Platform for Progression: Employer Training Pilots

Year 2 Evaluation Report
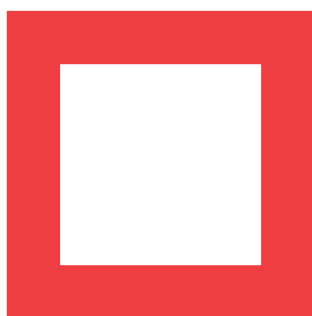
Jim Hillage, George Loukas
Becci Newton, Penny Tamkin

Contents

Foreword

Raising skills levels and creating a flexible and productive workforce are essential to help individuals secure their employability; help businesses to increase their productivity; and enable the UK to thrive in the global economy.

Employer Training Pilots are being very successfully managed by the Learning and Skills Council, and provide a package of support to encourage employers to train their low-skilled employees. This includes free or heavily subsidised training, information and advice for employers and learners, paid time for training for employees, and, in all but one pilot area, support for employers to meet the costs of giving staff paid time to train. This report follows the First Year Evaluation Report which we published in late 2003 and assesses the progress made by 12 pilots up to the end of the second year of activity in August 2004.

We are delighted with the success of the Employer Training Pilots and have learned so much about the approaches they have tested, with 12,000 employers and 80,000 learners participating in the first two years. Most employees involved left school at or before age 16 and half have no qualifications at all. 70 per cent of participating firms employ less than 50 people. Learners have acquired new skills, feel more confident and are better equipped to do their job. Employers reap the benefits of a more motivated workforce and are more likely to train their low-skilled employees in the future.

As we have stated in the Skills White Paper published alongside this report, this evaluation will inform the development of the National Employer Training Programme to be introduced across England from 2006-07.

We look forward to the completion of the Employer Training Pilots and the introduction of the new national programme, and working in partnership with providers, employers, unions and learners to deliver the skills Britain need to compete in the global economy.

IVAN LEWIS MP
Minister for Skills & Vocational Education
DfES

JOHN HEALEY MP
Economic Secretary
HM Treasury
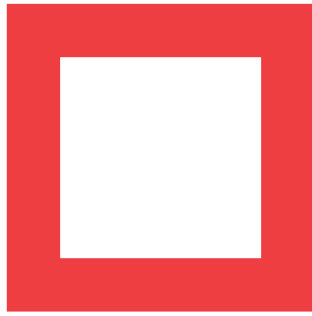
Executive Summary

THE PILOTS

The Employer Training Pilots (ETP) were established in September 2002, to test the effectiveness of an offer of free or subsided training to employees without a level 2 qualification, wage compensation (of various levels) to their employers for giving time off to train plus access to information, advice and guidance. The pilots are administered by local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) in partnership with local Business Links and other agencies, through a network of local brokers or learning advisers and training providers. They were originally planned to run in six areas for a year, but were subsequently extended to cover 12 areas for an additional year and again, from September 2004, to run for a total of three years in the Phase 1 areas, two years in the Phase 2 areas and for a year in five new areas plus a regional pilot in the North East.

THE EVALUATION

The evaluation of the pilots is being conducted by IES in partnership with the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) and MORI, with the aim of assessing the nature and extent of the take-up of the ETP offer and examining the key issues affecting how the pilots operate in practice and the experiences of the employers and employees who take part.

The evaluation has two main strands:

- a quantitative assessment through surveys of potentially eligible employers and employees in pilot and control areas before the start and at the end of Phase 2 of the pilots

- surveys and interviews with the main stakeholders, providers plus employers and learners involved in each of the 12 Phase 2 pilot areas and analysis of management information data for the first two years of the pilots *ie* September 2002 to August 2003.

This report is based primarily on the latter element of the evaluation. The former will finish and be reported in the Spring of 2005.

12,000 employers involved

At the end of the second year of the pilots almost 12,000 workplaces were involved in the 12 Phase 1 and 2 pilots. Take-up has been stronger in the second year than in the first. Some 10 per cent of eligible employers are involved – 12 per cent in the Phase 1 pilots and 8.5 per cent in Phase 2. Employer take-up levels vary significantly by pilot area. Seventy per cent of the establishments involved employ fewer than 50 people (25 per cent employ 10 or under), 19 per cent have between 50 and 249 employees and 11 per cent employ at least 250. The pilots have attracted almost half the potentially eligible large employers in their areas.

Throughout, participation from employers in the health and social care sector has been strong – 28 per cent come from that source. Three-quarters of ETP employers are from the private sector.

Some are among the hardest to reach

Half of the employers involved with ETP had a previous involvement with either a business support agency (like Business Link), a training provider (*eg* further education college or private provider), or a national training initiative (such as Investors in People (IIP) or National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ)). One-third had been involved with at least one agency, initiative or provider. The remaining 14 per cent had no previous involvement and could therefore be classified as among the hardest to reach sections of the employer community. One-third said they had not worked with a training provider and almost one-half had no prior involvement with NVQs.

ETP employers have a relatively positive approach to training compared with average employers. Most adopt a strategic approach to training, express positive attitudes to training and say that they provided at least some training to low skilled employees.

Some employers would have provided the training anyway

We can infer from ETP employers' past training behaviour, and the fact that most agreed that they would have provided the training in any event, that there is a degree of deadweight in the pilots. Further evidence comes from comparing the training levels of low-skilled employees in employers in the initial pilot areas with those in comparable non-ETP areas. This analysis suggests that most ETP employers were providing some form of qualification-based training to their low-skilled employees, although not necessarily in the form or to the extent as that offered in the pilots. A more conclusive measure of the net additional effect of ETP on workplace qualification-based training will be available in the quantitative assessment, due in Spring 2005.

80,000 learners signed up

At the end of August, 80,000 learners had signed up to the pilots, around four per cent of the eligible total. Again participation varies among the pilot areas. ETP learners tend to be female, aged between 26 and 45 and working full-time in personal service or elementary occupations. Over ten per cent are from minority ethnic groups – rising to over one-quarter in some pilots – more than would be expected from the ethnic profile of the pilot areas.

Most ETP learners left school at or before the age of 16 without a positive view of their educational experience. A minority, around one-fifth, of learners already have a level 2 equivalent qualification and are therefore theoretically ineligible to take part, although they could still obviously benefit from the training.

Only around one-fifth had not had any training in the past three years and on the whole learners held a positive view about learning in general and the training and skill development opportunities in their workplace.

Most opt for NVQ training

Only 11 per cent of learners are working towards a basic-skill qualification, despite considerable effort by the pilots and others to attract such learners. Some pilots have been particularly successful at signing up basic-skill learners, partly because of a high take-up among their minority ethnic communities for ESOL-type courses. Other pilots have struggled to convince employers or to get employees to identify basic-skill needs. In a number of cases, basic-skill needs have become apparent while a learner is working towards an NVQ and pilots have adapted their provision to try to provide support.

In the first and second years of ETP, approaching 40 per cent of learners working towards an NVQ are taking a course in health and social care or a related subject, although among other learners the range of courses taken has increased.

Employers are attracted by free, flexibly delivered brokered training

The availability of free (or heavily subsidised) flexibly delivered training is the most attractive feature of the pilots. Hard to reach employers appear to be particularly attracted by the brokerage and help with identifying training needs. There is no apparent relationship between the level of compensation on offer and the level of take-up among employers or employees. Other factors seem more likely to explain the differential participation levels among the pilots.

Pilot organisation varies

The pilots vary in the way they are organised including: their approach to marketing the ETP programme; the size and experience of their team; the way they engage with employers *eg* through either independent brokers (working in Business Link or co-located with the LSC team) or 'recruiting' providers, and how they are managed.

Training providers are an important source of employer recruitment

Employers most often get involved with the pilots either through responding to a local marketing campaign or by being contacted by a training provider. The remainder mostly join up after being contacted by a Business Link or pilot broker.

There does appear to be some relationship between the way the pilots are organised and their ability to get employers or learners to sign up. For example employer penetration rates are relatively higher in pilots with recruiting providers, although completion rates tend to be higher in areas with independent brokers.

Learners have more choice over taking part than over course of study

In most cases employees volunteer, or are 'volunteered', to take part in the training. They generally think they have a lot of choice over whether to take part at all, but less choice over what course they do, although most said training was relevant to their job.

Assess-Train-Assess operates, but only for a minority

While most learners had an initial skills assessment, only a small minority – around one in six – went through some form of initial assessment in the Assess-Train-Assess model, whereby skills needs are initially identified, existing skills accredited and subsequent training adapted to fill the gaps.

Training and assessment is delivered in the workplace

Forty per cent of the employers involved in ETP had their training needs assessed as part of their involvement (and one-third of those did it themselves).

ETP training tends to be organised to suit workplace operations in the workplace. Two-thirds of learners work with private (non-college) providers. While those who have completed an NVQ take an average of seven to eight months (five to six for basic-skills learners), there are a large number still in learning after a year which may eventually raise the average completion time.

We have estimated that it takes around 100 hours for a learner to complete an NVQ course, with roughly half that time spent in contact with the trainer, although practice does vary by subject. A further quarter of the time was spent outside normal working hours (usually unpaid). The other quarter was spent on independent learning, or evidence gathering, in the work time.

Providers spend about one-third of their contact time (ie around 16 to 17 hours) training, around 40 per cent assessing and about one-quarter portfolio building. Learners spend nearly all their non-contact time collecting evidence and compiling their portfolio and working through learning materials. Generally, most time is spent on assessment and evidence collation, rather than formal training.

A minority receive IAG, but like what they get

Just over one-third of learners received some form of information advice and guidance (IAG), mostly from some-one in their workplace or (less often) their training provider. Learners found the information, advice and, if offered, guidance they received helpful and were likely to be more satisfied than average with their ETP experience.

17,000 learners have completed

Over 17,000 learners have successfully completed their training including 14,400 NVQ learners. Just under half of those who started in the first nine months of the pilots have completed. Around 20 per cent have left their course and the remaining 30 per cent or so are designated as 'still in learning'.

Most learners leave early because they have changed job or for personal reasons. However, 40 per cent (of those who left) either found that they did not have enough time to train, lost interest or found the training too difficult – reasons implying that some may have benefited from further support.

Completion is affected by learner provider and area factors

We have identified three sets of factors that appear to affect completion:

- There are a range of **learner-related factors**. Learners who are older, male, do not have a disability, work flexibly (*ie* part-time or on a night-shift) have lower (but at least some) prior attainment and are not a member of a union have, statistically, the greatest chances of completion. Obviously some of these factors, *eg* union membership, are related to other characteristics (such as size of workplace or sector, although we have looked at these separately and found no statistically significant relationship with completion).

- There are also **course-related factors**. For example, learners doing an NVQ in leisure and sport, hospitality or manufacturing had the highest chances of completion while those on business administration, health and social care or transportation related courses had the lowest tendency to complete (so far, as some will still be in learning). We also found that the odds of completing a course were statistically lower for learners with colleges than those with non-college providers.

- **Area-related factors** exist too. Some pilot areas have much higher completion rates than others which seems to relate to their approach, *eg* those with the higher completion rates tend to be those that concentrate most on initial assessment. Other local factors that appear, at least anecdotally, to affect completion rates include the availability and extent of employer support.

Employers and learners like their ETP experience
Employers and learners express high levels of satisfaction with their experience of the pilots. Ninety-three per cent of employers were either very or fairly satisfied. Similarly 90 per cent of learners were at least fairly satisfied – this is comparable to levels recorded in the LSC's national learner satisfaction survey.

Learners learn something new
Most learners think that they have learnt something new from their learning that will help them do their immediate job better. Learners taking a health-related qualification were the most likely to say that they had learnt a lot of new skills.

Learners see shorter-term benefits for their current job
As learners progress through their training they tend to see fewer benefits *per se* and those that they do see are more narrowly focused on their current jobs. In a second survey of the same ETP learners who had by now completed their courses, we found respondents were still very positive, but more likely to identify no benefits at all than in the first survey. In particular they placed less emphasis on gains to do with having the skills to do a different job or with gaining a promotion or better pay.

Learners remain positive about ETP and training in general once the training has finished but tend to be not as positive as when they started.

… but become more interested in further training
We have also found that learners are more inclined to go on to further study at the end of their course than at the beginning and the majority of those who wanted to study further were interested in a level 3 or higher qualification. Employees who become more positive during the course of their training are most likely to want to progress to further learning. We found that learners who had received information, advice and guidance were also more likely to want to take their training further.

Employers benefit from better motivated and skilled employees
All employers see a range of benefits from their participation in the pilots, the most important being giving employees more self confidence and important business skills. As employers move through the programme, they appear to see the gains in more immediate terms and relate them to gains for their employees rather than the business as a whole.

… and become more positive about training the lower-skilled
On the other hand, employers become more positive in their attitudes to training following their ETP experience and say they are more likely to train less-skilled employees.

ETP: a platform for progression

We conclude that the pilots have got off to a flying start and that the offer is attractive to both employers and learners. Interestingly some of the pilots that started more slowly in terms of getting in the numbers, and concentrated on offering a 'pure' approach have been most successful in securing completions and therefore qualifications.

However, it is not just the offer itself that is attractive, it is the way it is being offered. ETP accesses learners through employers. Wage compensation does not seem as important as the provision of flexibly provided, free or subsidised and (perhaps most importantly) brokered training in attracting employers. The broker plays a key role in taking the offer to employers and animating demand.

While the pilots have got the numbers in, there are still many more potentially eligible workplaces and learners to be accessed. Those yet to be involved will be harder to reach than those so far engaged.

Once engaged, employers and learners seem satisfied with their experience.

Finally, we conclude that the pilots appear to offer a platform for progression:

- for learners to go onto to level 3
- for provision to become more flexible and workplace orientated
- for employers to become more interested in training particularly their lower-skilled employees
- for policy to take the elements that work best and feed into the development of a national employer training programme.

Chapter 1
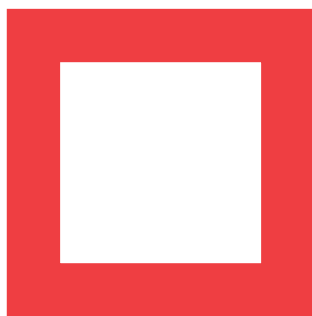
Introduction

1.1 THE PILOTS

Employer Training Pilots (ETP) were established in six local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) areas in September 2002, to test their effectiveness in stimulating additional work-based training leading to improved skills and qualifications for low-skilled employees. The aim was to engage with employers or employees who do not normally get involved with qualifications-based training. The pilots are administered by local LSCs in partnership with local Business Links and other agencies, through a network of local brokers or learning advisers, and were originally planned to last a year. They offer training with registered providers to either NVQ level 2 or equivalent or in basic skills, to employees not already qualified to level 2 (*eg* with fewer than five GCSEs at grades A to C or equivalent). There are four main elements of the offer:

- Free or subsidised training[1]

- Paid time off for training (either 35 or 70 hours)

- Wage compensation (paid to employers for the time employees spend training)

- Information, advice and guidance to employers and employees.

The pilots have subsequently been extended twice. From September 2003, a further six pilot areas were added and the original six were given an extension of a further year. From September 2004, another five single LSC pilot areas were added and a regional pilot established in the North East incorporating an existing pilot in Tyne and Wear. All pilots run until the end of August 2005 and in total they cover 20 LSC areas.

---

1   The training is mainly provided free but in some cases, due to EU State Aid rules, employers are required to make a contribution.

Table 1.1 lists the pilot areas involved in Phases 1, 2 and 3 and summarises the main elements of the offer in each area.

Table 1.1: Employer Training Pilot areas

| LSC area | Level of wage compensation (% of pay) | | | Time off (hrs) |
	Small (under 50 employees)	Medium (50 to 249 employees)	Large (250 employees or over)	
Phase 1 pilots (started September 2002)				
Greater Manchester	150	120	75	35
Derbyshire	130	100	50	35
Essex	110	75	0	35
Tyne & Wear (part of North East pilot)	150	120	75	70
Wiltshire & Swindon	130	100	50	70
Birmingham & Solihull	110	75	0	70
Phase 2 pilots (started September 2003)				
Shropshire	150	120	75	35
Leicestershire	130	100	50	35
Kent & Medway	0	0	0	35
London East	150	120	75	70
Berkshire	130	100	50	70
South Yorkshire	110	75	0	70
Phase 3 pilots (started September 2004)				
Black Country	110	75	0	70
Cambridgeshire	110	75	0	70
Devon and Cornwall	130	100	50	70
Lancashire	130	100	50	70
West Yorkshire	110	75	0	70
North East – County Durham; Northumberland and Tees Valley	130	100	50	70

Source: DfES, 2004

The table illustrates the variety of compensation packages on offer. In the first phase, every pilot had a different combination of wage compensation (paid as a percentage of a nominal basic rate) and hours of time off (multiplied by the wage compensation rate to give the maximum amount an employer can receive). In Phase 2, a further model, of no wage compensation, was established in Kent. In Phase 3 the compensation regime across the pilots was simplified and pilots either offer a 'low' or 'middle' range of compensation for up to a maximum of 70 hours of time off.

1.1.1 National Employer Training Programme

The lessons learnt from the pilots are being fed into the development of a national employer training programme provisionally planned for 2006.

1.2 THE EVALUATION

The evaluation of the pilots is being conducted by IES in partnership with the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) and MORI, and aims to:

- provide an authoritative assessment of the nature and extent of the take-up of the ETP offer in the pilot areas. This includes:

  - providing comprehensive data on the characteristics of pilot participants (both employers and employees)

  - estimates of the additional training activity and acquisition of qualifications that have resulted from the pilots (including any 'deadweight' and 'displacement' effects)

  - the influence of the four key elements of the ETP offer (time off for training, free or subsidised training, wage compensation and access to information, advice and guidance) on take up

- examine the key issues affecting how the pilots operate in practice, including assessing the different marketing approaches adopted by the pilots areas, the role and value of the brokerage, employers and employees views on participation, the nature and value of the training provided, the role of information, advice and guidance, and contractual and payment processes

- provide the foundation for a possible longer-term assessment of the impact of the pilots in terms of individuals and organisational outcomes.

1.2.1 Method

At the heart of the evaluation is a large-scale survey effort (carried out by MORI) to establish accurate baselines of, and changes in, employer and employee qualification-based training activity. This has included baseline and follow-up surveys of a random sample of employers eligible to take part in the pilots in:

- four of the Phase 2 pilot areas (Leicestershire, Berkshire, Kent and London East) – in order to be able to draw a baseline before the policy comes into effect

- four of the Phase 1 pilot areas – including three areas (Derbyshire, Wiltshire and Swindon, and Essex) matched with new areas above, plus Birmingham and Solihull and

- two control areas (Sussex and Bedfordshire) – chosen for their relevant labour market characteristics.

Surveys of random samples of eligible employees have also been conducted in two Phase 2 pilot areas (Berkshire and Leicestershire), and the two control areas (Bedfordshire and Sussex).

The fieldwork has been completed and the data are currently being analysed by colleagues at IFS and will be reported in the Spring of 2005.

In addition, throughout the last year the evaluation team has conducted:

- case studies in each of the 12 pilot areas in Phase 2 – involving interviews with ETP personnel plus local stakeholders, providers, employers and employees.

- surveys of employer and employee participants. Since the last report[2] we have conducted follow-up surveys among employers and employees involved in the Phase 1 pilots and most recently surveys of 1,500 employer and 2,000 learner participants across all 12 pilots.

- a survey of involved training providers.

- regular analyses of management information (MI) about the employers and learners signed up to the pilots.

1.3 THE REPORT

This report pulls together what we know about the pilots from the evaluation activities so far. As the evaluation is not complete we are unable to draw definitive conclusions about, for example, the net effect of the pilots on increasing employer training activity among low-skilled employees or their net acquisition of qualifications. However:

- we are able to analyse the rates of take-up by pilot area and examine the characteristics of the employers and learners involved, and

- we draw some preliminary conclusions on participation and the factors that influence it

- we have a fairly clear idea of the various ways in which the pilots have been organised in the different areas, and

- we are able to pull out some conclusions on delivery

- we also have a good picture of what participation involves for learners and their employers and in this report we describe the main elements of the learning process from initial assessment to completion

---

2   Hillage J and Mitchell H (2003), *Employer Training Pilots: First Year Evaluation Report*, DfES

- we are able to look at completion rates, ie what proportion of learners gain qualifications as a result of taking part and what appears to affect completion

- finally, we examine what learners and employers feel they have gained as a result of their involvement in the pilots. Although this is not an impact evaluation – and most of the gains that could result will only materialise over time – we do have some data, set out in this report, on the perceived impact of the pilots on employers and learners and training provision more generally.

The rest of this report contains chapters on:

- participation – details of the numbers and characteristics of the employers and learners taking part in the pilots and the factors that appear to influence take-up.

- delivery and training – what we know about how the pilots are organised and what seems to work best as well as how the training is organised, how long it takes and what happens at the end.

- outputs – the level of learner completions and acquisition of qualifications and their overall satisfaction with the pilots.

- impact – what we know about the effect participation in the training has had on learners and employers.

Chapter 2

Taking Part

In this chapter we look at the numbers and characteristics of the employers and employees (learners) taking part in the pilots and some of the factors that appear to influence take up.

2.1 KEY POINTS

- At the end of the second year of the pilots almost 12,000 workplaces were involved in the 12 Phase 1 and Phase 2 pilots. Take-up has been stronger in the second year than in the first. Some 10 per cent of eligible employers are involved – 12 per cent in the Phase 1 pilots and 8.5 per cent in Phase 2. Levels of employer take-up vary significantly by pilot area.

- Seventy per cent of the establishments involved employ fewer than 50 people (25 per cent employ 10 or under), 19 per cent have between 50 and 249 employees and 11 per cent employ at least 250. The pilots have attracted almost half the eligible large employers in their area.

- Participation is strong from employers in the health and social care sector – 28 per cent come from that source. Three-quarters of these are from the private sector.

- Half of the employers involved had a previous involvement with either a business support agency (like Business Link) a training provider (*eg* further education college or private provider) or a national training initiative (such as Investors in People (IIP) or National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ)). One-third had been involved with at least one agency, initiative and a training or education provider. The remaining 14 per cent had no previous involvement and could therefore be classified as 'hard to reach'.

- One-third had not worked with a training provider before and one-half had no prior involvement with NVQs.

- ETP employers had a relatively positive approach to training compared with average employers. Most adopted a strategic approach to training, expressed positive attitudes to training and said that they provided at least some training to low skilled employees.

- We can infer from ETP employers' past training behaviour, and the fact that most tended to agree that they would have provided the training in any event, that there is a degree of deadweight in the pilots. Further evidence comes from comparing the training levels of low-skilled employees in employers in the initial pilot areas with those in comparable non-ETP areas. This analysis suggests that most ETP employers were providing some form of qualification-based training to some of their low-skilled employees, although not necessarily in the form or to the extent as that offered in the pilots. A more conclusive measure of deadweight will be available in the quantitative assessment due in Spring 2005 of a second round of surveys in pilot and control areas which will give us a 'before and after' reading for both employers and employees.

- At the end of August, 80,000 learners had signed up to the pilots, around four per cent of the eligible total. Again participation varies among the pilot areas.

- ETP learners tend to be female, aged between 26 and 45, working full-time in personal service or elementary occupations. Over ten per cent are from minority ethnic groups – rising to over one-quarter in some pilots – more than would be expected from the ethnic profile of the pilot areas.

- Most ETP learners left school at or before the age of 16 without a positive view of their educational experience. A minority, around one-fifth, of learners already have a level 2 equivalent qualification and were therefore theoretically ineligible to take part, although they could still obviously benefit from the training.

- Only around one-fifth had not had any training in the past three years and learners generally held a positive view about learning in general and the training and skill development opportunities in their workplace.

- Only 11 per cent of learners are working towards a basic-skill qualification, despite considerable effort by the pilots and others to attract such learners. Some pilots have been particularly successful at attracting basic-skill learners, partly because of a high take-up among their minority ethnic communities for ESOL-type courses. Other pilots have struggled to convince employers or to get employees to identify basic-skill needs. In a number of cases, basic-skill needs have become apparent while a learner is working towards an NVQ and pilots have adapted their provision to try to provide support.

- In both the first and second years of ETP, approaching 40 per cent of learners working towards an NVQ are taking a course in health and social care or a related subject, although among other learners the range of courses taken has increased.

- The availability of free (or heavily subsidised) flexibly delivered training is the most attractive feature of the pilots. 'Hard to reach' employers appear to be particularly attracted by the brokerage and help with identifying training needs. There is no apparent relationship between the level of compensation on offer and the take-up among employers or employees. Other factors seem more likely to explain the differential participation levels among the pilots.

2.2 EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION

At the end of the second year of the pilots, approaching 12,000 separate workplaces are, or have been, involved in the 12 areas.[3] The take-up of the ETP offer by employers has been far stronger in the second year than in the first. Over the last year the numbers of employers involved in the first year of the six Phase 1 pilots have been revised down (from 3,100) to around 2,400 (see Table 2.1) as record keeping has improved. In the second year twice as many, 4,800, have been signed up. The Phase 2 areas have been almost as successful, signing up nearly 4,500 employers. Across all 12 areas, employers have been joining the pilots at a rate of around 700 a month.

2.2.1 Employer penetration

The pilot areas vary considerably in size and in particular by the number of potentially eligible employers. We have been able to roughly estimate the size of the eligible employer population in each of the areas (from data from our random surveys of employers, see section 1.2.1).[4] By expressing the number of employers involved as a percentage of this base population we can calculate an 'employer penetration rate' to see what proportion of eligible employers are involved in each area (Table 2.2). Overall, around 10 per cent of potentially eligible employers are involved, 12 per cent in the Phase 1 areas and 8.5 per cent in the Phase 2 areas.

---

3 It is likely that this number may be revised in the future as late records are entered and others updated and corrected.
4 The overall employer population in each area was estimated from Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) data. The number of small and medium-sized employers was factored down by survey estimates of the numbers who employed potentially eligible employees and who had the autonomy to decide to join a scheme like ETP. In the areas where we did not conduct surveys we used an average figure to estimate the proportion of eligible employers. In all areas we assumed that all large workplaces were eligible.

Table 2.1: Employer and learner participants in ETP by pilot area

	First year participants		Second year participants		Total participants	
	Employers 1/9/02 to 31/08/03	Learners 1/9/02 to 31/08/03	Employers 1/9/03 to 31/08/04	Learners 1/9/03 to 31/08/04	Employers (since 1/9/02)	Learners (since 1/9/02)
Berkshire	0	31	681	3,492	681	3,523
Birmingham and Solihull	159	1,576	434	4,011	593	5,587
Derbyshire	205	1,683	911	4,783	1,116	6,466
Essex	792	4,123	1,472	9,096	2,264	13,219
Greater Manchester	604	4,084	1,044	8,118	1,648	12,202
Kent and Medway	0	4	1,058	4,419	1,058	4,423
Leicestershire	0	1	663	4,723	663	4,724
London East	0	463	659	4,387	659	4,850
Shropshire	0	0	637	4,734	637	4,734
South Yorkshire	0	54	764	5,652	764	5,706
Tyne and Wear	257	2,696	654	4,780	911	7,476
Wiltshire and Swindon	382	2,784	341	3,872	723	6,656
Total	*2,399*	*17,499*	*9,318*	*62,067*	*11,717*	*79,566*

Source: ETP MI data, 31 August 2004

Table 2.2: ETP employer penetration rates: August 2004

Pilot area	Size of employer (no. of employees)			
	Total (%)	Small (u.50) (%)	Medium (50-249) (%)	Large (250 +) (%)
Birmingham and Solihull	6.7	5.4	14.7	23.4
Derbyshire	15.3	13.1	30.3	46.3
Essex	15.7	11.9	48.1	100.0
Greater Manchester	8.8	6.5	28.3	26.9
Tyne and Wear	13.8	10.1	36.3	56.6
Wiltshire and Swindon	13.7	10.9	30.7	59.7
Total in Phase 1 pilots	*11.9*	*9.2*	*30.8*	*51.4*
Berkshire	9.9	7.8	18.7	45.7
Kent and Medway	10.9	7.7	24.9	88.3
Leicestershire	9.1	6.3	20.8	71.8
London East	3.8	2.9	12.5	9.1
Shropshire	17.9	19.4	1.3	5.0
South Yorkshire	10.0	7.3	22.6	55.5
Total in Phase 2 pilots	*8.5*	*6.7*	*17.8*	*41.7*
All pilots	*10.3*	*8.1*	*24.7*	*46.6*

Note: Based on IDBR data. Excludes self-employed and central government
Source: IFS/IES/ETP MI data 31 August 2004

2.2.2 Employer characteristics

What sort of employers have become involved in the pilots? In particular have the pilots just engaged with the 'usual suspects' or have they managed to reach employers with little previous involvement in training or government programmes?

Size

Seven out of ten employers involved in the pilots employ under 50 people, 19 per cent have between 50 and 249 employees and the remaining 11 per cent employ at least 250 people (see Table A2.1 in Appendix 2), similar to the pattern found at the end of the first year.

The penetration data indicate that pilots have been more successful at attracting a higher proportion of larger employers, engaging with around 50 per cent of the potential pool, compared with under 10 per cent of eligible small employers, though there are, of course, very large numbers of these. Data from our most recent survey of ETP employers suggest that almost one-quarter of the smallest employers have 10 or fewer employees and a further 20 per cent have between 11 and 20.

So although the pilots have succeeded in attracting substantial numbers of small and very small employers, there are still plenty more potentially available.

Sector

A breakdown of employer participants by sector is presented in Appendix 2 (Table A2.2). Again the pattern varies little from that found in the first year. The popularity of the pilots among employers from the health and social care sector, driven by the need for employers to comply with the National Minimum Standards for Care Homes issued by the Department of Health, has continued with 28 per cent of employers coming from that sector. Compared with the first year the proportion of employers in education and the public services has increased, while those from the production sectors has declined.

Other characteristics

According to the MI data some 90 per cent of employers are from the private sector, (of which our survey suggests around 10 per cent are voluntary or not-for-profit organisations) and just over 10 per cent are from the public sector.

Other details of the ETP employer population from the employer survey include:

- Most (63 per cent) said that they had a business plan. Although this is higher than average (according to the National Employers Skills Survey [NESS][5]), it is a lower proportion than we found among employers involved in the first year of the pilots.

- Most (57 per cent) were operating at full capacity at the time of the survey and a further seven per cent were 'at overload'. One-third were operating below capacity – similar to last year and above the national average as measured by NESS 2003.[6]

2.2.3 Are ETP employers 'hard to reach'?

A sustained reduction in the numbers of low skilled employees will require engaging with employers not normally involved in such a programme as ETP. We have taken that to mean not normally involved with government training initiatives, agencies or providers and used three measures to assess whether ETP employers are 'hard to reach'. In the most recent employer participant survey we asked whether they had, prior to their involvement with the pilots, been involved with:

- a training provider (*eg* a further or higher education institution or a private sector provider).

- a national training initiative (such as apprenticeships, Investors in People or NVQs).

- a public training or business support agency (such as an LSC, Business Link or TEC).

The results for all pilot areas are summarised in Table 2.3. They key points are that:

---

5   Hogarth T, Shury J, Vivian D, Wilson R, Winterbotham M (2004), *National Employers Skill Survey 2003*, LSC
6   *ibid*

- about half the employers in the survey had been involved with some form of business support agency – most often with their local Business Link. Such engagement may not have involved support with training.

- two-thirds said they had been involved with a training provider, generally with a private sector provider or a further education college. This is a far higher proportion than the 38 per cent recorded in NESS 2003,[7] but NESS only looked at involvement over the previous year.

- Two-thirds had also been engaged in a national training initiative, with over half saying that they had been involved with NVQs.

Table 2.3: Involvement with business support agencies, training providers and training initiatives, prior to ETP

Involvement with:	%	N
Business support agency		1,452
Business Link	33.5	
LSC	23.2	
TEC	11.5	
No agency	49.9	
Training provider		1,470
Further education college	37.9	
Higher education institution	19.8	
Private sector training provider	41.3	
Other training provider	20.1	
No training provider	32.5	
National training initiative		1,483
Apprenticeships	20.0	
Investors in People	28.5	
NVQs	53.2	
No training initiative	34.4	

Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2004

The three variables can be combined to examine the overall extent to which an employer is 'hard to reach' in terms of getting involved with ETP:

- If an employer has had some involvement/experience with all three then the presumption is that the employer is '**easy to reach**'.

7   *ibid*

- If the employer has had no contact/experience with any of the three indicators, then it may be somewhat harder to get this group involved in training generally, and in ETP, so this group is labelled '**hard to reach**'.

- If they have had experience with some but not all then they lie somewhere in between and are labelled '**OK to reach**'.

The results of our survey show that around half of our sample (54 per cent) are 'OK to reach' (Table 2.4) which means they have had some contact with either a business support agency, training provider or national training initiative, but not all three. Further analysis with this group showed that this experience was mostly likely to have been with a training or education provider (74 per cent of this group), since only 33 per cent had received support from a business support agency.

It is interesting to note that one-third said that they had no previous involvement with a training provider – and therefore had been introduced to one through ETP.

Around one-third of our sample are 'easy to reach', which means they have had contact with, or experience of, all three. A minority of our sample (14 per cent) met a fairly strict definition of 'hard to reach' in that they had no experience whatsoever.

Levels of 'hard to reach' employers varied by sector and size of organisation. They were highest in the distribution sector (where they made up 30 per cent of the sample) and lowest in education and public administration (seven per cent). They were also much more frequent amongst smaller employers with less than ten employees, where they made up 30 per cent of the group. None of the larger employers with 250+ employees were 'hard to reach' employers.

The variation by pilot area is shown in Table 2.4. The data suggest that South Yorkshire, and Wiltshire and Swindon have been the most successful at attracting the hardest to reach employers. London East was the least successful and Shropshire had the highest proportion of firms which (under this categorisation) are 'easy to reach'.

2.2.4 Approach to training prior to ETP

The responses to the employer participant survey suggest that the employer participants continue to be more likely to adopt a positive approach to training, compared with employers at large. We have developed a number of measures to assess the approach to training among employers prior to signing up to the pilots.

Table 2.4: 'Hard to reach' employers, by pilot area (per cent)

	Berkshire	Birmingham & Solihull	Derbyshire	Essex	Greater Manchester	Kent & Medway	Leicestershire	London East	Shropshire	South Yorkshire	Tyne & Wear	Wiltshire & Swindon	Total
'Easy to reach'	28.8	34.6	34.3	29.9	37.5	29.7	35.4	34.9	45.5	28.3	36.5	24.1	32.8
'OK to reach'	55.6	53.1	50.0	56.2	52.1	60.1	54.0	63.5	39.1	50.7	54.1	57.8	53.6
'Hard to reach'	15.7	12.3	15.7	13.9	10.4	10.1	10.6	1.6	15.5	21.0	9.5	18.1	13.5
N =	153	81	140	137	144	148	113	63	110	138	74	116	1,417

Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2004

First, using a typology adopted in the first year evaluation initially adapted from one developed by Kitching and Blackburn (2002)[8] we can categorise employers by their response to a series of statements about their approach to training (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5: Overall policy in workplace to training and learning prior to ETP

	Frequency	**%**
No training taken place recently	55	3.7
Training is a last resort	10	0.7
Training undertaken as and when necessary	327	22.0
Take a positive and systematic though informal approach	498	33.5
Written policy ensuring necessary learning takes place	595	40.1
Total	*1,485*	*100.0*

Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2004

The responses suggest that almost three-quarters of ETP employers fall into the strategic trainer category – a lower proportion than in the survey of first year participants but still significantly above the 29 per cent of employers found in Kitching and Blackburn's national sample (although their study focused solely on small employers).

8   Kitching J and Blackburn R (2002), *The nature of training and motivation in small firms*, DfES Research Report 330

Further evidence of ETP employers' positive approach towards training is shown in their responses to a series of statements paraphrased in Figure 2.1. The overwhelming majority of employers saw the link between training and business, with 95 per cent agreeing that 'raising skill levels will significantly improve business performance' and 90 per cent agreeing that 'training is a key part of the business strategy'. These figures highlight a 'business-orientated' approach to training. Similarly, the majority agreed that training needs should be determined by the needs of the business (85 per cent). Finally, the positive approach is shown by the result that 93 per cent of employers disagreed that lower-skilled job employees should receive less training. However, a sizeable group agreed that they trained mostly to meet their legal requirements (18 per cent).

Attitudes concerning the value of qualification-based training were more mixed. The majority (64 per cent) thought they were preferable to non-qualification-based training, but 22 per cent disagreed with this statement. There were also mixed feelings concerning whether training should be for current tasks rather than for the future. The majority (61 per cent) disagreed with this statement, but almost one-third (31 per cent) agreed.

Figure 2.1: Attitudes to training and development
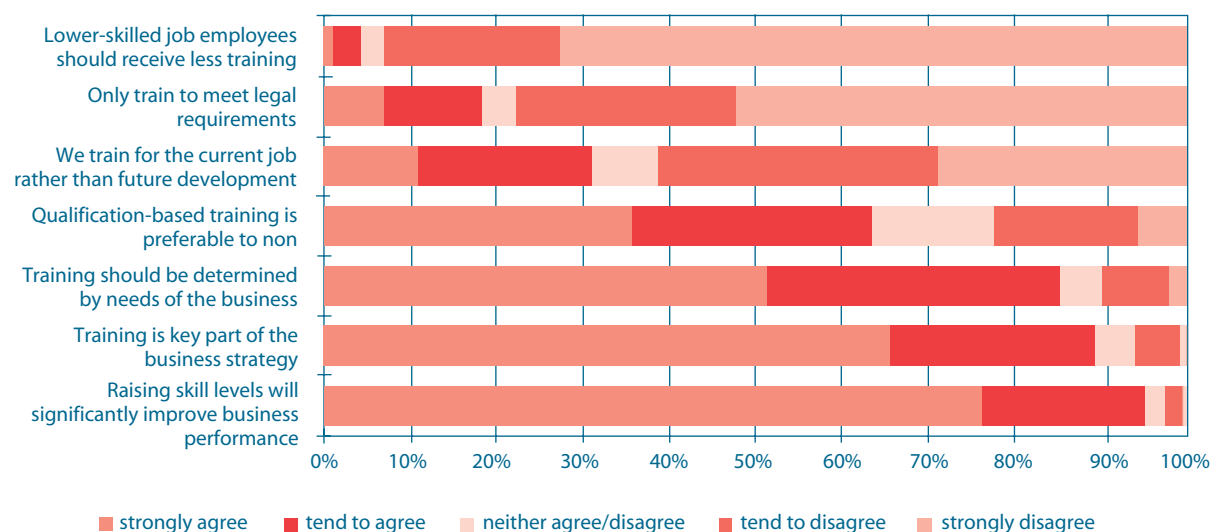
Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2004

Finally, we asked ETP employers about the training offered to their staff in lower-skilled jobs (*ie* personal service occupations, sales and customer service occupations, process plant and machine operatives, and elementary occupations) prior to starting on the ETP scheme.

- Just under three-quarters (73 per cent) stated that they provided time off for training to at least some of their staff. Around one-quarter (24 per cent) provided time off for training to all of their employees, whilst one-fifth (20 per cent) had provided time off for training to a maximum of 20 per cent.

- Seventy-four per cent of those who had provided training gave qualification-based training to at least some of these staff. Eleven per cent had given this to all their lower-skilled staff, whilst 30 per cent had given it to under 20 per cent of these staff.

- Finally, participants were asked whether this qualification-based training had been NVQ training. Only seven per cent of those who had provided qualification-based training had provided NVQ training to all of these staff, whilst 38 per cent had provided it to a maximum of 20 per cent.

Overall, these results indicate that around 42 per cent of the ETP participants in the sample with low-skilled employees provided NVQ training to at least some of their low-skilled employees over the 12 months prior to their involvement with the pilots.

The extent to which training is provided, and the extent to which this is qualification-based, and/or NVQ-based varies with size (Table 2.6). The greatest difference is in the uptake of qualification-based learning and NVQ learning. For example, whilst 56 per cent of employers with 250+ employees had provided NVQ training to at least some of their lower-skilled staff, only 25 per cent of the smallest employers had done so.

Table 2.6: Training of staff in lower-skilled jobs prior to ETP by size of employer

Size of employer (no. of employees)	Training %	Qualification-based training %	NVQ training %	Total (N)
1 to 10	57.2	33.9	24.7	271
11 to 20	72.5	51.6	37.7	273
21 to 49	77.2	61.1	50.5	368
50 to 249	76.2	60.1	48.8	281
250+	78.6	63.1	56.3	103
All	*71.9*	*53.4*	*42.5*	*1,296*

Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2004

Reasons for not providing training

Those 24 per cent of employers in the survey who said that they had not provided any training to their lower-skilled employees in the 12 months prior to ETP were asked to describe the reasons why (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7: Reasons for not providing training

	Frequency	%
Employees learn from experience/each other	125	42.4
Sufficient training provided before	119	40.3
Financial costs	90	30.5
Cannot afford time	77	26.1
Lack of workforce interest	68	23.1
Lack of information on training opportunities	67	22.7
Further training has no business benefits	47	15.9
Other	24	8.1
No training needed	22	7.5
Afraid trained workers would leave	17	5.8
N	*295*	

Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2004

Those who had not provided qualification-based training were also asked to elaborate on the reasons why. The most common reasons were:

- that the organisation felt there was no business need for qualifications (35 per cent)

- the cost of qualification-based training (29 per cent)

- a lack of employee interest (28 per cent)

- the lack of relevant courses (26 per cent)

- employees are new/skill needs just identified (23 per cent)

- did not know how to find a course (20 per cent).

2.2.5 Deadweight

The above data suggest that some ETP employers may have provided at least some of their ETP eligible employees with qualification-based training even if they had not taken part in the pilots.

The evaluation has three measures of 'deadweight'.

Qualitative measure

The first is primarily a qualitative measure – based on employers' perceptions of whether they would have provided the training in the absence of the pilot. In our most recent survey, 37 per cent strongly agreed and 23 per cent tended to agree (60 per cent in all) that they 'would have provided the ETP training in any event' (and we found a similar result in the survey of first year participants which they maintained when we asked them again in a follow-up survey).

By contrast, in the same survey, 77 per cent of employers agreed (strongly or partially) that the ETP training provided an opportunity to improve the skills of employees who would not otherwise get trained. Again we found a similar response in our survey of first year participants, a view held even more strongly by respondents followed up in another survey six months later. However, while it may be that employers already do give qualification-based training to a few employees, ETP provides the opportunity to spread the net much wider – especially to lower-skilled employees.

The employers who agreed that they would have provided the training in any event were, statistically, significantly more likely to:

- have a training plan

- have offered off the job training to low skilled staff in the past 12 months

- adopt a more strategic approach to training (employers defined as strategic trainers as opposed to tactical trainers or low trainers)

- think that training and development is a key part of their overall business plan

- think that raising employees' skill levels will improve business performance

- say that the fact that ETP will enable them to meet a legal requirement to train their staff is a benefit to their organisation in taking part, and to think that they selected employees for ETP training because the training was required by law.

Inferred measure

Secondly, the analysis of the data from the first round of random surveys of employers in ETP and non-ETP areas (see section 1.2.1) gives a further insight on deadweight. The level of training provided by employers in Phase 1 areas was compared with that provided by employers in the Phase 2 areas prior to the launch of the pilots and in the control areas.[9] The proportion of eligible employers providing qualification-based training in the Phase 1 areas was one percentage point higher (eight per cent compared with seven per cent) in the first year implying that the policy has lead to a 17 per cent increase in the take-up of training by eligible employers. There appeared to be a bigger effect among larger workplaces than among smaller employers and no variation by the levels of wage compensation offered.

At the time of the survey, August 2003, the average employer penetration rate (in the pilot areas surveyed) was 4.5 per cent. In other words, the pilots had recruited one out of every twenty-two potentially eligible employers at that point. However, the data from the survey suggest that some three out of four of these employers were already providing some sort of similar (but not necessarily identical) qualification-based training to at least some of their employees.

---

9   This element of the evaluation is conducted by the IFS.

Direct measure

Once IFS has analysed the follow-up employer and employee quantitative data in the pilot and control areas, we will have a more direct (and reliable) measure of additionality. Until then it is too early to be conclusive about these issues.

What we can say

There is a fairly consistent picture emerging. Relatively few ETP employers are 'hard to reach' and, for instance, most have worked with NVQs and been involved with a government agency like a Business Link or LSC before. Four out of ten told us that they had provided at least some of their low-skilled employees with NVQ training. Generally, ETP employers are far more likely to have a positive approach to training (on a range of measures) than average employers. Our initial survey evidence, though not conclusive, indicates that a significant proportion of ETP employers were providing some sort of ETP-like training to at least some of their low-skilled employees, although maybe not to the same number. We will have to wait for the final analysis of the quantitative surveys in the new pilot and control areas to be more conclusive about the issue of deadweight. At this stage however, we can expect to find that many of the employers involved with the pilots are the (relatively rare) kind who already provide qualifications-based training (though not necessarily to NVQ level 2) to (at least some) low-skilled employees. While most employers provided very little qualification-based training for their low-skilled employees, ETP employers appear to be drawn disproportionately from the minority who do.

2.3 EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

The numbers of learners involved in the first and second year of the pilots was set out in Table 2.1. It showed that as at the end of August 2004, 80,000 learners had started training and joining the pilots at a rate of over 7,000 a month. The Phase 1 pilots have recruited twice as many learners in the second year than in the first and, in the second year, 25 per cent more than the Phase 2 pilots. Overall, the average number of employees taking part per employer has remained constant over the two years – at around seven.

2.3.1 Employee penetration

We have used the Labour Force Survey (LFS) data to estimate the approximate size of the eligible employee population in the LSC areas (which varies from around 58,000 in Shropshire to 322,000 in Greater Manchester). Table 2.8 shows that across all pilots some four per cent of the eligible population have so far been engaged. Penetration varies by area, from over eight per cent in Shropshire (the area with the smallest eligible population and a Phase 2 area going for only one year) and two per cent or under in Kent and Medway and London East (two of the areas with the largest eligible populations).

The evidence on employee deadweight will not be available until Spring 2005.

Table 2.8: Employee penetration rates: August 2004

Area	%
Birmingham & Solihull	3.7
Derbyshire	4.6
Essex	5.7
Greater Manchester	3.8
Tyne & Wear	5.9
Wiltshire & Swindon	7.7
Total Phase 1 pilots	**4.8**
Berkshire	3.7
Kent and Medway	1.9
Leicestershire	3.6
London East	2.0
Shropshire	8.2
South Yorkshire	3.0
Total Phase 2 pilots	**3.0**
All pilots	*4.0*

Note: The population base is estimated from LFS data to represent the number of adult (19+) employees with qualifications below level 2

Source: IFS/IES/ETP MI data 31 August 2004

2.3.2 Characteristics

Some of the detailed characteristics of the learners involved in the pilots are summarised in Appendix 2. Additional details come from our surveys of ETP learners.

Gender

As at the end of the first year, most learners (54 per cent) are female (Table A2.5).

Ethnicity

The proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups has increased over the second year. Overall, 85 per cent of learners on the MI database are White British and 11 per cent are non-White British (the rest from other ethnic groups or their ethnicity is unknown) (Table A2.5).

Participation by members of minority ethnic groups varies significantly by pilot area. In four areas, Berkshire, Birmingham and Solihull, Leicestershire and London East, over 20 per cent of ETP learners are from ethnic minorities. To an extent the level of participation reflects the ethnic make-up of the local area. In Table 2.9 we have compared the proportion of minority ethnic learners in each area with the proportion in the local (adult) population (taken from LFS).[10] It can be seen that in most areas, participation from ethnic minorities is higher than we would expect from their representation in the general population.

10 Data on the proportion of ethnic minorities in the working population (or by qualification level) are not available by LSC area.

Table 2.9: Minority ethnic participation in the pilots

ETP area	Proportion of ethnic minorities in the local population (%)	Proportion of ETP learners from a minority ethnic group (%)
Berkshire	10.9	28.4
Birmingham & Solihull	22.3	29.7
Derbyshire	2.9	8.4
Essex	2.5	6.5
Greater Manchester	8.3	7.9
Kent & Medway	3.2	6.7
Leicestershire	13.2	23.2
London East	29.4	40.9
Shropshire	—	6.5
South Yorkshire	3.9	3.8
Tyne & Wear	3.7	2.6
Wiltshire	3.7	2.6
All pilots	*10.0*	*11.0*

Source: ETP MI data/ LFS

Age

As last year, most learners are between 26 and 45 years of age (Table A2.5). Over one-quarter are aged 46 or over and seven per cent are over the age of 55.

Disability

Some four per cent of learners on the ETP database have a disability – far fewer than the 12 per cent of the overall (Great Britain) working population (using the Disability Discrimination Act definition), but similar to the five per cent recorded this time last year.

Employment status

Three-quarters of learners are in full-time jobs and the remaining one-quarter are part-time.

Occupation

Most ETP learners work in personal service occupations (32 per cent in care-related jobs), elementary occupations (20 per cent) or as process, plant or machine operatives (12 per cent). However, eight per cent work in skilled trades, a further eight per cent in secretarial and administrative occupations and four per cent in managerial jobs.

Size of workplace

The proportion of learners in small workplaces has risen slightly over the year and at the end of August 2004, 42 per cent were employed in establishments with fewer than 50 employees (compared with 40 per cent in the first year), 31 per cent are in workplaces with between 50 and 249 employees and the remaining 27 per cent in sites with 250 or more employees. Most of the pilots have a broadly similar profile apart from Shropshire where 88 per cent of learners are from small workplaces (with under 50 employees).

Trade union membership

Only 16 per cent of learners are members of trade unions – varying between 25 per cent in South Yorkshire and five per cent in Kent and Medway.

Length of time in job

Over one-quarter of learners (28 per cent) have been working for their employer for under a year and most (55 per cent) have been at the same workplace for under three years. Around 15 per cent had been employed at the same place for between six and 15 years and six per cent had been with the same employer for over 15 years.

Pay

Average rates of pay among ETP learners (estimated from learner survey data) are around £6.25 an hour.

2.3.3 Previous educational experience

Most (around three-quarters) of ETP learners left school at or before the age of 16. In our recent survey of 2,000 ETP learners (across all pilots) 24 per cent said that they had left before the age of 16 and 48 per cent left at the age of 16. Of the rest, 11 per cent left aged 17, and nine per cent left aged 18. The remaining eight per cent left above the age of 18.

The learners had mixed views on their educational experience. One-third (35 per cent) were not bothered either way, *ie* indifferent about their educational experience. Just over one-quarter (27 per cent) had negative views of their educational experience, and 37 per cent had a positive view of their previous educational experience.

Prior qualifications

According to the data entered on the MI, some three per cent of learners already had a level 2 or higher qualification prior to joining the pilot and were therefore theoretically ineligible. In a further 14 per cent of cases the prior level of qualification was unknown. Thus the MI data show that at least 84 per cent of ETP learners are qualified to a level less than level 2.

However, as in the first year, the data we collected from learners in the most recent participant survey suggest that the proportion of apparently ineligible people may be significantly higher. Using the LFS question we asked our sample of 2,000 ETP learners for their highest qualification prior to starting the pilot. Half had no qualifications and 21 per cent had a qualification equivalent to below level 2. However, 17 per cent were qualified to level 2 and a further 11 per cent had qualifications above level 2. In our first year evaluation (in the Phase 1 pilots) we found that 24 per cent of ETP learners had a qualification equivalent to level 2 or higher. Although we have used a standard method of collecting the data, there may still be issues of respondent recall and coding of non-standard qualifications, and not all survey respondents replied to the question. Therefore we must not attach too much precision to our survey data. However, the evidence does suggest that a considerable minority of ETP learners, around one-fifth, are nominally over-qualified.

As we reported in our first report it can be difficult for some employers to know the qualifications of their workforce and indeed some individuals may not be sure of the exact level of a particular award. Learners with level 2 or above tend to have either obtained their qualifications some time ago or in a very different area to which they are now working. Some of the pilots have recently tightened up their eligibility rules (see Appendix 1) and so we could expect the proportion of level 2 and above learners to fall.

2.3.4 Previous experience of learning

In the ETP learners survey, we asked learners whether they had taken part in any form of learning over the past three years. Most learners (78 per cent) had taken part in some type of learning activity over the period while fewer than one-quarter (22 per cent) had no learning experience at all.

The same question was asked in the National Adult Learning Survey 2002 (NALS)[11] in order to calculate the respondents' experience of taught learning. Seventy-six per cent of respondents (adult learners) in the NALS 2002 survey had participated in some form of learning over the past three years, almost identical to the ETP learners' survey result.

One-fifth (22 per cent) of ETP learners had not participated in any learning or training activity in the last three years (*ie* the same time period used in NALS). Learners with no recent learning experience are more likely to be older men, doing either engineering- or manufacturing-related NVQ training.

We did not find any evidence of a 'second-generation effect' in the first six pilots *ie* that in the second year they had been able to attract more learners without a recent learning record. Learners in the second year were not demonstrably different in their recent training or past education experience compared to the first wave of learners.

---

11 Fitzgerald R, Taylor R, La Valle I (2002), *National Adult Learning Survey 2003*, DfES Research Report 415

2.3.5 Attitudes to training

As we found in the survey of learners in the Phase 1 pilots conducted in the first year of the evaluation, ETP learners in the Phase 2 survey generally had positive attitudes to learning. Respondents were asked their views on a series of statements (see Figure 2.2). The results indicate that:

- most learners thought learning enjoyable (69 per cent) and few (six per cent) say that they are not interested.

- the survey found a strong demand to participate in future training and learning. The majority of learners (71 per cent) would like to receive more internal careers advice from their employers.

- learners felt qualifications are important, two-thirds (60 per cent) felt that qualifications are important to progress.

- although learners indicated that qualifications are important, on-the-job experience was also considered to be essential. Almost two-thirds (57 per cent) strongly agreed that you can learn more by doing, than going on a course, and 56 per cent strongly agreed that getting the right experience is more important at work than getting qualifications.

- there was also evidence of demand for paying for learning – most learners agreed that they would be willing to pay to do training that interested them (79 per cent strongly, or tended to, agree).

Figure 2.2: Views on learning in general
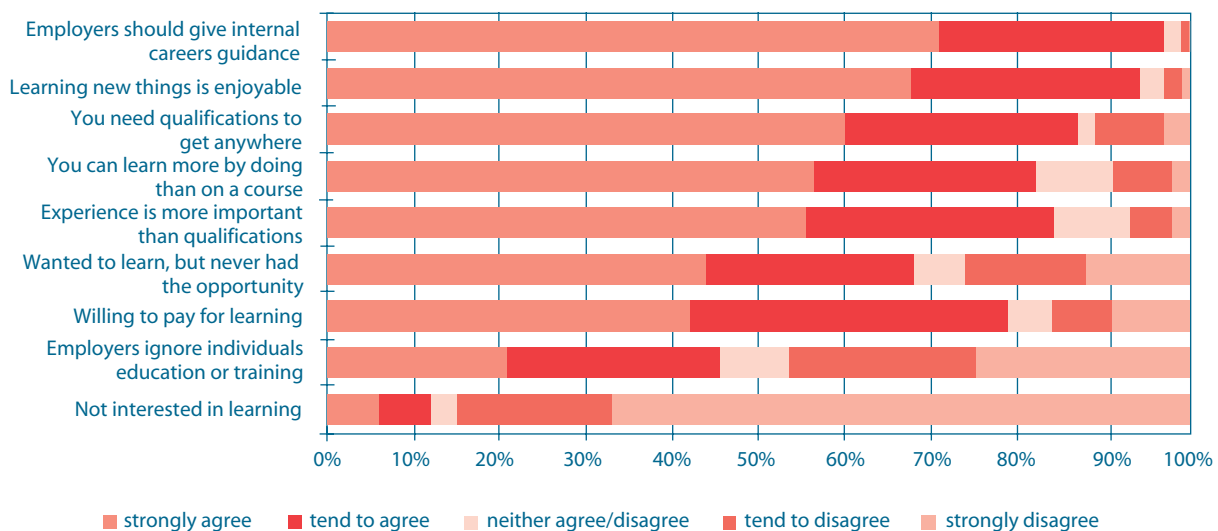
Source: IES/MORI ETP learner survey, 2004

Minority ethnic learners were more likely than White learners to strongly agree that you need qualifications to get anywhere these days (69 per cent of minority ethnic learners, compared to 59 per cent of White learners). Additionally, higher proportions of minority ethnic learners had a more positive attitude to learning new things (84 per cent strongly agree) and were interested in doing training (71 per cent strongly agree). Furthermore, higher proportions of minority ethnic learners (54 per cent) strongly agreed that they have never had the opportunity to do training before (compared to 42 per cent of White learners). Finally, minority ethnic learners were more willing to pay for learning that interests them (61 per cent of non-White learners strongly agreed that they would pay for learning, compared to 39 per cent of White learners).

The results follow patterns indicated by other research that suggest that, as a whole, people from minority ethnic groups are generally better disposed towards taking part in learning activities than White people (although attitudes vary considerably between different minority ethnic groups, and by other factors such as gender and class[12]).

2.3.6 Attitudes to training in the workplace

Learners were also generally positive about the training and skill development opportunities in their workplace (Figure 2.3).

Most learners felt that they were encouraged to develop new skills (59 per cent) and have equal access to training and development opportunities (59 per cent). Most also felt it is easy to get training in their workplace (63 per cent strongly, or tend to, agree). Few learners felt their employer was not keen on training (12 per cent strongly agreed). Learners from small companies were most likely to disagree with the statement (47 per cent strongly disagree). The majority of learners disagreed that there was never time to get training in their workplace.

12 See, for example, *'Why the difference? A closer look at Higher Education ethnic minority students and graduates'*, Connor H, Tyers C, Modood T, Hillage J, DfES Research Report 552, 2004.

Figure 2.3: Views on learning in the workplace
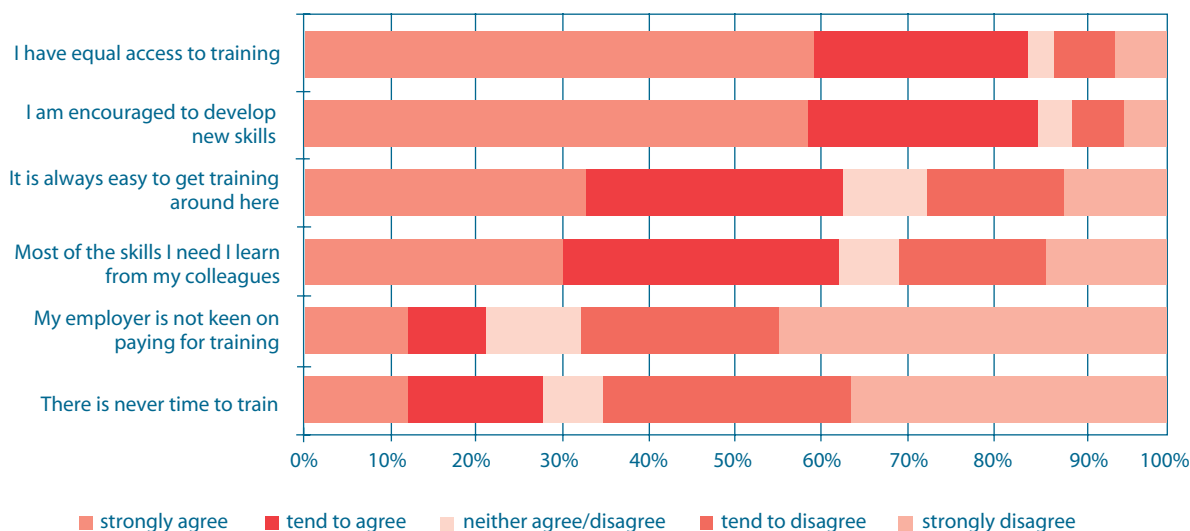
Source: IES/MORI ETP learner survey, 2004

Additionally, most learners (70 per cent) said they had regular appraisals with their manager.

2.4 TAKE-UP BY TYPE OF COURSE

The vast majority of ETP learners are taking NVQ level 2 courses. Despite the various initiatives taken over the last year we have not detected any significant increase in the uptake in the number of basic-skills learners involved in the pilots.

2.4.1 Basic skills

Some 11 per cent of ETP learners (up from 10 per cent in the first year) have or are taking a basic-skills qualification. Some pilots have been more effective than others at attracting basic-skills learners. For instance, 31 per cent of the learners are doing a basic-skills course in Birmingham, 23 per cent in Leicestershire and 20 per cent in Wiltshire and Swindon. Evidence from the case studies (see Appendix 1) suggests that these pilots have been relatively successful in packaging basic-skill support and had an effective network of providers in place.

The skewed distribution by area can also be partly explained by the fact that learners from a minority ethnic group are far more likely than White learners to study for a basic-skill qualification. Almost one-quarter, 23 per cent, of minority ethnic learners are working on basic skills (compared with only nine per cent of White learners). Evidence from the area case studies suggest that many of the minority ethnic learners are taking English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) type courses rather than literacy or numeracy courses.

Some of the pilots report difficulties in getting employers and or employees to admit to basic-skills difficulties. Often the difficulties become apparent while a learner is studying for an NVQ and training providers are encouraged by the pilots to provide basic-skills support in those circumstances (see Appendix 1). We cannot tell from the MI what proportion of ETP learners receive basic-skill support, but we estimate (from the surveys of learners and training providers) that around 10 per cent of NVQ learners get additional support.

Two other reasons for the low take-up of basic-skills courses emerged during the course of our interviews with training providers and pilot personnel:

- **Capacity** – our training provider survey found that many providers could not supply such support and/or embed basic skills within the NVQ, and either did not provide the support required or relied on the help of a specialist provider. Some areas reported a shortage of capacity among specialist providers – as well as a lack of a capacity within mainstream providers.

- **Finance** – some of the providers we interviewed indicated that other funding streams for basic-skills provision had priority and it was more important to ensure that they filled their core contractual targets or ESF programme obligations, for example, before taking on additional ETP learners.

2.4.2 NVQs

The most commonly taken NVQ courses relate to health and social care and the proportion of learners involved with care has remained constant over the two years, at 38 per cent. Otherwise the range of courses being taken by learners has increased – 20 per cent of learners now take a course under the 'other category' in Table A2.6 (compared with only 12 per cent in Phase 1). Such courses include:

- Business administration (eight per cent of all learners)

- Construction (six per cent)

- Transport (three per cent)

- Leisure, sport and travel (two per cent).

We have found that learners' experiences and the time taken to complete vary considerably by the type of course (see section 3.3.3).

2.5 INFLUENCES ON TAKE-UP

The number of employers and learners (for instance as measured by the employer and employee penetration rate, see Tables 2.2 and 2.8) taking part in the pilots varies significantly by area. A number of factors could explain the variation:

- The level of the offer – which in terms of wage compensation is more generous in some areas than others

- Factors relating to the area itself – including its size and the nature of the local labour market

- The approach adopted by the pilots – particularly in the first year, the pilots experimented with a number of marketing and engagement approaches.

In the remainder of this chapter we examine the first set of factors. We are not able to draw any final conclusions until we are nearer the end of the evaluation and have analysed the second wave of quantitative data from the pilot and control areas – which will particularly help us assess the influences of the offer and local labour market factors. In the meantime we have focused on a more qualitative assessment based on data from the pilot case studies. In the next chapter we look at the way pilots are organised before looking to see whether we can identify how the approach has affected performance.

2.5.1 Does the offer make a difference?

In the participant survey, employers were asked which aspects of ETP had first attracted them to the programme (Table 2.10). The aspects of ETP which were initially attractive to most employers were:

- free or subsidised training (88 per cent attracted to this feature)

- flexibly delivered training (76 per cent)

- free information, advice and guidance (67 per cent).

The wage compensation (59 per cent), help linking training to business (58 per cent), and links to other business services were attractive to fewer employers. Employers' views on the attractiveness of wage compensation may be affected by whether, and how much, wage compensation is marketed to employers.

Table 2.10: What attracts employers to ETP

	Found attractive (%)	Found most attractive (%)
Free or subsidised training	88.1	42.9
Flexibly delivered training	75.9	18.7
Wage compensation for employee time off on training	58.6	10.1
Help with linking training to business needs	57.8	6.1
Help with identifying training needs	48.1	5.7
Free information advice and guidance	67.4	4.2
Other	67.4	10.1
Don't know		2.2
N=	*1442*	*1471*

Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2004

We found some variation by pilot area. In Tyne and Wear, where the wage compensation is relatively high, the wage compensation feature was initially attractive to nearly three-quarters of the sample (73 per cent). In Essex meanwhile, where the compensation offered is relatively low, only 37 per cent of employers found this feature initially attractive. However, it is interesting to see that employers were more likely to have been initially attracted to wage compensation in Berkshire (71 per cent) where the 'middle' package is offered, than in Greater Manchester where the package is relatively generous.

'Hard to reach' employers were less likely to be attracted, initially, by free or subsidised training (80 per cent compared to 92 per cent amongst 'easy to reach' employers), or wage compensation (56 per cent compared to 62 per cent amongst 'easy to reach' employers). They were more likely to be attracted by the help identifying training needs (52 per cent compared to 46 per cent for 'easy to reach' employers), and help linking training to business needs (63 per cent compared to 55 per cent for 'easy to reach' employers) – *ie* the broking role offered by the pilots.

Participants were also asked to rate which of the features they had found the *most* attractive initially (see Table 2.10). Free or subsidised training was rated the most attractive feature by the highest proportion of employers (43 per cent), followed by flexibly delivered training (19 per cent). Wage compensation meanwhile was rated as the most attractive by ten per cent of the sample.

In subsequent questions, respondents were asked whether they would still have taken part in the programme if certain features had not been available. Table 2.11, again, shows that the free training was a crucial incentive in joining the scheme. This time we found no significant difference in the importance attached to wage compensation across the different areas of compensation (high, medium, low).

The only significant variation between organisations of different size, was on the importance attached to help identifying training needs. This was more important to the smaller employers. On the whole, as size increases, the proportion who would have taken part in ETP even without this feature decreases. Twenty-four per cent of the smallest employers would not have taken part without this help, compared to 11 per cent of the largest.

In our interviews with employers we explored the issue of wage compensation and found that it could be important at the margins. For instance, some large companies said that wage compensation helps bolster the business case for getting involved. In small, tightly staffed companies (*eg* care homes) wage compensation can pay for part-time staff to work on their NVQ on a day off. Generally though, once training had started it was the flexibility and quality of delivery that most concerned employers rather than the compensation for the time off.

Table 2.11: Whether would have taken part in ETP without certain features

Would still have taken part?	No help identifying training needs		Training not free/subsidised		No wage compensation	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Don't know	82	5.5	44	2.9	86	6.1
Yes	1,189	79.3	565	37.7	1,074	76.7
No	229	15.3	465	31.0	240	16.0
Would depend on the cost	–	–	426	28.4	–	–
Total	*1,500*	*100.0*	*1,500*	*100.0*	*1,400*	*100.0*

Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2004

Conclusion

The key participation data, by level of the offer are summarised in Table 2.12. In theory we could expect higher proportions of employers to take part in areas where the levels of compensation were the greatest. In fact there is no statistical correlation between penetration rates and compensation levels. Average employer penetration rates are, if anything, higher in the pilot areas, with lower rates of wage compensation than where compensation rates are higher. On the other hand employee penetration rates are more uneven: lowest in the areas of high compensation but also in the area with nil compensation.

We have separately found that areas with a smaller eligible employee population are more likely to have higher penetration rates (*ie* proportionally more employees taking part in areas such as Shropshire and Tyne and Wear than in Manchester or London East) – perhaps because it is easier to spread the available pilot resources across fewer employers.

Table 2.12: ETP take-up by level of wage compensation

Level of wage compensation	Employer penetration rates (1) (%)	Employee penetration rates (1) (%)
High	6.5	3.0
Medium	9.7	3.7
Low	8.7	3.3
Nil (2)	10.9	1.9

Note 1: year 2 only
Note 2: only comprises one area (Kent)

Source: IES/ETP MI data

2.6 CONCLUSION

The pilots have been very successful in attracting both employer and employee participants. Participation in the second year is stronger than in the first. Most employers are small and the learners generally left school at 16 without any qualifications. However, few so far appear to be from organisations with a strong track record or to be lowly-qualified individuals with no recent experience of training, which will be important to sustain momentum and make a significant impact on reducing the number of unqualified working adults.

Employers and learners from the care sector are the largest single group of participants driven by the need to comply with the National Minimum Standards for Care Homes. It will be interesting to see whether overall participation tails off once the deadline in the legislation has passed in 2005. Despite their success so far, our data suggest that there are still many more eligible employers and employees not involved in the pilots, so the potential market remains large. Whether the pilots can get beyond the easier to reach employers and penetrate larger proportions of the sectors and areas with little tradition of training will be interesting to monitor in the third year, especially in the Phase 1 pilots where one could expect most of the 'low hanging fruit' to have been picked.

Generally take-up varies between the pilots but not with the level of the offer as compensation. Employers seem most attracted by the free, flexible training on offer. The role of the broker in helping identify training needs and appropriate provision seems particularly attractive to the harder to reach employers.

Chapter 3
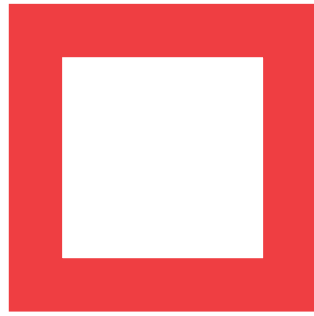
Delivery and Training

This chapter looks at how the pilots are organised to deliver the ETP programme and what the training actually entails. We look at some of the key aspects of delivery, and how employers and learners initially get engaged in the pilot before examining the training in practice including the initial assessment, the location and form of delivery and how long courses take to complete. We also consider how the information, advice and guidance and further business support elements of the pilot are delivered.

3.1 KEY POINTS

- The pilots vary in the way they are organised in a number of ways including: their approach to marketing the ETP programme; the size and experience of their team; the way they engage with employers *eg* through either independent brokers (working in Business Link or co-located with the LSC team) or 'recruiting' providers; and how they are managed.

- There does appear to be some relationship between the way the pilots are organised and their ability to get employers or learners to sign up. For example, employer penetration rates are relatively higher in pilots with recruiting providers, although completion rates (see chapter 4) tend to be higher in areas with independent brokers doing the recruiting.

- Employers most often get involved with the pilots either through responding to a local marketing campaign or being contacted by a training provider. The remainder mostly join up after being contacted by a Business Link or pilot broker.

- Employees generally volunteer, or are 'volunteered' to take part in the training. They say they have a lot of choice over whether to take part at all, but less choice over what course they do, although most said it was relevant to their job.

- Forty per cent of employers involved in ETP had their training needs assessed as part of their involvement (and one-third of those did it themselves).

- While most learners had an initial skills assessment, only a small minority – around one in six – went through some form of initial assessment in the Assess-Train-Assess model, whereby skills needs are initially identified, existing skills accredited and subsequent training adapted to fill the gaps.

- ETP training tends to be workplace-based and delivered by private providers (two-thirds of learners work with non-college providers). While those who have completed an NVQ take an average of seven to eight months (five to six for basic-skills learners), there are a large number still in learning after a year which may eventually raise the average completion time.

- We have estimated that it takes around 100 hours for a learner to complete their NVQ course, with roughly half that time spent in contact with the trainer, although practice does vary by subject. A further quarter of the time was spent outside normal working hours (usually unpaid) the other quarter was spent on independent learning – or more than likely evidence gathering – in the work time.

- Providers spend about one-third of their contact time (*ie* around 16 to 17 hours) training, around 40 per cent assessing and about one-quarter portfolio building. Learners spend nearly all their non-contact time collecting evidence and compiling their portfolio, and working through learning materials. Generally, time is spent most on assessment and evidence collation, rather than formal training.

- Just over one-third of learners received some form of information advice and guidance, generally from someone in their workplace or (less often) their training provider. Learners found the information, advice and, if offered, guidance they received helpful on the whole and were likely to be more satisfied than average with their ETP experience.

3.2 PILOT ORGANISATION

Details of how the pilots have structured themselves and their approach are set out in the case studies of each of the areas in Appendix 1.

3.2.1 Models of delivery

The case studies show that there is no single model of delivery. In very general terms, the local LSC manages the pilot through contracts and payments and works with a network of brokers to access employers, these brokers are employed by the local Business Link (although in some cases the LSC employs its own brokers to look after large employers). Some pilots also have a network of 'recruiting providers' with responsibilities to bring employers to the pilot. The LSCs market the pilot, often under local brand names. Once interest has been established (*eg* in response to a direct marketing campaign) employers receive a visit from the broker to identify their training needs eligible employees and an appropriate training provider.

Provider choice

Where possible, employers are offered a choice of provider, although pilots report they tend to opt for those with whom they have had previous contact. In some cases the pilot has to go 'out of area' to meet the employer's needs. Where employers come into the pilot through providers they appear to get a further contact from the independent provider to, for example, verify that they are happy with their provider and to offer them a choice if not. This process can act as a 'bottleneck' in the system.

The provider then takes over to deliver the training. Employers and learners can access information, advice and guidance at various points in the process, including at the end of the training to see whether they have any further need for training or business support.

Variations in the model

Pilots vary in a number of ways. Based on our interviews with pilot personnel and other stakeholders in the local areas involved with pilots we have identified the following key variants:

- Size of the combined LSC/Business Link team.

- Recruitment (whether the team was internally or externally recruited or a mixture of these).

- The kinds of experience looked for in brokers (*eg* whether they had been recruited from a background in sales, business, education/training *etc.*).

- The role of the broker – *ie* salesperson or independent broker. An independent broker seeks to identify employers' needs and an appropriate solution, independent of any specific provider. Under a sales-based approach the broker represents (or is part of) specific providers – often known as recruiting providers.

- Provider control (hands-off or close monitoring) *eg* the degree to which the pilot has been actively collecting, scrutinising and acting on performance data on provider performance in terms of quality, completions or satisfaction.

- LSC control of Business Link – via contract or as part of an integrated team. There are pilots in which the Business Link team is managed via a contract with clear performance targets; and those where the Business Link staff are fully integrated into the team and line managed by the project manager. In a few pilots, this integration is such that there is no Business Link identity at all and the team is solely ETP.

- The quality of the LSC/Business Link relationship (good or fractured) based on an assessment of the level of mutual co-operation, respect and common sense of purpose.

- Location (co-located or separate). In some pilots the various elements involved in the delivery of ETP are located together in others they are split over multiple sites.

3.3 EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

In our recent employer survey, participants were asked how they first heard about their local pilot. Figure 3.1 shows that awareness came through a number of routes, but most commonly via a training provider.

Figure 3.1: How employers first became aware of ETP
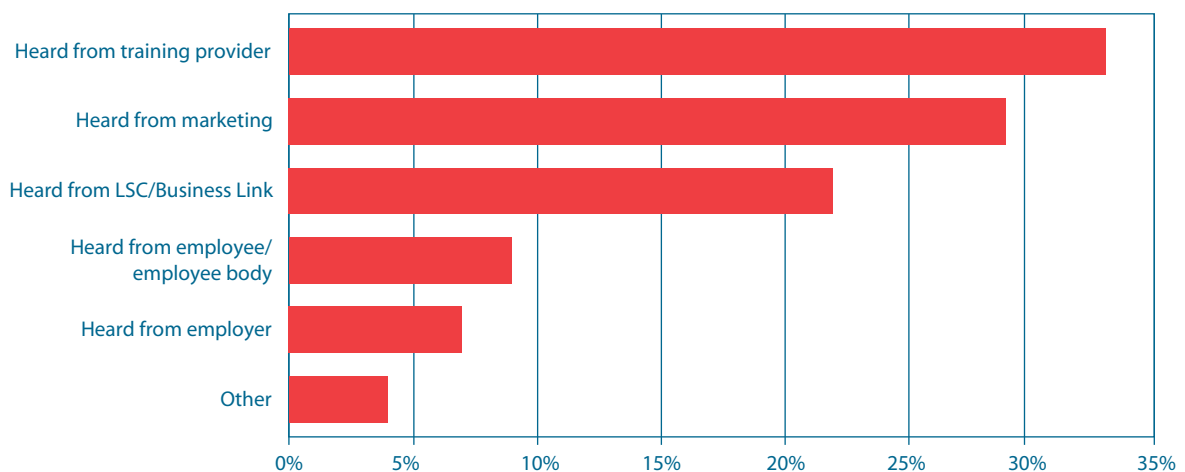
Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2004

Contact from the training provider was also an important means for employers to *get involved* in the scheme (Figure 3.2). The data have been combined to distinguish between a proactive initiative on behalf of an employer (such as phoning a free telephone number in response to advertisements) and a reactive response to being contacted (*eg* by telephone or face to face) by a Business Link or training provider representative. Broadly speaking, one-third of employers got involved through a proactive approach and two-thirds were reactive (mainly to an initiative by a training provider).

The survey found some variation by area and also by sector, with training providers being particularly active with employers in manufacturing (43 per cent of the group) and employers in health and social work being particularly likely to have rung the free helpline (43 per cent). This may be linked to the introduction of the National Minimum Standards for Care Homes and we found a statistically significant relationship between the existence of recruiting providers and a high proportion of learners working towards a care-related NVQ.

We found no variation by size of organisation or whether it was 'hard to reach', although we have identified a statistically significant relationship between recruiting providers and employer penetration. Areas with recruiting providers are significantly more likely statistically to have a higher proportion of employers involved.

Figure 3.2: How employers first got involved with ETP
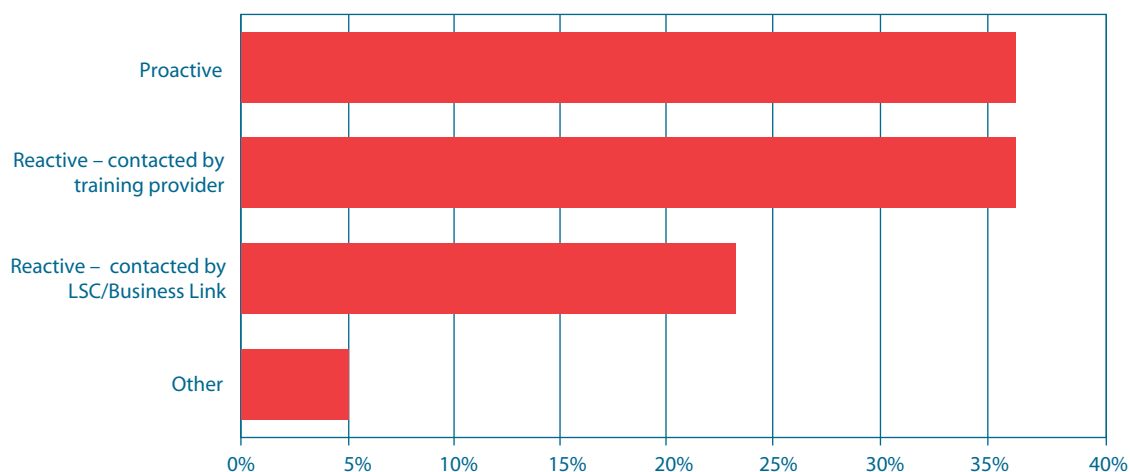
Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2004

3.3.1 How employees got involved

Employers generally either put employees forward for the training or ask for volunteers.

In our surveys we found that nine out of ten learners said they were either very or fairly keen to take part in the training and only around one in ten expressed some reluctance. Older learners were less keen than younger learners to take part.

We asked learners why they had not done any similar sort of training before. The responses fell into two broad groups:

- Those who said that they had not been offered the training before or were constrained from taking it up – *ie* responses indicating a latent demand for training – some 60 per cent of the learners in the sample

- Learners whose circumstances had changed and, therefore, felt that they now needed the skills or the qualification (30 per cent).

The rest had other reasons for not doing the training before.

Over half of the learners in the survey thought that they had a lot of choice over taking part in the pilot programme and a further 21 per cent said that they felt they had some choice (Figure 3.3). Only 23 per cent said that they had no choice (up from the 15 per cent in the survey of Phase 1 learners in the first year of the evaluation). Learners felt they had less choice over the actual training course they were doing (38 per cent said that they had no choice at all, slightly lower that the equivalent figure in the last survey). Most learners thought their course was relevant, 47 per cent strongly agreed, 22 per cent agreed, and only eight per cent disagreed that their course was appropriate for them.

Figure 3.3: Choice about taking part
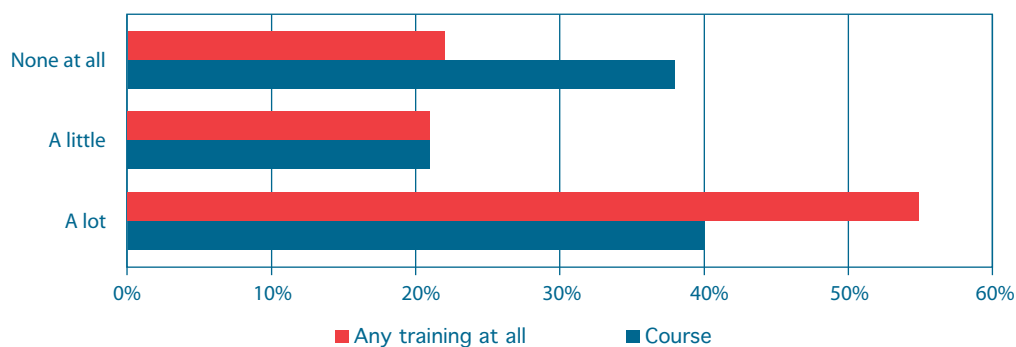
Source: IES/MORI ETP learner survey, 2004

Proportion of employees taking part

On average around three-quarters of eligible employees per employer take part in the training. The main reasons why employees did not take part were that they did not think the training would benefit them and, to a lesser extent, that they did not have any confidence in learning because of their age or they had other commitments.

Twenty per cent of employers also said that they had found it impossible to spare the staff from their work. Interestingly, this was more likely to be stated by larger employers (25 per cent) than by small employers (18 per cent).

3.3.2 What works

We have attempted to identify whether variations in the approaches adopted by the pilots could explain the differential employer and/or learner take-up. As the numbers of the pilots is small and the variables largely unquantifiable (and subjective) this was largely a qualitative exercise, although we have sought to check our conclusions statistically. Pilots were ranked in order of outcome data (employer penetration rate, employee penetration rate and the number of completions as a proportion of the eligible employee population) and we looked for patterns against the variables identified in section 3.2.1.

Our analysis would suggest that:

- there is a positive but insignificant relationship between size of team and employer penetration rates.

- employer penetration rates tend to be higher where:

  - brokers take on a salesperson rather than independent broker role (confirmed by statistical analysis)

  - the LSC relationship with Business Link is based on contract rather than operating as a single team

  - where the pilots operate through direct recruiters rather than just marketing.

- there was no clear evidence that any of the characteristics of ETP teams had an impact on employee penetration rates.

- one aspect of team approach which seemed to have a strong relationship with learner completion is the role adopted by the broker: in a reversal of the picture on employer penetration, completions are generally higher where the broker adopts an independent broker role (but this relationship is not statistically significant).

- there also appeared to be a weak (but again insignificant) relationship with the provision of up-front assessment and completions.

We could see no other relationships between the variables examined. We also looked closely at the different approaches to marketing and explored the size of marketing spend; the main marketing approach used; and what other approaches were used (categorised into general marketing; direct mail; telemarketing and events) but found no obvious relationship between any of these and data on penetration and completion.

3.4 THE TRAINING IN PRACTICE

The model for ETP training delivery is based around the principles of Assess-Train-Assess, *ie* training needs are initially assessed, training is then provided to meet the identified skill gaps, followed finally by an assessment of competence. In practice we have found that the full model operates in only a minority of cases.

3.4.1 Initial assessment

At an organisational level fewer than half the employers in the recent participant survey (40 per cent) said that they had their training needs assessed as part of ETP (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Whether training needs were assessed (by how respondent heard about ETP)

	Heard from employee	Heard from employer	Heard from LSC/BL	Heard from marketing	Heard from training provider	Heard other	Total
Yes	44.0	39.4	40.6	40.6	38.6	47.2	40.5
No	48.8	52.9	53.8	54.2	57.6	49.1	54.1
Don't know	7.2	7.7	5.6	5.3	3.8	3.8	5.4
Total	*125*	*104*	*320*	*419*	*472*	*53*	*1,423*

Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2004

Where employers had an assessment it was mainly done by the training provider who eventually supplied the training (43 per cent of cases) or they did it themselves (32 per cent). In 18 per cent of cases, training needs were established by the LSC or Business Link broker and in six per cent by a different provider than the one delivering training.

3.4.2 Identification of learners' training needs

In their survey, learners were asked a series of questions designed to identify whether their training had followed the Assess-Train-Assess model.

Skills analysis

Over half of learners (55 per cent) had an initial assessment before they started training, with considerable variation across pilot areas. Birmingham and Solihull had the highest number of learners who received a skills assessment (74 per cent), while fewer than half of learners in Shropshire (45 per cent) had an assessment.

Accrediting existing skills

Three-quarters (76 per cent) of those learners who received a training-needs assessment or TNA (*ie* 42 per cent of all learners) indicated that this process involved the accreditation of at least some prior learning, although this may not have been a formal APL-type accreditation. Again, the pattern of responses differed significantly by pilot area. In London East, almost all (91 per cent) learners who had their skills assessed said that at least some counted towards their qualification, compared with 65 per cent in Essex.

Adapted training

Finally, 39 per cent of those learners who received a TNA (*ie* 19 per cent of all learners) reported that an assessor then identified particular areas in which they needed training (most of whom then went on to receive it). Some 14 per cent of this group (about three per cent of all learners) went on to receive a basic-skills assessment.

Assess-Train-Assess

Overall, some 16 per cent of learners went through all three phases and, therefore, could be said to have undergone (on our fairly strict definition) at least the front end of an Assess-Train-Assess model, and as we found in our first report, a number of other models are in use.

Looking at the results for each stage, the survey data showed that Birmingham and Solihull, and Tyne and Wear have the highest proportion of learners that had followed the Assess-Train-Assess delivery model of NVQ training.

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI), in their report on the pilots,[13] did not comment on the extent to which initial TNAs took place but did find that – where they occurred – they 'failed significantly in the area of literacy, numeracy and language skills'.

3.4.3 The training
Location

Most ETP training takes place at the workplace, according to data from learners, providers and employers. The most recent employer survey found that, in around one-quarter of cases, the training took place mainly away from the workplace, in about another quarter it was generally delivered at the workplace but away from normal duties. In the remainder – *ie* in half the workplaces in the survey – the training was delivered at the workplace as part of normal duties.

There was also some variation by sector. Employers in distribution were most likely to have training take place at the workplace as part of normal duties. Employers in health and social work were most likely to have training take place at the workplace away from normal duties.

Interviews with employers and learners confirm that the training and assessment is predominantly organised to suit the operation of the workplace, not just in terms of location but also time (*eg* at break times or at the end of shifts).

Time taken

The MI data indicate that the average length of time taken to complete an ETP course is between six and seven months for those on NVQ courses (calculated by difference between the recorded start date and recorded finish date). Basic-skill courses take slightly less time to complete, averaging around five to six months.

This may be an underestimate due to the numbers still learning well after a year from when they have started and some learners appear to take under one month to complete their award (which might be more of a data entry issue than a reflection of actual training time).

We asked employers in the follow-up survey how long, on average, it took learners to complete their training. Employers estimated that the average time to complete an NVQ course was around seven to eight months and around five to six months for a basic-skills course.

13 The Adult Learning Inspectorate, *Employer Training Pilot Survey Report*, March 2004

Taken altogether, we estimate that NVQs take an average of around seven to eight months to complete and basic-skills courses around five to six months.

Training delivery

Most of the training in the pilots is provided by private trainers rather than colleges – although practice does vary by area. In Table A2.7 (in Appendix 2) we show the approximate proportions of learners taking their NVQ or basic-skills qualification with a college or with a independent provider, taken from data on the MI database. On average 35 per cent of learners are working towards their qualification with a college. Practice varies by area (*eg* from 67 per cent in Shropshire and Leicestershire, where pilots have particularly engaged with colleges, to around 15 per cent in Berkshire and Tyne and Wear[14]).

From the surveys of providers and learners and the MI, we have estimated that it takes around 100 hours for a learner to complete their NVQ course, with roughly half that time spent in contact with the trainer. A further quarter of the time was spent outside normal working hours (usually unpaid) the other quarter was spent on independent learning – or more than likely evidence gathering – in the work time.

Providers spend about one-third of their contact time (*ie* around 16 to 17 hours) training, around 40 per cent assessing and about one-quarter portfolio building. Learners spend nearly all their non-contact time collecting evidence and compiling their portfolio, and working through learning materials. Generally, relatively little time is spent on formal training inputs and most is spent on assessment and evidence collation. The ALI report[15] also found that the pilots involved little formal training, in keeping with the standard model of work-based learning and NVQ delivery which concentrates on workplace visits and on-the-job assessment.

Figure 3.4: ETP learners views on ETP training
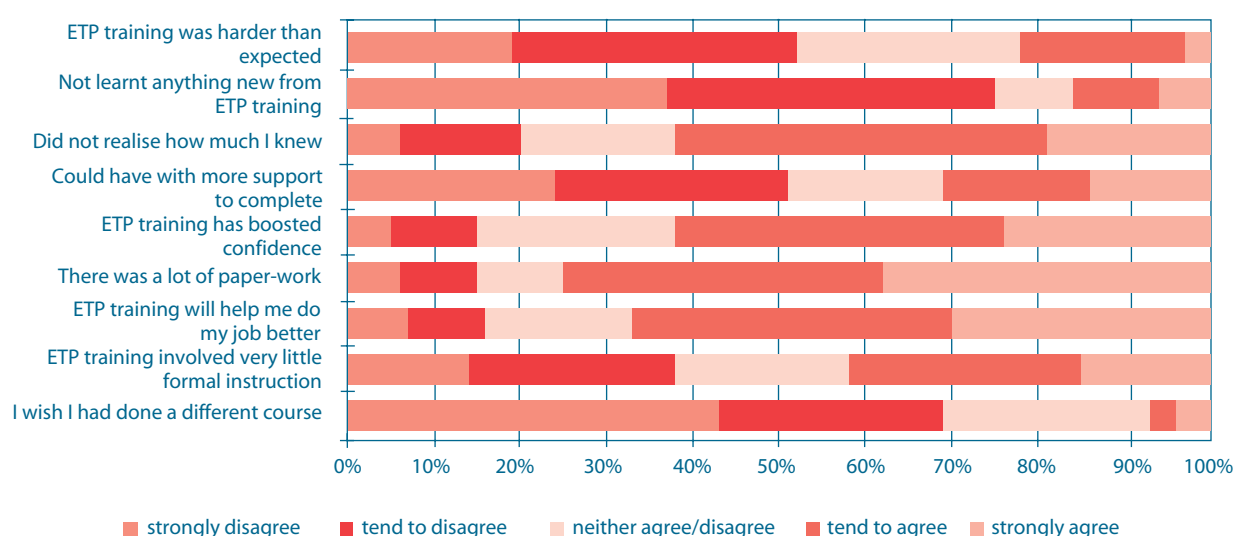
Source: IES/MORI, ETP learner follow-up survey, 2003

14 The low figure for South Yorkshire is thought to be a result of a coding anomaly.
15 *op. cit*

To assess learners' views about their ETP training we asked respondents to our follow-up survey of Phase 1 learners (and who were at the end of, or had finished, their training) whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements. The results are set out in Figure 3.4 and indicate that:

- overall relatively few learners thought the training harder than they expected; most therefore found their training easier or as easy as they had thought it would be. Younger learners and those doing manufacturing and business administration NVQs were most likely to think their training easier than expected while learners in smaller workplaces and those doing health and social care NVQs were more likely to think that their course was harder than expected.

- the vast majority of learners felt that they had learnt something new from their experience (least likely among those doing business administration and retailing NVQs) and

- as a result of the training the vast majority of learners felt that they were better able to do their job.

- most learners said that they did not realise how much they knew before they started their training and therefore they knew more than they thought about their job and how to do it.

- perhaps as a result of realising what they knew plus learning skills to do their job better, most agreed that taking part in the training had boosted their confidence. Older learners in particular were more inclined to say that their confidence had improved following their ETP training.

- very few respondents wished they had done a different course, indicating that they had generally made the right initial choice and that, at least in this regard, the initial training assessment had been successful.

- there were mixed views on the amount of formal training they had received. 42 per cent agreed with the statement that 'ETP training involved very little formal instruction or teaching' while 38 per cent disagreed. The learners most likely to agree that their training involved little formal instruction were those doing retailing and business administration NVQs.

- while most respondents indicated that they had not needed any further support to help them complete their training, some 30 per cent either tended to or strongly agreed that they could have done with more help, particularly learners doing management and professional, or care-related NVQs. Learners from Essex were the most likely to say they would have liked further support to help them complete their training. In addition, half of the learners who had left their course agreed that they could have done with more support.

- the great majority (and particularly older learners) thought that there was a lot of paperwork and evidence-gathering involved with their training.

Variation by course

Pulling together MI data and the various survey results, we found some variation in learners' experience of the training by type of NVQ:

- **Care NVQs** tend to take a long time to complete with relatively high levels of contact time, with a relatively high amount of training and evidence collecting done off-the-job. Learners generally found them harder than other NVQs and were more likely to want learning support.

- **Retail and customer service NVQs** on the other hand took a less-than-average time to complete. Learners said they had relatively little formal training input. Relatively few learners said that they learnt much new and, according to providers, these NVQs had the highest incidence of the Assess-Train-Assess model of delivery. Overall, learners expressed relatively high levels of satisfaction.

- **Business administration NVQs** appear to have low-to-average completion rates and average amounts of contact time – most of which was spent observing and assessing performance rather than on formal training. They take a relatively long time to complete and learners are least likely to learn something new.

- **Management and professional NVQs** were felt by learners to be relatively easy and took a short elapsed time but resulted in lower levels of satisfaction. Providers said these NVQs had relatively high formal inputs and a relatively low proportion of time spent on observing and assessing performance and portfolio building. Learners thought the training quite intensive (and some said they could have done with more learner support).

3.4.4 Role of IAG

As part of the ETP package, learners can receive information, advice and/or guidance (IAG) about current or future training opportunities. The survey asked learners whether they have received any IAG and how helpful it was.

Just over one-third of ETP learners (37 per cent) received some IAG – most often (in 63 per cent of cases) from someone in their workplace. A further 30 per cent of those learners who received IAG were helped by their training provider, and a small proportion (six per cent) received help from a specialist careers adviser. In three-quarters of cases the support provided involved information/advice about other training opportunities. One-quarter of those in receipt of support were provided with careers information/advice about opportunities with their current employer and 16 per cent were provided with information about their wider career opportunities. Around one-quarter were also directed to a training helpline number/website or to careers leaflets.

Those learners who received some form of IAG found it helpful. Sixty per cent rated the IAG provision as very helpful, and 36 per cent rated it as fairly helpful. No learner found the IAG unhelpful (Figure 3.5).

There is considerable variation in the nature and extent of IAG on offer in the pilots (see Appendix 1). Some IAG providers have been engaged in:

- providing help-line support to learners (Birmingham and Solihull and Essex).

- providing learners with learning support materials (*eg* in the form of a learner pack [Tyne and Wear], progress file [Kent], CD-ROM [Berkshire]).

- building capacity in workplaces (*eg* through the development of learning champions [Birmingham] and among providers [Tyne and Wear]).

- working initially with employers involved in the pilot (South Yorkshire).

Figure 3.5: How helpful was the information, advice and/or guidance
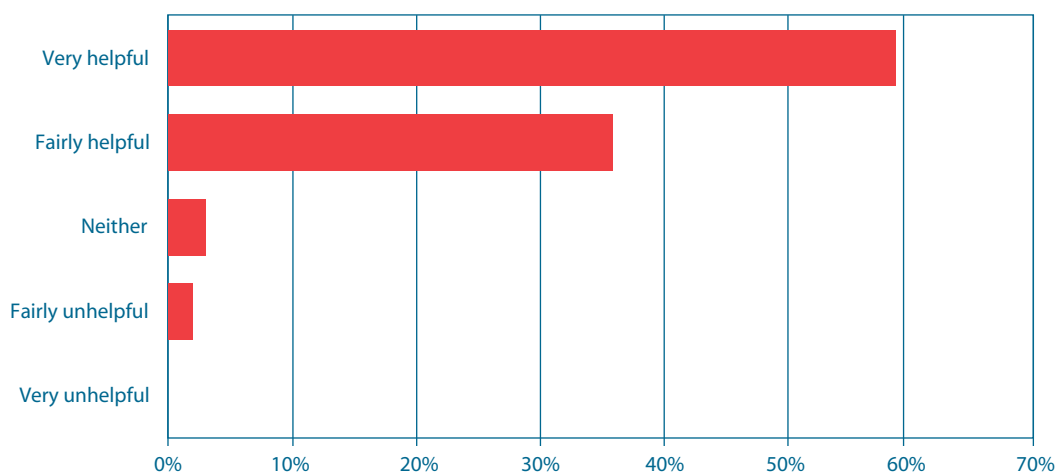
N = 615

Source: IES/MORI ETP learner survey, 2004

As documented in the case studies, some of the pilots have struggled to establish a clear and integrated IAG offer, compounded by recruitment and staffing problems and difficulties identifying a simple delivery model. Our survey evidence indicates that in most cases information and advice offered to employers is generally informal and provided through the broker. And the support most learners say they receive is predominantly information orientated and mostly provided by employers or trainers rather than specialists. There is very little guidance taken up anywhere.

We found a statistically significant positive relationship between learner satisfaction (see section 4.4) and the provision of IAG, with learners in areas where there was a strong offer of IAG support expressing higher levels of satisfaction with their experience of the pilot.

3.4.5 Follow-up business support

Only one-third of the employers in the follow-up survey had had any discussions with government agencies about further business or training support since their involvement with the pilot and only 13 per cent had actually received any support.

Of the employers who had at least discussed further support:

- 42 per cent had talked to their local Business Link.

- 41 per cent talked to their training provider.

- 31 per cent discussed matters with their local LSC.

In all cases the discussions were mainly about training-related issues such as: help with more training in the future; getting more staff involved in training; getting more information about NVQs; and access to funding. In very few cases (under five per cent of the one-third who had any other subsequent help or discussion about support) was the focus on business advice or support.

3.5 CONCLUSION

The approach that pilots adopt clearly makes a difference to the extent to which employers and learners get involved and also what they experience *eg* in terms of initial assessment. However, we have been unable to pin-point many of the critical differences between pilots to explain the significant differences in take-up between areas, apart from where pilots have adopted a sales-oriented approach and or relied heavily on providers to recruit employers. In these cases pilots have engaged with proportionally more employers than where the pilot has focused more on the independent broker model.

Across the piece, the evidence clearly demonstrates that the training involved in ETP is very workplace-orientated and adapted to meet the needs of the employer or the learner at least in terms of location and timing etc. We found less adaptation to individual learning needs. Although the Assess-Train-Assess approach is a desirable model of ETP delivery and elements apply in most cases, the full version (involving an initial skills gap analysis, accreditation of existing skills and consequent adapted delivery of training to meet the gaps) only applies in a minority of cases. However this is another way in which practice appears to vary by area, with some carrying out a far higher proportion of initial TNA than others.

Learners usually had a choice about whether they took part or not and although they had less choice about which particular qualification they took, most thought their training appropriate and hardly any wished they had studied something else.

On average, learners took about six to eight months to complete their qualification (though as we shall see in the next chapter there are still significant numbers still in training) and most spent at least some of their own time, as well as work time, on their qualification.

While most learners did not find it too difficult to do their training, some said they could have done with more support and relatively few learners saw someone from the pilot at the end of their course to talk about how it went and/or what they could do next. Few employers received follow-up visits either.

Many pilots have struggled to find an effective design and form of delivery of the formal IAG element of the pilot offer. In fact many employers and learners receive a lot of information and guidance from more informal sources, including the broker, their provider or (in the case of the learner) their employer. Learners in particular seem to need different types of support which could be supplied by different agencies at different points in the process:

- **Getting in** – in terms of helping to understand what the training and the NVQ process would involve, overcoming any concerns, ensuring the proposed course and learning methodology are appropriate, having current skills assessed (including basic skills) and current competence accredited, and the training suitably adapted

- **Getting on** – *ie* support with the learning process, *eg* helping with portfolio building, accessing learning opportunities, ensuring sufficient time etc. for training, overcoming any learning difficulties, maintaining pace and momentum leading to completion

- **Moving on** – *ie* progression on completion, helping to decide whether any further learning would be appropriate and if so what kind, what employment prospects may exist etc.

Chapter 4
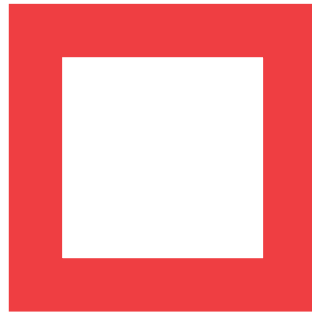
Outputs

The main output from the pilots is the vocational or basic-skills qualifications gained by the learners. In this chapter we review the evidence so far on completion rates and whether learners feel they have gained new skills. We also look at levels of satisfaction with the pilots among employers and learners.

4.1 KEY POINTS

The main points in this chapter are that:

- over 17,000 learners have successfully completed their course. Just under half of those who started in the first nine months of the pilots have completed. Around 20 per cent have dropped out and the remaining 30 per cent or so are designated as 'still in learning'.

- most learners leave early because they have changed job or for personal reasons. However, 40 per cent either found that they did not have enough time to train, lost interest or found the training too difficult – reasons implying that some may have benefited from further support.

- we have identified three sets of factors that appear to affect completion:

    - There are a range of **learner-related factors**. Learners who are older, male, do not have a disability and work flexibly (*ie* part-time or on a night-shift) have lower (but at least some) prior attainment and are not a member of a union have, statistically, the greatest chances of completion. Obviously some of these factors, *eg* union membership, are related to other factors (such as size of workplace or sector, although we have looked at these separately and found no statistically significant relationship with completion).

- There are also **course-related factors**. For example, learners doing an NVQ in leisure and sport, hospitality or manufacturing had the highest chances of completion while those on business administration, health care or transport-related courses had the lowest tendency to complete. We also found that the odds of completing a course were statistically lower for learners with colleges than those with non-college providers.

- **Area-related factors**. Some pilot areas have much higher completion rates than others which seems to relate to their approach, *eg* those with the higher completion rates tend to be those that concentrate most on initial assessment. Other local factors appear, at least anecdotally, to affect completion rates include the availability and extent of employer support.

- employers and learners express high levels of satisfaction with their experience of the pilots. Ninety-three per cent of employers were either very or fairly satisfied. Similarly, 90 per cent of learners were at least fairly satisfied, similar to levels recorded in the LSC's national learner satisfaction survey.

4.2 COMPLETION RATES

At the end of August 2004, over 17,100 learners had completed their course and gained a qualification, including 2,700 basic-skill learners and 14,400 NVQ learners, according to the data on the ETP MI database. The new numbers comprise 29 per cent of those learners who have actively started their course (as opposed to just signing up). Whether or not a learner could be expected to complete their course depends in large part on when they started and so we have analysed the data on completion by learner start date (Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3), taken from the MI at the end of August 2004.

The tables cover both NVQ and basic-skills learners (completion rates are not significantly different), who can be in one of three situations:

- Completed – and therefore gained their qualification (Table 4.1).

- Left their course – we have combined the data for designated as 'early leavers' and other leavers whose destination is unknown (Table 4.2).

- Still learning (Table 4.3).

The tables present the data by pilot area and combine start dates into quarters, starting with the first three months from the start of the pilots (September to November 2002).

Overall, just under half of those who started in the first nine months of the pilots have completed. Around 20 per cent have stopped training and the remaining 30 per cent or so are designated as still in learning. Fewer learners who started in the second year of the pilots have finished their course and most are still in learning.

Completion rates above 50 per cent are higher than the average 45 per cent achieved by students aged 19 or over taking NVQ level 2 in FE and tertiary colleges.[16]

4.2.1 Why learners leave early

We have some data on why learners leave their course early from our surveys of employers and from a follow-up survey of learners in the Phase 1 pilots who we first surveyed in 2003. Employers generally reported that the main reason why any of their ETP learners failed to complete their course was that they had left the workplace.

The responses in the follow-up survey from a small number (55) of learners who had left early also indicated that leaving the workplace was the biggest single reason for not completing their ETP course and others said that their personal circumstances had changed or that they had withdrawn for health reasons. However, around 40 per cent said that they found that they did not have enough time to train, had lost interest or had found the training too difficult. These reasons suggest that some may have been able to complete with more support (*eg* from their employer or provider).

16 www.lscdata.gov.uk/benchmarking

Table 4.1: ETP completions as a proportion of starters, by quarter

	2002-3				2003-4				Total
	Sept-Nov	Dec-Feb	Mar-May	Jun-Aug	Sept-Nov	Dec-Feb	Mar-May	Jun-Aug	2002-2004
Birmingham & Solihull	66.7	48.9	56.5	60.2	36.4	28.6	32.9	32.9	40.8
Derbyshire	58.6	44.8	52.1	36.7	21.0	19.3	19.5	8.5	27.4
Essex	33.5	26.1	24.7	31.0	19.4	16.4	10.1	25.6	22.0
Greater Manchester	52.9	58.2	54.2	39.6	31.4	19.2	19.2	18.9	33.6
Tyne & Wear	56.1	56.3	51.6	42.8	45.3	41.2	33.6	48.8	48.2
Wiltshire & Swindon	54.3	57.3	47.9	52.9	34.8	30.2	38.6	16.7	42.0
Berkshire					30.2	25.9	45.4	10.8	30.3
Kent					3.3	3.7	5.1	0.0	3.8
Leicestershire					13.4	21.6	17.9	4.4	18.1
London East					54.3	41.6	19.6	5.1	28.5
Shropshire					26.4	10.1	2.8	2.2	9.5
South Yorkshire					11.3	16.6	23.1	0.0	15.7
All cases	48.4	47.2	48.7	40.7	26.3	20.5	21.9	17.4	28.6
Total no. of learner starts in the quarter (N =)	3,001	4,429	4,221	4,237	12,537	15,075	12,283	3,992	59,893

Note: Based on learners with attendance records. Those in the Phase 2 pilots with start dates prior to September 2003 have been excluded.

Source: ETP MI data 31 August 2004

Table 4.2: ETP early leavers as a proportion of starters, by quarter

	2002-3				2003-4				Total
	Sept-Nov	Dec-Feb	Mar-May	Jun-Aug	Sept-Nov	Dec-Feb	Mar-May	Jun-Aug	2002-2004
Birmingham & Solihull	6.7	26.0	20.4	18.3	12.2	19.7	5.6	0.7	13.7
Derbyshire	23.4	25.7	15.7	22.8	16.5	10.7	5.6	0.7	13.7
Essex	26.0	15.7	16.6	7.5	5.1	2.8	2.2	1.1	9.1
Greater Manchester	32.7	24.1	21.4	21.1	11.9	6.5	2.4	0.2	12.9
Tyne & Wear	16.3	10.3	5.7	9.0	5.6	6.3	7.9	1.5	7.5
Wiltshire & Swindon	23.8	17.4	20.6	12.3	12.9	8.5	5.6	1.4	12.9
Berkshire					9.5	8.2	3.1	0.2	3.8
Kent					13.2	9.0	6.2	4.0	9.3
Leicestershire					17.9	10.3	7.3	3.3	11.1
London East					2.8	10.7	4.3	0.4	4.8
Shropshire					13.8	8.6	2.5	0.0	6.9
South Yorkshire					13.3	7.9	5.5	0.0	9.2
All cases	*25.2*	*18.9*	*17.4*	*13.6*	*11.1*	*8.3*	*4.6*	*0.9*	*10.3*
Total no. of learner starts in the quarter (N =)	3,001	4,429	4,221	4,237	12,537	15,075	12,283	3,992	59,893

Notes: Based on learners with attendance records. Those in the Phase 2 pilots with start dates prior to September 2003 have been excluded. Early leavers includes leavers who have left their course for an unknown destination.

Source: ETP MI data 31 August 2004

Table 4.3: ETP learners still in learning as a proportion of starters, by quarter

	2002-3				2003-4				Total
	Sept-Nov	Dec-Feb	Mar-May	Jun-Aug	Sept-Nov	Dec-Feb	Mar-May	Jun-Aug	2002-2004
Birmingham & Solihull	26.7	25.1	23.2	21.6	51.4	51.8	61.5	66.4	45.4
Derbyshire	17.9	29.6	32.2	40.5	62.5	70.0	74.9	90.8	58.8
Essex	40.5	58.2	58.7	61.5	75.4	80.8	87.7	73.3	69.0
Greater Manchester	14.4	17.7	24.4	40.3	56.7	74.3	78.4	80.9	53.6
Tyne & Wear	27.6	33.4	42.6	48.2	49.1	52.6	58.5	49.7	47.3
Wiltshire & Swindon	21.8	25.3	31.6	34.8	52.3	61.3	55.9	81.9	45.0
Berkshire					60.3	65.9	51.5	88.9	64.7
Kent					83.4	87.3	88.7	96.0	87.0
Leicestershire					68.7	68.1	74.8	92.2	70.7
London East					43.0	47.7	76.1	94.5	66.7
Shropshire					59.7	81.3	94.6	97.8	83.6
South Yorkshire					75.4	75.6	71.4	100.0	75.1
All cases	*26.5*	*33.8*	*33.9*	*45.7*	*62.7*	*71.2*	*73.5*	*81.8*	*61.1*
Total no. of learner starts in the quarter									
(N =)	*3,001*	*4,429*	*4,221*	*4,237*	*12,537*	*15,075*	*12,283*	*3,992*	*59,893*

Note: Based on learners with attendance records. Those in the Phase 2 pilots with start dates prior to September 2003 have been excluded.

Source: ETP MI data 31 August 2004

4.3 FACTORS AFFECTING COMPLETION

We have examined all the data we have about learners from the MI to see if we can identify factors associated with higher rates of completion using logistic regression and found a number of interesting results.

4.3.1 The learners most likely to complete

First we found a number of learner characteristics associated with completion. The chances that learners would complete their courses are enhanced if they:

- are **male** – the odds that a male learner would complete his course were 13 per cent higher than those of a woman.

- **do not have a disability** – those with a disability had a 20 per cent lower chance of completion.

- **work part-time** – full-timers had a eight per cent lower chance of completing their courses.

- **work a night shift** – those on a night shift were 32 per cent more likely to complete than those on a day shift, who in turn had a four per cent better chance of completion than learners on variable shifts.

- **are older** – learners aged 26 to 35 were 15 per cent more likely than those aged between 19 and 25 to complete and the oldest group – aged 56 or over were 21 per cent more likely.

- **have lower (but at least some) prior attainment** – the odds of completing the course were 16 per cent higher for learners with entry level qualifications than those with no qualifications and nine per cent higher for those with a level 1 qualification but significantly lower for learners with level 2 or higher qualifications. We have no concrete evidence to explain this finding but it is likely that the less qualified are more motivated than the better qualified learners yet more capable of completing the course than those with no qualifications at all.

- **are a non-union member** – union members have a 17 per cent less chance than non-members of completion.

4.3.2 Course-related factors

However, it is not just learner characteristics that appear to make a difference, we also found significant variation in completion rates with a number of course-related factors.

While there was no significant difference between those studying NVQs and those doing a basic-skill qualification, the type of the NVQ course appeared to be a particularly important factor. Learners studying for an NVQ in leisure and sport, hospitality or manufacturing had the highest chances of completion and those on business administration, health care or transport-related courses had the lowest completion rates. A learner doing an NVQ in leisure and sport was, according to the data, over four times more likely to have completed than one studying a business administration course.

The type of provider also made a difference – the odds of having completed a course were 29 per cent lower for those doing their course in a college compared with those studying in a non-college provider. There may be other contributory factors explaining this result such as the courses undertaken or local area factors.

4.3.3 Area makes a difference too

As we saw in Table 4.1, completion rates vary significantly by area. Learners in the Wiltshire and Swindon, Birmingham and Solihull, and Tyne and Wear pilots had the greatest chances of completion, significantly more than learners from Essex. In Phase 2 areas, learners in London East were more likely to complete than in Kent or Shropshire, where completion rates were the lowest. The area case studies in Appendix 1 set out various ways in which pilots are planning to tighten up their procedures and, for example, the way they manage providers, with the aim of improving completion rates.

Evidence from the case studies

As the pilots have progressed the issue of completion has become more important and, as set out in the case studies in Appendix 1, many have begun to take action to improve both the pace and rate of completion. A number of pilots have conducted reviews of their providers and have taken, or are planning to take, action where completion rates are unacceptably low, and provider payments are being more heavily geared to paying on completion (see Appendix 1). In addition to provider performance the issues that affect completion that emerge from the pilot case studies include:

- the importance of an initial assessment, to ensure the training is appropriate, to establish effective learning styles and patterns and, perhaps most importantly, to identify any basic-skills deficiencies which could affect a learner's ability to complete their NVQ. A number of pilots felt that basic-skills difficulties could explain relatively low completion rates (see Appendix 1).

- labour turnover – thought to affect the care sector in particular.

- employer support.

4.4 WHAT HAVE LEARNERS GAINED?

In our survey of ETP learners we asked whether they had learnt anything new during their training and seven in ten (73 per cent) said they had. One-quarter of learners (27 per cent) said that they had not learnt anything new, although it should be noted that most of these had not completed their training. We found some variation by type of course, with learners doing management and professional or hospitality NVQs most likely to report that they had learnt something new and retailing and customer services learners least likely.

The vast majority of learners felt that the training would help them do their job a lot (57 per cent) or a little (30 per cent) better. Only one-tenth of learners felt the training course would be no help at all.

The majority (68 per cent) of learners doing NVQs in the health care and public services subject area felt they had learnt a lot of new skills that will help them do their current job better. Younger learners tended to respond more positively to this question and were more likely to feel they had learnt new skills that would help them do their current job better. Two-thirds of learners under 25 years old (61 per cent) felt the skills they had learnt during training would help them do their job better.

4.5 VIEWS ON THE PROCESS

Our surveys of learners and employers have consistently recorded high levels of participant satisfaction.

Responses from employers were very positive. Fifty-four per cent were very satisfied with the scheme overall, and another 39 per cent were fairly satisfied. Only four per cent were dissatisfied.

Learners were also well satisfied with the training experience so far. In the most recent learner survey, 15 per cent said they were extremely satisfied, 42 per cent were very satisfied, and one-third (33 per cent) were fairly satisfied. Only four per cent of learners expressed any dissatisfaction with the training experience.

There were differing levels of satisfaction in the different pilot areas, as shown in Table 4.4. Over half of learners in Wiltshire (55 per cent) were very satisfied with their training experience.

Satisfaction levels are similar to those reported in the LSC's National Learners Satisfaction Survey.[17]

---

17 National Learner Satisfaction Survey, 2002/03 LSC (2003)

While drop-out from the programme is relatively low, at 20 per cent, completion rates are so far not as high as initially expected, but still higher than the nearest equivalent benchmark (of delivery of NVQ level to adults [aged 19 plus] in further education and tertiary colleges). However, there appears to be a large number of learners still in learning well over a year after they started. If those in learning complete at the same rate as those who have already finished, we could expect the overall completion rate to rise and approach 70 per cent. However, many of the reasons why learners appear to quit their course before finishing (such as changing job *etc.*) become more likely the longer they stay in learning. Given that less than 50 per cent of those who started between 18 months and two years previously have so far completed then an eventual 70 per cent completion rate may prove optimistic.

Table 4.4: Overall learner satisfaction by pilot area (percentages)

	Berkshire	Birmingham and Solihull	Derbyshire	Essex	Greater Manchester	Kent and Medway	Leicestershire	London East	Shropshire	South Yorkshire	Tyne and Wear	Wiltshire	All pilots
Extremely satisfied	23	22	15	15	15	15	9	18	13	13	14	6	15
Very satisfied	37	42	36	41	44	37	51	42	35	45	47	55	42
Fairly satisfied	32	28	34	39	38	34	29	28	33	34	29	27	33
Neither	2	3	4	2	1	4	1	4	7	3	4	6	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4	1	6	1	1	5	6	5	5	2	2	1	3
Very dissatisfied	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Extremely dissatisfied	1	1	3	0	1	0	2	1	3	1	2	1	1
Too early to say/Don't know	1	1	1	1	0	2	1	2	3	1	2	1	1
N =	142	86	159	160	135	158	128	124	175	176	167	77	1,687

Source: IES/MORI ETP learner survey, 2004

A combination of learner-related, course-related and area-related factors appear to be contributing to the extent and rate of completions. It would be useful to understand more about why learners are not completing faster and whether they could benefit from additional support (*eg* from their provider or employer) or whether there were other ways of speeding up the pace of completion. This issue will figure prominently in the early stages of the next phase of the evaluation.

Satisfaction levels among learners and employers are high, with nine in ten at least fairly satisfied with their experience. Most learners say they had learnt something new as a result of their training and were better able to do their job as a result. In the next chapter we turn to examine the available evidence on the impact that these effects have on individuals and the workforce.

Chapter 5

Impact

In this chapter we examine the available evidence on the impact of the pilots. The longer-term effect of the training on organisational or individual performance is beyond the scope of this evaluation. However, we have looked at:

- the benefits that learners perceive they have gained from their training.

- the benefits that employers think they have found from participating in the pilot.

- whether involvement in the pilots has affected the attitudes to training among learners and employers.

- the extent to which employees are likely to go on to further training and whether involvement with ETP has affected their aspirations for progression.

5.1 KEY POINTS

The main findings to emerge from this chapter follow:

- The most important benefit that learners felt they had gained from taking part in the pilots was improved skills to help them do their current jobs better.

- As learners progress through their training they tend to see fewer benefits *per se* and those that they do see are more narrowly focused on their current jobs. In a second survey of the same ETP learners who had by now completed their courses we found respondents were generally still very positive, but the proportion who identified no benefits at all had grown since the first survey. In particular they placed less emphasis on gains to do with having the skills to do a different job or with gaining a promotion or better pay.

- All employers see a range of benefits from their participation in the pilots, the most important being giving employees more self confidence and important business skills. As employers move through the programme, they appear to see the gains in more immediate terms and relate them to their employees rather than the business as a whole.

- Learners remain positive about ETP and training in general once the training has finished but tend to be slightly less positive than when they started.

- On the other hand, employers become more positive in their attitudes to training following their ETP experience and say they are more likely to train less skilled employees.

- We have also found that learners are more inclined to go on to further study at the end of their course than at the beginning and the majority of those who wanted to study further were interested in a level 3 or higher qualification.

- Employees who become more positive during the course of their training are most likely to want to progress to further learning. We also found that learners who had received IAG were also more likely to want to take their training further.

5.2 WHAT HAVE LEARNERS GAINED FROM ETP?

In a series of surveys of ETP learners, we have asked them what they thought were the benefits of taking part in the pilots.

In the most recent learner survey (Figure 5.1), 83 per cent said that gaining a qualification was a benefit and 78 per cent identified gaining skills to help them do their current job better. When asked what they felt was the most important benefit, four in ten said skills to help them do their current job better. The next most important reason was to gain a qualification (22 per cent) followed by skills to help them do a different job in the future (12 per cent).

Figure 5.1: Benefits of ETP training
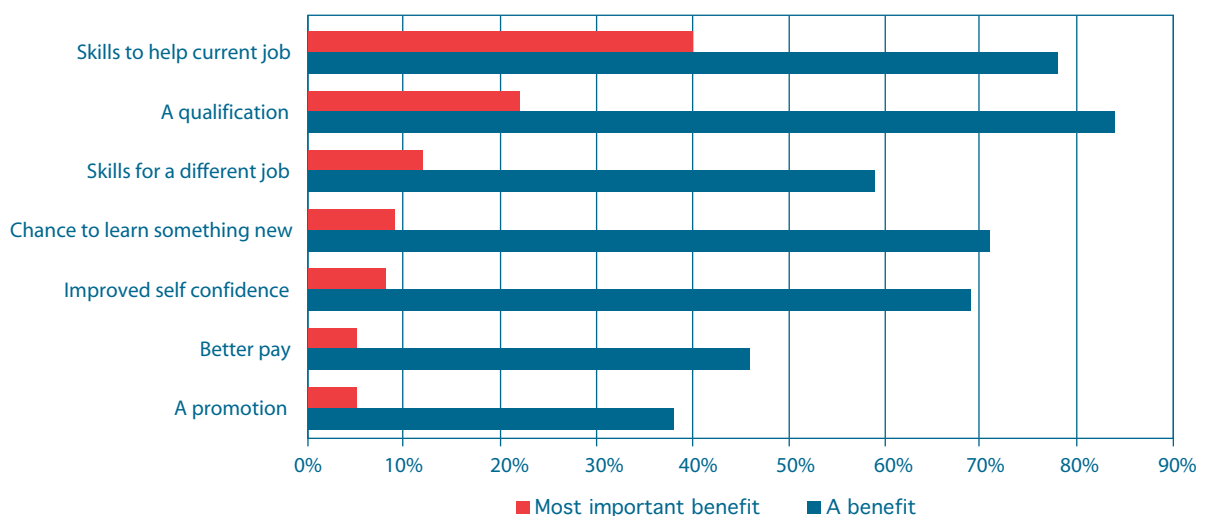
Source: IES/MORI ETP learner survey, 2004

There is some evidence that as learners progress through their training they see fewer benefits *per se* and those that they do see are more narrowly focused on their current jobs. In the first evaluation report[18] we reported the views of learners surveyed from the first year of the Phase 1 pilots. We went back to the same learners in the autumn of 2003 (after most had finished their course) and asked similar questions (*eg* on the benefits they saw from their training). In the follow-up survey the results were still positive, but respondents were less likely to identify benefits the second time around, *eg* the proportion identifying no benefits rose from two per cent to five per cent and each of the proportions identifying any of the benefits in Table 5.1 was lower than in the first survey. In particular less emphasis was placed on gains to do with having the skills to do a different job or with gaining a promotion or better pay. The change in responses may be because learners' initial expectations of benefits were unrealistic or that some of the hoped for benefits in terms of pay and career progression had not yet materialised but still could in the longer-term.

5.3   WHAT EMPLOYERS THINK THEY GAIN FROM ETP

Employers see a range of benefits from taking part in the pilots. In both the surveys of employers in the first year pilots and those involved in the 12 Phase 2 pilots almost every employer saw benefits of taking part. Ninety-six per cent said it would boost employees' self-confidence and give them job-related skills, 94 per cent said employees would gain qualifications and 93 per cent felt it would result in improved quality of service or production.

In the survey of 2004 employer participants, we asked which of the benefits were seen as the most important for their organisation. Improving the quality of services and products emerged as the most popular, as stated by one-third (33 per cent) of the group. Next most popular was job-related skills (17 per cent), followed by the belief that employees will gain more self-confidence (16 per cent).

In the follow-up survey of 2003 employer participants, we asked them to identify the most important benefits they thought they had actually gained (rather than the benefits they hoped to achieve). The results are set out in Figure 5.2.

The most commonly reported benefits focused on the learners in terms of increasing their confidence and providing them with important business-related skills. Over 10 per cent of employers said that the most important benefit was improved quality of output and other direct business-related benefits identified included increased efficiency and better compliance with the law.

5.4   CHANGES IN ATTITUDES TO TRAINING

As employers move through the programme, they appear to see the gains in more immediate terms and relate them to their employees rather than the business as a whole.

---

18 Hillage J, Mitchell H (2003), *Employer Training Pilots: First Year Evaluation Report*, DfES

Figure 5.2: Most important benefits of taking part in ETP
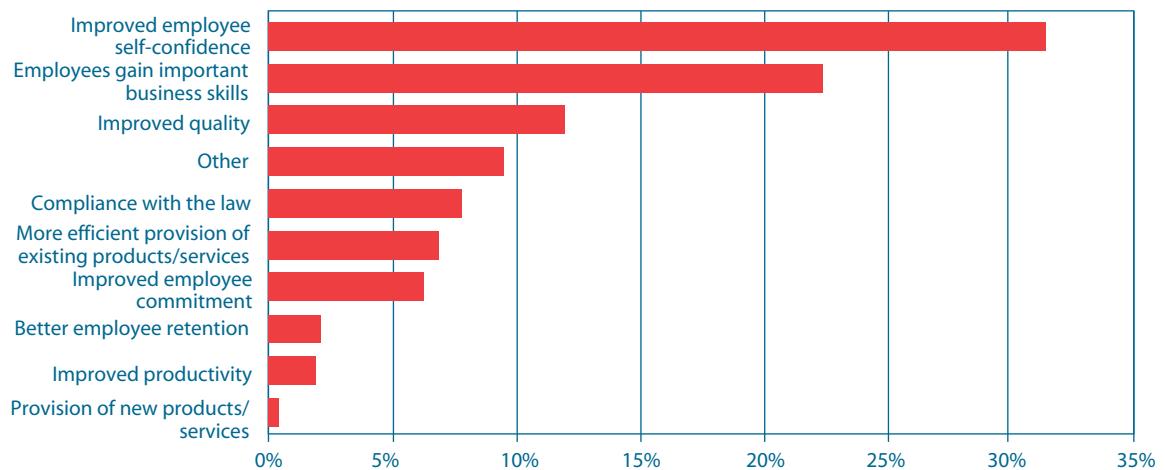
Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer follow-up survey, 2003

Figure 5.3: Changes in attitudes to learning between the two surveys
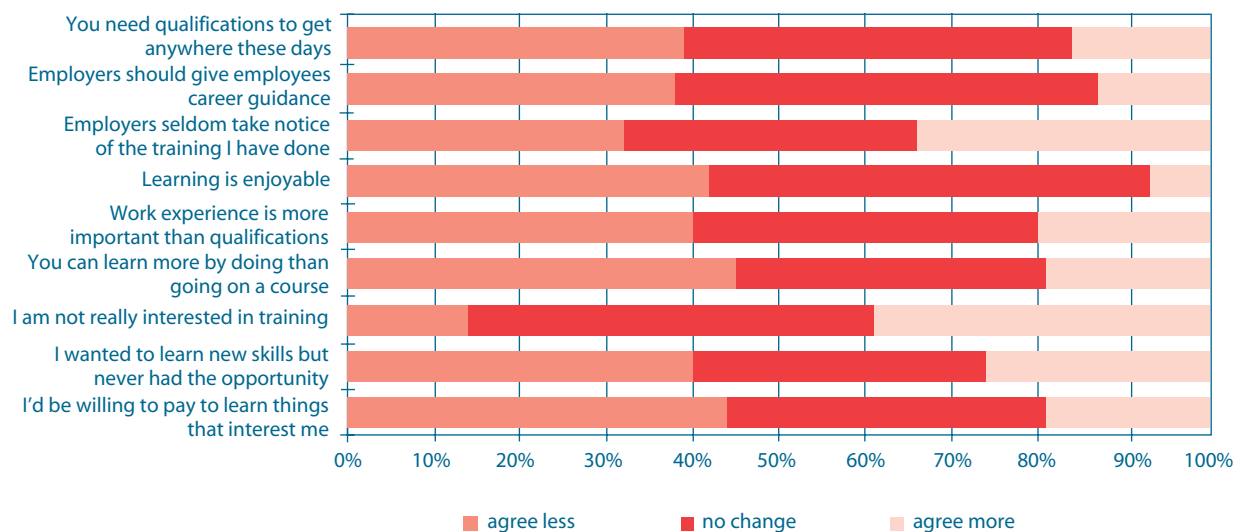
N = 683

Source: IES/MORI, ETP learner follow-up survey, 2003

We have seen in chapter 2 that ETP learners tend to have a positive view about training, but does that view change following their experience on the pilots? In the follow-up to the first survey ETP learners were asked to identify the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the same series of statements about learning in general that they were asked about in the first survey.

Respondents still generally held a positive view about learning but had become a bit less positive between the two surveys. Figure 5.3 shows the percentage of respondents who agreed more with the statements put to them the second time around and those who agreed less (*eg* answered 'strongly agree' in the first survey and just 'agree' in the second survey – most respondents only moved one place on the five-point scale) and those who recorded no change.

One-third to a half of the respondents gave the same answers in both questions. Of the rest, the balance tended to agree less rather than more with the statement (apart from the one negative statement). It is important to stress that overall learners were still strongly positive about training, but were not as positive at the end of their training than there were at the beginning and, for instance, were:

- less inclined to see qualifications as important.

- less inclined to think learning is enjoyable.

- less interested in training.

- less interested in paying for training.

There had been little net change in their views on how much notice employers take of the training they had done (with a third of learners becoming more positive and another third moving the other way). On a different note, learners had become less likely to think that they did not have the opportunity to train – presumably because of the opportunity that ETP has given them – and interestingly less inclined to think work experience more important than qualifications.

Some of these movements are those we could have expected. For instance, they suggest that on balance learners appreciate more what they learn from doing a course (as opposed to just relying on experience). However, in at least three respects (*ie* becoming less interested in training, less inclined to pay for training and more likely to think learning is less enjoyable) there is a group of learners who have become less positive about training while they have been on ETP. Those who became less positive tended to be older, male, and have done a manufacturing (or engineering) NVQ.

5.4.1 Employers become more positive

Employers appear to become more positive about training in general and training their low-skilled employees in particular as a result of their involvement with the pilots.

In initial and follow-up surveys of those involved in the Phase 1 pilots, the same employers were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the same series of statements about their views on training and development in the workplace. We compare the two sets of results in Figure 5.4.

Figure 5.4: Changes in views on training and development
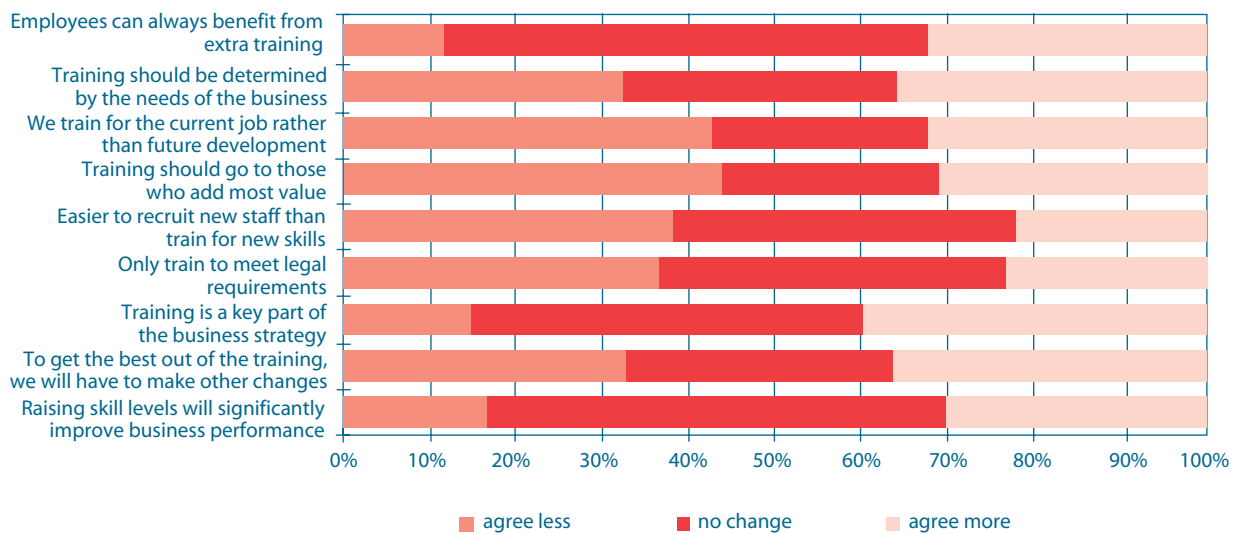
Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer survey, 2003 and employer follow-up survey, 2003

Some respondents recorded a higher level of disagreement (*eg* moved from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'disagree') while others recorded a higher level of agreement (*eg* moved from 'agree' to 'strongly agree'). Figure 5.4 shows the percentage who moved towards disagreement (-) and the percentage who moved towards agreement (+) and those who recorded no change. While we found that respondents had changed their views both ways, the results show that while the employers were involved in the pilots, their views had, on balance, become significantly more positive.

In particular, in the follow-up survey, employers were significantly more likely to agree that:

● employees can always benefit from extra training and development.

● training and development was a key part of their business strategy.

● raising skill levels will significantly improve their business performance.

and less likely to say that:

● they train for the current job rather than develop for the future.

● training and development should mainly go to people who add most value to the business.

● if they needed new skills it was easier to recruit new staff than train existing ones.

There are additional findings from employers which suggest that their involvement with the pilots had something to do with their adopting more positive attitudes towards training.

The respondents to the follow-up survey also generally agreed that as a result of their involvement with the pilots they felt more positive about training their less skilled employees and had a greater understanding of vocational qualifications. Respondents were asked whether their views on training had changed in a number of specific ways (by once again stating whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements). Their responses are set out in Figure 5.5.

These findings suggest that employers had very positive views about their experience of the pilots. Their views about training in general had become more positive and specifically they were more likely to think that the ETP training would benefit their business in a number of ways. They also thought that their involvement in the pilots had given them a more positive view about training less-skilled employees.

Figure 5.5: Changes in views on training as a result of involvement with ETP
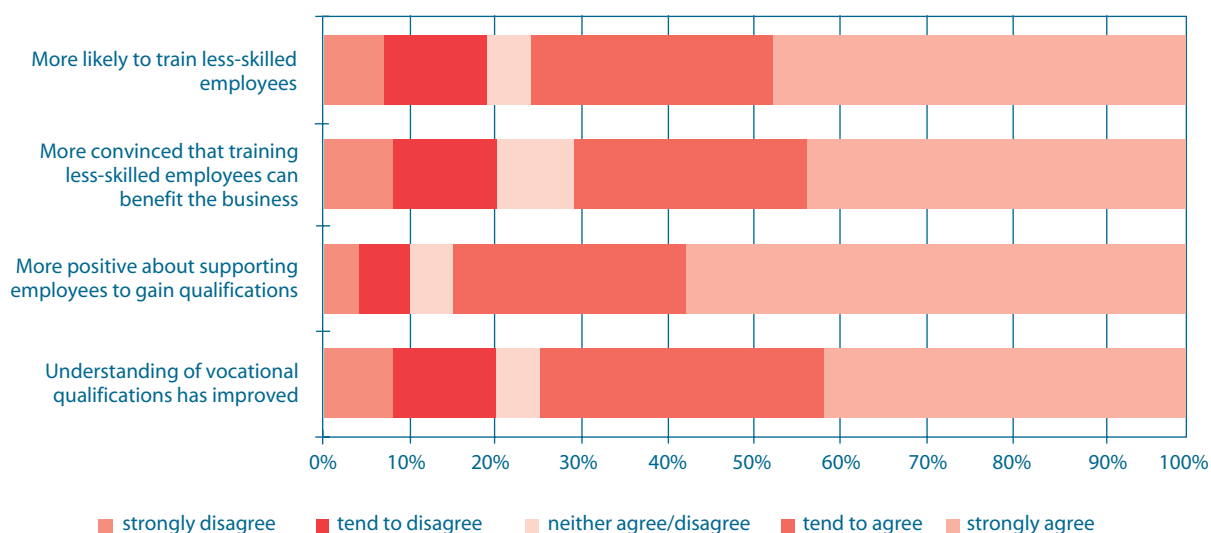
Source: IES/MORI, ETP employer follow-up survey, 2003

5.5 PROGRESSION

Finally we have fairly strong evidence that involvement with the pilots could lead learners onto further learning and, in some cases, progression to level 3.

5.5.1 Further involvement with training

In the follow-up survey of learners at the end of their involvement with the Phase 1 pilots, most respondents (71 per cent) said that they were either very likely (44 per cent) or fairly likely (27 per cent) to undertake further job-related training in the next two to three years. Younger respondents and those from smaller workplaces had the greatest tendency to say that they were likely to undertake further job-related training in the near future.

These responses indicate that our sample of learners had become more likely to say they intended to do further training since the learners were first surveyed at the start of their involvement with the pilots. Some 63 per cent had become more positive about the likelihood of doing more training in the future (*eg* said 'fairly unlikely' in the first survey and 'fairly likely' in the second survey) and 11 per cent had become less likely to undertake further training (see Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6: Intention to undertake more training (per cent)
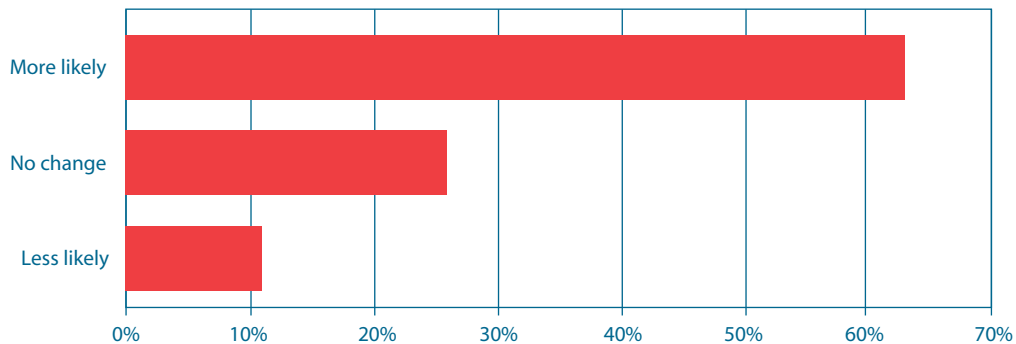
N = 492

Source: IES/MORI, ETP learner follow-up survey, 2003

The majority (55 per cent) of those who said that they were likely to undertake further training said that they intended to study for a higher qualification at level 3 or above. While 13 per cent said they did not intend to study for a higher qualification, one-third did not know, perhaps indicating a level of demand for further information and advice.

Respondents specified a wide range of learning opportunities that they would like to pursue. Within the 55 per cent of those saying that they would like to do further training, 23 per cent just mentioned doing an NVQ at level 3 (without specifying a subject area), and a further four per cent talked about level 4. The rest mentioned specific work-related qualifications in subject areas and the most commonly mentioned follow:

● Care – nine per cent of those wanting to do further training specified an NVQ level 3 in care and a further four per cent mentioned a nursing qualification. Another three per cent said they wanted to do other care-related qualifications *eg* in childcare or mental health.

● Information technology (six per cent).

● Management (five per cent).

We found a relationship between learners' experiences on their ETP courses and their inclination to undertake further learning. For example the group we identified earlier, of learners who had apparently become less positive about learning during the course of their ETP experience, were much less inclined than average to contemplate further learning activity. On the other hand, the opposite group (*ie* who had not changed their views or who had become more positive) were much more likely than others to say that they expected to do more learning in the future.

Nine out of ten learners who had received information or advice about further training said that they were either very likely or fairly likely to do it in the next two to three years – significantly higher than the sample as a whole.

We found a positive relationship between those in receipt of information and advice and the intention to go on to further study. While the causality is not clear (*ie* those wanting to take their studies further may be more likely to seek further information about how to do so) this does provide some encouragement for the provision of 'exit interviews' or other interventions with learners at the end of their ETP course to facilitate their learning progression.

5.6 WIDER IMPACTS

5.6.1 Capacity

The case studies and interviews with training providers and employers have given us considerable anecdotal evidence that ETP has contributed to developing training provision in at least two ways:

- Through developing more work-based and other assessors, particularly for level 2 qualifications – some areas are still concerned about the capacity of their providers to meet the potential demand for basic skills (especially in terms of workplace delivery or in support of a level 2 course).

- Encouraging provision to be more flexible and meet employers' and learners' needs by delivering in the workplace and at times that suit (for example in the middle of the night in some cases when the learners work shifts).

5.7 CONCLUSION

In our evaluation we have not been able to track either employer or employee participants over a long period of time and compare them with others in similar starting positions to assess objectively the impact of their involvement with ETP. The evidence we do have paints a slightly complex picture.

While both employer and learner participants remain positive about the pilots in particular and training in general after their involvement has finished, they do seem to take a more short-term, and in some ways softer, view of the direct benefits. Employers see the gains in terms of a more skilled and confident workforce rather than being able to evidence material business benefits. They also appear to become more positive about training their less skilled employees as a result of their involvement in the pilots. On the other hand employees are, if anything, less positive about training in general and its benefits in terms of giving them material gains but do think they are better able to carry out their current role as a result of the training they have had. It may be that involvement in the pilots produces more immediate benefits for the workplace, than for individual learners.

We have also found that learners are more likely to intend to go onto further training once they have completed their ETP course. These results suggest that while their ETP training may not have given learners all the benefits they hoped for in the short-term, it has helped them perform better in their current job and provided many with a platform for further progression that may fulfil their longer-term aspirations.

Chapter 6
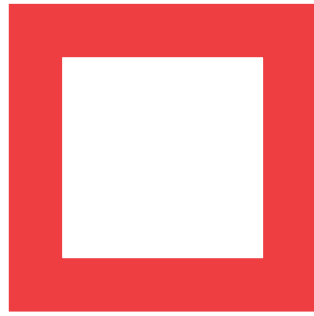
Conclusion

This evaluation has attempted to assess the nature and extent of the take-up of the ETP offer of free or subsidised training, time off, wage compensation and has examined the key issues affecting how the pilots operate in practice. We have also given some consideration to the impact of the programme (though it is too early to form definitive conclusions). While the evaluation has not finished – we still have the quantitative assessment of take-up in Phase 2 to come plus further evaluation of the pilots in Phase 3 – five general themes emerge for the evaluation so far.

6.1 OFF TO A FLYING START

The numbers of employers and learners signed up in the second year of the pilots is impressive. The best part of 12,000 employers and 80,000 learners are, or have been, involved in the 12 Phase 1 and Phase 2 areas. The Phase 1 areas have shown little sign of flagging and have enjoyed higher levels of participation in their second year of operation. The six new Phase 2 pilots hit the ground running and, over the year, almost matched their Phase 1 counterparts in engaging with employers and learners. We can conclude that the pilot offer is obviously attractive to both employers and learners.

6.1.1 The tortoise and the hare

So far, the pilots have been more successful at getting in participants than seeing them through to a finish. Completion rates are at best 50 per cent and, although they are relatively high (and will probably climb higher), they are certainly lower than those initially expected. We have seen from the case studies that the issue of low completion is being addressed by the pilots. Interestingly some of the pilots which have so far generated the greatest number of completers per head of the estimated eligible population seem to be those that either got off to a relatively slow start (in terms of signing up starters) and/or adopt the most pure approach (*eg* in terms of focusing on the hardest to reach, adopting an independent broker role, maximising the number of learners who get initial assessments, providing effective IAG provision etc.). However, there is more work to be done, across all pilots, to understand why it is seeming to take some learners a very long time to complete and whether anything can be done to speed up the pace of completion by, for example, offering learners (and employers) more support.

6.1.2 Basic skills still an issue

The success of the pilots has been built on the back of NVQ provision. Despite considerable efforts, the proportion of basic-skills learners remains at around ten per cent, lower than expected. Some ETP learners are now able to access basic-skills support as part of their NVQ provision (although we cannot tell how many from the MI). Part of the key to identifying basic-skills needs is an effective initial assessment. In Phase 3 all learners should go through such a process and it will be interesting to see whether it has an effect on the take up of basic-skills provision.

6.2 IT IS NOT JUST THE OFFER, BUT THE WAY IT IS OFFERED

Of major policy interest is what attracts learners and employers to the programme. In the first place it is important to note that learners come through employers. Most eligible learners take part voluntarily once the training is offered at the workplace. The main reason they have not taken part before is that no-one has offered them the opportunity. The key then is to get employers involved, but how?

The level of wage compensation appears to make little difference to employer involvement, although in some circumstances it can tip the balance of argument in favour of taking part. The most attractive feature appears to be the provision of training that is:

- **flexibly provided** (in terms of location, timing and to some extent content)

- **heavily subsidised** or free and, crucially

- **brokered** in, ideally by someone who can help link training needs to business needs, help the employer understand what training is on offer, identify an appropriate provider; and – perhaps more rarely – provide ongoing support.

6.2.1 The importance of the broker

The broker appears to be a key element of the success of the pilots and one of the hooks through which harder to reach employers are more likely to be caught. By taking the offer to employers and then helping them identify needs and appropriate provision, brokers are in effect stimulating otherwise latent demand for this level of training. Even where the broker was not directly involved in the initial employer engagement process they are generally involved with the employer to ensure their needs are being met. By working with providers to encourage them to meet employers' needs they are also helping to change the nature and form of provision. Pilots with the most effective brokerage models appear to be among those with the highest rates of learner completion.

During the year we found that brokers tended to focus too much on the start of the process and on initial employer engagement. However since then the role of the broker has been developed into a more 'customer relationship' model, with more emphasis placed on longer-term contact to secure learner completion and to provide further business support. It will be interesting to see whether this helps to secure permanent changes in the workplace in either the approach to training or even business strategy.

6.3 PLENTY OF SCOPE FOR FURTHER INVOLVEMENT

While employer and learner recruitment has obviously been successful in general terms, the pilots have had so far only limited success in penetrating the hardest to reach sectors of the employer community. It is important not to underestimate what has been achieved. One-third of the employers involved in the pilots said that they had not worked with a training provider before their involvement with the pilots. Half had never been involved with their LSC, Business Link or other business support agency before and a half are new to NVQs. One in seven had no previous involvement with any form of business support, training providers or government training schemes and fulfil our definition of being particularly hard to reach.

However, most of the employers involved have had some connection with a publicly funded training initiatives in the past and hold a positive approach to training which they have backed up with provision. The large proportion from the care sector have responded to the regulations introducing minimum standards in care homes by training their staff in NVQs. The growth of 'licence to practice' regimes has obviously influenced employers in other sectors to take part too. This is not to say that the learners involved would have been trained in basic skills or NVQs by their employer in any event. We cannot confidently estimate the additional effect of the pilots in this respect at this stage in the evaluation, although we do have evidence that a significant proportion of the employers involved have provided similar qualifications-based training in the past, although not necessarily of the same type, extent or depth.

Despite their success at attracting participants, the pilots have only just skimmed the surface of the potentially available employer and, particular employee, pool, with still relatively low estimated penetration rates. Even if we have considerably over-estimated the eligible populations (and they are only estimates), there is still plenty of scope for more employers and, especially, learners, to get involved. However, those still to participate are likely to be less positive about training in the first place, not known to Business Links or training providers and therefore more difficult to get engaged. It will be interesting to see whether, in their third year, the first wave of pilots are able to make inroads into the deeper waters of their employer communities.

6.4 KEEPING THE CUSTOMER SATISFIED

Employers and learners alike are satisfied with their ETP experience. Learners feel they have learnt new skills, feel more confident and are better able to do their job. Employers see the benefits of a more motivated workforce and are more inclined to train their low-skilled employees in the future. Such testimony should help encourage other employers and learners to get involved.

6.5 ETP PROVIDES A PLATFORM FOR PROGRESSION

The evidence suggests that some learners leave their training programmes slightly less enthusiastic about training than they enter them, although still generally positive. They are also slightly less optimistic about the impact of the training on their future career. This may be because of unrealistic expectations in the first place, or a reaction to their experience of NVQs (with their emphasis on evidence gathering and assessment of competence rather than a lot of formal training which many might have expected). Perhaps the most significant result is that they still retain an aspiration to progress, in fact it seems even stronger after they have finished their training than before. This suggests that the pilots provide learners with a platform for progression, particularly to level 3, if not beyond.

The pilots provide the foundations for other forms of progress too. It is clear that the training provided is workplace orientated, much more so than that traditionally provided, for example by college providers. While some colleges (and private providers) have struggled to adapt to an employer-focused demand, others have been innovative and radically changed their approach to delivery. While it is difficult to estimate the extent of change, the pilots have certainly contributed to a re-orientation of vocational provision towards a stronger focus on workplace delivery.

Participation in the pilots also appears to have contributed to a change of attitude among employers to training lower-skilled employees. Although many were already training orientated, they generally concentrated their efforts on the higher qualified in higher-skilled occupations. We have found that, after being involved in the pilots, they are more likely to want to continue training all their staff, including the less qualified. While pilots have really only just begun to build systematically the sort of long-term customer relationship with employers from which they can capitalise on this change, they do appear to have built a platform from which employer training can progress more generally, not only in Phase 3 but also through any subsequent national employer training programme.

Appendix 1

Case Studies

BERKSHIRE

The Berkshire offer

The Berkshire offer is branded under the name 'free2learn'. It offers mid-range compensation for up to 70 hours, capped at £8.57 per hour (as set out on the following table).

Wage compensation in Berkshire

Company size	Compensation level (% of 'basic' pay*)
under 50 employees	130
50–249 employees	100
250+ employees	50

subject to EU 'State Aid' rules

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	–	681	–	3,523
Estimated penetration rate (%)	–	9.9	–	3.6
Estimated learner completion rate*(%)	–	–	–	30.3

*Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

The marketing budget is £205,000, including £20,000 for use by training providers. Marketing is organised by the LSC marketing team, supported by the ETP team. There has been a wide range of marketing activities, and data on where leads come from are fed to the marketing team on a weekly basis so that the team can advise on the best actions to take as a result.

A number of direct mailouts were organised in the early stages, targeted at either particular sectors or areas. Learning providers also do their own mailshots, some to employers they have worked with before and others to capture a wider market.

A telesales company was contracted to work in Berkshire and Wiltshire with mixed results. When Programme Advisers (PAs), went to visit employers they were finding a significant number of ineligible learners. Whether, and how, to approach telesales is being re-thought.

The most successful means of generating leads is through training providers, and working with affinity groups and other contacts. Personal contacts with employers are very important. The ETP team are also beginning to work more closely with Sector Skills Councils.

Division of responsibilities

There is a dedicated ETP team, all of whom were recruited externally: the area manager, four PAs, a provider-owner, and two and a half contract co-ordinators. The whole team is located at the LSC. Three PAs focus on businesses within a geographical area of the county; one focuses on the public sector, one on large employers (one in the east and the other in the west of the county), and two members of the team are now responsible for supporting training providers.

The Basic Skills/Skills for Life adviser is co-located with the ETP team, and an IAG adviser is now working full-time with the team.

There is a weekly team meeting at the LSC, and team members are fully involved in taking forward the processes and direction of ETP in Berkshire.

Signing-up process

All contacts should go through a 0845 number so that they are registered on a central database. A PA then makes contact within 48 hours to arrange a visit. At the first visit, the PA will discuss the needs of the business, how ETP fits in, whether any other Business Link/LSC products or services are of interest and possibly IAG. There is sometimes a TNA. The PA will explain eligibility and do a general assessment but often a PA has to negotiate with an employer, stressing the business case for training. Small employers are usually signed up very quickly, although a few prevaricate. Large employers may take much longer as participation has to be cleared through a range of functions or levels.

Where a training provider has brought in a lead, they may make the first visit, followed by the PA to confirm eligibility.

Employers often know which training provider they want to use. If they do not, the PA will give them two or three names and it is then up to the employer to contact these and make a decision. Once the training provider has been chosen, he/she will visit to check learner eligibility and assess the training needs of individual employees, then enrol the learners.

Purpose-designed software has just been introduced to speed up and make links between the whole process. Following an initial visit to an employer the PA will enter information on the software, and this then generates the necessary information for the chosen training provider and the contract team.

Information, advice and guidance

A CD-ROM was developed in partnership with the Berkshire IAG Network. This is sent to all employers and given to all learners as they complete. This CD helps learners identify their learning style, to think about where they want to be in the future and identify training and development needs. It also signposts them to relevant learning opportunities. The CD-ROM recently won 'Most innovative use of technology in the delivery of IAG' at the 2004 Career Awards.

An IAG adviser has been based with the ETP team on a part-time basis and has conducted some one-to-one work with learners. This role is now being expanded to full time and the adviser will visit employers and do more one-to-one work with learners.

Delivery and completion

There had been much better progress with NVQ 2 sign up than basic skills although the care sector makes up some 40 to 50 per cent of learners. In response, marketing had been stopped to the care sector.

Completion was generally felt to be quite good but varied depending on NVQ, attitude of employer, and training provider. The pilot feels that non-completion at level 2 is partly due to poor basic skills (especially in hotels and construction) and it has started insisting that training providers address these needs. There has been an increasing focus on completion and likely to be considered activity with regards to providers with a poor record.

Management

The team was externally recruited and selected on the basis of business and training skills. They are now all co-located after an initial period where some PAs were located in Business Link.

There are regular team meetings and occasional awaydays, for example there was a recent meeting to discuss lessons learnt to date and changes to make for year 3. The area manager delegates responsibilities (*eg* attending meetings) to team members, change is debated amongst them and is the responsibility of everyone.

Emerging issues

- New arrangements have just been introduced to more effectively manage training providers. Two PAs are now responsible for nearly all the providers. Procedures are being tightened and providers will have to provide monthly feedback on the number of starts, completers and learners in the pipeline.

- A lot of work has been put into engaging minority ethnic businesses. This has involved persistent personal contact and building up relationships of trust around the delivery of government training programmes.

- More emphasis is being placed on identifying opportunities for ETP through Sector Skills Councils – picking up on particular sector issues, driving training needs, and specific alternative sources of funding.

- Building partnerships with a range of relevant local organisations is an important way of generating further leads for ETP, but also linking ETP in with the objectives of other organisations.

The Birmingham and Solihull offer

In Birmingham and Solihull, the offer is marketed under the brand name '**train2gain**', and provides:

- up to 70 hours training leading to a full NVQ level 2 in a range of vocational areas, or basic-skills training.

- free IAG at the end of the training.

Employers are offered wage compensation on the basis set out in the following table.

Wage compensation in Birmingham and Solihull

Company size	Compensation level (% of 'basic' pay*)
under 50 employees	110
50–249 employees	75
250+ employees	0

*subject to EU 'State Aid' rules

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	159	1,576	434	4,011
Estimated penetration rate (%)	1.8	6.7	1.0	3.6
Estimated learner completion rate* (%)	–	–	53.6	40.8

*Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

Marketing **train2gain** to increase employer engagement in the pilot has proved a challenge to the LSC. A variety of techniques has been used, including an initial mass mailout to over 25,000 businesses in the area that generated too many leads too quickly for the pilot to take full advantage. Following this lesson marketing activity is now being managed more successfully, it is more targeted and is organised on a smaller scale. The LSC have just purchased the Dun and Bradstreet company database and are using this to target their mailing activity. Marketing activity for the **train2gain** pilot has included direct mail and telesales follow-up, distributing Christmas cards, coasters and calendars, and all participants get a **train2gain** mug with all the relevant telephone numbers printed on it (and importantly the number for IAG). The LSC has also hosted events and piggy-backed at other events, for example, those arranged by Business Links, to market **train2gain**. Their largest event so far has been an employer conference held in January 2004, in the city centre, where participating (and exemplar) employers and learners received awards. Providers are also actively marketing **train2gain** and provide case studies to the LSC for local marketing and dissemination *ie* press releases.

The LSC has recently retained a telemarketing company to generate leads for business advisers, and are booking visits directly into their diaries. They receive a flat-rate fee then a further conversion payment when employers sign up to **train2gain**.

Division of responsibilities

train2gain is being delivered by the LSC (the lead contractor), Business Link, local colleges and providers, and the IAG Partnership. Business Link business advisers (BAs) actively engage employers with up to 249 employees, as do (private) training providers and business development advisers (BDAs) working from college sites. The LSC's sector co-ordinators have responsibility for engaging large employers with 250+ employees. The LSC are also about to recruit two skills brokers who will work with SMEs to generate leads for private providers. IAG is delivered by providers within the IAG partnership. Attempts have been made to engage with the TUC and local unions but this has not yielded any significant results. Sign up to **train2gain** continues to lag behind many of the other pilots and the referral process has been expanded to allow BDAs, providers (and shortly skills brokers) to actively market the pilot in order to boost the numbers of trainees coming into training.

Signing-up process

Interested employers are identified as a result of a marketing activity *eg* mailshot/return card, an event or conference and leads are passed to BAs, BDAs or LSC sector co-ordinators to follow up. BAs, BDAs, LSC sector co-ordinators and providers may also be actively marketing/cold calling employers.

Organisational eligibility is checked at the first visit and employers are asked to nominate staff who would be eligible for **train2gain** (basic skills and/or NVQ), and to select the vocational area in which training would be carried out. If the referral is being made by BAs (*ie* Business Link) or sector co-ordinators (*ie* LSC) then employers choose a training provider (college or private provider) who will undertake a TNA and (usually) provide the subsequent NVQ/basic-skills training. If BDAs are meeting with employers for the first time, they would normally check eligibility and then send in an assessor from their own college to undertake the TNA and agree a training plan. If providers have actively marketed the employer, they can undertake the TNA and then follow-up with the training directly. Once the number of learners and type of training is established at an organisational level, an employer agreement is drawn up and training commences.

The LSC has contracts with training providers and colleges (38 providers in all) and private providers are more actively engaged in **train2gain** than colleges.

Information, advice and guidance
The IAG offer in Birmingham and Solihull concentrates on:

- providing free IAG at the end of the training programme for individuals.

- identifying and offering training to individuals within companies who can act as a learning champion to build learning capacity and infrastructure.

- a training helpline (accessible by phone and e-mail) has been set up to offer ongoing IAG to trainees, but also to guard against early leaving.

Delivery and completion
In Birmingham and Solihull providers are responsible for completing a TNA for each individual learner. Delivery is felt to mostly follow an Assess-Train-Assess model and is flexibly delivered. Take-up of separate basic-skills training is relatively high although many providers appear also to address basic-skills needs informally as part of the NVQ training. Completion rates for Birmingham and Solihull are comparatively good however, the LSC does liaise with providers regularly to maintain and check learner records and attendance.

Management
The ETP team is located separately from brokers in Business Link and is managed by contract. Turnover in the Business Link team has been relatively high but the LSC team has been stable. Relationships are quite formal, with regular meetings.

Emerging issues
- The LSC and Business Link operate from two different sites, which has provided a challenge to ensure there is proper ownership and management of the pilot. It has also, however, ensured that **train2gain** is not seen as just an LSC initiative, and is fully embedded into the workforce development infrastructure in the area.

- The **train2gain** team has grown over time and new employer engagement methods are now in place (*ie* BDAs and providers can now recruit to the pilot, skills brokers are also about to come on board). Whilst this should improve take-up, good co-ordination will be essential, particularly in terms of accountability and reporting (*eg* BDAs are managed by colleges, funded by the LSC but marketing the full range of Business Link services). It will also be important to ensure employer intelligence is exchanged regularly and records are kept up to date to avoid duplicate approaches being made to employers.

- The LSC has briefed Jobcentre Plus and New Deal personal advisers on **train2gain** to encourage vacancy handling teams, and advisers who are placing jobseekers, to promote **train2gain** to employers.

- The uptake of basic skills in the **train2gain** pilot proved a successful element of the pilot, this is largely due to re-packaging the offer and selling it to employers and learners differently, for example, as help with report writing or essential skills for business. Many training providers, however, continue to automatically include assistance with basic skills, as part of their NVQ level 2 training, absorbing the costs of doing so themselves rather than offering a separate qualification.

- The **train2gain** model is Assess-Train-Assess. TNA is seen as an absolute necessity. The LSC believe it is invaluable in identifying needs, establishing whether there is prior learning to be accredited and whether basic skills should be a precursor to NVQ training. It is felt to be one of the unique selling points of the pilot, and that it should be maintained.

- **train2gain** is also the brand name for the new Black Country pilot and the two LSCs will be working closely together to market and provide the same offer to employers and learners across both LSC areas. The pilots will be run as one pilot, with a joint management board, reporting to one senior manager.

The Derbyshire offer

The pilot in Derbyshire operates under the brand name of 'Valu£able Skills'. There is a middle offer of wage compensation (see table below) and the provision of free (in most cases) training for up to 35 hours.

Wage compensation in Derbyshire

Company size	Compensation level (% of 'basic' pay*)
under 50 employees	130
50–249 employees	100
250+ employees	50

subject to EU 'State Aid' rules

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	205	1,116	1,683	6,466
Estimated penetration rate (%)	2.8	15.3	1.0	4.6
Estimated learner completion rate* (%)	–	–	43.5	27.4

*Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

Marketing was contracted out to an external marketing team that devised the brand identity for the pilot and the image (a dangling carrot). The initial approach (continued throughout the pilot) was based on building a strong brand, and targeting 'hard to reach' employers and those with identified training gaps. The initial set-up costs were £58,000, which included employer, media and provider launch events and £150,000 for marketing in the first year.

The main marketing methods used were leafleting, letters, radio ads, direct mail, and events held prior to the launch. The events were poorly attended. Face-to-face contact and/or telesales worked better. There have been 11 telesales initiatives, covering some 10,000 employers with telephone follow up to around 3,000 employers. There have also been a number of telemarketing campaigns undertaken by a telemarketing company. Lead conversion has been very low to date.

The LSC initially contracted with 13 providers (four colleges, one adult community learning provider and eight private work-based learning providers) such that each had a geographic 'patch' in which to directly recruit employers. For the second year of the pilot, the number and range of providers was expanded from 13 to 28, the geographic demarcations were dissolved, and a number of out-of-county providers were included. Recruiting providers (RP's) receive monetary support from the LSC to help with their own marketing. This supports varies with size.

Large public sector providers have received a block grant to enable them to recruit a business development manager. Smaller providers can claim an allowance for each successful employee signed up and a further allowance to assist with marketing expenses although they have to work with the ETP marketing team to ensure a consistent message.

The TUC is involved and strongly affiliated to Derby College but success in terms of ETP engagement has been limited to date. A number of union learning representatives are engaged to build capacity and support workplace engagement.

Division of responsibilities

In the first year, Business Link and the RPs had lead responsibility for recruiting private sector employers with less than 50 employees. The results indicated about 60 per cent of sign-ups came through Business Link, and around 40 per cent through the recruiting providers. The LSC had lead responsibility for recruiting employers from the public sector, voluntary sector and charities, irrespective of size, as well as private sector employers with more than 250 staff. In the second year, the number of RP's has been increased and the LSC no longer undertake any recruitment themselves.

Signing-up process

Employers contacting the helpline are visited by a Business Link adviser, who explores general business issues before discussing training needs and ETP. Those who express interest when contacted by the telesales team, will be routed either to Business Link or to an RP (if they have supplied the contact). RPs tend to sign up their own leads unless there is a training need that the provider cannot meet when they may be referred to Business Link. Interested employers then work with Business Link, and/or the RP to identify eligible employees, and to determine appropriate qualifications. Business Link advisers also help the employer choose an appropriate quality-assured provider from the approved provider directory. The employer can choose one, or ask to see several. The adviser also contracts with the employer for the appropriate level of wage compensation, and with the provider (if not an RP) for the delivery of the agreed training provision.

The Business Link adviser organises for the chosen provider to undertake TNA to determine what training would be most suitable to the employer/employee, and to confirm eligibility.

The RPs can determine eligibility, training needs, and the appropriate qualifications to meet employer and learner needs, with support from the IAG staff. The only intervention from the Business Link or LSC advisers was initially to conclude the contract, but RPs now have full responsibility for the employer contracting process, including the calculation of the value of the offer.

The LSC/Business Link advisers found that organisations needed considerable help to identify the best training. Business Link/LSC advisers were doing detailed TNAs initially, but have passed these over to providers to complete. Derbyshire do not pay separately for TNAs.

Delivery and completion

There are concerns about the capacity of assessors, and the pilot is sponsoring assessor development, acting to help build capacity and funding the development of paper-free tools.

The structure of payments to providers has been changed to reward completion more *ie* they now pay ten per cent for an individual learner record (ILR), 40 per cent for registration and 50 per cent on completion. They have also found that completion is low in some sectors *eg* land-based industries; because of the seasonal nature of the work, it takes a full year to be able to gain the range of relevant experience. There are still a large percentage of learners from the care sector and Derbyshire have therefore capped the care sector at current levels.

Management

The project manager directs the contract with Business Link but has no management role in terms of Business Link staff. They have regular contract review meetings and a member of the LSC ETP team holds operational meetings with the Business Link team leaders.

There are two contract managers who manage the providers. Their biggest problem appears to be with organising and verifying provider payments.

Information, advice and guidance

In the first year, two specialists were recruited and located in Business Link offices to provide IAG to learners before they started training and to conduct independent 'exit' interviews at the end. In the event, they had few referrals and the service was not effectively integrated in the overall ETP process. In the second year the IAG resource was reduced and no longer sited in Business Link offices. It was concentrated mainly on providing exit interviews and the provision of some support to Business Link advisers. New options for the inclusion of IAG in the pilot are being developed for year 3.

Emerging issues
- The way ETP has been delivered in Derbyshire has evolved considerably over the first two years. More changes are proposed for year 3 with the introduction of two separate teams:
  - a brokerage team (made up of business experts) that will provide business support and undertake business diagnostics and
  - a development solutions team who will find appropriate learning.

There will no longer be recruiting providers. The new system is aimed to provide a segmented approach *eg* with different materials for different sectors and to embed ETP further within the LSC and other skills agencies. The intention is that the two teams will be resourced with those with relevant expertise: one with business skills or experience and the other with a training background. It is hoped that this will help focus the role and improve expertise levels and the quality of service provided.

The Essex offer

The Essex offer has been branded 'Profit from Learning' (PfL). The offer provides small and medium-sized employers with compensation for up to 35 training hours per employee.

Wage compensation in Essex

Company size	Compensation level (% of 'basic' pay*)
under 50 employees	110
50–249 employees	75
250+ employees	0

*subject to EU 'State Aid' rules

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	792	2,264	4,123	13,219
Estimated penetration rate (%)	5.5	15.7	1.8	5.7
Estimated learner completion rate* (%)	–	–	24.0	22.0

*Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

The wage compensation aspect of the offer is not seen as the key incentive in the promotion of PfL by Essex.

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

PfL was originally marketed as providing free, flexible training in essential (basic) skills, or to NVQ level 2, to employers. The effect of the State Aid rules means that the offer is now marketed as subsidised, flexible training.

PfL has involved three employer engagement approaches:

- marketing by the LSC

- direct mailing followed up with telephone calling through a call centre

- direct contact via the training providers – it is estimated that originally, around 30 per cent of employers participating in PfL were recruited by providers. This is increasing as the providers develop their work-base delivery.

The LSC has used a wider range of marketing approaches, which fall under two headings: those designed to raise awareness – PR exercises such as press articles and radio and speaking events – and those designed to generate leads. This second group includes targeted direct mail and e-mail, followed by telemarketing; radio advertisements; press advertisements; and a promotional tour around industrial estates in Smart Cars bearing the PfL logo, followed-up by business adviser visits. Earlier campaigns placed greater emphasis on the value of NVQs, later campaigns focused on the essential (*ie* basic) skills.

The telemarketing approach has proved the most successful, generating 41 per cent of all calls to the telephone information line in a two-month period. Radio advertising, the second most effective marketing approach, produced 13 per cent of leads over the same period.

Division of responsibilities

The PfL team at Essex LSC has the role of co-ordinating the involvement of all the parties in the process. It manages the telephone information line, which has been sub-contracted to a specialist agency. It matches employers to training providers, and has dedicated members of staff in employer co-ordinator and training provider co-ordinator roles. The team also has responsibility for the MI system for the project.

The information line collects the details of employers interested in PfL and arranges appointments for Business Link advisers or skills brokers to make an initial visit to the workplace.

The LSC has an in-house team of skills brokers who follow-up leads in relation to organisations with 250 or more employees. Advisers from Business Link have a similar role in respect of smaller employers. In addition, they are expected to generate leads by cold calling employers.

Signing-up process

The broker or adviser conducts an initial visit to establish interest and number of eligible employees. At this stage, or in a second meeting, the employer is 'signed-up' to PfL and the adviser or broker then helps the employer to select a provider on the basis of criteria determined by the local LSC.

Some training providers also recruit to the scheme, in which case Business Link is not involved. In all cases, the training provider has responsibility for confirming eligibility and conducting a TNA. All individuals must have initial assessments. The provider should also determine the individual learning needs and a learning plan for each learner.

The finalisation of the package of support is undertaken by the adviser or broker.

During the first year of the pilot, Business Link advisers provided more of an advisory service rather than a sales approach. Year 2 saw a proactive sales approach. For year 3 the approach will be more of an account management approach to ensure customer satisfaction and continuation of training.

Information, advice and guidance

The Essex IAG offer is run by 'the Way to Go' and is limited to information and advice, which is being provided to learners by accredited providers as well as via a freephone learner helpline, employer/learner focus support groups and direct calls to learners and employers. This phone line offers learners an ongoing support line during the period of training. Essex does not provide an end-of-training guidance service to learners.

Delivery and completion

Progress has been good but completions have been slow to come through. Out of 12,500 learners, they had 1,630 completions at the time of our visit, with perhaps another 500 in the pipeline. As in other pilots, there has been a change to payment systems to provide a higher proportion of payments at the back end of the project. The latest position on the completion percentage shows 36 per cent of a learner number of 13,700. Percentage figures are increasing as Phase 1 learners are coming to the end of their training.

Management

The project manager manages the contract with Business Link who are dedicated to ETP. There is an effective contract relationship with the team. The team is working more closely with providers as the project matures and there are dedicated roles in the ETP LSC team to ensure this.

There have been a number of housekeeping exercises such as follow-up of providers with incomplete learner records or poor completion.

Planned changes year 3

For the future, Essex is looking at:

- a changed role for Business Link advisers. The team for year 2 was selected on the basis of its marketing skills. The aim is now to move towards a stronger account management role for brokers.

- the establishment of the ETP team as part of the core unit with marketing, employer engagement, contract and account management all within the LSC ETP team.

- working through four geographically based provider consortia. There will be a lead provider in each area and other providers will be sub-contractors of the lead organisation. The aim is to further develop provider self-recruitment, but with the checks provided by the broker account management role.

The Greater Manchester offer

The Greater Manchester offer is known as 'ETP' and marketed as such. More recently, publicity material has adopted a new logo and runs with the strapline 'profit from skills'. The offer provides employers with varying levels of compensation for up to 35 training hours per employee, as set out in the following table, plus free access to IAG.

Wage compensation in Greater Manchester

Company size	Compensation level (% of 'basic' pay*)
under 50 employees	150
50–249 employees	120
250+ employees	75

subject to EU 'State Aid' rules

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	604	1,648	4,084	12,202
Estimated penetration rate (%)	3.2	8.8	1.3	3.8
Estimated learner completion rate* (%)	–	–	49.7	33.6

*Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

Greater Manchester has used a number of employer engagement approaches. However, their overall approach for the first two years of the pilot has been relatively low key, relying on telemarketing and word of mouth rather than a major marketing campaign. Over the last two years training providers have also made referrals. Training provider leads now account for 50 per cent of all new referrals (training providers are not paid for recruitment to the pilot).

The quality of leads from telemarketing varies, but Business Link advisers estimate that between 50 and 80 per cent of referrals from the telemarketing team result in a new contract. An additional advantage to the telemarketing is that it can be focused on the sectors they really want to reach, and nearly 50 per cent of companies who make appointments are new to Business Link.

For the third year of the pilot a number of changes are underway. For the first time, the Greater Manchester ETP will have a substantial marketing initiative running from 1 October until March 2005 targeted at hard to reach employers, *ie* SMEs (excluding micro organisations) with no Business Link involvement in the past two years. The campaign will consist of direct mailouts to employers and followed up by telemarketing. The website is also being updated.

Division of responsibilities

With the appointment of a new manager in May 2004, a major review of procedures and 'blockages' in the ETP programme was undertaken. This resulted in the opportunity to re-establish or clarify roles and responsibilities and amend contracts with providers and employers. The employer agreement for example has been simplified and now clarifies that payment of wage compensation will be on completion of training.

Chamber Business Enterprises and North Manchester Business Link have now merged to form one Business Link operation with a new overall manager. The number of advisers has changed from 16 in March 2004 to 30 in August. It is anticipated that this figure will rise to 40 over time. Advisers are now divided in to six sectoral teams: construction; finance and professional; hospitality and tourism; manufacturing and engineering; public and care; and retail and transport. Adviser roles have also undergone a significant change. Whereas previously advisers were dedicated wholly to ETP, they now have responsibility for other Business Link services including recruitment and modern apprenticeships.

Signing-up process

Business Link acts as an 'honest broker' in the signing-up process.

When a referral is received from the telemarketing company, the Business Link advisers conduct a follow-up telephone call to check eligibility. They then visit to discuss the employer's needs, how many employees will be involved in the training, and to discuss training providers. The Business Link adviser should then continue to manage the account, monitoring and checking that the training provider has been in touch and following up when the training has been completed.

When a referral has come via a training provider it is passed to Business Link and dealt with in the same way. In the majority of cases the referral goes back to the training provider who made it, but employers are offered the option of other training providers.

Part of the ETP internet site enables the pilot to track progress of leads when they are passed to Business Link.

Information, advice and guidance

IAG was originally provided by six separate centres, and revolved around an IAG exit interview on completion of training. There has been little IAG activity in the Greater Manchester pilot over the past two years. However, with the reorganisation of IAG services nationally and creation of a central IAG provision in Manchester, talks are underway to look at how IAG can be improved within the Manchester pilot. A leaflet and an event for providers are planned.

Delivery and completion

At the LSC end, the payments to providers have been rescheduled to 20 per cent at the start, 30 per cent mid-way and 50 per cent at the end (in line with national guidelines) so that there is a greater emphasis on completion.

Other changes include a greater focus on basic skills. As a result Business Link are working more proactively to increase take up of basic skills. Within the pilot, the feeling is that the basic-skills numbers are starting to come through now, with over 1,063 signed up and a lot of the NHS people still to be signed up.

It has been taking learners longer to complete the qualifications than previously anticipated. For Phase 2, all learners signed up by March 2004 should have completed by August 2004. In reality they still have some Phase 1 learners on the system who have not yet completed. High turnover in some sectors such as care is felt to contribute and the training of new entrants is slower than for experienced staff. There is considerable emphasis given to ensure Phase 3 learners complete by August 2005.

Management

There have been a number of changes in the management of the pilot and recently a new project manager has been appointed from within the LSC. The Employer Training Manager at Greater Manchester LSC now has the role of co-ordinating the involvement of all the parties in the process, and administering the programme. The pilot has undergone a number of substantial changes in personnel and structure over the past six months.

A new contract between the LSC and Business Link has been drawn up for year 3, which specifies Business Link's responsibilities and deliverables in more detail. Greater detail has been placed on account management.

Emerging issues

- A number of initiatives have been undertaken to address low take-up of basic skills within Greater Manchester. This includes working with *eg* the NHS Strategic Health Authority to discuss overall strategy on literacy, identifying sites where there is a big interest and working closely with FE colleagues to provide large scale screening services (*eg* the 'Learning Lorry' was borrowed from Derbyshire ETP for two weeks).

- There have been complaints about the tightening of the criteria regarding eligibility. Greater Manchester previously allowed those with a previous NVQ level 2 (or equivalent) qualification as eligible employees, if it was both irrelevant to the current job and more than ten years old. It now follows the project managers' guidance to the letter so no employees who hold an NVQ level 2 (or equivalent) are eligible, regardless of the relevance of their previous qualification or how long ago it was achieved.

- There has been frustration that the scheme did not extend beyond level 2 NVQs. Employers, learners, providers and Business Link advisers have all fed back that there is interest amongst completers to continue training to a higher level.

The Kent and Medway offer

The offer in Kent and Medway is marketed under the brand name 'Profit from Learning', originally developed for the Essex ETP. Kent shares some marketing with Essex and London East (which uses the same brand), and they have also adopted a shared approach to the use of union learning representatives. The Kent ETP design was informed by the model and experience in Essex but also sought to draw on the lessons from other pilots.

The Kent ETP is the single pilot where no wage compensation is offered. Instead the offer was designed to consist of:

- subsidised training in line with State Aid rules

- free TNA

- free IAG to employers and learners.

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	–	1,058	–	4,423
Estimated penetration rate (%)	–	10.9	–	1.9
Estimated learner completion rate* (%)	–	–	–	3.8

*Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

ETP was initially launched to local businesses and training providers through briefings held at prestige events. A number of large-scale mailshots have also been used, targeted at companies with under 250 employees. There has been a small number of direct marketing calls from one of the two members of staff on the Business Link employer enquiry line. A range of press adverts has been used in local business journals and there has been PR activity with the local press. In addition, the pilot has run a series of local radio adverts. Kent has an ongoing programme of business breakfasts which are felt to be an effective way of raising the profile of the pilot.

Business Link has responsibility for sectoral marketing and has used a range of approaches including telemarketing.

Other engagement approaches have included the funding of two part-time TUC project workers who have targets to engage 40 employers and 200 learners in Kent. Under this approach the project worker hands over any lead to a member of the Business Link team for a formal sign-up. The TUC field workers are also tasked with identifying, recruiting and training union learning representatives (ULRs) in the county which traditionally is not heavily unionised.

Mobile learning jeeps, administrated by two colleges, were available to travel around local companies to raise awareness and offer basic-skills screening. However engagement of SMEs has been a lengthy process and use has not been as high as expected.

In addition, the local guidance consortium has a brokerage role for ETP in the NHS building on a previously Regional Development Agency-funded project

Division of responsibilities
The LSC and Business Link each have dedicated teams working on the ETP which are based in the same premises but operate as separate teams. Business Link is contracted by the LSC to deliver the employer enquiry line. Business Link also arranges all first visits to employers which are undertaken by one of the Business Link skills relationship managers (SRM) and is responsible for the employer sign-up process, including eligibility and State Aid checks. Any leads from other partners in the pilot (for example the TUC or providers) are passed to Business Link. The LSC has responsibility for infrastructure development and provider contracting and management .

Signing-up process
At the first visit, the Business Link SRM provides the employer with a list of providers (supplied by the LSC) who can deliver the training required and the employer makes the selection. The SRM also conducts a TNA for the employer and undertakes a preliminary assessment of learner eligibility.

Details are then passed to the LSC provider team to refer the lead to a provider (ensuring capacity is available) that makes the second visit to the employer and meets the learners. The Business Link SRM follows up each lead within six weeks of the original visit. Providers have responsibility for assessing individual learner needs.

Business Link has one ex-basic-skills tutor who is called into employers where an interest in basic skills has been expressed. The basic-skills broker screens and assesses learners and passes these referrals to the LSC. Due to the expert knowledge of this broker, the level of commitment from the learner is very high. However, this limited resource has produced some backlogs and the aim is to make greater use of other sources of assessment, such as the mobile units, in the future.

Business Link has a support role in both ensuring that a provider visit has taken place, and then following up those cases where there has been a provider visit but there no ILRs have been received.

Information, advice and guidance

Information and Advice is to be provided to learners by the Kent Guidance Consortium (KGC). The aim is that KGC provides every learner with a progress file tailored to the scheme, which contains tips and hints on organising and planning learning, logging achievements, and identifying future learning options. Support should also be provided via telephone and electronic means during the programme, and KGC should talk collectively to learners and also to employers towards the end of programmes, to help identify further training and development opportunities. However, delay in finalising the contract, plus an unwillingness on the part of providers to provide the necessary leads to KGC has delayed full implementation.

Delivery and completion

Approximately half of current learners are with colleges. As part of on-going reviews with providers, a series of quality workshops are planned to ensure quality is maintained and learners fully supported. Completion rates are low currently (at around three per cent) and the pilot is just beginning to examine these issues and to chase providers on the basis of estimated completion dates.

Management

Kent has commissioned an internal process review which has helped them to focus on areas to address. The Business Link team are managed through a contractual arrangement and each team has maintained its own identity.

Emerging issues

- The lack of a wage compensation element to the Kent offer has meant that there has been little demand for an employer support role, while the provider co-ordinator has been over-stretched. As a result the team is being restructured. This, together with the change at national level in the attendance record requirements, will free-up resources for more active provider management and an increased focus on essential skills.

- Changes are being made to the provider contract, from specifying learner numbers by subject area to a generic total contract value. This is because the previous arrangement was found to be inflexible and to delay progress, as internal local LSC procedures make it time consuming to vary contracts.

- Completion rates have been slow and this is now a focus for the Kent ETP team, which is beginning to chase-up providers on the basis of the original estimated finishing date for learners.

The Leicestershire offer

Leicestershire ETP is branded under the name 'Skills at Work'. It offers mid-range compensation payments (see table below) for up to 35 hours.

Wage compensation in Leicestershire

Company size	Compensation level (% of 'basic' pay*)
under 50 employees	130
50–249 employees	100
250+ employees	50

subject to EU 'State Aid' rules

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	–	663	–	4,724
Estimated penetration rate (%)	–	9.1	–	3.6
Estimated learner completion rate* (%)	–	–	–	18.1

Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

The marketing strategy was developed by the LSC marketing manager in conjunction with the Skills at Work team. An LSC marketing assistant runs the day-to-day activities of the ETP. In addition, an independent consultant was employed from the Skills at Work budget between May and August 2004. The overall marketing budget was £300,000.

The ETP was launched in a high profile event at the Leicester City Football Club and followed by a telephone marketing campaign run by a specialist telesales company. There has also been a media campaign with articles in local press, advertisements in local business publications and profiles in the LSC magazine. A number of events has taken place, some at county-wide level, others at town level, including a celebration event for learners and employers.

Direct marketing has generated a large number of appointments (between 70 and 100 a month), and appears to have good lead conversion rates (1:9 – employer engaging: employers contacted). Providers are also able to generate leads and these have gathered momentum over the first year, although they still account for relatively few employer contacts.

Providers have also, in some cases, been conducting their own telemarketing, and there is a possibility of some overlap resulting in employers being contacted by more than one source.

Division of responsibilities

There is a central team in the LSC consisting largely of staff recruited specifically for the project. The ETP team broker ETP to interested companies and manage the contracting side. The key managers are seconded from the LSC and Business Link, but the core team of programme advisers are all on temporary contracts for the duration of the ETP. Additionally there is a dedicated staff member in each of the six main provider colleges.

There has been some high-level staff turnover (*ie* project manager and senior programme adviser), but both for reasons outside of ETP. Commitment to the brand and ETP offer is high amongst staff. Because of expansion, the team now operates out of two offices and there is therefore a recognition that the informal systems to facilitate communication across contracting and sales will need to be monitored. This will be important in maintaining the strong sense of ETP identify that exists in the team.

Signing-up process

Every employer is involved in a first visit, normally with a programme adviser if the lead has come through the central ETP team, or with a provider representative if this is the way the employer has come in. No training begins until a programme adviser has met with the provider and the employer. The pilot has moved towards a more sectoral programme adviser division, encouraging individual specialisms and knowledge to build up. Where employers want to work with a particular provider, it can be brought into the project, but this is not common unless the provider is the source of the lead. Generally employers accept the advice of the programme advisers, but the process is very employer centred.

The first visit allows staff to collect basic information and discuss what the ETP can offer, as well as outline the data collection needs that they have (*ie* NI numbers, staff details etc.). The needs of the employer are not discussed in detail at this point. The next stage is a three-way meeting involving a programme adviser, the designated provider and the employer. This is where the specifics are dealt with and employee details are collected.

Information, advice and guidance

There has been some staff turnover and some difficulties in establishing a clear role for IAG within the ETP offer. The role is currently being redefined with a new staff member in place. The new role aims to find a way in the existing ETP processes to identify potential early leavers, including how to make contact with assessors, and working more closely with employers and providers. IAG is also exploring opportunities for learners to progress onto the next level of study following completion, with a view to embed sustainability in learning behaviours. Additionally IAG is proposing to conduct a user-based evaluation of the ETP process. Draft discussion guides/questionnaires for the evaluation and early leaver review were available for viewing at time of the project visit, and progress is being made.

The pilot is hoping to move towards benchmarking their performance against other ETPs on a number of key performance management indicators (*eg* ILR delivery, number of starts). The plans for next year involve a focus on quality, and will link strongly with the IAG representative.

Delivery and completion

Having secured a lot of business in the first year, the team is now moving towards an increased focus on completion rates and actively managing the performance of providers through monthly reviews and regular consultation. The team is hoping to develop national guidelines/training for contract managers.

Completion rates are around 25 per cent but perceptions amongst the team are that the care sector has lower levels of completion. Some of this is attributed to poor early assessments by providers, which have missed essential skills needs. Manufacturing and food processing also have problems with completions because of poor basic skills, particularly ESOL needs. Offering ESOL through the ETP has resulted in much improved pass rates on essential NVQs such as Food Hygiene.

One-quarter of those signed up are estimated to be doing essential-skills courses, a high participation rate when compared nationally. There was a strong existing learning partnership in the area, with an established network of essential skills providers. Whilst this is thought to have benefited ETP activity, wage compensation is seen as critical in driving through essential skills amongst employers.

Management

The ETP team is co-located. All staff have the same performance indicators and have been managed by the ETP project management team (there have been two project managers, one for the business side, and one for the provider/contracting side), although the project manager for the business side is currently leaving the ETP team for a regional LSC appointment.

There are regular provider network meetings every two months, involving up to 60 people at each. This allows the ETP to keep providers informed about changes to processes and offers them the opportunity to have round table discussions about what providers need/want. These meetings are seen as very important in bringing about partnerships rather than just a 'supplier' relationship.

Emerging issues

Leicestershire is unique in its focus on colleges as the main delivery points, particularly the funding of posts with responsibility for managing the ETP business within the college. This has provided the resources to focus on business development and given the colleges a vehicle to establish contacts with employers. It is unlikely that this would have happened at all, or at the very least not as quickly without the ETP. Establishing a dedicated staff member in each of the colleges has resulted in a much better service from colleges and has established, in effect, a business development network across the county's providers. Many of the providers are hoping that the ETP will help them to generate much more business, particularly amongst non-eligible employees and completers.

The London East offer

The offer in London East is marketed under the brand 'Profit from Learning', a brand shared with Kent and Essex and provides high levels of wage compensation for up to 70 hours.

Wage compensation in London East

Company size	Compensation level (% of 'basic' pay*)
under 50 employees	150
50–249 employees	120
250+ employees	75

*subject to EU 'State Aid' rules

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	–	659	–	4,850
Estimated penetration rate (%)	–	3.8	–	1.8
Estimated learner completion rate* (%)	–	–	–	28.5

*Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

The main approach to marketing has been direct mail followed by telemarketing; the companies are sorted by employee size, with the largest targeted first. A call centre has been used to conduct telemarketing.

Two launch events were held at the beginning of the pilot, and since then brand awareness has been raised through adverts in the local press, radio adverts (shared with Essex), events and mobile advertising (using smart cars, bus backs, panels at stations and on trains, and health club posters).

Training providers are also undertaking marketing in consultation with the LSC marketing team to their own clients. Business Link brokers are also creating their own leads, and ULRs are identifying learners who may benefit from ETP and then suggesting to employers that they sign up.

All leads are routed through the call centre, whether they are generated from direct mail, brand awareness raising methods, providers, brokers or ULRs. The direct mail plus telemarketing approach has been most effective in generating leads.

The marketing strategy has changed from initially targeting employers by size, to a sector-based approach. Sector-based marketing is being conducted, and there are plans to work closely with Essex and Kent on this. Outdoor advertising (such as buses, radio etc.) is being dropped as although it was felt to be good for awareness raising, it was not so good for generating leads. The new telemarketing company has been very successful in getting more learners signed up, and in functioning as part of the ETP team with good knowledge of ETP.

Division of responsibilities

The ETP teams at the LSC and Business Link do not share premises although they do have shared management arrangements such as daily contact between managers, weekly meetings and a shared away day. The LSC has a dedicated team of 11, most of whom were recruited from the external labour market.

Business Link now has a dedicated team of six, made up of administrative staff and the manager, but it was originally using a large team of sub-contracted brokers who were not working solely on ETP.

Signing-up process

Leads from the call-centre helpline come in to the LSC. The LSC brokers deal with employers with over 250 employees and the Business Link brokers deal with employers with less than 250 employees. A broker makes the appointment for the first employer visit, checking for eligibility (*eg* that the employer is in the area) and conducts the visit.

An employer TNA may be undertaken at this stage, or there is capacity for a TNA to be done later by a Business Link sub-contractor if a more in-depth process is needed. At the first meeting, brokers explain ETP, estimate the number of potential learners and check whether employers have any preference for providers of whom they have experience. Providers also sometimes attend this first visit.

The second visit, in most cases, is conducted by the provider only. At this visit, learner eligibility is determined and individual learning-needs assessments are conducted. The employer agreement is then finalised and training starts.

Information, advice and guidance

Referrals to IAG started in May 2004. The contract is with an organisation called Leap – made up of Futures, Prospects and Careers Enterprise. Depending on where the employer is based, one of the IAG partner organisations will take the lead. All the IAG advisers are fully qualified NVQ 3/4 guidance advisers. There is a helpline that employees can ring if they have any concerns which is open outside office hours in case they do not want to discuss the issue at work. IAG has an information pack to give out to employees who are reached (produced in conjunction with the ETP marketing team).

The ideal IAG model is seeing employees at the beginning (to pick up basic-skills needs), having the helpline available whilst they are in learning (and beyond) and having an exit interview at the end. At present IAG is mainly seeing people at the end of the process.

Few employers have an interest in IAG for themselves (rather than for their learners).

Delivery and completion

Take-up has progressed over time. The LSC has deliberately kept a close eye on both sign-up and completion and has conducted the telemarketing activity in phases to help it do this.

Basic-skills uptake remains low but there is a view that unidentified basic-skills needs are affecting completion rates. The team are monitoring learner records and reviewing rates.

Management

The management of the Business Link is through a contract but there are good relationships, clear reporting lines, good communication and joint meetings.

Emerging issues

- The wage subsidy is seen as very important for getting London East employers to sign up. However, by the end of the process it seems less important to employers, and the quality of training is more important.

- IAG needs to be done at the beginning of the process to ensure learners are on the right courses and that any basic-skills needs are identified. This would also help completion rates.

- Employers do not seem to be attracted by IAG and some employers are not co-operating with IAG. If employers realised that IAG was part of ETP at the beginning of the process it would be easier for IAG to get in and see learners when they finish ETP training.

- Doing joint marketing with Essex and Kent has made the marketing much easier. This will be increased in the future.

- There is a lot of interest amongst learners and employers for NVQ level 3 training.

The Shropshire offer

The Shropshire offer is branded under the name 'Skills for Growth' (S4G). It offers high levels of wage compensation (see the following table), and the paid time off for training is a maximum of 70 hours.

Wage compensation in Shropshire

Company size	Compensation level (% of 'basic' pay*)
under 50 employees	150
50–249 employees	120
250+ employees	75

subject to EU 'State Aid' rules

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	–	637	–	4,734
Estimated penetration rate (%)	–	17.9	–	8.2
Estimated learner completion rate* (%)	–	–	–	9.5

*Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

Marketing is organised by a marketing consultant employed by the LSC. They have tried a range of marketing approaches – telemarketing alone, mailouts alone, mailout followed by telemarketing, advertisements and articles in the local newspapers. Of these, mailout followed by telemarketing worked the best; if just one approach on its own had to be selected, they would choose telemarketing. The marketing budget for 2003-2004 was just under £400,000.

The ETP team estimates that it has had around a 50 per cent success rate in following up contacts. In July 2004, 1,860 companies had been contacted, of which 1,171 had been visited by a S4G adviser. From these visits, 653 employer contracts had been issued, of which 562 had been signed up. Providers were also actively marketing the ETP offer.

It is still early in the project in relation to completion rates. However, the local LSC has collected data on the proportions of learners currently projected to be on schedule (according to target dates for completion), ahead of projected completion date, or lagging behind anticipated completion date. Learner progress towards completion is being closely monitored.

Division of responsibilities

The ETP team consists of around 20 personnel, including seven Business Link advisers. The team is co-located in one shared office at the local LSC premises. There is a good working relationship between the LSC and Business Link halves of the team.

The team has experienced recruitment difficulties in filling three posts, most notably IAG (two) and basic-skills adviser (one) posts, which remained vacant for most of the year. By July, it had gone some way towards remedying this situation with an individual seconded from *learndirect* who was developing a basic skills strategy for the local LSC as a whole.

All leads from the telemarketing activity come in to the Business Link S4G administrator, who then allocates these leads to the various advisers on the basis of their availability. Records are kept of the numbers of visits made by each adviser. A key factor in their success at engaging employers was thought to be the entrepreneurship and initiative of the advisers. Allocation of clients depends a variety of factors that includes geographical area and sector but these are flexible and each adviser has a diverse portfolio of clients.

Signing-up process

Every employer receives a visit from a Business Link adviser, who confirms eligibility and discusses potential providers. The adviser also explains the contracting process. The process does not include a formal TNA. In many cases it is observed that employers themselves have already decided what training they need.

Initially 13 training organisations were approved to deliver training via the initiative, by July this had increased to 21. Employers select the provider they would like to work with from the approved list. The largest single provider of the employer training pilot in Shropshire is a local college with an established business development unit.

Information, advice and guidance

Initially, recruitment difficulties meant that the local LSC had no IAG provision arrangements. At the time of the visit, collaborative arrangements with the local IAG partnership were being developed.

Delivery and completion

Delivery to date is through some 15 or so providers, around half of which have large numbers of learners. The MI data indicate that actual completion rates are low to date, although few learners had been scheduled to complete by the time this report was compiled; in addition the ETP team is monitoring progress and is working with providers to identify and progress any learners who are behind target.

Management

The two teams (Business Link and the LSC) are co-located and the manager of the Business Link team reports in to the project manager. The teams have an excellent relationship and currently hold monthly team meetings. The intention is to hold separate monthly brokers meetings to deal with detailed issues.

Emerging issues

- The problems with recruitment of pilot personnel were largely attributed to the originally short-term nature of the pilot (one provider noted that this was an issue for employers, too) and the announcement of the extension had largely resolved this.

- Given the rural nature of region served by Shropshire LSC, many individuals are self-employed or only employ family members. Many of these individuals are keen to gain access to training, but are excluded by the current eligibility rules. They regret the fact that the rules specify 'employed' rather than 'working'.

The South Yorkshire offer

The pilot in South Yorkshire operates under the brand name of 'Train2Gain'. The pilot here is unique in that the LSC has wholly contracted out the ETP processes and its management, primarily to managing agents A4e Consult Limited.

Wage compensation in South Yorkshire

Company size	Compensation level (% of 'basic' pay*)
under 50 employees	110
50–249 employees	75
250+ employees	0

*subject to EU 'State Aid' rules

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	–	764	–	5,704
Estimated penetration rate (%)	–	10.0	–	3.0
Estimated learner completion rate* (%)	–	–	–	15.7

*Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

Take-up of publicly funded training such as ETP has been a continual challenge in South Yorkshire. A major marketing campaign to all 33,000 businesses in the region was undertaken in three phases (the third phase funded by ESF money). The marketing promoted ETP and other training offers. The marketing consisted of a TV campaign which was judged to be highly successful in generating leads to a call centre, a mailout to all businesses, telephone follow-up and mailshot to non-responders. The marketing generated 9,000 calls, the majority of which were converted to ETP or Objective 1. It is estimated that the mailout generated around 50 per cent of the leads. The bigger take-up was on Objective 1 (around 70 per cent of all contacts). Marketing is no longer funded in South Yorkshire.

Recruitment to ETP mainly comes from the training provider base (around 66 per cent of referrals), with a further 34 per cent from account managers. A particularly successful approach at South Yorkshire has been to invite small employers to an all-day 'business breakfast' held once a week. Generally, around 60 employers a week are signed up in this way.

Division of responsibilities

The unique aspect of this pilot is that the whole ETP process is contracted out to A4e. At the LSC, three members of staff work full time on ETP whilst a fourth works part time on the pilot. In addition there are three administrators inputting into the Xansa system. Both A4e and the ETP team at the LSC describe the working relationship as a partnership and feel that the working relationship is very good. A4e has responsibility for employer engagement and sign-up and managing the provider role and delivery of key outcomes in terms of employer and learner numbers. A4E provides the LSC with monthly reports on progress against targets and is also responsible for the delivery of complete and accurate employer and employee records, and employee attendance records to the LSC. Other contracted partners involved in the ETP include Business Link, who manage the marketing contract; and Sheffield Futures and Lifetime Careers who, between them, have the IAG contract, the TUC and Premier Partnerships (training for Learning Advocates).

Signing-up process

Employers calls are taken by A4e. Referrals are then either passed to an account manager at A4e, or where an employer has specified a provider, to that provider. In most cases (except in the case of larger employers) the account manager will invite the employer to attend a 'business breakfast' at which they are given an appointment to discuss the range of options available to them. These take place once a week and have been a particularly successful approach. A4e report that interest has been greater than expected from micro businesses.

Delivery and completion

Basic skills take up has been particularly low and efforts are underway to address this. Awareness training sessions are being run for providers and providers who do not offer basic skills are being buddied up with **_learndirect_** who will provide the basic-skills element.

Management

A4e account managers are working much more closely with contract managers now, with the result that the referral process has been speeded up considerably.

A4e went out to the provider base very early with agreements for ETP delivery and has worked hard with providers to achieve smooth management of the pilot. Initially, all providers are quality checked and risk branded across a number of criteria. Dependent on the 'risk' A4e will work with training providers to identify areas that need further work and support them. They will also run mock inspections on training providers and give them feedback.

A4e found that the first few claims submissions under ETP were really poor, so have produced provider guidance (they are currently on version 4) and will coach providers on a 1:1 basis if necessary to help them complete forms. In addition they run paper workshops and have tried to take on board the areas that are really difficult and sort them out.

Contract managers are currently turning their attention to performance and the quality phase is really kicking in now.

Information, advice and guidance

IAG in South Yorkshire is contracted out to New Futures and Lifetime Opportunities. The IAG input is flagged up at the start of the ETP process and forms part of the contract with the employer. Contact is initially with the employer via the training provider once training is complete. New Futures and Lifetime Opportunities receive a monthly print-out of referrals and they record who is seen and the outcome.

Employers are generally happy to speak to IAG providers, and the emphasis is on working with the employer to understand their perspective from the business point of view. A questionnaire is used to draw out the employers' purpose in training and to identify where they want to go next. This is seen as providing an important context for the conversations that are subsequently conducted with staff. This is a novel approach in an area that is traditionally more individually focused. IAG contact is also delivered in a very flexible way, either with groups (offering individual follow up) or individuals. IAG has even been delivered at 3.00am on a Friday (in order to see people on permanent nights).

The sessions start with a review of why people did the training, how they found it, what they learnt and then they move on to talk about the future. For those who want to proceed, there is an individual development plan and where appropriate, onward referral.

Comments on the training are fed back to the employers and to the LSC. Currently 42 per cent of all ETP finishers have had IAG input and they are aiming for a rate of 70 to 80 per cent overall.

So far response has been very positive, with companies happy to involve IAG in conversations about future training needs and overall workforce skills development. New Futures and Lifetime Opportunities report that individuals also respond positively to IAG.

Emerging issues

The approach in South Yorkshire is unique compared to the other ETP areas. However, contracting out delivery and management of the process represents the typical way of working for the LSC. In this case it has resulted in very clear responsibilities and a good working relationship.

A lot of effort has been put into the management of training providers and into ensuring that they are operating ETP processes correctly.

Completion rates are on target, however, training is taking longer to complete than originally estimated. This is thought to be due to delivering the training at the employers' pace.

Take up amongst colleges is lower than expected. The feeling is that this is in part due to restraints on colleges in terms of training delivery.

The delivery of IAG in South Yorkshire is extremely successful. The IAG providers feel that this is in part due to the innovative approach which is employer focused and has been received well by organisations so far. There is a large and well-established adult guidance service in South Yorkshire and it is on the basis of this experience that the approach has been developed.

The Tyne and Wear offer

The Tyne and Wear offer is branded under the name 'EQ8' (pronounced equate). It offers a relatively high level of wage compensation, as set out in the table below, and the paid time off for training is a maximum of 70 hours.

Wage compensation in Tyne and Wear

Company size	Compensation level (% of 'basic' pay*)
under 50 employees	150
50–249 employees	120
250+ employees	75

subject to EU 'State Aid' rules

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	257	911	2,696	7,476
Estimated penetration rate (%)	3.9	13.8	2.1	5.9
Estimated learner completion rate* (%)	–	–	48.0	48.2

*Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

Initial marketing aimed to raise general brand awareness – using an image of pencils and the strapline 'make your business sharper'. The LSC believes that while they achieved strong brand recognition, there is less understanding about what the brand stands for. There was no initial targeting on local areas or sectors.

The most successful approach so far has been through providers, accounting for some 60 per cent of take-up according to the LSC. This has stayed pretty steady throughout the pilot. Other approaches have been less successful. An initial direct mailshot to 500 firms on the Business Link database, with whom there had been no previous contact, only generated one direct lead. There have been few leads from within the LSC, but some cross-referral from within the Business Link. The Business Link team is now organised so that ETP is embedded within Workforce Development to encourage cross referrals.

Other leads have been generated from events in particular sectors, and meetings with affinity groups (*eg* in construction and childcare).

The public sector have remained slow to sign up despite considerable initial interest and several efforts at capacity building by the LSC.

Division of responsibilities

Initially there was a very small central team in the LSC consisting of two operational and one administrative person. The Business Link had a team of five, including a team leader, three learning advisers (known as champions) and an administrator who picked up calls and transferred them to the learning champions. The LSC team has grown as they have sought to deal with backlogs and it is currently (August 2004) a team of five permanent staff and another five agency workers. Business Link follow up all private sector leads, regardless of the size of employer. The champions developed their own approaches, but focused on different sectors and/or areas. Currently Business Link is organised on a regional basis (ready for Phase 3).

Signing-up process

Every employer receives a visit from a learning champion, who confirms eligibility and discusses potential providers. The contract is with the employer.

Around half of the employers engaged so far have had a TNA – supplied by specialist providers or the training provider (for which they are paid an additional amount).

There are some 60 training organisations that have registered with the LSC to provide training, although only around one-third have actually become involved, and half of those (*ie* around ten) are strongly engaged. Three contract administrators on the LSC team manage 20-plus providers each. Providers initially received ten per cent of their payment at the start of the training, 70 per cent over the lifetime of the course, and 10 per cent on achievement. This payment profile has now shifted to 20 per cent, 30 per cent and 50 per cent at the end to help encourage completion.

Even if providers have approached an organisation and secured interest, Tyne and Wear maintain a strict independently brokered model and Business Link will visit the employer to sign them up and to discuss provision. Employers choose the provider they want in conjunction with the learning champion. There are no contracts with providers. They receive a letter from the LSC notifying them when an employer has 'selected' them. The provider then waits for the employer to contact them to start the training.

Payments are handled by the LSC.

Information, advice and guidance

The IAG network is hosted by Connexions, and the model of delivery was put together in discussion with the ETP project manager. The IAG team was new in post (it was started in April 2003) and the model is still being developed in practice.

The IAG team has been very proactive and have tried many new ideas to engage with learners and employers. It has worked hard to build in progression and have just produced a leaflet called 'Don't Stop Now' which will go to all completers. Inside the leaflet is a questionnaire on satisfaction and thoughts for the future and IAG is running a monthly prize draw for all returned questionnaires. There are three interventions planned for each learner: at the beginning when each learner will receive a booklet about learning and IAG; in the middle when they will receive postcard reminders and at the end when they will receive the leaflet.

The team has also worked closely with providers, contacting and visiting them and has produced a good practice TNA guide. The IAG team has divided into three specialisms – TNA, progression and skills for life, and has also aligned itself geographically to mirror the Business Link team. The advice and guidance worker liaises with the learning champions.

Delivery and completion

Completion is running at about one-third. Tyne and Wear has undertaken several reviews of completion, as it has been able to clear the backlog. There are a number of providers with large numbers of participants still in learning after 18 months plus. They are reviewing these with a view of terminating the contracts after December. Some providers have much worse completion records than others and, again, the ETP team is reviewing these as contract renewal comes up. It is likely that some providers will not have their contracts renewed.

Completion rates are lowest in care and highest in engineering and manufacturing. Their view is that many of the problems in terms of completion are the result of providers not undertaking appropriate TNAs and therefore not picking up basic-skills needs. In Phase 3, providers will not receive a contract until they have completed a TNA.

Take-up of basic skills has improved as a direct result, they believe, of more activity at the centre. Three providers have moved to basic skills as their core business and one large care provider has taken on two basic-skills tutors. FE colleges have performed disappointingly to date, but the three biggest colleges have set income targets for ETP in year 3 which is indicative of a desire to increase their involvement.

Management

Relationships with the partners are on the whole very good, especially in terms of all the changes forced on Business Link which have made their job much more difficult *eg* changes in the way compensation is paid, and several tweaked processes. Some changes have been forced on ETP too.

The Business Link and IAG teams are managed through contract arrangements. The teams are not co-located and, whilst relationships are good, identities are primarily with their host institution. There are targets for the teams which are monitored by the project manager and regular monthly meetings both separately and together.

Emerging issues

- IAG has played a much more active role than in other pilots. It has have embedded well, been very proactive and worked hard with the other partners. Tyne and Wear has also insisted on, and maintained, brokerage impartiality.

- In year 3, Tyne and Wear will be part of a regional pilot managed by the current Tyne and Wear project manager. They will have output related contracts with Business Link based on employer and employee sign up and referrals to business support. The team will monitor contracts against targets and the partners will be funded 80 per cent for core and 20 per cent for performance.

- The focus will be to push skills for life through a telemarketing campaign focused on the needs of the business.

- With greater resources, the emphasis will shift to monitoring and evaluating progress and performance of the pilot.

The Wiltshire and Swindon offer

The Wiltshire and Swindon offer was originally branded under the name 'Free2Learn' (F2L). This is continuing, although there is now an overarching brand 'Skills4Business', which offers an integrated delivery service associated with employer development and workforce development. Free2Learn offers a middle level of wage compensation (as set out in the table below) for up to 70 hours.

Wage compensation in Wiltshire and Swindon

Company size	Compensation level (% of 'basic' pay*)
under 50 employees	130
50–249 employees	100
250+ employees	50

*subject to EU 'State Aid' rules

Key statistics: 31 August 2004

	Employer engagement		Learner engagement	
	August 2003	August 2004	August 2003	August 2004
Number of participants	382	2,784	723	6,656
Estimated penetration rate (%)	7.2	13.7	3.2	7.7
Estimated learner completion rate* (%)	–	–	49.4	42.0

*Successful completions as a percentage of the number of starters by the date at the top of the column
Source: IES/IFS/ETP MI, August 2004

Main features of the approach

Marketing and employer engagement

The marketing strategy for F2L is generated via the F2L manager and team, who subsequently liaise with the local LSC marketing team. Activities and impact are discussed with the Free2Learn team, and information from the central database is used to monitor the effectiveness of different marketing activities.

A range of marketing approaches has been adopted, including mailshots, telemarketing, attendance at events, cold calling and press activities. Training providers have also conducted their own mailshots and marketing activities. Telemarketing has had mixed success: it led to many enquiries but only small numbers of sign-up, and was therefore dropped. Marketing involving personal contact is the most successful – in particular, training providers and working with affinity groups. Mailshots do not lead to much interest, although they provide general publicity. If employers attend an event, the emphasis is on engaging the delegates and progressing their interest through arranging an appointment, rather than letting them leave with general commitments.

The F2L team has also been identifying and targeting sectors or occupations where there is a known training need – for example, teaching assistants.

Signing up large companies takes longer. Several visits are usually necessary and ETP has to be sold to multiple layers within the organisation. Local economic conditions have impacted on signing up larger companies as there have been some large scale redundancies. In addition, establishments which are part of large national companies do not always have the local authority to sign-up.

Division of responsibilities
Since Phase 1 of ETP, there has been a slight expansion in the team. For Phase 2, the team included an area manager, eight programme advisers (PAs), eight contract co-ordinators and a temporary data entry person. In addition, there is a workplace skills for life adviser operating from within the team.

The PA responsibilities are divided so that two have responsibilities for large companies, three for the public sector and three for small businesses. Those working with small companies are co-located in the Business Link offices across the county. All, however, regularly meet weekly and are part of the F2L team.

Each PA has responsibility for employer engagement in their specific area and is also allocated a certain number of training providers. Emphasis is now placed on working with providers to address issues such as completion rates, flexibility of provision, and management of that provision.

Signing-up process
All employer leads go through the 0845 number (administered by Business Link and run jointly with Berkshire). They are registered on a central database which can then be used to monitor progress, including success rates of the various sources of leads. Each is allocated to a PA who follows up with a telephone call within 48 hours, and a visit is arranged at a mutually convenient time. The PA usually conducts the first visit. However, where training providers have produced the lead, they might do preliminary visits, which is then followed up by the PA.

PAs act as brokers. They explain all aspects of ETP and, where relevant, outline other LSC and Business Link products. Some employers need to be persuaded that ETP is for them, and a business case for training is made. The number of visits a PA makes, and the length of time between the initial lead and an employer signing up, vary considerably.

The PA may do a basic TNA. Employers interested in a full TNA are referred elsewhere, but most have a fairly clear idea of what training they want and for whom. If the employer does not know which training provider to use, the PA offers a selection. Once a training provider has been selected, the provider is notified and visits the employer. Individual training assessments and eligibility checks will be done at this stage by the training provider.

The training provider confirms with the PA that the employer is going ahead, and the number of learners anticipated. This information is passed to the contract co-ordinators who issue the contract. The PA keeps in regular contact with employers to keep them informed of developments and check that things are running smoothly.

Information, advice and guidance

As part of their brokerage role, PAs introduce IAG to employers, including a visit to discuss further training as the initial training is completed. Employers are provided with advice and guidance about training opportunities more broadly, and are referred on as necessary. A provider is currently being sought to tender for the delivery of a fuller service.

Delivery and completion

F2L is now included with other products and services under the overarching brand of Skills4Business. This reflects a major change in the way it is delivered, in particular its relationship with other LSC products. The brokerage model is being expanded so that PAs will introduce employers to a range of products and services relating to workforce development. A specialist adviser for a particular product may go in at a later stage. The long-term aim is to develop 'superbrokers' who will have the authority to sell a much wider range of products and services. The ETP team is being re-organised to include other Business Link and LSC staff, in particular the IiP and workforce development teams.

Management

The ETP team is managed by the LSC Skills4Business Manager. The team is fully involved in the day-to-day running of the pilot, and given considerable training and information to ensure it has a range of knowledge and it is kept up-to-date. Each training provider is linked to a PA and meetings are held with providers to inform them of ETP developments.

Emerging issues

- PAs are working more closely with training providers, especially where completion rates are low, and to address provider flexibility. If necessary a provider will be put on an action plan to improve performance.

- Increasing basic-skills capacity amongst training providers remains an issue. Attention is being paid to more innovative means of delivery – for example, initial assessments for each learner, embedding basic skills in NVQs. Independent providers have reacted to the need for increased basic-skills capacity.

- ETP has increased interest amongst employers in training, and efforts are being made to develop and maintain this. Significant demand has been created for level 3 training and development. Funding for this has been received from the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) and European Social Fund (ESF).

- Involving large companies with sites across the country is a challenge. They often do not want to negotiate with a separate team in each locality. Greater co-ordination of this function would produce more learners.

Appendix 2

ETP Management Information (31 August 2004)

Table A2.1: Employers by LSC

Pilot area	Small		Medium		Large		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Berkshire	479	*70*	111	*16*	91	*13*	681	*100*
Birmingham and Solihull	415	*70*	122	*21*	56	*9*	593	*100*
Derbyshire	854	*77*	199	*18*	63	*6*	1,116	*100*
Essex	1,585	*70*	399	*18*	280	*12*	2,264	*100*
Greater Manchester	1,084	*66*	436	*27*	128	*8*	1,648	*100*
Kent and Medway	673	*64*	188	*18*	197	*19*	1,058	*100*
Leicestershire	408	*62*	130	*20*	125	*19*	663	*100*
London East	441	*67*	171	*26*	47	*7*	659	*100*
Shropshire	631	*99*	3	*1*	3	*1*	637	*100*
South Yorkshire	493	*65*	160	*21*	111	*15*	764	*100*
Tyne and Wear	588	*65*	224	*25*	99	*11*	911	*100*
Wiltshire and Swindon	518	*72*	128	*18*	77	*11*	723	*100*
Total	*8,169*	*70*	*2,271*	*19*	*1,277*	*11*	*11,717*	*100*

Source: ETP MI data 31 August 2004

Table A2.2: Learners by LSC

Pilot area	Small		Medium		Large		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Berkshire	1,523	*43*	949	*27*	1,051	*30*	3,523	*100*
Birmingham and Solihull	2,308	*41*	1,840	*33*	1,439	*26*	5,587	*100*
Derbyshire	3,331	*52*	1,973	*31*	1,162	*18*	6,466	*100*
Essex	5,701	*43*	3,301	*25*	4,217	*32*	13,219	*100*
Greater Manchester	4,420	*36*	4,771	*39*	3,011	*25*	12,202	*100*
Kent and Medway	2,083	*47*	1,434	*32*	906	*21*	4,423	*100*
Leicestershire	1,680	*36*	1,367	*29*	1,677	*36*	4,724	*100*
London East	1,782	*37*	2,094	*43*	974	*20*	4,850	*100*
Shropshire	4,144	*88*	86	*2*	504	*11*	4,734	*100*
South Yorks	1,638	*29*	2,220	*39*	1,848	*32*	5,706	*100*
Tyne and Wear	2,493	*33*	2,422	*32*	2,561	*34*	7,476	*100*
Wiltshire and Swindon	2,382	*36*	1,917	*29*	2,357	*35*	6,656	*100*
Total	*33,485*	*42*	*24,374*	*31*	*21,707*	*27*	*79,566*	*100*

Source: ETP MI data 31 August 2004

Table A2.3: ETP Employers by Sector

Area	Primary		Manu-facturing		Distribution		Finance & Business Service		Education & Public Services		Health & Social Care		Other		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Berkshire	11	2	19	3	155	23	69	10	56	8	265	39	106	16	681	100
Birmingham & Solihull	4	1	56	9	50	8	253	43	20	3	195	33	15	3	593	100
Derbyshire	71	6	182	16	181	16	95	9	104	9	323	29	160	14	1,116	100
Essex	119	5	298	13	435	19	470	21	288	13	422	19	232	10	2,264	100
Greater Manchester	78	5	266	16	312	19	250	15	138	8	484	29	120	7	1,648	100
Kent and Medway	37	4	69	7	231	22	60	6	147	14	434	41	80	8	1,058	100
Leicestershire	36	5	152	23	108	16	46	7	54	8	211	32	56	8	663	100
London East	28	4	42	6	28	4	105	16	175	27	205	31	76	12	659	100
Shropshire	191	30	75	12	108	17	30	5	65	10	128	20	40	6	637	100
South Yorks	23	3	118	15	278	36	62	8	63	8	142	19	78	10	764	100
Tyne & Wear	32	4	88	10	311	34	73	8	34	4	284	31	89	10	911	100
Wiltshire & Swindon	23	3	70	10	110	15	69	10	127	18	198	27	126	17	723	100
All Areas	653	6	1,435	12	2,307	20	1,582	14	1,271	11	3,291	28	1,178	10	11,717	100

Source: ETP MI data 31 August 2004

Table A2.4: Further details of ETP employers

Area	Type of Training								Investors		Source											
	No training		NVQ2		Basic skills		Both		IIP		BL/LSC		Direct mail		Tele-marketing		Provider		WoM		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Berkshire	143	21	513	75	11	2	14	2	130	19	36	5	5	1	10	2	620	91	7	1	3	0
Birmingham & Solihull	4	1	412	70	90	15	87	15	26	4	31	5	12	2	190	32	356	60	4	1	0	0
Derbyshire	122	11	916	82	33	3	45	4	253	23	244	22	58	5	87	8	534	48	157	14	27	2
Essex	288	13	1,772	78	84	4	120	5	887	39	395	18	102	5	488	22	981	44	212	9	78	4
Greater Manchester	239	15	1,302	79	23	1	84	5	626	38	140	9	211	13	48	3	1151	70	82	5	7	0
Kent and Medway	200	19	796	75	24	2	38	4	197	19	67	6	155	15	35	3	382	36	205	20	208	20
Leicestershire	113	17	429	65	59	9	62	9	267	40	205	31	2	0	61	9	293	44	64	10	35	5
London East	49	7	525	80	21	3	64	10	591	90	0	0	0	0	9	1	637	97	9	1	4	1
Shropshire	247	39	386	61	2	0	2	0	631	99	637	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Yorks	12	2	734	96	11	1	7	1	197	26	5	1	145	19	72	9	460	60	63	8	19	3
Tyne & Wear	193	21	652	72	9	1	57	6	278	31	365	40	2	0	0	0	492	54	23	3	24	3
Wiltshire & Swindon	4	1	630	87	36	5	53	7	139	19	127	18	15	2	17	2	494	69	43	6	25	4
All Areas	1,614	14	9,067	77	403	3	633	5	4,222	36	2,252	19	707	6	1,017	9	6,400	55	869	7	430	4

Source: ETP MI data 31 August 2004

Table A2.5: Details of ETP Learners

Area	Gender				Ethnic group								Age									
	Female		Male		White British		Non-white British		Other		Not known		18-25		26-35		36-45		46-55		56+	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Berkshire	2,210	63	1,313	37	2,356	67	1,002	28	75	2	89	3	754	21	1,039	30	942	27	583	17	204	6
Birmingham & Solihull	2,850	51	2,737	49	3,444	62	1,630	29	94	2	419	8	1,051	19	1,580	28	1,568	28	967	17	420	8
Derbyshire	2,953	46	3,513	54	5,908	91	399	6	58	1	101	2	999	16	1,725	27	2,026	31	1,241	19	471	7
Essex	6,805	52	6,414	49	11,998	91	787	6	163	1	270	2	1,910	15	3,470	26	3,932	30	2,736	21	1,162	9
Greater Manchester	5,992	49	6,210	51	10,731	88	942	8	107	1	421	4	1,136	9	3,806	31	4,220	35	2,367	19	664	5
Kent and Medway	3,384	77	1,039	24	4,075	92	259	6	33	1	55	1	635	14	1,192	27	1,376	31	875	20	343	8
Leicestershire	2,528	54	2,196	47	3,548	75	1,064	23	43	1	68	1	638	14	1,214	26	1,526	32	1,019	22	327	7
London East	2,729	56	2,121	44	2,374	49	1,984	41	196	4	295	6	774	16	1,437	30	1,462	30	902	19	275	6
Shropshire	2,677	57	2,057	44	4,451	94	239	5	21	0	23	1	674	14	1,217	26	1,523	32	997	21	322	7
South Yorks	2,649	46	3,057	54	5,402	95	199	4	83	2	22	0	836	15	1,610	28	1,857	33	1,066	19	337	6
Tyne & Wear	4,187	56	3,289	44	7,216	97	166	2	30	0	62	1	953	13	1,884	25	2,506	34	1,615	22	517	7
Wiltshire & Swindon	3,652	55	3,004	45	5,989	90	377	6	108	2	182	3	1,183	18	1,859	28	1,911	29	1,235	19	467	7
All Areas	42,616	54	36,950	46	67,492	85	9,048	11	1,011	1	2,007	3	11,543	15	22,033	28	24,849	31	15,603	20	5,509	7

Source: ETP MI data 31 August 2004

Table A2.6: Further details of ETP Learners

Area	Type of Training						NVQ Course													
	Basic skills		NVQ		Both		Engineering		Health, Care and Public Services		Hospitality		Management		Manufacturing		Retailing & customer service		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Berkshire	348	10	3,174	90	1	0	3	0	1,825	58	384	12	84	3	53	2	241	8	585	18
Birmingham & Solihull	1,713	31	3,851	69	17	0	139	4	1,658	43	156	4	135	4	810	21	445	12	525	14
Derbyshire	555	9	5,905	91	6	0	343	6	1,751	30	284	5	815	14	698	12	475	8	1,545	26
Essex	1,353	10	11,853	90	13	0	926	8	3,801	32	468	4	1,925	16	998	8	982	8	2,766	23
Greater Manchester	939	8	11,219	92	40	0	652	6	4,006	36	783	7	864	8	1,531	14	875	8	2,548	23
Kent and Medway	186	4	4,234	96	3	0	47	1	2,835	67	150	4	227	5	135	3	407	10	436	10
Leicestershire	1,103	23	3,601	76	20	0	167	5	1,186	33	341	9	398	11	368	10	453	13	708	20
London East	385	8	4,436	92	29	1	181	4	2,594	58	96	2	413	9	67	2	273	6	841	19
Shropshire	26	1	4,708	100	0	0	137	3	844	18	186	4	504	11	1,058	23	556	12	1,423	30
South Yorks	129	2	5,574	98	3	0	196	4	1,200	22	360	7	429	8	1,590	29	595	11	1,207	22
Tyne & Wear	656	9	6,808	91	11	0	343	5	2,988	44	1,040	15	181	3	683	10	1,033	15	551	8
Wiltshire & Swindon	1,299	20	5,348	80	9	0	93	2	2,142	40	233	4	410	8	786	15	870	16	823	15
All Areas	8,692	11	70,711	89	152	0	3,227	5	26,830	38	4,481	6	6,385	9	8,777	12	7,205	10	13,958	20

Source: ETP MI data 31 August 2004

Table A2.7: Further details of ETP Learners

Area	Training with a college		Part-time		Full-time		Member of a trade union	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Berkshire	339	15	2,633	75	890	25	194	6
Birmingham & Solihull	2,098	46	3,963	71	1,624	29	896	16
Derbyshire	1,409	27	5,212	81	1,254	19	1,074	17
Essex	2,452	30	10,175	77	3,044	23	2,014	15
Greater Manchester	4,828	44	9,347	77	2,855	23	2,358	19
Kent and Medway	1,164	41	2,997	68	1,426	32	208	5
Leicestershire	2,265	67	3,531	75	1,193	25	578	12
London East	969	29	3,714	77	1,136	23	583	12
Shropshire	2,894	67	3,488	74	1,246	26	993	21
South Yorks	0	0	4,518	79	1,188	21	1,446	25
Tyne & Wear	910	14	5,480	73	1,996	27	1,631	22
Wiltshire & Swindon	2,288	39	4968	75	1,688	25	929	14
All Areas	*21,616*	*35*	*60,026*	*75*	*19,540*	*25*	*12,904*	*16*

Source: ETP MI data 31 August 2004