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Train to Gain Learner Evaluation: Report from Wave 4 research

June 2009

Of interest to everyone involved in
improving skills and learning opportunities
in the workforce across England

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Executive Summary

This report documents the findings from the fourth wave of the learner evaluation of Train to Gain – a service managed by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) that is designed to help employers improve the skills of their workforce. The evaluation took place over two years, from 2007 to 2009.

This wave consisted of a survey of a representative sample of learners, carried out by telephone in November and December 2008. The survey invited the views of Train to Gain learners on Level 2 and Level 3 programmes. In total, 9,006 learners were interviewed including:

- a cohort of 2,704 fully funded Level 2 and 526 partially funded Level 3 learners who had also been interviewed during Wave 3, six months earlier. This group is referred to throughout the report as the ‘longitudinal learners’ group; and
- a cohort of 4,802 fully funded Level 2 and 974 partially funded Level 3 learners. These learners had started their training more recently and had not previously taken part in the survey. This group is referred to throughout the report as the ‘new entrant’ group.

High levels of satisfaction among Train to Gain learners

Satisfaction levels among learners have remained at a relatively high level throughout the evaluation. In each wave, between 90 per cent and 96 per cent of learners in both survey groups have been satisfied with the quality of teaching and with the training overall. Satisfaction ratings based on the LSC’s key measure of learners who are ‘very satisfied’ or ‘extremely satisfied’ have fluctuated a little, but have remained high over the four waves.

- In Wave 4, 95 per cent of learners in both survey groups were satisfied with their training overall, while 94 per cent of new entrants and 95 per cent of longitudinal learners were satisfied with the quality of teaching.

- In Wave 4, 76 per cent of new entrants and 72 per cent of longitudinal learners were extremely or very satisfied with the training overall. For the quality of teaching received, the score was 78 per cent of new entrants and 77 per cent of longitudinal learners.

Expectations focus on personal achievement

The findings have consistently shown the appeal to employees of gaining qualifications and increasing skills. These factors, rather than pay rises or promotion, appear to be a strong motivator for taking part in Train to Gain.

As in previous waves, the expectations of new entrants in Wave 4 focused on improving skills and gaining qualifications, with a view to career development. Most current learners expected to:

- gain 'a qualification' (90 per cent);
- gain skills that would help with a future job or employer (both 87 per cent);
- gain skills that would help with their current job (83 per cent); and
- learn something new (83 per cent).

Learners in both surveys stressed the importance of qualifications: 83 per cent of new entrants and 85 per cent in the longitudinal group agreed that 'you need qualifications to get anywhere these days'.

Outcomes mirror these expectations

Learners' expectations prior to embarking on their training or qualifications were mirrored by the perceived outcomes of those who had completed their qualification: focusing on personal achievements and increasing their skill levels and qualifications with a view to their current job and future careers.

New entrants who had completed saw the outcomes as follows.

- 90 per cent said they had gained 'a qualification'.
- 88 per cent said they had gained skills that would look good to future employers.
- 83 per cent said they had gained skills that would help them do a better job in the future.

Longitudinal learners who had completed saw the outcomes as follows.

- 91 per cent said they had gained skills that would look good to future employers.
- 86 per cent said they had gained skills that would help them do a better job in the future.
- 86 per cent felt more confident in their ability to learn.
- 84 per cent said they had gained 'a qualification'.
- 78 per cent had learned practical skills related to their job.

Longitudinal learners stressed the importance of gaining qualifications: 93 per cent of completers said that achieving the qualification was important to them personally.

While external recognition through qualifications is important, external rewards (such as pay and promotion) are not the primary outcome for Train to Gain learners. Still, reasonable numbers of learners did report that they had received better pay or a promotion as a result of doing the qualification.

- 34 per cent of new entrants said they had received increased pay, and 34 per cent had had a promotion.
- 21 per cent in the longitudinal group said they had received a financial bonus, promotion or pay rise, and 52 per cent felt they had better prospects of promotion.

Learners feel Train to Gain benefits employers and employees

Learners felt that employers benefited from their training and qualifications: 84 per cent of longitudinal learners said their qualification was important to their employer, and 77 per cent in both longitudinal and new entrant surveys felt that both they and their employer benefited equally.

Train to Gain stimulates interest in further learning

In the longitudinal group, 16 per cent of respondents had already embarked on further training since completing their Train to Gain programme. Of the rest, 72 per cent felt it was likely that they would do another qualification in the next three years.

Furthermore, 72 per cent of new entrants and 61 per cent of longitudinal learners (in both groups, those who had completed their qualification) felt it was likely that they would do a higher-level qualification in the next three years. Even those who had left their programmes early were open to further learning: 73 per cent felt that it was likely.

These levels have been similar for the four waves, giving grounds for optimism that learners will sign up to further learning in the future. However, the longitudinal data tempers such optimism, showing that the initial enthusiasm for further learning fades a little over time.

Awareness of Train to Gain has levelled off

Employers have consistently been the main source of information about Train to Gain and, while awareness of the programme has grown over time, it may now have reached a plateau.

Awareness of Train to Gain among new entrants levelled off in Wave 4, having risen in previous waves: 77 per cent of respondents had heard of Train to Gain, compared with 76 per cent in Wave 3 and 67 per cent in Wave 2. Still, almost half of all new entrants knew little or nothing about Train to Gain, and a third of those who had heard of it did not know that their training was funded by it.

Most learners (54 per cent of new entrants) had first heard of Train to Gain through their employers, and increasing numbers had heard of it from television advertisements (17 per cent, compared with no more than 9 per cent in previous waves).

Train to Gain involves active and collaborative choice

The setting up of training continues to involve collaboration between employer and employee. The last two waves taken together show increasing collaboration between employer and employee in initiating the training, with more employees now feeling that they had ample choice in whether or not to take part and in what their training should comprise. However, levels do fluctuate from wave to wave, and no clear trend is easily discernible.

Fewer new entrants in Wave 4 than in Wave 3 cited collaboration in initiating the training, yet many more felt they had had the choice.

- 49 per cent felt that they and their employer had jointly initiated the training (down from 59 per cent in Wave 3).
- Among those whose employers had initiated the training, 47 per cent felt they had had 'a great deal of say' over their learning, compared with 33 per cent in Wave 3.

Most are well prepared for Train to Gain

Good levels (around two-thirds) of pre-entry discussions have been maintained over the four waves of the evaluation. Participation levels in pre-entry assessments are also stable, at nearly 90 per cent and, since the first wave, have had more impact on the subsequent training or qualifications.

In Wave 4, around two-thirds of learners (65 per cent) embarking on training or qualifications under Train to Gain had a discussion about what would be involved, and 87 per cent had some form of pre-entry assessment.

- Among those who had a discussion, three-quarters (75 per cent) said that they had been advised which qualification would be most suitable for their needs (compared with 68 per cent in Wave 1).
- Among those who had an assessment, a fifth (20 per cent) were put on a higher-level qualification (compared with 4 per cent in Wave 2, when the question was first asked).

The information provided before training was sufficient for the great majority of learners: at least 84 per cent of learners said that they had received enough or more than enough information about the training, including how it would be assessed, how long it would take, and how much time the learner would need to commit to it. A smaller majority of learners (59 per cent) reported that they had received an individual learning plan or personal development plan.

Learners are well supported

More than 90 per cent of learners in the longitudinal group met their assessors at least once a month, generally for at least an hour.

- 65 per cent met once or twice a month.
- 22 per cent met three or four times a month.
- 86 per cent said that meetings lasted for at least an hour.

These figures are consistent with the last time they were measured, in Wave 2.

Learners received good levels of support from employers and assessors.

- 93 per cent had regular discussions with tutors or assessors.
- 82 per cent were given time to focus on their training at work.

This type of support is crucial, since learners reported that the support they received from their assessor and the time they spent on the qualification at work were the most important factors in completing their qualification.

There was some evidence that part-time workers are less well supported than their full-time counterparts.

- 6 per cent of those working less than 16 hours per week were given paid study leave by their employer, compared with 14 per cent of full-time workers.
- 78 per cent of part-time workers were given time for independent work (compared with 83 per cent of full-time workers).

Train to Gain continues to be a positive experience for most participants

Few learners (12 per cent in the longitudinal group) experienced any problems during their training or qualifications. Difficulties with assessment and quality of teaching were the issues most commonly raised.

The small proportion of learners who had left their training or qualifications early (4 per cent of the longitudinal group) mostly blamed this on the fact that they had left their original employer, or else on personal circumstances; others had problems because their assessor or trainer had stopped coming to the workplace.

Overall, the learner evaluation of Train to Gain has shown high satisfaction, positive outcomes, good prospects for future learning, good support from employers and tutors, and few problems for learners on the programmes.

Introduction

Background

- 1 The Train to Gain service, managed by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), provides impartial, independent advice on training to businesses through a network of skills brokers across England. The service aims to support employers in improving the skills of their workforce, as a means of enhancing their business performance. Train to Gain also publicly funds some training for employees. Through Train to Gain, employers can access training at all levels, in order to meet their business needs. The costs and the amount of public subsidy available depend on the nature of the business, the skills needs and the existing qualifications of the employees involved.
- 2 For employers, engaging with Train to Gain should mean a commitment to invest in training, jointly with the Government. The benefits to employers include quality-assured advice in identifying the range of skills-development needs within their businesses and help in commissioning high-quality training to ensure that those needs are met. The advice an employer receives results in a skills solution package that may include government training subsidies, alongside the employer's own investment.

The Train to Gain learner journey

- 3 For a learner, the Train to Gain journey starts with the engagement of their employer. This may be initiated either by a skills broker or by a training provider. If a skills broker leads on engagement, they initially approach employers to assess their skills-development needs and to carry out an organisational needs analysis (ONA). Following the ONA, a tailored training package is developed and a selection of appropriate training providers is identified. The employer chooses one, and that provider becomes the employer's contact for the training.
- 4 The skills broker identifies funding options, and individual employees who are suitable for support through Train to Gain are identified by the training provider and the employer. Each employee is then given an initial

assessment by the training provider, including advice and guidance on the types and forms of training available.

The evaluation

- 5 This report presents the findings from the fourth wave of the Train to Gain learner evaluation, and is based on a telephone survey of 9,006 learners. The research involved following up those learners who took part in the third wave of this study, plus a survey using a new sample of those learners who had registered for Train to Gain between April and December 2008.
- 6 This document focuses on the findings from Wave 4, and highlights comparisons with previous waves if they are of interest and serve to pinpoint trends over the two years of the evaluation. A data annex has been produced as a more comprehensive companion publication. It documents the results from the previous three waves of the survey, alongside the Wave 4 results, and allows comparisons to be drawn on all questions that featured in Wave 4 (questions from previous waves that have no Wave 4 counterpart are not included).
- 7 The involvement of learners with Train to Gain was evaluated by Ipsos MORI and the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) on behalf of the LSC, in accordance with an overall evaluation framework developed with the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and other interested parties. The strategy includes surveys of learners, employers and skills brokers, as well as the collection and analysis of relevant management information. For learners, the LSC will measure success by the extent to which

...employees receive a high quality learning experience that delivers the achievement of relevant qualifications and provides a platform for future career/learning progression.

*National Employer Training Programme Train to Gain Evaluation
Strategy (LSC, March 2006)*

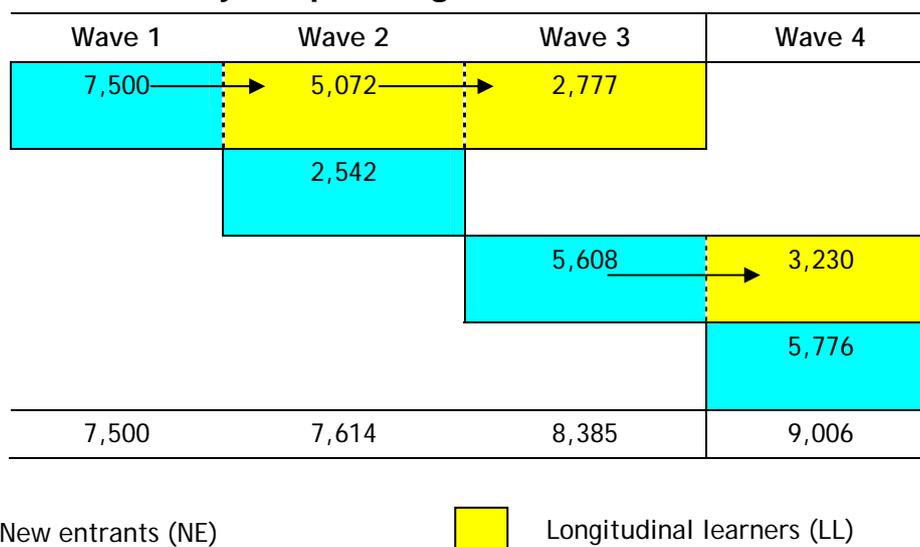
- 8 Train to Gain is more than just a programme for fully and part-funded learners. However, since this evaluation reviews only those aspects of training that are funded by the Government, we focus here on those learners who are participating in Train to Gain fully and part-funded training, with the aims of:
- examining the key characteristics of the learners who have engaged with the service;
 - identifying the main elements of the training process as experienced by learners and, in particular, the extent to which the Assess–Train–Assess approach is being followed;
 - measuring learners’ satisfaction with all the key aspects of Train to Gain and the training provided through it;
 - assessing the factors affecting qualification completion and drop-out; and
 - examining the subsequent employment experiences of learners who have completed their training, and assessing their perceptions of the impact the training has had on them and their workplace.

Evaluation design

- 9 The two-year evaluation was designed as four waves of research among learners (defined as people who had signed up for Train to Gain programmes). These learners were waiting to start, were part of the way through their programme, or had completed it. Paragraphs 3 to 48 describe their employment status and other characteristics. The research comprised telephone surveys in each wave, plus qualitative interviews in Waves 1 and 3 only. There was a six-month gap between each survey wave.
- 10 The design and development of the learner evaluation began in the autumn of 2006.
- Wave 1 fieldwork commenced in March 2007. This involved a telephone survey of 7,500 learners who had started Train to Gain before the end of February 2007, plus face-to-face qualitative interviews with 100 of them.

- Wave 2 fieldwork was undertaken around six months later, between October and November 2007. This involved a telephone survey of 7,614 learners. Of these, 5,072 had been interviewed during Wave 1, while the remainder were new entrants to the survey – that is, those who had started their learning between January and June 2007 and were not interviewed at Wave 1. There was no qualitative element to this wave.
- Wave 3 took place between May and June 2008. This was a telephone survey of 8,385 learners, of whom 2,777 had been interviewed in both Wave 1 and Wave 2. The remainder were new entrants to the survey. Level 2 new entrants had started their courses between December 2007 and April 2008, while Level 3 learners had started between September 2007 and April 2008. In addition, 100 qualitative telephone and face-to-face interviews were carried out with new entrants and longitudinal learners.
- Wave 4, which is reported here, took place during November and December 2008. This was a telephone survey only. In all, 9,006 learners took part, comprising 3,230 longitudinal learners (learners interviewed at Wave 3 but not earlier) and a new entrant group of 5,776 who had registered for Train to Gain since April 2008. Both groups included learners at Level 2 and Level 3. Figure 1 shows the design for the quantitative element.

Figure 1: The survey sample design



Source: Train to Gain employee survey

Sample size and structure

11 The target number of interviews for the Wave 4 survey of learners was 7,500 Level 2 learners and at least 1,500 Level 3 learners. The objective was to interview as many Level 2 and Level 3 learners who had taken part in Wave 3 as possible (that is, the Wave 4 longitudinal group), and have a top-up sample of new learners to reach the target number of interviews. The achieved interviews by level are shown in Table 1. The overall response rate for the survey was 50 per cent, 69 per cent for longitudinal learners and 43 per cent for new entrants.

Table 1: Achieved interviews by respondent's level of course

	Wave 4 (NE)		Wave 4 (LL)	
	Number	%	Number	%
Level 2 (fully funded)	4,802	83	2,704	84
Level 3 (part funded)	974	17	526	16
Base (N)	5,776	–	3,230	–

Base = all learners, new entrant (NE) and longitudinal group (LL).

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

Longitudinal learners

- 12 The longitudinal group was constructed from Level 2 and Level 3 learners interviewed as the new entrant group in Wave 3. All new entrants were asked during the Wave 3 survey for their permission to be re-contacted at Wave 4. Of the 5,608 in the survey, 5,242 (93 per cent) agreed.
- 13 An advance letter was sent to the whole longitudinal sample, giving everyone the opportunity to opt out of the Wave 4 survey: 56 learners contacted Ipsos MORI to opt out (1 per cent). This took the final longitudinal sample to 5,186.
- 14 We attempted to contact all these participants in Wave 4. Annex B shows the valid response rate for the longitudinal sample to be 69 per cent. This compares with 62 per cent in Wave 3 and 77 per cent in Wave 2.

New entrant sample (Level 2 learners)

- 15 The new entrant sample was drawn from the individualised learner record (ILR). This comprised 47,926 unique records of eligible Level 2 learners – that is, Level 2 Train to Gain learners who had started their course since April 2008 and had given permission to be contacted for research purposes. However, once we removed learners with missing telephone numbers and Employer Training Pilot learners, the eligible population fell to 35,191. Because of the high number of eligible Level 2 learners in the ILR database, a random sample of 13,708 learners (stratified by region, gender and age) was drawn.
- 16 During fieldwork, it was noted that a lower proportion of males than females was opting to take part. An additional sample of 2,586 male Level 2 learners (with a disproportionately greater proportion of those aged 18–35) was therefore drawn to redress this balance, taking the total sample to 16,294. Although the data was anyway going to be weighted after the survey, having a better-balanced sample reduces the weighting required and ensures more representative findings.

- 17 Finally, learners with incomplete telephone numbers and those listed in the Ipsos MORI 'do not contact' database were removed from the sample drawn, leaving a final sample of 16,190 Level 2 learners.
- 18 The valid response rate for this sample was 42 per cent, compared with 43 per cent in Wave 3 and 31 per cent in Wave 2. A detailed breakdown of the response rate is presented in Annex B.

New entrant sample (Level 3 learners)

- 19 A similar process was followed for Level 3 learners. The ILR contained 3,138 eligible Level 3 learners, which fell to 2,426 after the deletion of ineligible or inaccurate records. A census (where we attempted to contact the whole sample) was conducted among this group.
- 20 The valid response rate for this group was 51 per cent, compared to 54 per cent in Wave 3 (and 39 per cent in Wave 2). A detailed breakdown of the response rate is presented in Annex B.

Comparison of the new entrant sample with the eligible learner population

- 21 Table 2 compares the achieved Level 2 new entrant sample profile with the sample from which it was drawn (that is, all learners who had started Train to Gain Level 2 since April 2008).

Table 2: Comparison between achieved sample and eligible Level 2 population on individualised learner record

		ILR population*	Achieved NE sample
		%	%
Gender	Male	56	53
	Female	44	47
Age	18–25	15	13
	26–35	26	24
	36–45	30	31
	46–55	21	22
	56+	9	9
	Disability/learning difficulty	Yes	6
	No	89	91
	Missing	4	2
Ethnicity	White	81	82
	Non-white/other	16	16
	Missing	3	2
Region	National	4	3
	East of England	9	9
	East Midlands	10	9
	London	15	14
	North East	5	5
	North West	16	18
	South East	11	12
	South West	8	9
	West Midlands	13	13
	Yorkshire and the Humber	10	8

* Base = NE (new entrants) all Level 2 Train to Gain learners who had started since April 2008 (excluding duplicate records).

Source: ILR data, April 2008 and Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

22 The achieved sample has a greater proportion of females than the ILR population profile would suggest, and a lower proportion of 18- to 35-year-olds.

- 23 **Weighting** was applied to the new entrant data to correct for the minor deviations between the final Level 2 sample interviewed and the ILR learner profile (as detailed above). For Level 2 learners, this was necessary for age and gender only.

Changes in the Level 2 population since Wave 1

- 24 A comparison of the Train to Gain population between Wave 1 and Wave 4 is shown in Annex A. The Level 2 population for Train to Gain has changed since Wave 1. There are now proportionally more men, more 18- to 25-year-olds, slightly fewer people with disabilities or learning difficulties, slightly more learners from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (BME), more learners in London, the South East and East of England, and fewer in the West Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber and the North East.
- The ratio of males to females was 56:44 in Wave 4 and 51:49 in Wave 1.
 - Some 15 per cent of learners at Wave 4 were aged 18–25, compared with 12 per cent at Wave 1.
 - Some 6 per cent consider themselves to have a disability or learning difficulty (compared with 8 per cent).
 - Some 16 per cent are from BME backgrounds (compared with 12 per cent).
 - Some 15 per cent of learners were from London (compared with 7 per cent).
- 25 The following table compares the achieved Level 3 sample profile with the sample from which it was drawn (that is, learners who started Train to Gain Level 3 between April and December 2008).

Table 3: Comparison between achieved sample and eligible Level 3 population on individualised learner record

		ILR population*	Level 3 achieved sample
		%	%
Gender	Male	28	23
	Female	72	77
Age	18–25	12	10
	26–35	30	25
	36–45	32	35
	46–55	21	25
	56+	5	6
Disability/learning difficulty	Yes	6	7
	No	91	91
	Missing	3	2
Ethnicity	White	77	78
	Non-white/other	21	21
	Missing	2	2
Region	National	3	2
	East of England	10	9
	East Midlands	5	6
	London	28	29
	North East	5	3
	North West	12	12
	South East	14	13
	South West	6	7
	West Midlands	14	16
	Yorkshire and the Humber	2	2

* Base = all Level 3 Train to Gain learners who had started since April 2008 (excluding duplicate records).

Source: ILR data, April 2008 and Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

26 The achieved sample has a greater proportion of females than the population profile of Level 3 Train to Gain learners would suggest, and a lower proportion of 18- to 35-year-olds.

- 27 **Weighting** was also applied to the Level 3 data to correct for minor deviations between the final sample interviewed and the ILR learner profile. Again, this was necessary for age and gender only.

Changes in the Level 3 population since Wave 1

- 28 There are fewer Level 3 learners overall, and too few to sample in Wave 1; hence we would expect to see greater change over the four waves of the survey. This is indeed the case, as Annex A shows.
- 29 The proportion of men was smaller than in the Level 2 population, and has shrunk between Wave 1 and Wave 4. There are now more 46- to 55-year-olds, more learners with disabilities/learning difficulties and more learners from BME groups. In Wave 1, Level 3 learners were drawn from only three regions, but they are now spread across all the regions of England, although there is now an even greater concentration in London.
- The ratio of males to females is 28:72 in Wave 4, compared with 37:63 in Wave 1.
 - In Wave 4, 12 per cent of learners were aged 18–25, compared with 16 per cent in Wave 1; the proportion aged 46–55 has grown correspondingly, from 17 per cent to 21 per cent.
 - Some 6 per cent in Wave 4 (compared with 3 per cent in Wave 2) consider themselves to have a disability or learning difficulty.
 - Some 21 per cent (compared with 11 per cent) are from BME backgrounds.
 - Some 28 per cent of learners (compared with 15 per cent) were from London.

Profile of respondents

- 30 This section provides an overview of the characteristics of the respondents. The data annex provides more detail.

Employment

- 31 As in previous waves, the Health, Social Care, Education and Public Services sector dominates the survey, with 50 per cent of the longitudinal group coming from this sector. The next largest sectors were Engineering and Manufacturing (12 per cent) and Construction (8 per cent).
- 32 The prevalence of the Health, Social Care, Education and Public Services sector means that Personal Services were again the largest occupational group, accounting for 32 per cent of both the longitudinal and the new entrant groups. Skilled Trades (15 per cent of new entrants and 14 per cent longitudinal), Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (14 per cent and 10 per cent) and Elementary occupations (10 per cent for both surveys) were the next largest groups, broadly consistent with Wave 3.
- 33 The occupational group varied considerably according to whether learners were working toward Level 2 or Level 3 qualifications, as Annex C shows.
- Personal Service occupations varied for new entrants (from 50 per cent at Level 3 to 28 per cent at Level 2) and for longitudinal learners (from 45 per cent to 30 per cent). This gap of around 20 percentage points between Level 2 and Level 3 in the new entrant survey has been relatively consistent since Wave 2, when Level 3 respondents were first included in the survey, and during a time when Level 3 Train to Gain provision has expanded rapidly.
 - Skilled Trades occupations varied for new entrants from 8 per cent at Level 3 to 16 per cent at Level 2 (12 per cent in Wave 1), and for longitudinal learners from 5 per cent to 15 per cent.
 - Process, Plant and Machine Operatives varied for new entrants from 1 per cent at Level 3 to 17 per cent at Level 2 (12 per cent in Wave 1), and for longitudinal learners from 2 per cent to 11 per cent.
- 34 Employers were distributed across small, medium and large organisations, as Table 4 shows. Compared with Wave 3, Wave 4 saw a slight trend towards smaller employers: 29 per cent of organisations had more than 250

employees in Wave 4 (33 per cent in Wave 3), while 13 per cent had 10 employees or fewer (10 per cent in Wave 3). In general, there is a slight trend towards smaller employers: in Wave 2, 10 per cent of learners were from companies with 1–10 employees, while 35 per cent were from companies with 250 employees or more.

Table 4: Size of employer/number of employees (current or most recent occupation)

	Number	%
1–10	434	13
11–49	886	27
50–249	850	26
250+	936	29
Don't know	124	4
Base (N)	3,230	–

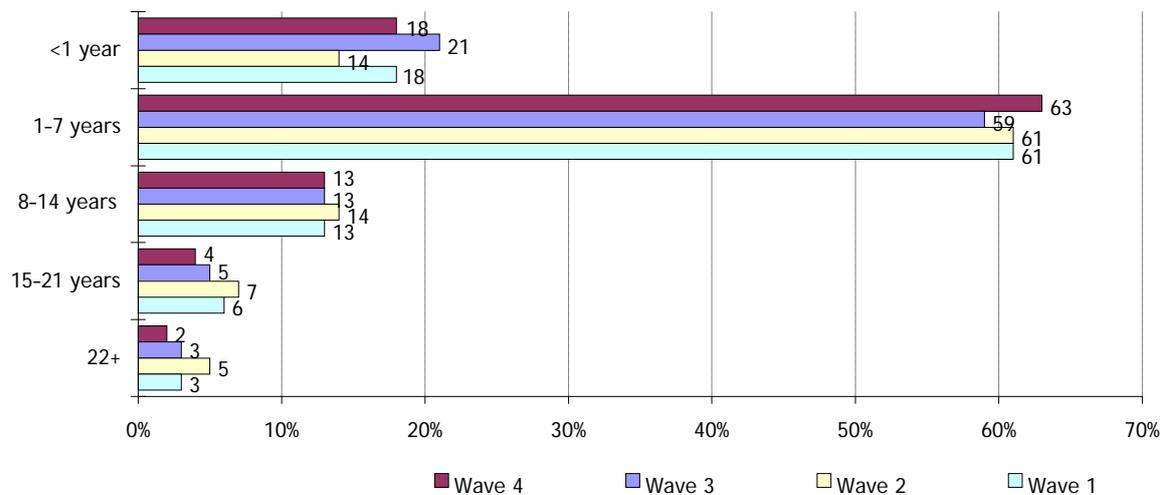
Base = all learners, longitudinal group.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

Length of time in job

- 35 New entrants were also asked how long they had been in their current job: most (80 per cent) had been in post for seven years or less. Figure 2 shows that there has been a slight decline from Wave 2 in the proportion of those who have been in post for more than 15 years.
- 36 Of those who had been in their current or most recent job for less than one year, 40 per cent had previously been working for a different employer doing a different job, and 39 per cent had been working for a different employer but doing much the same sort of job. Previously being in full-time training or learning accounted for 2 per cent; 2 per cent had been short-term unemployed or not working (i.e. for less than six months), and 9 per cent had been long-term unemployed or not working (i.e. for six months or longer). The previous circumstances of the remaining 7 per cent were not known.

Figure 2: Length of time in job



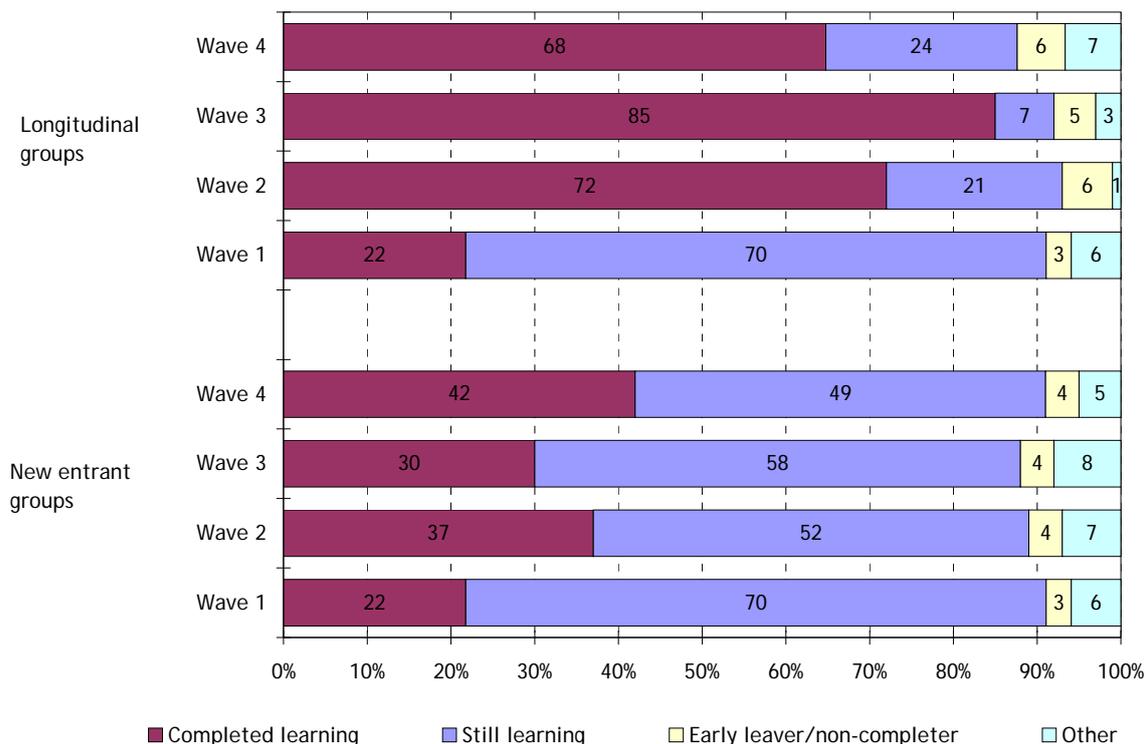
Base = all learners, new entrant group: Wave 4 N = 5,776, Wave 3 N = 5,608, Wave 2 N = 2,542, Wave 1 N = 7,500.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)

Learning

- 37 In the new entrant group, 49 per cent were in the process of learning, 42 per cent had already completed their learning, 5 per cent had yet to start and 4 per cent had left without completing the course.
- 38 In the longitudinal group, 24 per cent were in the process of learning, 68 per cent had already completed, 6 per cent had left the course early and 7 per cent were about to start or there were some other circumstances. As Figure 3 shows, the proportion of completers increased from Wave 1 to Wave 3, since the same cohort was followed and increasing numbers completed over time. For the Wave 4 cohort, which followed up Wave 3 new entrants, the proportion of completers fell back (as is to be expected, since they had had less time on their programmes than the Wave 3 longitudinal group). However, we can see a smaller increase in completers between Wave 3 (new entrants) and Wave 4 (longitudinal) than between Wave 1 and Wave 2. While this may in part be due to a slightly longer lag between Wave 1 and Wave 2, the difference is quite large.

Figure 3: Learning status



Base = all learners, longitudinal and new entrant groups: Wave 4 (LL) N = 3,230, Wave 4 (NE) N = 5,776, Wave 3 (LL) N = 2,777, Wave 3 (NE) N = 5,608, Wave 2 (LL) N = 5,072, Wave 2 (NE) N = 2,542, Wave 1 N = 7,500.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)

Qualifications

- 39 The main qualification learners were working towards was a national vocational qualification (NVQ) in Health and Social Care: 27 per cent of new entrants and 30 per cent of longitudinal learners. The next closest qualification was Customer Service (6 per cent and 7 per cent). This has changed little over time: in Wave 1, 31 per cent of learners were working towards an NVQ in Health and Social Care.
- 40 Health and Social Care was more popular among Level 3 learners than Level 2: 44 per cent, compared with 23 per cent among new entrants, and 39 per cent, compared with 28 per cent for the longitudinal group.

Provider type

- 41 As in Wave 3, most respondents in Wave 4 were following their training or qualifications through independent, rather than public providers. In the new entrant survey, the ratio was 55:45, slightly more even than in Wave 3 (58:43). The longitudinal group reflected the Wave 3 new entrant sample, with a ratio of 56:44.

Personal characteristics

Gender

- 42 In the new entrant survey, men and women were represented in fairly equal proportions (51 per cent male, 49 per cent female). Yet, as in previous waves, women were over-represented in the longitudinal sample (40 per cent male to 60 per cent female). The Wave 1 sample was unbalanced, with a ratio of males to females of 35:65, but the gender balance in Waves 2 and 3 was similar to that in Wave 4.

Ethnicity

- 43 Whereas in previous waves white learners were over-represented in the longitudinal group, in Wave 4 some 82 per cent of longitudinal learners were white – in line with the Wave 3 new entrants they were drawn from. The Wave 4 new entrant survey comprised 81 per cent white respondents, indicating that the last two waves have seen a considerable rise in the proportion of respondents from other ethnic groups (Wave 1 was 91 per cent white and Wave 2 – 87 per cent).

Disability

- 44 In both groups, 6 per cent of respondents reported having a disability, learning difficulty or health problem. This figure has been fairly stable over the four waves (apart from a jump to 9 per cent for the longitudinal group in Wave 3).

Age

- 45 Learners' ages clustered around 40 years, with around a third of respondents aged 36–45 (35 per cent longitudinal and 30 per cent new entrants). The remaining learners were split fairly evenly above and below this group, although, in line with previous waves, the new entrant survey had a slightly younger age profile than the longitudinal group.
- 46 New entrants were asked at what age they had left school. Some 60 per cent had left aged 16 or below – a figure that has dropped steadily over the four waves of the survey. Correspondingly, the proportion of those who left school aged 18 or over has risen steadily, from 15 per cent in Wave 1 to 29 per cent in Wave 4.
- 47 The age profile of new entrants has become younger over the four waves of the survey: 41 per cent were aged 35 or under in Wave 4, compared with 26 per cent in Wave 1. Similarly, 29 per cent were aged 46 and over in Wave 4, against 39 per cent in Wave 1.

Region

- 48 Learners were spread across the country, with the largest proportions coming from the North West (17 per cent new entrants and 18 per cent longitudinal) and London (17 per cent and 16 per cent). The least well represented regions were the North East (4 per cent and 5 per cent) and Yorkshire and the Humber (7 per cent and 4 per cent). The greatest change since Wave 1 has been the increase from 3 per cent in London and a fall from 20 per cent to 13 per cent in the West Midlands.

Analysis and reporting

- 49 This report focuses on the findings from Wave 4, and, where appropriate, highlights trends over time.

Data annex

- 50 Given the large amount of data over the four waves, we have simplified many of the tables and charts to show only Wave 4 results, and have referred to trends in the text. A data annex accompanies this report to show

full tables for all four waves (for questions that were asked across all four waves). The data annex is set out in the same order as the report, making it easy for the reader to cross-refer while reading through.

Comparisons over time

- 51 In order to allow comparisons to be drawn over time, data for the different waves is presented in the data annex and, where appropriate, in the main report.
- 52 The new entrant data shows the figures for each question at each wave, and there is a cross-sectional comparison for each new cohort.
- 53 The longitudinal data is also shown as a cross-section, i.e. the data for each longitudinal cohort is shown side by side. However, as was described in the section on sampling above, the longitudinal group varies from wave to wave, and is either a first follow-up of a new entrant cohort (as in Wave 2 and Wave 4) or a second follow-up (Wave 3). Depending on the question, the most useful comparison is likely to be between Waves 2 and 4 (since these cohorts are most alike), and this is the comparison that is usually made. Wave 3 is included in tables for the sake of completeness, and it can be interesting to follow cross-sectional patterns.
- 54 Where questions were asked of exactly the same respondents in Wave 3 (when they were 'new entrants') and in Wave 4 (the longitudinal group), the data annex also shows a 'like-for-like' comparison. This is a true longitudinal comparison, since it shows the responses for the same people at two different stages. This approach is only possible for a small number of questions, and so has not been used as the main form of comparison.

Report sections

- 55 The report has four main sections, which deal with the Train to Gain experience chronologically.
- **Finding Out and Signing Up:** awareness of Train to Gain, the process of signing up and learners' expectations of the programme.

- **Advice and Guidance:** the extent to which learners had pre-entry discussions and assessments to inform training.
- **Experiences of Training:** learners' reflections on the process of the training, the support they had, and what made the programme easy or difficult to complete.
- **Satisfaction and Outcomes:** outcomes from training, learner satisfaction and plans for the future.

56 Each section begins with a brief summary of the findings from Wave 4 and of the trends over time for the key issues.

Finding Out and Signing Up

Key findings

- 57 After rising in the course of previous waves, awareness of Train to Gain among new entrants has levelled off: 77 per cent of respondents had heard of Train to Gain (compared with 76 per cent in Wave 3). Almost half of all new entrants knew little or nothing about Train to Gain, and a third of those who had heard of it did not know that their training was funded by it.
- 58 Most learners (54 per cent of new entrants) had first heard of Train to Gain through their employers, though increasing numbers had learned of it from television advertisements (17 per cent, compared with no more than 9 per cent in previous waves).
- 59 The setting up of training continues to involve collaboration between the employer and the employee. Although, compared with Wave 3 fewer new entrants cited collaboration in initiating the training, many more felt that they had had the choice of taking part in Train to Gain.
- 49 per cent felt that they and their employer had jointly initiated the training (down from 59 per cent in Wave 3).
 - Of those whose employers had initiated the training, 47 per cent felt that they had had 'a great deal of say' over their learning (33 per cent in Wave 3).
- 60 As in previous waves, around half of all new entrants had undertaken other job-related training in the previous year. Of these, 58 per cent said the training had led to a qualification (53 per cent in Wave 3).
- 61 As in previous waves, new entrants' expectations focused on improving skills and gaining qualifications, with an eye to career development. Most current learners expected to:
- gain 'a qualification' (90 per cent);
 - gain skills that would help with a future job or employer (both 87 per cent);
 - gain skills that would help with their current job (83 per cent); and

- learn something new (scores ranged from 83 per cent).

62 Learners in both surveys stressed the importance of qualifications: 83 per cent of new entrants and 85 per cent of those in the longitudinal group agreed that 'you need qualifications to get anywhere these days'.

Trends over time

63 Over the two years of the evaluation, the findings have consistently shown the appeal to employees of gaining qualifications and increasing their skills. These factors, rather than pay or promotion, appear to be the main motivation for taking part in Train to Gain. Employers have continually been the main source of information about Train to Gain and, while awareness of the programme has grown over time, it may now have reached a plateau.

64 The last two waves taken together show increasing collaboration between employer and employee in initiating the training, and more employees now feel that they had ample choice over whether or not to take part. However, levels do fluctuate between waves, and a clear trend is not easily discernible.

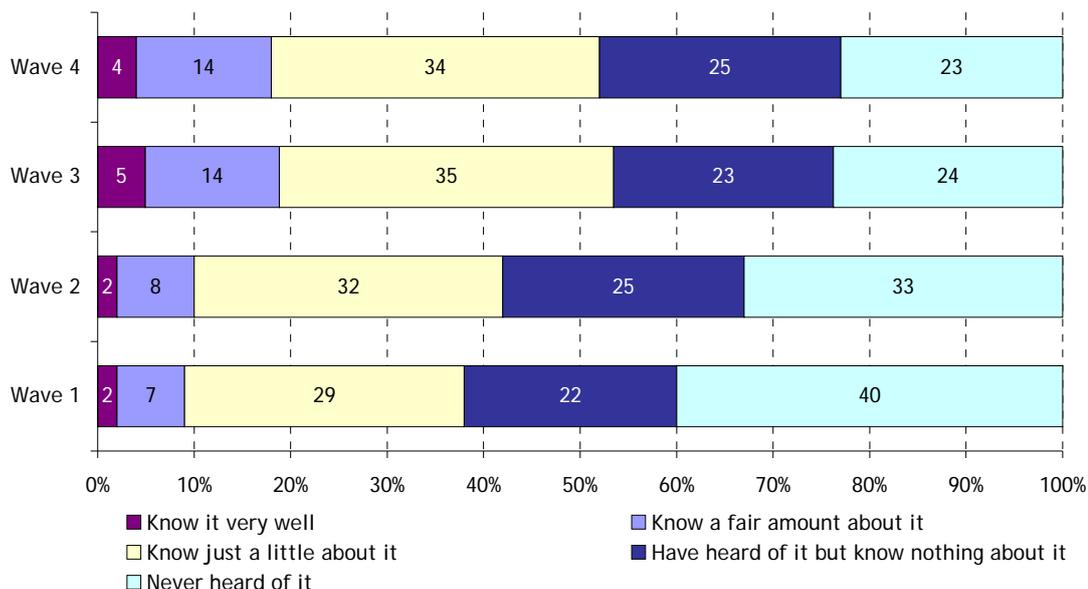
The Train to Gain brand

Awareness and knowledge of Train to Gain

65 All learners in the new entrant survey were asked the extent of their knowledge of Train to Gain. While three learners in four (77 per cent) had heard of Train to Gain, the extent of their knowledge varied. As Figure 4 shows: 4 per cent felt that they knew the Train to Gain programme very well; 14 per cent felt that they knew a fair amount about it; 34 per cent felt that they knew just a little about it; 25 per cent said they had heard of it but knew nothing about it; and 23 per cent said they had never heard of it.

66 The data over the four waves suggests that the level of awareness has reached a plateau, having increased significantly between Waves 1 and 2 and having levelled off between Waves 3 and 4. This still leaves large numbers within the programme who have not heard of it or who know nothing about it.

Figure 4: Awareness and knowledge of Train to Gain



Base = all learners, new entrant group: Wave 4 N = 5,776, Wave 3 N = 5,608, Wave 2 N = 2,542, Wave 1 N = 7,500.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)*

67 There was little variation in the awareness of Train to Gain according to the personal characteristics of gender or disability, but awareness was higher among young learners than among older learners: awareness in the youngest age group of 18–25 was 80 per cent, which declined as age increased to an awareness level of 70 per cent for the oldest age group of 56 and above. Awareness also differed by ethnicity, with an awareness level of 79 per cent among white learners, compared with 69 per cent for learners of BME origin.

68 There was little variation in awareness according to provider type or subject, but some according to the occupational group of the learner. Awareness was highest for Administrative and Secretarial occupations (88 per cent) and among Managers and Senior Officials (86 per cent), and lowest among Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (73 per cent) and Elementary occupations (74 per cent).

69 The awareness levels among those working less than 16 hours a week were lower than among those working 16–30 hours or those working full time (71

per cent, compared with 79 per cent and 78 per cent, respectively).

Awareness was also higher for those studying at Level 3 than at Level 2 (82 per cent, compared with 76 per cent).

- 70 All those who had heard of Train to Gain (77 per cent of the total) were asked about their understanding of how their course was funded. Of these, 65 per cent knew that their current course was funded by Train to Gain, leaving a third of respondents who did not know that their courses were funded by Train to Gain.
- 71 Knowledge that the course was being funded by Train to Gain also showed some variation by occupational group. Knowledge was highest among Managers and Senior Officials (77 per cent) and Administrative and Secretarial occupations (75 per cent), and was lowest for Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (60 per cent) and Elementary occupations and Personal Service occupations (both 62 per cent).
- 72 There were few differences according to personal characteristics or according to the type of training provider.

Source of information about the Train to Gain brand

- 73 In keeping with previous waves, the main source of information about Train to Gain was a manager, supervisor, the human resources (HR) or training department, cited by 54 per cent of learners. As Table 5 shows, other sources of information included television advertisements (named by 17 per cent), colleagues (8 per cent), and friends or relations (5 per cent).
- 74 The proportion that cited television advertisements increased markedly from less than 10 per cent in all previous waves. Television advertisements for Train to Gain have been shown during various campaigns since the summer of 2007: July 2007 (between Waves 1 and 2), January 2008 (between Waves 2 and 3), May 2008 (during Wave 3), August 2008 (between Waves 3 and 4) and November 2008 (during Wave 4). It is therefore possible that the recent rise is due to the cumulative effect of the television campaigns; or it may be specific to the campaigns that took place prior to and during the Wave 4 survey.

- 75 By contrast, only 1 per cent found out initially from a training provider – a figure that has steadily declined from 12 per cent in Wave 1.

Table 5: Source of information about the brand

	Number	%
From a manager/supervisor/HR or training department	2,384	54
TV advertisement	746	17
From a colleague	336	8
From friends or relations	220	5
Union/union learning representative	121	3
Radio advert	97	2
Advert in local or national newspaper	98	2
Trade body or association	88	2
From a training provider/college staff/assessor	57	1
Don't know	163	4
Base (N)	4,458	–

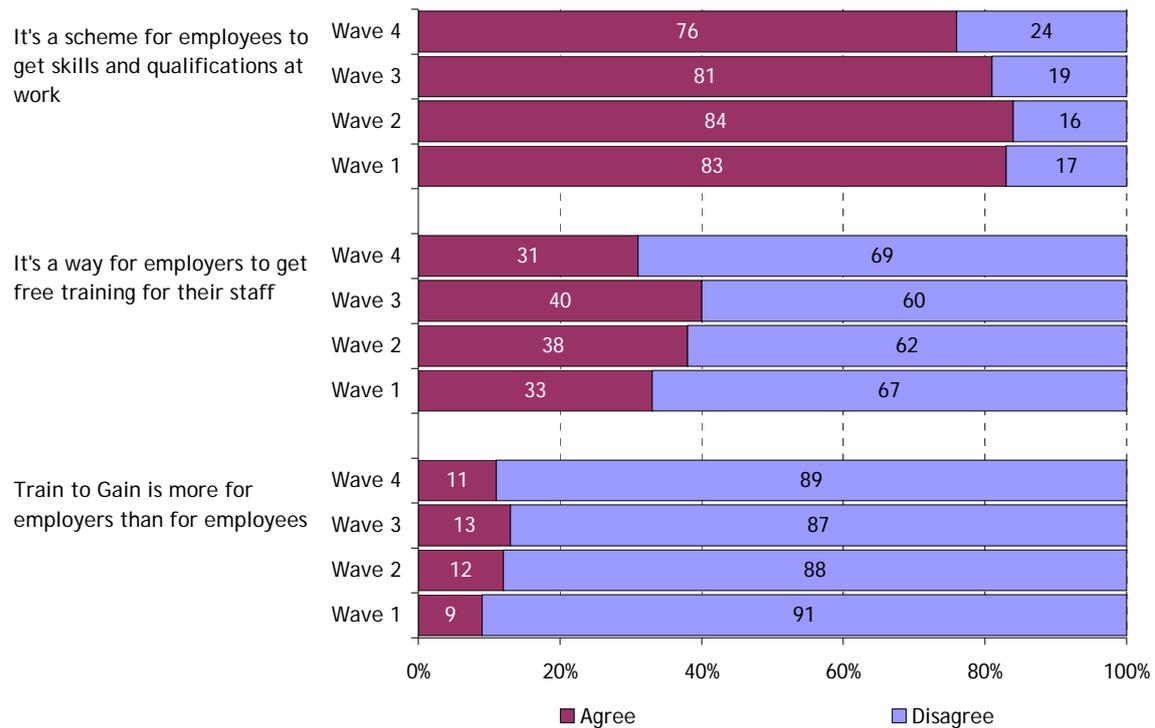
Base = new entrant survey: all those who were aware of Train to Gain.
Multiple responses given; only responses of over 2 per cent shown.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

Understanding of Train to Gain

- 76 All new learners were presented with three statements about Train to Gain and were asked to indicate their agreement with each. Figure 5 shows that 76 per cent agreed that Train to Gain is 'a scheme for employees to get skills and qualifications at work'. This is a slight drop from previous waves, where figures ranged from 81 per cent to 84 per cent.
- 77 Less than a third (31 per cent) agreed that 'it's a way for employers to get free training for their staff', compared with 40 per cent in Wave 3. Furthermore, only 11 per cent agreed that 'Train to Gain is more for employers than for employees'.

Figure 5: Statements about Train to Gain



Base = new entrants, all those who had heard of Train to Gain: Wave 4 N = 4,458, Wave 3 N = 4,277, Wave 2 N = 2,542, Wave 1 N = 4,470.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)

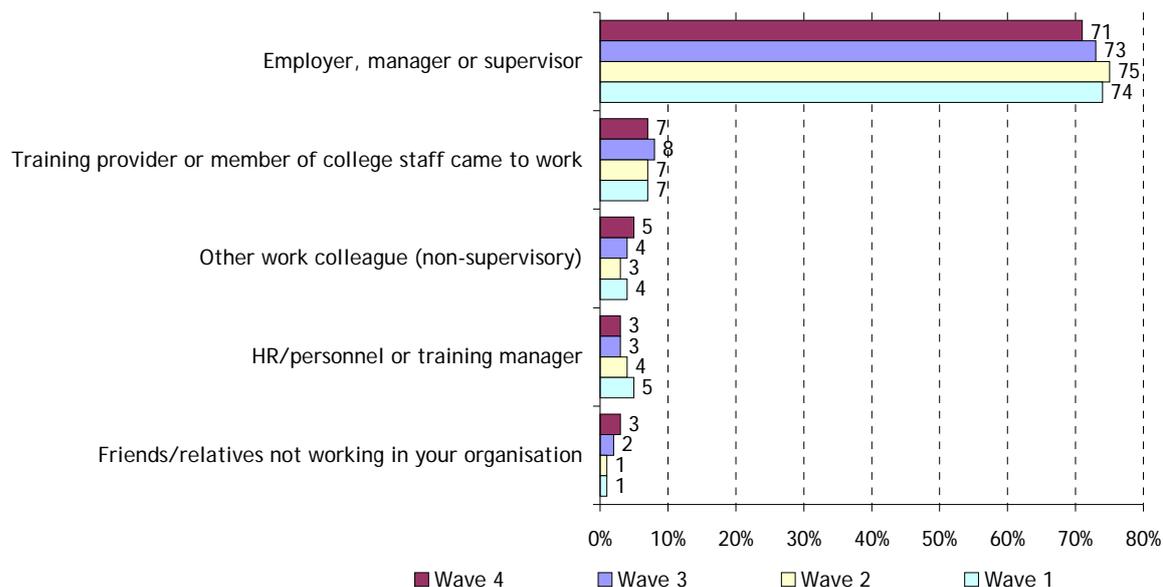
Getting involved in Train to Gain

Finding out about the training

78 All respondents in the new entrant group were asked to describe how they had first found out about the training, and 71 per cent of learners said their initial source had been their employer, manager or supervisor, while an additional 7 per cent reported that they had been visited at work by a member of the college staff or training provider (see Figure 6).

79 The four survey waves consistently show that managers or other staff at the workplace are the main sources of information for learners about qualifications.

Figure 6: Where learners first heard about their qualification



Base = all learners, new entrant group: Wave 4 = 5,776, Wave 3 N = 5,608, Wave 2 N = 2,542, Wave 1 N = 7,500. Only Wave 4 responses over 2 per cent shown.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)*

- 80 Although the employer, manager or supervisor was the most common source across all subgroups, it was particularly high among those studying on a care course, where it was named by 84 per cent. By contrast, employers were named by 67 per cent of those on non-care courses, who were more likely to say that the training provider had come to their workplace (9 per cent, compared with 3 per cent on care courses). Occupational group, too, showed some variation in the proportion giving their employer as the original source – from highs of 79 per cent among Personal Service occupations and 74 per cent of Associate Professional and Technical staff, to lows of 63 per cent for both Managers and Senior Officials, and Sales and Customer Services.
- 81 Consequently, the proportions who had been visited by the training provider also varied: from 5 per cent of those in Personal Service occupations and 6 per cent of Associate Professional and Technical staff, to 14 per cent of Sales and Customer Services and 12 per cent of Managers and Senior Officials.

Choosing to take part

Who initiated training

- 82 Learners reported many ways in which they had come to take part in the learning, and almost two learners in three (63 per cent) reported more than one entry means (though the survey did not collect information on whether the training was facilitated by brokers or training providers). Figure 7 shows that the two most common were:
- putting themselves forward for the training when they heard about the opportunity (63 per cent); and
 - being asked by their employer whether they were interested in the training (59 per cent).
- 83 Compared with Wave 3, Wave 4 figures show significant falls in all categories, partly as a result of respondents choosing fewer options in this wave (63 per cent gave more than one response in Wave 4, compared with 81 per cent in Wave 3). The sharpest fall was among those who had been told by their employer to do the training – nearly halving, to 21 per cent of respondents.

Figure 7: How learners came to take part in training



Base = all learners, new entrant group: Wave 4 = 5,776, Wave 3 N = 5,608, Wave 2 N = 2,542, Wave 1 N = 7,500. Multiple responses given; only Wave 4 responses over 1 per cent shown.

* This question was not asked in Waves 1 and 2. Note that 'mandatory' is learner defined, Train to Gain does not fund any training required by legislation

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)

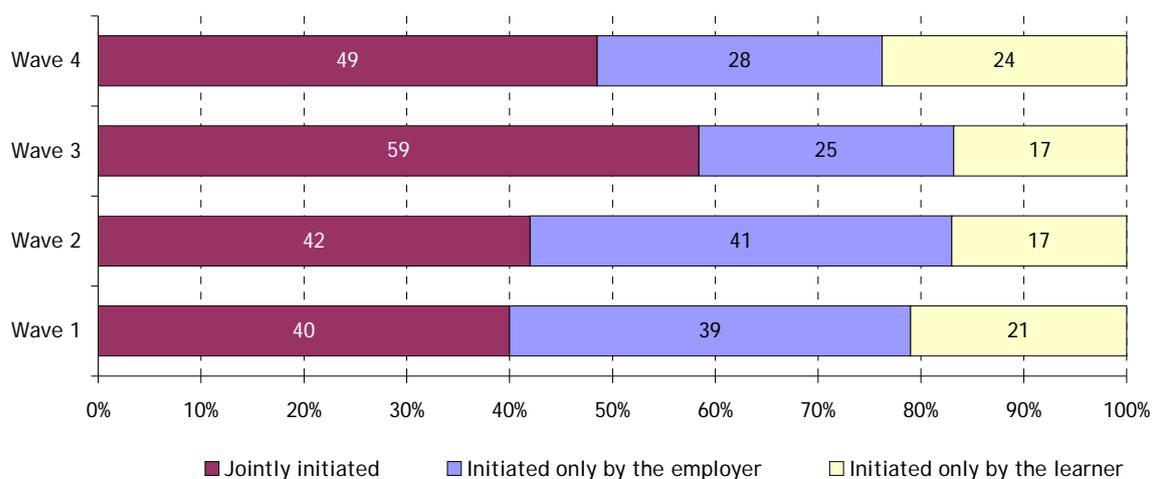
84 These responses can be combined into three groups according to the role played by the employer. This reveals a less collaborative approach to setting up the training than in the last wave. However, the balance between solely employer-led (i.e. the employer had asked for volunteers, had asked the learner if they were interested or had told the learner to do the training) and solely employee-led (i.e. the learner had put themselves forward or had requested the training themselves) is more equal than in any previous wave. Figure 8 shows that:

- 49 per cent of learners felt that the training had been initiated jointly by themselves and their employer (down from 59 per cent in Wave 3);
- 28 per cent felt that the training had been initiated solely by their employer (25 per cent in Wave 3); and

- 24 per cent felt they had initiated the training themselves, without any influence or involvement from their employer (17 per cent in Wave 3).

85 Training that was **employer-initiated only** showed only minor variation by occupational group: it was most common among Managers and Senior Officials (31 per cent) and Associate Professional and Technical occupations (30 per cent), and least common in Administrative and Secretarial occupations (22 per cent) and Professional occupations (23 per cent). Training that was **self-initiated only** was least common among the Elementary occupations and Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (both 20 per cent), and was highest among Managers and Senior Officials, Professional occupations, and Administrative and Secretarial occupations (all 28 per cent).

Figure 8: Who initiated the training



Base = all learners specifying who initiated training, new entrant group: Wave 4 N = 5,407, Wave 3 N = 5,366, Wave 2 N = 2,503, Wave 1 N = 7,405.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)

86 For the sake of consistency with previous waves of analysis, the three groups shown in Figure 8 all include those learners whose training was mandatory (as defined by the learner) and who may, therefore, have different motivations:

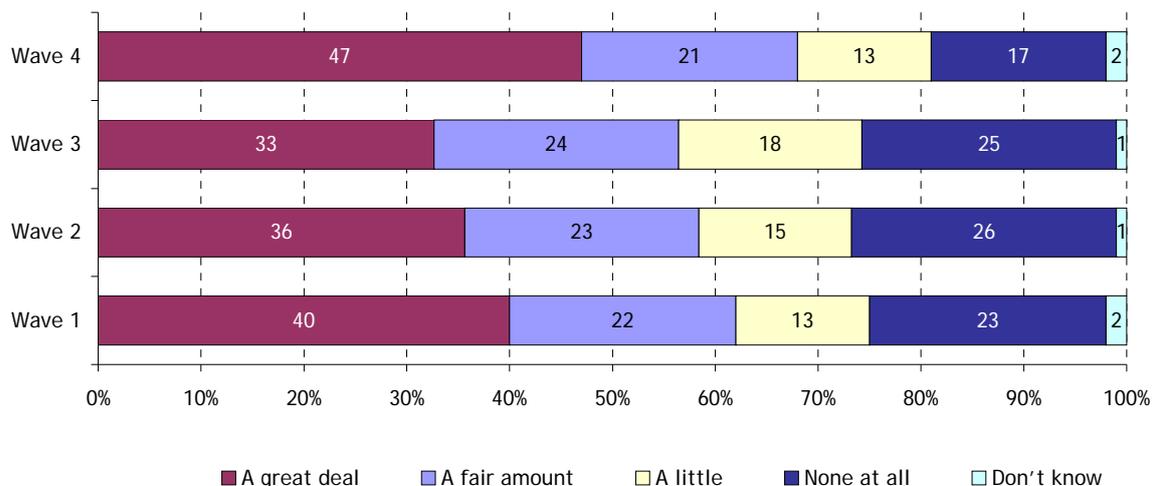
- of the **jointly initiated** learners, 51 per cent also said the training was mandatory (57 per cent in Wave 3);
- of the **employer-initiated** learners, 26 per cent also said the training was mandatory (44 per cent in Wave 3); and
- of the **self-initiated** learners, 14 per cent also said the training was mandatory (19 per cent in Wave 3).

87 Overall, those who said that the training was mandatory for their job accounted for 39 per cent. This figure was particularly high in the Personal Service occupations (47 per cent) and Skilled Trades (43 per cent), and lowest in the Administrative and Secretarial sector (20 per cent) and Sales and Customer Services (24 per cent). Subject area was also related to the likelihood of the training being mandatory: 51 per cent of those studying on a care course said it was mandatory for their job, compared with 34 per cent of those on other subjects.

Amount of choice

- 88 Those learners for whom the training was initiated solely by their employer were asked to describe the amount of say they felt they had had over whether or not to participate in the training. Figure 9 shows that, despite their employer's involvement in the decision, 47 per cent said they had had 'a great deal of say', 21 per cent said they had had 'a fair amount of say', and a further 13 per cent had had 'a little amount of say'. The remaining learners said they had had 'no say at all' (17 per cent), or did not know (2 per cent).
- 89 Figure 9 shows that, despite the apparent lack of collaboration in initiating the training (described above), learners felt increasingly empowered in choosing whether or not to embark on their training. This redresses small but steady declines over each of the previous three waves.

Figure 9: Amount of say over whether or not to do the training



Base = employer-initiated training only, new entrant group: Wave 4 N = 1,402, Wave 3 N = 1,322, Wave 2 N = 1,020, Wave 1 N = 2,816.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)*

90 The small group of 17 per cent who felt they had had no say at all in whether or not to take part in the learning showed some variation according to whether or not the training was mandatory, and according to the occupational group of the learner.

- Some 30 per cent of those who said the training was mandatory for their job said that they had had no say at all, compared with 12 per cent of those who were not obliged to do the training.
- The highest proportions of those who had had no say at all were to be found among Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (25 per cent) and Associate Professional and Technical occupations (24 per cent).
- Managers and Senior Officials, and Sales and Customer Service occupations had the smallest proportions of learners who had had no say over the training (both 13 per cent).

Work and training

Access to training and qualifications at work

- 91 More than half of all new entrants (56 per cent) reported that they could have done the training before now, had they so wished. This shows a small increase of five percentage points over the four waves (see data annex). As Table 6 shows, the main reasons given for not choosing to do the qualification earlier included: not knowing that the training existed; not needing the skills before now; not being offered the training before now; and not having had any time at work to train. The proportion that had not been offered the training before has decreased from 19 per cent in Wave 1 to 13 per cent in Wave 4.

Table 6: Reasons for not doing training earlier

	Wave 4 (NE)	
	Number	%
Did not know training/qualification existed	505	16
Did not need these skills before	452	14
Was not offered before now	430	13
Did not have any time to train at work	425	13
Never thought of doing it	366	11
Could not afford to pay for it myself	255	8
Not interested in it	199	6
Base (N)	3,243	–

Base = all those who said they could have done the training earlier, new entrant group. Multiple responses given; only responses above 5 per cent shown.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

- 92 The respondents who reported that they had not signed up for the training earlier because they had not previously needed the skills were asked to expand on their response. Table 7 shows the reasons for the skills not having been needed until now. The proportion of those citing as the reason the fact that they had worked in a different industry or had had a different job rose from 23 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively, in Wave 3.

Table 7: Reasons for not needing skills before

	Wave 4 (NE)	
	Number	%
The training had not previously been a requirement of the job	140	34
Had previously worked in a different industry	125	30
Had previously worked in a different job or recently been promoted	91	22
Already had the knowledge or experience	58	14
Base (N)	414	–

Base = learners who said that these skills had not been needed before now, new entrant group. Multiple responses given; only responses above 2 per cent shown.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

Other learning and training at work

93 Nearly half of all new entrants (47 per cent) reported that they had undertaken job-related training in the previous year. This group was then asked to provide more detail about the training in question. Table 8 shows that 58 per cent had undertaken additional training that led to a qualification – a proportion that has risen steadily from 46 per cent in Wave 2, when the question was first asked.

Table 8: Training at work in the previous year

New entrants	N	%
Did this training lead to a qualification?		
Yes	1,551	58
No	1,123	42
Don't know	22	1
Did you do this training because you were legally required to do it for your job?		
Yes	1,745	65
No	927	34
Don't know	25	1
Base (N)	2,696	–

Base = all those doing extra training at work during last year, new entrant group.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

94 The proportion that had undertaken additional training because they were legally required to do so for their job varied considerably by occupation. Personal Service occupations stood out as the only occupational group with

an above-average proportion of 74 per cent. Sales and Customer Services, and Administrative and Secretarial occupations were the least likely to have a legal obligation (49 per cent each). The proportion of those who said they were legally required to do the training was higher within care subjects (76 per cent) than among those on other subjects (57 per cent).

95 Respondents who were undertaking additional learning were also asked whether they had undertaken any learning intended to support specific skills (see Table 9).

- 15 per cent reported that their additional course supported their learning in information and communication technology (ICT)/computing.
- 13 per cent were supported in English.
- 11 per cent were supported in maths.

Table 9: Extra courses at work to support key skills

		N	%
Maths	Yes	617	11
	No	5,153	89
	Don't know	6	*
English	Yes	771	13
	No	4,996	87
	Don't know	9	*
ICT/computing	Yes	891	15
	No	4,884	85
	Don't know	1	*
Base (N)		5,776	–

Base = all learners, new entrant group.

* Denotes less than 1 per cent.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

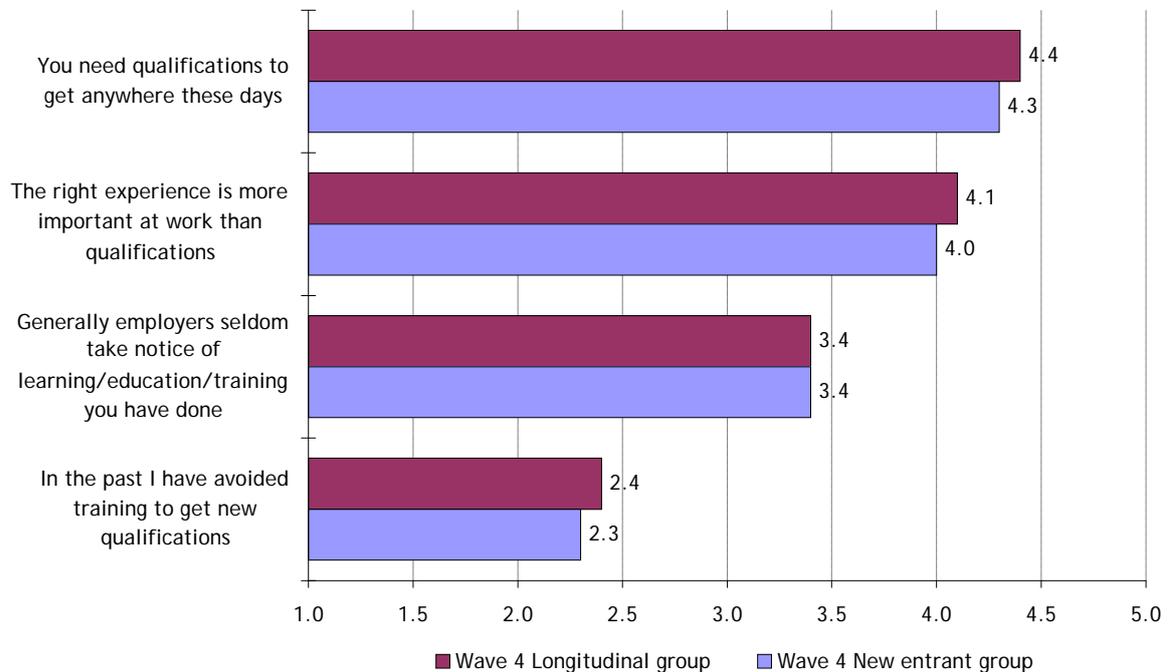
Attitudes to work and learning

Attitudes towards learning in general

- 96 All respondents in both the new entrant group and the longitudinal group were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with four statements about the role of learning. Figure 10 shows the responses, converted into an average or mean score. (Mean scores are based on the following: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = tend to disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = tend to agree, 5 = strongly agree. Thus, the higher the score, the greater the agreement.)
- 97 In the new entrant group, the greatest agreement was found for the statement 'you need qualifications to get anywhere these days', with 83 per cent agreement and a score of 4.3 out of a maximum possible 5.0. Respondents also agreed that 'the right experience is more important at work than qualifications' (75 per cent, score 4.0) and 'generally employers seldom take notice of the learning, education or training you have done' (57 per cent, score 3.4). However, with a score of 2.3 and an agreement percentage of just 27 per cent, respondents generally disagreed that 'in the past I have avoided training to get new qualifications'.
- 98 The pattern of responses was very similar in the longitudinal group, as Figure 10 shows. Again, the greatest agreement was noted for the statement 'you need qualifications to get anywhere these days', which had 85 per cent agreement and a score of 4.4 out of a maximum 5.0. Respondents also agreed that 'the right experience is more important at work than qualifications' (77 per cent, score 4.1) and 'generally employers seldom take notice of the learning, education or training you have done' (60 per cent, score 3.4). Again, with a lower score of 2.4 and an agreement percentage of just 29 per cent, respondents generally disagreed that 'in the past I have avoided training to get new qualifications'.
- 99 Responses across the four waves show a great deal of consistency among both groups. The exception is more agreement (based on the mean score) with the statement 'generally employers seldom take notice of the learning,

education or training you have done'. The mean score in the longitudinal group has risen from 3.0 in Wave 2 to 3.4 in Wave 4.

Figure 10: Agreement with attitudes towards learning (mean score)



Base = all learners, longitudinal and new entrant groups:
Wave 4 (NE) N = 5,776, Wave 4 (LL) N = 3,230.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

100 In both the longitudinal group and the new entrant group, variations in the mean scores were explored according to the personal characteristics of the learners, and variations that were consistent across both groups were noted. The greatest amount of variation was evident in the statement that 'employers seldom take notice of the learning, education or training you have done'.

- Younger learners were more likely to feel that 'employers seldom take notice of the learning, education or training you have done'. In the longitudinal group, the two youngest groups scored 3.9 (age 18–25) and 3.7 (age 26–35), compared with a score of 3.3 for the three older age groups. Similarly, in the new entrant group, the two youngest groups scored 3.6 (age 18–25) and 3.5 (age 26–35), compared with a score of

3.3 for the middle group of those aged 36–45, 3.2 for those aged 46–55 and 3.1 for those aged 56 and over.

- Learners from BME groups were more likely than white learners to agree that ‘employers seldom take notice of the learning, education or training you have done’, with a mean score of 4.0 in the longitudinal group and 3.8 in the new entrant group (compared with 3.3 for white learners in both groups).

101 Age and ethnicity also had an impact on the scores for the statement that ‘you need qualifications to get anywhere these days’.

- Learners were more likely to agree that ‘you need qualifications to get anywhere these days’ as they got older. It appears that, as they get older, people value qualifications more and perceive that employers value qualifications.
 - In the longitudinal group, the mean score for the youngest age group of 18–25 was 3.9 and rose with age to 4.5 for those aged over 46.
 - In the new entrant group, the pattern was similar: those aged 18–25 scored 4.0, rising to 4.3 for the oldest age group of 56 and above.
- BME learners were more likely than white learners to agree that ‘you need qualifications to get anywhere these days’, with a mean score of 4.6 in the longitudinal group and 4.5 in the new entrant group (compared with 4.3 and 4.2, respectively, for white learners).

102 The other two statements showed little variation by subgroup, although those with a disability or learning difficulty were a little more likely than other learners to agree that, in the past, they had ‘avoided training to get new qualifications’ (2.6 in the longitudinal group and 2.5 in the new entrant group, compared with 2.3 for other learners in both groups).

Attitudes towards current skill levels and needs of the job

Skill levels

103 When learners in the new entrant group were asked to consider how their skill level compared with the requirements of their job, the majority agreed that they were well suited to their job. As in previous waves, most learners disagreed that their current job was a struggle, and acknowledged that they could do a more challenging job.

- Some 62 per cent strongly agreed and 29 per cent tended to agree that 'in terms of the skills and abilities I have, my job suits me well' (mean score 4.5 out of a maximum 5.0).
- Some 43 per cent strongly agreed and 30 per cent tended to agree that 'I can do a more challenging job than the one I am doing' (mean 3.9).
- Some 44 per cent strongly disagreed and 23 per cent tended to disagree that 'sometimes I find my job a bit of a struggle' (mean 2.3).

104 The suitability of the job showed some variation with ethnicity and age.

- BME learners were more likely to feel that they struggled with their job, but were also more likely to feel that they could do a more difficult job. An apparent contradiction is shown here by the fact that 36 per cent of BME learners agreed with both statements, making it difficult to draw strong conclusions from the findings.
 - BME learners scored 2.7 for the statement 'sometimes I find my job a bit of a struggle', compared with a score of 2.2 for white learners (a score of 3.0 indicates a neutral response, and less than 3.0 indicates a negative response, i.e. disagreement).
 - BME learners scored 4.3 (compared with 3.8 for white learners) for the statement 'I can do a more challenging job than the one I am doing'.
 - However, there was only minimal variation in the responses to the statement 'in terms of the skills and abilities I have, my job suits me well' (4.4 for white learners and 4.5 for BME learners).

- Older people appear more confident in the job they are doing, but less confident that they can do a more challenging job.
 - Agreement with the statement 'I can do a more challenging job than the one I am doing' declined with age: those aged 18–25 and 26–35 both scored 4.0, and those aged 56 and above scored 3.7.
 - Agreement with 'sometimes I find my job a bit of a struggle' also declined – from 2.4 for those aged 18–25 and 26–35 years, to 2.0 for those aged 56 and over.
 - However, agreement that 'in terms of the skills and abilities I have, my job suits me well' increased a little with age – from a score of 4.4 for the three youngest age groups, to 4.6 for the oldest age group.

105 Although there was some variation in the scores according to the occupational group of the respondents, most variation was quite moderate.

- All occupational groups disagreed that 'sometimes I find my job a bit of a struggle', with disagreement being strongest among Administrative and Secretarial occupations (at 2.0) and less strong among Personal Service occupations (at 2.5).
- Scores for the statement 'in terms of the skills and abilities I have, my job suits me well' varied from 4.3 for Sales and Customer Services to 4.6 for Personal Service occupations.
- Agreement with 'I can do a more challenging job than the one I am doing' was lowest for Administrative and Secretarial occupations (at 3.8), and highest for Sales and Customer Services, Elementary occupations, and Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (all 4.0).

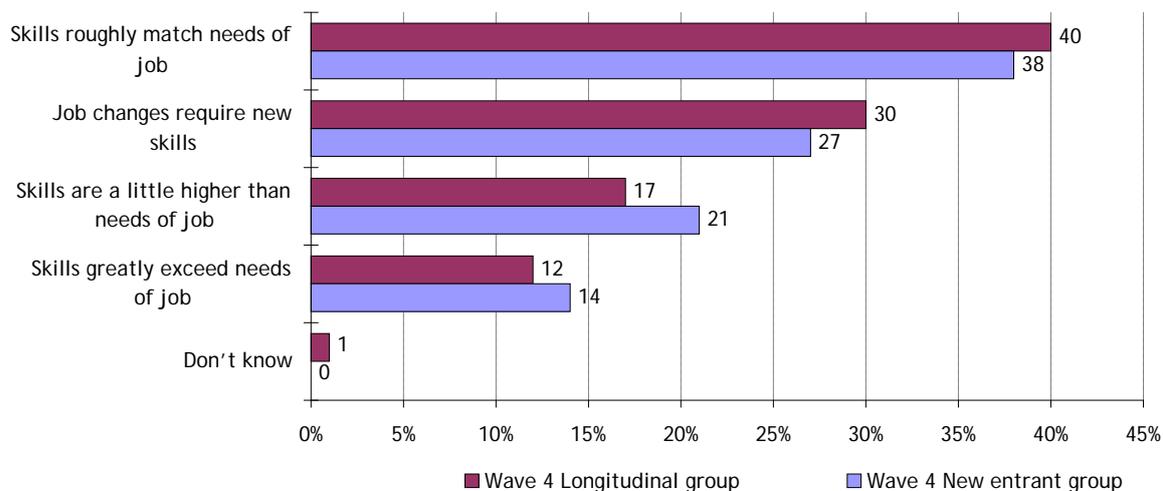
Skills requirements

106 A further question in both the new entrant group and the longitudinal group examined the relationship between learners' skills and the skill requirements of the job (see Figure 11). The chart shows that, among the new entrant group, 38 per cent agreed that their skills roughly matched the needs of their

job, while 27 per cent reported that they have had to develop new skills in line with the changing needs of their job.

- 107 In the longitudinal group, the responses were very similar, although learners were slightly less likely to feel over-skilled (17 per cent felt their skills greatly exceeded the needs of the job, and 12 per cent felt their skills were a little higher than needed). Some 40 per cent felt that their skills matched those needed in their job, and 30 per cent felt the demands of their job were changing.
- 108 Over the four waves of the survey, the broad message has been consistent. The main differences showed up in the Wave 3 longitudinal group, which revealed a greater tendency to feel appropriately skilled than did other waves – 52 per cent in Wave 3 (compared with 40 per cent in Wave 4) felt that their skills roughly matched the needs of the job. However, a like-for-like comparison of those new entrants in Wave 3 who were followed up in Wave 4 shows a small decrease (one or two percentage points) in those who felt over-skilled being balanced by an increase (38 per cent to 40 per cent) in those who felt that their skills roughly matched the needs of the job. This can be seen in more detail in the data annex. The tables with like-for-like comparisons show the scores only for new entrants in Wave 3 who were followed up in Wave 4 and who gave answers to both questions being compared.

Figure 11: How current skills relate to current job



Base = all learners in employment, longitudinal and new entrant group: Wave 4 (LL) N = 3,092, Wave 4 (NE) N = 5,380.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

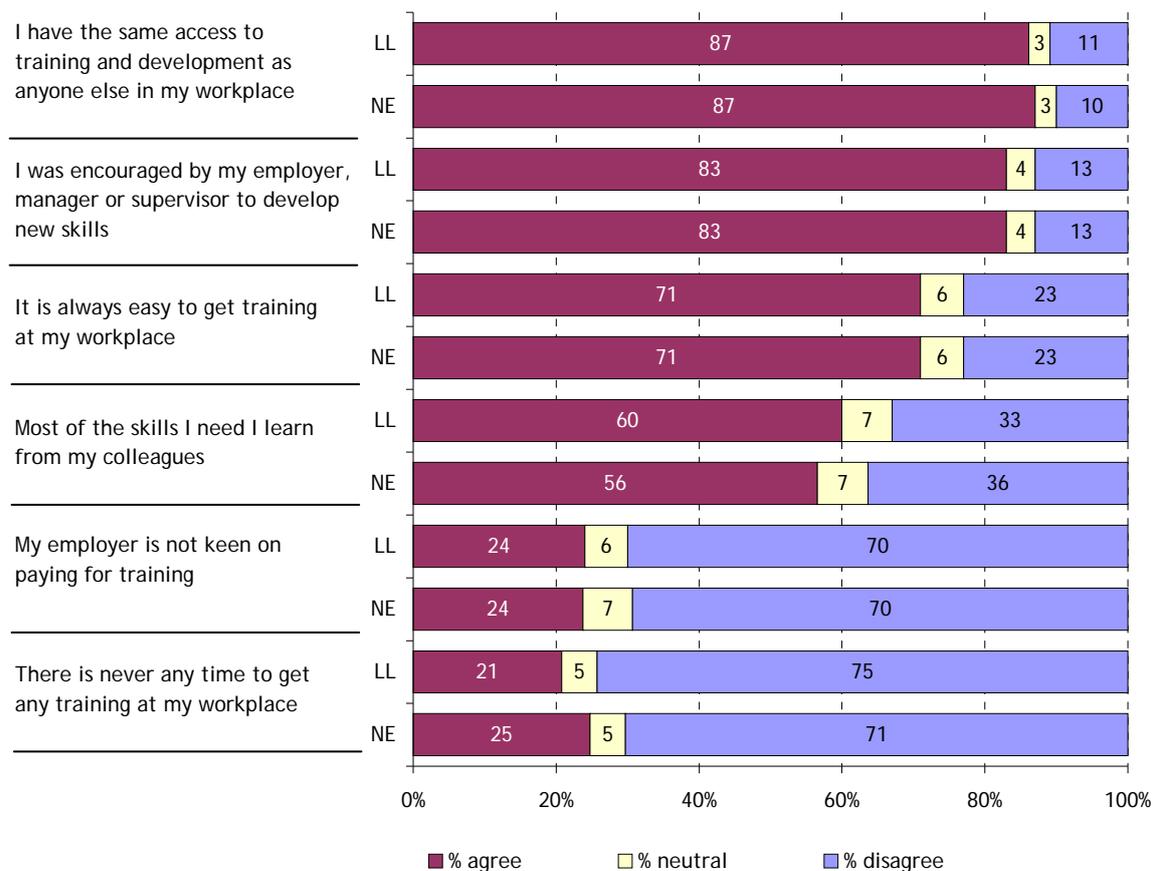
Opportunity and employer attitudes

109 In both the new entrant survey and the longitudinal survey, six questions examined the attitudes towards learning in relation to the learner's employer and workplace. Across both groups, agreement was high for four of the statements:

- 'I have/had the same access to training and development as anyone else in my workplace' (87 per cent agreement – i.e. either strongly agree or tend to agree – in both the new entrant and the longitudinal group);
- 'I am/was encouraged by my employer, manager or supervisor to develop new skills' (83 per cent agreement in both groups);
- 'It is/was always easy to get training at my workplace' (71 per cent agreement in both groups); and
- 'Most of the skills I need/needed I learn/learned from my colleagues' (60 per cent agreement in the longitudinal group and 56 per cent agreement in the new entrant group).

- 110 However, fewer respondents in both groups agreed with the remaining two statements about learning in their workplace:
- ‘There is/was never any time to get any training at my workplace’ (21 per cent of the longitudinal group agreed, as did 25 per cent of the new entrant group); and
 - ‘My employer is/was not keen on paying for training’ (24 per cent of both groups agreed).
- 111 These figures show that most learners felt able to access training without having undue barriers placed in their way by their employers. They are generally consistent across all four waves and for both survey groups. There is minor variation concerning the employer’s willingness to pay for training (as perceived by the learners), which is slightly lower in Wave 4 than in Wave 3 for new entrants (24 per cent, compared with 26 per cent) and for longitudinal learners (24 per cent, compared with 27 per cent). However, it still shows a more positive result than in Wave 1 (20 per cent) for the longitudinal group, and there is no change in the like-for-like comparison of those Wave 3 new entrants followed up in Wave 4.
- 112 The same like-for-like group analysis also shows a slight rise (from 69 per cent to 71 per cent) in those agreeing that ‘it is/was always easy to get training at my workplace’. They also agreed more strongly in Wave 4 that ‘most of the skills I need/needed I learn/learned from my colleagues’ (from 56 per cent to 60 per cent). The data annex shows the wave comparisons in more detail.

Figure 12: Attitudes towards learning and training



Base = all learners, longitudinal and new entrant group: Wave 4 (LL) N = 3,230, Wave 4 (NE) N = 5,776.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

113 If we look at the mean scores, all statements show some degree of variation according to the personal characteristics of the learners. Those features that were consistent across both the longitudinal and the new entrant survey were as follows.

- Although men and women both disagreed that ‘there is never any time to get any training at my workplace’, men disagreed less strongly than women (men scored 2.2 in the longitudinal group and 2.4 in the new entrant group, compared with the women’s scores of 2.0 and 2.1, respectively; again, a score of less than 3.0 indicates disagreement).
- Men were also more likely than women to agree that ‘most of the skills I need I learn from my colleagues’ (3.6 for the longitudinal group and 3.4 for

the new entrant group, compared with 3.3 and 3.2, respectively).

- BME learners were more likely to agree that 'it is always easy to get training at my workplace' (4.1 and 4.0, compared with 3.8 for white learners across both survey groups).
- The youngest learners were more likely than older learners to agree that 'most of the skills I need I learn from my colleagues' (scores dropped from 3.7 for those aged 18–25 in both survey groups to lows of 3.1 for the oldest age group of 56 and above in the new entrant survey group, and 3.4 in the longitudinal group).
- Learners with a disability or learning difficulty were more likely than other learners to agree that 'most of the skills I need I learn from my colleagues' (3.6 and 3.5, compared with 3.4 and 3.3).

114 All statements also showed some degree of variation according to the work characteristics of the learners. Again, those that were consistent across both the longitudinal and the new entrant survey are described below.

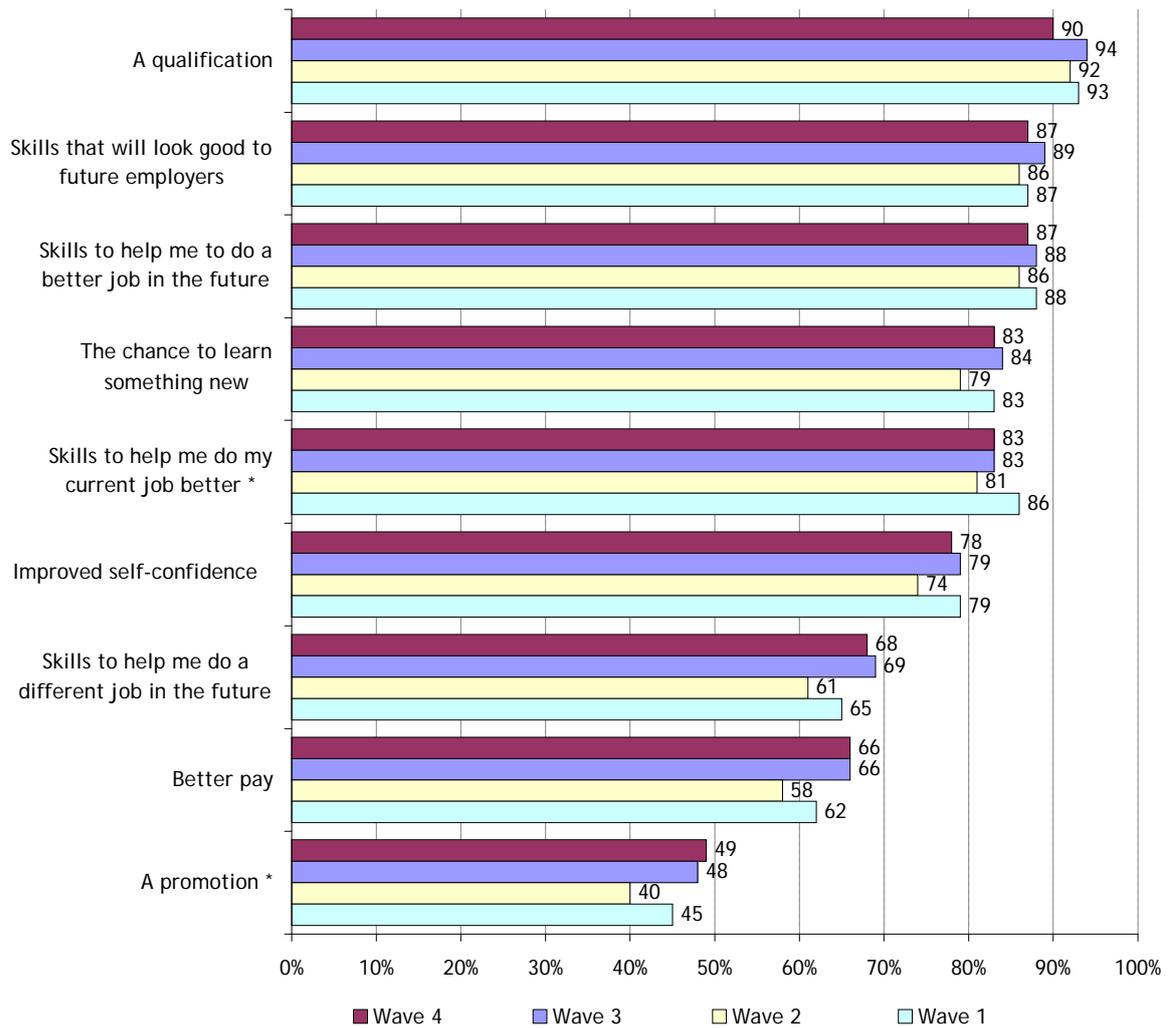
- 'It is always easy to get training at my workplace' was scored highest in both surveys by those in Personal Service occupations (scores of 4.1 and 4.2). Across both surveys, Process, Plant and Machine Operatives scored lowest (3.6 and 3.4).
- Managers and Senior Officials were the group least likely to say that 'most of the skills I need I learn from my colleagues' (3.1 and 3.0). By contrast, Skilled Trades were the group most likely to agree, with scores of 3.7 and 3.5.
- Administrative and Secretarial occupations were the least likely in both groups to agree (i.e. they disagreed more strongly) that 'my employer is not keen on paying for training', with scores of 2.0 and 1.9.

115 There were no clear patterns in the responses according to the full- or part-time status of the learners.

Expectations and motivations

- 116 Those in the new entrant survey who were currently learning or waiting to start their qualification were asked what they expected to gain at the end of the training. Figure 13 shows that, as in previous waves, most current learners expected to gain 'a qualification' (90 per cent, down from 94 per cent in Wave 3). Most also expected to gain skills that would help with current and future jobs and be attractive to employers, and to have the chance to learn something new (scores ranged from 83 per cent to 87 per cent).
- 117 The figures are broadly consistent across the four waves of the survey (apart from a slight drop from Wave 1 to Wave 2), and the rank order of each statement has been almost identical in each wave. There has been a slight increase from Wave 2 to Waves 3 and 4 for many statements – most notably for those that have elicited fewer responses (i.e. those in the bottom half of the graph) and that possibly have greater scope to increase. Overall, the responses indicate that the opportunity to develop better skills and gain qualifications motivate learners more (or are a more realistic target) than the prospect of better pay or promotion, although pay and promotion have seen the biggest proportional increases.

Figure 13: Anticipated outcomes of training



Base = all those currently learning or waiting to start, new entrant group: Wave 4 N = 3,106, Wave 3 N = 3,726, Wave 2 N = 1,487, Wave 1 N = 5,672. * = only asked of those in work for Waves 2 and 3.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)

Advice and Guidance

118 Questions reported in this section were asked of new entrants only.

Key findings

119 Around two-thirds of learners (65 per cent) embarking on training or qualifications under Train to Gain had a discussion about what would be involved, and 87 per cent had some form of pre-entry assessment.

- Among those who had a discussion, three-quarters (75 per cent) said that they had been advised which qualification would be most suitable for their needs.
- Among those who had had an assessment, a fifth (20 per cent) were put on a higher-level qualification.

120 The information provided before training was sufficient for the great majority of learners: at least 84 per cent of learners said that they had received enough or more than enough information about the training, including how it would be assessed, how long it would take, and how much time the learner would need to commit to it. A smaller majority of learners (59 per cent) reported that they had received an individual learning plan (ILP) or personal development plan (PDP).

Trends over time

121 These high levels of pre-entry discussions have remained relatively stable over the four waves of the evaluation (between 65 per cent and 67 per cent). Participation levels in pre-entry assessments are also stable (69 per cent to 72 per cent) and, since the first wave, have had more impact on the subsequent training or qualifications. Overall, 28 per cent in Wave 1 said 'nothing' had happened as a consequence of their assessment, compared with 8 per cent in Wave 4. More specifically, there was a large rise in those who moved to a higher-level qualification: 20 per cent, compared with 5 per cent in Wave 3. Only 3 per cent were moved to a lower level.

122 The proportion who said that they had been advised which qualification would be the most suitable for their needs as a result of the discussion has

increased to 75 per cent (from 68 per cent in Wave 1), while the proportion who said they had not received advice has dropped from 30 per cent to 23 per cent.

Requirements for information, advice and guidance within the Train to Gain policy

123 LSC documentation states that the purpose of information, advice and guidance (IAG) in Train to Gain is to:

Ensure that the right individuals undertake the right learning and development activities, with the right levels of support and so achieve the right outcomes in terms of maximising their own productivity, employability and progression prospects within the organisation.

Working Together: developing effective information, advice and guidance services to support employees undertaking learning funded through Train to Gain (LSC, 2007)

124 Within Train to Gain, the training provider has the lead responsibility and funding to provide relevant support to learners at the pre-entry stage and during the programme. *The Requirements for Funding Train to Gain* (version 3, 2007/08; available at <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/Lsc/National/nat-traintogainreqfund-feb08.pdf>) state that there should be a general pre-entry information session for employees interested in training, in order to provide details of the learning available; and that an ILP should be developed for each learner.

125 As that document states, an ILP can be in any format, but should include:

- the skills, knowledge and competence required and the timescale over which they have to be achieved;
- the training the learner is to receive, where it is delivered and how it is scheduled, who is delivering it and what support is being provided;
- the methods that will be used to deliver training (including on- and off-the-job training);

- how on- and off-the-job training will be co-ordinated; and
- the learner’s assessment and review arrangements.

Pre-entry discussion

- 126 All learners in the new entrant survey were asked about the extent of any information, advice or guidance they had received at the outset of the training.
- 127 There was a small drop in the numbers who had received a pre-entry discussion about the job they were doing and the skills they needed to do it – from 67 per cent in Wave 2 and Wave 3 to 65 per cent in Wave 4. Those studying with an independent training provider were a little more likely to have been spoken to (67 per cent) than were those studying with a public training provider (62 per cent).
- 128 As Table 10 shows, of those who had been spoken to, in 51 per cent of cases it had been their employer, manager or supervisor, and in 43 per cent of cases the training provider, college staff or assessor. This latter figure has fallen from previous waves, when figures ranged from 47 per cent to 54 per cent.

Table 10: Who spoke to you about your current job and required skills, prior to you doing training?

Source	Wave 4 (NE)	
	Number	%
Employer, manager or supervisor	1,890	51
Training provider or college staff/assessor	1,615	43
HR/personnel or training manager	192	5
Skills broker	60	2
Friends and/or family	21	1
Union learning rep/union staff member	41	1
Colleagues	25	1
Base (N)	3,734	–

Base = all those who had been spoken to prior to the training, new entrant group. Multiple responses given; only responses over 1 per cent shown.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

- 129 Three learners in four (75 per cent) said that, as a result of the discussion, they had been advised which qualification would be the most suitable for their needs. This figure has increased from 68 per cent in Wave 1, while the proportion who said they had not received advice has dropped from 30 per cent to 23 per cent.
- 130 There was a little variation by occupational group. Professional occupations were the most likely to have received qualification advice (81 per cent) and Process, Plant and Machine Operatives the least likely (67 per cent). Differences according to level of course were minimal, as was variation in relation to who conducted the discussion. By subject, those on care-related courses were a little more likely to have received advice (80 per cent) than those studying in other areas (73 per cent).
- 131 Provider type showed a small difference, with 78 per cent of those studying with an independent provider receiving qualification advice, compared with 73 per cent of those studying with a public provider.

Skills assessments

- 132 All respondents to the new entrant survey were asked which, if any, skills assessments they had received prior to embarking on their qualification. Table 11 shows that 69 per cent of learners reported having been asked about existing qualifications they already held; 62 per cent were asked about their skills in relation to the requirements of the qualification (i.e. a skills gap assessment); and 59 per cent received an assessment of their English, maths or language skills. Overall, 13 per cent of learners received no assessments at all – a similar proportion to that found in other waves (12 per cent to 14 per cent).

Table 11: Extent of assessment prior to the training

	Saying yes	
	Number	%
Did anyone ask you about any qualifications you already had?	4,019	69
Did anyone assess you against some or all of the requirements of the qualification you were signing up to? (i.e. skills gap assessment)	3,586	62
Did anyone assess your English, maths or language skills? (i.e. Skills for Life)	3,378	59
No assessments at all	759	13
Base (N)	5,776	–

Base = all learners, new entrant group.

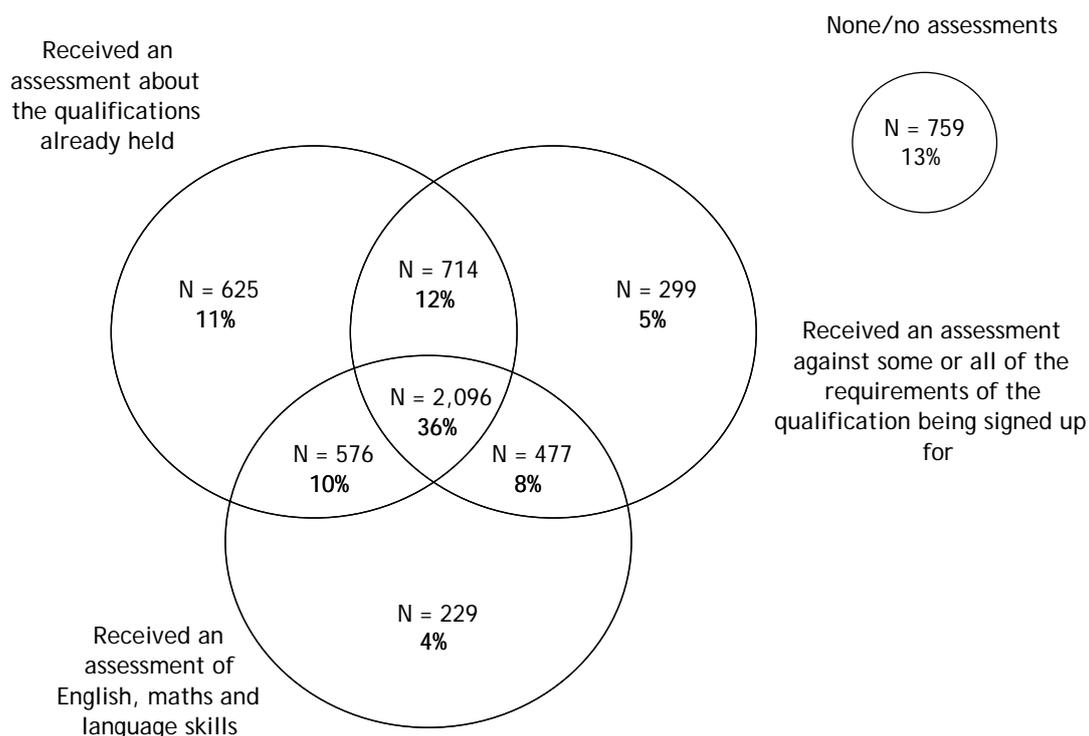
Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

133 Combining these different types of prior assessment shows that 87 per cent of learners received at least one of the three possible assessments. Figure 14 shows the relationship between the types of assessment.

- Some 36 per cent had all three elements of assessment. Receiving all three assessments was a little more common with independent training providers (39 per cent) than public providers (33 per cent), and among those on care-related courses (47 per cent) than other subjects (32 per cent). By occupational group, the proportion receiving all three assessments was highest (at 46 per cent) among Personal Service occupations, and lowest among Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (26 per cent). By region, the highest proportion to have received all three assessments was to be found in London (43 per cent), and the lowest in the North West and in Yorkshire and the Humber (31 per cent each). Those studying for a Level 3 qualification were more likely than Level 2 learners to receive all three assessments (43 per cent, compared with 35 per cent).
- Some 31 per cent had two of the three elements of assessment, the most common combination being an assessment of pre-existing qualifications and a skills gap assessment.
- Some 20 per cent had one of the three elements of assessment (the most likely being that they were asked about previous qualifications).

- Some 13 per cent had no assessment of any sort. In relation to the occupation of the learner, this was highest for Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (20 per cent) and Elementary occupations (18 per cent), and lowest for Personal Service occupations and for Managers and Senior Officials (both 9 per cent). The proportion not receiving any assessments rose to 16 per cent for learners on non-care-related courses, compared to 7 per cent for care-related courses. Regional differences varied from a high of 19 per cent in Yorkshire and the Humber to a low of 9 per cent in the East of England. Level 3 learners were less likely than Level 2 learners to have no assessments (8 per cent, compared with 14 per cent), and those studying with a public provider were a little more likely to have no assessments (15 per cent) than were those studying with an independent provider (11 per cent).

Figure 14: Relationship between the three possible forms of assessment



Base = all learners, new entrant group: Wave 4 N = 5,776.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

- 134 Responses across all four waves show a broadly level or slightly upward trend for the skills assessments, and 67 per cent of respondents received two or three types of assessment, compared with 62 per cent in Wave 2 (the nature of the assessments was not asked in Wave 1). Furthermore, 62 per cent received an assessment against the requirements of the qualification in Wave 4, compared with 56 per cent in Wave 2.
- 135 Learners were asked to specify who had carried out the assessment(s). Table 12 shows that more than three learners in four (77 per cent) were assessed by the training provider, college staff or assessor.

Table 12: Who carried out the assessment(s) of skills and qualifications

Source	Wave 4	
	Number	%
Training provider or college staff/assessor	3,839	77
Employer, manager or supervisor	806	16
HR/personnel or training manager	217	4
Skills broker	98	2
Base (N)	5,017	–

Base = all those having an assessment of any of the three possible types, new entrant group. Multiple responses given; responses above 1 per cent shown.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

- 136 Those who had had some form of initial assessment were asked what had happened as a result. Table 13 shows the consequence of the assessment(s), and reveals that the most likely outcome was to be trained and assessed for the whole qualification (57 per cent). This figure has fallen from 68 per cent in Wave 3.
- 137 Almost a quarter (23 per cent) were moved to a different level of qualification (compared with 11 per cent in Wave 3). There was a large rise in those moving to a higher-level qualification – 20 per cent, compared with 5 per cent in Wave 3. Only 3 per cent were moved to a lower level.

Table 13: Consequences of the skills and qualifications assessment

New entrants	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	
	%	%	%	N	%
I was told I would be trained and assessed for the whole qualification	68**	65	68	2,852	57
I was put on a different level of the qualification	19	8	11	1,140	23
<i>I was put on a higher level</i>	–	4	5	981	20
<i>I was put on a lower level</i>	–	3	5	159	3
<i>Level not known</i>	–	1	1	0	0
I was told I didn't require any training and would just need to be assessed for the qualification	12	13	10	625	13
I was told I only needed to be trained and/or assessed in some parts of the qualification	18**	8	7	619	12
I was put on a different qualification subject	7*	3	3	122	3
Nothing	28	8	10	385	8
Don't know	5	4	3	197	4
Base (N)	2,977	1,904	3,804	5,017	–

Base = all those having an assessment of any of the three possible types, new entrant group.

* The Wave 1 result is based on the statement 'I was put on a different qualification altogether'.

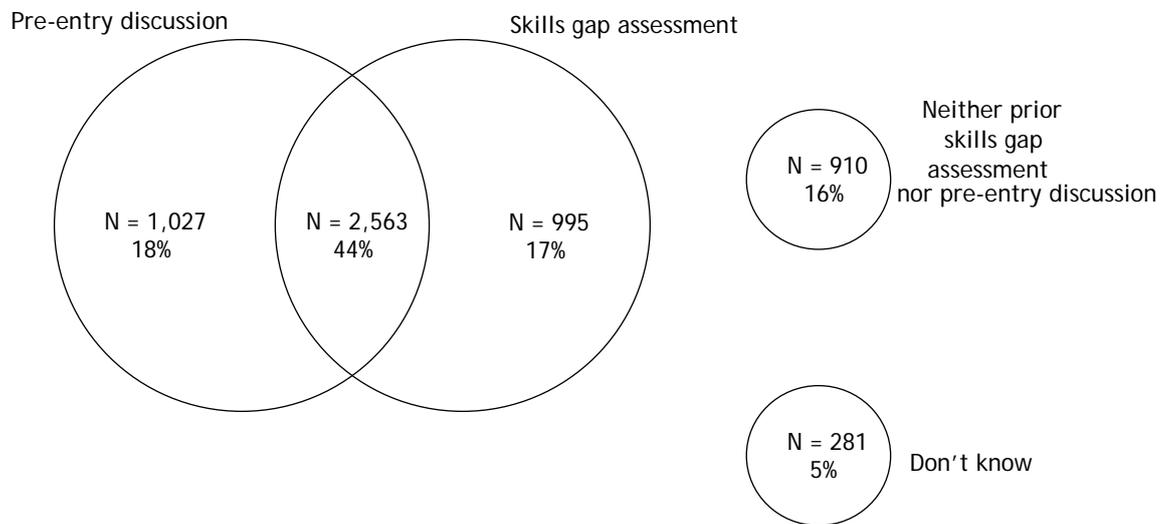
** This information was gathered in two ways in Wave 1: 18 per cent of all learners had training arranged for only some parts of their qualification and 68 per cent of all learners had training arranged for the whole of the qualification.
Multiple responses given.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)

Relationship between pre-entry discussion and skills assessment

138 Figure 15 shows the relationship between receiving a pre-entry discussion and receiving a prior skills gap assessment (i.e. an assessment against some or all of the requirements of the qualification). It shows that 44 per cent of learners received both the pre-entry discussion and the skills gap assessment, while 18 per cent received only the pre-entry discussion and 17 per cent received only the assessment.

Figure 15: Relationship between pre-entry discussion and prior skills gap assessment



Base = all learners, new entrant survey: Wave 3 N = 5,776.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

Learners who transferred to a different level of qualification

139 The small group of learners who were transferred to a different level of qualification following the assessment(s) (23 per cent of those who received an assessment of some sort – see Table 13) were asked about the reasons behind this decision. Table 14 shows the reasons in the case of those who changed from a higher qualification to a lower one. Compared with Wave 3, far more learners (24 per cent, compared with 9 per cent) felt that the original level was too high for them.

Table 14: Reason for being recommended to change level (those changing from a higher qualification to a lower one)

Reason	Number	%
Due to the type of work being done at the time	52	33
Original level was too high for my current skills and/or qualifications	38	24
Original level was too high for what I do in my job	14	9
I had already completed the original level	10	7
Literacy problems	7	4
To help improve my job prospects	4	3
Base (N)	159	–

Base = all those who were moved from a higher to a lower-level qualification following the assessment, new entrant group. Multiple responses given; only Wave 4 responses over 2 per cent shown.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

140 Table 15 shows the reasons given by those who changed from a lower qualification to a higher one. There is considerable change from Wave 3. In particular, those who cited the type of work being done rose from 18 per cent in Wave 3 to 27 per cent in Wave 4.

Table 15: Reason for being recommended to change level (those changing from a lower qualification to a higher one)

Reason	Wave 4		Wave 3
	Number	%	%
Due to the type of work being done at the time	263	27	18
Original level was too low for my current skills and/or qualifications	205	21	33
Original level was too low for what I do in my job	194	20	25
I had already completed the original level	144	15	11
To help improve my skills or qualifications	21	2	1
Base (N)	981	–	195

Base = all those who were moved from a lower to a higher-level qualification following the assessment, new entrant group. Multiple responses given; only Wave 4 responses over 2 per cent shown.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 3 and 4 (summer 2008 and winter 2008)*

Learners who transferred to a different qualification subject

141 The group of learners who transferred to a different qualification subject following their assessment(s) (3 per cent of those who received an assessment – see Table 13) were asked their reasons for doing so. Table 16 shows that 45 per cent felt that the subject they had changed to was a

better match for their job.

Table 16: Reason for recommendation to change subject

Reason	Wave 4		Wave 3	Wave 2
	Number	%	%	%
The recommended qualification was a better match for my job	55	45	36	45
The recommended qualification was more appropriate to my future career	26	21	18	9
The recommended qualification was a better match for my current skills	25	20	19	22
To learn more, or to gain more experience	5	4	1	1
Base (N)	122	–	105	97

Base = all those who were put on a different qualification subject following the assessment, new entrant group. Multiple responses given; only Wave 4 responses over 2 per cent shown.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 2, 3 and 4 (autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)

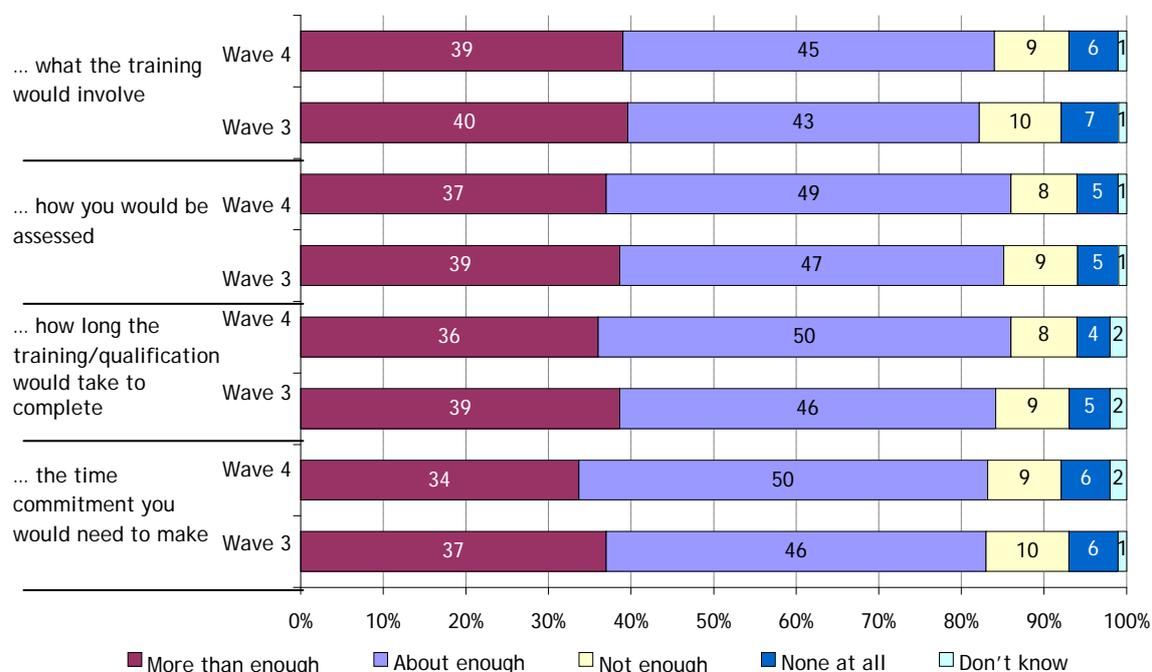
Information received prior to training

142 All respondents to the new entrant survey were asked to consider the amount of information they had received at the outset of the training, and the extent to which this had met their needs. Received information levels were high for all four areas investigated, and Figure 16 shows that 84 per cent to 86 per cent of respondents said they had received enough or more than enough information on each measure. While these figures are broadly consistent from wave to wave, there is a slight fall in those who received 'more than enough' information about assessment, time taken and the time commitment required.

- 39 per cent said they had received more than enough information, and 45 per cent had received about the right amount of information, about what the training would involve.
- 37 per cent had received more than enough information, and 49 per cent the right amount of information, about how they would be assessed.
- 36 per cent had received more than enough information, and 50 per cent the right amount of information, about how long the training would take to complete.

- 34 per cent had received more than enough information, and 50 per cent the right amount of information, about the time commitment they needed to make.

Figure 16: Amount of information received prior to learning



Base = all learners, new entrant group: Wave 4 N = 5,776, Wave 3 N = 5,608. Not asked in previous waves.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 3 and 4 (summer 2008, winter 2008)*

Receiving an individual learning plan

143 All new entrant survey respondents were asked whether they had received an ILP or a PDP at the start of the training (PDPs were included in the question wording as some providers may refer to ILPs thus): 59 per cent reported that they had (a drop from 63 per cent in Wave 3), while 37 per cent said they had not (33 per cent in Wave 3). Although ILPs are a requirement of registering for Train to Gain, these findings show that some learners either do not receive them or do not know they have them.

- By subject area, those studying on a course in care were the most likely to have received an ILP/PDP (66 per cent), compared with 56 per cent of those on other courses.

- By occupational group, ILPs/PDPs were more common for Administrative and Secretarial occupations (70 per cent) and Managers and Senior Officials (69 per cent each), and were less common among the Skilled Trades and Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (both 49 per cent).
- Regional differences varied from a low of 53 per cent in Yorkshire and the Humber to highs of 61 per cent in both the North East and the South West.
- Provision of an ILP/PDP was more common among independent training providers (62 per cent) than public providers (55 per cent). Part-funded Level 3 learners were more likely than fully funded Level 2 learners to have received an ILP/PDP (66 per cent, compared with 58 per cent).
- Those working less than 16 hours a week were less likely than other workers to have received an ILP/PDP (52 per cent, compared with 61 per cent of those working 16–30 hours a week and 59 per cent of full-time employees).

Experiences of Training

Key findings

- 144 More than 90 per cent of learners in the longitudinal group met their assessors at least once a month:
- 65 per cent met once or twice a month; and
 - 22 per cent met three or four times a month.
- 145 For most (86 per cent), the meetings lasted at least an hour, and the average for each visit was 1.8 hours. For those studying at Level 3, the average rose to 2.0 hours.
- 146 In addition, learners spent an average of 2.3 hours a week at work on their qualification when their assessor was not present, and a further 2.4 hours at home. By comparison with previous cohorts, learners in this wave spent more time with their assessors and more time at home working on their training or qualification.
- 147 Learners received good levels of support from employers and assessors.
- 93 per cent had regular discussions with tutors or assessors.
 - 82 per cent were given time to focus on their training at work.
- 148 This type of support is crucial, since learners reported that the support from their assessor and the time they spent on the qualification at work were the most important factors enabling them to complete their qualification quickly.
- 149 There was some evidence that part-time workers are less well supported than their full-time counterparts.
- 6 per cent of those working less than 16 hours per week were given paid study leave by their employer, compared with 9 per cent of those working 16–30 hours and 14 per cent of full-time workers.
 - 78 per cent of part-time workers (compared with 83 per cent of full-time workers) were supported by being given time for independent work.

- 150 Few learners (12 per cent in the longitudinal group) experienced any problems during their qualifications: difficulties with assessment and quality of teaching were the issues raised most commonly. The small number of learners who left their training or qualifications early, without completing (4 per cent), mostly blamed this on the fact that they had left their original employer, or else on personal circumstances, while some had problems because their assessor or trainer had stopped coming to the workplace.

Trends over time

- 151 Train to Gain continues to be a positive experience for the majority of participants, who feel well supported and do not experience any problems. Of those who left their courses early, increasing numbers cite the assessor not coming into work as a reason for leaving, although the scale of the issue is relatively small.

Assessment

- 152 Guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority requires NVQ assessors to test ‘candidates’ underpinning knowledge, understanding and work-based performance to make sure they can demonstrate competence in the workplace’ (see qca.org.uk/14-19/qualifications/index_nvqs.htm). Train to Gain assessors observe learners in the workplace carrying out tasks related to their role, or review evidence collected by the learner, including photographs and written work, in order to establish the extent to which the learner meets the competencies set out in the qualification. Train to Gain assessors may be managers or colleagues, or be supplied by the learning provider. (The assessor and the tutor may be one and the same person, and it was not possible from the survey to determine the extent to which this is the case, or whether learners understood the difference between assessors and tutors.)

Training provider or workplace assessors?

- 153 All those in the longitudinal group who had started their training were asked about the type of organisation their assessor was from: 78 per cent said they had an assessor who worked for a college or training provider, while 20 per

cent said their assessor came from their workplace. This compares with 86 per cent and 13 per cent, respectively, in Wave 2.

- 154 There was only small variation according to the type of learning provider, with public providers being a little more likely to provide the assessor themselves (80 per cent of assessors coming from the college or provider, and 19 per cent from the workplace), and independent providers a little less likely (77 per cent from the college or provider, and 21 per cent from the workplace).
- 155 Most learners (83 per cent) said that they had had the same assessor throughout the duration of the qualification.

Where assessment takes place

- 156 Learners were also asked where they most often met their assessor.
- 85 per cent said they met their assessor at work (88 per cent in Wave 2).
 - 10 per cent went to the college or training provider (8 per cent in Wave 2).
 - 3 per cent said they met their assessor at home (2 per cent in Wave 2).
 - 1 per cent met their assessor somewhere else.
- 157 The location of the meetings with assessors showed only minor variation according to the type of learning provider. Those learning with a public provider were more likely to meet their assessor at the college or the provider's premises than were those learning with an independent provider (14 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively). Consequently, those learning with a public provider were a little less likely to meet their assessor at the workplace than were those learning with an independent provider (83 per cent and 87 per cent, respectively).

Frequency of meetings with assessors

- 158 Learners in the longitudinal group who had been training for at least a month were asked about the frequency with which they saw their assessor. Table 17 shows the number of assessor visits in a typical month, and reveals that the largest percentage (65 per cent) was found among those learners who saw their assessor once or twice a month. A smaller group had more

frequent meetings with their assessor: 22 per cent typically met their assessor three or four times a month. These figures were very similar when they were last measured in Wave 2.

Table 17: Average frequency of seeing assessor (number of times per month)

	Number	%
Haven't seen assessor	18	1
Less than 1	114	4
1–2	2,025	65
3–4	696	22
5–6	64	2
7–8	48	2
9–10	18	1
More than 10	32	1
Other/don't know	125	4
Base (N)	3,140	–

Base = all learners who have been training for at least a month, longitudinal group.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

Time spent with the assessor

- 159 Respondents were then asked about the length of time typically spent with their assessor at each meeting. Table 18 shows that 38 per cent typically spent an hour or less with their assessor each time they met, and a further one in three (32 per cent) spent up to two hours with their assessor when they met.
- 160 Assessors were spending more time with learners in this wave than in Wave 2: 38 per cent of Wave 4 respondents said they saw their assessor for an hour or less, compared with 44 per cent in Wave 2; meanwhile 16 per cent in Wave 4 (10 per cent in Wave 2) saw their assessor for more than three hours.

Table 18: Length of time typically spent with assessor at each meeting

	Number	%
About half an hour	381	12
Around one hour	804	26
Around one and a half hours	391	13
Two hours	608	19
Two and a half hours	164	5
Three hours	245	8
More than three hours	495	16
Don't know	52	2
Base (N)	3,140	–

Base = all learners who have been training for at least a month, longitudinal group.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

161 When represented as an average time spent, learners as a whole spent an average of 1.8 hours with their assessor on each visit. This showed no variation according to the type of training provider or the subject being studied, but did show a little variation according to the level of the course: those studying at Level 2 spent an average of 1.8 hours, while for those studying at Level 3, the average rose to 2.0 hours. By occupational group, Administrative and Secretarial occupations, Sales and Customer Service occupations and Professional occupations spent the least time with their assessor (1.7 hours). Skilled Trade occupations and Associate Professional and Technical occupations spent the most (2.0 hours).

Home and workplace training

Time spent on training at work

162 In the longitudinal group, two learners in three (67 per cent) who had been training for at least one month said they spent time on the training or qualification at work when their tutor or assessor was not present – a small increase from 64 per cent in Wave 2. Table 19 shows the typical number of hours at work each week that learners spent on qualifications without their assessor, and reveals that 43 per cent of learners spent three hours or more on their training each week while at work. This compares with 33 per cent in Wave 2.

Table 19: Number of hours at work (per week) typically spent on training when assessor is not present

Hours per week at work	Number	%
About half an hour	133	6
Around one hour	382	18
Around one and a half hours	77	4
Two hours	411	20
Two and a half hours	54	3
Three hours	167	8
More than three hours	736	35
Don't know	145	7
Base (N)	2,105	–

Base = all learners who have been training for at least a month and who spend some time on the training/qualification at work when the tutor/assessor is not present, longitudinal group.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

- 163 When this is converted to an average, we find that learners spent around 2.3 hours per week on their training at work without the assessor being present. As with the amount of time spent with the assessor, this varied little according to the type of training provider, subject area or level of study. However, there was a little variation by occupational group, with the amount of time spent on training in the workplace without the assessor ranging from 2.1 hours for Administrative and Secretarial groups to 2.5 hours for Skilled Trade occupations.
- 164 Learners were also asked whether their employer had paid for the time they spent on the training while at work (including time with the assessor and time spent alone on the qualification). Some 80 per cent reported that they had been paid (83 per cent at Wave 2), 19 per cent reported that they had not, and 1 per cent did not know.
- 165 This showed some variation by occupation, with the lowest proportion of learners who were paid for the time spent training at work to be found in the Personal Service occupations (73 per cent) and the highest proportion among Managers and Senior Officials (89 per cent). There was also little variation according to the size of the employer, with 78 per cent of the smallest workplaces paying for time spent training, rising to 82 per cent of

the largest workplaces.

- 166 The greatest variation was to be found according to the full-time or part-time status of the learner. Among those who were employed on a full-time basis, 84 per cent had been paid for the time they spent training. This fell to 77 per cent of those employed for between 16 and 30 hours a week, and the figure fell further still to 55 per cent of those working for less than 16 hours a week.

Time spent on training at home

- 167 Learners in the longitudinal group who had been learning for more than a month were asked about any time they spent at home on their qualification. While 30 per cent said they only spent time on the training during working hours, 70 per cent said they had also spent some time at home studying (compared with 72 per cent at Wave 2).
- 168 Table 20 shows the typical number of hours that learners spent at home each week on their qualification. It reveals that getting on for half of all learners (45 per cent) spent three hours or more each week of their own time. Again, this has increased substantially from Wave 2, when the figure was 36 per cent, partly due to the inclusion of more Level 3 learners, who spend longer.

Table 20: Number of hours at home (per week) typically spent on training

Hours per week at home	Number	%
About half an hour	114	5
Around one hour	366	17
Around one and a half hours	75	3
Two hours	514	24
Two and a half hours	78	4
Three hours	252	12
More than three hours	728	33
Don't know	56	3
Base (N)	2,183	–

Base = all learners who have been training for at least a month and who spend some time at home on the training/qualification, longitudinal group.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

169 As an average, this equates to around 2.4 hours spent at home on the qualification. Differences according to the type of training provider were minimal, but those studying on a care course spent an average of 2.6 hours, compared with 2.2 hours for other subject areas; and those studying at Level 3 spent longer (2.6 hours) than did those studying at Level 2 (2.3 hours). By occupational group, those working in Process, Plant and Machine Operative occupations spent the least time studying at home (an average of 2.0 hours), compared with those in Professional occupations and Personal Service occupations, who spent the greatest amount of time studying at home (average of 2.6 hours).

Distribution of time spent on the training

170 Learners were then asked about the distribution of time spent on the qualification. Table 21 shows that being assessed took the greatest amount of time for 37 per cent of the learners, while independent study absorbed the bulk of the time for 35 per cent. The remainder spent most of the time being trained either by their tutor (18 per cent), who would usually be from a training provider, or by their employer (8 per cent).

Table 21: What took/takes up the bulk of the time spent on the qualification

	Number	%
Independent study at home or at work	1,089	35
Being assessed	1,160	37
Training delivered by tutor	574	18
Training delivered by supervisor/employer/other colleague	261	8
None of these	25	1
Don't know	31	1
Base (N)	3,140	–

Base = all learners who have been training for at least a month, longitudinal group.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

- 171 Those studying on a care course were more likely to report independent study at home or at work (47 per cent) than were those on other subjects (30 per cent). Consequently, those studying for a care qualification were less likely to spend the bulk of their time being assessed (28 per cent) than were those in other subject areas (41 per cent).
- 172 The level of the course also seemed to make a difference to how the time was spent: those studying for a Level 3 qualification were more likely to spend their time on independent study at home or at work (47 per cent, compared with 32 per cent of Level 2 learners), while Level 2 learners were more likely to spend their time being assessed (39 per cent, compared with 28 per cent of Level 3 learners).
- 173 Large differences were also noted by occupational group. Those who spent most of their time on independent study ranged from 18 per cent among Process, Plant and Machine Operatives and 24 per cent among the Skilled Trades, to highs of 48 per cent in Professional and 45 per cent in Personal Service occupations. Time spent being assessed was lowest among Professional and Associate Professional and Technical occupations (26 per cent), and highest among Process, Plant and Machine Operatives, in Sales and Customer Service occupations and among Skilled Trades (47 per cent, 46 per cent and 46 per cent, respectively). Spending the bulk of the time on training delivered by the tutor was most common in Associate Professional and Technical occupations (24 per cent) and among Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (22 per cent), and least common in Skilled Trades (12 per cent) and Sales and Customer Services (14 per cent). Spending most time on training delivered by the employer ranged from 4 per cent among Managers and Senior Officials to 14 per cent among Skilled Trades.
- 174 Those studying with a public provider were more likely to spend most of their time on training delivered by their tutor (21 per cent, compared with 16 per cent with independent training providers), and less likely to spend most of their time being assessed (33 per cent, compared with 39 per cent with independent providers).

175 As might be expected, those whose assessor came from their workplace were more likely to report that most of their time was spent doing training delivered by the employer or a supervisor or other colleague (13 per cent) than were those whose supervisor came from the college or training provider (7 per cent).

Finance

176 Three further questions were asked of those in the longitudinal group who had been studying for at least a month. These addressed certain financial aspects of studying: whether study leave had been granted, who had paid for the training, and whether the learner had to repay any of the costs of training in the event that they did not complete.

- 13 per cent had been allowed some paid study leave, and 4 per cent had been allowed some unpaid study leave; but the majority (83 per cent) had not been granted any study leave at all. Receiving paid study leave was most common within Professional, Associate Professional and Technical occupations and Personal Service occupations (15 per cent), and was lowest within Sales and Customer Service occupations (6 per cent) and among Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (8 per cent). Paid study leave was also least common for part-time workers: only 6 per cent of those working less than 16 hours per week were given paid study leave by their employer, compared with 9 per cent of those working 16–30 hours and 14 per cent of full-time workers.
- 13 per cent (16 per cent in Wave 2) said that their employer had specified that they would have to pay a contribution to the cost of the training if they failed to complete it. This figure was particularly high for those in Personal Service occupations, where 21 per cent of learners had been told they might have to repay some of the costs (compared with between 5 per cent and 13 per cent among other occupational groups).
- 52 per cent reported that their training had been paid for by the Government, 44 per cent said their employer had paid, and 2 per cent said they had paid for the training themselves. In Wave 2, 48 per cent

said the Government had paid for their training. Most of the difference is accounted for by a smaller proportion in Wave 4 who did not know who had paid.

Support

- 177 The longitudinal survey asked all learners who had been training for at least a month to gauge the importance of four different types of support. It then asked them the extent to which these had been available during their qualification. Table 22 shows the importance of each type of support in the form of a mean score, where a higher score indicates greater importance. (Mean scores are based on the following: 1 = not at all important; 2 = not very important; 3 = neither/nor; 4 = fairly important; 5 = very important.)
- 178 Table 22 shows that, for all types of support, the importance was felt to be very high. These figures have changed little wave on wave.
- Two support factors scored 4.7 out of a maximum 5.0: the importance of ‘understanding how to use tasks from your work as evidence for your qualification’, and the importance of ‘regular discussions with the tutor or assessor’. These were rated as important (either very important or fairly important) by 97 per cent and 96 per cent, respectively.
 - The other two support factors both scored the same: the importance of having ‘time for independent work on your training/qualification during work’ and ‘receiving support from your manager or supervisor’ both rated a score of 4.4, and were viewed as important by 90 per cent and 88 per cent, respectively.

Table 22: Importance of types of support (mean score)

Support	Mean score
Regular discussions with the tutor/assessor	4.7
Understanding how to use tasks from your work as evidence for your qualification	4.7
Support from your manager/supervisor	4.4
Time for independent work on your training/qualification during work	4.4
Base (N)	3,140

Base = all learners who had been training for at least a month, longitudinal group.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

179 Table 23 goes on to show whether each type of support was received by the learner. It reveals high levels of support.

- The two elements rated the most important, i.e. ‘understanding how to use tasks from your work as evidence for your qualification’, and ‘regular discussions with the tutor or assessor’ were received by 91 per cent and 93 per cent, respectively.
- The other two elements – having ‘time for independent work on your training/qualification during work’ and receiving ‘support from your manager or supervisor’ – were each received by 82 per cent of learners.

Table 23: Whether support was received

Support	Number saying Yes	% saying Yes
Regular discussions with the tutor/assessor	2,907	93
Understanding how to use tasks from your work as evidence for your qualification	2,871	91
Support from your manager/supervisor	2,583	82
Time for independent work on your training/qualification during work	2,579	82

Base = all learners who have been training for at least a month, longitudinal group: Wave 4 N = 3,140.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

180 Although the figures are slightly higher than in the Wave 3 survey, they are similar to those for Wave 2, which is a better comparison for this longitudinal group (since the Wave 2 and Wave 4 longitudinal groups are the follow-ups from, respectively, the Wave 1 and Wave 3 new entrant surveys – see Introduction).

181 The percentages of learners who received support showed some variation according to the occupational group and the full- or part-time status of the learners.

- Receiving ‘support from your manager or supervisor’ varied from 78 per cent of Process, Plant and Machine Operatives to 91 per cent of Administrative and Secretarial occupations.

- Receiving 'time for independent work on your training/qualification during work' was lowest for Professional staff (75 per cent) and highest for Managers and Senior Officials (87 per cent).
- The proportion receiving support in how to use tasks from their work as evidence for their qualification varied from 88 per cent of Professional occupations to 96 per cent of Managers and Senior Officials.
- Those who received regular discussions with their tutor/assessor varied from 89 per cent of Process, Plant and Machine Operatives to 97 per cent of Managers and Senior Officials.
- Part-time workers who worked less than 16 hours per week were a little less likely than full-time workers to receive all four elements of support: time for independent work was received by 78 per cent (compared with 83 per cent of full-time workers); understanding how to use the tasks was received by 87 per cent (compared with 92 per cent); support from the manager was received by 80 per cent (compared with 83 per cent); and regular discussions were received by 90 per cent (compared with 92 per cent).

182 Combining all four possible types of support shows that:

- 71 per cent of learners received all four forms of support (66 per cent in Wave 3).
 - By occupational group, the proportion receiving all four forms of support was highest (76 per cent) for both Elementary occupations and Administrative and Secretarial occupations, and was lowest among Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (64 per cent) and Professional occupations (65 per cent). There was a small variation according to full-/part-time status, from 72 per cent of full-time workers to 68 per cent of those working less than 16 hours per week.
- 15 per cent received three out of the four forms of support (16 per cent in Wave 3);
- 6 per cent received two forms of support (8 per cent in Wave 3);
- 4 per cent received one form of support (8 per cent in Wave 3);

- 3 per cent received no support at all (3 per cent in Wave 3).
 - By occupational group, this was most likely to occur among Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (5 per cent) and least likely within Associate Professional and Technical occupations (1 per cent). Some 4 per cent of those working less than 16 hours per week did not receive any support, as did 3 per cent of full-time workers.

183 Learners were then asked whether there was any additional support that they would have liked. While 82 per cent did not feel the need for any additional support, 17 per cent did. This, too, showed variation according to the occupational group: Skilled Trades and Managers and Senior Officials were the least likely to need extra support (11 per cent), while those in Professional occupations and Personal Service occupations were much more likely (25 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively). Part-time workers working less than 16 hours a week were more likely to need extra support than were those working full time (24 per cent, compared to 17 per cent).

184 When asked to specify the type of support needed, the most frequently named were: getting extra support from the manager/supervisor; support from the assessor or tutor; having time available at work or having time off from work in order to do the training; and time with, or access to, the tutor.

Completion

Time taken to complete learning

185 Those learners who had already completed their learning were asked about the length of time this had taken. In the longitudinal group, completers accounted for 68 per cent of the total sample (2,209 individuals) and in the new entrant group – 42 per cent (2,438 individuals).

186 The completers in the longitudinal group reported that their courses had lasted between one week and eight months; the average duration was 21 weeks. This compares to an average of 26 weeks for the Wave 2 group. In the new entrant group, the duration of the course also ranged from one week to eight months, but the average duration was lower – around 16 weeks. (We would expect learners in the longitudinal group to have a longer

average completion time, since they started their learning around six months before the new entrants. For the same reason, we compare the Wave 4 longitudinal group with the Wave 2 longitudinal group, and not with the Wave 3 longitudinal.)

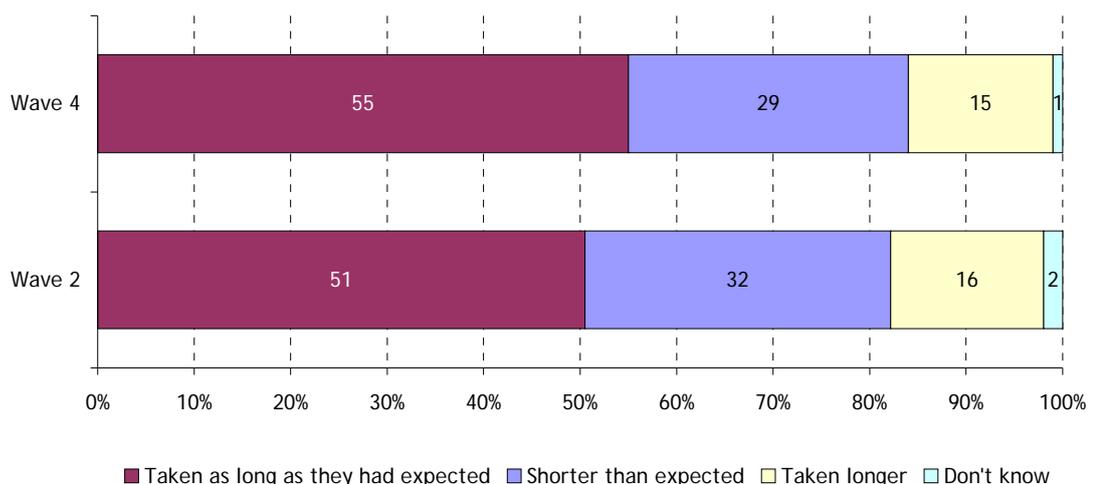
187 In the new entrant group, the average time taken to complete the course for Level 2 learners was 15 weeks, rising to 20 weeks for Level 3 learners. Similarly, in the longitudinal group, Level 2 learners took an average of 20 weeks to complete, compared with 23 weeks for Level 3 learners.

Expectation of time

188 Completers in the longitudinal group were also asked how this compared to their expectations at the outset of the course. As Figure 17 shows, in Wave 4 more than half the completers (55 per cent) felt the length of time taken to complete was as expected; 29 per cent felt it had been shorter than expected; and 15 per cent felt it had taken longer. In Wave 2, 51 per cent felt that their learning had taken as long as expected.

189 Those who said their courses had taken longer than expected had an average course length of 23 weeks, compared with 20 weeks for the other two groups.

Figure 17: Time taken to complete learning



Base = completers only, longitudinal group: Wave 4 N = 2,209, Wave 2 N = 3,633.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 2 and 4 (autumn 2007, winter 2008)*

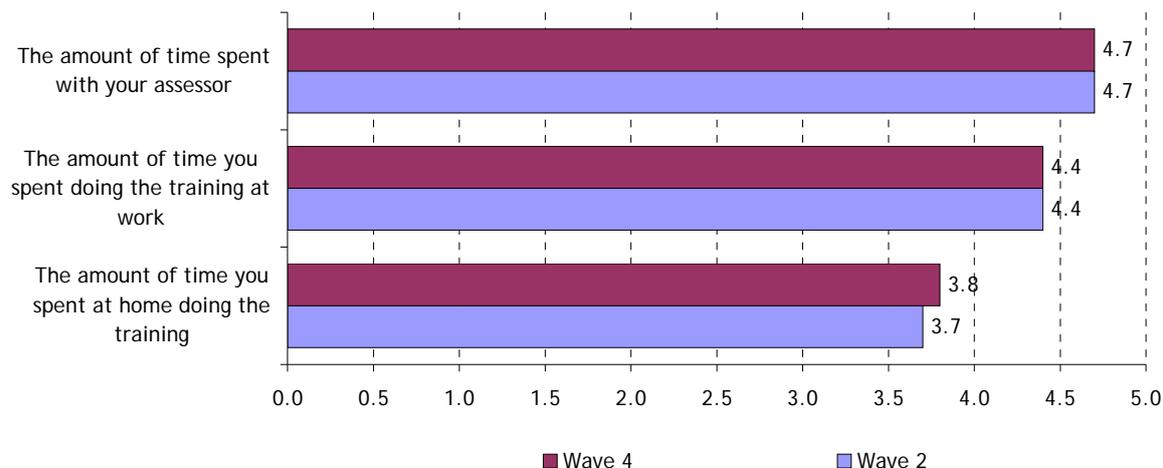
190 This showed some variation by subject area, with those studying on a care course being more likely than those on other courses to say that it had taken less time than expected (35 per cent, compared with 27 per cent). Different occupational groups also had different responses: the proportions saying their courses had taken less time than expected ranged from 21 per cent and 22 per cent of Elementary occupations and Process, Plant and Machine Operatives, respectively, to 35 per cent of Personal Service occupations and 39 per cent of Administrative and Secretarial occupations. Variation by training provider and level of course was minimal.

Influences on speed of completion

191 All completers in the longitudinal group were asked to rate the importance of three different factors to the speed at which they had completed their training. These are shown in Figure 18 as mean scores, where a higher score indicates greater importance. Once again, mean scores are based on the following: 1 = not at all important; 2 = not very important; 3 = neither/nor; 4 = fairly important; 5 = very important.

- The most important factor was the amount of time spent with the assessor, which scored an average of 4.7 out of a maximum 5.0. This was rated as very important by 75 per cent of completers, and as fairly important by 21 per cent.
- Also important to the speed at which the training was completed was the amount of time spent doing the training or qualification at work, which scored 4.4. This was rated as very important by 62 per cent of completers, and as fairly important by 28 per cent.
- The importance of the amount of time spent at home doing the training was a little lower (but still very high), with an average score of 3.8. Some 43 per cent of completers thought it very important and 27 per cent fairly important.

Figure 18: Importance of factors to speed of completion



Base = completers only, longitudinal group: Wave 4 N = 2,209, Wave 2 N = 3,633. Mean scores range from 1 (not at all important) to 5 (very important).

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 2 and 4 (autumn 2007, winter 2008)*

192 There were some differences in the importance of factors according to the personal characteristics of the completers.

- Women were more likely than men to recognise the importance of time spent at home doing the work, which they rated at 4.1 (compared with the men's score of 3.4). Although women also scored the other two factors more highly than men, the gender differences were less marked: the amount of time spent with the assessor was rated by women as 4.7 (compared with 4.5 for men), and the amount of time spent doing the training at work was rated as 4.5 (compared with 4.4).
- BME learners rated all three factors higher than did white learners: the amount of time spent at home doing the work was rated as 4.3 (compared with 3.7 among white learners); the amount of time spent with the assessor was rated as 4.9 (compared with 4.6); and the amount of time spent doing the training at work was rated as 4.7 (compared with 4.4).
- Differences according to disability and age were minimal.

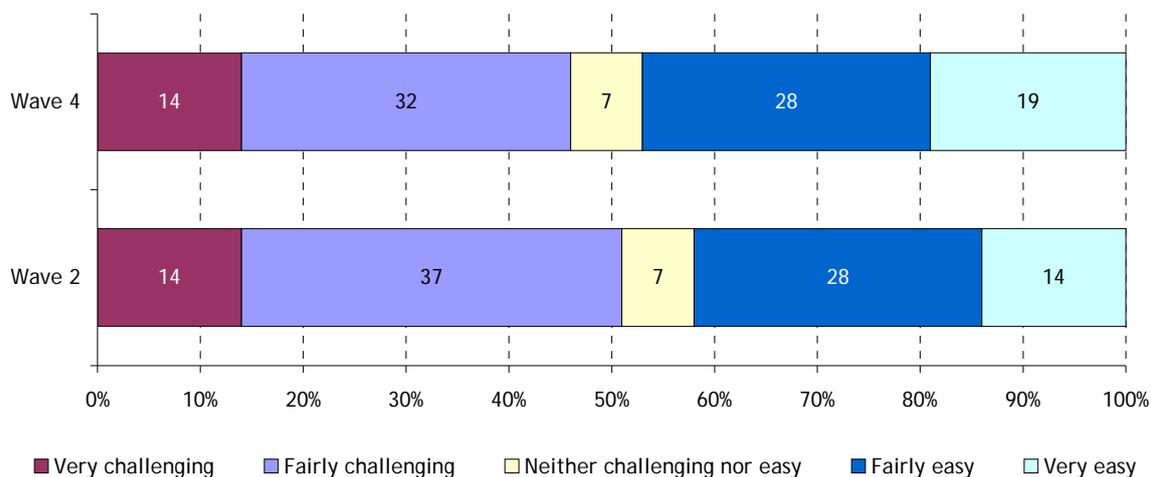
193 Completers were then asked whether any other factors had contributed to the speed at which they had completed, in either a positive way or a negative way. Almost one completer in three (31 per cent) felt there had

been additional factors involved, the most common of which related to having a good, supportive or contactable assessor or tutor; hard work and motivation; and support from the employer or manager.

Ease of completion/studying

194 Learners in the longitudinal group who had already completed their course were asked to reflect on how easy or challenging their study had been. Figure 19 shows a very balanced split between those who had found it very or fairly easy (47 per cent) and those who had found it very or fairly challenging (46 per cent). In Wave 2, the split slightly favoured finding it challenging (51 per cent, compared with 42 per cent finding it easy).

Figure 19: How easy or challenging the training is/was



Base = completers only, longitudinal group: Wave 4 N = 2,209, Wave 2 N = 3,633.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 2 and 4 (autumn 2007, winter 2008)*

195 The data was examined in more detail according to the personal characteristics of the learners.

- The greatest difference was found in relation to ethnicity: BME learners were more likely than white learners to say that they had found the course challenging (65 per cent, compared with 42 per cent).
- Women were more likely than men to say they had found the course challenging (49 per cent, compared with 41 per cent).
- Those with a disability or learning difficulty were a little more likely to have

found the course challenging (51 per cent, compared with 46 per cent of other learners).

- Although the data fluctuated with age, in general older learners seemed more likely to have found the course challenging than younger learners: 39 per cent of the age group 18–25 had found it challenging, compared with 45 per cent of those aged 26–35, 43 per cent of those aged 36–45, 51 per cent of those aged 46–55, and 48 per cent of those aged 56 and over.

196 Those who felt that the course had been challenging were asked to expand on their response. Table 24 shows that the single most common response, named by 22 per cent, referred to difficulties in finding sufficient time to complete the training. This list has changed substantially since Wave 2, when the level of the course (17 per cent) and the format of the qualification (12 per cent) were the most frequently cited issues.

Table 24: What made it challenging to complete the training

	Wave 4		Wave 2
	Number	%	%
Time management/finding the time	222	22	11
New subject area/lack of previous knowledge	149	15	7
Difficulty understanding the questions or assignments	148	15	8
Haven't studied for long time or ever	138	14	10
Problems with the written work, English or grammar	98	10	8
The level of the course	90	9	17
Personal level of motivation	74	7	7
The format of the qualification	59	6	12
Base (N)	1,011	–	1,868

Base = completers who found the course challenging, longitudinal group. Multiple responses given; answers of 6 per cent and above shown.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 2 and 4 (winter 2007, winter 2008)*

197 Similarly, those who felt that the course had been easy were asked to expand on their response. Table 25 shows that the single most common response, named by 58 per cent (42 per cent in Wave 2), referred to pre-existing knowledge of the subject area or the job. Those citing the level of

the course dropped from 24 per cent in Wave 2 to 9 per cent in Wave 4, perhaps as a result of larger numbers being moved to higher-level courses (see section on ‘Advice and Guidance’).

Table 25: What made it easy to complete the training

	Number	%
Already have a good experience or knowledge of the area/my job	601	58
The level of support received from the tutor/assessor	334	32
The level of support received from the employer	96	9
The level of the course	95	9
Level of support from colleagues	74	7
Personal level of motivation	70	7
Base (N)	1,033	–

Base = completers who found the course easy, longitudinal group. Multiple responses given; answers of 6 per cent and above shown.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

Problems experienced by completers

198 All completers in the longitudinal group were asked whether they had experienced any difficulties during the qualification. While 82 per cent had not had any problems, 12 per cent reported that they had. The most common difficulties experienced included:

- finding the questions or assignments hard to understand or ambiguous (25 per cent of those reporting difficulties (N = 267));
- the poor quality of the teaching, training or assessment (12 per cent);
- the assessor stopped coming to the workplace (8 per cent);
- disliking the format of the training or qualification (8 per cent); and
- lack of time at work to do the training (8 per cent).

199 Of those who had experienced problems, 88 per cent said they had spoken to someone about it: the majority spoke to their tutor or assessor, and many others spoke to their employer.

Early leavers

- 200 In the new entrant group, those who left without completing the qualification (4 per cent of the total) reported that they had done so between 1 and 30 weeks after starting (on average after 10 weeks).
- 201 In the longitudinal group, early leavers had spent anything between less than a month and eight months before leaving the course (on average just under three months).
- 202 Reasons given by the early leavers for failing to complete their course are shown in Table 26. The issues contrast with the problems cited by completers, discussed above, with less emphasis on the assessor or the course. The main reasons for leaving had to do with the respondent leaving the employer with which they had started the training, changes in personal circumstances, lack of time at work to do the training, and the assessor ceasing to come to the workplace.
- 203 For the new entrant group, there was a substantial increase from Wave 3 in the proportion of those who had personal difficulties (previously 11 per cent) and whose assessor had stopped coming (4 per cent).
- 204 For the longitudinal group, too, there was a rise in the proportion of those whose assessor had stopped coming (9 per cent in Wave 2) and a fall in those leaving their original employer (23 per cent in Wave 2).

Table 26: Reasons for leaving course early/not completing it

	Longitudinal		New entrants	
	N	%	N	%
I left the employer I originally signed up for training with	14	10	58	25
My personal/domestic circumstances changed (e.g. moved house, illness, pregnancy, bereavement)	23	17	48	21
The assessor/trainer stopped coming to my workplace	27	20	31	13
I did not have enough time at work to do the training	7	5	23	10
The quality of teaching/training or assessment was poor	8	6	15	7
I was encouraged/forced to give up by my employer	8	6	13	6
Base (N)	137	–	232	–

Base = early leavers, longitudinal and new entrant group. Multiple responses given; answers of 6 per cent and above shown.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

205 Additional questions were also asked of early leavers in the longitudinal group, in order to expand on some of the responses given above. Half of the early leavers (51 per cent) felt that something could have helped them to stay on the qualification. It would have helped if:

- there had been more support or someone to go to for help (19 per cent of those specifying extra help (N = 70));
- the tutor had been available as scheduled (14 per cent); and
- they had stayed with the same employer (13 per cent).

206 Of those who were asked, around half (26 out of the 49 questioned) had gone on to speak to someone about the problem(s) they were experiencing. Reasons given for not speaking to someone included the belief that there was no one who would understand or be in a position to help.

Satisfaction and Outcomes

Key findings

- 207 Satisfaction with the training or qualifications is very high, as it has been over the four waves of the survey. In Wave 4, 95 per cent of learners across both groups were satisfied with their training overall. The LSC's key measure of learners who are 'very satisfied' or 'extremely satisfied' increased slightly to 76 per cent for new entrants and 72 per cent for longitudinal learners.
- 208 For most learners, the benefits of participating in Train to Gain lay in increasing their skills levels and qualifications with a view to improving their future career prospects. Some learners also reported that their achievements had led to increases in pay and the opportunity for promotion.
- 209 Among new entrants:
- 90 per cent of completers said they had gained 'a qualification';
 - 88 per cent said they had gained skills that would look good to future employers, and 83 per cent said they had gained skills that would help them do a better job in the future;
 - 34 per cent felt that their training had led to increased pay, and 34 per cent felt it had led to promotion.
- 210 Within the longitudinal group:
- 91 per cent said they had gained skills that would look good to future employers;
 - 86 per cent said they had gained skills that would help them do a better job in the future;
 - 86 per cent felt more confident in their ability to learn;
 - 84 per cent of respondents said they had gained 'a qualification';
 - 78 per cent had learned practical skills related to their job; and

- 21 per cent said that they had received a financial bonus, promotion or pay rise.
- 211 Longitudinal learners stressed the importance of gaining qualifications: 93 per cent of completers said that achieving the qualification had been important to them personally.
- 212 Learners also felt that employers had benefited from their training and qualifications: 84 per cent of longitudinal learners said their qualification was important to their employer, and 77 per cent in both the longitudinal and the new entrant surveys felt that it benefited them and their employer equally.
- 213 The prospects for further learning among Train to Gain participants are good. Although only 16 per cent (of longitudinal learners) had already embarked on further training, 72 per cent of new entrants and 61 per cent of longitudinal learners felt that it was likely that they would do a higher-level qualification in the next three years.

Trends over time

- 214 Satisfaction levels among learners have remained at a relatively high level over the course of the evaluation. In each wave, between 90 per cent and 96 per cent of learners in both survey groups have been satisfied with the quality of teaching and with the training overall. In Waves 2, 3 and 4, new entrants gave slightly lower (but still high) ratings for the information and advice prior to training (90–91 per cent), the time it took to complete the training (90–92 per cent) and the support received from employers (88 per cent in each wave). Satisfaction tends to drop slightly as learners move on from their qualifications. Like-for-like comparison of mean scores for the longitudinal group shows a drop from 6.0 to 5.9 (on a seven-point scale) for the quality of teaching, and a fall from 6.0 to 5.8 for training overall. However, it should be stressed that these are still very positive scores.
- 215 The strength of feeling has fluctuated a little more. Following an initial drop after the first wave, satisfaction ratings have risen in the new entrant groups. Although the LSC's key measure is not yet back to the level seen in Wave 1 (78 per cent), ratings have risen steadily since Wave 2 – from 71 per cent to

76 per cent extremely or very satisfied with the training overall. The longitudinal group score on the LSC's measure has risen only marginally since Wave 2 – from 71 per cent to 72 per cent.

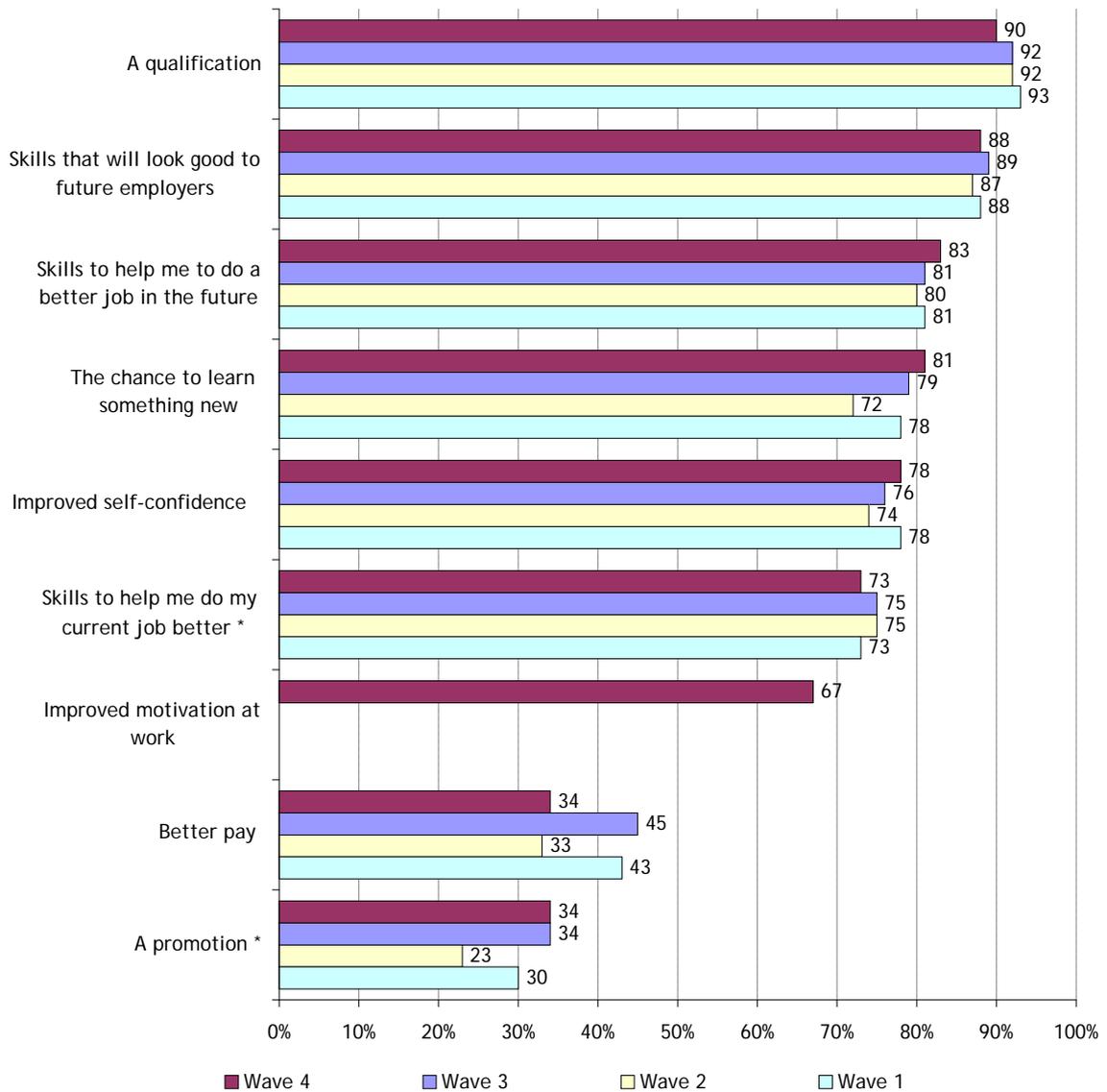
- 216 Outcomes have focused consistently on skills and qualifications, on personal achievements and the individual's ability to do their job now and in the future, rather than on external rewards such as pay and promotion. Increased promotion prospects (43 per cent Wave 2 to 52 per cent in Wave 4) and increased responsibility at work (46 per cent to 53 per cent) are increasing as outcomes within the longitudinal group, but they are still less important than skills and qualifications.
- 217 Many learners feel that they will sign up to further learning in the future. However, the longitudinal data casts doubt over the extent to which these intentions are acted upon. We do not have the data to measure the impact on learning in the longer term, but it appears that the initial enthusiasm for further learning fades a little.

Outcomes

- 218 Those learners in both the new entrant group and the longitudinal group who had completed their training were asked what they had actually gained as a result (Figures 20 and 21 – note that there were some differences in the questions asked of each group).
- 219 Among the new entrant group, agreement was high with most of the statements about outcomes, particularly with regard to gaining a qualification (90 per cent of respondents) and to gaining skills that would be of benefit in current and future jobs and to employers, improving self-confidence and having the chance to learn something new (scores ranged from 75 per cent to 88 per cent).
- 220 Two questions were also asked of the new entrant group that were not asked of the longitudinal group: 34 per cent felt that their training had led to increased pay (a fall from 45 per cent in Wave 3), and 34 per cent felt it had led to promotion (also 34 per cent in Wave 3).

- 221 For completers in the longitudinal group, responses were very similar to those of completers in the new entrant group – i.e. agreement was high with most of the outcomes, particularly in relation to gaining a qualification (84 per cent of respondents) and to gaining skills that would be of benefit in current and future jobs and to employers, improving self-confidence and having the chance to learn something new (scores ranged from 75 per cent to 91 per cent). There are signs of increases from Wave 2 among longitudinal learners on the lower-scoring aspects, in particular ‘increased promotion prospects’ (43 per cent in Wave 2 to 52 per cent in Wave 4) and ‘increased responsibility at work’ (46 per cent to 53 per cent).
- 222 With a few exceptions, the results are broadly in line with previous waves. The proportion of those citing ‘a qualification’ as the outcome has dropped slightly but is still extremely high. A like-for-like comparison shows that in the Wave 4 longitudinal group only 88 per cent (compared with 93 per cent of the same respondents in Wave 3) said they had achieved ‘a qualification’. There are a number of possible reasons for such a drop: the qualification may be of less importance to the respondents, respondents may have forgotten about the qualification they achieved, or they may have moved on to another qualification. The only statements for which agreement increased were about skills improving prospects for future jobs and future employers, which showed modest increases (set aside larger falls – of between two and seven percentage points – for the other statements).
- 223 There was another significant fall (from 45 per cent to 34 per cent) in the proportion of new entrants who cited ‘better pay’ as an outcome. This figure has fluctuated over the period of the surveys, so it is difficult to draw conclusions about whether this indicates a downward trend. Most other scores were within one or two percentage points, and indicated level or slightly increasing trends over the four waves.

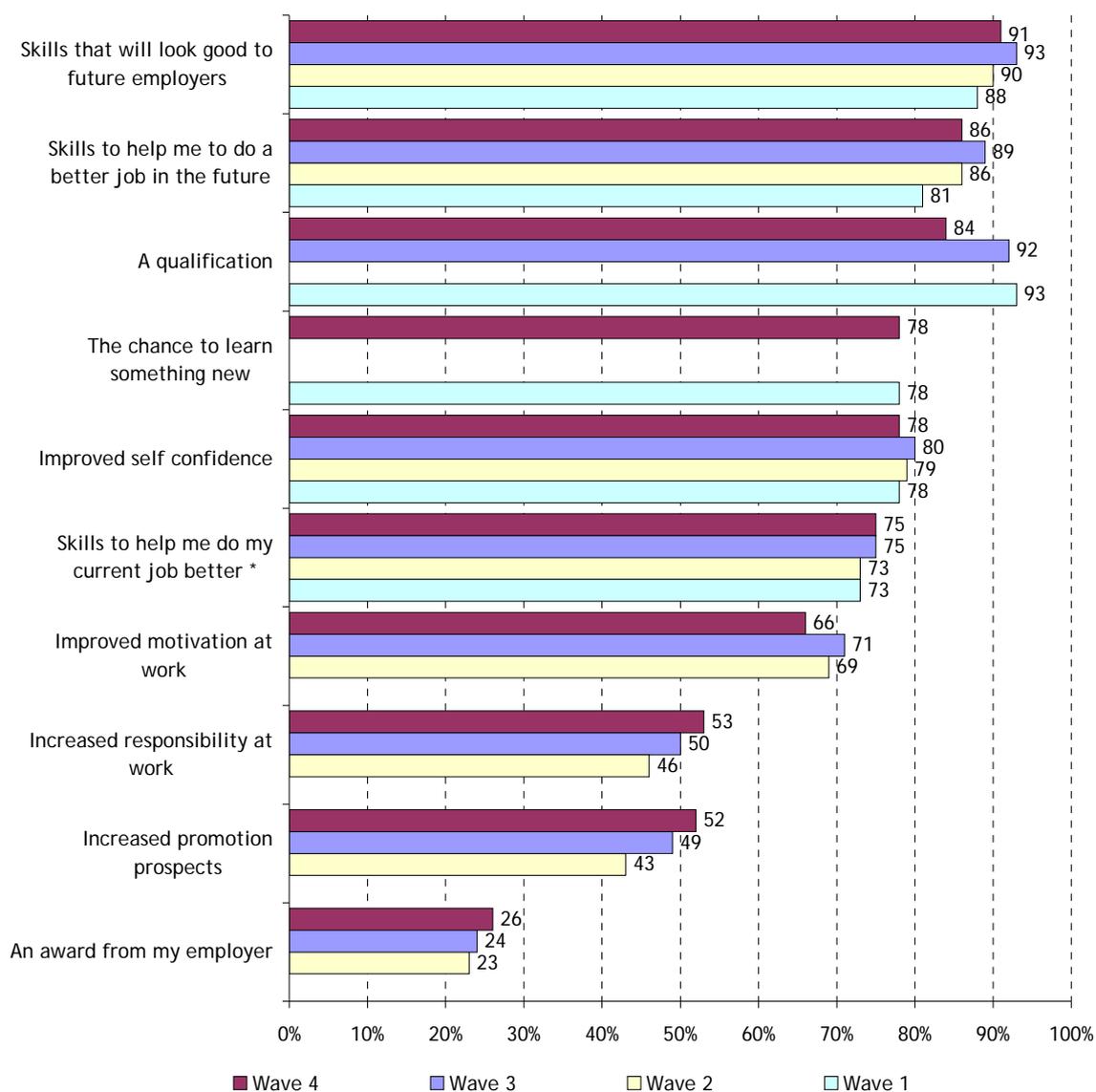
Figure 20: Actual outcomes of training (new entrant group)



Base = completers only, new entrant group: Wave 4 N = 2,438, Wave 3: N = 1,688, Wave 2: N = 939, Wave 1: N = 1,642. * = only asked of those in work.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)

Figure 21: Actual outcomes of training (longitudinal learners)



Base = completers only, longitudinal group: Wave 4 N = 2,209, Wave 3 N = 2,372, Wave 2 N = 3,636, Wave 1 N = 1,642. * = only asked of those in work.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)

Outcomes and expectations

224 Table 27 isolates responses from learners who were in the process of studying or who were waiting to start at the time of the Wave 3 survey, and who had completed by the time of Wave 4. It shows, therefore, for the same group of 1,304 learners, the differences between what they had anticipated they would gain from their learning (as measured at Wave 3) and what they had actually gained (as measured at Wave 4). For most outcomes, the

expectation had not – or had not yet – lived up to reality. There were two notable examples of this.

- 94 per cent had anticipated that their training would lead to a qualification, but only 71 per cent reported that this had happened by the time of Wave 4.
- 87 per cent had anticipated that they would gain an award from their employer, but only 74 per cent reported that this had happened.

225 It is not possible to state with any great confidence the reasons for these differences, but they may reflect a genuine gap between expectations and ultimate outcome, or they may just indicate a lag between achievement and outcome. By comparison with a similar analysis in Wave 3, and in view of the like-for-like comparison discussed above, it would appear that the expectations of learners do slightly exceed reality. However, any negative interpretation of this data should be balanced by a recognition that most learners' expectations are being fulfilled.

Table 27: Outcomes of training – differences between what was anticipated at Wave 3 and what was actual at Wave 4

Outcome	What was anticipated at Wave 3		What was actual at Wave 4		Percentage difference
	Number	%	Number	%	%
Skills that will look good to future employers	1,145	88	1,139	89	+1
Skills to help me to do a better job in the future	1,165	89	1,081	85	-4
A qualification	1,224	94	904	71	-23
Chance to learn something new	1,105	85	983	77	-8
Skills to help me do my current job better *	1,110	87	947	74	-13
Improved self-confidence	1,063	82	995	78	-4
Base (N)	1,304	-	1,304	-	-

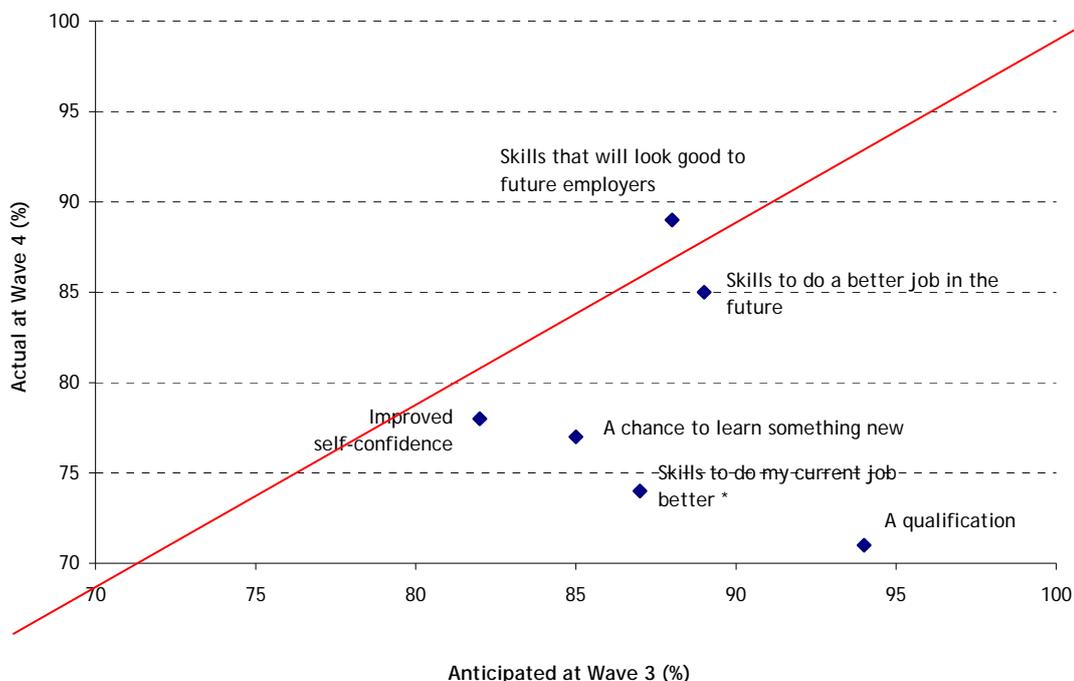
Base = completers at Wave 4 who were current learners at Wave 3, longitudinal group.

* = only asked of those in work.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 3 and 4 (summer 2008, winter 2008)

226 Figure 22 shows the same information graphically. The line indicates a 'perfect match' between anticipated and actual outcomes and is not intended to be a best-fit correlation line.

Figure 22: Outcomes of training – anticipated at Wave 3 versus actual at Wave 4



Line is drawn to indicate a 'perfect match' between anticipated and actual outcomes.
 Base = completers at Wave 4 who were current learners at Wave 3, longitudinal group: N = 1,304.
 * = only asked of those in work.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 3 and 4 (summer 2008, winter 2008)

Financial gains

227 Completers in the longitudinal survey were asked whether they had 'received a financial bonus, promotion or increase in pay as a direct result of the qualification'. As in previous waves, around a fifth (21 per cent) said that they had. By contrast, in the new entrant survey around a third said they had gained increased pay (34 per cent) or promotion (34 per cent) from doing the training/qualification. The difference in response might be explained by the more direct connection between the outcome and the qualification made in the wording of the question to the longitudinal group. This may make learners more hesitant in concluding that there was a **direct** relationship between achievement and reward.

New skills

- 228 All learners in the longitudinal group, with the exception of those yet to start their training, were asked about new skills that they may or may not have acquired in the course of their training. Table 28 shows that 78 per cent felt they had learned practical skills related to their job, and 56 per cent had learned general employability skills. Smaller groups of learners said they had learned new literacy, numeracy, or IT skills during their training (27 per cent, 19 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively).
- 229 These findings are generally comparable with Wave 3, although both literacy and numeracy skills show a fall of three percentage points.

Table 28: Skills learned

New skills	Number	%
Practical skills related to your job	2,451	78
Skills related to general employability (e.g. problem solving, time management)	1,762	56
New literacy skills	841	27
New numeracy skills	580	19
New IT skills	627	20
None of these/nothing	383	12
Base (N)	3,140	–

Base = all learners who have been training for at least a month, longitudinal group. Multiple responses given.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

- 230 Those who felt they had gained new skills were asked whether they had used these skills in their current job: 89 per cent reported that they had. Usage of new skills was high across all occupational groups, ranging from 82 per cent of Managers and Senior Officials to 91 per cent of Personal Service occupations and Associate Professional and Technical occupations.
- 231 Learners were asked only once whether they had used their new skills in their current job and, because they were able to select multiple new skills, it is not possible to isolate **which** new skills they felt they had applied in their job. However, around 900 people (26 per cent) identified only one new skill learned, and the responses of these learners are shown in Table 29. In the

case of these learners, we can see which type of skill they felt they had applied. Although the numbers involved are small for most other categories, 87 per cent of those who said they had learned practical skills related to their job also said they had used those skills.

Table 29: New skills learned and used

New skills learned	Whether used in job		
	Number	%	Base size
Practical skills related to your job	589	87	677
New IT skills	29	71	41
Skills related to general employability (e.g. problem solving, time management)	72	68	106
New literacy skills	16	59	27
New numeracy skills	6	50	12

Note: low base size for most items.

Base = all learners who have been training for at least a month, longitudinal group. Base size indicates those specifying that only one type of new skill had been acquired.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

Attitudes towards learning

232 Learners in the longitudinal group were asked to rate their agreement with an additional three statements about their attitudes towards learning. For all three statements, the results indicate further positive outcomes from learners' participation in Train to Gain.

- 86 per cent agreed with the statement 'I feel more confident in my ability to learn' (this scored 4.3 out of a maximum possible 5.0).
- 82 per cent agreed that 'I feel more positive about learning than when I started this course' (mean score of 4.2).
- Only 26 per cent agreed that 'I have not got everything out of the learning that I wanted' (mean score of 2.3 (a score of less than 3.0 indicates a negative response, i.e. disagreement)).

233 The extent of agreement showed some variation according to the personal characteristics of the learners.

- Women were more likely than men to agree that ‘I feel more positive about learning than when I started this course’ (score of 4.3, compared with 4.1 for men) and ‘I feel more confident in my ability to learn’ (score of 4.4, compared with 4.2 for men). Men were more likely than women to agree that ‘I have not got everything out of the learning that I wanted’ (2.4, compared with 2.2 for women).
- Learners with a disability or learning difficulty were more likely to agree that ‘I feel more positive about learning than when I started this course’ (score of 4.4, compared with 4.2 for other learners) and ‘I feel more confident in my ability to learn’ (score of 4.6, compared with 4.3).
- Age also appears to be related to the results for the statement that ‘I feel more confident in my ability to learn’, with younger learners more likely to agree: the two youngest age groups rated this at 4.4, compared with 4.3 for the middle age groups and 4.2 for the oldest age group.
- BME learners were more likely than white learners to agree with both ‘I feel more confident in my ability to learn’ (4.6, compared with 4.3) and ‘I feel more positive about learning than when I started this course’ (4.4, compared with 4.2). Although learners of all ethnic origins disagreed that ‘I have not got everything out of the learning that I wanted’, BME learners disagreed less strongly than did white learners (2.6, compared with 2.3).

Impacts

234 The longitudinal survey asked all those who had started their learning whether there had been any changes to their working situation since the start of the learning. Table 30 shows that, while 28 per cent had taken on further responsibility with the same employer without additional pay or promotion, 20 per cent had received better pay.

235 All the changes mentioned were about as common as (or less common than) in Wave 3. Most of the variations were relatively small, although only

20 per cent in Wave 4 said they had received better pay, compared with 32 per cent in Wave 3. As this wave of the survey took place at the beginning of the recession, there may be a link between the state of the economy and this decline. Longer-term data would be needed to establish the link more confidently.

236 There was a little difference between those who had completed and those who were still learning. Perhaps surprisingly, those who were current learners were more likely than completers to say that they had taken on extra responsibility, as Table 30 shows.

Table 30: Changes since the start of the training

	Number all learners	% all learners	% completers	% current learners
Have taken on further responsibility with same employer without additional pay or promotion	863	28	27	32
Got better pay	622	20	20	20
Got a better job with the same employer	448	14	15	14
Changed to a different role with the same employer (same level)	439	14	15	16
Got a better job with a new employer	227	7	7	5
Changed employer (same level job)	196	6	6	4
Became self-employed	88	3	3	3
Been made redundant	69	2	2	1
Base (N)	3,140	–	2,209	782

Base = all learners who have been training for at least a month, longitudinal group. Multiple responses given.

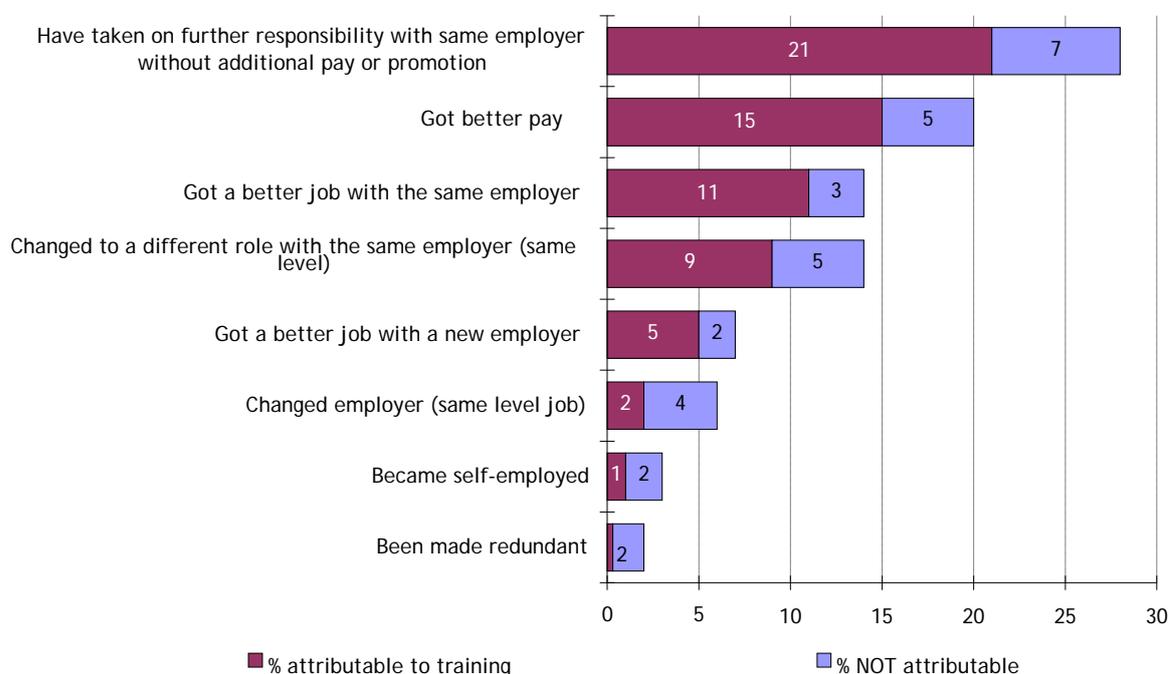
Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

237 The survey went on to ask all those who reported a change whether or not they could attribute this to the training undertaken. The results are shown in Figure 23, which shows the overall percentage reporting each change, and, within that, the proportion attributing the change to the training. It shows, for example, that the change most likely to be attributed to the training was switching to a better job with the same employer: while this was reported by only 14 per cent, 80 per cent of those respondents attributed it to the training undertaken.

238 Three respondents in four who had received better pay attributed this to the training undertaken (21 per cent overall), as did 75 per cent of those who had taken on further responsibility with the same employer without additional pay or promotion (11 per cent). Other changes attributed to the training were: moving to a different role at the same level with the same employer (65 per cent) and moving to a better job with a new employer (64 per cent).

239 There were no significant differences between the completer and the current learner groups.

Figure 23: Proportion saying changes were attributable to the training



Base = all learners who have been training for at least a month and who have experienced change, longitudinal group: N = 3,140 (see Table 30).

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

240 Combining some of the responses to Table 30 and Figure 23 allows us to isolate those who had experienced positive change or improvements as a result of their training (i.e. those who said they had got a better job with the same employer, got better pay, had taken on further responsibility with the same employer without additional pay or promotion, or had got a better job with a new employer). Overall, respondents who experienced one or more of

these changes and who attributed them to the training accounted for 38 per cent of those questioned, compared with 44 per cent in Wave 3 (the base is all learners except those yet to start, longitudinal group: Wave 4 N = 3,140).

Future career intentions

241 Table 31 shows the future career intentions of learners in both the longitudinal group and the new entrant group. It reveals that, across both groups, most learners planned to stay with their current employer for the foreseeable future (60 per cent and 62 per cent, respectively), or at least for another year (18 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively). In Wave 2, 68 per cent of longitudinal learners said they planned to stay with their current employer for the foreseeable future. The new entrant data has changed little since Wave 3, but there has been a drop from 69 per cent in Wave 1.

Table 31: Future career intentions

Career intentions	Wave 4 (LL)		Wave 4 (NE)	
	Number	%	Number	%
I plan to stay with my current employer for the foreseeable future	1,737	60	3,325	62
I am likely to stay with my current employer for at least another year	526	18	795	15
I plan to leave my current employer as soon as the opportunity arises	319	11	446	8
I am likely to leave my current employer within the next year	166	6	344	6
I expect to have to leave my current employer within the next year due to redundancy or relocation	77	3	181	3
I expect to have to leave my current employer when my contract ends	41	1	185	3
Don't know	40	1	105	2
Base (N)	2,906	–	5,380	–

Base = all those in employment, longitudinal and new entrant groups.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

242 A like-for-like comparison with the responses gleaned from the learners who were new entrants in Wave 3 shows that, in Wave 4, they were now more likely than before to feel that they would move on soon: 60 per cent in Wave 4 said that they planned to stay with their current employer for the foreseeable future, compared with 65 per cent in Wave 3; while 11 per cent

in Wave 4 said they would leave as soon as the opportunity arose, compared with 8 per cent in Wave 3. Again, this instability may be linked to the economic climate at the time of the survey.

Importance of training

243 Completers in the longitudinal survey were asked to gauge the importance of doing their qualification – both in terms of personal importance and importance to their employer (see Table 32). The importance was rated very highly.

- Most completers felt it was very important to them personally to have achieved the qualification (75 per cent), and a further 18 per cent said it was fairly important. This is similar to the previous wave, although the proportion who felt it was very important has risen (from 68 per cent in Wave 3), while the number who felt it was fairly important has declined (from 24 per cent).
- The importance of the qualification to their employer was a little lower, with 59 per cent thinking it was very important and 25 per cent thinking it was fairly important to their employer (57 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively, in Wave 3).

Table 32: Importance of having achieved qualification – personal and to employer

	Personal importance		Importance to employer	
	Number	%	Number	%
Very important	1,653	75	1,307	59
Fairly important	402	18	554	25
Neither important or unimportant	34	2	70	3
Not very important	79	4	135	6
Not at all important	40	2	77	4
Don't know	1	*	66	3
Base (N)	2,209	–	2,209	–

Base = completers only, longitudinal group. *Denotes less than 1 per cent.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

244 The personal importance of completing the qualification showed little variation according to personal characteristics once the 'very important' and the 'fairly important' scores were combined. However, for some groups, the variation in the percentages for 'very important' alone was marked.

- Learners from BME groups were more likely than white learners to say it was 'very important' to them personally to have achieved the qualification (89 per cent, compared with 72 per cent).
- Those with a disability or learning difficulty were more likely than other learners to say that it was 'very important' personally (82 per cent, compared with 74 per cent).
- Women were more likely than men to say that it was 'very important' (78 per cent, compared with 70 per cent).

245 Similarly, by occupational group, the proportions saying that achieving the qualification was very important to their employer showed great variation.

- Importance to the employer was particularly high among those in Personal Service occupations, of whom 70 per cent felt it was very important; this group was followed by the Skilled Trades (with 65 per cent).
- Achieving the qualification was deemed to be of least value to the employer in the Administrative and Secretarial occupations (where 41 per cent felt it was very important) and Sales and Customer Service occupations (42 per cent).

Who benefits from the training

246 Both the longitudinal group and the new entrant group surveys examined the extent to which learners felt that they and/or their employers benefited from the training. Table 33 shows the responses from the new entrant group survey and Table 34 the longitudinal survey responses.

- 247 For the new entrant survey, two sets of responses are shown. First, a response was elicited from learners as to who they felt would benefit from the training (anticipated), as reported by those who were currently learning or waiting to start. Second, a response was collected from those who had completed in both the new entrant group and the longitudinal group, where they offered their perception of who had actually benefited from the training.
- 248 Across all three measures, more than three learners in four felt that both they and their employer had benefited (or would benefit) equally from the training: 83 per cent of those in the new entrant group who were yet to complete anticipated that they and their employer would benefit equally, although a smaller proportion of completers (77 per cent) felt this was the case. This trend is echoed in previous waves, where responses of similar magnitude were observed (74–78 per cent over the four waves).

Table 33: Who benefits most from training

	Anticipated		Actual	
	Number	%	Number	%
You only	389	13	387	16
Your employer only	71	2	80	3
Both you and your employer equally	2,449	83	1,865	77
Neither you nor your employer	34	1	84	3
Too early to say/Don't know	10	*	22	1
Base (N)	2,954	–	2,438	–

Base = new entrants, current learners and those about to start (anticipated) and completers (actual)

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

- 249 The same proportion of completers in the longitudinal group felt that both they and their employer had benefited equally, as Table 34 shows. This is a slight increase from 75 per cent in Wave 2.

Table 34: Who do you think has benefited most from the training? (actual)

	Number	%
You only	393	18
Your employer only	77	3
Both you and your employer equally	1,690	77
Neither you nor your employer	39	2
Too early to say/Don't know	10	1
Base (N)	2,209	–

Base = longitudinal group, completers only.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

Further training

Current/subsequent training

250 Those in the longitudinal group whose training had finished were asked whether they had subsequently started any additional training. Some 16 per cent reported that they had. Table 35 shows the training that this group were undertaking and reveals that the single most popular qualification was an NVQ – mostly being undertaken at Level 3 or Level 2.

Table 35: Current/subsequent training being done?

Qualification	N	%
NVQ	159	50
(Entry Level)	(3)	(2)
(Level 1)	(3)	(2)
(Level 2)	(43)	(27)
(Level 3)	(91)	(57)
(Level 4)	(14)	(9)
(Level 5 or 6)	(1)	(1)
(Not known)	(4)	(3)
In-house training	27	8
Life skills/Entry to Employment preparatory learning	16	5
Diploma in higher education	13	4
Professional qualification	9	3
First aid	8	2
GCSE/GCSE vocational	8	2
Base (N)	351	–

Base = completers who have started a subsequent course, longitudinal group. Responses of 2 per cent and above shown.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

251 Although there was little change in the proportion of learners who had started new qualifications, the proportion who said that they were taking an NVQ (50 per cent) showed a substantial increase from 35 per cent in Wave 3.

Discussion of further learning

252 Completers in both the longitudinal group and the new entrant group were asked whether or not anyone had talked to them about further training options since they had finished their learning.

253 In the new entrant survey, 45 per cent reported that they had been spoken to about further training options. This is an increase of around five percentage points over previous waves.

254 In the longitudinal group, 44 per cent had been spoken to. This figure has changed little over the last three waves, and the like-for-like comparison shows that, since Wave 3, no more of this cohort has been spoken to about their training. The close match between the new entrant survey and the longitudinal figures implies that there is little or no follow-up on discussions about training, unless it takes place shortly after the training.

255 Those in the new entrant survey who had been spoken to about further training options were more likely to have had skills assessments, pre-entry discussions and an ILP before they embarked on their training (longitudinal learners were not asked about pre-entry discussions or assessments). They were also:

- more likely to have had **some form of** assessment (91 per cent, compared with 84 per cent of those who had not been spoken to);
- more likely to have had both a pre-entry discussion **and** a prior assessment (68 per cent, compared with 56 per cent); and
- more likely to have received an ILP (66 per cent, compared with 53 per cent).

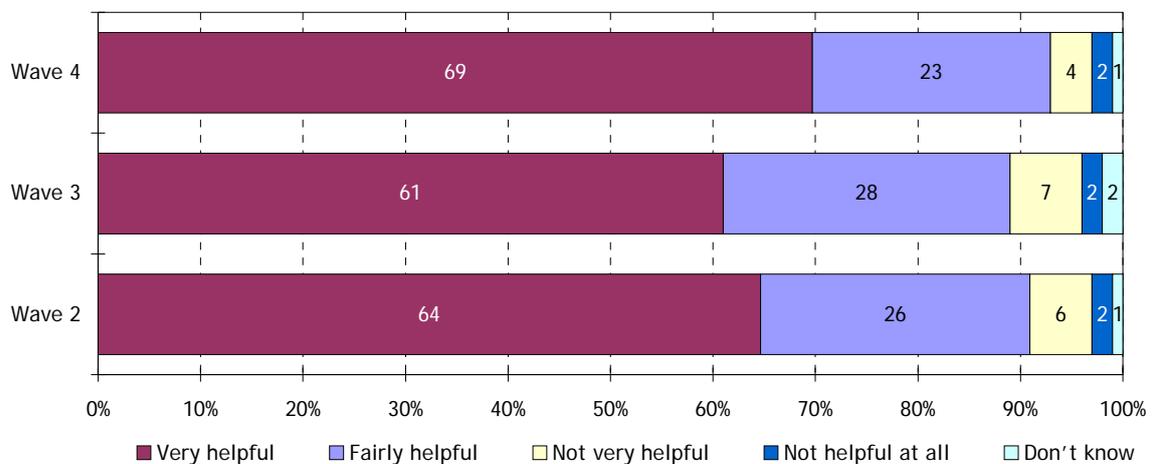
256 Furthermore, in relation to the amount of information they received prior to training, new entrants who had been spoken to about further training options were:

- more likely to have received enough information about what the training would involve (92 per cent, compared with 85 per cent of those who had not been spoken to); and
- more likely to have received enough information about how they would be assessed (94 per cent, compared with 87 per cent).

257 Those in the longitudinal group were also asked to specify who had talked to them. More than half the completers had been spoken to by their employer, manager or supervisor (54 per cent). Although this has fallen slightly since Wave 3, a further 4 per cent were spoken to by colleagues, which balances the decline. A growing number are being spoken to by their tutor or assessor (44 per cent, compared with 40 per cent in Wave 3) or by training providers (10 per cent, compared with none).

258 Completers in the longitudinal group were also asked how helpful it had been to be spoken to about the further training options available to them. Figure 24 shows that the proportion finding it very helpful (69 per cent) or fairly helpful (23 per cent) was very high – higher than in previous waves, and with far more positive responses ('very' rather than 'fairly' helpful) than before.

Figure 24: How helpful it was to have been spoken to about further training options



Base = completers who had been spoken to about further training options, longitudinal group: Wave 4 N = 971, Wave 3 N = 201, Wave 2 N = 1,668.

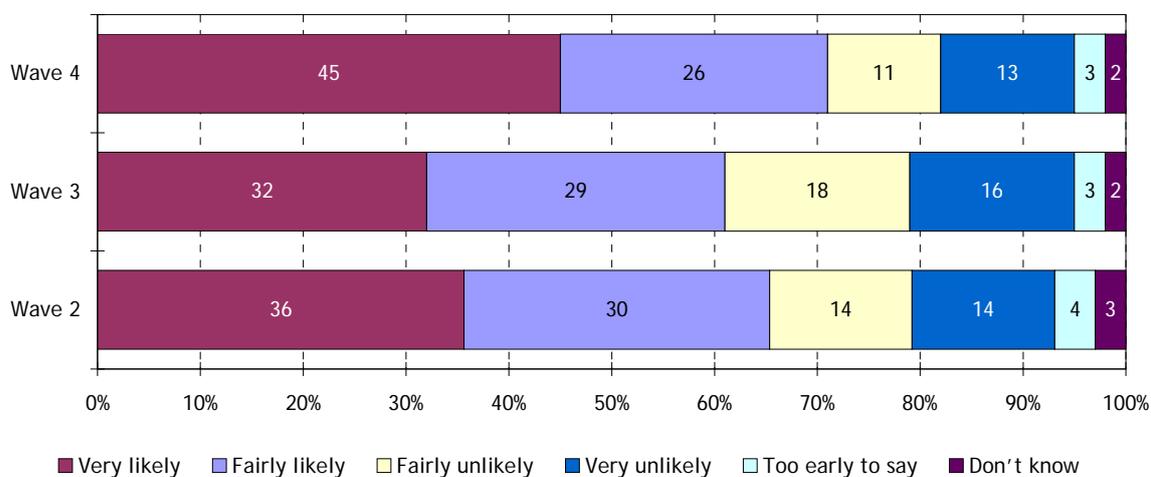
Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 2, 3 and 4 (autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)*

Likelihood of more learning

259 Both the longitudinal group and the new entrant group were asked about additional learning in the future: the longitudinal group was asked about the likelihood of undertaking **another** qualification and about the likelihood of undertaking a **higher** qualification in the next three years. The new entrant group was asked only about undertaking a **higher** qualification.

260 Figure 25 shows that, within the longitudinal group, 45 per cent of completers felt it was very likely that they would do another qualification within the next three years, and 26 per cent felt it was fairly likely. The figure shows that, compared with previous waves, there was an encouraging leap in those planning to embark on a further qualification.

Figure 25: Likelihood of doing ANOTHER qualification in the next three years



Base = completers who have not started a subsequent course, longitudinal group: Wave 4 N = 1,858, Wave 3 N = 1,794, Wave 2 N = 3,035.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 2, 3 and 4 (autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)*

- 261 Table 36 shows that the likelihood of those in the new entrant group continuing with a higher-level qualification within the next three years is high: 46 per cent of completers felt that this was very likely, and a further 25 per cent felt it was fairly likely. The proportion of those who say it is likely that they will undertake further learning has risen since Wave 2 (when it dropped to 61 per cent, from 68 per cent in Wave 1).
- 262 Figures were lower for the longitudinal group, where 36 per cent felt that a higher-level qualification was very likely and 25 per cent felt it was fairly likely, compared with 29 per cent and 28 per cent, respectively, in Wave 2. The proportion who felt it was likely, therefore, has risen from 56 per cent in Wave 2 to 61 per cent in Wave 4.

Table 36: Likelihood of doing a HIGHER-LEVEL qualification in the next three years

	Wave 4 (LL)		Wave 4 (NE)	
	Number	%	Number	%
Very likely	675	36	1,128	46
Fairly likely	456	25	606	25
Fairly unlikely	291	16	291	12
Very unlikely	345	19	313	13
Too early to say/Don't know	91	5	100	4
Base (N)	1,858	–	2,438	–

Base = completers who have not started a subsequent course for longitudinal group, and all completers for new entrant group.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)*

- 263 A comparison of the new entrants and the longitudinal learners suggests that, with time, learners start to feel less sure that they will embark on further, higher-level learning (since the longitudinal group completed learning, on average, less recently). The like-for-like comparison reinforces this: in Wave 3, 69 per cent said they were very likely or fairly likely to do a higher-level qualification, but in the six months since they were last interviewed, the figure for those same learners has fallen to 57 per cent.
- 264 Table 37 examines the likelihood of learners undertaking a higher-level qualification in conjunction with whether or not they had already been spoken to about their future options. As would be expected, those who had been spoken to about further training options were more likely to consider doing a higher-level qualification in the next three years. Within the longitudinal group, the proportion of those who were very likely to consider higher training rose from 31 per cent of those who had **not** been spoken to, to 45 per cent of those who had. Similarly, within the new entrant group, the proportion of those who were very likely to consider higher training rose from 37 per cent to 57 per cent. The survey does not tell us the direction of causation, but only that there appears to be a relationship; so we cannot conclude that having the discussion makes further training more likely.

Table 37: Likelihood of doing higher-level qualification in the next three years (percentage)

	Wave 4 (LL)		Wave 4 (NE)	
	Whether been spoken to about further training options		Whether been spoken to about further training options	
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
Very likely	45	31	57	37
Fairly likely	23	26	22	28
Fairly unlikely	13	17	7	16
Very unlikely	15	21	10	15
Too early to say	2	4	2	3
Don't know	2	2	1	2
Base (N)	727	1,130	1,089	1,343

Base = completers only, longitudinal and new entrant group.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

Early leavers

265 Early leavers in the new entrant survey were similarly asked about their thoughts on future training. Table 38 shows that almost half the early leavers (47 per cent) felt that it was very likely that they would sign up for training in the future, and a further 26 per cent thought it was fairly likely. This is a more positive response than in Wave 3, when 40 per cent said it was very likely and 32 per cent said it was fairly likely. The figure has improved steadily since falling at Wave 2.

Table 38: Likelihood of signing up for future training (early leavers)

New entrants	Wave 4		Wave 3	Wave 2	Wave 1
	N	%	%	%	%
Very likely	110	47	40	30	42
Fairly likely	60	26	32	21	19
Fairly unlikely	23	10	13	12	13
Very unlikely	32	14	11	30	22
Too early to say	5	2	2	4	3
Don't know	3	1	2	3	2
Base (N)	232	100	194	113	186

Base = early leavers only, new entrant group

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 (spring 2007, autumn 2007, summer 2008, winter 2008)

266 Exploring the relationship between early leaving and information, advice and guidance at the outset of the training shows that the small group of early leavers (4 per cent of the total sample) were less likely to have received an ILP (51 per cent, compared with 59 per cent of completers and 61 per cent of current learners). They were also:

- less likely to have received enough information about what the training would involve (73 per cent, compared with 88 per cent of completers and 85 per cent of current learners);
- less likely to have received enough information about how they would be assessed (76 per cent, compared with 90 per cent of completers and 85 per cent of current learners);
- less likely to have received enough information about how long the qualification would take to complete (74 per cent, compared with 92 per cent of completers and 87 per cent of current learners); and
- less likely to have received enough information about the time commitment needed (74 per cent, compared with 91 per cent of completers and 83 per cent of current learners).

Barriers to further learning

267 Completers in the longitudinal group who had not yet started any further learning were asked to consider any possible barriers they might face. Some 61 per cent reported that they could not identify any barriers in their path. Table 39 shows the barriers identified by the remaining respondents. It reveals that the greatest barriers were lack of funding or money, lack of time, age, and personal barriers.

Table 39: Barriers to taking up further learning

	Number	%
Lack of funding/money	218	12
Lack of time	135	7
Age/soon to retire	82	4
Personal barriers (e.g. changed domestic circumstances)	75	4
Job insecurity	57	3
Employer would not support it	52	3
Motivation, not interested, attitude to learning	37	2
Childcare costs/lack of childcare	28	2
Nothing/no barriers	1,132	61
Base (N)	1,858	–

Base = completers who had not started a subsequent course who said there were barriers to further learning, longitudinal survey. Multiple responses given; answers of 2 per cent and above shown.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

Satisfaction with the training or qualification

Completers

- 268 Both the longitudinal survey and the new entrant survey questioned those who had finished their learning, in order to gauge their satisfaction with the training or qualification, both overall and for more specific measures. High levels of satisfaction have been maintained (or even increased) on all measures since Wave 3.
- 269 In both groups, 95 per cent of learners were satisfied with their training overall. For both groups, this figure has been between 94 per cent and 96 per cent across the four waves (with just the one exception, in Wave 2, when the new entrant score was 90 per cent).
- 270 Table 40 presents the Wave 4 results in the form of a mean score, which can range from a low of 1.0 (which indicates extreme dissatisfaction) to a high of 7.0 (which indicates extreme satisfaction). A middling score of 4.0 indicates a neutral response. The mean score is more sensitive to strength of feeling than is the overall satisfaction score.
- 271 The table shows that the two satisfaction elements that were asked of both groups – satisfaction with the training/qualification overall and satisfaction

with the quality of the teaching received – both scored very positively, with mean scores of 5.8 or 5.9. The other elements of satisfaction (which were included only for the longitudinal group) all scored slightly lower, but were nevertheless still very high (mean scores of 5.5 and 5.6).

Table 40: Satisfaction with different aspects of the training/qualification (mean score)

Satisfaction with...	Wave 4 (LL)	Wave 4 (NE)
the training/qualification overall	5.8	5.9
the quality of the teaching received	5.9	5.9
the information and advice prior to starting the training	5.5	–
the length of time it took to do the training	5.6	–
the support from your employer	5.5	–
Base (N)	2,209	2,438

Base = completers only, longitudinal and new entrant groups.

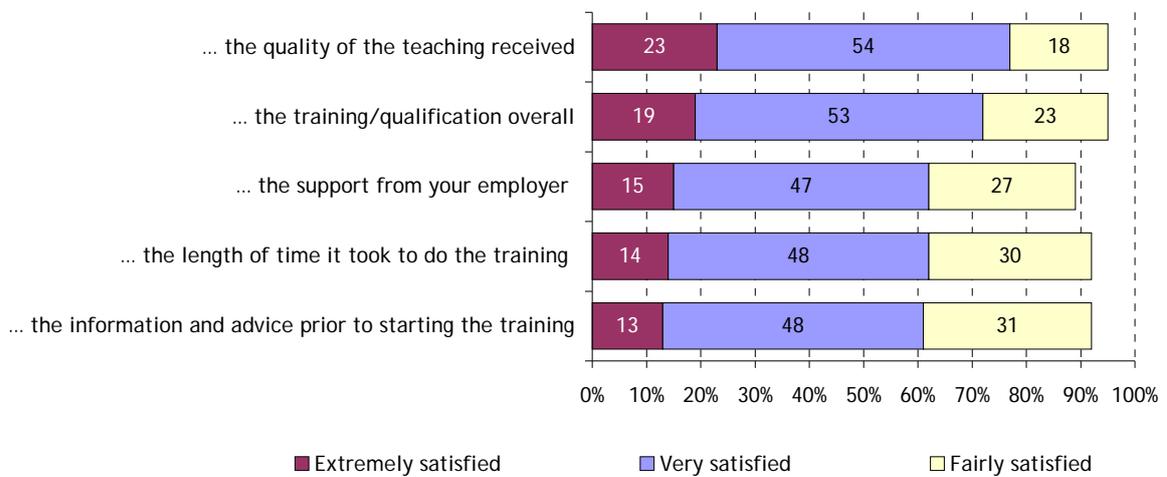
– indicates question not asked.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

272 Figures 26 and 27 show that satisfaction (using the LSC's key measure) has increased. The LSC uses a combination of 'extremely satisfied' and 'very satisfied' to give ongoing measures of satisfaction with its provision. In Wave 4, this measure for overall satisfaction increased by three percentage points (to 72 per cent) for the longitudinal group. The corresponding figure for the new entrant group was higher, at 76 per cent – an increase of two percentage points over Wave 3.

273 Over the four waves of the survey, satisfaction on the LSC's key measure has been high and has increased steadily following a fall between Wave 1 and Wave 2. The longitudinal score has consistently been lower than that for new entrants, which implies that those reflecting on their learning at a distance tend to give slightly lower satisfaction ratings. This is reinforced by the like-for-like comparison, where the mean score for overall satisfaction fell from 6.0 to 5.8 between Wave 3 and Wave 4.

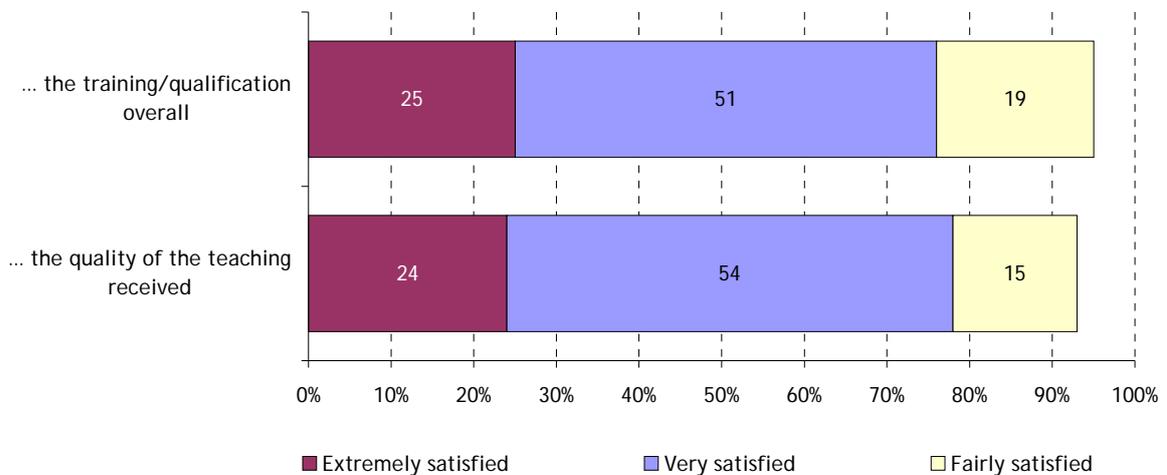
Figure 26: Satisfaction with different aspects of the training/qualification (LL)



Base = completers only, longitudinal group: Wave 4 N = 2,209.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

Figure 27: Satisfaction with different aspects of the training/qualification (NE)



Base = completers only, new entrant group: Wave 4 N = 2,438.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

274 Table 41 shows the overall satisfaction according to various subgroups of respondents.

- New entrants who felt they had some choice in whether to do their training were more satisfied than were those who had had none (6.0, compared with 5.3).

- New entrants who had both forms of pre-entry assessment were more satisfied than were those who had had neither (6.0, compared with 5.6).
- Longitudinal learners who completed their training in the time they expected (or sooner than expected) were more satisfied than were those who had taken longer than expected (5.9 and 5.8, compared with 5.6).
- Those studying for a care course were more satisfied than were learners in other subject areas (6.1, compared with 5.8 for new entrants; 6.0, compared with 5.7 for longitudinal learners).

Table 41: Satisfaction with the training/qualification overall (mean scores) by subgroup

		Mean score (LL)	Mean score (NE)
Training provider	Independent	5.8	5.9
	Public	5.8	5.9
Subject area	Care	6.0	6.1
	Other	5.7	5.8
Hours worked	Part time (< 16 hours)	5.9	5.7
	Part time (16–30 hours)	5.9	5.9
	Full time (30+ hours)	5.8	5.9
Who initiated the learning	Self-initiated	–	5.9
	Employer-initiated	–	5.8
	Jointly initiated	–	6.0
Amount of pre-entry discussion or assessment	Discussion only	–	6.0
	Skills gap assessment only	–	5.7
	Both assessments	–	6.0
	Neither	–	5.6
Amount of say over whether to do the training	A great deal	–	6.0
	A fair amount	–	5.8
	A little	–	5.6
	None at all	–	5.3
Received ILP or PDP	Yes	–	6.0
	No	–	5.8
Time taken to complete	Longer than expected	5.6	–
	Shorter than expected	5.8	–
	About as expected	5.9	–
How easy or challenging was it to complete the training	Challenging	5.9	–
	Neither	5.8	–
	Easy	5.7	–
Received a financial outcome	Yes	6.0	–
	No	5.8	–
Base (N)		2,209	2,438

Base = longitudinal and new entrant group, completers only.

Mean scores range from 1 (extremely dissatisfied) to 7 (extremely satisfied). A mean score of more than 4.0 indicates satisfaction; less than 4.0 indicates dissatisfaction.

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

What makes a satisfied completer?

- 275 Table 41 points to a number of factors that are associated with completers' satisfaction. However, in order to allow us to look at the relative importance of these factors and their interaction with one another, it was necessary to undertake some multivariate analysis. The output from such analysis allows us to say how much influence the different variables have on learners' satisfaction levels.
- 276 The technical details of the analysis are shown in Annex D. Briefly, though, an aggregate measure of satisfaction was built from the five satisfaction questions in the survey, and the relationships between an individual's response to these questions and other questions in the survey were tested.
- 277 It is difficult to tease out the factors that influence satisfaction when, as in the case of Train to Gain, satisfaction levels are very high. The analysis showed that, if someone was satisfied with the training and qualifications overall, they were also likely to be satisfied with the other aspects of Train to Gain. Similarly, if they were neutral or dissatisfied with one satisfaction measure, they had similar views about the others. This lack of variance among the different variables means that the influence of any one variable is small.
- 278 Nevertheless, a number of findings did emerge from this analysis. The variables that were found to have a significant influence on the overall satisfaction score were the answers to the following questions.
- **'How important was it to you personally to achieve the qualification?'**: This basic measure of individual engagement with the process was the most important positive factor driving overall satisfaction. This means that the more someone agreed that achieving the qualification was important, the more satisfied they were with their training overall.
 - **'How important was it to your employer that you achieved the qualification?'**: This measure of corporate engagement was the next most important positive factor driving overall satisfaction.

- **‘How many weeks did it take you to complete?’**: This had a much lower impact, but was still significant. Perhaps surprisingly, the longer the qualification took to obtain, the more satisfied the learner was. This potentially indicates some resistance to simply ‘accrediting’ prior knowledge.
- **‘How long did you typically spend with your assessor when you saw them?’**: This was a negative relationship – i.e. the less time spent, the better. This suggests that short bursts of assessment created greater satisfaction when the other factors were held constant.

279 Table 42 shows the influence of each of these variables. It shows how much the mean satisfaction score increases for a one-point increase in the different variables. For example, for every one-point increase on the personal importance scale, the satisfaction score increases by about quarter of a point (0.257, the standardised coefficient in the table). Similarly, a one-point increase in the corporate importance scale meant the overall satisfaction scale went up by a seventh of a point (0.139).

Table 42: Regression and aggregate satisfaction of completers

	Standardised coefficients
How important was it to you personally to achieve the qualification?	0.257
How important was it to your employer that you achieved the qualification?	0.139
How many weeks did it take you to complete?	0.084
How long do/did you typically spend with your assessor when you see/saw them?	-0.051

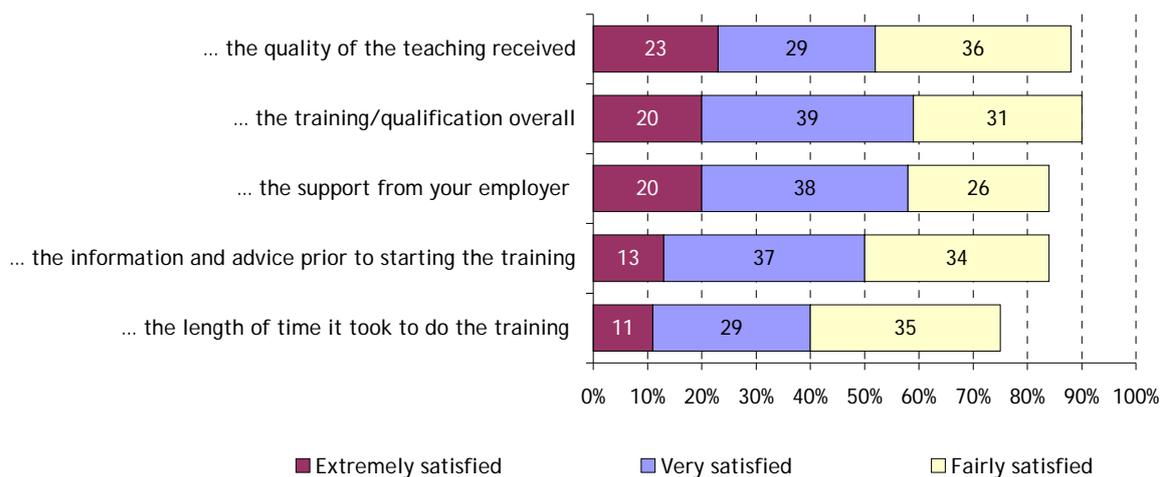
Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

280 Both the individual and the corporate engagement show the importance of getting the initial brokerage and assessment of the appropriateness of the qualification right. Meanwhile, the other factors suggest that the exercise should not be over and done with rapidly, and that each assessment session should not be too onerous.

Current learners – satisfaction to date

281 In the longitudinal survey, satisfaction levels were asked of those who were still in the process of completing their qualification. While scores were still high, they were mostly lower than those for completers. In particular, the proportion of learners who were extremely satisfied or very satisfied is considerably lower: 58 per cent (compared with 72 per cent) for the training overall, and 62 per cent (compared with 77 per cent) for the quality of teaching received. The exception was ‘support from your employer’, where the scores were within 2 per cent of one another.

Figure 28: Satisfaction with different aspects of the training/qualification (LL)



Base = current learners only, longitudinal group: Wave 4 N = 782.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

Conclusions

- 282 In four waves of evaluation of the Train to Gain programme, more than 21,000 learners have been involved in a total of 32,505 telephone interviews. In addition, 200 of these learners have taken part in lengthy qualitative interviews (the majority of them in person). This extensive research gives us a wealth of data about learners' perceptions of the Train to Gain experience.
- 283 The four waves have produced consistent messages, reinforcing and refining findings from earlier waves: learners choose to train rather than feel obliged to do so; they are encouraged and supported by their employers; and they gain real benefits from completing their qualifications. Above all, learners are happy with Train to Gain: over 90 per cent of all learners across all four waves have said they were satisfied with their experience. They also value qualifications, which serve to recognise their skills and achievements, and they see these qualifications and their new skills as a means to further their careers and improve their ability to do their job.
- 284 The vital role of tutors and assessors, and the importance of support from employers, has also been demonstrated, particularly through the qualitative research in Wave 3. Frequent, but perhaps not extended, contact with assessors helps learners feel supported. Flexibility in working arrangements and encouragement from employers and colleagues facilitate learning and help to ground it in the context of the workplace.
- 285 Few learners experience problems, which makes it difficult to identify areas of weakness or make strong recommendations for improvement. But certain themes have emerged to highlight what makes Train to Gain work. In what follows, we use the best-practice themes identified in the Wave 1 report as a basis for discussion of the findings across all four waves.

Raising awareness and encouraging learning participation

- 286 We have seen awareness of Train to Gain rise over the two years of the evaluation. In Wave 1, 40 per cent of survey respondents had never heard of Train to Gain, despite having signed up to take part. This figure has fallen

to less than a quarter of Wave 4 respondents – which is still a substantial minority. The level of awareness and knowledge among the general population is likely to be lower still. Furthermore, although more have now heard of Train to Gain, large numbers still know little or nothing about it.

- 287 For more than half of all learners, the employer is the source of information about Train to Gain. Getting information to employers, demonstrating the benefits to employer and employee, and ensuring that lessons are learned from the employer evaluation are the key to raising awareness of, and knowledge about, Train to Gain.

Pre-entry assessments, and information, advice and guidance

- 288 Around two-thirds of learners have a discussion, usually with their employer or the training provider, prior to embarking on their training or qualification. This figure has remained stable, as has the proportion of learners who have assessments (87 per cent in this wave). However, this leaves more than one learner in ten in each wave with no assessment at all. This latest wave showed an increase in the activity following pre-entry assessments, with many learners moved to a higher level of qualifications than they might otherwise have tackled. This suggests that the assessments are increasingly being acted upon and used – as they should be – to inform the subsequent training. This makes it all the more important to ensure that all learners have access to them.

Individual learning plan

- 289 Around 60 per cent of learners receive an individual learning plan (ILP) or personal development plan (PDP) at the outset of their learning. Wave 4 learners with an ILP or PDP were more satisfied overall, and we also know from qualitative and quantitative findings that setting out expectations and clarifying how assessment will work are important factors for learners. Encouragingly, most learners say they receive adequate information about what their learning will entail, but there is clearly scope to ensure that more learners receive an ILP or PDP, which may help support or increase satisfaction and/or the quality of learning.

Support for learning in the employing organisation

- 290 The last two waves have shown increasing collaboration between employer and learner at the outset of training. Learners have felt that their learning is beneficial to their employers as well as to themselves. There does appear, therefore, to be recognition by employers of the mutual benefits of Train to Gain, and this appears to translate into more active support.
- 291 Although most learners do not receive study leave, there is no evidence that they particularly need or want it. Furthermore, the quantitative and qualitative evidence throughout the evaluation shows that employers do support learners in a number of other ways – for example, by offering flexibility to fit training or assessment around the requirements of the job, or ensuring that the tutor or assessor has access to the workplace.

Support to learn, regular feedback and encouragement

- 292 Support from assessors, tutors, employers and colleagues has been shown to be an important factor for learners. Flexible and readily available assessors, in particular, ensure that learners can gain recognition of their achievements in a timely way. A small number of learners have taken longer to achieve because assessors have been unavailable, have lost portfolios or have moved on to other posts. The relationship between learner and assessor or tutor appears to be one of the most important factors influencing whether learners have a positive or a negative experience.

Information, advice and guidance about future learning opportunities

- 293 There is a case for increasing, improving or speeding up the availability of post-learning information, advice and guidance (IAG). Most learners – even those who leave their programmes early – think it likely that they will do more learning in the future. Most of those who were interested in further learning had also discussed further training with their employer or assessor. We cannot show a causal link, i.e. we do not know if learners who were interested sought out IAG or if they became interested **because** they received IAG. However, none of the Wave 3 new entrants had been spoken

to about their training since the last survey, which suggests that if discussions do not happen shortly after the training has been completed, they are unlikely to happen at all. We also know that, as time goes on, learners feel that it is less likely that they will pursue further learning.

- 294 At the very least, then, follow-up IAG and discussions about future learning must be available to all learners on completion. It also seems sensible to follow these discussions up, perhaps after six months or a year, once learners have had a chance to reflect, rest and consider what to do next.

Celebration and acknowledgement on completion

- 295 This theme has not been explored in any depth over the course of the evaluation. However, around a quarter of learners receive an ‘award’ from their employers on completion, and we also know that learners feel a sense of achievement, gain in confidence and feel motivated as a result of their training. All of this, combined with the additional skills and qualifications a learner acquires, means that, from the learner’s point of view, Train to Gain delivers a great deal to celebrate.

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- 296 Learner satisfaction has remained high, but has not increased in the course of the evaluation. Given the already high levels, driving it even higher is a great challenge; but there is still scope to improve. The quality of training, continuity of assessor (or a smooth transition between assessors), offering learners the opportunity to use their new skills in the workplace, and raising the profile of Train to Gain are options to explore in the drive to increase satisfaction and improve outcomes for current and future learners.

Annex A: Change in Train to Gain Population

Table A.1: Level 2 learners

		ILR population*		Change Wave 1 to Wave 4	Level 2 achieved sample
		Wave 1	Wave 4		
		%		%	%
Gender	Male	51	56	5	53
	Female	49	44	-5	47
Age	18–25	12	15	3	13
	26–35	25	26	1	24
	36–45	31	30	-1	31
	46–55	22	21	-1	22
	56+	9	9	0	9
Disability/learning difficulty	Yes	8	6	-2	6
	No	86	89	3	91
	Missing	6	4	-2	2
Ethnicity	White	86	81	-5	82
	Non-white/other	12	16	4	16
	Missing	3	3	0	2
Region	National	3	4	1	3
	East of England	7	9	2	9
	East Midlands	9	10	1	9
	London	7	15	8	14
	North East	8	5	-3	5
	North West	16	16	0	18
	South East	11	11	0	12
	South West	7	8	1	9
	West Midlands	17	13	-4	13
	Yorkshire and the Humber	15	10	-5	8

Table A.2: Level 3 learners

		ILR population*		Change Wave 1 to Wave 4	Level 3 achieved sample
		Wave 1	Wave 4		
				%	%
Gender	Male	37	28	-9	23
	Female	63	72	9	77
Age	18–25	16	12	-4	10
	26–35	29	30	1	25
	36–45	31	32	1	35
	46–55	17	21	4	25
	56+	7	5	-2	6
Disability/learning difficulty	Yes	3	6	3	7
	No	97	91	-6	91
	Missing		3	3	2
Ethnicity	White	85	77	-8	78
	Non-white/ other	11	21	10	21
	Missing	2	2	0	2
Region	National		3	3	2
	East of England		10	10	9
	East Midlands		5	5	6
	London	15	28	13	29
	North East		5	5	3
	North West	37	12	-25	12
	South East		14	14	13
	South West		6	6	7
	West Midlands	48	14	-34	16
	Yorkshire and the Humber		2	2	2

Annex B: Breakdown of Sample Leads

Table B.1: Breakdown of leads provided – longitudinal learners

Final sample status	Sample (N)	Total sample used (%)	Valid sample (%)
Total sample issued	5,186	100	
<i>Invalid sample</i>			
Bad telephone numbers	404	7.79	
No longer at address	49	0.94	
Ineligible/screened out (for example, respondent did not recall having signed up for/taking part in training)	25	0.48	
<i>Valid sample</i>			
	4,708		
Soft appointments	322	6.21	6.84
Hard appointments	15	0.29	0.32
Respondent quit interview	120	2.31	2.55
Refusal	836	16.12	17.76
Not available during fieldwork	13	0.25	0.28
Leads tried a max. number of times	172	3.32	3.65
Achieved interviews	3,230	62.28	68.61
<i>Response rate summary</i>			
Unadjusted response rate		62.28	
Adjusted response rate			68.61

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

Table B.2: Breakdown of leads provided – Level 2 new entrants

Final sample status	Sample (N)	Total sample used (%)	Valid sample (%)
Total sample issued	16,190	100	
<i>Invalid sample</i>			
Bad telephone numbers	3,559	21.98	
No longer at address	262	1.62	
Ineligible/screened out (for example, respondent did not recall having signed up for/taking part in training or out of quota)	879	5.43	
<i>Valid sample</i>			
	11,490		
Soft appointments	1,118	6.91	9.73
Hard appointments	128	0.79	1.11
Respondent quit interview	446	2.75	3.88
Refusal	2,552	15.76	22.21
Not available during fieldwork	70	0.43	0.61
Leads tried a max. number of times	2,374	14.66	20.66
Achieved interviews	4,802	29.66	41.79
<i>Response rate summary</i>			
Unadjusted response rate		29.66	
Adjusted response rate			41.79

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

Table B.3: Breakdown of leads provided – Level 3 new entrants

Final sample status	Sample (N)	Total sample used (%)	Valid sample (%)
Total sample issued	2,426	100	
<i>Invalid sample</i>			
Bad telephone numbers	376	15.50	
No longer at address	34	1.40	
Ineligible/screened out (for example, respondent did not recall having signed up for/taking part in training)	90	3.71	
<i>Valid sample</i>			
	1,926		
Soft appointments	254	10.47	13.19
Hard appointments	35	1.44	1.82
Respondent quit interview	63	2.60	3.27
Refusal	347	14.30	18.02
Not available during fieldwork	3	0.12	0.16
Leads tried a max. number of times	250	10.31	12.98
Achieved interviews	974	40.15	50.57
<i>Response rate summary</i>			
Unadjusted response rate		40.15	
Adjusted response rate			50.57

Source: Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

Annex C: Training and Qualifications

Table C.1: Occupational group by whether fully or part funded (new entrants)

	Level 2		Level 3		Total NE	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Managers and Senior Officials	284	6	117	12	400	7
Professional occupations	176	4	70	7	246	4
Associate Professional and Technical	210	4	71	7	281	5
Administrative and Secretarial	275	6	83	9	358	6
Skilled Trades occupations	782	16	77	8	859	15
Personal Service occupations	1,360	28	489	50	1,850	32
Sales and Customer Service occupations	333	7	26	3	359	6
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	807	17	12	1	819	14
Elementary occupations	530	11	24	3	554	10
Other/not known/unemployed	45	1	5	*	50	1
Total	4,802	100	974	100	5,776	100

Base = all learners, new entrant group: Wave 4 N = 5,776.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

Table C.2: Occupational group by whether fully or part funded (longitudinal)

	Level 2		Level 3		Total LL	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Managers and Senior Officials	162	6	79	15	241	8
Professional occupations	129	5	55	11	184	6
Associate Professional and Technical	137	5	45	9	182	6
Administrative and Secretarial	166	6	50	10	216	7
Skilled Trades occupations	415	15	26	5	441	14
Personal Service occupations	800	30	238	45	1,038	32
Sales and Customer Service occupations	227	8	13	3	240	7
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	309	11	11	2	320	10
Elementary occupations	316	12	7	1	323	10
Other/not known/unemployed	43	2	2	*	45	1
Total	2,704	100	526	100	3,230	100

Base = all learners, longitudinal group: Wave 4 N = 3,230. *Denotes less than 1 per cent.

Source: *Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)*

Annex D: Drivers of Satisfaction

This section provides more detail for the regression analysis described in the section on 'Satisfaction and Outcomes'.

Aggregate satisfaction scale

Generally, the vast bulk of completers are satisfied. Clearly this is a good outcome, but statistically it limits the tools that can be used. Therefore, we created an aggregate satisfaction scale.

The individual satisfaction scales are all clustered around the 'very satisfied' point on the scales. This means that individually they supply insufficient differentiation to allow multivariate approaches to any analysis. By aggregating all the non-missing scores, a single overall (or aggregate) satisfaction scale was developed. This scale had greater variation in scores and so allowed more sophisticated analysis. The following satisfaction scales were used to create the single aggregate scale.

- How satisfied are/were you with the training and qualification?
- How satisfied are/were you with the information and advice prior to starting?
- How satisfied are/were you with the length of time it took to do the training/ qualifications?
- How satisfied are/were you with the quality of the teaching you have received?
- How satisfied are/were you with the support from your employer?

This scale was then tested to ensure that all the elements of the scale were consistent with the overall scale. This was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, which, at 0.785, indicated that all the sub-scales were aligned – i.e. that if someone was satisfied with the training and qualification, they were also likely to be satisfied with the other aspects of Train to Gain.

Regression analysis

Having created an aggregate scale, it was then possible to test which factors might be determining overall satisfaction. The most successful regression generated an adjusted R-square of 0.104 (which is relatively low, but, given the nature of the variables we were using and their distributions, is an acceptable value). Essentially, this means that the variables that are included in the regression equation accounted for 10 per cent of the variance in overall satisfaction. This means that there remains a further 90 per cent, which we cannot explain using the variables included in the regression.

Table D.1 provides the technical information from the regression. The variance inflation factors (VIF) were all close to 1, which meant that the variables included were not simply echoes of each other but were independent.

Table D.1: Regression and aggregate satisfaction of completers

	Standard errors	Standardised coefficients	Significance	VIF
(Constant)	0.286	–	0.000	–
How important was it to you personally to achieve the qualification?	0.098	0.257	0.000	1.044
How important was it to your employer that you achieved the qualification?	0.077	0.139	0.000	1.039
How many weeks did it take you to complete?	0.005	0.084	0.000	1.008
How long do/did you typically spend with your assessor when you see/saw them?	0.039	-0.051	0.014	1.004

Source Train to Gain employee survey Wave 4 (winter 2008)

A wide range of other potential explanatory variables were examined and were found to have no significant impact on overall satisfaction, once the four variables above had been taken into account. Those variables included gender, age, the degree to which the training was challenging, and the amount of time spent per week on the training.

