

**SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR IMPACT
EVALUATIONS WHICH RELY ON
BENEFICIARIES SELF-
ASSESSMENT**

Evidence and guidance

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Survey Questions for Impact Evaluations which rely on beneficiaries self-assessment: evidence and guidance

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1 BACKGROUND

The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) is the government department with a remit to improve the productivity and competitiveness of UK businesses. It is responsible for a range of initiatives and regulations that are designed to assist businesses in order to help achieve this goal. The Department commissions surveys that are designed to evaluate whether or not these initiatives and regulations have made the intended difference. Particular research questions, which the surveys seek to address include:

- what *economic* impact the initiative or regulation has had on businesses: i.e. what have been the financial gains or costs to businesses arising from it; and
- whether this impact was a result of the initiative or regulation itself or whether it would have happened anyway.

These types of research questions are often difficult to answer for a number of reasons. The Department commissioned NatCen's Questionnaire Development and Testing (QDT) Hub to evaluate the current methodology employed on many BIS surveys that seek to measure the economic impact of these initiatives or regulations on businesses. The methodology used relies on businesses being able to self-report the impact that the initiative/ regulation has had on their business. A set of survey questions attempt to measure the economic impact, both in terms of quantifying the impact in monetary terms and qualitatively, in terms of measuring the perceived impact. NatCen tested these original survey questions in 2007 using cognitive interviewing methods and proposed some modifications¹, with the revised questions being tested again. The original testing involved businesses who had taken part in the Business Cross Product Monitoring Survey. As a result of this second round of testing further recommendations were made, to revise question-wording further². This report is concerned with the findings from further cognitive testing of these revised questions, undertaken in early 2010, and in reviewing the guidance contained in the Green Book, regarding the use of self assessment as a tool in programme evaluation.

1.1 Research design

Sixteen cognitive interviews (15 face-to-face and one telephone interview) were conducted with predominantly small businesses, who had recently taken part in the *Solutions for Business Monitor Survey*. The rationale for following up businesses who had participated in this survey was that it had recently

¹ McGee A, Andrews F and Legard R, Collins D (2009) *Assessing the Economic impact of BERR policies: findings from round one cognitive interviews*. Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.

² McGee A, Andrews F and Legard R (2009) *Assessing the Economic impact of BERR policies: findings from round two cognitive interviews*. Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.

been in the field and focused on a different set of products to those covered by the Business Cross Product Monitoring Survey. Fourteen businesses were located on a single site and two were multi-site businesses. More details on the methodology used for this cognitive interviewing study are contained in Appendix A.

The *Solutions for Business Monitor Survey* covers a range of business support activities aimed at a wide variety of businesses. In this round of cognitive testing, businesses had received one (or more) of the following **six** support and advice products, described in table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Description of support and advice products received

Product Name	Description
Starting a Business (SAB)	Free advice to help those wishing to start a business. Advice and information on all aspects of setting up and running a successful business, from an assessment of a business idea to advice on business planning and finance. Also includes post start-up guidance. Eligibility: Individuals and groups starting a business.
Intensive Start Up Support (ISUS)	Free advice and intensive assistance (in addition to what's provided by Starting a Business) for under-represented individuals to help them start their own business. Eligibility: Prioritised based on locality and the needs of the individual. This includes, but is not restricted to, women, people with disabilities and black and minority ethnic communities.
Starting a High Growth Business (SaHGB)	Free help for new businesses (and people developing a business concept) identified as having high-growth potential. Intensive individual coaching through workshops, networks and online resources to help achieve rapid growth. One-to-one mentoring is also envisaged. Eligibility: Companies in specific sectors that have the potential to achieve turnover of £500,000 to £1 million or higher within three years of starting to trade.
Understanding Finance for Business (UFFB)	Free advice and support from specialist advisors to ensure that entrepreneurs and businesses understand their options for getting the money they need to start and grow a business. Includes a diagnosis of financial needs and facilitated introduction to potential sources of finance. Eligibility: Small and medium start-up and growth businesses (under 250 employees) lacking an understanding of finance options and the skills to develop their propositions and access to potential investors.
Innovation, Advice and Guidance (IAG)	Innovation advice and guidance from experts, providing businesses with expert knowledge and highly specialised and technical skills to innovate and improve performance. Eligibility: Small and medium sized businesses (under 250 employees) and social enterprises seeking innovative approaches to tackling barriers to growth. Advice to businesses with 250 or more employees is provided but at full market rate.
Coaching for High Growth (CHG)	A free, structured coaching programme helping new and existing businesses with the desire and potential to achieve significant growth. The coaching is a customised, intensive, one-to-one programme provided by experienced mentors. It is supplemented by workshops, networks and online resources. Eligibility: Small and medium sized businesses (under 250 employees) with the potential to achieve high growth.

Cognitive interviewing methods were used to explore the mental thought processes respondents used to answer questions included in the *Solutions for Business Monitor Survey*, concerned with collecting information to allow the measurement of economic change and the counterfactual. Specifically these methods focus on four stages: how respondents understand and interpret survey questions; how they recall information that applies to them; the judgements they make as to what information to use when formulating their answers; and how they respond.

The format of the cognitive interviews was as follows: respondents were asked the survey questions and their answers recorded on a paper questionnaire. They were asked to think aloud as they answered the questions, and specific issues were followed up using retrospective probes. The interviews were audio recorded with respondent-consent; the recordings reviewed and detailed notes made. These notes and recording were then analysed using a content analysis approach. A copy of the test questions and cognitive probes is contained in Appendix B.

1.2 Report structure

The purpose of this report is to detail the findings from this ‘third round’ of cognitive testing, and provide recommendations on the wording of the survey questions. Findings and recommendations are presented in Chapter 2. Appendix D contains a summary of the wording of questions recommended for use with small businesses. Chapter 3 contains a review of the Cabinet Office’s Green Book guidance on conducting evaluations, specifically focusing on the issues to consider when using the self-assessment methods.

2 COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS

This chapter sets out the findings from cognitive testing, which took place between late January and mid February 2010. Each section contains the:

1. recommendations put forward to the Department following the second round of cognitive testing, which took place in 2007; all of which were taken forward by this study. The question numbering used in the third round of testing is shown in **green bold**. The **NEW** suffix indicates a new question recommended following the second round of cognitive testing;
2. questions that were cognitively tested (the full questionnaire can be found in Appendix B);
3. an outline of the findings at that question; and
4. recommendations and suggested wording changes, when appropriate.

We would advise that any changes suggested following this round of cognitive testing are tested again to see that they fully address the issue and do not inadvertently introduce new problems.

2.1 Referring to the intervention

2.1.1 Terminology respondents used

At the beginning of the interview, before we asked the 'test' survey questions, respondents were asked to name the Business Support Package that they had received from the BIS. As was found in earlier rounds of cognitive testing, undertaken in 2007 (refer to McGee et al, 2009, op cit), the ability of respondents to recall the name of the package received was variable. Factors that affected recall of the package received included:

- the length of time that had elapsed since respondents took part in the scheme;
- the number of other schemes they had participated in;
- whether they had actively sought involvement in the scheme or had been referred to it, specifically through Business Link; and
- whether the package had been branded using the title referred to in the survey questions, or in some other way. In the case of the latter, respondents referred to the package in terms of who delivered the advice or 'training' (Business Link, Wirral Biz, private sector named provider) or by a course/programme working title (Access to Finance, High-Growth Programme).

Prompting – the interviewer reading out the name and description of each programme – helped some respondents to identify the programme they had been involved in but not all. This issue is discussed further in section 3.3.

2.2 Multi-site businesses: unit of analysis

Recommendations from round 2 testing to establish unit of analysis for multi-site businesses

- Include a battery of questions (for multi-site businesses only) on the number of workplaces and number of employees at the outset of the questionnaire, to establish the link between workplace and (entire) business. This link can then be used to aggregate or scale the answers so that they are comparable across the whole sample³. NB: Sole UK sites of foreign-owned businesses will be treated as single-site businesses (i.e. they will not be routed to any multi-site questions).
- Add two questions (for multi-site businesses only) to the questions on annual turnover (Q5) to determine the annual turnover for that particular workplace. This will assist in scaling respondents' answers to ensure comparability.
- Add questions, in advance of each set of questions, to determine whether the respondent would prefer to answer for about a specific workplace or the business as a whole.

Questions Cognitively tested

NEW1 *What is the main activity of this workplace?*

INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

NEW2 *Is this workplace one of a number of different workplaces in the UK belonging to the same organisation, a single independent workplace or the sole UK workplace of a foreign organisation?*

One of a number of different workplaces in the UK

belonging to the same organisation

(ASK NEW3)

Single independent workplace

(Go to NEW5)

Sole UK workplace of a foreign organisation

(Go to NEW5)

³ These questions were adapted from questions used as part of the Workplace Employees Relations Survey (WERS).

IF PART OF A LARGER ORGANISATION IN THE UK

NEW3 *How many workplaces, including this one, are there within your organisation in the UK?* INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

NEW4 *Approximately, how many employees are on the UK payroll of your organisation (i.e. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland)? That is the whole organisation in the UK, not just your present location where you work?* WRITE IN: _____

ASK ALL

NEW5 *And how many employees are there on the UK payroll at this/your workplace?* INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

NEW6 *When answering these questions please think about your workplace only*

INTERVIEWER: READ WORDING BELOW EXACTLY AS WRITTEN

INTRO ASK ALL

I am now going to run through some of the questions you might be asked as part of the BIS survey about the scheme you took part in. I'd like you to try and answer the questions and as you do so please talk me through any issues they raise. We'll then talk about these issues a bit more.

The first few questions are about the benefits you might have experienced that resulted from your participation in < SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG > and whether you would have experienced these regardless of this participation.

Findings

Earlier rounds of cognitive testing found that respondents working at businesses with more than one 'site' or 'workplace' were not consistent in terms of which unit (site or organisation as a whole) they reported on when answering the questions. Specifically there was a tendency to think about the business as a whole when answering the earlier questions on general finance (Q4-7) but to consider the workplace at which the intervention was awarded when answering the later economic impact questions (Q8-11). A new battery of questions was recommended (NEW1-5, shown above) with the aim of identifying, at subsequent questions, which unit (site or organisation as a whole) the respondent was reporting on and to standardise answers for analysis purposes. The approach proposed was based on that used on the Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS).

This round of testing identified a practical problem with this approach: how to identify whether the business has multiple sites, and therefore should be asked these new questions? Administrative data, collected when the business applied to take part in the programme, could be used to identify multi-site businesses. However not all programmes collect administrative data, and even when it is collected it may not be collected in a standardised way.

Moreover the information could be out-of-date by the time the interview is undertaken.

Recommendation

- Collect (or link to administrative data to obtain) the characteristics of businesses who (apply to) take part in a BIS programme in a standardised way. This should include information on the size of the business (single or multi-site, number of employees) and how long the business has been in existence for. This information is contained on the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) and could linking to the IDBR should be explored. Moreover such information (size of business, single or multi site etc) should be used when selecting samples for BIS surveys aimed at measuring economic impact, and should be made available to survey contractors for this purpose, subject to the appropriate data protection and security arrangements being in place.

NEW1 to NEW6

In the absence of (available) administrative data, we asked all respondents questions NEW1 to NEW6. The terms ‘workplace’ and ‘organisation’ were not generally seen as appropriate descriptions of such small, fledgling businesses: respondents used the term ‘business’ and wanted to talk about it in this way. Not all respondents felt they had ‘a workplace’ – a fixed, physical place from which they ran their business. The workplace could include the car, the home office/studio, and/or the client’s premises. The term ‘organisation’ implied something bigger, involving more than one or two people, with more than one office. However it could also denote the way in which the business was organised (“*where they are in charge of you*”) or how it was described on the internet (by the suffix *.org*).

Recommendations

- Re-order questions as follows NEW2, NEW 3, NEW4, NEW1. NEW6 to be dropped as not required.
- When interview length is limited it may not be practical to ask NEW1 to NEW6. However, this decision should be made based on the characteristics of the target survey population (i.e. how heterogeneous it is in terms of single/multi-site businesses) and how accurate the evaluation evidence on the size of economic impact needs to be.

2.3 Benefits resulting from the intervention - New7-1a

2.3.1 The intervention's contribution to the business - New7-1a

Recommendations from round 2 testing

- The minor changes to the question wording proposed following stage 1 have worked well. The question wording should be retained.
- There is no evidence of option 3 providing any clear-cut alternative to the other four options so we recommend that it be deleted (suggestion from Alex Bryson).
- Add a **new** question (**NEW7**) for multi-site businesses to determine whether respondents would prefer to think about the workplace or the business as a whole (suggestion from Alex Bryson).
- Textfill business/workplace depending on the answer to this new question.
- Reading out the response options over the phone could pose problems especially where the answer was not clear-cut. A visual stimulus would be advantageous Consider sending out a show card in advance of the interview.

Questions cognitively tested

IF MULTI SITE BUSINESS:

NEW7 When thinking about the contribution your participation in < SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB, or CHG > has made to your organisation/workplace, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?

This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

ASK ALL

SHOW CARD 1

Q1 Thinking about your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB, or CHG >, what contribution has it made, or do you expect it **will** make to your <organisation/workplace>? Do you think ...

you would (have) probably achieve(d) similar results?	01 (ask Q1a)
you would (have) definitely achieve(d) similar results	02 (ask Q1a)
you would (have) probably not have achieve(d) similar results, or	03 (go to Q2)
you would (have) definitely not have achieve(d) similar results	04 (go to Q2)
(None of these)	05 (go to Q2)
(Don't Know)	06 (go to Q2)
(Refused)	07 (go to Q2)

Q1a And do you think you would have achieved similar results in the same time frame, over a longer time frame, or in a shorter time frame had you not taken part in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB, or CHG >?

Same time frame	01
Longer time frame	02
Shorter time frame	03
(Don't know)	04
(Refused)	05

Findings

New7

Of the two multi-site organisations who participated in this test, both choose to answer questions concerning impact in relation to the organisation as a whole. Both correctly understood the distinction between a workplace and an organisation.

Contribution of participation to business - Q1 answer options

The show card was helpful in aiding respondents' retention of the answer options and in them considering which one was most appropriate.

In some cases, when respondents were uncertain about what support package they had received they thought about their main point of contact for support and information in general (typically in relation to starting up their business) – which was usually Business Link.

Respondents' expectations of what they wanted to achieve from participation in the support package influenced their choice of answer.

Recommendation Q1

- Retain question as currently worded.

Speed at which would have achieved similar results - Q1a

Sometimes this question was felt to be complicated and wordy, evidenced by requests for interviewers to re-read it, and respondents changing their answer having heard the question again (as part of the cognitive probing).

Recommendation for Q1a

Simplify wording – **Q1a** Would you have achieved similar results if you had not taken part in [NAME OF PROGRAMME] in the...RUNNING PROMPT...
...same time frame,
a longer time frame, or
a shorter time frame?
DK, REF

2.3.2 Whether intervention provided something unique – Qs 2,3a & 3b

Q2-3 Recommendations from round 2 cognitive testing

- Tell respondent about the rating scale before reading out the statement so that it is firmly top-of-mind. Then repeat again after the statement has been read out.
- The term “support package” successfully conveys the added value element of BIS support. Need to be aware that respondents may rate according to their “total experience” of the BIS support package.
- Question 3a should be asked of those giving a 1 or 2 rating at question 2.
- Question 3b should be asked of those giving a rating of 3,4 or 5 at question 2.

ASK ALL

Q2 *I am going to read out a statement. I would like you to give me an answer using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is ‘agree strongly’ and 5 is ‘disagree strongly’.*

Thinking about <this/your workplace only/the organisation as a whole>),to what extent would you agree with this statement:

The <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG> has provided, or will provide, a support package that I could not have got from any other source’?

May I remind you that 1 is ‘agree strongly’ and 5 is ‘disagree strongly’.

1 - Agree strongly

2

3

4

5 - Disagree strongly

(Don't Know)

(Refused) _____

IF Q2= 1 or 2

Q3a

What was it that the <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG,UFFB, CHG, UFFB> provided you with, or is expected to provide you with that you couldn't have got elsewhere?

INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

IF Q2= 3,4 or 5

Q3b

What or who could have provided you with the same as the <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG,UFFB or CHG> scheme?

INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

Findings

Whether the intervention has provided support that could not have been obtained from another source – Q2

The term 'support package' covered:

- initial advice, information and answers to respondents' questions;
- on-going advice, information and motivation; and
- training and workshops.

Not all respondents thought that they had received a 'support package': the programme had not lived up to its billing and or had not provided on-going support. For example, one respondent who had taken part in ISUS, answered 3 because the support had been quite good at the beginning when he was setting up his business but that there had not been enough support once it was up and running. Another respondent who had taken part in ISUS, answered 5 because she felt the 'package' was not aimed at people like her, who were already in business. Moreover the decision to engage in the programme was not always a pro-active one: sometimes respondents had been recommended to participate by an advisor, such as someone from Business Link. This meant they did not always know what other options, if any, were available.

Answer scale

The agree/disagree scale labelling for this question was reversed at wave 2 (strongly disagree was originally labelled 1 but was then labelled 5) following a recommendation in the round one cognitive testing report (McGee et al 2009, op cit), which suggested that the reversal was more in-keeping with what was done on other surveys. There was no evidence from round one that the direction of the scale was problematic, nor did the round two testing report any problems.

However, during this round of testing, on occasion the scale labelling, specifically the direction (1 being strongly agree and 5 being strongly disagree) caused confusion, resulting in errors being made by respondents in reporting their answers. When this confusion arose respondents struggled to retain the scale labels in their heads. They therefore thought that the scale ran from negative to positive – the bigger the number the more positive the agreement. This suggests that the direction of the scale is counter-intuitive and that when respondents fail to retain the labels given when the question is read out, they will label the scale based on what they would expect (the higher the score the better it is).

Recommendation for Q2

- Re-label the scale so that 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree.

2.4 Financial profile of the company Q4-New11

2.4.1 Annual turnover Q5a to New11

Recommendations from round 2 testing

- Retain the question wording for Q4.
- Remove the introduction currently read out before Q5. Leave the sentence 'The next few questions are about the financial performance of your business', but move it to sit before Q4.
- Retain the specified time frame.
- Retain the answer bands in Q5b.
- Add a **new** question (**NEW8**) following Q5b – *Were you thinking about annual turnover before or after tax?*
- Add three **new** questions (**NEW9-NEW11**) (for multi-site businesses only) to establish annual turnover of the workplace.

ASK ALL

The next few questions are about the financial performance of your business.

Q4 When does your business's financial year start and end?

INTERVIEWER: IF FINANCIAL YEAR VARIES ASK FOR THE LAST COMPLETE FINANCIAL YEAR.

INTERVIEWER: PLEASE CODE THE START MONTH.

January	01
February	02
March	03
April	04
May	05
June	06
July	07
August	08
September	09
October	10
November	11
December	12

INTERVIEWER: PLEASE CODE THE END MONTH.

January	01
February	02
March	03
April	04
May	05
June	06
July	07
August	08
September	09
October	10
November	11
December	12

INTERVIEWER: READ WORDING BELOW EXACTLY AS WRITTEN

Q5aIntro *The next few questions are about the financial performance of your business. These questions are designed to enable BIS to assess the impact or likely impact of your participation in < SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG,UFFB, CHG, UFFB>.*

Q5a *What was the annual turnover of your organisation in the last complete financial year? You may also refer to turnover as income, sales, invoices or receipts.*

£

DK 8

Refused 9

Not yet completed first financial year 7 GO TO NEWQ15INTRO

IF Q5a=DK

Q5b *If you had to estimate the annual turnover of your organisation in the last complete financial year, roughly into which of the following bands would you place it?*

READ OUT

£0 01

Less than £100,000 02

£100,000 but less than £200,000 03

£200,000 but less than £500,000 04

£500,000 but less than £1million 05

£1million but less than £2million 06

£2million but less than £5million 07

£5million but less than £10million 08

£10million but less than £25million 09

£25million but less than £50million 10

More than £50million 11

(Don't Know) 12

(Refused)

13

ASK IF GIVEN AMOUNT AT Q5a or Q5b

NEW8 *Were you thinking about annual turnover before or after tax?*

Before tax 01

After tax 02

(Don't Know) 03

(Refused) 04

IF MULTI-SITE BUSINESS	
NEW9 And what was the annual turnover for this/your workplace in the last complete financial year? You may also refer to turnover as income, sales, invoices or receipts.	
£	01
(Don't Know)	02
(Refused)	03
IF NEW9=DK	
NEW10 If you had to estimate the annual turnover for this/your workplace in the last complete financial year, roughly into which of the following bands would you place it?	
READ OUT	
£0	01
Less than £100,000	02
£100,000 but less than £200,000	03
£200,000 but less than £500,000	04
£500,000 but less than £1million	05
£1million but less than £2million	06
£2million but less than £5million	07
£5million but less than £10million	08
£10million but less than £25million	09
£25million but less than £50million	10
More than £50million	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13
IF MULTI-SITE BUSINESS AND GIVEN AMOUNT AT NEW9 OR NEW10	
NEW11 Were you thinking about annual turnover before or after tax?	
Before tax	01
After tax	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

Findings

Financial year - Q4

Unlike in round 2, in this round we found cases where respondents were uncertain about when their financial year started and ended. This uncertainty related to how:

- recently the business had come into existence; and
- much experience and knowledge the respondent had about business finance (this was sometimes related to how recently the business was set up).

One respondent queried whether he should report the date he started trading (January 2009) or when the accountant did the first accounts from (September 2009). He gave the accountant's date.

Annual turnover - Q5 / Q9

Questions on annual turnover were not applicable to businesses that had not completed their first financial year. There needs to be a way of identifying such businesses: currently there is no means for the interviewer to code this is the case. However in one case the respondent gave an estimate, as an amount, of what he anticipated the annual turnover would be because his financial year was ending the following month.

As was found in earlier rounds of testing, respondents understanding of what annual turnover is, what it includes and excludes, was variable.

Two respondents were asked the multi-site version of the annual turnover questions. These respondents had also been asked the single-site version of these questions, in error.

Before or after tax - NEW8

This question was understood and presented no problems to respondents. All who were asked it answered 'before tax'.

Recommendations

- Include a question after Q4 that ascertains if a the business has completed its first financial.
- Consider whether questions on annual turnover, employment costs and profit and loss should be asked of those who have not completed a full financial year. Our recommendation is that they should be asked to estimate what they anticipate these to be.
- Retain NEW8 as currently worded.

2.4.2 Employment costs **NEW12**, Q6a & Q6b

Recommendations from round 2 testing

- Leave the question wording as it is for the different interventions.
- Add the wording 'redundancy pay' in the list of examples of costs to include.
- Retain the answer categories.
- Add a **new** question (**NEW12**) for multi-site businesses to determine whether respondents would prefer to think about the workplace or the business as a whole (suggestion from Alex Bryson).
- Textfill business/workplace depending on the answer to this new question.

ASK IF MULTI SITE

NEW12 *The next question is about total employment costs. When thinking about total employment costs, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?*

This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

ASK ALL

Q6a *Approximately what were the total employment costs to this <organisation/workplace> in the last complete financial year? Please include all employee costs, such as salaries, pensions, social security, dividends paid to Directors and redundancy pay.*

£	
(Don't Know)	08
(Refused)	09

IF Q6a=DK

Q6b *If you had to estimate the total employment costs to this <organisation/workplace> in the last complete financial year, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT

£0	
01	
Less than £100,000	02
£100,000 but less than £200,000	03
£200,000 but less than £500,000	04
£500,000 but less than £1million	05
£1million but less than £2million	06
£2million but less than £5million	07
£5million but less than £10million	08
£10million but less than £25million	09
£25million but less than £50million	10
More than £50million	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	

Findings

In this round of testing, in the absence of routing instructions, interviewers were uncertain as to whether these questions applied to new businesses that had yet to complete a full financial year. This uncertainty resulted in some respondents being asked these questions (in error) and providing an estimate.

A recurrent query raised was whether freelancer costs should be included or whether employment costs only referred to PAYE staff costs. Several businesses used freelancers to cover work but varied in whether they included them. Whether the inclusion of freelancers would have made a difference to answer band given (none were able to give an actual amount) is not certain as the bands offered at this question were very broad. Respondents were not always able, of the top-of-their-heads, to calculate the costs of freelancers, however in one case the respondent was certain that even if he had have included them it would have made no difference to the answer he gave (which was code 1, less than £100,000).

Recommendations

- Consider whether employment costs questions should be asked of ‘new’ businesses, which have yet to complete a full financial year. Either include routing instructions to bypass these questions or tailor wording to indicate what time period respondents should consider (last complete financial year/ what you anticipate your employment costs will be at the end of your first complete financial year).
- Include an instruction, as part of the question wording, on whether freelancer costs should be included in estimates of employment costs (e.g. include/ exclude freelancer costs).

2.4.3 Annual profits/losses *New13-New14*

Recommendations from round 2 testing

- Add a **new** question (**NEW13**) for multi-site businesses to determine whether respondents would prefer to think about the workplace or the business as a whole (suggestion from Alex Bryson).
- Textfill business/workplace depending on the answer to this new question.
- Change the wording at Q7a to read ‘In the last complete financial year, did your business make an annual profit or loss’. This should remove any confusion from asking about ‘current financial year’ followed by the ‘last complete financial year’.
- Leave the spontaneous answer category ‘(Neither a profit nor a loss)’ at Q7a. This should only be used where the respondent offers the information rather than it being read out.
- Route respondents who answered ‘Neither a profit nor a loss’ at Q7a past Q7b and Q7c.
- Remove the words ‘bottom line’ from Q7b and Q7c. This will create consistency with Q7a (suggestion from Alex Bryson).
- Retain the wording ‘the last complete financial year’ in Q7b and Q7c.
- Leave the bands at Q7c as they are.
- Add a **new** question (**NEW14**) following Q7c – Were you thinking of your annual <profit/loss> before or after tax?

Questions Cognitively Tested

ASK IF MULTI SITE

NEW13 *The next questions are about profits and losses. When thinking about profits and losses, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?*

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| This workplace only | 01 |
| The organisation as a whole | 02 |
| (Don't Know) | 03 |
| (Refused) | 04 |

ASK ALL

Q7a *In the last complete financial year, did your <organisation/workplace> make an annual profit or loss?*

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Profit | 01 (Go to Q7b) |
| Loss | 02 (Go to Q7b) |
| (Neither a profit nor a loss) (spontaneous response) | 03 (Go to NEW14) |
| (Don't Know) | 04 (Go to NEW15Intro) |
| (Refused) | 05 (Go to NEW15Intro) |

Q7b *What was your annual <profit/loss> for the last complete financial year?*

- £
- (Don't Know)
- (Refused)

IF Q7b=DK

Q7c *If you had to estimate your annual <profits/losses> for the last complete financial year, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| £0 | 01 |
| Less than £100,000 | 02 |
| £100,000 but less than £200,000 | 03 |
| £200,000 but less than £500,00 | 04 |
| £500,000 but less than £1million | 05 |
| £1million but less than £2million | 06 |
| £2million but less than £5million | 07 |
| £5million but less than £10million | 08 |
| £10million but less than £25million | 09 |
| £25million but less than £50million | 10 |
| More than £50million | 11 |
| (Don't Know) | 12 |
| (Refused) | 13 |

NEW14 *Were you thinking of your annual <profit/loss> before or after tax?*

Before tax	01
After tax	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

Findings

Questions on profit and loss are designed to be asked in relation to the 'last complete financial year'. As mentioned earlier, we interviewed people who had set up businesses within the past 12 months and therefore had not completed a full financial year. Currently there is no means by which interviewers can identify and record such circumstances, and interviewers were uncertain as to whether to ask these questions. In some cases those who had not completed a full financial year were asked these questions and were able to estimate whether they would make a profit or loss and indicate within which band (at **Q7c**) this profit/loss fell. A decision needs to be made about whether such businesses should be asked these questions, and the wording amended as necessary.

Those unable to give a figure at **Q7b** were able to choose an appropriate answer band at **Q7c**. The bands offered at **Q7c** were felt to be very broad, and all answers given (including actual amounts) fell within the first band (less than £100,000) suggesting that the bands need to be modified depending on the target population (small or larger businesses). The fact that the bands were so broad meant that respondents felt very confident about their estimates.

One respondent queried whether these questions applied to him, as his business was a 'not-for-profit' organisation. He reported the surplus made in the preceding year, which was ploughed back into the business.

NEW13 asked respondents whether they wanted to report profit or loss figures for the workplace or organisation as a whole. A filter is required, so this question is only asked of multi-site businesses. The two multi-site businesses who took part in this test answered for the organisation as a whole.

Before or after tax - NEW14

A recommendation from the round 2 testing was that questions on profit or loss should be asked first, with a follow up question checking whether the amount given was before or after tax. This new question worked well, identifying figures given before and after tax.

Recommendations

- Include explicit filter instructions for question **NEW13**.
- Consider whether profit and loss questions should be asked of 'new' businesses, which have yet to complete a full financial year. Either include routing instructions to bypass these questions or tailor wording to indicate what time period respondents should consider (last complete financial year/ what you anticipate your profit or loss will be at the end of your first complete financial year).
- Include interviewer instructions on how to treat not-for-profit organisations.
- Tailor the banding of Q7c to reflect the characteristics of the target survey population (i.e. finer bands at the bottom end and broader bands at the top end of the answer scale for smaller businesses)
- Retain **NEW14** as currently worded.

2.5 Financial impact of participating in the scheme **New15-Q8a**

2.5.1 Costs of participating in the intervention **New15- Q8a**

Recommendations from round 2 testing

- Alter the introduction to make clear that the questions will ask firstly about costs and returns to date, then future costs and returns, resulting from the intervention.
- Change the terminology so that 'gains' is replaced with 'returns'. We anticipate that this will improve the question as currently it may be biased towards positive responses, (suggestion from Alex).
- Add a **new** question for (**NEW15**) multi-site businesses to determine whether respondents would prefer to think about the workplace or the business as a whole (suggestion from Alex Bryson).
- Textfill business/workplace depending on the answer to this new question
- Start by asking a new general question (**NEW16**) about what the costs have been overall. If respondents answer £0 route them past this section.
- Follow this up with the specific questions about cost for each of the 4 categories (Q8c). The two sets of questions can then be compared (suggestion from Alex Bryson).

- Combine staff time and salaries to make 4 categories at Q8c.
- Add two **new** questions (**NEW17, NEW18**) before Q8d/e and improve the wording at Q8d/e to make clearer this question wants to find any costs not included at Q8c.
- Follow up with a general qualitative question about whether the costs have been significant, moderate or minimal (Q8a).
- Remove (No costs incurred to date) from Q8a as respondents would be routed past this question if they had not incurred costs.
- Delete Q8b as this did not make sense to respondents.
- Move the question about future costs (Q8f) to a separate section dedicated to the future.
- Retain the five year reference period at Q8f.
- Remove routing at Q8f so the question is asked regardless of whether the intervention is complete.
- Consider using a show card at this question to help respondents visualise the range of bands. This is discussed in more detail in section 2.7 of the McGee et al (2009) report..
- Consider moving to a longitudinal design, asking the questions on economic impact some time in the future, separately from the earlier questions on implementation. This would allow a more informed self-reported answer. This is discussed in more detail in section 2.7 of the McGee et al (2009) report.

Questions cognitively tested

NEW 15Intro *Now I'd like you to think specifically about the financial impact of...*

...your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >. This section will ask firstly about costs and secondly about returns to your organisation/workplace to date, resulting from your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >. _____

ASK IF MULTI SITE

NEW15 *When thinking about the costs of...*

...your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?

This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

ASK ALL

NEW16 *Firstly thinking about costs, If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date...*

resulting from your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>, into which of the following bands would you place them?

READ OUT

£0	01 (Go to next section New19)
Less than £10,000	02 (Go to Q8c1)
£10,000 but less than £50,000	03 (Go to Q8c1)
£50,000 but less than £100,000	04 (Go to Q8c1)
£100,000 but less than £200,000	05 (Go to Q8c1)
£200,000 but less than £500,000	06 (Go to Q8c1)
£500,000 but less than £1million	07 (Go to Q8c1)
£1million but less than £2million	08 (Go to Q8c1)
£2million but less than £5million	09 (Go to Q8c1)
£5million but less than £10million	10 (Go to Q8c1)
£10million or more	11 (Go to Q8c1)
(Don't Know)	12 (Go to Q8c1)
(Refused)	13 (Go to Q8c1)

Q8c1 *Now thinking only about staff time and salaries, what have been the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of staff time and salaries?*

£	01
(Don't Know)	02
(Refused)	03

IF Q8c1=DK

Q8c2 *If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of staff time and salaries, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £10,000	02
£10,000 but less than £50,000	03
£50,000 but less than £100,000	04
£100,000 but less than £200,000	05

£200,000 but less than £500,000	06
£500,000 but less than £1million	07
£1million but less than £2million	08
£2million but less than £5million	09
£5million but less than £10million	10
£10million or more	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

Q8c3 Next, thinking about consultancy, what have been the total consultancy costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date?

£

(Don't Know)

(Refused)

IF Q8c1=DK

Q8c4 If you had to estimate the total consultancy costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, into which of the following bands would you place them?

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £1000	02
£1,000 but less than £5,000	03
£5,000 but less than £10,000	04
£10,000 but less than £20,000	05
£20,000 but less than £50,000	06
£50,000 but less than £100,000	07
£100,000 but less than £500,000	08
£500,000 but less than £1million	09
£1million but less than £5million	10
More than £5million	11
(Don't know)	12
(Refused)	13

Q8c5 Now thinking about materials and equipment, what have been the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of materials and equipment?

£

(Don't Know)

(Refused)

IF Q8c1=DK

Q8c6 *If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of materials and equipment, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £10,000	02
£10,000 but less than £50,000	03
£50,000 but less than £100,000	04
£100,000 but less than £200,000	05
£200,000 but less than £500,000	06
£500,000 but less than £1million	07
£1million but less than £2million	08
£2million but less than £5million	09
£5million but less than £10million	10
£10million or more	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

Q8c7 *And lastly, thinking about training and mentoring, what have been the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of training and mentoring?*

- £
- (Don't Know)
- (Refused)

IF Q8c1=DK

Q8c8 *If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of training and mentoring, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £1000	02
£1,000 but less than £5,000	03
£5,000 but less than £10,000	04
£10,000 but less than £20,000	05
£20,000 but less than £50,000	06
£50,000 but less than £100,000	07
£100,000 but less than £500,000	08
£500,000 but less than £1million	09
£1million but less than £5million	10
More than £5million	11
(Don't know)	12
(Refused)	13

NEW17 *Have there been any other costs to your <organisation/workplace>, in addition to those you have just given me?*

- | | | |
|--------------|----|-----------|
| Yes | 01 | ASK NEW18 |
| No | 02 | GO TO Q8a |
| (Don't Know) | 11 | GO TO Q8a |
| (Refused) | 12 | GO TO Q8a |

ASK IF NEW17 CODED 1

NEW18 *What were these additional costs for? WRITE IN:*

Q8d *Thinking about these additional costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, what have the total costs been?*

- £
- (Don't Know)
- (Refused)

IF Q8d=DK

Q8e *If you had to estimate these additional costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| £0 | 01 |
| Less than £10,000 | 02 |
| £10,000 but less than £50,000 | 03 |
| £50,000 but less than £100,000 | 04 |
| £100,000 but less than £200,000 | 05 |
| £200,000 but less than £500,000 | 06 |
| £500,000 but less than £1million | 07 |
| £1million but less than £2million | 08 |
| £2million but less than £5million | 09 |
| £5million but less than £10million | 10 |
| £10million or more | 11 |
| (Don't Know) | 12 |
| (Refused) | 13 |

ASK ALL

Q8a *Overall, do you feel that the costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date...*

of your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG > have been...

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Significant | 1 |
| Moderate | 2 |
| Minimal | 3 |
| (Don't Know) | 4 |
| (Refused) | 5 |

Findings

General findings on financial impact of participating in the scheme

A recommendation from round 2 was to alter the introduction to make it clear that the questions will ask firstly about costs and then about returns to-date. This division seems to have worked. The difficulties respondents had with the 'cost' questions (**NEW15Intro** to **Q8a**) were not observed for the 'financial returns' questions (**NEW19** to **NEW22**).

There were five main findings that impacted on how the questions in this section (**NEW15** to **NEW22**) were answered.

1. Inclusion of the scheme name that the respondent had participated in encouraged respondents to think about the costs of participation. When the scheme name was not included in the question stem – at questions **Q8c1** to **Q8e** on specific 'costs' of participation - respondents did not consistently think about the scheme they had participated in, such as SAB, when answering these questions.
2. When respondents did consider the scheme they had participated in, such as SAB, when answering **Q8c1** to **Q8e** they found it difficult or impossible to determine whether the specific costs incurred by participating in the scheme would have been incurred anyway, because the scheme had provided advice and support about setting up or growing the business – an activity respondents would have done anyway. Most of the businesses who took part in this test did not employ other staff, so 'staff' and 'training' costs only applied to the respondent.
3. The term 'to date' was understood in two ways, either from time of trading or when an idea was first conceptualised. Whichever way the phrase was understood, this understanding was universally retained by respondents when answering questions **NEW15** through to **NEW22**.
4. The banded costs questions (**NEW16**, **Q8c2**, **Q8c4**, **Q8c6**, **Q8c8** and **Q8e**) encouraged respondents to provide an estimate although the bands were felt to be very broad.
5. Finally, some concerns were expressed about the commercial sensitivity of the information being asked for and the impact it would have on the business if it fell into the hands of its competitors. Respondents said they would either not answer these questions if asked in a 'real' telephone survey or would only provide the information in the context of a face- to-face interview.

Recommendations

- Add a reference to the scheme name at questions Q8c1 through Q8e and NEW17, to encourage respondents to consider costs associated in participating in it (rather than setting up/ developing a business per se).
- Tailor banding of NEW16, Q8c2, Q8c4, Q8c6, Q8c8 and Q8e to reflect the characteristics of the target survey population (i.e. finer bands at the bottom end and broader bands at the top end for smaller businesses)

Below we present findings for the individual questions in this section.

NEW15 Intro

Respondents appeared to understand the introduction, although it was considered too long. The term 'financial impact' on the whole seems to have been understood as intended. Occasionally respondents initially questioned whether they should be thinking about the financial impact on them personally, on the business, or on the tax payer but then recognised that the question was interested in the impact on the business.

NEW15 Intro recommendation

- Consider amending the introduction to:

Now I'd like you to think specifically about the financial impact of your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>. This section will ask firstly about **costs** and secondly about **returns** to your <organisation/workplace> to date, **resulting from your <organisation's/workplace's> participation** in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>.

Thinking about this work place or organisation - NEW15

This question worked as intended.

Estimating total costs - NEW16

Respondents appeared to understand what this question was asking and were able to select an answer option. As observed with previous questions, the higher bands were not considered relevant to smaller businesses, such as those who took part in this test. Respondents of smaller businesses either selected answer option 1, 2 or 3.

There was some variation in whether respondents included the costs of participation in the scheme (taking time out to attend a course or participate in an interview connected with their participation). Single employee or two employee businesses tended to include time taken away from their business as a cost of participation irrespective of which scheme they were participating in.

Estimating each set of costs - Q8c1 to Q8e

Respondents were, on the whole, able to provide answers to these questions. Where they were unable to give an exact figure they were generally able to put the costs for each category into one of the bands.

As found in round 2 of cognitive testing, separating out the costs into these five categories meant that respondents did think about each one. The categories themselves made sense to respondents. Respondents were asked to define the categories; they were well understood as the following examples illustrate:

Staff time: *“Is time spent active in business” (SAB, small size, single site)*

Salaries: *“Are the amounts regularly paid as wages” (SAB, small size, single site)*

Consultancy: *“A management service where a third party is paid to provide specific expertise or give specific advice on a topic. They would not be part of the permanent organisation” (UFFB, small size, single site)*

Materials and Equipment: *“Are dedicated purchases for use on specific projects. Equipment is purchased items used over longer periods and several projects e.g. security equipment/system for protecting premises and staff”. (UFFB, small size, single site)*

Training and Mentoring: *“Someone who I might phone to say what do you think about his answer we will discuss it ... learning by either paying someone to teach me something or buying a book to teach myself” (SaHGB, small size, single site)*

Accuracy of answers

The accuracy of respondents' answers was variable, reflecting findings from earlier rounds of testing. Respondents who had small, 'young' businesses were more likely not to have this information readily available. They were unsure about how accurate the figures they provided were, either because the business had not matured to be in a position to have this type of information available (even with reference to records) or the respondent was not closely involved with the accounts on a regular basis. The broad bands meant that even if respondents did not know the exact figure they could estimate which band was most appropriate by eliminating higher ones. Bands one, two and three were used by respondents who took part in this test.

Too early to tell

Despite the question asking for the costs 'to date' occasionally respondents commented that it was too early to say what the costs of the intervention would be. As found in round 2 testing, this suggests that the intervention had simply not been taken far enough to give a good overview of its success at the time of interview. An explicit answer category 'too early to tell' should be included at questions **NEW16, Q8c1, Q8c3, Q8c5, Q8c7, and Q8d**.

Not applicable

Answer option 1 (£0) was used when there had been no consultancy services used, materials or equipment bought or training and mentoring provided as well as when the cost was £0 i.e. the service had been provided for free.

Over measurement

Testing revealed that there is potential for double counting to occur with the current set of questions, with mentors being included in consultancy and in training and mentoring.

Unit of measurement

On a rare occasion it was easier for a respondent to think of costs not in pounds but in time, whether it be days or hours. One respondent reported 'a day' reflecting the time spent taking part in the follow up surveys resulting from her participation in the scheme. Another respondent answered 12 hours for training and mentoring because the training and mentoring had actually been free so it was just the time away from the business.

Additional points pertaining to specific questions are mentioned below.

Staff times and salaries - Q8c1 and Q8c2

For respondents who run a new business, this question was difficult to answer because they did not monitor how many hours they worked, or were not in a position to pay themselves salaries or a "proper salary". Respondents in this group either estimated an answer or spontaneously answered 'don't know'.

Testing suggests that double-counting of staff time and salaries did not occur at this question. With small businesses staff time seems irrelevant because they do not seem to be counting the number of hours they work, they just work the number of hours needed. Respondents tended to think of salaries. On occasion this question was considered irrelevant because the business had not yet reached a point where the respondent could draw a salary. When this arose a 'don't know' response was selected.

Other Costs - NEW17 and NEW18

These two questions appeared to work as intended. Other costs identified included travel, hotels, heating and lighting of the business premises, and advertising. Not all the respondents included the additional costs identified at **NEW18** in the total cost question (**NEW16**) because they only remembered these additional costs here.

Any remaining costs - Q8d/e

This question worked as intended on the whole. When this question did not work as intended, it was because respondents thought about *new* additional costs which they had not thought about at **NEW18**. This occurred because the phrase 'additional costs' was understood at this question as the cost of setting up an individual to go into business. Furthermore, testing revealed that rather than thinking in pounds, on occasion respondents thought about time, so answered 'weekends' as an additional cost reflecting the fact they had worked them or thought about the time taken away from the business by participating in the scheme. In one case the respondent could not answer this question because he wanted to think about all the additional costs incurred in setting up the business since its inception but he could not calculate these.

Overview of costs to date - Q8a

The last question in this section asked respondents to give an overall idea of whether the costs to their business resulting from the intervention, up until the time of interview, had been significant, moderate or minimal. Respondents were, on the whole, able to answer this question and the answer options were used appropriately. However, there was a group who found it more difficult. Those in this group found the question difficult because:

- i. they felt the question was being used to measure the success of the scheme; or,
- ii. it was too early to tell; or,
- iii. it was being used to evaluate whether the expenditure on their business was worth it.

Testing also revealed that satisficing was adopted, whereby respondents selected the middle answer option because it was easier than having to think in any detail about the question.

Costs Recommendations

- Include the answer option 'to early to tell' at NEW16, Q8c2, Q8c4, Q8c6, Q8c8, Q8e .
- Consider adding a 'Not used' category to the answer options at Q8c3, Q8c5 and Q8c7
- Retain NEW15, NEW16, NEW17 and NEW18 without changes.

2.5.2 Whether financial gains are greater than the costs *New19-New22*

Recommendations from round 2 testing

- As with Q8, change the terminology so that 'gains' is replaced with 'returns'. We anticipate that this will improve the question as currently it is biased towards positive responses (suggestion from Alex Bryson).
- Delete Q9a and Q9b as respondents did not find these helpful, instead answering Q9c;
- Improve the wording at Q9c to make clear that this question refers to the situation to-date rather than in the future by adding 'that is up until now'.
- Add a **new** question (**NEW19**) for multi-site businesses to determine whether respondents would prefer to think about the workplace or the business as a whole (suggestion from Alex Bryson).
- Textfill business/workplace depending on the answer to this new question.
- Add a **new** question (**NEW20**) asking whether there have been any returns to-date.
- At Q9c and Q9d alter the wording to be less leading and to ask about financial returns (suggestion from Alex Bryson) and add the wording 'or is it too early to tell?'
- Alter the categories at Q9c and Q9d to reflect new question wording.
- Retain the five year reference period at Q9d.
- Move Q9d to a separate section on future costs and gains/returns.
- Consider using a show card at this question to help respondents visualise the range of bands.

- Consider moving to a longitudinal design, asking the questions on economic impact some time in the future, separately from the earlier questions on implementation. This would allow a more informed self-reported answer.
- As with Q8 and Q9, change the terminology so that 'gains' is replaced with 'returns'. We anticipate that this will improve the question as currently it is biased towards positive responses (suggestion from Alex Bryson).
- Delete Q10a and Q10b as respondents did not see these as useful, instead jumping straight to Q10c.
- At Q9d add 'or is it too early to tell' to the question wording;
- Remove 'in terms of profits made before tax' from Q10c.
- Remove routing at Q10c so that it is asked regardless of whether the intervention is complete.
- Add a **new** question (**NEW21**) following Q10c – 'Were you thinking of financial returns before or after tax?'
- Move the questions about future gains (Q10d/e/f) to a separate section dedicated to the future.
- Switch Q9d and Q10d so that Q10d follows Q8f. These two questions on the anticipated direction of the costs (Q8f) and gains (Q10d) sit better together.
- Alter the question wording at Q9d to match Q9c.
- Retain the five-year reference period at Q10d.
- Retain routing at Q10d so that the question is not asked if Q9d=DK/Ref. Respondents are unlikely to be able to provide an idea of the direction the gains will move in if they were unable to answer Q9d.
- Add further examples to Q10e and alter 'networking' to 'gaining contacts'.
- Add two new check questions (**NEW22, NEW23**) for multi-site businesses (for returns to-date and future returns) to determine whether they were still thinking about the workplace or the business as a whole (as at Q9).
- Textfill business/workplace depending on the answer given at Q9.
- Consider sending out a show card pack. This would be helpful for respondents when thinking about the financial bands;
- Consider using a show card at this question to help respondents visualise the range of bands.

- Consider moving to a longitudinal design, asking the questions on economic impact some time in the future, separately from the earlier questions on implementation. This would allow a more informed self-reported answer.

Questions cognitively tested

INTRO Now I'd like you to think about the financial **returns** to your organisation/workplace to date, that is up until now, resulting from your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >.

ASK IF MULTI SITE

NEW19 When thinking about the financial returns of...

your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >, to date, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| This workplace only | 1 |
| The organisation as a whole | 2 |
| (Don't Know) | 3 |
| (Refused) | 4 |

ASK ALL

NEW20 Have there been any financial returns, resulting from...

your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >, to date?

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| (Don't Know) | 3 |
| (Refused) | 4 |

SHOW CARD 2

Q9c To date, are any financial returns resulting from...

your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG > greater than the costs?

- | | |
|---|---|
| Yes, financial returns are greater than the costs | 1 |
| No, financial returns are less than the costs | 2 |
| (Financial returns are about the same as the costs) | 3 |
| (Too early to tell) | 4 |
| (Don't Know) | 5 |
| Refused) | 6 |

IF THE RESPONDENT WAS ASKED AND COULD NOT ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS IN THE PREVIOUS SECTION (NEW19-9c) GO STRAIGHT TO Q10e

Q10c Thinking again about any financial returns to your organisation to date, resulting from your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >.

Into which of the following bands would you put these gross financial returns?

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £1000	02
£1,000 but less than £5,000	03
£5,000 but less than £10,000	04
£10,000 but less than £20,000	05
£20,000 but less than £50,000	06
£50,000 but less than £100,000	07
£100,000 but less than £500,000	08
£500,000 but less than £1million	09
£1million but less than £5million	10
More than £5million	11
(Don't know)	12
(Refused)	13

NEW21 Were you thinking about financial returns before or after tax?

Before tax	01
After tax	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

IF MULTI-SITE

NEW22 Can I just check, when answering these questions were you thinking about this/your workplace or your organisation as a whole?

This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

Findings

Thinking about this workplace or organisation - NEW19

This test included two multi-site organisations, and both continued to report about the organisation as a whole.

Financial returns - NEW20

This question seems to have been understood as intended. However, respondents did find this question difficult to answer because:

- i. it was too early to tell;
- ii. they struggled to identify whether the advice and or support received had resulted in financial returns or would have happened anyway without participating in the scheme; or
- iii. external variables, such as the recession, made it difficult to identify whether the scheme had helped or not.

NEW19 Recommendation

- Consider retaining NEW19 without changes

Whether gains are greater than the costs, to date - Q9c

This question was understood as intended but it was difficult for those who found it hard to calculate in their heads whether the returns outweighed the costs (a finding echoed in earlier rounds of testing). Another difficulty was that although the question says 'to-date', some respondents felt it was too early to tell. Respondents nevertheless did provide an answer, and speculated on the future depending on the stage the intervention was currently at if it was still on-going. This tended to occur when the intervention was at an early stage. Testing revealed that on occasions it was difficult for respondents to identify the role of the scheme, but respondents were able to provide an answer.

A recommendation from round 2 was to replace gains with returns. This seems to have worked as respondents were not sensitive about this word and the term was understood in the context of the needs of the business e.g. as profits, income, money or becoming a better managing director.

Q9c Recommendation

- Consider retaining Q9c without changes

Quantifying financial returns - Q10c

On the whole this question worked as intended although respondents found it a difficult question. The previous question asked respondents to compare returns and costs, whereas this question asked them to take the next step and quantify the amount (in terms of selecting a band). Not all respondents were able to estimate the financial returns by selecting a band. The fact that the bands were considered to be quite broad, particularly at the upper end, helped some to estimate, by a process of elimination.

Factors that made it difficult for respondents to answer were that:

- respondents had not thought about this issue before;
- it was too early to tell, and the information was not yet available;
- the information was not to hand: they needed to access records to provide an answer; or
- they were not involved or “clued up” on the business’s finances.

As mentioned earlier, the fact that the bands were quite broad did help respondents to select an option through a process of elimination.

There will always be a group of respondents who cannot quantify the counterfactual, especially when the products they have received are nebulous, such as advice and support. Care should be taken when interpreting results from this question.

Q10c Recommendations

- At **Q10c** consider adding a spontaneous option too early to tell.
- Consider revising the bands used, depending on the target population (i.e. smaller amounts for smaller businesses, bigger amounts and broader bands for bigger businesses) and the bandings are consistent and are administered in the same way with **NEW16** to **Q8e**.

Before or after tax - NEW21

This question was found to be universally straightforward and easy to answer. ‘Before tax’ was always given as the answer because this is the only way respondents thought about it

NEW21 Recommendation

- Consider retaining NEW21 without changes

Multi-site: thinking about this workplace or organisation - NEW22

Only two businesses that took part in this test had multiple sites, and both were able to provide an answer, which was consistent with earlier answers (they continued to report for the organisation as a whole).

NEW22 Recommendation

- Consider retaining NEW22 without changes

2.5.3 Future costs and gains as a result of the intervention **Q8f-10f**

Recommendations from round 2 testing

- As with Q8 and Q9, change the terminology so that 'gains' is replaced with 'returns'. We anticipate that this will improve the question as currently it is biased towards positive responses (suggestion from Alex Bryson).
- Delete Q10a and Q10b as respondents did not see these as useful, instead jumping straight to Q10c.
- At Q9d add 'or is it too early to tell' to the question wording;
- Remove 'in terms of profits made before tax' from Q10c.
- Remove routing at Q10c so that it is asked regardless of whether the intervention is complete.
- Add a **new** question (**NEW21**) following Q10c – 'Were you thinking of financial returns before or after tax?'.
- Move the questions about future gains (Q10d/e/f) to a separate section dedicated to the future.
- Switch Q9d and Q10d so that Q10d follows Q8f. These two questions on the anticipated direction of the costs (Q8f) and gains (Q10d) sit better together.
- Alter the question wording at Q9d to match Q9c.
- Retain the five year reference period at Q10d.
- Retain routing at Q10d so the question is not asked if Q9d=DK/Ref. Respondents are unlikely to be able to provide an idea of the direction the gains will move in if they were unable to answer Q9d.
- Add further examples to Q10e and alter 'networking' to 'gaining contacts'.
- Add two new check questions (**NEW22, NEW23**) for multi-site businesses (for returns to-date and future returns) to determine whether they were still thinking about the workplace or the business as a whole (as at Q9).
- Textfill business/workplace depending on the answer given at Q9.
- Consider sending out a show card pack. This would be helpful for respondents when thinking about the financial bands;
- Consider using a show card at this question to help respondents visualise the range of bands.

- Consider moving to a longitudinal design, asking the questions on economic impact some time in the future, separately from the earlier questions on implementation. This would allow a more informed self-reported answer.

Questions cognitively tested

FUTURE COSTS AND RETURNS

ASK ALL

*The next set of questions is about any **future** costs and returns resulting from...*

your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >.

SHOW CARD 3

Q8f *First thinking about any future **costs** to your <organisation/workplace> over the next 5 years, that is until <April 2015>, do you expect these costs to...*

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| ...rise | 1 |
| ...remain constant | 2 |
| ...diminish; or | 3 |
| ...cease? | 4 |

Q10d *Next, thinking about any financial **returns** to your <organisation/workplace> over the next 5 years, that is until <April 2015>, resulting from...*

your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >. Do you expect these returns to...

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| ...rise | 1 |
| ...remain constant | 2 |
| ...diminish; or | 3 |
| ...cease? | 4 |

SHOW CARD 2

Q9d *And thinking overall about the financial **returns** to your organisation over the next 5 years, that is until <April 2015>, resulting from...*

...your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >, do you expect any financial returns to be greater than the costs?

- | | |
|---|---|
| Yes, financial returns are greater than the costs | 1 |
| No, financial returns are less than the costs | 2 |
| (Financial returns are about the same as the costs) | 3 |
| (Too early to tell) | 4 |
| (Don't Know) | 5 |
| Refused) | 6 |

IF MULTI-SITE

NEW23 When answering these questions were you thinking about this/your workplace or your organisation as a whole?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| This workplace only | 1 |
| The organisation as a whole | 2 |
| (Don't Know) | 3 |
| (Refused) | 4 |

Q10e Next, thinking about **non-financial returns** that your <organisation/workplace> will receive, do you anticipate any significant non-financial returns resulting from...

your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >? For example, gaining contacts and new opportunities, increased knowledge and raising the organisation's profile.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| (Don't Know) | 3 |
| (Refused) | 4 |

IF Q10e=Yes

Q10f What are these non-financial returns?

WRITE IN:_____

Q10e Next, thinking about non-financial returns that your <organisation/workplace> will receive, do you anticipate any significant non-financial returns resulting from...

your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >? For example, gaining contacts and new opportunities, increased knowledge and raising the organisation's profile.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |
| (Don't Know) | 3 |
| (Refused) | 4 |

IF Q10e=Yes

Q10f What are these non-financial returns?

WRITE IN:_____

Findings

General findings on future costs, financial returns and non financial returns

Testing found that there were some common issues that affected how the questions in this section (Q8f to Q10f) worked. We present these common issues first followed by question specific findings.

Thinking about the scheme in the context of the question

Testing found that respondents did not always consider the impact their participation in the scheme would have on their business going forward in the next five years. A number of different strategies were employed by respondents when considering these questions, and these are described below.

1. Considered their current involvement in the scheme and predicted its affects on the business in the future, assuming they would not still be involved in the scheme in five years time.
2. Thought about the scheme as if they were going to carry on with the same scheme for the next five years.
3. Were confused when they thought about the scheme because they could not think about future costs and returns resulting from advice or support they received from the scheme.
4. Did not think about the scheme at all when they answered the questions.
5. Dismissed the involvement of the scheme because he/she considered the course irrelevant to their businesses.

Respondents either thought about the scheme in the same consistent way for all the questions in this section or varied how they thought about the scheme (based on the 5 ways listed above) depending on the specific question. Respondents who thought about the scheme in the first four ways presented, all provided codeable answers to the questions in this section. When the fifth understanding was exhibited, the respondent answered not applicable to all the questions in this section.

Thinking about 5 years

Universally respondents understood the five year time frame. Respondents either went on to answer the question thinking:

1. About the next five years; or,
2. Answered the question thinking about a shorter time period (one year, two years or three years). The time period thought about was influenced by the time frame of their business plan.

Universally respondents who thought about a short time period answered all the questions in this section.

Recommendation

- Consider amending slightly the introduction for future costs and returns, to help respondents to think about their current involvement in the scheme when answering these questions.

E.g. ASK ALL

The next set of questions is about any future costs and returns resulting from...

your **current/recent** participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >.

Estimated future costs - Q8f

Understanding of this question varied and there was some confusion about what was being asked for: an assessment of the costs and benefits of on-going participation in the scheme, or the anticipated costs and benefits arising as a result of participation. Those who found it confusing did so because they were no longer involved in the scheme and answered 'cease' to indicate that their participation had ended.

"As far as I know I'm not involved in the programme any more. So therefore it will 'cease; unless I'm invited to do anything else" (SaHGB, one employee, single-site).

The question asked respondents to think about the next five years (until April 2015). As noted in the general findings section, not all the respondents thought about this reference period, with a group of respondents thinking about a shorter time frame. The length of time respondents thought about depended on whether they had a future business plan for the intervention.

The four-point answer scale worked as intended on the whole. 'Rise' was used to indicate future costs due to expansion or replacement of necessary equipment. 'Remain constant' reflected respondents' desires for the business to remain in its current position. 'Cease' was used to indicate the costs would decrease following initial outlays. (As noted above, this answer option was also used to indicate that the person was no longer involved with the scheme).

Q8f Recommendation

- Consider retaining Q8f without modification

Estimated future gains - Q10d and Q9d

As seen in round 2 of cognitive testing, generally respondents were able to provide answers to these questions though they were not necessarily always thinking about (a) returns specifically from the intervention; and (b) the next five years. Measuring the role of the scheme in future returns is difficult for respondents, especially when the scheme involves products which are inherently nebulous, such as advice and support.

One of the recommendations from round 2 was to replace the term 'gains' with 'returns'. Returns was understood in the context of respondents' businesses and what they wanted to get out of the scheme, for example improved sales, profits and winning new contracts.

On one occasion a respondent did not see a difference between Q8f and Q10d, despite the question being read out again. It was only when the interviewer pointed out the difference explicitly that the respondent was able to answer the question successfully.

At Q9d respondents were able to compare costs and returns. As the question is concerned with the future the answer options should be worded appropriately (i.e. worded in the future tense).

Recommendations

- Consider retaining Q10d without modifications.
- Consider amending the answer options for Q9d to:

Yes, financial returns **will be** greater than the costs

No, financial returns **will be** less than the costs

(Financial returns **will be** about the same as the costs)

NEW23

There was no evidence found to suggest that this question was problematic.

Recommendation

- Consider retaining Q23 without modification

Non-financial gains - Q10e and Q10f

Findings

These questions were generally well received by respondents. Respondents on the whole found both questions easy to answer.

The examples in **Q10e** were found to be helpful in clarifying the question and were appropriate. On one occasion the respondent credited participation in the scheme with 'significant non-financial returns' but on probing it was found that these were nothing to do with the scheme. This again highlights the difficulties that respondents can have with assessing the impact of the scheme on their business and the care that analyst should take in interpreting answers to these questions.

As with round 2, there were a group of respondents who cited the examples listed in the question. A recommendation from round 2 was to add more examples to Q10e so respondents thought of a wider range of non-financial returns. This has worked. In round 3, respondents provided a range of examples including networking. Evidence from the cognitive interviews showed that respondents started to spontaneously think about these types of returns prior to them being read out by the interviewer (resulting from respondents being asked to 'think aloud' as they answered the survey questions). This indicates that respondents understood the question and were not influenced by the examples. Other non-financial returns mentioned by respondents beyond the examples currently mentioned in **Q10f** were:

- moving from a one-man business to a limited company;
- networking;
- developing (new) business leads;
- facilitating alliances and joint ventures;
- Increased marketing;
- receiving encouragement; and
- gaining knowledge.

On occasion, financial returns were thought about at this question. When this occurred respondents were thinking about grants, new customers and new contracts.

Q10e Recommendation

- Retain current question wording.

2.5.4 Whether would have achieved financial gain regardless of intervention: Constructing the counterfactual New24-Q11b

Recommendations from round 2 testing

- Alter the question wording to ask about 'current' performance.
- Add a new question (**NEW24**) for multi-site businesses to determine whether they would prefer to think about the workplace or the business as a whole (suggestion from Alex Bryson).
- Text fill Q11a and Q11b depending on the answer to this question.
- Add a new response category to Q11a to identify respondents who are unable to think of any similar businesses to compare to (suggestion from Alex Bryson). These respondents would be routed past Q11b.
- Consider moving to a longitudinal design, asking the questions on economic impact some time in the future, separately from the earlier questions on implementation. This would allow a more informed self-reported answer.

Questions Cognitively Tested

The next questions are about how well your organisation/workplace is currently performing.

ASK IF MULTI SITE

NEW24 *Would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?*

This workplace only	1
The organisation as a whole	2
(Don't Know)	3
(Refused)	4

ASK ALL

Q11a *On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is performing very badly and 10 is performing very well, how well is your <organisation/workplace> currently performing, in comparison to other similar <organisations/workplaces>?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

<i>Don't know any other similar organisations to compare to</i>	11 (END)
<i>(Don't Know)</i>	12 (END)
<i>(Refused)</i>	13 (END)

Q11b Again, on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is performing very badly and 10 is performing very well, how well do you think your <organisation/workplace> would currently be performing in comparison to other similar <organisations/workplaces>, if you had not...

...participated in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Findings

NEW24

No problems were reported with NEW24. Respondents were able to answer the question and the two multi-site businesses continued to report for the organisation as a whole.

NEW24 Recommendation

- Add routing so that NEW24 is only asked of multi-site organisations. Spilt out first introductory sentence and ask of all. Retain remainder of NEW24 without change.

Q11a and Q11b

These two questions, although difficult for respondents to answer, did work as intended. **Q11a** was considered easier than **Q11b**. This is not surprising as **Q11b** asks respondents to compare their businesses to other similar businesses and estimate the counterfactual using a scale. Below we present the key findings for these two questions.

Scale

Testing showed that the direction of the scale - 1 being 'performing very badly' and 10 being 'performing very well' - seemed more natural for respondents than the inverse direction of the scale, which was used at **Q5**. Furthermore, respondents seemed to like the 10 point scale because it offered greater differentiation of opinion - "*no one likes to be an extreme*" - and because providing an answer was easy because the scale was intuitive - 'marks out of 10'. they could easily select a scale. The mid point - 5 - was used to:

1. indicate that the scheme made no difference;
2. express that the respondent didn't know how their business compared to others;

3. represent that the changes proposed to the business that resulted from participation in the scheme had not been implemented (as yet).

At **Q11b**, testing found that the answer option 'too early to tell' would have made the question easier to answer. As there are businesses that have not completed a full financial year who took part in this survey, this seems like a sensible option to add.

Time period

The time period 'currently' worked as intended, with respondents thinking about how their business was doing at the moment.

Particular economic situation

The current recession was thought about by a group of respondents at this question. Respondents either compared how their business was fairing in the recession compared to other similar trading businesses, or could not answer **Q11b** because they had not been able to put in place the suggestions proposed by the scheme.

Answer Strategy

Generally respondents could be divided into one of four categories on how they answered **Q11a** and **Q11b**. Those who:

1. were able to provide answers;
2. were able to provide answers but did not compare their business to other similar businesses;
3. did not know but provided an answer;
4. were unable to provide answers at all or said the question was not applicable to them.

The main difference between these categories came down to whether the respondent had previously pinpointed similar businesses and the level of knowledge they had regarding how well these other businesses were performing. Respondents that fell into the first category found it easy to think about other similar local, national or European business; in some cases they already used them as benchmarks to establish how well they were performing. In these cases respondents said there were a number of similar businesses in the industry.

"We're getting more work, we're charging better and there is more to come in, so the groundwork is paying- off .. a good service. I can't be too hard on myself, we're doing all right. While my wage is not substantial, I can't say we're a roaring

success, but to be fair 7 is the right number” (ISUS, small size, single site).

Those who adopted the second strategy :

- compared their business’s current performance to where they wanted it to be;
- compared their business to a very different local business, which was viewed as ‘successful’ and reflected the respondent’s aspirations for their business;
- could not compare their business to other similar ones, because they believed their business was unique, so compared it to a local business in different trades that they knew about;
- compared their performance to the benefits they thought other attendees on the scheme had received.

In this round of cognitive testing all the respondents in this group gave an answer between one and ten, yet it is arguable that they should have been coded 11 (don’t know any other similar organisations to compare to).

Respondents, in the third and fourth categories, who did not know how their business was doing compared to similar businesses either couldn’t provide an answer for **Q11a** and **Q11b** or just provided an answer for **Q11a**.

Respondents who did answer **Q11a** selected 5 because they did not know. Respondents in the third category, found this question far more difficult. In these cases respondents answered in terms of their own business, thinking about where they would like their business to be in the future. When a respondent had not been able to implement the changes suggested by the scheme due to external variables, namely the recession, the respondent could not answer the question.

Recommendations.

- Consider adding a question before Q11a to route out respondents who don’t know similar organisations.

E.g. **NEW25** Do you know of any similar <organisations/workplaces> to this one?

Yes	1 (Q11a)
No	2 (End)
(Don’t know)	3 (End)
Refusal	4 (End)

- Retain Q11a as currently worded.
- Retain Q11b with slight changes.

E.g. **Q11b** Again, on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is performing very badly and 10 is performing very well, how well do you think your <organisation/workplace>

would currently be performing in comparison to other similar <organisations/workplaces>, if you had not participated in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG, or is it too early to tell>?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (End)

Too early to tell 11 (End)

Don't Know 12 (End)

- Care should be taken when interpreting data from Q11a and Q11b.

2.6 General findings

At the end of the cognitive interview, respondents were asked to give their opinions in general about the test survey questions. It should be borne in mind that these views may be subject to context effects (i.e. they were expressed following a cognitive interview in which rapport was built); and thus we cannot base recommendations on these alone. In addition, respondents who agreed to take part in cognitive interviews could have different characteristics from those who were not willing to take part, particularly in relation to their preferences for mode of interview, and findings should be interpreted with this in mind.

Mode of survey

Four main modes of survey data collection were discussed: telephone; face-to-face; self completion postal; and self-completion web-based.

Telephone

Telephone interviews were generally not liked by respondents. On the occasions it was considered an appropriate mode:

- it was cautioned that the interview should be less than 10 minutes long;
- the person administering the interview should have clear English and understand the survey to a standard that they can clarify any questions the respondent may have about the survey and or the survey questions.

When the telephone interview mode was preferred, it was because the call could be taken during the respondent's lunch break.

Testing revealed that respondents had concerns about providing the level of financial detail asked for in the test questions to someone over the telephone, which related to concerns about the authenticity of the research and the confidentiality of the information being sought. It was felt more difficult to ascertain or judge the genuineness of the request for this type of information when it was made by telephone.

Face-to-face

The possibility of conducting the interview face-to-face was well received by respondents in this round of cognitive testing. This was because the concerns that respondents had with a telephone interview could be overcome by a face-to-face interview as they could ask for ID and 'see' the interviewer. Also bad

past experience with a telephone interview, such as not understanding the questions or the interviewer speaking too fast on the phone, made this mode of administering the interview preferable. However it is recognised that this mode may not be practical for reasons of costs and time. Face-to-face interviews are (perceived) to take longer than telephone interviews, and for some businesses time is barrier to participation in research studies (and this was encountered in the recruitment of businesses to participate in this study).

Paper or Web based self-completion

Postal (paper) and web-based self-completion questionnaire were seen as alternatives to telephone surveys. The advantage of these modes was that respondents could complete them in their own time. This was especially valuable when the respondent was the only person who ran the business. Telephone interviews were viewed as disturbing the respondent from work-related tasks. If the survey was administered as a paper self-completed questionnaire respondents felt it should come with a paid self addressed envelope. If the survey is administered as a web-based questionnaire, it would need to be hosted on a secure website to ensure the financial information was kept safely. Again, it is recognised that in practice self-completion methods alone may not be practical because of the lower response rates associated with them. However in some circumstances a mixed-mode approach may be appropriate in encouraging response for certain kinds of businesses who are under-represented in a telephone survey.

Advance letter

Respondents generally commented that a letter should be sent out in advance of contact being made by an interviewer. The letter should include information about the purpose of the interview and mention what the respondent would be expected to answer questions about. However, these same respondents also acknowledged that a letter mentioning that they would need to have financial details available would put them off participating in the survey and we are aware from discussions with survey contractors that including such information can adversely affect survey response rates. This suggests that the advance letter needs to be carefully worded to ensure it achieves the objective of providing sufficient information to respondents to encourage them to take part but not too much, so that it puts people off or raises additional concerns. Testing also found that respondents felt that the advance letter should provide strong assurances on the confidentiality of answers given, to reassure respondents that the information being sought would be treated with great care.

Motivation for taking part

In this round of cognitive testing, respondents were asked about their motivation for taking part in surveys, as an indicator of how to engage respondents. The interview revealed the positive motivations for taking part were centred on wanting to give something back by, for example, helping to improve the scheme for others. Testing showed that respondents could feel obliged to take part in the survey because they were involved in the scheme which had helped them. On one occasion a respondent did say she felt obliged to take part in surveys because she had received help from the scheme, but she found the process very frustrating because she had taken part in so many, which were not relevant to the help that she received. This highlights the danger of over-burdening respondents with too many surveys with the risk of decreasing response rates and the quality of responses.

Time

The length of time was not mentioned as a problem, other than feeling uncomfortable if a telephone interview were to take longer than 10 minutes.

Who best to talk to

On the whole, respondents felt that they were the best person to take part in the survey because they were the only employee/owner of the company or because they had access to the necessary information, because they were the 'managing director' or the 'communications and accounts administrator'. It was pointed out that it would be difficult for a managing director to take time out to participate in a survey, and that a financial director or operations manager may be better placed to participate in a survey of this kind.

Suggestions

A number of suggestions were made to improve surveys.

- Ensure the survey has a clear introduction, which talks about the intervention received. This would help those who could not remember the name of the intervention they took part in.
- Survey questions should be tailored for smaller businesses. Smaller businesses might be identified as sole-traders or having a 'small' annual turnover.
- Questions should be simple and "*less wordy*".

Incentives

Testing revealed that on a few occasions' respondents felt that it would be nice to have an incentive to take part, such as being put into a prize draw.

3 USE OF SELF-ASSESSMENT TO CONDUCT POLICY EVALUATION AS OUTLINED IN THE GREEN BOOK⁴

3.1 Background

HM Treasury's *Green Book* offers guidance to government departments and agencies to assist them in designing and implementing techniques for the appraisal and evaluation of government initiatives and policies. *The Green Book* distinguishes between "appraisal" – the process of preparing policy options for a programme needed to meet a market failure and/or distributional objectives - and evaluation. Evaluation is the post-hoc investigation of the impact of treatment⁵ (project or programme) on one or more 'outcomes', outcomes being desirable policy objectives (such as an increase in business survival rate) relative to what might have occurred in the absence of the intervention (the 'counterfactual').⁶ *The Green Book* sets out the principles governing good practice with respect to appraisal and evaluation which government departments are expected to follow.

This chapter considers the role that "self-assessment" might play in BIS impact evaluations. "Self-assessment" (henceforth SA) is the methodology whereby programme participants are asked to assess the outcome achieved as a result of participation in a programme, and to compare them with the outcome which would have been achieved in the absence of the programme. The difference between the actual outcome and the self-assessed "counterfactual" outcome is the impact attributed to programme participation.⁷ This can be presented net of the costs which participants may have incurred as a consequence of their participation. Since programmes may have both positive and negative effects on non-participants respondents may also be asked to quantify these second-order effects.

"Self-assessment" has been used widely in BIS impact assessments, in part because it is regarded as a timely and cost-effective evaluation tool. The chapter considers some of the "pros" and "cons" of this methodology, draws on empirical evidence of its performance as an evaluation tool, and provides a guide to evaluators in considering whether SA is appropriate.

⁴ This chapter was written by Alex Bryson. He would like to thank Helen Bewley, Natalia Chivite-Matthews, Debbie Collins, Richard Dorsett, and Jeff Smith for comments.

⁵ We use the terms "treatment" and "intervention" to denote the BIS project or programme that the business is participating in.

⁶ The concept of the 'demonstration programme' whereby policy formation and on-going evaluation are intertwined is not considered explicitly even though it is an important part of the evaluation landscape in Britain.

⁷ The approach is akin to the contingent valuation method used to value environmental amenities in which people are asked in surveys how much they are willing to pay for a service or the compensation they should receive for an environmental disamenity.

3.2 The application of Green Book principles to BIS evaluations

The Green Book is not prescriptive in terms of the methodologies which departments and agencies should deploy when undertaking evaluations. Rather it notes the value of “robust” evaluation, defined as one which is “reliable and accurate” and, at the same time, notes that the resources devoted to evaluation should be proportionate. That is, the degree to which resources should be devoted to robust evaluation is partly a function of the resources devoted to the programme itself and the political importance attached to the outcomes it seeks to achieve.

Bewley and Forth (forthcoming) discuss potential evaluation methodologies available to BIS for policy evaluation. They devote only five paragraphs of their report to the role of SA, although they note that it is a common approach to policy evaluation. One reason for this may be that it is deemed a proportionate response to the need to evaluate small and medium-sized interventions, as hinted at in *The Green Book* (paragraph 5.72). However, their possible application to business settings is very complex.

All evaluation techniques seek to compare outcomes for treated cases with outcomes which would have occurred in the absence of the treatment to obtain an impact. The evaluation problem stems from the fact that each given case (often a business in BIS evaluations) is either a participant or a non-participant. It is not possible to observe the counterfactual scenario of non-participation for those who have participated. Moreover it is not feasible to assume that non-participants can provide the counterfactual scenario since participants and non-participants may differ in unobserved ways which the analyst cannot account for but which may be correlated with outcomes, thus confounding accurate estimates of the impact of participation. For example, those who are motivated enough to participate in a BIS scheme may be more highly motivated in general relative to non-participants. Motivation can itself bring business rewards so that, if one is unable to account for differences in motivation between participants and non-participants, some of the positive impact attributed to programme participation may instead arise due to the higher pre-existing motivation of participants.

One methodology that can tackle this problem well is the randomised trial in which treatment is randomly assigned to members of the eligible population. The advantage of this methodology for evaluating programme impacts is that the randomisation process, if undertaken rigorously, ensures that there are no systematic differences between participants and non-participants on either observed or unobserved characteristics. Thus differences in outcomes between the two groups can reasonably be attributed to programme participation. There are nevertheless some important drawbacks to the use of the randomised trial in the case of BIS evaluations such as the political, ethical and/or practical infeasibility of randomly allocating the treatment. It is for these reasons that evaluation often entails the artificial construction of a counterfactual in a non-experimental fashion, as in the case of propensity score matching (PSM), for example. In PSM participants are matched to non-

participants on often very limited observed criteria such that one can isolate the impact of treatment on outcomes based on the assumption that treatment is independent of the outcome having conditioned on the matching variables. However, in a business setting it is often the unobserved variables that are not available for matching that may matter most, such as the quality of the product, the calibre of directors, or workforce practices. This makes it particularly difficult to use matching for evaluating effects of BIS programmes on businesses.

SA evaluation differs in that it usually relies on information provided solely by programme participants to construct the counterfactual. SA evaluations thus offer the benefit of not having to track down and interview eligible non-participants and use their data for the construction of the counterfactual. It also overcomes the difficulties in deciding to randomly assign a treatment which, at least in principle, is designed to assist businesses. This may save time and money but the chief question is whether SA can offer a robust basis for the estimation of a programme's impact.

3.3 Considerations when applying SA to BIS evaluations

Limitations to respondent's knowledge about programme participation

Credible self-assessment relies upon respondents recognising that they have been on the programme while efforts to establish what would have happened in the absence of participation (the counterfactual) presuppose some detailed knowledge of what participation entailed. It is crucial, therefore, to identify the person in the organisation best placed to provide accurate information. Even then, it is not always clear that any one individual will be able to provide reasonable information. For example, a respondent in a multi-site firm may have good knowledge of the particular establishment in question but have little knowledge about the full extent of participation in the programme by the firm.

Respondents often have difficulties in identifying whether the firm has participated in specific named programmes. This is a fundamental problem because, in the absence of other data, this makes it difficult to know whether the respondent has actually participated in the programme which is being evaluated and, if so, to what extent. The problem can arise when a programme is difficult to distinguish from other types of support or service provided, and when there have been a number of initiatives, often with similar objectives and even similar names or acronyms. It is not an insurmountable problem if one knows from administrative sources who participated in what. It is therefore good practice to maintain up-to-date and comprehensive lists of those eligible for a scheme and those who participated in the scheme. However, even if one is able to distinguish participants from non-participants using administrative data, the fact that respondents are unsure about their participation status raises concerns about their ability to provide accurate

information regarding the costs and benefits of participation or about outcomes in the absence of participation.⁸

It is worth considering whether the quality of information provided by respondents could be improved via CAPI or CATI prompts regarding the actual nature of the treatment the respondent received, for example, the size of a grant. This would entail programming in respondent-specific details regarding the nature of the programme received by the firm. This is easier when the respondent has received a distinct, clearly defined “treatment” such as financial assistance or a day’s training, but it is more difficult when the programme offers a diffuse range of information and advice.

A particular concern is that respondents may hide the extent of their ignorance about their participation status so that it may not be apparent from survey questions: often respondents are loath to disappoint the interviewer with “don’t know” responses, or else they feel they should know more than they do.

Ability to quantify outcomes and impact of programme participation

Respondents often feel unable to quantify the costs and benefits of programme participation. Some may be new to the world of business and feel ill-equipped to make such judgements. Others are simply unwilling to provide estimates that they feel could be misleading. Even if respondents can offer estimates, they may find it easier to measure them in non-monetary values such as time saved in undertaking a task, or the time it takes to find a new recruit. Sometimes participants are able to provide qualitative information about the nature of costs and benefits (e.g. whether the savings were ‘very substantial’, ‘large’ or ‘small’) but find it difficult to convert these responses into monetary values. If pressed to do so this can result in high non-response rates. These problems can be ameliorated to some degree by offering banded code-frames.

Sometimes the respondent’s difficulties arise due to the timing of participation versus the expected realisation of benefits. For instance, recent participants may be able to assess costs of participation to date but may not expect benefits to flow for some time to come. These concerns can be ameliorated to some extent by incorporating questions about short-term, medium-term and long-term costs, benefits and counterfactual values. This approach may be merited in any event since the costs and benefits of programme participation can change over time.

⁸ See, for example, the SQW Consulting (2008) evaluation of DTI’s Bio-Wise programme.

Even when respondents do provide monetary values the question arises as to how accurate they are. If errors are random this can lead to less precision in the estimated impact of a programme. Classical measurement error of this type will downwardly bias the estimated impact of programme participation. If errors are correlated systematically with unobserved factors which affect the propensity for programme participation and the outcome being evaluated this can seriously bias estimates of programme impacts.

A potential source of upward bias in the estimates of SA programme impact comes from participants' desire to see government assistance continue. There may be a tendency to overstate the benefits of a programme if respondents feel that doing so helps ensure the continuation of a programme. Evaluators may be able to address this problem through the information they provide to respondents prior to interview. For instance, they may allay respondents' fears that what they say in the survey will directly affect the future of the programme being studied.

A further source of bias in SA evaluations is recall bias. Respondents may be asked to compare outcomes pre- and post-participation in a programme, the assumption being that any difference may be attributable to participation. Recall biases can both positively and negatively affect responses. For instance, the welfare evaluation literature indicates that participants are inclined to over-state the value of programmes which they have enjoyed participating in. Conversely they tend to under-state the benefits from programmes where the experience of participation or engagement with the programme administrators has been less enjoyable. If participants believe greater resources are liable to bring about better outcomes, they may be liable to upwardly adjust post-programme outcomes for more resource-intensive programmes relative to programmes which are less resource-intensive.

Although discussion of recall bias often focuses on judgements regarding post-programme outcomes, there is some evidence that participation can also bias recall of "before" judgments with participants under-estimating the level of achievement or output in the pre-period (see Smith et al., 2007 for a discussion). These errors may be mitigated if the participant's actual "before" judgment is known and the subject is given a real incentive to recall it correctly.

As Bewley and Forth (forthcoming) note, one potential means of tackling this problem is to survey participants and non-participants and obtain information on outcomes of interest before and after the programme was in place, thus potentially offering the basis for a difference-in-difference evaluation. Alternatively, if the evaluation focuses solely on participants it is likely to be important for the survey instrument to separate out participants' feelings about programme participation from their estimates of its costs and benefits.

Non-response may also affect the SA estimates of costs, benefits and impacts. Some eligible businesses may simply refuse to participate in an evaluation survey. The response decision may be partly conditioned on the experience of the programme itself. In some cases it may be reasonable to

assume that those least likely to respond will include those who felt they had benefited least from the programme. On the other hand, if businesses view participation in a programme to be burdensome then may wish to relate this to survey interviewers, thus increasing their chances of survey participation.⁹ As with all survey-based evaluation it is therefore important to seek to understand both the extent and nature of potential non-response induced biases. Administrative micro-data on the potentially eligible population can permit adjustments to survey estimates. If respondents to the survey are a non-random sub-set of all programme participants this can also bias estimates of the programme's impact. Another possible solution to this problem would be to make participation in the evaluation a condition of receiving assistance under the BIS programme.

One means of establishing the degree of measurement error or bias in self-assessed costs and benefits is to seek to corroborate the estimates via alternative evaluation methods. "Triangulation" means policy advisers can consider the results from a SA evaluation in a broader context, and establish whether estimates appear plausible alongside estimates obtained using other methodologies. The advantage is that this can provide external validation for SA estimates of costs, benefits and impact and can also prevent fixation on a single number which may emanate from a SA exercise, thus avoiding the pitfall of what *The Green Book* terms "spurious accuracy". Supplementation of SA evaluation with a process evaluation in which respondents are encouraged to explain why they did (not) incur costs or obtain benefits can also provide insights into the mechanisms underpinning the SA estimates. The disadvantage of "triangulation" is that evaluation via multiple methods is potentially more costly.

3.4 Is there value in qualitative estimates of costs, benefits and impacts?

If monetised values are difficult to procure, there may nevertheless be value in collecting qualitative measures that can be used in quantitative analysis such as ordinal variables regarding the size of costs and benefits using Likert-type scales. Here reliance is placed on the assumption that rankings according to an ordinal scale – as opposed to a cardinal scale which indicates quantity – are informative. This approach is certainly gaining credence in parts of the economics literature such as the new wellbeing literature. In health economics and environmental economics efforts are being made to attach monetary values to these qualitative estimates. Nevertheless, difficulties arise due to the potential for ordinal ratings to reflect respondent characteristics which are unobserved by the analyst. Again, if these are correlated with the propensity for treatment this has potential to bias estimates.

⁹ As Bewley and Forth (forthcoming) note: "The experience that firms have had from the intervention, or the extent to which they regard the intervention as beneficial (regardless of its actual impact), may affect their willingness to respond to a survey, which in turn can bias the impact estimates. For example, firms that have not benefited from an intervention may be more anxious to relate their experiences than firms that have had a neutral experience."

There may also be value in collecting participant evaluations of programme impacts along qualitative lines because it is conceivable that participant SA evaluations contain information which one might not obtain from other impact estimates. This is because there may be true benefits accruing to participants, or costs incurred, that might be unobserved in a standard econometric impact assessment. This can occur, for instance, if participants attach weight to outcomes which fall outside a narrowly defined concept of monetary returns, or if their estimations are made along a different time-dimension to that used in an econometric evaluation. It is also valuable to obtain qualitative measures to set alongside any quantitative measures obtained in a survey. The analyst is then able to compare impact estimates using both cardinal and ordinal data.

3.5 Difficulties in estimating counterfactual outcomes

There are particular difficulties in relying on respondents' subjective assessments of counterfactual outcomes when there are heterogeneous returns to participation. This is illustrated by studies of profiling in the welfare evaluation literature (for a discussion see Bryson and Kasparova, 2003). The most compelling evidence that we have regarding the difficulty that participants have in accurately estimating programme impacts comes from Smith, Whalley and Wilcox (2007). They use experimental data from the National Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Study (NJS) to compare experimentally estimated programme impacts to individual self-reports of programme effectiveness after the completion of the programme. They find little evidence of a relationship between experimentally estimated programme impacts and self-reported programme effectiveness. Instead they find SA impacts resemble before-after estimates, a finding which is hardly surprising given that these may be viewed as "cognitively inexpensive potential proxies for programme impacts" (ibid.). Although these findings relate to individuals participating in welfare programmes, it seems likely that similar systematic judgement errors arising from the need to take cognitive short-cuts will also affect SA estimates of the impact of programmes targeted at businesses.¹⁰ Indeed, this is precisely what our own cognitive testing indicates.

Bell and Orr (2002) provide evidence that caseworkers are good at predicting outcome levels (even conditional on clients' characteristics) but very bad at predicting impacts. This is a cautionary tale since (a) caseworkers are professionals seemingly capable of applying expert knowledge; (b) caseworkers have access to good data on the nature of participants; (c) caseworkers tend to be very knowledgeable about the nature of programmes. This has led some to propose the use of statistical profiling methods to allocate programme slots, rather than caseworker judgements (Lechner and

¹⁰ Their paper includes an excellent discussion of the psychology literature relating to systematic errors in recall and reliance on "judgement heuristics" which raises concerns about the ability of individuals to construct counterfactual outcomes. Smith et al. (2007) conclude: "overall, we conclude that participant self-evaluations of the type analyzed here are very poor substitutes for rigorous experimental or non-experimental estimates of program impact."

Smith, 2007).¹¹ It is therefore important to seek to understand the mechanisms by which programmes generate heterogeneous impacts.

3.6 The feasibility of assessing the impact of a programme on non-participants

Many programmes will affect businesses other than those participating in the programme. These effects can be positive or negative. For example, if a programme successfully equips firms with computer hardware this may create demand for computer software which will benefit software designers and distributors. On the other hand, if the building of a new shopping mall in one part of town results in greater sales for the shops in the new mall at the expense of the shops at the other end of town this may negatively affect the survival probabilities of those at the other end of town.

Large programmes offering substantial assistance to firms may have an impact on the whole marketplace. For instance, large wage subsidies to firms can affect wage setting throughout the economy. These general equilibrium effects can potentially dwarf the direct impact of the subsidy on the firms receiving it. Such programmes are inherently difficult to evaluate via SA or indeed any other standard evaluation technique.

SA is most likely to be credible when the respondent is asked to assess the costs and benefits of their own business's participation in the programme. It is perhaps less credible as a way of establishing potential effects of the programme on other firms for example, because this requires some knowledge on the part of the respondent as to how the market in general operates and, indeed, other "counterfactual" markets.

3.7 Deadweight

How likely is it that programme participants will have received the same or similar assistance in the absence of the BIS programme? If it is likely, did the availability of the BIS programme either cut the cost of obtaining this assistance or ensure that the assistance was more timely? Answers to these questions help determine the cost-effectiveness of government intervention. Where it is established that participants were likely to have received the same or similar assistance in the absence of the government programme 'deadweight' is said to be high.

In an evaluation through self-assessment participants will be asked about the likelihood of obtaining similar assistance through other means. It is possible to address this directly in questions regarding the availability of alternative ways of procuring similar assistance, with the attendant costs and benefits. The difficulty, however, is that if a business is already in receipt of BIS

¹¹ Lechner and Smith find that, in their particular setting (Swiss labour market programme for the unemployed) statistical profiling results in higher programme impacts than caseworker allocation.

assistance, they may know less about these alternatives than they might otherwise because they will wish to forgo the costs of additional search.

It is also worthwhile noting that the availability of similar assistance through other means implies that the 'counterfactual' to non-participation in the government programme may be treatment elsewhere rather than no treatment at all, thus limiting the impact of the programme.

4 SUMMARY

The Green Book proposes the use of robust evaluation techniques provided the costs are commensurate with the size of the programme being evaluated. SA may be less costly than some evaluation techniques but there are some questions as to just how robust estimates based on SA might be. From a BIS perspective, however, the question is not necessarily whether or not to use SA on a particular programme evaluation. Rather the questions are three-fold:

- Can SA offer robust evidence regarding the impact of a programme if used as a free-standing (the only) methodology?
- If so, under what conditions is it likely to offer robust evidence?
- If there are serious questions about the robustness of the evidence it provides on programme impact can it nevertheless usefully complement other approaches in triangulation giving richer sense of potential impacts?

We suggest that SA may be a more attractive option in some circumstances rather than others. It may be more attractive where:

- where there are limited funds available to undertake a more thorough evaluation;
- where the programme is visible and discrete;
- where the benefits of participation are clearly understood and the costs and benefits are easily quantifiable;
- where it is relatively straightforward to envisage the world in the absence of participation;
- where potential knock-on effects from the programme to other firms are not large;
- where there are other evaluation tools available against which to benchmark the impact estimate derived from SA;
- and where it is important to gain an understanding of the participation process, such as the costliness of participation, the clarity of programme rules, the helpfulness and usefulness of staff.

Evaluators should refer to McGee et al.'s (2009) guidance on best practice when applying SA to estimate programme impacts.

Having said all of this, the concern remains that participants' assessments of programme impacts are liable to systematic biases due to cognitive processes which lead them to proxy impacts using comparisons of outcomes before and after participation with little consideration of the counterfactual scenario of non-participation throughout. This view is supported by empirical evidence

from the welfare evaluation literature, although one cannot wholly discount the possibility that participants consider factors in their answers that are not captured in econometric impact assessments. It is possible that advances in question wording, such as Manski's (2004) work on probabilistic expectations, may assist in the more accurate measurement of outcomes and impacts, but this remains to be seen.

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APPENDIX A TECHNICAL DETAILS OF COGNITIVE TESTING

This appendix describes in further detail the design and conduct of the cognitive testing.

Study Design

In 2007, the then Department for Trade and Industry commissioned the Questionnaire Development and Testing (QDT) Hub at NatCen to test and revise an existing set of survey questions that could effectively measure the economic impact of its policies. These questions attempt to measure the economic impact that a BIS programme or regulation has had on businesses. The questions are designed to be used therefore on a range of different BIS surveys.

Questions were tested in two rounds of cognitive interviews in 2007. Round one took place in February 2007 and involved testing the existing survey questions with respondents who had recently taken part in the Business Cross Product Monitoring Survey. The findings from this first test were used in making revisions to the survey questions, which were subject to a second round of testing, in April 2007. As a result of this testing, further recommendations on the wording of the questions were made. In 2010 the Department of Business Innovation and Skills commissioned the QDT Hub to undertake further testing of the questions, incorporating the recommendations made at round two. This 'third round' involved respondents who had recently (within the last few months) taken part in the *Solutions for Business Monitor Survey*.

The aim was to conduct 16 interviews covering the range of different types of business that had participated in the six different programmes covered by the *Solutions for Business Monitor Survey*. Cognitive interviewing methods are qualitative in nature and samples are purposive, reflecting respondents' characteristics thought to have a bearing on how the test questions would be interpreted. Interviewers were set quotas to achieve a range of different types of business, which had been involved in the six different interventions.

Cognitive Methods

Cognitive interviewing methods, which are derived from cognitive psychology, enable researchers to examine (in greater detail) the question-and-answer process, helping to identify problems with questions and possible solutions. Cognitive interviewing techniques focus on four main processes:

- how respondents understand and interpret questions;
- how respondents recall the information required to answer questions;
- the judgements they make as to what information to use when formulating their answers; and

- how to respond to the questions.

The two most frequently used cognitive interviewing techniques are ‘think aloud’ and probing. In this study, a mixture of think aloud and probing techniques were used. In the think aloud technique, respondents were asked to say out loud what they are thinking as they go about answering completing the task. For example, respondents would be encouraged to articulate what they think a particular data item means, what information they are drawing on to complete each section, what decisions they make about what they are being asked to provide or what information is required to answer it and how they provide their (final) information for each item.

In the probing technique the interviewer will ask specific, usually scripted, questions which provide similar information. These ‘probes’ are partly pre-scripted and provide a guide to the topics to be covered in the cognitive interview. Probing was carried out retrospectively, once a section of questions had been asked and an answer given. A copy of the cognitive probes used can be found in Appendix B. At the top of each page of the probe sheet, a small box was included which summarised the different interventions that were discussed. This can be seen in Figure A.1 below.

Figure A.1 BIS Programmes Evaluated by the Solutions for Business Monitor Survey

SaB – Starting a Business
ISUS – Intensive Start Up Support
SaHGB – Starting a High Growth Business
IAG – Innovation Advice and Guidance
UFFB – Understanding Finance for Business
CHG – Coaching for High Growth

Sampling and recruitment

Recruitment for the cognitive testing of the economic impact questions used in the Solutions for Business Monitor Survey was carried out by the cognitive interviewers. The sample was provided by the survey organisation who administers the Solutions for Business Monitor Survey. The sample did not contain any businesses who had received Coaching for High Growth (CHG). The sample was therefore made up of respondents who had received one of the other five other interventions the survey evaluates (see Figure A.1 above). The interviewers were given a sample list containing the contact details of businesses that had taken part in the survey and had agreed to take part in further research. Prior to providing the sample details to the interviewers, all the businesses were sent an opt out letter by post, if the postal address was known. Internet searches were made to find the postal address when it was not in the sample file. When we could not find the postal address we looked for an email address by which to send the opt out letter. When neither the postal address nor the email address could be found, businesses were cold-called. This occurred only for businesses in the London area.

The opt out letter explained the study and provided the name of the interviewer who was going to contact them to set up the appointment for the interview. A copy of the letter sent to respondents is contained in Appendix C.

The areas in which interviewing took place were:

- Essex:
- Manchester; and,
- Lancashire.

In total fifteen face-to-face interviews and one telephone interview were conducted in three areas: Essex, Manchester and Lancashire. The intention was to conduct all the interviews face-to-face and also to conduct interviews in London. However, due to the need to complete interviews and report within an agreed timetable and to offer respondents flexibility in terms of when and where interviews took place, one interview was conducted by telephone. We were unsuccessful in being able to recruit any respondents in London, as all were too busy to participate.

Characteristics of those interviewed

Sixteen interviews were conducted in total. Table A.1 shows the characteristics of respondents interviewed as part of this study.

Table A.1: Characteristics of those interviewed

Characteristic	Characteristic	Number with Characteristic
Scheme the organisation is involved with	Starting a Business (SAB)	3
	Intensive Start Up Support (ISUS)	4
	Starting a High Growth Business (SaHGB)	3
	Innovation, Advice and Guidance (IAG)	3
	Understanding Finance for Business (UFFB)	3
	Coaching for High Growth (CHG)	0
	Total	16
Size of the organisation (Number of people employed)	One person (1 employee/owner)	8
	Small (2-16 people employed)	7
	Medium to large (25 people or more employed)	1
	Total	16
Single sited and multi-sited	Single-sited	14
	Multi-sited	2
	Total	16

Interviews

Interviews were conducted by NatCen field interviewers trained in cognitive interviewing methods and a member of the research team. No incentives were used on this study. The recordings were reviewed so that detailed notes could be made. Notes were analysed using a content analysis approach described below.

Analysis

Notes were analysed using a content analysis approach based on Framework, an analytic tool developed by the Qualitative Research Unit at NatCen. A matrix was set up, which listed the respective areas of the questionnaire we tested across the page and cases down the page. The matrix included a summary of the characteristics of respondents; such as the product they received and whether they were based at a single or multi-site. Under each question, a summary was made of each respondent's understanding of the question, recall strategies used, judgements made in formulating an answer and the answer provided. Any other problems were also recorded. Thus data could be read horizontally as a complete case record for an individual, or vertically by question, looking across all cases. Once the matrix was completed the data were reviewed. In reviewing the matrix the full range of problems with the economic impact questions were explored.

APPENDIX B ROUND 3 COGNITIVE QUESTION AND PROBE SHEET



SaB – Starting a Business
ISUS – Intensive Start Up Support
SaHGB – Starting a High Growth Business
IAG – Innovation Advice and Guidance
UFFB – Understanding Finance for Business
CHG – Coaching for High Growth

P2994 Assessing the economic impact of BIS policies: cognitive interviews

The Main Aim

- To examine R's experience of the questionnaire through **think aloud** and **retrospective probing**

The Main Objectives for the interview

- To examine Rs' understanding of the questions
- To examine Rs' ability to answer the questions

Name of Interviewer: _____

Date of Interview: ____/____/2010
DD / MM

Serial ID: _____ e.g. Serial Number (use number provided by researcher)

Stage One – Introduction

- Introduce yourself, the National Centre, and the study
- You need to introduce the survey to the respondent.
- It is an evaluation study on behalf of BIS (The Department for Business Innovation and Skills).
- The study aims to explore and understand the difficulties businesses face in providing information on the financial impact of projects / interventions.
- The questions being tested are asked on BIS surveys that seek to assess the economic impact of advice and support to help businesses.
- Respondent will have very recently taken part in the *Solutions for Business Monitor Survey* (The questions we are testing are different to the ones included in this survey).
- Explain that you will be asking them to answer a series of questions which you would like them to answer and at various points throughout the questionnaire you will then be asking them to tell you how they went about answering the survey questions.
- We are less interested in the answers and more interested in what they understand the questions to mean and the process by which they arrive at their answers.
- Remind them:
 - that participation is voluntary; and
 - the interview could last up to one hour.
- Stress the confidentiality of the process; all the findings will be reported anonymously. Make sure they understand this.
- Explain that you will be recording the interview so that you don't have to make lots of notes during the interview. Check this is ok with the respondent.
- Ask whether they have any questions before you start

Stage Two – Respondent Details

Spend some time building rapport with the respondent covering the following:

- Respondent title and what post entails;
- Length of time in post;
- Principal activities;
- Size and age of organisation; and,
- Nature of organisation and number of workplaces (see below for specific questions).

I would like to begin by asking you some general questions about this/your workplace:

- What is the main activity of this organisation?
- Is this workplace one of a number of different workplaces in the UK belonging to the same organisation, a single independent workplace or the sole UK workplace of a foreign organisation?
- *If multi-site:* How many workplaces, including this one, are there within your organisation in the UK?
- *If multi-site:* Approximately, how many employees are on the UK payroll of your organisation. That is the whole organisation in the UK, not just your present location where you work?
- (And) How many employees are there on the UK payroll at this/your workplace?

Stage Three – Exploring terminology

Next explore exactly how respondents refer to the intervention:

Probes:

- Which scheme(s) have you participated in or received help or advice from?
- How do you refer to the <read out>? (Explore if Rs can identify the schemes(s) and possible areas of confusion and what is clear for them)
- If DK: When is your involvement in <read out> due to be completed? (Explore if Rs see this as involvement with a fixed time frame or open ended)

Survey questions for impact evaluations which rely on beneficiaries self-assessment: evidence and guidance

INTERVIEWER: If respondent does not know the name of the scheme(s) they took part in read out the descriptions below as a prompt to help them identify which one(s) they took part in.		
Product Name	Description	
Starting a Business (SAB)	Free advice to help those wishing to start a business. Advice and information on all aspects of setting up and running a successful business, from an assessment of a business idea to advice on business planning and finance. Also includes post start-up guidance. This scheme is available to individuals and groups starting a business.	1
Intensive Start Up Support (ISUS)	Free advice and intensive assistance (in addition to what's provided by Starting a Business) for under-represented individuals to help them start their own business. This scheme is prioritised based on locality and the needs of the individual. This includes, but is not restricted to, women, people with disabilities and black and minority ethnic communities.	2
Starting a High Growth Business (SaHGB)	Free help for new businesses (and people developing a business concept) identified as having high-growth potential. Intensive individual coaching through workshops, networks and online resources to help achieve rapid growth. One to one mentoring is also envisaged. This scheme is available to companies in specific sectors that have the potential to achieve turnover of £500,000 to £1 million or higher within three years of starting to trade.	3
Innovation, Advice and Guidance (IAG)	Innovation advice and guidance from experts, providing businesses with expert knowledge and highly specialised and technical skills to innovate and improve performance. This scheme is available to small and medium sized businesses (fewer than 250 employees) and social enterprises seeking innovative approaches to tackling barriers to growth. Advice to businesses with 250 or over employees are provided but at full market rate.	4
Understanding Finance for Business (UFFB)	Free advice and support from specialist advisors to ensure that entrepreneurs and businesses understand their options for getting the money they need to start and grow a business. Includes a diagnosis of financial needs and facilitated introduction to potential sources of finance. This scheme is available to small and medium start-up and growth businesses (under 250 employees) that require an understanding of finance options and the skills to develop their propositions and access to potential investors.	5
Coaching for High Growth (CHG)	A free structured coaching programme, helping new and existing businesses with the desire and potential to achieve significant growth. The coaching is a customised intensive, one-to-one programme from experienced mentors. It is supplemented by workshops, networks and online resources. This scheme is available to small and medium sized businesses (fewer than 250 employees) with the potential to achieve high growth. (Businesses receiving this programme are rare and in your sample you may not have any as it does not run in all parts of the country)	6

SaB – Starting a Business	IAG – Innovation Advice and Guidance
ISUS – Intensive Start Up Support	UFFB – Understanding Finance for Business
SaHGB – Starting a High Growth Business	CHG – Coaching for High Growth

Stage Four - Questions

Assessing the economic impact of BIS policies: cognitive interviews

Aim: To see if Rs understand the questions and are able to answer them

Please ask respondents to **think aloud** while they are answering the questions

- INTERVIEWER:
- Please explain to the respondents that you are going to read out questions which you would like the R to answer.
 - **Think aloud** Please ask the R to tell you what they are thinking when they answer the questions. Use the windows example or another example if you find it helpful.
 - Use the probes to elicit specific information that we are looking for.

NEW1 *What is the main activity of this workplace?*
 INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

NEW2 *Is this workplace one of a number of different workplaces in the UK belonging to the same organisation a single independent workplace or the sole UK workplace of a foreign organisation?*

One of a number of different workplaces in the UK
 belonging to the same organisation (ASK NEW3)
 Single independent workplace (Go to NEW5)
 Sole UK workplace of a foreign organisation (Go to NEW5)

IF PART OF A LARGER ORGANISATION IN THE UK:

NEW3 *How many workplaces, including this one, are there within your organisation in the UK?* INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

NEW4 *Approximately, how many employees are on the UK payroll of your organisation (i.e. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland)? That is the whole organisation in the UK, not just your present location where you work?*
 WRITE IN: _____

ASK ALL

NEW5 *And how many employees are there on the UK payroll at this/your workplace?* INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

SaB – Starting a Business	IAG – Innovation Advice and Guidance
ISUS – Intensive Start Up Support	UFFB – Understanding Finance for Business
SaHGB – Starting a High Growth Business	CHG – Coaching for High Growth

NEW6 When answering these questions please think about your workplace only

INTERVIEWER: READ WORDING BELOW EXACTLY AS WRITTEN

ASK ALL

I am now going to run through some of the questions you might be asked as part of the BIS survey about the scheme you took part in. I'd like you to try and answer the questions and as you do so please talk me through any issues they raise. We'll then talk about these issues a bit more.

The first few questions are about the benefits you might have experienced that resulted from your participation in < SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG > and whether you would have experienced these regardless of this participation.

IF MULTI SITE BUSINESS

NEW7 When thinking about the contribution...

...your participation in < SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB, or CHG > has made to your organisation/workplace, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| This workplace only | 01 |
| The organisation as a whole | 02 |
| (Don't Know) | 03 |
| (Refused) | 04 |

ASK ALL

SHOW CARD 1

Q1 *Thinking about your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB, or CHG >, what contribution has it made, or do you expect it **will** make to your <organisation/workplace>? Do you think ...*

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| you would (have) probably achieve(d) similar results? | 01 (ask Q1a) |
| you would (have) definitely achieve(d) similar results | 02 (ask Q1a) |
| you would (have) probably not have achieve(d) similar results, or | 03 (go to Q2) |
| you would (have) definitely not have achieve(d) similar results | 04 (go to Q2) |
| (None of these) | 05 (go to Q2) |
| (Don't Know) | 06 (go to Q2) |
| (Refused) | 07 (go to Q2) |

Q1a *And do you think you would have achieved similar results in the same time frame, over a longer time frame, or in a shorter time frame had you not taken part in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB, or CHG >?*

- | | |
|--------------------|----|
| Same time frame | 01 |
| Longer time frame | 02 |
| Shorter time frame | 03 |
| (Don't know) | 04 |
| (Refused) | 05 |

Probes for NEW1 to NEW5

What did you understand by the term workplace? Ask for an example
What did you understand by the term organisation? Example? When asked these Qs did Rs see a difference between these two terms? If so, how are they different?

- Were these questions easy or difficult to answer? (Explore reasons)

Probes for NEW6

- What did 'workplace only' mean to you in this question?

Probes for Q1

- How did you decide on your answer? (Explore if the question was easy or difficult and why? (e.g. does the amount of time that has elapsed between when took part in scheme and taking part in this interview affect ability to answer?)
- What does 'results' mean? -What kinds of things were you thinking about when you answered this question?
- What does 'your organisation/workplace' mean to you in this question?
- *If multi-site:* Why did you decide to answer this question thinking about <this workplace/organisation as a whole>?

Probes for Q1a

- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? Why?
- How did you decide on your answer to this question

ASK ALL

Q2 *I am going to read out a statement. I would like you to give me an answer using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is 'agree strongly' and 5 is 'disagree strongly'.*

Thinking about <this/your workplace only/the organisation as a whole>),to what extent would you agree with this statement:

The <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG> has provided, or will provide, a support package that I could not have got from any other source'?

May I remind you that 1 is 'agree strongly' and 5 is 'disagree strongly'.

1 - Agree strongly

2

3

4

5 - Disagree strongly

(Don't Know)

(Refused) _____

SaB – Starting a Business
ISUS – Intensive Start Up Support
SaHGB – Starting a High Growth Business

IAG – Innovation Advice and Guidance
UFFB – Understanding Finance for Business
CHG – Coaching for High Growth

IF Q2= 1 or 2

Q3a

What was it that the <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG,UFFB, CHG, UFFB> provided you with, or is expected to provide you with that you couldn't have got elsewhere?

INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN:_____

IF Q2= 3,4 or 5

Q3b

What or who could have provided you with the same as the <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG,UFFB or CHG> scheme?

INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN:_____

Probes General – ask for Q2, Q3a and Q3b

- How did you decide on your answer?
- What were you thinking about?
- How easy or difficult did you find answering the question?
- *If multi-site:* Why did you decide to answer this question thinking about <this workplace/your workplace as a whole>?

Q2

- What did 'support package' mean to you in this question? What kinds of things were you thinking about?
- *If answered Agree strongly (1):* Can you rate from 1-10 how strongly you feel?

Q3a and Q3b

- What sorts of things were you thinking about?
- What did you include/exclude? Why?

ASK ALL

The next few questions are about the financial performance of your business.

Q4 When does your business's financial year start and end?

INTERVIEWER: IF FINANCIAL YEAR VARIES ASK FOR THE LAST COMPLETE FINANCIAL YEAR.

INTERVIEWER: PLEASE CODE THE START MONTH.

January	01
February	02
March	03
April	04
May	05
June	06
July	07

SaB – Starting a Business	IAG – Innovation Advice and Guidance
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August	08
September	09
October	10
November	11
December	12

INTERVIEWER: PLEASE CODE THE END MONTH.

January	01
February	02
March	03
April	04
May	05
June	06
July	07
August	08
September	09
October	10
November	11
December	12

PROBES FOR Q4

- HOW EASY OR DIFFICULT DID YOU FIND ANSWERING THIS QUESTION?
- What were you thinking about when you answered the question?

INTERVIEWER: READ WORDING BELOW EXACTLY AS WRITTEN

Q5aIntro *The next few questions are about the financial performance of your business. These questions are designed to enable BIS to assess the impact or likely impact of your participation in < SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG,UFFB, CHG, UFFB>.*

Q5a *What was the annual turnover of your organisation in the last complete financial year? You may also refer to turnover as income, sales, invoices or receipts.*

£

DK 8

Refused 9

Not yet completed first financial year 7 GO TO NEWQ15INTRO

IF Q5a=DK

Q5b If you had to estimate the annual turnover of your organisation in the last complete financial year, roughly into which of the following bands would you place it? READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £100,000	02
£100,000 but less than £200,000	03
£200,000 but less than £500,000	04
£500,000 but less than £1million	05
£1million but less than £2million	06
£2million but less than £5million	07
£5million but less than £10million	08
£10million but less than £25million	09
£25million but less than £50million	10
More than £50million	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

ASK IF GIVEN AMOUNT AT Q5a or Q5b

NEW8 Were you thinking about annual turnover before or after tax?

Before tax	01
After tax	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

IF MULTI-SITE BUSINESS

NEW9 And what was the annual turnover for this/your workplace in the last complete financial year? You may also refer to turnover as income, sales, invoices or receipts.

£	01
(Don't Know)	02
(Refused)	03

IF MULTI-SITE BUSINESS & NEW9=DK

NEW10 If you had to estimate the annual turnover for this/your workplace in the last complete financial year, roughly into which of the following bands would you place it?

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £100,000	02
£100,000 but less than £200,000	03
£200,000 but less than £500,000	04
£500,000 but less than £1million	05
£1million but less than £2million	06
£2million but less than £5million	07

£5million but less than £10million	08
£10million but less than £25million	09
£25million but less than £50million	10
More than £50million	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

IF MULTI-SITE BUSINESS AND GIVEN AMOUNT AT NEW9 OR NEW10

NEW11 Were you thinking about annual turnover before or after tax?

Before tax	01
After tax	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

Probes

Q5a and Q5b

- What information did you think these questions were asking for?
- How easy or difficult did you find answering the question? Why?
- What do you understand by 'annual turnover' in the question?
- What time period were you thinking about?
- How did you go about coming up with an answer to this question? (Explore what R included and excluded and why)
- Explore R's involvement and knowledge of financial matters within the organisation.
- Are there any records that R could refer to? How accessible is the information?
- How accurate do you think your answer is? Why?
- *If multi-site:* Why did you decide to answer this question thinking about <this workplace/your workplace as a whole>?
- **Q5B** – were the answer options for annual turnover appropriate. Probe if R thought them too broad or too narrow – what would be appropriate?

NEW8

- How did you decide on your answer? (Explore what R understood by annual turnover before or after tax). If answer after tax: could R provide give a pre-tax turnover figure?

NEW9

- Did you find this question easy or difficult to answer? – Why? (Explore reasons)
- What did annual turnover mean to you in this question? (To explore consistency in understanding of term with the preceding question)

NEW10

- How did you go about answering this question? Were the answer options for annual turnover appropriate. Probe if R thought them too broad or too narrow – what would be appropriate?

NEW11 - How did you decide on your answer? (To explore R's answer strategy)

ASK IF MULTI SITE

NEW12 *The next question is about total employment costs. When thinking about total employment costs, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?*

This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

ASK ALL

Q6a *Approximately what were the total employment costs to this <organisation/workplace> in the last complete financial year? Please include all employee costs, such as salaries, pensions, social security, dividends paid to Directors and redundancy pay.*

£	
(Don't Know)	08
(Refused)	09

IF Q6a=DK

Q6b *If you had to estimate the total employment costs to this <organisation/workplace> in the last complete financial year, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £100,000	02
£100,000 but less than £200,000	03
£200,000 but less than £500,000	04
£500,000 but less than £1million	05
£1million but less than £2million	06
£2million but less than £5million	07
£5million but less than £10million	08
£10million but less than £25million	09
£25million but less than £50million	10
More than £50million	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

Probes

NEW12 - Why did you decide to answer this question thinking about <this workplace/your workplace as a whole>?

Q6a and 6b

- How easy or difficult did you find answering the question? (Explore understanding of question and how R decided on their answer and what things R include/exclude in their answer? Why? – if multi-sited explore if Rs stuck with their choice in NEW12 if not why not)
- What did you understand by 'total employment costs'?
- What did redundancy pay mean to you in the question (Q6a)?
- Explore R's involvement and knowledge of financial matters within the organisation.
- Are there any records that R could refer to? How accessible is the information?
- How accurate do you think your answer is to Q6a and Q6b? Why?

ASK IF MULTI SITE

NEW13 *The next questions are about profits and losses. When thinking about profits and losses, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?*

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| This workplace only | 01 |
| The organisation as a whole | 02 |
| (Don't Know) | 03 |
| (Refused) | 04 |

ASK ALL

Q7a *In the last complete financial year, did your <organisation/workplace> make an annual profit or loss?*

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Profit | 01 (Go to Q7b) |
| Loss | 02 (Go to Q7b) |
| (Neither a profit nor a loss) (spontaneous response) | 03 (Go to NEW14) |
| (Don't Know) | 04 (Go to NEW15Intro) |
| (Refused) | 05 (Go to NEW15Intro) |

Q7b *What was your annual <profit/loss> for the last complete financial year?*

- £
- (Don't Know)
- (Refused)

IF Q7b=DK

Q7c *If you had to estimate your annual <profits/losses> for the last complete financial year, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| £0 | 01 |
| Less than £100,000 | 02 |
| £100,000 but less than £200,000 | 03 |
| £200,000 but less than £500,00 | 04 |
| £500,000 but less than £1million | 05 |
| £1million but less than £2million | 06 |
| £2million but less than £5million | 07 |
| £5million but less than £10million | 08 |
| £10million but less than £25million | 09 |
| £25million but less than £50million | 10 |
| More than £50million | 11 |
| (Don't Know) | 12 |
| (Refused) | 13 |

SaB – Starting a Business	IAG – Innovation Advice and Guidance
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NEW14 <i>Were you thinking of your annual <profit/loss> before or after tax?</i>	
Before tax	01
After tax	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

OVERALL PROBES FOR QNEW13, Q7A, Q7B, Q7C AND QNEW14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How easy or difficult did you find answering these questions? Why? (Explore R's understanding of what these questions were asking about) • Explore R's involvement and knowledge of financial matters within the organisation. • Are there any records that R could refer to? How accessible is the information? • When were your most recent accounts produced?
NEW13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did you decide to answer this question thinking about <this workplace/your workplace as a whole>? • Did you think about this workplace, your organisation as a whole or did it vary when you answered the questions in this section? (Explore reasons if varied)
Q7a
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did last complete financial year mean to you in this question?
Q7b
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If amount given – ASK How did you decide on your answer? (Explore what factors R included or excluded in their calculation) • How confident are you of your answer?
Q7c
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you go about coming up with an answer to Q7c question? What did you include/exclude? Why? (Interviewer please read the question again if R needs reminding of the bands) • How accurate do you think your answer is? Why?
NEW14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you decide on your answer? • IF GAVE AFTER TAX FIGURE: Could you provide a profit/loss before tax figure before tax? Why?

NEW 15Intro Now I'd like you to think specifically about the financial impact of...

...your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >. This section will ask firstly about costs and secondly about returns to your organisation/workplace to date, resulting from your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >.

ASK IF MULTI SITE

NEW15 When thinking about the costs of...

...your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| This workplace only | 01 |
| The organisation as a whole | 02 |
| (Don't Know) | 03 |
| (Refused) | 04 |

ASK ALL

NEW16 Firstly thinking about costs, If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date...

resulting from your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>, into which of the following bands would you place them?

READ OUT

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----|----------------------------|
| £0 | 01 | (Go to next section New19) |
| Less than £10,000 | 02 | (Go to Q8c1) |
| £10,000 but less than £50,000 | 03 | (Go to Q8c1) |
| £50,000 but less than £100,000 | 04 | (Go to Q8c1) |
| £100,000 but less than £200,000 | 05 | (Go to Q8c1) |
| £200,000 but less than £500,000 | 06 | (Go to Q8c1) |
| £500,000 but less than £1million | 07 | (Go to Q8c1) |
| £1million but less than £2million | 08 | (Go to Q8c1) |
| £2million but less than £5million | 09 | (Go to Q8c1) |
| £5million but less than £10million | 10 | (Go to Q8c1) |
| £10million or more | 11 | (Go to Q8c1) |
| (Don't Know) | 12 | (Go to Q8c1) |
| (Refused) | 13 | (Go to Q8c1) |

Q8c1 Now thinking only about staff time and salaries, what have been the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of staff time and salaries?

£	01
(Don't Know)	02
(Refused)	03

IF Q8c1=DK

Q8c2 If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of staff time and salaries, into which of the following bands would you place them?

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £10,000	02
£10,000 but less than £50,000	03
£50,000 but less than £100,000	04
£100,000 but less than £200,000	05
£200,000 but less than £500,000	06
£500,000 but less than £1million	07
£1million but less than £2million	08
£2million but less than £5million	09
£5million but less than £10million	10
£10million or more	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

Q8c3 Next, thinking about consultancy, what have been the total consultancy costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date?

£
(Don't Know)
(Refused)

IF Q8c1=DK

Q8c4 If you had to estimate the total consultancy costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, into which of the following bands would you place them?

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £1000	02
£1,000 but less than £5,000	03
£5,000 but less than £10,000	04
£10,000 but less than £20,000	05
£20,000 but less than £50,000	06
£50,000 but less than £100,000	07
£100,000 but less than £500,000	08
£500,000 but less than £1million	09

£1million but less than £5million	10
More than £5million	11
(Don't know)	12
(Refused)	13

Q8c5 Now thinking about materials and equipment, what have been the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of materials and equipment?

£

(Don't Know)

(Refused)

IF Q8c1=DK

Q8c6 If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of materials and equipment, into which of the following bands would you place them?

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £10,000	02
£10,000 but less than £50,000	03
£50,000 but less than £100,000	04
£100,000 but less than £200,000	05
£200,000 but less than £500,000	06
£500,000 but less than £1million	07
£1million but less than £2million	08
£2million but less than £5million	09
£5million but less than £10million	10
£10million or more	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

Q8c7 And lastly, thinking about training and mentoring, what have been the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of training and mentoring?

£

(Don't Know)

(Refused)

If Q8c1=DK:

SaB – Starting a Business	IAG – Innovation Advice and Guidance
ISUS – Intensive Start Up Support	UFFB – Understanding Finance for Business
SaHGB – Starting a High Growth Business	CHG – Coaching for High Growth

Q8c8 *If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of training and mentoring, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £1000	02
£1,000 but less than £5,000	03
£5,000 but less than £10,000	04
£10,000 but less than £20,000	05
£20,000 but less than £50,000	06
£50,000 but less than £100,000	07
£100,000 but less than £500,000	08
£500,000 but less than £1million	09
£1million but less than £5million	10
More than £5million	11
(Don't know)	12
(Refused)	13

NEW17 *Have there been any other costs to your <organisation/workplace>, in addition to those you have just given me?*

Yes	01 ASK NEW18
No	02 GO TO Q8a
(Don't Know)	11 GO TO Q8a
(Refused)	12 GO TO Q8a

ASK IF NEW17 CODED 1

NEW18 *What were these additional costs for? WRITE IN:*

Q8d *Thinking about these additional costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, what have the total costs been?*

- £
- (Don't Know)
- (Refused)

IF Q8d=DK

Q8e *If you had to estimate these additional costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £10,000	02
£10,000 but less than £50,000	03
£50,000 but less than £100,000	04
£100,000 but less than £200,000	05
£200,000 but less than £500,000	06
£500,000 but less than £1million	07
£1million but less than £2million	08
£2million but less than £5million	09
£5million but less than £10million	10
£10million or more	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

ASK ALL

Q8a *Overall, do you feel that the costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date...*

of your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG > have been...

Significant	1
Moderate	2
Minimal	3
(Don't Know)	4
(Refused)	5

Overall Probes

- What information did you think these questions were asking for?
- Explore R's involvement and knowledge of financial matters within the organisation.
- Are there any records that R could refer to? How accessible is the information?
- How accurate do you think your answers are? Why?

NEW15

- Why did you decide to answer this question thinking about <this workplace/your workplace as a whole>?
- Did you think about this workplace, your organisation as a whole or did it vary when you answered the questions in this section? (Explore reasons if varied)

NEW16

- How did you go about answering this question? Was there anything that you were not certain about when you estimated the cost (To explore if R's can answer a general question on costs)
- What did you understand by 'total costs to your organisation/workplace' in this question?
- What did you understand by 'to date' in this question?
- Were the answer options for costs provided appropriate? Probe if R thought them too broad or too narrow – what would be more appropriate?

Q8c1

- Did you think about staff time or salaries or both at this question? (Explore reasons)
- Was this easy or difficult to do? (Explore R's rationale for what R included and excluded)

Q8c2

- How easy or difficult was it to think about the time period 'to date'? Why?
- How did you decide on your answer? (Explore if R calculated/guessed answer, what was included or excluded and reasons e.g. whether R included staff time and salaries. What else?)
- Were the answer options for costs provided appropriate? Probe if R thought them too broad or too narrow – what would be more appropriate?

Q8c3

- How did you go about answering this question? (Explore understanding of consultancy and what R included or excluded in their answer)

Q8c4

- How did you decide on your answer? (What did the R include and exclude in their estimation)
- Were the answer options for costs provided appropriate? Probe if R thought them too broad or too narrow – what would be more appropriate?

Q8c5

- What did you think about when you answered this question? (Explore understanding of materials and equipment and how R decided on their answer)

Q8c6

- How did you decide on your answer?
- Were the answer options for costs provided appropriate? Probe if R thought them too broad or too narrow – what would be more appropriate?

Q8c7

- What did you think about when answering this question?
- Explore understanding of training and mentoring
- How did you decide on your answer

Q8c8

- How did you decide on your answer?
- Were the answer options for costs provided appropriate? Probe if R thought them too broad or too narrow – what would be more appropriate?
- What did you think about when you answered this question? (Explore understanding of training)

NEW17

- What did ‘other costs’ mean to you at this question? (Explore if there is anything R wasn’t sure about including here)
- How did you decide on your answer?

New18

- Was this question easy or difficult to answer? Why? (Explore if there is anything R wasn’t sure about including here)

Q8d/e

- What did you understand by ‘additional costs’?
- What did you include/exclude? Why?
- Were the answer options for costs provided appropriate? Probe if R thought them too broad or too narrow – what would be more appropriate?

Q8a

- How did you decide on your answer?
- What did you understand by the term ‘Significant costs’? ‘Moderate costs’? ‘Minimal costs’? Explore if Rs would have preferred a scale with more options such as very significant, quite significant, not very significant, not at all significant, negligible.

INTRO Now I’d like you to think about the financial **returns** to your organisation/workplace to date, that is up until now, resulting from your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >.

ASK IF MULTI SITE

NEW19 When thinking about the financial returns of...

your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >, to date, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?

This workplace only	1
The organisation as a whole	2
(Don’t Know)	3
(Refused)	4

ASK ALL

NEW20 Have there been any financial returns, resulting from...

your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >, to date?

Yes	1
No	2
(Don’t Know)	3
(Refused)	4

SHOW CARD 2

Q9c *To date, are any financial returns resulting from...*

your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG > greater than the costs?

Yes, financial returns are greater than the costs	1
No, financial returns are less than the costs	2
(Financial returns are about the same as the costs)	3
(Too early to tell)	4
(Don't Know)	5
Refused)	6

OVERALL PROBES

- What information did you think these questions were asking for?
- How easy or difficult did you find answering these questions? Why? What did you include/exclude? Why?
- What did you understand by 'returns'?
- Explore R's involvement and knowledge of financial matters within the organisation.
- Are there any records that R could refer to? How accessible is the information?
- *If multi-site:* Why did you decide to answer this question thinking about <this workplace/your workplace as a whole>?

NEW20

- Was this question easy or difficult to answer? Why? (Explore if R was consistent with his/her answer to NEW19)

Q9c

- Was this question easy or difficult to answer? Why? (Explore appropriateness of answer options)
- How easy or difficult was it to think about the time period 'to date'? Why?
- What did 'financial returns' mean to you at this question?
- What did 'is it too early to tell' mean to you at this question?
- (Explore if R was consistent in her/his answer to NEW19)

If the respondent was asked and could not answer any questions in the previous section (new19-9c) go straight to Q10e

Q10c *Thinking again about any financial returns to your organisation to date, resulting from your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >.*

Into which of the following bands would you put these gross financial returns?

READ OUT

£0	01
Less than £1000	02
£1,000 but less than £5,000	03
£5,000 but less than £10,000	04

£10,000 but less than £20,000	05
£20,000 but less than £50,000	06
£50,000 but less than £100,000	07
£100,000 but less than £500,000	08
£500,000 but less than £1million	09
£1million but less than £5million	10
More than £5million	11
(Don't know)	12
(Refused)	13
NEW21 <i>Were you thinking about financial returns before or after tax?</i>	
Before tax	01
After tax	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04
IF MULTI-SITE	
NEW22 <i>Can I just check, when answering these questions were you thinking about this/your workplace or your organisation as a whole?</i>	
This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

OVERALL PROBES

- What information did you think these questions were asking for?
 - What time period were you thinking about when you answered these questions?
 - Explore R's involvement and knowledge of financial matters within the organisation.
 - Are there any records that R could refer to? How accessible is the information?
- Q10c** - What did you understand by 'gross financial returns'? (Note gross in this Q refers to in total)
- How did you work these financial gains out? (Explore what R included/excluded and why and how the answer codes worked)
- NEW21**- Was this question easy or difficult to answer (Explore why)
- What did you understand by 'financial returns before or after tax'? IF ANSWERED AFTER TAX: would you have been able to provide a before tax figure? Why?
- NEW22** - Why did you decide to answer this question thinking about <this workplace/your workplace as a whole>?

FUTURE COSTS AND RETURNS

ASK ALL

*The next set of questions is about any **future** costs and returns resulting from...*

your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >.

SHOW CARD 3

Q8f First thinking about any future **costs** to your <organisation/workplace> over the next 5 years, that is until <April 2015>, do you expect these costs to...

- ...rise 1
- ...remain constant 2
- ...diminish; or 3
- ...cease? 4

Q10d Next, thinking about any financial **returns** to your <organisation/workplace> over the next 5 years, that is until <April 2015>, resulting from...

your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >. Do you expect these returns to...

- ...rise 1
- ...remain constant 2
- ...diminish; or 3
- ...cease? 4

SHOW CARD 2

Q9d And thinking overall about the financial **returns** to your organisation over the next 5 years, that is until <April 2015>, resulting from...

...your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >, do you expect any financial returns to be greater than the costs?

- Yes, financial returns are greater than the costs 1
- No, financial returns are less than the costs 2
- (Financial returns are about the same as the costs) 3
- (Too early to tell) 4
- (Don't Know) 5
- Refused) 6

IF MULTI-SITE

NEW23 When answering these questions were you thinking about this/your workplace or your organisation as a whole?

- This workplace only 1
- The organisation as a whole 2
- (Don't Know) 3
- (Refused) 4

OVERALL PROBES

- What information did you think these questions were asking for?
- What time period were you thinking about when you answered these questions? (Explore the meaning of future costs AND did they think they would be in businesses 5 years time?)
- Explore R's involvement and knowledge of financial matters within the organisation.
- Are there any records that R could refer to? How accessible is the information?

Q8f

- What time period were you thinking about? Was this easy or difficult to do? Why?
- How did you decide on your answer (Explore how the answer options worked)

Q10d

- What did 'financial returns' mean to you at this question?

Q10d and Q9d

- How easy or difficult was it to think about '5 years'?
- Would it have been easier to think about a different time period? How long? Why?

New23

- How did you decide on your answer? (Explore if R was consistent in what they thought about from Q8f to Q9d)

Q10e Next, thinking about **non-financial returns** that your <organisation/workplace> will receive, do you anticipate any significant non-financial returns resulting from...

your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >? For example, gaining contacts and new opportunities, increased knowledge and raising the organisation's profile.

Yes	1
No	2
(Don't Know)	3
(Refused)	4

IF Q10e=Yes

Q10f What are these non-financial returns?

WRITE IN: _____

PROBES FOR Q10E AND 10F

- What did you understand by ‘non-financial returns’ in these 2 questions?
- How did you decide on your answer for Q10e? (Explore what R included and excluded in their answer and whether the Q was easy or difficult to answer)
- What did gaining contacts mean to you in Q10e?
- How did you decide on your answer for Q10f? (Explore what R included and excluded in their answer and whether the Q was easy or difficult to answer)
- Was there anything you were unsure about whether to include in Q10f? Why?

The next questions are about how well your organisation/workplace is currently performing.

ASK IF MULTI SITE

NEW24 *Would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?*

This workplace only	1
The organisation as a whole	2
(Don't Know)	3
(Refused)	4

ASK ALL

Q11a *On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is performing very badly and 10 is performing very well, how well is your <organisation/workplace> currently performing, in comparison to other similar <organisations/workplaces>?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Don't know any other similar organisations to compare to 11
 (END)

(Don't Know) 12 (END)

(Refused) 13 (END)

Q11b *Again, on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is performing very badly and 10 is performing very well, how well do you think your <organisation/workplace> would currently be performing in comparison to other similar <organisations/workplaces>, if you had not...*

...participated in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

OVERALL PROBES

- What information did you think these three questions were asking for?

Q11a

- What did currently performing mean to you in this question? Examples of what they mean by performing
- How easy or difficult did you find answering this question? (Explore use of the answer scale and comparing to other similar, <organisation/workplaces>.
- What types of other similar organisations were you thinking of when answering the question?

Q11b

- How did you decide on your answer to Q11b?
- Would it have been easier to think about a different time period to currently? What time period would be easier/were they thinking of? Why?

If multi-site:

- Why did you decide to answer this question thinking about <this workplace/your workplace as a whole>?
- Was it easy or difficult to answer the following questions with this in mind?

INFO FOR COMPLETE FINANCIAL YEAR Q5a/b, New9/10, Q6a/b, Q7b/c

For those who had not completed a full financial year and therefore were not asked to think annual turnover, employment costs and annual profit/loss – go back and ask whether they think they would be able to provide that information once they get the end of the financial year

Stage Five – General Probes

Probe about the following questions if not explored when asking survey specific questions

Motivation

- Motivation to provide an accurate answer (how motivated, what would make respondent more motivated, face to face, letter in advance stating information required)

Taking part

- Reactions to request to participate in this study
- Factors affecting participation in a BIS survey (mode, length of interview, timing, whether successful with application, views on success of participating in the scheme(s) for organisation, concerns about confidentiality)
- Expectations about what information might be asked for (kind of information required)

- Who would/ should we talk to if we want to know about:
 - Decision making process about applying to the scheme
 - Financial impact on organisation of scheme
 - Probe for details of person/people (job title, location, why them)
- Experience of taking part in previous surveys (telephone v face to face, preference, time involved)

Suggestions for improvements

- To the way we make contact with organisations
- How we contact them and conduct the interview
- Amount of information collected
- Type of information collected
- Confidentiality
- Other issues

END

Thank respondent for their time. Reiterate confidentiality.

APPENDIX C ADVANCED LETTER

Company Name
Address
Address
Postcode



Dear Title Name,

Our Reference: P2994/serial number
Date

Assessing policy impact on businesses

I am writing to you about a study that the National Center for Social Research (NatCen) is working on. The Department of Business and Innovation and Skills (BIS) have commissioned NatCen, an independent research institute, to undertake an evaluation of questions in the 'Solutions for Business Monitor Survey' also known as the 'Beneficiaries Survey'.

BIS is the government department with a remit to improve the productivity and competitiveness of UK businesses. It has a range of programs that provide different kinds of assistance to businesses in order to help achieve this goal. The 'Beneficiaries Survey' is designed to evaluate whether or not these initiatives have made the intended difference. I am writing to you, as I believe you recently took part in this survey on behalf of your organisation.

What taking part involves

Taking part in this research would involve you being interviewed in person by a NatCen interviewer at a time and place convenient for you. For example, the interviewer can come to your office if this is convenient. The interview would last around 1 hour. In the interview you will be asked the survey questions and the interviewer will explore with you, how you went about answering the questions, to find out if the questions work as intended. There is no right or wrong answers; we simply want to find out how the questions work. If there are any problems with the questions we have time to suggest changes before they are asked in the next survey.

Participation in the interview is entirely voluntary, and any answers given will be treated in the strictest confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Everything that is told in the interview will only be used for the purpose of this research and will not be shared with anyone outside the project research team at NatCen, for example, it will not be shared with BIS. The research will only be used to inform our question development. At no point during the research project will your name or your organisation be linked to the information provided in the interviews. With your permission the interview will be audio-recorded.

If you do not want to take part in this study, please let us know by contacting either myself on [TEL NUMBER] or email me at [EMAIL ADDRESS] or my colleague [NAME] on [CONTACT DETAILS]. Please leave your name and the reference

Survey questions for impact evaluations which rely on beneficiaries self-assessment: evidence and guidance

number at the top of this letter. If we do not hear from you, you may be contacted by telephone to explain more about the interview and asked a few questions.

Please do not hesitate to contact me using the above contact details or my colleague [NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS] if you have any questions or queries about this research.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

m. v. Balarajan.

Meera Balarajan (Researcher)

APPENDIX D RECOMMENDATIONS FOR QUESTIONS MEASURING SELF-ASSESSED ECONOMIC IMPACT

This appendix contains a revised set of questions to be used on surveys measuring self-assessed economic impact. These recommendations are based on the findings from a third round of cognitive testing, details of which are contained in chapter 2. Text in **red font** indicates proposed new changes to questions and routing instructions. Some recommendations are concerned with the need for tailoring question wording and or answer options to reflect the characteristics of the target population, for example small businesses with fewer than five employees.

Proposed Questions

Profile: business details

(NEW3-NEW5, NEW6 to be included if time allows and there is a requirement for accurate data at workplace level).

NEW2 *Is this workplace one of a number of different workplaces in the UK belonging to the same organisation, a single independent workplace or the sole UK workplace of a foreign organisation?*

One of a number of different workplaces in the UK belonging to the same organisation	1 (ASK NEW3)
Single independent workplace	2 (Go to NEW5)
Sole UK workplace of a foreign organisation	3 (Go to NEW5)

IF PART OF A LARGER ORGANISATION IN THE UK

NEW3 *How many workplaces, including this one, are there within your organisation in the UK?* INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

NEW4 *Approximately, how many employees are on the UK payroll of your organisation (i.e. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland)? That is the whole organisation in the UK, not just your present location where you work?* WRITE IN: _____

ASK ALL

NEW5 *And how many employees are there on the UK payroll at this/your workplace?* INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

NEW1 *What is the main activity of this workplace?*

INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

INTRO

The first few questions are about the benefits you might have experienced that resulted from your participation in < SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG > and whether you would have experienced these regardless of this participation.

IF MULTI SITE BUSINESS (NEW2=1)

NEW7 *When thinking about the contribution...*

...your participation in < SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB, or CHG > has made to your organisation/workplace, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?

This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

Impact and additionality: qualitative measures

ASK ALL

SHOW CARD 1

Q1 *Thinking about your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB, or CHG >, what contribution has it made, or do you expect it **will** make to your <organisation/workplace>? Do you think ...*

you would (have) probably achieve(d) similar results	01 (ask Q1a)
you would (have) definitely achieve(d) similar results	02 (ask Q1a)
you would (have) probably not have achieve(d) similar results, or	03 (go to Q2)
you would (have) definitely not have achieve(d) similar results?	04 (go to Q2)
(None of these)	05 (go to Q2)
(Don't Know)	06 (go to Q2)
(Refused)	07 (go to Q2)

Q1a *Would you have achieved/ Do you expect to achieve similar results if you had you not taken part in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB, or CHG > in the...RUNNING PROMPT...*

same time frame,	01
a longer time frame, or	02
a shorter time frame?	03
(Don't know)	04
(Refused)	

ASK ALL

Q2 *I am going to read out a statement. I would like you to give me an answer using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is 'disagree strongly' and 5 is 'agree strongly'.*

Thinking about <this/your workplace only/the organisation as a whole>, to what extent would you agree with this statement:

Survey questions for impact evaluations which rely on beneficiaries self-assessment: evidence and guidance

The <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG> has provided, or will provide, a support package that I could not have got from any other source'?

May I remind you that 1 is 'disagree strongly' and 5 is 'agree strongly'.

1 - Disagree strongly

2

3

4

5 - Agree strongly

(Don't Know)

(Refused)

IF Q2= 1 or 2

Q3a What was it that the <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG,UFFB, CHG, UFFB> provided you with, or is expected to provide you with that you couldn't have got elsewhere?

INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

IF Q2= 3,4 or 5

Q3b What or who could have provided you with the same as the <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG,UFFB or CHG> scheme?

INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN: _____

Financial profile

ASK ALL

The next few questions are about the financial performance of your business.

Q4 When does your business's financial year start and end?

INTERVIEWER: IF FINANCIAL YEAR VARIES ASK FOR THE LAST COMPLETE FINANCIAL YEAR.

INTERVIEWER: PLEASE CODE THE START MONTH.

January	01
February	02
March	03
April	04
May	05
June	06
July	07
August	08
September	09
October	10
November	11
December	12

INTERVIEWER: PLEASE CODE THE END MONTH.

January	01
February	02
March	03
April	04
May	05
June	06
July	07
August	08
September	09
October	10
November	11
December	12

NEWQ *Has this organisation/business completed a full financial year?*

Yes

No

DK, REF

TEXT FILL DEPENDING ON WHETHER BUSINESS FINISHED FULL FINANCIAL YEAR (NEWQ YES=BLACK TEXT, NEWQ NO=RED TEXT)

INTERVIEWER: READ WORDING BELOW EXACTLY AS WRITTEN

Q5aIntro *The next few questions are about the financial performance of your business. These questions are designed to enable BIS to assess the impact or likely impact of your participation in < SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG,UFFB, CHG, UFFB>.*

Q5a *What was the annual turnover of your organisation in the last complete financial year? / **What do you anticipate the annual turnover of your organisation will be for the first complete financial year?** You may also refer to turnover as income, sales, invoices or receipts.*

£

DK 8

Refused 9

Not yet completed first financial year 7 GO TO NEWQ15INTRO

IF Q5a=DK

Q5b *If you had to estimate the annual turnover of your organisation in the last complete financial year, roughly into which of the following bands would you place it?*

If you had to estimate the annual turnover of your organisation for your first complete financial year, roughly into which of the following bands would you place it?

READ OUT [TAILOR BANDS TO REFLECT POPULATION OF INTEREST]

£0	01
Less than £100,000	02
£100,000 but less than £200,000	03

Survey questions for impact evaluations which rely on beneficiaries self-assessment: evidence and guidance

£200,000 but less than £500,000	04
£500,000 but less than £1million	05
£1million but less than £2million	06
£2million but less than £5million	07
£5million but less than £10million	08
£10million but less than £25million	09
£25million but less than £50million	10
More than £50million	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

ASK IF GIVEN AMOUNT AT Q5a or Q5b

NEW8 Were you thinking about annual turnover before or after tax?

Before tax	01
After tax	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

IF MULTI-SITE BUSINESS (NEW2=1)

NEW9 And what was the annual turnover for this/your workplace in the last complete financial year? / **And what do you anticipate the annual turnover for this/your workplace will be for the first complete financial year?**

You may also refer to turnover as income, sales, invoices or receipts.

£	01
(Don't Know)	02
(Refused)	03

IF NEW9=DK

NEW10 If you had to estimate the (anticipated) annual turnover for this/your workplace in the last / for the first complete financial year, roughly into which of the following bands would you place it?

READ OUT [TAILOR BANDS TO REFLECT POPULATION OF INTEREST]

£0	01
Less than £100,000	02
£100,000 but less than £200,000	03
£200,000 but less than £500,000	04
£500,000 but less than £1million	05
£1million but less than £2million	06
£2million but less than £5million	07
£5million but less than £10million	08
£10million but less than £25million	09
£25million but less than £50million	10
More than £50million	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

IF GIVEN AMOUNT AT NEW9 OR NEW10 (CODES02-11)

NEW11 Were you thinking about annual turnover before or after tax?

Before tax	01
After tax	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

ASK IF MULTI SITE (NEW2=1)

NEW12 The next question is about total employment costs. When thinking about total employment costs, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?

This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

ASK ALL

Q6a Approximately what were/ *will be* the total employment costs to this <organisation/workplace> in the last/ *for the first* complete financial year? Please include all employee costs, such as salaries, pensions, social security, dividends paid to Directors, redundancy pay *and (BIS TO CONFIRM: freelancer costs)*.

£	
(Don't Know)	08
(Refused)	09

IF Q6a=DK

Q6b If you had to estimate the total employment costs to this <organisation/workplace> in the last/*for the first* complete financial year, into which of the following bands would you place them?

READ OUT

[TAILOR BANDS TO REFLECT POPULATION OF INTEREST]

£0	01
Less than £100,000	02
£100,000 but less than £200,000	03
£200,000 but less than £500,000	04
£500,000 but less than £1million	05
£1million but less than £2million	06
£2million but less than £5million	07
£5million but less than £10million	08
£10million but less than £25million	09
£25million but less than £50million	10
More than £50million	11
(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

Profit or loss

ASK IF MULTI SITE (NEW2=1)

NEW13 *The next questions are about profits and losses. When thinking about profits and losses, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?*

This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

ASK ALL

Q7a *In the last complete financial year, did your/ **At the end of your first financial year do you anticipate your** <organisation/workplace> **(will)** make an annual profit or loss?*

Profit	01 (Go to Q7b)
Loss	02 (Go to Q7b)
(Neither a profit nor a loss) (spontaneous response)	03 (Go to NEW14)
(Don't Know)	04 (Go to NEW15Intro)
(Refused)	05 (Go to NEW15Intro)

NEED AN INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION ON HOW TO TREAT NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

Q7b *What was/**do you anticipate will be** your annual <profit/loss> for the last / **the first** complete financial year?*

£
(Don't Know)
(Refused)

IF Q7b=DK

Q7c *If you had to estimate your annual <profits/losses> for the last/ **the first** complete financial year, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT

[TAILOR BANDS TO REFLECT POPULATION OF INTEREST]

£0	01
Less than £100,000	02
£100,000 but less than £200,000	03
£200,000 but less than £500,00	04
£500,000 but less than £1million	05
£1million but less than £2million	06
£2million but less than £5million	07
£5million but less than £10million	08
£10million but less than £25million	09
£25million but less than £50million	10
More than £50million	11

(Don't Know)	12
(Refused)	13

NEW14 *Were you thinking of your annual <profit/loss> before or after tax?*

Before tax	01
After tax	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

Cost of participation

NEW 15Intro Now I'd like you to think specifically about the financial impact of your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>. This section will ask firstly about **costs** and secondly about **returns** to your <organisation/workplace> to date, resulting from your <organisation's/workplace's> participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>.

ASK IF MULTI SITE (NEW2=1)

NEW15 *When thinking about the costs of your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?*

This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

ASK ALL

NEW16 *Firstly thinking about costs, If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date resulting from the <organisation's/workplace's> participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT [TAILOR BANDS TO REFLECT POPULATION OF INTEREST]

£0	01 (Go to next section New19)
Less than £5,000	02 (Go to INTRO8)
£5,000 but less than £10,000	03 (Go to INTRO8)
£10,000 but less than £50,000	04 (Go to INTRO8)
£50,000 but less than £100,000	05 (Go to INTRO8)
£100,000 but less than £200,000	06 (Go to INTRO8)
£200,000 but less than £500,000	07 (Go to INTRO8)
£500,000 but less than £1million	08 (Go to INTRO8)
£1million but less than £2million	09 (Go to INTRO8)
£2million but less than £5million	10 (Go to INTRO8)
£5million but less than £10million	11 (Go to INTRO8)
£10million or more	12 (Go to INTRO8)
(SPONTANEOUS) Too early to tell	13 (Go to INTRO8)

(Don't Know)

14 (Go to INTRO8)

(Refused)

15 (Go to INTRO8)

Q8c1 *Now thinking only about staff time and salaries, what have been the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of staff time and salaries resulting from the <organisation's/workplace's> participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>?*

£

(Don't Know)

(Refused)

IF Q8c1=DK

Q8c2 *If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of staff time and salaries, resulting from the <organisation's/workplace's> participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG> into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT [TAILOR BANDS TO REFLECT POPULATION OF INTEREST]

£0	01
Less than £5,000	02
£5,000 but less than £10,000	03
£10,000 but less than £50,000	04
£50,000 but less than £100,000	05
£100,000 but less than £200,000	06
£200,000 but less than £500,000	07
£500,000 but less than £1million	08
£1million but less than £2million	09
£2million but less than £5million	10
£5million but less than £10million	11
£10million or more	12
(To early to tell)	13
(Don't Know)	14
(Refused)	15

Q8c3 *Next, thinking about consultancy, if you have used consultancy services what have been the total consultancy costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date resulting from the <organisation's/workplace's> participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>?*

£

Not Used

(Don't Know)

(Refused)

IF Q8c1=DK

Q8c4 *If you had to estimate the total consultancy costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, resulting from the <organisation's/workplace's> participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT [TAILOR BANDS TO REFLECT POPULATION OF INTEREST]

£0	01
Less than £1000	02
£1,000 but less than £5,000	03
£5,000 but less than £10,000	04
£10,000 but less than £20,000	05
£20,000 but less than £50,000	06
£50,000 but less than £100,000	07
£100,000 but less than £500,000	08
£500,000 but less than £1million	09
£1million but less than £5million	10
More than £5million	11
(To early to tell)	12
(Don't know)	13
(Refused)	14

Q8c5 *If you have used materials and equipment, what have been the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date resulting from the <organisation's/workplace's> participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>?*

£

Not Used

(Don't Know)

(Refused)

IF Q8c1=DK

Q8c6 *If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of materials and equipment, resulting from the <organisation's/workplace's> participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG> into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT [TAILOR BANDS TO REFLECT POPULATION OF INTEREST]

£0	01
Less than £5,000	02
£5,000 but less than £10,000	03
£10,000 but less than £50,000	04
£50,000 but less than £100,000	05
£100,000 but less than £200,000	06
£200,000 but less than £500,000	07
£500,000 but less than £1million	08
£1million but less than £2million	09
£2million but less than £5million	10
£5million but less than £10million	11

Survey questions for impact evaluations which rely on beneficiaries self-assessment: evidence and guidance

£10million or more	12
(Too early to tell)	13
(Don't Know)	14
(Refused)	15

Q8c7 And lastly, *if you have used training and mentoring*, what have been the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of training and mentoring *resulting from the <organisation's/workplace's> participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>?*

£

- Not used
- (Don't Know)
- (Refused)

IF Q8c1=DK

Q8c8 *If you had to estimate the total costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, of training and mentoring **resulting from the <organisation's/workplace's> participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>**, into which of the following bands would you place them?*

READ OUT [TAILOR BANDS TO REFLECT POPULATION OF INTEREST]

£0	01
Less than £1000	02
£1,000 but less than £5,000	03
£5,000 but less than £10,000	04
£10,000 but less than £20,000	05
£20,000 but less than £50,000	06
£50,000 but less than £100,000	07
£100,000 but less than £500,000	08
£500,000 but less than £1million	09
£1million but less than £5million	10
More than £5million	11
(Too early to tell)	12
(Don't know)	13
(Refused)	14

NEW17 *Continuing to think about the costs on your <organisation's/workplace's> participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG> have there been any other costs to your <organisation/workplace>, in addition to those you have just given me?*

Yes	01ASK NEW18
No	02 GO TO Q8a
(Don't Know)	11 GO TO Q8a
(Refused)	12 GO TO Q8a

{ASK IF NEW17 CODED 1}

NEW18 What were these additional costs for? WRITE IN:

Q8d Thinking about these additional costs *you have just mentioned for your <organisation/workplace>*, to date *from taking part in < SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG>*, what have the total costs been?

£

(Don't Know)

(Refused)

If Q8d=DK

Q8e If you had to estimate these additional costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date, into which of the following bands would you place them?

READ OUT [TAILOR BANDS TO REFLECT POPULATION OF INTEREST]

£0	01
Less than £10,000	02
£10,000 but less than £50,000	03
£50,000 but less than £100,000	04
£100,000 but less than £200,000	05
£200,000 but less than £500,000	06
£500,000 but less than £1million	07
£1million but less than £2million	08
£2million but less than £5million	09
£5million but less than £10million	10
£10million or more	11
(Too early to tell)	12
(Don't Know)	13
(Refused)	14

ASK ALL

Q8a Overall, do you feel that the costs to your <organisation/workplace>, to date

of your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG > have been...

significant,	01
moderate, or	02
minimal ?	03
(Don't Know)	04
(Refused)	

Financial returns of participation

INTRO *Now I'd like you to think about the financial **returns** to your organisation/workplace to date, that is up until now, resulting from your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >.*

ASK IF MULTI SITE (NEW2=1)

NEW19 *When thinking about the financial returns of your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >, to date, would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the organisation as a whole?*

This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

ASK ALL

NEW20 *Have there been any financial returns, resulting from your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >, to date?*

Yes	01
No	02
Too early tell	03
(Don't Know)	04
(Refused)	05

SHOW CARD 2

Q9c *To date, are any financial returns resulting from your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG > greater than the costs?*

Yes, financial returns are greater than the costs	01
No, financial returns are less than the costs	02
(Financial returns are about the same as the costs)	03
(Too early to tell)	04
(Don't Know)	05
Refused)	06

IF THE RESPONDENT WAS ASKED AND COULD NOT ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS IN THE PREVIOUS SECTION (NEW19-9c) GO STRAIGHT TO Q10e

Q10c Thinking again about any financial returns to your organisation to date, resulting from your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >, >

into which of the following bands would you put these gross financial returns?

READ OUT [TAILOR BANDS TO REFLECT POPULATION OF INTEREST AND MAKE CONSISTENT WITH BANDS USED AT NEW16-Q8e]

£0	01
Less than £1000	02
£1,000 but less than £5,000	03
£5,000 but less than £10,000	04
£10,000 but less than £20,000	05
£20,000 but less than £50,000	06
£50,000 but less than £100,000	07
£100,000 but less than £500,000	08
£500,000 but less than £1million	09
£1million but less than £5million	10
More than £5million	11
(Too early to tell)	12
(Don't know)	13
(Refused)	14

NEW21 Were you thinking about financial returns before or after tax?

Before tax	01
After tax	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

IF MULTI-SITE (NEW2=1)

NEW22 Can I just check, when answering these questions were you thinking about this/your workplace or your organisation as a whole?

This workplace only	01
The organisation as a whole	02
(Don't Know)	03
(Refused)	04

Future costs and returns

ASK ALL

The next set of questions is about any **future costs and returns** resulting from your **current/recent** participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >.

SHOW CARD 3

Q8f First, thinking about any future **costs** to your <organisation/workplace> over the next 5 years, that is until <MONTH YEAR >, do you expect these costs to...

- | | |
|--------------------|----|
| ...rise | 01 |
| ...remain constant | 02 |
| ...diminish; or | 03 |
| ...cease? | 04 |

Q10d Next, thinking about any financial **returns** to your <organisation/workplace> over the next 5 years, that is until <MONTH YEAR >, resulting from your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >. Do you expect these returns to...

- | | |
|--------------------|----|
| ...rise | 01 |
| ...remain constant | 02 |
| ...diminish; or | 03 |
| ...cease? | 04 |

SHOW CARD 2

Q9d And thinking overall about the financial **returns** to your organisation over the next 5 years, that is until <MONTH YEAR >, resulting from your participation in <SaB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >, do you expect any financial returns to be greater than the costs?

- | | |
|--|----|
| Yes, financial returns will be greater than the costs | 01 |
| No, financial returns will be less than the costs | 02 |
| (Financial returns will be are about the same as the costs) | 03 |
| (Too early to tell) | 04 |
| (Don't Know) | 05 |
| (Refused) | 06 |

IF MULTI-SITE (NEW2=1)

NEW23 When answering these questions were you thinking about this/your workplace or your organisation as a whole?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| This workplace only | 01 |
| The organisation as a whole | 02 |
| (Don't Know) | 03 |
| (Refused) | 04 |

Non financial returns

Q10e Next, thinking about non-financial returns that your <organisation/workplace> will receive, do you anticipate any significant non-financial returns resulting from your participation in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG >? For example, gaining contacts and new opportunities, increased knowledge and raising the organisation's profile.

- | | |
|--------------|----|
| Yes | 01 |
| No | 02 |
| (Don't Know) | 03 |
| (Refused) | 04 |

IF Q10e=Yes

Q10f What are these non-financial returns?

WRITE IN:_____

Performance against peers

ALL

INTRO24 The next questions are about how well your business/workplace is currently performing.

ASK IF MULTI-SITE (NEW2=1)

NEW24 Would you prefer to answer for this/your workplace only or for the business as a whole?

- | | |
|-------------------------|----|
| This workplace only | 01 |
| The business as a whole | 02 |
| (Don't Know) | 03 |
| (Refused) | 04 |

ASK ALL

NEW25 Do you know of any similar <organisations/workplaces> to this one?

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| Yes | 01 (Q11a) |
| No | 02 (End) |
| (Don't know) | 03 (End) |
| Refusal | 04 (End) |

IF NEW25=1

Q11a On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is performing very badly and 10 is performing very well, how well is your <business/workplace> currently performing, in comparison to other similar <businesses/workplaces>?

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------------|----------|
| | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | |
| (Don't know) | | 10 (End) |
| (Refused) | | 11 (End) |

IF Q11a=1-10

Q11b Again, on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is performing very badly and 10 is performing very well, how well do you think your <organisation/workplace> would currently be performing in comparison to other similar <organisations/workplaces>, if you had not participated in <SAB, ISUS, SaHGB, IAG, UFFB or CHG, or is it too early to tell>?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Too early to tell

11

Don't Know

12

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