training courses between the ages of 16 and 19

Relationship to 14-16 phase
Nationally, there is strong and longstanding evidence that choices between the ages of 16-19 cannot be divorced from the experiences of young people from age 14 or even earlier. This has become even more the case in recent years with the establishment of a deliberate policy focus on the 14-19 phase of education, accompanied by the introduction of programmes at key stage 4 including the Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP), the Young Apprenticeship Programme, the Foundation Learning Tier, and – in particular – the Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced Diplomas (Marson-Smith et al, 2009).

At present it is too soon to judge the full impact of these developments on 16-19 choices, but early indications do not suggest significant changes in the patterns that have been identified by research over the past 15 years and more. Most notably, attempts to achieve “parity of esteem” between vocational and academic routes of progression appear to be little further towards realisation than when they were first begun in earnest over three decades ago.

Expectations and aspirations
At the outset, we should also note that choices are formed over time, from broad expectations to specific decisions on subject, course, place of study and employment, and all bounded by the opportunities actually available (Hodkinson, 2004). What seems “irrational” from the viewpoint of policy makers and planners may be entirely rational when seen from the perspective of individual circumstances. Different individuals will also go about the process in different ways. One model adopted by government identifies eight distinct “mindsets” encapsulating views about the future and levels of decisiveness (Figure A1: SHM, 2005).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mindset</th>
<th>Outcome focus</th>
<th>Process focus</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May bypass the system</td>
<td><strong>Confident aspirational</strong>&lt;br&gt;My ambition will get me there</td>
<td><strong>Determined realists</strong>&lt;br&gt;I know what I want: let me focus on that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes the most out of the system</td>
<td><strong>Long-term preparers</strong>&lt;br&gt;School, degree, then I’m not sure</td>
<td><strong>Indecisive worriers</strong>&lt;br&gt;How can I decide? It’s all too much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passes through the system</td>
<td><strong>Short-term conformists</strong>&lt;br&gt;What’s the next step in the education system?</td>
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30 Thus a young person may take up a job rather than continue on a course at Level 1 or 2 because he / she judges (quite reasonably) that gaining such a qualification would not enhance his / her employability to any great extent. Or a young mother may be reluctant to return to learning because of a fear that this would detract from her parental duties.
Overall, most 16 year olds were classified as “determined realists”, with the next most frequently identified group being “comfort-seekers”, though neither of these conditions was necessarily stable over time.

**Demographic and socio-economic influences**

The key influence on opportunity and choice remains the deep-seated link between social class / socio-economic status and attainment. Generally speaking, young people from the least well off family backgrounds perform least well at school, and at 16 are most likely to seek full-time employment and to withdraw from education or training. They are also most likely to choose and be directed towards vocational options at school, including the Diplomas, and to continue in the vocational route after leaving. This in turn helps to explain why those with average or below average attainment at 16 are relatively more likely to enrol at a general FE college as opposed to a sixth form college or school. Conversely, young people from better off backgrounds and with above average attainment at 16 are much more prone to continue with full-time education, follow the A level route, and to study in a school sixth form or sixth form college (Davies, 1996; Foskett & Hesketh, 1996; Pring et al, 2009).

This pattern does not seem to be explained by any instinctive aversion to vocational education amongst those of above average attainment. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that the whole ability band is attracted by subjects that are perceived as practical and relevant to the world of work. Work experience placements also tend to be universally well-regarded (Davies, 2006b). The answer rather lies in the extent to which young people aspire to progress to higher education. Those for whom this is a definite goal overwhelmingly follow the A/AS level route, because they conclude – correctly in most cases – that in doing so they will optimise their chances of entry to the degree course and university of their choice. Even amongst those for whom university entry is only a possible ambition, some are deterred from choosing the vocational route that they might otherwise have followed because of a genuine fear that it might close off this option, rather than open it up. Others who are motivated primarily by the desire to find full-time employment may also reason that their prospects will be improved, or at least not jeopardised, by acquiring good GCSEs and A levels rather than ostensibly equivalent vocational qualifications (Pring et al, 2009).

No doubt this helps to account for the fact that the Diplomas are still some distance from reaching their targets for both numbers of learners enrolled and lines of learning offered – and also that the learners who are involved in the Diplomas tend overwhelmingly to be those with average and below average prior attainment, who were perceived at school as having a “practical” as opposed to an academic inclination (O’Donnell & Lynch, 2009; Pring et al, 2009).

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31 Though the Advanced Diploma theoretically fulfils university matriculation requirements, in practice most admissions tutors continue to give preference to candidates with good grades in two or more A levels.
We should also note here that 16-19 year olds who are engaged in (supposedly) full-time learning overwhelmingly take on paid employment in parallel. Hours worked do not appear to be related to relative deprivation (though low numbers quoted by some students from Asian backgrounds are thought to mask significant levels of unpaid work in family businesses). In general students appear to regard this state of affairs positively – as part of the transition to adulthood as well as a welcome source of income. However, there are indications that when hours of work exceed ten per week there commences a negative correlation with academic performance. A number of colleges have attempted to combat this effect by seeking to adjust timetables to enable learners more readily to manage the balance of study and paid employment (Davies, 1999).

Choice of subjects at school also has a bearing on what and where 16-19 year olds study. Gender plays a part here, reinforced by perceptions of male and female career opportunities. The failure to select particular subjects may later restrict or rule out certain types of course and career option, whilst those that are taken exert an influence on subsequent progression. This makes it important both that young people are supported in making the choices that are right for them, and that there is sufficient flexibility in the system to allow for subsequent changes of pathway.

There are also other gender differences in the patterns of education and training for 16-19. Females generally achieve higher levels of attainment than males, have higher aspirations, are somewhat more likely to remain in full-time education at 16, are more likely to follow the academic route, and are notably less likely to engage in work-based learning (WBL) (Wright, 2005).

Differences by ethnicity are likewise apparent, linked to attainment and social class. Nationally, Chinese and Indian ethnic groups have the highest Level 2 and Level 3 attainment by age 19, and Black, Traveller and Gypsy / Roma groups the lowest – though the Black group shows the most improvement in Level 2 attainment between the ages of 16 and 19 (DfES, 2007). In general, ethnic minority groups are more likely than their White counterparts with similar levels of attainment to stay on in full-time education, and are proportionately less well represented in WBL. At least part of the explanation for this pattern appears to lie in the relatively higher educational aspirations of many ethnic groups, combined with the poorer labour market opportunities that sometimes apply to them (Wright, 2005). Some postcodes with above average concentrations of people from an Asian background have participation rates in further education that are higher than would normally be expected given the socio-economic profile (Mosaic).

The nature of the labour market exerts a more general influence on those young people whose primary motivation is to enter full-time employment at 16, or subsequently after a further period of study. However, Level 1 and 2 qualifications are by no means passports to employment. Apprenticeships are popular, and Advanced Apprenticeships in particular offer excellent pathways into paid work. Nonetheless, opportunities via this route are severely restricted by the limited numbers of places on offer from employers. Some of those able to obtain full-employment enter jobs with training, especially if they join larger organisations, which may also involve studying towards accredited vocational qualifications at Level 2 or above, including via Train to Gain. In many cases though, and particularly for those working in SMEs, no further education and training occurs unless individuals make arrangements for it in their own time. As with the last recession in the early 1990s, current indications are that post-16 continuation rates in full-time education are rising as jobs become harder to find and those with qualifications at Level 2 or below find themselves in a weaker competitive position compared to other job-seekers (Pring et al, 2009).
Why do students decide to study out of the Borough post-16?

General FE (GFE) and sixth form colleges are autonomous institutions operating within a system where in practice there are financial incentives that encourage competition to recruit students. In urban areas such as London, students are usually faced with a choice of a number of colleges within easy travelling distance. Whist convenience is an important factor in choice, it is unlikely that many young people identify particularly with or feel a loyalty towards their own local authority, as opposed to the neighbourhood in which they reside. For some living on the periphery of the local authority boundaries, colleges in other boroughs are actually nearer and/or easier to reach. In some cases colleges in other boroughs will be perceived to offer a better choice of the course or qualification that an individual wishes to study. Reputation also plays a part, influenced not just by objective measure of performance but also by the socio-economic and ethnic profile of the area in which a college is located and the students who attend (Foskett & Hesketh, 1996; Pring et al, 2009). In London, also, there is evidence that some young people who have under-achieved at school deliberately seek out post-compulsory education away from their immediate area of residence in order to free themselves from negative peer group pressures while they continue their studies. This phenomenon has been found to be relatively more prevalent amongst young black males.

The structure of educational provision in an area post-16 has also been noted as influencing choice and opportunity. In recent years government policy has been to increase the choice of type of educational provider open to young people, including via the so called “sixth form presumption” encouraging the expansion and addition of sixth forms in schools with outstanding inspection results. However, the evidence suggests that 16-19 participation rates are highest in areas with fewer school sixth forms and with more colleges, and that attainment rates are comparable or better in such areas. The explanation appears to lie in the fact that most school sixth forms in practice operate selective admissions practices according to Level 2 attainment, whilst GFEs cater for the full ability range. Further, GFEs and sixth form colleges have significant economy of scale advantages over most school sixth forms, which tend to be far smaller in terms of student numbers. Within their budgets they are therefore able to offer a relatively wider curriculum choice (Pring et al, 2009). The structure of education that applies in London Borough of Newham corresponds to the types that nationally appear to be associated with optimum rates of 16-19 participation and achievement.

Choice of 16-19 learning courses and young people's abilities to find and keep jobs

Nationally, the evidence suggests that the level of qualification obtained is a more important factor in employability than specific vocational subjects and qualifications. Young people possessing qualifications at Level 3 and above are generally attractive to employers, whilst those qualified at Level 2 or below appear to be far less advantaged compared to the completely unqualified\(^\text{32}\). When asked about the key criteria for employment, employers invariably place the main stress on basic communication skills and numeracy, plus the “softer” inter-personal attributes (Martin et al, 2008). We examine this evidence in more detail in the sections that follow that deal with employer needs and with engaging young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Young people’s accessing of information on which they base their learning and career decisions

\(^{32}\) Though in general there are positive income rates of return to holders of qualifications at Level 2, this does not apply in the case of most NVQs.
Evidence suggests that young people value and benefit from independent and personalised Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) from guidance professionals such as Connexions personal advisors. This applies particularly to those contemplating vocational pathways, where the available choices are both more complex and less familiar than the traditional academic pathway of A levels followed by university. However, young people are also influenced strongly by their parents / carers and their subject teachers. Though they may be dismissive about the degree of parental influence, in practice few young people make choices at 16+ to which their parents are opposed, and mothers appear to be especially influential. Subject teachers have greater day-to-day contact with students than guidance professionals, as do supervisors for those in full-time employment. Given the recent upheavals in 14-19 qualification pathways, and the ever changing patterns within the labour market, both parents and teachers can inadvertently present out-dated or otherwise misleading information and advice. Friends also exert an influence, and peer group pressures can inhibit optimal choices. However, on balance they seem to be less significant in their impact on 16-19 year olds than guidance professionals, teachers and parents. Parents and friends appear to be relied upon most in instances where IAG via school or college is perceived as lacking (Davies, 1996; Foskett, 2004; Marson-Smith et al, 2009; Wright, 2005).

There is also evidence that young people tend to be better informed and equipped to make vocational choices aged 16-19 if during their 14-16 phase of education part of their timetable was spent in college and in work experience (Davies, 2006b; Marson-Smith et al, 2009).

**Provision of information, advice and guidance facilitating young people's decisions on education and training pathways that lead to sustainable employment choices**

A review of IAG in 2004 concluded that it is “characterised for most young people by complexity, confusion, competition and a distinct lack of credibility” (Foskett, 2004). However, since then there have been signs of improvement. There is still evidence that young people who make the least stable decisions at 16+, and who are indecisive or uncertain about their choices, previously attended schools where they were lacking in support and comprehensive careers advice. Generally speaking, it is the lower attainment bands who are the least likely to have a clear or confident view of the future. However, student-centred schools and colleges with comprehensive advice, guidance and support strategies in place develop young people with more positive mindsets and more effective decision-making skills. GFEs are often seen to be effective in supplying IAG, as they provide a wide range of academic and vocational options within the same organisation, and have no particular incentive to influence students in one route rather than another.

Features of effective IAG to young people have been identified as:

- provision of support not just when choices are about to be made, but throughout their time on a programme;
- delivered by individuals who are well informed about available possibilities and who know to whom they can refer young people;
- diverse and wide-ranging guidance tailored to the individual;
- collaboration between providers;
- genuine interest by the individual student in the pathway concerned;
- full facts, including information on potential progression routes.

Young people clearly need support to navigate through the new curriculum and career opportunities – especially as their novelty and complexity is greatest for those contemplating applied qualifications, who in general are amongst the least confident and least equipped of
their age group to make considered decisions about the future. Students appear to be least clear about WBL routes. This support therefore needs to come from informed adults – not only guidance professionals but those with particular insights into the content and nature of potential qualifications, including college and training provider staff. IAG needs to take account not only the content and learning style of courses under consideration, but also practical and logistical implications such as travel time and cost. Young people need to be made aware of the implications of their decision, so as to understand where it may and may not present future constraints. Such informed support can be enhanced by connecting with parents and carers who know the individual young person well and can assist her / him in questioning and interpreting the information to ensure that the right decision is made. There are also indications that IAG has more credence and impact if mediated with the support of former students who between them have experience of the different routes of onward progression (Marson-Smith et al, 2009).

Understanding young people’s destinations

**Destination of students once they have finished their 16-19 learning courses**

Labour market statistics for July-September 2009 – at the time of writing the last quarter for which figures are available – indicate that nationally 26.5% of 16-17 year olds have some form of paid employment and 58.5% of 18-24 year olds. These levels are respectively some nine and five percentage points below those for the equivalent period last year. For 16-17 year olds the female employment rate is higher than that for males, though this is accounted for by part-time employment. For both age bands, the employment rate for males has fallen by a notably larger amount over the past year than it has for females. Just fewer than 83% of 16-17 year olds are in full-time education and training, as are 30% of 18-24 year olds. Of the remainder, around 40% of 16-17 year olds are in work, just under a third unemployed but seeking work, and 40% are economically inactive. The equivalent figures for 18-24 year olds are 69%, 18% & 16% (Figures A1 & A2: ONS, 2009).

**Figure A1. National employment rates**

![National employment rates](image)

- **Men**
- **Women**
- **Total**

- **16-17**
- **18-24**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>July-Sept '08</th>
<th>June-Sept '09</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
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Evidence from the Labour Force survey shows that 16-17 year olds typically access routine, low-paid jobs that do not offer much chance of progression to further training, often in the retail and catering sectors. Those from minority ethnic groups are less likely to be in constant employment over the same one-year period than their white counterparts, though this may well be a reflection of differential socio-economic status, rather than the impact of race (Pring et al, 2009).

Tracking of student destinations is much more developed in colleges than in schools, though even in the former the quality of the data is often patchy, as formerly it was not a requirement upon which the receipt of LSC funding depended (RCU, 2003). Under Framework for Excellence system introduced by DCSF, LSC & Ofsted, learner destinations now form one of the key indicators by which provider performance is judged. The PI in question is based on the proportion of priority learners completing an LSC-funded programme in one academic year, and progressing in the next academic year to a positive destination, defined as further / higher learning or employment. In 2009/10, the learner destinations PI will relate to the 2008/09 destinations of those learners completing in 2007/08. The analysis for this is being undertaken centrally by the LSC’s contractor, Ipsos MORI, involving data matching in ILR and HEFCE datasets and telephone interviews. It does not require any direct action by providers. To support this indicator, the results will include an employment rate which will measure the proportion of learners achieving a qualification who subsequently achieve an improved sustained labour market outcome (such as a better job, higher earnings, for example). This rate will be published at both national and provider level as part of the destinations outcomes in spring 2010 but will not count towards a college's or a provider’s overall Learner Destinations Grade nor will it be graded separately. These arrangements reflect the difficulties inherent in individual schools, colleges and WBL-providers accurately tracking the destinations of a sufficiently high proportion of their learners, especially when they leave full-time learning altogether.

A limitation of these arrangements is that they only extend to post-16 providers delivering LSC-funded learning. There are currently no plans for similar requirements to apply in respect of learners at the end of compulsory education, albeit that it is possible to track those who remain in full-time education or training. Related issues concerning the retention and
successful completion of courses of study post 16, and the progression at 17+ into study towards additional qualifications, are dealt with under the sections dealing with NEETs that follow.

**Destinations after three months and a year of finishing the course and after three years**

At present, there is a dearth of reliable data of this type at the level of individual learners and individual providers, especially for those individuals who do not continue with qualification-bearing education or training. The arrangements outlined in the section above should improve this situation to some extent. The national Labour Force Survey and Jobcentre Plus data provide some data useful for identifying trends at regional level.

What is known, though, is that nationally there is considerable instability over the timescale in question, with considerable movement in and out of employment, education and training, and between jobs. This so-called “churn” is likewise dealt with in more detail under the section on NEETs that follow.

**Effective tracking of destinations from September 2010 onwards and understanding which courses / training lead to sustainable employment**

On the assumption that the Young People’s Learning Agency continues the Framework for Excellence arrangements recently put in place by LSC, an external contractor will provide some of the relevant data, at least where publicly funded courses leading to accredited qualifications are concerned. Otherwise, the most cost-effective solutions are likely to lie in periodic surveys of those no longer in full-time education or training, including via so-called “reverse tracer studies” which sample people in employment and gather data and opinion about their previous education and its perceived relevance.

We should sound a note of caution, though, about the utility of these approaches even in the unlikely event that comprehensive and accurate data of this type could be assembled. The absence or presence of a clear link between the subject areas of previous qualifications, and posts held, cannot be taken as any kind of automatic indicator of the former’s relevance and appropriateness (Pring et al, 2009).

**How do young people who do not go through further education find their jobs and are there any significant differences between ethnic groups?**

There often appear to be effective informal mechanisms via which young people form judgements about their immediate job prospects in an area, which we deal with further in the sections on NEETs that follow. However, such judgements tend to be narrower and more constrained once they become separated from IAG support.

As we have noted, job opportunities for young people from ethnic minority groups tend in practice to be more limited than for their white counterparts with similar socio-economic circumstances. A number of those from Asian backgrounds, however, are typically engaged in work in family businesses that may not be recorded as paid full-time employment in official statistics.

**Responding to the needs of employers**

**Key skills required by local employers**

Nationally, survey evidence repeatedly emphasises the fact that employers want young people entering their first job to be good at timekeeping, possess literacy and numeracy skills, and show enthusiasm and commitment. After around five years of employment
employers expect employees to have developed a more sophisticated set of skills, including job-specific technical skills, team-working and problem-solving. In general, employers are prepared to fund training for these further skills, but not for those that they see as a basic requirement for initial employment, which they view as the responsibility of the individual and the state education system (LSN, 2008a; Martin et al, 2008). Some employers in certain sectors, including, but not limited to, retail and hospitality, require not only technical and social skills, but also “aesthetic” skills, including body language, dress sense and style, personal grooming, and the voice and accents of existing and potential customers. Employers looking for such characteristics and dispositions may only employ young people who already display them, perhaps signalling a belief that these features are not readily inculcated by training (Pring et al, 2009).

**Qualifications in most in demand amongst employers**

For the country as a whole, qualifications at Level 3 and above appear to be valued, and to command a clear wage advantage in the job market. Qualifications at Level 2 convey less advantage to those who hold them though they may be seen as an indicator that skills for initial employment have been acquired. Except for Advanced Apprenticeships, vocational qualifications do not appear to command any advantage over their academic equivalents at the same level, except in sectors such as Construction where initial technical skills may be valued (Pring et al, 2009).

Employer surveys indicate that skill-shortage vacancies (SSVs) were falling even before the recession. Compared with the rest of England, though, employers based in the London region are relatively more likely to report recruitment problems, reflecting higher levels of competition for skilled workers in the capital. Technical, practical and job-specific skills are at a premium where SSVs exist. There has been a decrease in the reporting of literacy and numeracy shortages amongst job applicants, though these areas remain a concern for employers. However, SSVs attributed to a lack of IT professional skills were rising at the time the recession took hold. Employers in sector skills council (SSC) sectors composed of public sector establishments were the most likely to report vacancies, though the proportion of establishments reporting SSVs is highest in the sectors covered by GoSkills (passenger transport), Semta (science, engineering and technology) and ConstructionSkills (LSC, 2008).

**Extent to which 16-19 learning equips young people with the skills they need to find and keep jobs**

Skills gaps are most likely to be found in “lower-level” occupational groups, particularly sales and customer service and elementary positions, where up to the recession over a third of staff were described as lacking proficiency (LSC, 2008).

Nationally, sizeable numbers of employers have been critical of the levels of skill they had found when recruiting recent school or college leavers. Over a quarter of employers say they find 16 year old school leavers to be poorly or very poorly prepared for employment, and around a fifth in respect of 17-18 year old school and college leavers, though these proportions have declined compared with those found in 2005 and earlier. Literacy and numeracy problems are reported as the main problem areas, followed by attitudinal reasons, such as motivation and work ethics, and other general communication skills (LSC, 2008; LSN, 2008a; Martin et al, 2008). For these reasons, HE students looking for part-time work, better qualified migrant workers, and older people are often preferred to younger and less well qualified entrants to the labour market (Pring et al, 2009).

Overall, some 14% of employers offer Apprenticeships to their staff, though only 8% have staff taking one at any one point. Just over three in five of all apprentices taken on are aged 16-18 (LSC, 2008).
Around a quarter of employers providing training have done so via a FE college, with some 84% of those that do so expressing themselves satisfied with this provision. It should be noted, though, that the three-quarters of employers who do not make use of FE include those who deliver their own training, and those who provide no training at all for their employees (LSC, 2008).

A recent Ofsted report on Train to Gain provision found that it was generally well regarded by those employers who made use of the programme, that their businesses benefited, and that employees involved showed improved knowledge, skills and qualification levels. However, the report also commented that:

- education in basic English, maths and IT education through Skills for Life was insufficient;
- progression rates beyond qualifications at level 2 were poor;
- success rates were too low;
- target-setting and monitoring of employees’ progress was sometimes poor;
- levels of recruitment via the skills brokerage service were low.

Most of the employers who engage in Train to Gain operate in sectors with legislative or otherwise established industry requirements for training, which implies that there is significant “deadweight” in the public funding involved (Ofsted, 2009b).

**How do post-16 providers identify & respond to employer needs?**

Colleges are generally experienced in attempting to respond to employer needs. All colleges enlist local employers as members of their corporation (board). They also all have marketing departments, which undertake research and coordinate publicity. Those in GFEs often work in conjunction with a Business Development Unit which has specific responsibility for the delivery of full-cost training to employers. The latest Ofsted Annual Report indicates that many colleges respond well to employers’ needs, and that productive and flexible partnerships have been developed with business and community organisations. Levels of employer engagement, and rates of progression into employment are said to be amongst the strengths of the college sector. Participants’ progression into employment has also improved in providers of contracted employment provision funded by the DWP, despite the greater degree of volatility in the labour market. However, WBL providers are found to perform much less well than colleges in these and other respects, with leisure, travel & tourism, preparation for life and work and ICT being especially weak areas. The vast majority of the better WBL providers tend to be specialist providers, or employers with provision in only one or two subject areas (Ofsted, 2008 & 2009a).

Some employers remain critical of what they perceive as a lack of flexibility and responsiveness in the system. However, much of this criticism seems to reflect on the requirements imposed by national qualifications, or by the government eligibility criteria for Train to Gain, rather than to any unwillingness to respond on the part of college managements and staff. In the case of Train to Gain, though, there have been indications that its main focus on the acquisition of full Level 2 vocational qualifications has brought some teaching staff into direct contact with employers in a way that they had not been used to previously. The government-funded staff development programme for Train to Gain has devoted a good deal of its time and effort to equipping such staff to work more commercially alongside their marketing colleagues by, for example, briefing them in selling and account management skills (LSN, 2008b).
Why is it that some courses do not equip young people to succeed in the jobs market?
As we have noted already, even where success rates are high – as they have generally become in sixth form colleges, and also in GFEs – the acquisition of a qualification at Level 2 or below is by no means a passport to employment. High levels of competition in the job market look set to continue for some time as the effects of the recession persist, and many young people are likely to struggle to find work whatever their programme of study.

Ofsted has identified the following features as applying to the quality of vocational provision at the best performing colleges:

- careful placement of learners on courses that are appropriate to their individual needs, and encouragement to females to apply for some types of course;
- close links with industry;
- high quality industry-standard equipment and working practices;
- teachers with direct knowledge of the vocational areas concerned; and
- varied learning activities imaginatively mixing practical and knowledge-based work (Ofsted, 2008).

Aims of employers in engaging in employment and training
It remains a matter of concern throughout the UK that only a minority of employers engage directly with further education to train their employees or to recruit new staff. This is especially regrettable as those that do generally report good levels of satisfaction (LSC, 2008).

Outcomes of research illustrate the wide range of expectations that employers have of training provision. Expectations are rightly high. Some are common to all employers, though there is a level of detail in requirements according to the context of the sector, and the aspirations and purpose of the individual employers and employees. In the construction industry, for example, most training is apprenticeship-style, with a much smaller amount relating to updating, which is in turn driven largely by legislative requirements. In the media industry, where there are no NVQs, there has been an increase in small niche companies with ‘freelance’ staffing. Engineering has a well-established range of training programmes on offer, especially for large companies (LSC, 2008).

What is preventing more employer engagement and what barriers are faced?
To develop effective employer engagement, it has been suggested that colleges need to set out clearly for employers what they can and cannot do. Employers need to appreciate that some of the issues they raise are outside the control of the colleges. The unitisation of qualifications, which many employers are seeking, is not yet widely available to accredit specific training. Nonetheless, a college that sets effective employer engagement as a strategic priority needs to understand that such weaknesses are the cause of considerable frustration and discontent on the part of employers, and needs to find solutions to the issues that are within their control. The way forward may require:

- working cooperatively with employers, other key players and providers of training and services to develop a ‘community of practice’, which shares a common vision of what constitutes best practice in the sector; and
- ensuring that provision is responsive, and that all parties are working together to achieve the principles and practices that secure effective employer engagement.

Colleges have therefore been recommended routinely to set service-level agreements with their business clients. This would ensure that expectations on the part of the college, the
employer and the learners were clearly set out from the outset, and so avoid misconceptions about the nature of the service being provided. Communication issues could likewise be assisted by issuing certain lecturers with mobile phones and business cards (Hughes & Smeaton, 2006).

**Effective employer engagement**

Features of effective employer engagement have been identified nationally as:

Colleges and other learning providers who:

- are proactive in contacting employers, initially and on a regular basis, organizing regular meetings and updates to provide feedback and to discuss issues, and regularly communicating if problems arise;
- are aware of employers’ and trainees’ needs: matching study modes and opportunities to suit trainees’ commitments through training in the workplace; distance learning; a larger range of courses (particularly at higher levels); providing more of a bespoke service more in tune with the employer’s needs;
- provide effective marketing communications, including websites and literature on specific training programmes which can be issued to individual trainees;
- provide a forum for consultation through which employers can influence the nature of provision and provider–employer relationships;
- maintain continuity of staff and contacts; and
- keep staff up to date with the latest developments in the industry.

Employers who play a part in developing and fostering effective engagement by:

- giving providers a clear insight and understanding of their needs, aims and expectations, working contexts and practices, and the direction in which the business is moving;
- maintaining frequent contact with the college; being aware of what the college can do and what is on offer; making their feelings known to ensure that when necessary the service is improved;
- getting involved in the college and in the training provision, meeting college staff on their own territory;
- working proactively with training providers to help employees succeed in their training by:
  - providing better mentoring of trainees, improving the support given to employees while training, ensuring trainee motivation and attendance;
  - reviewing regularly employees’ learning and the impact of training, carrying out regular appraisals, taking and acting upon frequent and formal feedback concerning trainees’ progress;
  - more closely matching the training commissioned with employees’ specific needs; and
  - working in partnership with colleges to develop qualifications and training programmes that better suit business needs (Hughes & Smeaton, 2006).

**Understanding the needs of different groups**

**NEETs**

Reducing the numbers of young people who are NEET is the most common national indicator among local authorities Local Area Agreement targets. Despite this the impact of the recession on the labour market has already resulted in a rise of two percentage points or more, so that at least 12% of 16-19 year olds are currently NEET. A further six to seven per cent of young people are commonly unaccounted for, and in some London Borough it is estimated that the true NEETs figure may be as high as 20%. It has been argued that actions to reduce NEETs numbers should also encompass the issue of jobs without training (JWT), which involve even larger numbers (Hodgson et al, 2009). Before considering the
adequacy of the curriculum offer to meet the needs of those who are NEETs, it is useful first to consider the nature of this group.

It should be emphasised that NEETs is by no means a homogeneous group. It is made up of individuals ranging from the acutely disadvantaged and disengaged to others who are in transition between courses and/or jobs. There is considerable “churn” within the group, so that some 17% of young people are NEET at some time between 16-19, but only around 1% is NEET throughout (Figure A3).

Figure A3. NEETs percentages 16-19

When those in JWT are included as well, the proportions within the NEET / JWT group at any one time are believed to break down as follows:

- JWT transitional (9%): Typically drop-outs from full-time education at 16+ who are likely to re-engage;
- JWT sustained (25%): Content with current situation and difficult to re-engage;
- JWT at risk of NEET (18%): Low levels of attainment & negative school experience, lacking capability to plan future but recognising they are insufficiently qualified;
- NEET open to learning (19%): Often qualified at Level 2, with more positive past educational experience & more optimistic view of future;
- NEET undecided (10%): Typically qualified at Level 1, but dissatisfied with available opportunities;
- NEET sustained (18%): Few or no qualifications and negative school experiences – parents also often unemployed (Spielhofer et al, 2009).

There is no doubt that disengagement 16-19 can be disastrous. For society it causes nuisance and crime in the community and increases welfare dependency. For individuals it is associated with homelessness, gang membership, early criminalisation, drug culture and dependency, care needs, teenage pregnancy, prostitution and, in many or even most cases, multiple and overlapping disadvantage.

The hard core of NEETs is unlikely to disappear, and in fact the recession is likely to solidify this group. Some commentators have therefore argued that attention should be focused much more on the young unemployed, and strategies should not just concentrate on disengagement, but also on overcoming worklessness (Hodgson et al, 2009).
Adequacy of curriculum offer for the needs of NEETs

It is apparent that the aspect of NEETs that is most susceptible to remedial action is the sustenance of retention and progression in the education and training system post-16, and the prevention of withdrawal. Part of the answer here lies in compulsory education, as regular truancy during the secondary education phase is strongly associated with a later propensity to be NEET (Hodgson et al, 2009). Rigorous follow-up of truants and personalised support for their re-engagement are therefore required if young people are not to be lost to the system before they reach age 16.

Withdrawal from the system aged 16-19 is of two main types – drop-out from courses before their completion, and failure to progress to further courses at equivalent or higher levels after completion, especially in respect of 17 year olds who undertook a one-year course after leaving school. The influences on the former phenomenon have been the subject of intensive research over the last 15 years or so. Findings have shown that whilst financial and personal problems, and the lure of full-time employment, are often the triggers for drop-out, their prevalence does not appear to be markedly higher amongst those who withdraw compared with those who stay on to successful completion. The main differences between these two groups are rather associated with learners’ perceptions of:

- the appropriateness of their course;
- the quality of the teaching and resources;
- the level of support to enable career progression.

Where such perceptions are positive, young people are much more likely to complete their course successfully, and to progress to further studies. These findings are generally well-understood by college managements and staff, and have been acted upon to the extent that there has been a steady improvement in retention and achievement rates extending over some years (Davies, 2006a).

By comparison, it is relatively recently that progression at 17+ has received the same level of attention. Part of the answer here patently lies in addressing the same issues as outlined above, as those who complete a one year course successfully after leaving school are much more likely to carry on within the system that those who do not. More is clearly required, though. Progression rates have been shown to be at their best where the full range of appropriate pathways is provided from foundation level through to Level 3 and beyond. The provision of such pathways needs to be supported by clear and personalised IAG that is provided regularly throughout a learner’s course, and not just before completion. Effective links with employers also help to ensure that entry to full-time employment is connected to jobs that include training (Davies & Webster, 2005).

Regarding provision across the 14-19 phase, Ofsted has expressed concerns that discontinuity at age 16 still exists in practice for too many young people, that access to a full-range of relevant post-16 programmes is not guaranteed, and that the engagement of looked-after children and those leaving care remains low. Critical to raising participation rates are said to be:

- improving coordination of 14-19 provision;
- extending vocational options through local partnerships;
- effectively promoting the 14-19 curriculum entitlement; and
- clarifying progression routes at local level (Ofsted, 2008).
Are the excessive demands of vocational courses, including for maths and English, alienating young people from education and training?

There is a conflict inherent in government reforms of 14-19 education between ensuring curriculum and qualification pathways that cater for all, whilst simultaneously reassuring the public and the media that the most rigorous standards are being applied. Particularly in respect of the Diplomas, some commentators have argued that their content is too academically demanding and insufficiently practical to appeal to those with below average prior attainment. Neither have they attracted significantly larger numbers of those of above average prior attainment. Thus they may never engage the numbers for whom they were intended, and may become associated with increased rates of drop-out and unsuccessful completion (Pring et al, 2009).

In such circumstances, colleges clearly have a difficult path to follow in delivering a sufficiently flexible and responsive offer. However, the effects of the recession make the possession of the Functional skills of English, ICT and Mathematics ever more important. Recent Ofsted pronouncements emphasise the vital need to deliver these effectively throughout the 14-19 phase. The latest annual report also notes that developing the core skills of literacy and numeracy remains a relatively weak area of provision. Barriers include poor integration of functional skills with other aspects of learning within Diplomas; shortages of staff in WBL providers who are qualified in skills for life training; and reluctance among employers to tackle basic skills issues (Ofsted, 2009).

How do we develop a curriculum offer that engages young people NEET in education and training that leads to sustainable employment?

Raising of participation age

Ostensibly, the raising of the participation age to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015 should of itself lead to a reduction in NEETs’ numbers. However, as Ofsted has indicated “meeting the demands implicit in this will require much work to be done to improve the standards of current programmes to re-engage young people and to devise new and imaginative pathways for them” (Ofsted, 2008). Some commentators have argued that the move is a red-herring, likely to achieve nothing in terms of increased participation that would not happen anyway in the wake of the recession. Others have argued that it might even make things worse if it is accompanied by legal sanctions on those who remain NEET, breeding resentment amongst those who might have returned to education voluntarily (Pring et al, 2009).

Entry to Employment

More pro-active steps are therefore still likely to be necessary, based on existing case studies of successful re-engagement. A number of these involve Entry to Employment (e2e) programmes, catering for those with prior attainment a little above Level 1, if that. Most participants have negative attitudes to school and need different, innovative learning structures to make up for disadvantages suffered in their domestic lives. The Engaging Youth Enquiry has pointed up the importance of the voluntary sector as well as college provision, since the former tends to be smaller in scale and often more flexible. For many of those on e2e programmes, it represents a place of relative safety, where they can readjust and start to sort out their lives. However this provokes tension with the prevailing LSC performance management system, with its emphasis on accreditable outcomes. The new 14–19 approach to Foundation Learning also represents a largely performance-driven, qualifications based process. There are likely to be real issues in reconciling this approach with the need to provide opportunities for young people to readjust their lives. There is a risk of locking young people into qualifications that have little value in terms of direct access to the labour market, and are regarded mainly as providing progression to other training or
learning opportunities. “If the transfer of responsibility for the NEETS group to local authorities is to have a positive impact, it will need to bring about a much greater integration of systems and structures to support and engage these vulnerable young people.” (Hodgson et al, 2009).

**EMAs**
The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) has been shown to have a small but significant impact on the numbers who engage in full-time education who would not otherwise have done so. EMAs also have associated problems. Funding has frequently been delivered too late resulting in corresponding significant levels of dropout. Rules on attendance and entitlement are seen as too strict, and forms are complicated to complete. Many young people have experienced difficulties in opening bank accounts, which are needed to receive EMA, and in London have found themselves ineligible for free Oyster cards because they are not on full-time programmes. Beyond the EMA knowledge about access to hardship funds varies widely within the system. Young people perceive a clear disparity between employer-based and programme-based provision because of the wages payable to those on the former (Hodgson et al, 2009).

**Activity Agreements**
The Activity Agreement pilots – started in 2006 and set to continue to 2010 – are operating in eight areas of the Country, aimed at ‘longer-term’ NEETS, who have remained within this category for more than 20 weeks. The basic approach is to provide young people with small financial incentives to participate in activities designed to encourage them to progress towards taking up a suitable employment or learning programme. Evaluation suggests a 13 percentage point improvement in the number of young people positively influenced. However the impact on those who have been affected, in terms of attitudes to jobs and learning and increased skills and confidence, is in most cases very significant. Those with higher prior attainment are more likely to move into work-based training opportunities, whereas lower attainers typically re-engage via learning towards a qualification. The allowance itself (around £20–£30 per week) is important in attracting participants at the outset, and often compensates for the loss of EMA. However, as young people become involved in the programme it is the activities that are the key to their continued participation. Having skilled and motivating advisers, who are engaged in 1-to-1 relationships with participants, can also be critical in maintaining their commitment. Progression within the programme is not always along defined pathways or following a regular pattern. The most vulnerable young people normally need to progress by means of very small steps, and the emphasis has to be on activities that can build their confidence, accompanied by intensive support, including via youth workers (Buckley, 2004; Colley, 2006; Hayward et al, 2008, Hodgson et al, 2009; Tanner et al, 2009).

**Evidence from other London boroughs**
Recent work in colleges in inner London boroughs sought to identify commonalities in practice between examples of effective provision. In total, nine key elements emerged that characterised the best types of provision, although not all are present in every case. The four most critical elements are considered to be:

- Partnership arrangements: these are seen as essential to ensure breadth of provision, to help individual providers improve, and in commissioning provision. Within the partnership there needs to be a proper balance between those at strategic and operational levels. Employers and representatives of young people themselves often act as key partners. Activities need to be properly evaluated so that a coherent local strategy can be developed.
• Effective management and organisation: best practice occurs when the whole of the college management structure had been engaged in NEETs developments, so that this type of provision is planned and funded as an integral part of the curriculum. The main threat to this often came from lack of sufficient funding. Continuous workforce development to support the delivery of NEETs provision also constitutes an important element.

• Personalised learning: provision has to be flexible and responsive to individual needs, often involving non-formal learning in the first instance.

• IAG and progression routes: courses need to have clear destinations that are meaningful to participants, which will normally involve progression to Level 2 or beyond in vocational and functional skills, including elements of personal and social development skills. Progression is best seen in the context of the partnership as a whole rather than the individual institution. Rapid follow-up of those who drop out is crucial in securing their early re-engagement.

The remaining five elements identified through the study are: outreach, marketing and recruitment; assessment and review; student support; celebrating success; and monitoring and evaluation (Hodgson et al, 2009).

**Sustainable employment and the curriculum offer for young people with English as a second or other language**

The main aim of ESOL and related language provision is not specifically vocational, being focused more social and citizenship aspects such as:

- talking to doctors and teachers;
- understanding the laws and customs of the UK;
- helping children with homework; and
- passing the Life in the UK test and become a British citizen.

However, in practice the best colleges ensure that such provision also provides a clear route into further study leading to national qualifications, including those via the vocational route. Many of those who attend ESOL classes have a strong vocational motivation, and include those already holding overseas qualifications at the equivalent of Level 2 or above. Young people enrolled on ESOL courses also commonly act as mediators via which their parents and other family members acquire greater employability.

**Sustainable employment and the curriculum offer for young people with disabilities and learning difficulties**

There are difficulties in making precise judgements about young people with learning difficulties and disabilities, stemming from problems of correct identification and measurement. However, across a number of indicators, young disabled people currently appear to experience poorer outcomes. At age 16, they are twice as likely to be NEET as their non-disabled peers, and two-thirds as likely across the 16-19 age range. They are also over twice as likely to have no qualifications, and less than half as likely to enter HE at 18 (Haines, 2006).

Those with disabilities who are in colleges, however, appear to be somewhat more likely to be “extremely satisfied” with their experience than those without. The overall college learning experience of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is positive. However, some disabled learners are undertaking courses that are unsuited to their aspirations. Others experience some form of social isolation. Those in mainstream programmes
sometimes seem to receive insufficient support to participate in activities outside the classroom (Davies, 2006a).

There remains, though, a discrepancy between the high numbers of people with disabilities and learning difficulties whose aim is to achieve employment and the low numbers who actually manage to achieve this aspiration. An investigation of creative solutions achieved by LSC-funded providers produced an overriding message of the need for a shift from ‘training for work’ to ‘training in work’, from a focus on employability to a focus on employment, and for far more proactive links between education and training providers and employers, whether this is carried out directly by the education or training provider or through the brokerage of a third party, such as a Supported Employment organisation. Conclusions and recommendations for policy-makers and managers included that post-school education clearly has an important role to play in supporting disabled adults back to work. This includes the important role of non-vocational education in enabling people to take a first step back into learning before moving onto more vocational training.

Engaging employers is crucial if disabled people are to be equally represented in the workplace. It is important that current work on employer engagement includes raising employers’ awareness of their duty towards disabled employees and support to them in carrying it out. Expert advice also needs to be available to disabled people and their families to guide them through the complexities of the benefit situation when they are considering entering employment.

Inter-agency collaboration is far more likely to be effective if it has strong support from above. College and WBL managers need to recognise the importance of inter-agency collaboration in supporting disabled people into employment and give it their active support. Collaboration takes time, and this needs to be reflected in practitioners’ work plans. The learners concerned need to be given the opportunity to learn work skills in real life situations. Managers therefore need to be creative in the curriculum guidance they give to practitioners and ensure that learning can move beyond the confines of the classroom. They should also note that the role that their curriculum offer, including their offer of non-vocational learning as a first step towards entering vocational training, can play in supporting disabled adults into employment, and reflect this in their plans (Maudsley, 2006).

**Are there special provisions that employers need addressing for these specific groups of young people?**

Ofsted has indicated that colleges with good and outstanding grades are generally excellent at furthering equality of opportunity. Many that serve extremely diverse Student groups – such as Newham College of FE – are beacons in this respect. They give a high profile to issues of equality and diversity, which are formally evaluated through impact assessments. Provision is designed well to meet the needs of a broad range of learners and the performance of different groups is closely monitored. This kind of expertise represents a rich resource from which local employers can benefit, especially where effective partnership arrangements are in place (Ofsted, 2008).

**References**


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Maudsley L (2006). *Support into employment for young people and adults with learning difficulties and disabilities*. LSDA.


Mosaic Public Sector Multimedia Guide


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Appendix B. Demographic background of young people surveyed

Ethnicity  The following table shows the breakdown of interviews achieved with young people from each ethnic group:

Figure B.1 Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>69 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>52 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>51 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>70 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>70 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>69 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Areas covered The following table shows the breakdown of interviews achieved with young people from each ward:

Figure B.2 Ward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beckton</td>
<td>10 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boleyn</td>
<td>27 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canning Town North</td>
<td>20 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canning Town South</td>
<td>16 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custom House</td>
<td>14 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Ham Central</td>
<td>26 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Ham North</td>
<td>26 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Ham South</td>
<td>16 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Gate North</td>
<td>20 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Gate South</td>
<td>18 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Street East</td>
<td>27 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Street West</td>
<td>22 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Ilford</td>
<td>21 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manor Park</td>
<td>13 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plaistow North</td>
<td>13 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plaistow South</td>
<td>19 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Docks</td>
<td>7 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratford and New Town</td>
<td>24 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall End</td>
<td>22 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Ham</td>
<td>20 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Schools attended** The following table shows the breakdown of schools attended by young people currently in full time education up to Year 11:

**Figure B.3 Schools attended by respondents currently in full time education up to Year 11:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School attended</th>
<th>Number and % of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landgon</td>
<td>6 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Ilford</td>
<td>4 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratford</td>
<td>4 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plashet</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastlea Community</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lister Community</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brampton Manor</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Gate Community</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsford Community</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Royal Docks Community</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Bonnell</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Angela’s RC</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Bonaventure’s RC</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base size</strong></td>
<td><strong>37</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Qualifications** The following table shows the equivalent academic and vocational qualifications for each ‘Level’:

**Figure B.4 Qualifications expressed as Levels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Academic qualification equivalent</th>
<th>Vocational qualification equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 0</td>
<td>No qualifications</td>
<td>No qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 –</td>
<td>GCSE grades D to G (or fewer than 5 at grades A to C)</td>
<td>BTEC General Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>academic</td>
<td></td>
<td>BTEC Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 –</td>
<td></td>
<td>BTEC First Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocational</td>
<td></td>
<td>City and Guilds Operative Awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 –</td>
<td>GCSE (5 or more at grades A to C)</td>
<td>CPVE Year 1 (Technician)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>academic</td>
<td>1 A Level</td>
<td>GNVQ Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 –</td>
<td>2 or 3 AS Levels</td>
<td>LCCI Elementary or First Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocational</td>
<td></td>
<td>PEI Elementary or First Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 –</td>
<td></td>
<td>RSA Elementary or First Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>academic</td>
<td></td>
<td>RSA Vocational Certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 –</td>
<td></td>
<td>BEC General Certificate with Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocational</td>
<td></td>
<td>BEC Diploma with Credit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Level 3 – academic | BTEC First Diploma  
City and Guilds Higher Operative or Craft  
GNVQ Intermediate  
LCCI Certificate (Second Level)  
PEI Stage 2  
Pitman’s Intermediate Level 2 Diploma  
Certificate  
RSA Diploma |
|-------------------|--|
| Level 3 – vocational | BEC National ONC or OND  
BTEC National ONC or OND  
City and Guilds Advanced Craft  
GNVQ Advanced  
LCCI Diploma (Third Level)  
Pitman’s Level 3 Advanced Higher Certificate  
RSA Stage 3 Advanced Diploma  
TEC Certificate or Diploma  
Access to Higher Education Courses  
ESOL and Foreign Languages Advanced Awards |
| 2 or more A Levels | |
| 4 or more AS Levels | |