Department for Business Innovation & Skills

ESTIMATING THE PROVISION OF BUSINESS MENTORING

A report by
GHK Consulting Ltd

SEPTEMBER 2012

Contents

Executive summary

Introduction

Government is committed to the development and expansion of the business mentoring network for SMEs in the UK, given evidence of business mentoring's ability to raise competition, stimulate innovation and support economic growth. Following the launch of mentorsme, the British Banker's Association's portal for enterprises seeking business mentoring services, GHK Consulting Ltd, in association with Swift Research and Paul Stokes of Sheffield Hallam University, was commissioned in late 2011 by BIS to undertake a study "Estimating the current provision of business mentoring in England".

The overarching aim of the project was to provide BIS with a baseline estimate of the number and services of business mentors operating in England. Essentially, this was based on an exercise of identifying and telephone surveying organisations that provide business mentoring. Alongside stakeholder interviews, a total of 183 business mentoring organisations were surveyed from an estimated population of up to 411 business mentoring organisations in England.

The business mentoring population in England

The study estimates a current business mentoring population of 19,000 mentors across up to 400 organisations. Around 11,000 mentors are accessible currently via organisations registered on mentorsme.

To these 19,000 mentors may be added 15,000 new volunteers to be brought forward under Get Mentoring – suggesting a potential total number of between 30-40,000 business mentors in England.

The sector is highly diverse - two thirds of business mentoring organisations employ less than 10 mentors and represent 4 per cent of the mentor population. In contrast, up to a dozen organisations employ half the mentoring population. The majority of mentors are part-time, and a fifth are currently 'dormant' (with an organisation but not currently providing services).

The business mentoring service offer in England

Business mentoring organisations are located in each of England's LEPs covering all the English regions. A third of organisations surveyed offered a national service offer.

Table ES1: The 'typical' business mentoring service offer

182 organisations, 11,525 mentors	All Organisations
… registered on mentorsme	31%
… providing "package" (mentoring, coaching, advice, etc.)	75%
… providing face to face mentoring	98%
… providing web-based mentoring	40%
… providing support locally or regionally	68%
… providing support nationally	32%
... charging for business mentoring (always or sometimes)	33%
… targeting all business life stages	29%
… targeting start up businesses	55%
… targeting all business sizes	20%
... targeting 1-9 businesses	66%
… targeting businesses desiring growth	52%
… providing broad coverage (not targeting sector or owner-manager characteristic)	58%
… providing sectorally targeted support (sometimes or always)	25%
… providing support focused towards women owners	15%
… providing support focused towards BME owners	9%
… requiring mentors to hold accreditation or qualification	26%

Table ES1 highlights that mentoring is a strongly face-to-face activity offered in a local or regional setting as part of a package of business support activities. A half of mentoring organisations charge for their services.

Coverage of business size, stage and strategic need is segmented with a current bias towards start-up, micro and growth businesses but with a significant minority of organisations providing coverage across all types. Mentoring provision targeted at sector and/or type of owner-manager is patchy – with less than a quarter of organisations, for example, offering targeted support to women owners, BME owners or specific sectors.

Demand for business mentoring

Within the sector there remains substantial disagreement as to whether demand for and supply of business mentoring is matched in the market. What is known is that in the last 6 months (2011-2012), 80 per cent of respondents reported an increase in demand and 90 per cent believe the potential exists to increase business mentoring levels further (including 53 per cent believing there to be significant potential). A total of 57 per cent plan to increase capacity over the next 6 months.

Barriers to demand in the business mentoring market

There is universal agreement across the sector – stakeholders and providers – that there remains a lack of understanding amongst business of the benefits of business mentoring as a distinctive business development activity (stated by 90% of organisations).

‘Trust’ is identified by providers as a key attribute for the procurement of successful business mentoring - with around two-thirds of organisations reporting the difficulties companies face both in finding the right mentor and a lack of information on standards.

Barriers to supply in the business mentoring market

On the supply side, two-thirds of organisations reported gaps in provision as a barrier to growth – alongside stakeholders identifying the need for segmented and tailored support to bring forward demand.

Two thirds of organisations noted a lack of understanding amongst potential mentors about the individual benefits which can be gained, alongside over half of organisations noting the difficulties of mentors finding the right organisation to join.

Stakeholders identified the lack of sector ‘infrastructure’ as the basis for coherence, co-ordination and communication of key messages around business mentoring.

The progress of mentorsme

Since launch in July 2011, mentorsme has registered around 100 organisations representing 11,000 mentors. Two thirds of members would recommend Mentorsme:

- ‘One stop portal’ nationally recognised and promoted;
- Credible, impartial and quality assured;
- Organisational exposure and profile; and,
- Source of referrals – but minor.

Only a third of surveyed organisations were registered in January 2012, and 60 per cent of those contacted were unaware of mentorsme. Of those unregistered but aware of mentorsme, reasons given for non-registration included:

- Misconception of its offer and membership (for example, for individual mentors only; free services only);
- No need – have enough work already and other productive referral systems; and,
- Lack of confidence in the mentorsme initiative (for example, quality and motives of member organisations; poor design and functionality)

Recommendations

On the basis of the analysis of stakeholder consultation and survey, the following recommendations have been developed:

- Business mentoring holds a distinctive position in the suite of business support products. There remains, however, a need to bring forward an awareness campaign (business-led and supported by government) amongst SMEs in England of the business value and economic benefits of business mentoring.
- The business perspective on business mentoring – and its articulation as a service demand – remains limited (especially within current economic conditions). There exists a need for further research on the demand for business mentoring – the nature of existing and latent demand, expectation of service provision (universal, segmented, tailored?) and how to bring forward enhanced demand.
- Substantial numbers of business support providers and mentors remain unaware and/or misinformed and/or unconvinced by mentorsme. Given this they remain unregistered. There exists a need to further raise awareness and engagement amongst the business mentoring sector of mentorsme (for example, and given the sector's strong basis in regional networks one engagement avenue might be a series of regional roadshows)
- A number of common issues with mentorsme were raised by respondents (whether or not they were registered) concerned with profile, functionality and information provision. mentorsme/BBA should continue its response to member organisation feedback to identify the potential for further enhancement of the current portal offer
- The business mentoring sector remains emergent, if undergoing substantial change. BIS should support conversations within the business mentoring sector about its continued development given recent transformational change in business support, policy encouragement and initiatives for business mentoring, and a transformed funding environment. An immediate example would be to provide a consistent and concerted message to business as the basis for raising demand.

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Following the launch of mentorsme, the Government's portal for small and medium-sized enterprises seeking business mentoring services, GHK Consulting Ltd, in association with Swift Research and Paul Stokes of Sheffield Hallam University, was commissioned in 2011 by BIS to undertake a study "Estimating the current provision of business mentoring in England". This final report describes the delivery of the research and presents the study findings.

1.2 Study aims and objectives

The overarching aim of the project was to provide BIS with a baseline estimate of the number and services of business mentors operating in England. Essentially, this was based on an exercise of identifying organisations that provide business mentoring and collecting data on their size (how many mentors and mentees) and the types of SMEs which they tend to support.

More specifically, project objectives were based on providing BIS with a greater understanding of the business mentoring market by collecting evidence on:

- Whether business mentoring organisations not currently on mentorsme are aware of the portal, intend to list and, if not, reasons why they would choose not to be on the site (to inform development of the site);
- The gap between business mentoring provision accessible through the website, and overall business mentoring provision in England;
- Views from business mentoring organisations on how effectively the market for business mentoring operates and whether recent initiatives such as mentorsme have or are expected to realise benefits (for example, have organisations on mentorsme noted an increase in enquiries originating from the portal); and,
- The challenges or opportunities to increase demand and supply of business mentoring.

1.3 Study methodology

The study methodology was delivered in four broad stages:

- Stage 1: Scoping phase including key stakeholder consultation and desk research to identify providers of business mentoring;
- Stage 2: Consultation with stakeholders;

- Stage 3: Quantitative survey of providers of business mentoring; and,
- Stage 4: Analysis and production of final outputs, including presentation of draft results to mentoring organisations.

Table 1.1 provides a brief overview of key elements of the study methodology, with further detail provided in Annex 1.

Table 1.1 Overview of study methodology

Stage	Methodology
Stage 1: Scoping and Desk Research	Following an inception meeting, discussions were held with key contacts from BIS, the British Bankers Association (BBA) and the UK Sector Skills Council for Enterprise (SFEDI). During this stage, desk review of existing studies and research into provision of business mentoring was undertaken.
Stage 2: Stakeholder Consultation	Telephone interviews with 4 stakeholders were undertaken including DorMen, ICAEW, NESTA and National Enterprise Network. A written submission was received from a further organisation, the Federation of Small Businesses, due to time constraints.
Stage 3: Survey of Providers of Business Mentoring	A telephone survey of organisations providing business mentoring was undertaken using a database of organisations populated through the integration of a database provided by BIS and an internet search across England[1]. A total of 469 organisations were listed in the database as potentially offering business mentoring services. Responses were achieved from 209 individuals/ organisations. These included 189 organisations from the database and a further 19 organisations identified through a snowballing approach with survey interviewees. A further response was provided in a written format. From the 209 interviews, 183 were full interviews. A further 23 were shorter interviews undertaken with providers of business support but not providing business mentoring. A total of 70 organisations of the 469 refused to take part in the research (this included 16 organisations that did not provide business mentoring).

[1] Including use of databases and website tools such as http://www.nationalenterprisenetwork.org/ and http://improve.businesslink.gov.uk/resources/business-support-finder

Stage	Methodology
	The sample of business mentoring organisation interviews achieved (183) from the potential business mentoring population of 411 (identified through the desk research and snowballing activity and excluding those discovered to not be mentoring) means that the survey results can be taken as representative at a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 5.4%.
Stage 4: Analysis and production of outputs	Key outputs from the research include: • A presentation of draft results to business mentoring organisations undertaken on 9 May 2012 in London; • A database of organisations providing business mentoring; and, • A final report – this document comprises the final version of this output.

1.4 The structure of this Report

The remainder of this document is structured as follows:

- Section 2: contains an overview of the context for the study, informed by the desk review, as well as presenting the findings of the stakeholder consultation;
- Section 3: sets out the analysis of the data gathered through the telephone survey; and,
- Section 4: provides the study conclusions and recommendations.

Supporting annexes provide further details of the study methodology, including the business mentoring survey questionnaire.

2 The business mentoring support landscape

2.1 The policy environment for business mentoring

2.1.1 Business support and the Business Improvement Programme

Supporting business growth is an established priority for Government. As a result of the shifting economic landscape and policy responses, business support systems have gone through substantial changes over the past few years and the role of Government in provision of advice and information to business has changed. In January 2011, the Government underlined its commitment to business support in "Bigger, Better, Business", setting out the 6 strands of what BIS refers to as the Business Improvement Programme (BIP), one of which is "the creation of a network of at least 40,000 experienced business mentors".

At a BIP programme level, the target group for business support is all those involved in starting or running a business. At the start of 2011, the UK had 4.5 million private sector enterprises with small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) accounting for 99.9 per cent of all private sector enterprises and employment of 13.8 million - 59 per cent of the total private sector workforce[2].

The BIP comprises a historically different balance between mainstream and targeted support and between transactional and transformational support and advice. A key objective of the new system is to overcome market failures (especially based on information failure) and through new value for money support structures see both greater use of all forms of business support and usage that maximises individual businesses' growth potential.

2.1.2 The Launch of mentorsme

As part of the BIP, the mentorsme portal[3] was launched in July 2011, as an online gateway for nascent entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises looking for business mentoring services. The site provides a search facility for users to identify providers of business mentoring, and enables filtering of results by location and the life stage of the mentees' business.

The main objective of mentorsme is "to help businesses find a mentoring organisation to suit their needs in a fast and easy way". The site also allows business professionals to

---

[2] BIS, Business Population Estimates 2011

[3] www.mentorsme.co.uk

offer their services as a business mentor via the mentoring organisations listed. Mentorsme.co.uk also aims to raise awareness about the benefits of business mentoring through its library of online resources, which includes articles about mentoring and case studies of successful business mentoring relationships.

Mentorsme.co.uk is operated by the Business Finance Taskforce, which has been set up by the British Bankers' Association (BBA) and is made up of five banks: Barclays, HSBC, Lloyds Banking Group, Royal Bank of Scotland and Santander. There were 96 organisations offering business mentoring support listed on mentorsme at April 2012.

2.2 Enterprise and business mentoring

2.2.1 What is business mentoring?

Defining mentoring

A key issue for the study, and for the organisation and provision of business mentoring more broadly, is the need to have a categorical definition of what is meant by the term business mentoring. The volume of published material relating to various forms of mentoring support, including business support, is considerable. Key questions underpinning the relevant information can relate to the nature of the mentoring activity, as well as the activity included and the way it is delivered.

The box below provides a definition of mentoring utilised for this study and taken from the mentorsme portal:

Mentoring – A Definition

The mentoring relationship is voluntary for both parties and, although it is usually designed for a set period of sessions, it may be ended at any time by either the mentee or mentor.

Mentoring is:

- a one-to-one relationship over a period of time between a less experienced person (mentee) and an established professional (mentor), which provides consistent support, guidance and practical help;
- a process by which an experienced professional shares their personal skills, knowledge and experience with another person;
- a means of enabling a less experienced person to gain the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence to be able to perform at a higher level;
- an opportunity for a less experienced person to gain access to impartial, non-judgmental guidance and support;
- a process of working together to achieve predetermined goals and objectives;
- a two-way process through which both parties derive satisfaction from the progress, and success is attained through working together.

Source: An Introduction to Enterprise Mentoring SFEDI Group & Essential Business, 2011

One of the main issues inherent to defining mentoring support is the need to establish where business mentoring 'sits' within the wider landscape of business support and how it relates to other forms of support. The stakeholder consultation interviews undertaken in Stage 2 of the study identified a common perception that mentoring is a very important form of support – "*The importance of mentoring is huge*"- however, this was tempered with a widely held view that mentoring should be seen as "*one facet of the holistic business support process*". One interviewee warned against the danger of "*seeing mentoring as covering everything*", a view that was reinforced by one respondent who stressed the need to view mentoring as part of the package of business support.

Mentoring in relation to other forms of support

Alongside the perception of mentoring as one part of a range of business support activities, is a recognition that there is a degree of overlap, due to the "*blurring of boundaries*" between definitions (for example, of mentoring, coaching, advice and guidance). More than half of the stakeholders interviewed emphasised the overlap between mentoring and other forms of support.

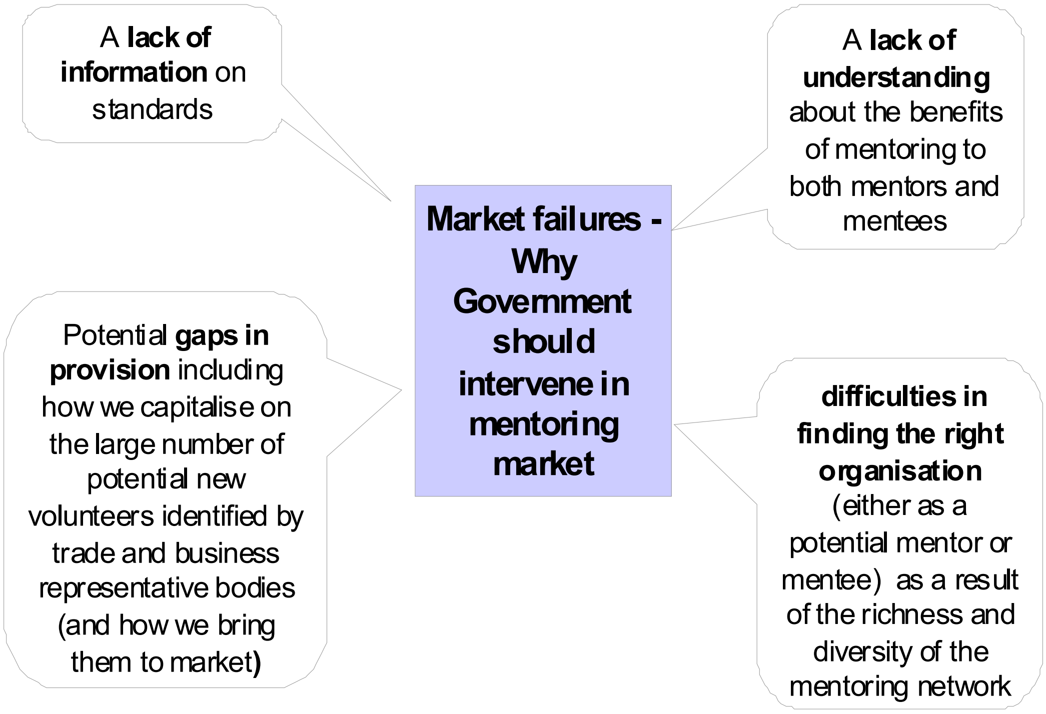
One stakeholder summarized the issue, and how each form of support can relate to a different focus, by describing the need for "*mentoring the business rather than mentoring the person*" i.e. a focus on business development rather than personal development such as enhancing leadership qualities. There was an acknowledgement, however, that there is obviously some overlap, especially in an owner/manager situation.

The formal/informal nature of mentoring

In addition to the overlap between mentoring and other forms of support, there was also considerable discussion by stakeholders around the balance between formal and informal mentoring delivery. One respondent was clear that, "*mentoring is an ongoing, iterative form of support*", and that in a lot of cases business mentoring is done on an informal basis (for example, through networks). As one person commented, "*the difficulty is in trying to formalise a relationship or exchange that is a largely informal one*". Whilst formal mentoring schemes attempt to replicate the benefits of informal mentoring in an organised way, there are degrees of formality which characterise the structure around the mentor / mentee relationship.

2.2.2 Use of business mentoring by businesses

BIS, through discussions with stakeholder organizations, has identified four main "market failures" affecting the supply and demand of business mentoring.



The key themes of understanding and information provision, the supply of mentoring and supporting infrastructure, and effective mechanisms to support people to find a mentor, all impinge on the lack of awareness and usage of business mentoring by businesses.

Awareness and perceptions of mentoring

One aspect to emerge from the stakeholder consultation is a clear sense that levels of awareness and general perceptions of mentoring within the business community are a significant issue. There is a common view that marketing and promotion of business mentoring per se is not being done to sufficient levels – "*many businesses aren't aware they could get support, and don't know how to get it, nor what the benefits are to having a mentor*".

In 2008, SFEDI undertook a study on skill needs, supply and gaps for business enterprise and business support which considered perceptions on mentoring by region and sector. As illustrated in Table 2.1, on average, 24% of businesses would be willing to use a business coach or mentor to develop business ability. When regional breakdown is considered, businesses in the Yorkshire and Humber were much more likely to engage with business coaches or mentors for this purpose (34.7%) whereas, conversely, businesses in the South West were least likely to use business mentoring (16.5%), and businesses in the East Midlands and North West were also less likely to engage with such support to improve their business ability.

When the take up of mentoring or coaching was considered, those in the East of England were most likely to have received mentoring or coaching which had made an important contribution to their business development. In this region, 16.9% of businesses had felt an important contribution had been made, compared to an English average of 13%. The share of businesses in Yorkshire & Humber was also high (15.6%), but such business support in the East Midlands and North West was least likely to have made an impact (10.5% and 9.9% respectively).

On average, 85% of businesses had not received support from a business mentor or coach to develop business ability – with take up lowest in the North East and Yorkshire & Humber.

Table 2.1 Regional perceptions on mentoring[4]

W.Mid	E.Mid	East	NE	NW	SW	SE	Lon	Y&H
Willing to use to help develop business abilities using a business coach or mentor								
25.8%	20.9%	27.7%	27.8%	20.6%	16.5%	21.9%	22.6%	34.7%
Business coach or mentor has made an important contribution to developing abilities to run business								
11.2%	10.5%	16.9%	12.4%	9.9%	11.6%	14.3%	11.6%	15.6%
During the last year, spent NO time developing business abilities with a business coach/mentor								
82.7%	85.6%	81.9%	88.6%	82.7%	86.4%	80.4%	86.2%	88.3%

When the sector of a business was taken into account (Table 2.2), 23% were willing to use a business coach or mentor to improve business ability – this was most likely in the Business and Information Technology sector (32.1%) and least likely among Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technology businesses (13.2%). Across all sectors, 13% of businesses had received support from a business coach or mentor leading to an important contribution to developing business ability – however, again, this was least likely among Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technology (7.4%) and Automotive businesses (8.2%) and most likely among those working in Facilities Management, Housing, Property, Planning, Cleaning and Parking (22.4%) and Business and IT (19.1%). In total, 84% of businesses had not received mentoring or coaching – however, take up was highest among the Business and IT and Hospitality, Passenger Transport, Travel and Tourism sectors.

[4] SFEDI (2008) 'Evidence on skill needs, supply and gaps for Business Enterprise and Business Support Extended Summary'

Table 2.2 Sectoral perceptions on mentoring[5]

Asset Skills	Automotive Skills	Construction skills	E Skills UK	Go Skills	Lantra	People 1st	Semta	Skillsmart Retail	Summit Skills	All sectors
Willing to use to help develop business abilities using a business coach or mentor										
20.6%	14.7%	20.3%	32.1%	16.9%	23.8%	25.4%	13.2%	21.4%	18.5%	23.4%
Business coach or mentor has made an important contribution to developing abilities to run business										
22.4%	8.2%	12.0%	19.1%	5.4%	14.7%	10.2%	7.4%	11.4%	12.0%	12.9%
During the last year, spent NO time developing business abilities with a business coach/mentor										
84.7%	86.0%	92.4%	72.1%	86.2%	83.4%	76.1%	92.6%	87.1%	81.9%	83.9%

Additionally, the SFEDI (2008) study found that 47% of business owner-managers would informally consult with other business owners, but only one in six would engage with a detailed diagnostic system as required by publicly funded business support. To develop business ability, 15% stated they would definitely utilise a business coach or mentor - a further 9% stating they would possibly use a coach/mentor with just less than one in four (23.4%) stating yes or possibly. More formal routes of support were more likely in those owners who:

- were under 35;
- wanted to grow their business;
- had previously received formal business or management training;
- were highly qualified;
- had employees; and,
- had more than 10 people working in it.

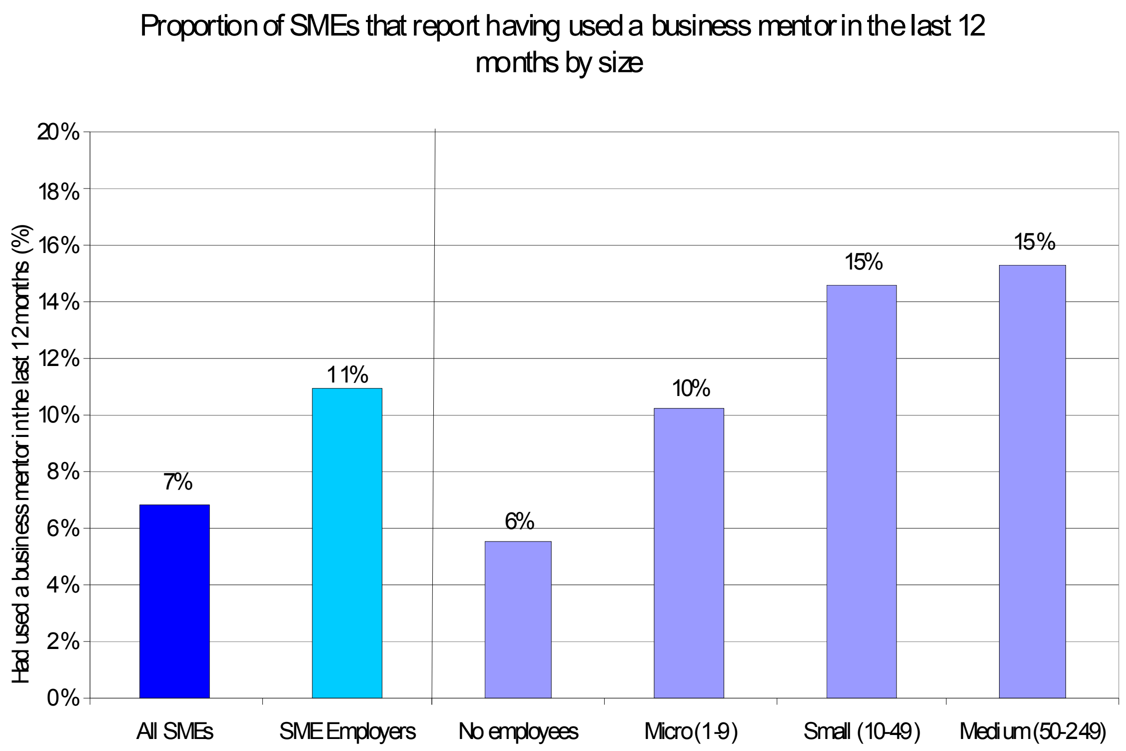
[5] SFEDI (2008) 'Evidence on skill needs, supply and gaps for Business Enterprise and Business Support Extended Summary'

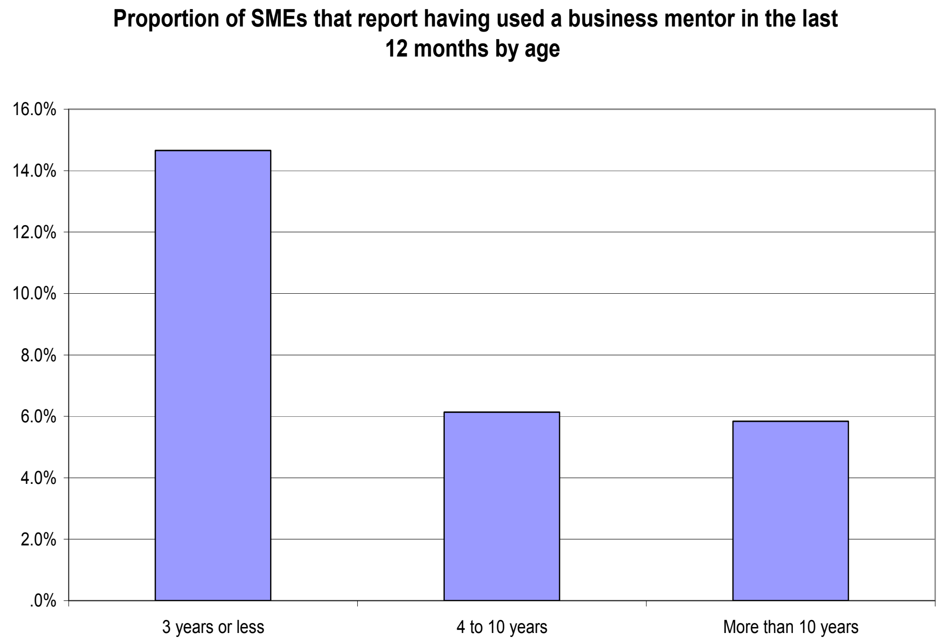
That said, stakeholders acknowledged that more recently the profile and awareness of mentoring had been raised. One example identified is through high profile television programmes which have shown the value of mentoring, and more generally awareness of mentoring as a support mechanism is growing. Similarly, one respondent stated that "*over the past 5-10 years there has been a strong culture of the Business Link model of support, including the notion of a paid coach or consultant*". The term mentoring was felt to now be better understood, than compared to 10 years ago, nonetheless it was acknowledged that "*there is a long way to go*".

Profile of businesses engaged in business mentoring

One of the few detailed pieces of research (undertaken between 1999-2006) is a review of the Business Volunteer Mentor Project (BVM) - which illustrates that the clients of mentors were mainly pre-start businesses (65%) with one in ten start ups. A similar level were self-employed and 14% micro businesses. Clients were mainly aged between 25 and 50 (71%) with 13% between 51 and 59. One in ten were aged between 18 and 24 (8%). Prior to self employment – 48% were employed and 43% unemployed.

BIS analysis of the SBS Survey 2010 established that in 2010 only around 7% of all UK SMEs had used a business mentor in the past year, and use was found to be higher amongst larger SMEs, and also younger businesses as illustrated in the figures below.





Source: BIS Analysis of the SBS Survey 2010

In 2011, BIS produced an Equality Impact Assessment on the Business Improvement Programme. The EIA considered the Small Business Survey in 2010 which highlighted that 11 per cent of small and medium sized business employers, and 7% of small and medium sized businesses, had used a business mentor to gain ongoing support[6]. The use of mentoring was higher among women-led and ethnic minority led SMEs but not at a statistically significant level.

A key distinction to be made within the context of the data is making a distinction in the roles and effects of both formal and informal mentoring. The SBS survey data established that 47% of respondent SMEs had used a specialist business mentor, whilst 21% had gained support from a friend or peer and 18% from someone who provides other services to business such as an accountant or lawyer.

In terms of the benefits experienced by those SMEs who had used a mentor, the BIS Business Barometer found that these were significant and on the whole fell into six main categories: 84% had been helped to develop and business plan and/or strategy, 51% had been helped to increase sales or profits, 41% had enhanced their leadership and management skills. 37% had been helped to develop new products or processes, and 30% to obtain finance. Finally, support with people management such as recruitment was received by 22%.

[6] BIS (2011) 'Equality Impact Assessment: Business Improvement Programme' http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/enterprise/docs/b/11-993-business-improvement-programme-equality-impact-assessment.pdf

In 2012, SBS SME Business Barometer (2012) findings found that 12% of respondents had used a business mentor in the last 12 months.

Communication to promote business mentoring take up

As detailed above, there exists a significant challenge in disseminating information around the availability and accessibility of mentoring, as well as promoting the benefits, in order to encourage take up.

Consultations with stakeholders revealed a strong sense that there was room for improvement in the levels of awareness of business mentoring provision more generally. This not only relates to co-ordination of information across the community ("*there is no dialogue across the sector*"), but also disseminating headline messages including promoting the benefits of mentoring.

Promoting the benefits was seen as a key way to encourage individuals to reflect on the fact that they might benefit from business mentoring support, and also be more prepared to pay for it. As one person noted, there is a well established mentoring network in Scotland. "*Mentoring has a high profile, it is supported by Government and the value of mentoring is nationally recognized*". It was suggested that a similar situation should be a strategic and policy priority for England, and that this would not necessarily be a costly ambition to achieve.

In addition to the provision of information to individuals, it was also felt that communication across the sector could be improved, both between mentoring organisations, between networks and umbrella organisations, and with BIS and other stakeholders. It was felt that communication and regular dissemination of updates would be instrumental in "*bringing the sector together*".

Stakeholders did state that there is the potential to increase the demand for and supply of business mentoring – "there is a lot of untapped resource", and "*lots of people would like to become a mentor but do not know what would be expected of them*".

As far as managing demand and supply of business mentoring was concerned, one respondent felt that "*demand can only be met if people – i.e. government, mentors, mentoring organisations- understand what is needed*". The BIS Business Barometer found that 25% of SMEs had considered using a mentor but had been unable to identify a suitable mentor. Another stakeholder said they viewed the growth of mentoring as "*an organic process and one which is difficult to artificially manage supply and demand upwards*". In their view, the growth in mentoring could be facilitated but not managed.

2.2.3 Supply of business mentoring

Corresponding to the need for raising of awareness and effective dissemination of information, there is also identified market failure relating to the supply of mentoring.

The current landscape/market for business mentoring provision

In relation to how well the 'market' of supply and demand for business mentoring operates, there are factors which affect the landscape of provision to varying degrees, including the infrastructure of support, geographical distribution of mentoring provision, and the extent to which business mentoring support is segmented or tailored to a specific owner group or type of business.

- Structural issues

It was highlighted through the stakeholder interviews that the structure of business support provision, and more specifically of business mentoring, is inherently problematic for developing and implementing a co-ordinated offer of support. Stakeholders cited the lack of “an umbrella organisation” or overarching network was seen as a disadvantage to developing comprehensive business mentoring provision. How far this stakeholder view is reflected across the sector is not known however.

One respondent described how in the accountancy sector, for example, there are two main organisations, the ICAEW and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. It is clear to people within the industry who they can approach. This point was furthered developed by the suggestion that the business mentoring industry needs an overarching professional body or a business representative body. Something which the BBA were seen to have “*gone some way towards but this is not a natural role for them*”. Furthermore, mentorsme, as a stand-alone portal, is not underpinned by an industry body, providing associated support and co-ordination activity, and this was seen as an issue that needed to be addressed.

- Geographical issues

In addition to the structural issues outlined, the geographical coverage afforded currently within business mentoring support was also seen as a barrier. Mentoring provision was seen as “very patchy” across the country. Whilst the survey analysis has subsequently established that the geographical spread of mentoring provision covers all regions and LEP areas, the breadth, depth and nature of coverage was found to be variable. Whilst stakeholders were aware there is some contact between individual networks across the country, generally this is not coordinated, and this was seen as contributing to the view that provision (and co-ordinated mentoring provision) is variable.

- Segmentation and tailoring of support

In terms of business mentoring provision, stakeholders recognise there is a need to have a broad offer of support but with the potential to tailor to the needs of mentees in order to provide the most effective mentoring activity.

It is recognised that segmentation is an important part of meeting individual mentee needs; for instance, often people expect to receive business mentoring from someone who has experience of their sector (although less so at pre-start stage). In response, often mentoring schemes seek to target a particular segment such as business life stage (for example, start-up or growth ambition), population demographic (for example, the over 50s of Prince’s Initiative for Mature Enterprise, PRIME; Enterprise Women Mentoring programme in East of England), industry or sector (a recent ‘games industry’ mentoring pilot) or region or sub-region (BizGrowthEast, East of England; Business Champions Scheme, East Midlands; Motivating Merseyside Business to Innovate, North West). Relatedly, recognition of different enterprise groups as part of the universal offer, such as support for women's enterprise and black and minority ethnic enterprise, is supported by Government policy[7].

Supply of Mentors

The desk research exercise established that the amount of existing evidence with regard to estimating the extent of mentoring provision is limited. Some examples were identified such as a 2008 SFEDI study which identified that 8,300 people were employed in the UK in mainstream public funded business support. Of these, 2,400 were volunteer business mentors with a further 440 employed or contracted mentors and 190 business coaches[8].

The BVM project ran across England between 1999 and 2006 - the project was reviewed in 2003 and, at this time, the project had provided 1,196 mentors to assist over 14,000 businesses. Over the course of the BVM network, 33,000 mentees were engaged and supported by 2,300 mentors[9].

In March 2012, it was announced that Get Mentoring Initiative had recruited more than 7,500 volunteer mentors, more than half of the target 15,000 volunteer mentors[10].

Mentor Profiling

Research by the Institute of Enterprise and Entrepreneurs (IOEE)[11] divided mentors into two categories within their programmes. The first is a mentor who shows commitment to helping other small businesses through a more informal approach or who is new to mentoring. The second is a mentor who has a qualification or accreditation in mentoring or has been involved in a structured mentoring programme such as Princes Trust, or the British Volunteer Mentor Association. Clutterbuck & Megginson's work in 1999 identified a number of roles that mentors can play: critical friend, career advisor, counsellor, networker, listener, sounding board[12].

In terms of profiling the key characteristics of mentors that have emerged through research or evaluation of mentoring programmes, the research by SFEDI found that just under

---

[7] http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/enterprise-and-business-support/entrepreneurial-culture/women-and-bame-enterprise

[8] SFEDI (2008) 'Evidence on skill needs, supply and gaps for Business Enterprise and Business Support Extended Summary'

[9] SQW Consulting (2009) 'A review of mentoring literature and best practice – creative business mentor pilot' NESTA

[10] http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2012/Mar/15000-business-mentors-milestone

[11] IOEE 'Mentor Types' http://ioee.co.uk/mentoring/how-it-works/ Accessed 18/11/11

[12] Clutterbuck, D. And Megginson, D (1999) Mentoring Executives and Directors

three-quarters of the business support personnel were male – and the majority between 45 and 64 years of age. Nine in ten were white British[13].

The profiling of mentors involved in the Business Volunteer Mentor Project found them to be primarily male (81%) and white (84%). A total of 10% of mentors were black and 4% Asian. Despite there being an increase in female led business at the time of the study, many of the businesses were still 'early-stage' and were not, therefore, at a stage where they could spend time volunteering their services. It was anticipated that more female mentors would be engaged in time. Over half of mentors were aged between 25 and 50 (52%) with one third between 51 and 60 and the remainder (13%) over 60 years of age. Mentors were most likely to be self-employed (50%) with one third employed and 13% retired. 3% of mentors were unemployed[14].

In terms of geographical distribution, the review of the Business Volunteer Mentor Project found that mentors were spread across England – but concentrated in the south, particularly in London (14%), the West Midlands (13%), East Midlands and South West (11%). Coverage was less concentrated in the North of England (North West 3% and North East 5%)[15].

Recruitment of and support for mentors

A central strand of activity underpinning the supply of mentors is the effectiveness of existing mechanisms to recruit mentors. From the stakeholder perspective, more than half of the stakeholders were aware of difficulties in recruiting mentors (for one respondent this was a sector-specific issue, for another it was a more general problem). Recruitment issues were identified relating not only to capacity, and the need to identify sufficient numbers of mentors, but also in terms of quality of mentoring, and the necessary skills, summarized by one stakeholder thus: " *just because someone is a good business person does not mean they will be a good mentor*". As one stakeholder described the process is that of bringing together mentor and mentee as a 'matchmaking process' which needs to be carried out in the right way, stressing that the personal relationship between mentor and mentee is the crux of the success of mentoring delivery.

Further to the recruitment of mentors, there is a recognized need to provide ongoing support for the mentor (as well as the mentee). For example, in order to ensure that those receiving the mentoring get the most from it, then those delivering the mentoring must be clear about what mentoring is. One stakeholder highlighted the need to ensure that inexperienced mentors do not "go into management mode" and try to use their business expertise rather than supporting the mentee to develop their own. One respondent

---

[13] SFEDI (2008) 'Evidence on skill needs, supply and gaps for Business Enterprise and Business Support Extended Summary'

[14] National Federation of Enterprise Agencies (2003) 'Business Volunteer Mentor (BVM) Project Review'

[15] National Federation of Enterprise Agencies (2003) 'Business Volunteer Mentor (BVM) Project Review'

underlined the need to ensure that mentors know where to go for help should problems arise, that mentors are well supported through the process, as well as mentees.

Mechanisms to promote/broker mentoring

There are a number of ways in which the ‘matching process’ of bringing together mentor and mentee can take place. Other than online portals, stakeholders highlighted other mechanisms through which mentoring is sourced and offered. The picture they provided included ‘both ends of the spectrum’ insofar as they highlighted the importance of informal networks and word of mouth at a “grassroots level”, as well as citing high profile, well established formal channels such as the Prince’s Trust, BITC, and PRIME. There are high levels of awareness of organisations like these and this often means people tend to trust them.

In both of these situations, central to the process is the issue of trust: at a local level this comes from word of mouth and personal recommendation, at a higher level this comes from a recognised, high profile organisation. One stakeholder commented that mentors have “quite a bit of power over the mentee” so this means that the trust issue is very important.

2.3 Mentorsme

One of the ways in which the Government is seeking to overcome areas of market failure in the business mentoring market place, is through the mentorsme portal – which aims to raise awareness and increase understanding of business mentoring, and provides a search facility for individuals looking for a mentor.

Awareness and perceptions of mentorsme

Stakeholders acknowledged that it was “*early days*” for mentorsme (launched in July 2011) however, one respondent stated that mentorsme had not been widely promoted, and that the “*trickle down has not happened yet*”.

Mentorsme also faces the issues inherent in the business mentoring landscape as described above. For example, in terms of the difficulty associated with defining business mentoring, it was suggested by stakeholders that as part of the promotion of mentorsme there is also a need to further explain what constitutes business mentoring. This may then prompt people to “*make the link*” and realize that, in many cases, they are already providing/receiving mentoring on an informal basis.

The majority of the stakeholders felt it was necessary to make a distinction between individuals offering business mentoring, and organisations offering business mentoring. One person expressed the view that “*mentorsme is fine for people who want to find a mentoring organisation*” but they went on to stress that often the value in business mentoring lies in providing individual support for people to identify a mentor with the appropriate skills. As noted previously, the personal relationship element is important in the matching process – essentially will the mentor and mentee get on - along with other factors such as location and sector.

Similarly, the structural issues which exist due to the nature of the current ‘market’ are significant. The “*myriad of smaller organisations and local networks*” which interviewees described as constituting the business mentoring support community was cited as a barrier to success for mechanisms such as mentorsme, with one going so far as to describe the challenge of bringing together the business mentoring provision available, as being comparable with "*herding cats*".

Whilst there was general support for mentorsme, some respondents expressed doubt about the use of a web-based portal to help people to find mentoring provision. One person noted that "*the mentorsme concept is good but it needs to include personal support, it feels like a website and nothing else*".

There was uncertainty as to whether the on-line format was suitable in each case, for those looking for a business mentor; "*for many people wanting support, especially pre-start up, people don't know the right questions to ask, and rather than on line resources, they just want to talk to someone*". Furthermore, the appropriateness of using an on line approach to identify a mentor was queried, with one stakeholder stating that "*on line doesn't replace face to face engagement*". As mentoring was seen unequivocally as having its basis in a personal relationship, a website was seen as "*a good jumping off point*" but not as a replacement for personal contact to meet the needs of mentees, and also mentors.

It was suggested by one stakeholder that not all mentors wish to have their details available on line (for example, individuals who get involved in mentoring once they have retired), which could limit the resource available through mentorsme.

Finally, from the supply side, some issues were identified by one respondent in that some of their members had been disgruntled that they were not able to register on mentorsme. There was also some concern expressed that some organisations registered on mentorsme are using it as a market generation tool. The interviewee acknowledged, however, that along with registration comes the obligation to adhere to a stated code of conduct, as well as making it clear whether or not organisations charge for their support.

Mentorsme mentoring capacity

A central ambition for mentorsme is to support the drive to increase the capacity of business mentoring available. Stakeholders were asked their views on the target number of 40,000 mentors to be achieved. Of those that gave a response, two felt that this figure was not appropriate: "*the figure is far too high*", "*I do not think this is realistic*". One other respondent felt that whilst they were not clear what the target had been based on, "*it may well be achieved but this will take time*".

Functionality of the mentorsme portal

All of the stakeholders interviewed had used the mentorsme portal. There were some comments relating to the functionality of the website, in relation to the search function, including:

- There should be more information displayed as part of the search results; for example, is sector specific support offered? When lots of mentoring provider options are listed in the search results it would be useful to have additional ways to differentiate between them, rather than having to visit the website of each one;

- The search function does not work well. Phone calls are received from people in other parts of the country which shows they are not able to use it properly to identify their local mentoring organizations; and,

- Finally, the search function would be improved if it gave the option of searching by a postcode area.

2.4 Conclusion

Business mentoring has come to the fore as a tool in the provision of business support, further shown by initiatives such as mentorsme and Get Mentoring. Explicit business mentoring has a limited policy history but its development reflects the issues of market failure commonly associated with a range of business support activity. Key issues include awareness of what is business mentoring, understanding of its value and intrinsic issues of accessing services of proven and reliable quality.

A business mentoring supply infrastructure exists, encompassing different types of provision, but little comprehensive information exists on this infrastructure with a suggestion of 'patchiness' in provision.

Varying sources (SBS Survey, BIS Business Barometer) have established that levels of use of business mentoring are low relative to the business population – around 10% of SMEs. The distinction between formal and informal business mentoring is also an important one to make.

The BIS Business Barometer helps to define the benefits of business mentoring (for the recipient), which fall into six main categories: develop and business plan and/or strategy, increase sales or profits, enhanced leadership and management skills, help to develop new products or processes, to obtain finance. Finally, support with people management such as recruitment is also important.

Mentorsme has been introduced to support the drive towards a target of establishing a network of 40,000 mentors to support the development of business mentoring activity in England. There has been a limited amount of research previously to establish the business mentoring population, one notable study is the 2008 SFEDI study which identified that 8,300 people were employed in the UK in mainstream public funded business support. Of these, 2,400 were volunteer business mentors with a further 440 employed or contracted mentors and 190 business coaches[16].

[16] SFEDI (2008) 'Evidence on skill needs, supply and gaps for Business Enterprise and Business Support Extended Summary'

3 Analysis of survey data – profiling the business mentoring sector in England

This section provides analysis from the telephone survey of organisations providing business mentoring undertaken by Swift between 19th January 2012 and 24th February 2012[17]. A total of 209 responses to the survey were achieved. Three responses were removed from the data – two of these did not fit into the research definition of 'mentoring' while another was a duplicate response, leaving a total survey population of 206. From this, 183 organisations provided business mentoring, while 23 did not and completed a shorter survey instrument.

Based on these figures the results can be taken as representative of the business mentoring population in England (at a confidence level of 95% and employing a confidence interval of 5.4%).

Organisations responding to the survey were located in 34 of the 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and all 9 of the English regions. Through these organisations and the substantial number providing national provision there is some form of business mentoring provision across all areas of England.

3.1 Establishing the current business mentoring population

A key aim of the study was to provide an estimate of the current business mentoring population in England.

Survey responses detail provision of some 11,500 mentors in just over 180 organisations. Given a business mentoring organisation population of just over 400, scaling up suggests a total number of business mentors in England of up to 26,000.

It should be noted, however, that 60% of these organisations offer mentoring through other organisations so there is an issue of double counting. Around 20 per cent reported that at least three-quarters of their mentors were registered elsewhere – suggesting that a 20 per cent adjustment in mentor numbers to allow for double counting is not unreasonable. This would suggest a total number of business mentors in England of 21,000.

Finally, the business mentoring sector is notable in that over half of its members are essentially sole traders alongside a handful of very large organisations. The survey covered the whole known potential business mentoring population and achieved a 45 per

[17] A copy of the survey instrument is available in Annex 2

cent response rate. Whilst the above calculation assumes that those organisations that did not respond to the survey have the same characteristics as those that did, a researcher’s sense check would suggest that non-respondents would in all likelihood include the ‘tail end’ of the sector and fewer larger organisations. Given this a further conservative 10 per cent reduction in potential numbers would not be unreasonable.

This suggests a total business mentoring population in England in the order of 19,000 mentors.

Around 11,000 mentors are registered on mentorsme (source: BBA). To this may be added 7,500 new volunteers being brought forward through Get Mentoring[18] (March 2012) – an initiative aimed at recruiting and training mentors in the UK from the small, medium and micro business community to which is attached a target of recruiting 15,000 mentors.

In total, the survey results, when viewed alongside other initiatives identified, suggests an ultimate range of 30 – 40,000 mentors in England (including those categorised as ‘dormant’ – 20 per cent of the mentors identified were categorised as ‘dormant’ as the time of the research, i.e. not currently providing mentoring).

3.2 The business mentoring sector and service offer: headline characteristics

3.2.1 The organisational structure of the business mentoring sector

Historically, and as identified by stakeholder responses in Section 2, the landscape of business mentoring provision and the nature its organisational infrastructure is one that is characterised as fragmented and embedded in local network structures which are both formal and informal in nature. Alongside this must be placed the more recent growth of major national providers.

Survey results for 183 organisations interviewed reveal this organisational diversity alongside dominance of mentoring employment by a few key organisations (as illustrated below in Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2).

---

[18] Get Mentoring is an initiative to unlock, train and support a community of enterprise mentors across the UK. http://getmentoring.org/

Figure 3.1 Number of mentors in organisations – share of organisations (registered/non-registered)

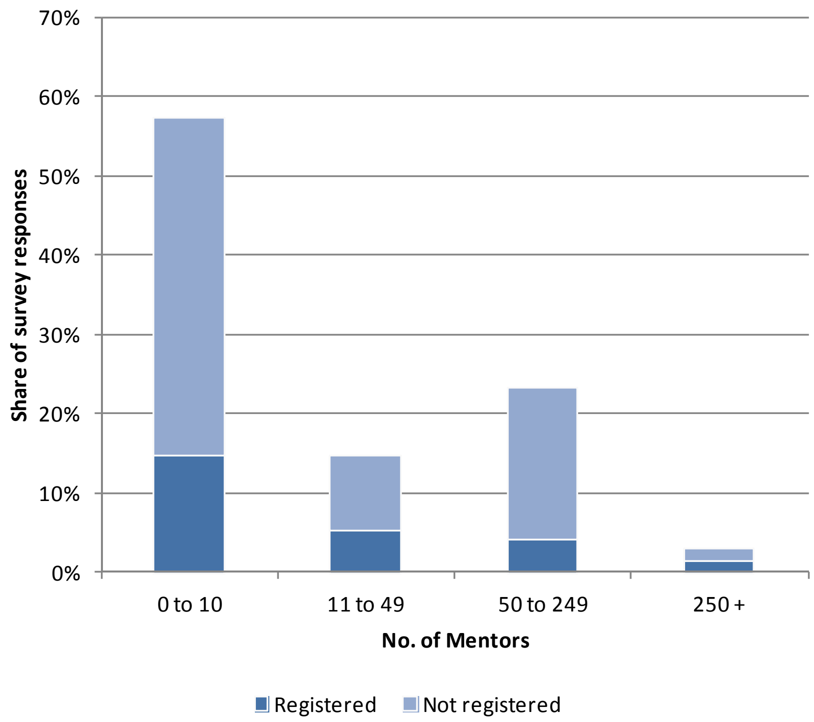
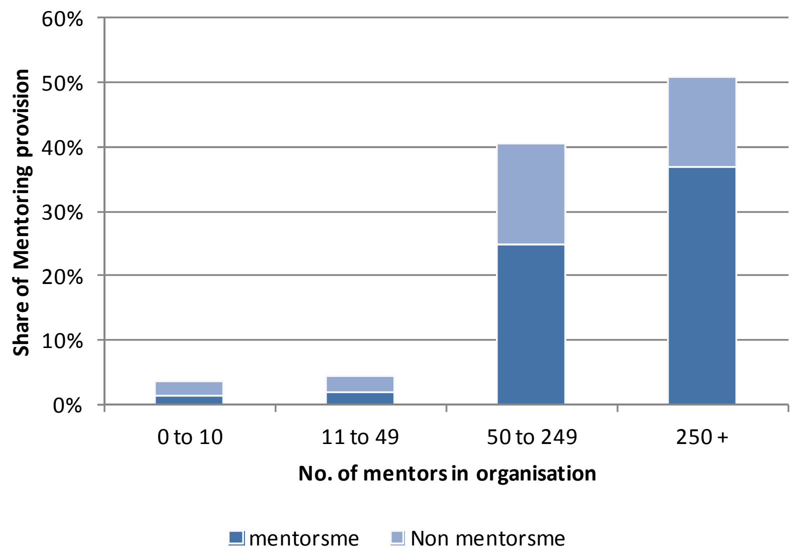


Figure 3.2 Number of mentors in organisations – share of mentoring provision (registered/non-registered)



The survey established that just under 60 per cent of organisations (with less than 10 mentors) employ 4 per cent of the business mentoring population. Of these, 20 per cent are registered on mentorsme. Almost 40 per cent of business mentoring organisations (with between 11-249 mentors) employ 45 per cent of the business mentoring population. Approximately 50 per cent of this group are registered on mentorsme. A small number of organisations (6 organisations) employ half the mentoring population, with half of these registered on mentorsme.

The majority of business mentoring organisations are private limited companies (48%); however, self-employed individuals (11%), educational establishments (11%) and social enterprises (8%) were also commoner organisational types providing mentoring.

3.2.2 Regional distribution

The survey established that business mentoring organisations are located across all regions and LEPs (for a more detailed analysis of provision according to geographical location please refer to Section 3.4). Table 3.1 sets out, by region, the share of mentors and share of organisations, and reflects these against the BIS business population estimate for the region.

Potential evidence of both ‘under provision’ and ‘over provision’ can be discerned. Care should be taken however in interpretation of these results on two counts: first, at this scale of breakdown figures represent the returns of a handful of respondent organisations and, second, the third of respondent organisations that provide national coverage are excluded from this regional breakdown.

Table 3.1 Summary table of regional distribution of mentors and organisations (excluding national providers)

	No. of mentors	No. of organisations	BIS Business Population Estimates (2011)
East Midlands	5%	5%	8%
East of England	4%	7%	12%
Greater London	4%	6%	19%
North East England	13%	8%	3%
North West England	24%	17%	11%
South East England	12%	23%	19%
South West England	14%	12%	11%
West Midlands	5%	6%	8%
Yorkshire and the Humber	18%	15%	8%

3.2.3 The 'typical' business mentoring organisation

On the basis of the survey data (including all respondents, both those registered and non-registered on mentorsme) we are able to draw on key variables to produce a profile of a 'typical' business mentoring organisation by selected characteristics, as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Key characteristics for the business mentoring population (registered or not)

182 Organisations, 11,525 mentors	All organisations
...registered on mentorsme	31%
...providing "package" (mentoring, coaching, advice, etc.)	75%
...providing face to face mentoring	98%
...providing web-based mentoring	40%
...providing support locally or regionally	68%
...providing support nationally	32%
...charging for business mentoring (always or sometimes)	33%
...targeting all business life stages	29%
...targeting start up businesses	55%
...targeting all business sizes	20%
...targeting 1-9 businesses	66%
...targeting businesses desiring growth	52%
...providing broad coverage (not targeting sector or owner-manager	58%
...providing sectorally targeted support (sometimes or always)	25%
...providing support focused towards women owners	15%
...providing support focused towards BME owners	9%
...requiring mentors to hold accreditation or qualification	26%

Mentoring organisations tend to provide a 'package' of business support services, including mentoring. Mentoring is overwhelmingly offered face-to-face with two-thirds of organisations offering local or regional support – and a third offering a national service. A third charge for their services.

Whilst a third of organisations target all business life stages, the most common life stage (start-up) was serviced by just over half of all respondents. Similarly, whilst a fifth of organisations target all business sizes, two-thirds target those with less than 10 employees.

In terms of enterprise groups, the majority of the sector does not target particular groups (only 15% focus support to women owners and 9% support towards BME owner groups). One quarter of providers offer specific sectoral coverage.

Only in one quarter of instances do organisations expect their mentors to hold an accreditation or qualification to undertake business mentoring.

Characteristics of the typical mentoring organisation did not vary by registration or not on mentorsme.

3.3 Profiling the business mentoring population by organisational type and size

3.3.1 Provider relationships

The survey established that business mentoring is largely provided by individuals – but who also operate within an affiliated member network structure (see Table 3.3 below). In a third of cases organisations directly employ mentors.

Table 3.3 Mentoring provision by provider relationship

	Operate a network of affiliated member mentors	Directly employ other mentors who deliver business mentoring	Provide mentoring as an individual
East Midlands (n=6)	100%	33%	83%
East of England (n=9)	44%	33%	89%
Greater London (n=8)	63%	50%	50%
North East England (n=10)	60%	50%	80%
North West England (n=22)	64%	32%	77%
South East England (n=29)	52%	38%	79%
South West England (n=15)	53%	20%	80%
West Midlands (n=8)	38%	25%	63%
Yorkshire and Humber (n=19)	74%	58%	68%
National provision (n=57)	63%	28%	79%
All organisations (n=183)	**61%**	**35%**	**77%**

Base: 183 (more than one response could be provided)

3.3.2 Mentoring provision by size of organisation

3.3.2.1 Organisations with less than 10 mentors

The majority of organisations had less than 10 mentors – with 105 organisations accounting for 399 mentors. In fact, despite accounting for 58 per cent of organisations they accounted for just 4 per cent of mentoring provision.

Of these, 20 per cent were registered on mentorsme, the lowest share if size of mentoring organisations is considered. These organisations were likely to provide face to face mentoring to a similar extent as the wider population, however were less likely to provide web-based mentoring (33%). Just fewer than three in ten organisations provided support nationally, with a focus on regional provision (51%).

Organisations with less than 10 mentors were likely to support start up businesses – but one in four targeted businesses of all life stages (24%), compared for three in ten organisations more broadly (29%). Smaller mentoring organisations were more likely to provide support that targeted business growth (61%) than other sized organisations and were also more likely to provide sectorally targeted support (29%). Conversely, they were less likely to provide support that was targeted to a specific type of business owner with just 9 per cent supporting women owners and 4 per cent supporting BME owners. This cohort of mentoring organisations was also less likely to include mentors that offered their support elsewhere (57%).

When the wider mentoring market is considered, organisations with less than 10 employees were less likely to have noted a change in demand for their services than other sized organisations (15%). They were also slightly less likely to state that demand had increased significantly in recent months (15%).

3.3.2.2 Organisations with between 11 and 49 mentors

A total of 27 organisations had between 11 and 49 mentors, accounting for 608 mentors, or 5 per cent, of the total provision. Two fifths of mentoring organisations within the cohort were registered on mentorsme.

Organisations with between 11 and 49 mentors were much more likely to provide web-based mentoring than the wider cohort of businesses (59%). There were slightly less likely to support businesses nationwide (26%) with a primarily regional focus (48%).

One third of businesses provided support to all life stages while 19 per cent targeted all business sizes. Organisations of this size were less likely to provide sectorally targeted or owner-focused support.

There was more likely to be an issue of double counting among organisations of this size, with just 15 per cent stating none of their mentors offered their services elsewhere compared to 40 per cent more broadly. Almost two thirds of organisations stated that there was significant potential to make more of business mentoring (63%) while no organisations felt that supply of mentors matched the demand for the service. Organisations of this size were much more likely to consider that demand had increased significantly over the last six months (37%) and that there were gaps in the provision of mentoring services (85%).

3.3.2.3 Organisations with between 50 and 249 mentors

One quarter of organisations (43) accounted for 4,609 mentors or 40 per cent of total mentoring provision. Approximately half of organisations of this size were listed on mentorsme (49%). Just 16 per cent of organisations stated that none of their mentors offered support elsewhere, suggesting that there could be substantial double counting of provision.

Organisations with between 50 and 249 mentors were most likely to provide targeted support to specific owner managers (37%) particularly women owners (28%) and BME led businesses (23%). They were also slightly more likely to offer support to all business sizes (23%) and all business life stages (42%).

One third of organisation provided mentoring support nationally (35%), however the majority provided regionally focused support (47%).

When the wider market for mentoring is considered, one third felt that there had been a significant increase in demand over the last 6 months compared to 23 per cent across the wider cohort of businesses. Organisations were slightly more likely to consider that the supply of mentors matched demand for mentoring (16%) while half of organisations felt that there was significant potential to make more of business mentoring (51%).

3.3.2.4 Organisations with over 250 mentors

The majority of mentors were part of larger organisations – with 5,909 mentors (51% of provision) covered by just 7 organisations (4% of organisations). Organisations of this size were more likely to be registered with mentorsme (57%); however, this was based on a small response base. Organisations with over 250 mentors were primarily providing national support (87%). They were most likely of all sized organisations to provide support to all life stages (43%) and to all business sizes (29%), however were least likely to provide sectorally targeted support (14%). None of the organisations provided regionally focused support – with 14 per cent (1 organisation) providing locally targeted support. Just 30 per cent of organisations stated that none of their mentors offered support elsewhere.

Larger organisations were most likely to suggest that there was significant potential to make more of business mentoring (71%); however, they were also least likely to perceive there to be gaps in the provision of mentoring services (43%).

Table 3.4 Summary of responses to selected survey questions by the size of organisation (i.e. number of mentors)

Share of organisations …	Size of organisation (no. of mentors)				All organisations
	0 to 10	11 to 49	50 to 249	250+	
… registered on mentorsme	20%	41%	49%	57%	31%
… providing face to face mentoring	98%	96%	100%	100%	98%
… providing web-based mentoring	33%	59%	44%	43%	40%
… providing support locally or regionally	71%	74%	65%	14%	68%
… providing support nationally	29%	26%	35%	86%	32%
… targeting all business life stages	24%	33%	42%	43%	29%
… targeting start up businesses	61%	44%	49%	43%	55%
… targeting all business sizes	18%	19%	23%	29%	20%
… targeting businesses desiring growth	61%	41%	40%	29%	52%
… providing sectorally targeted support	29%	22%	19%	14%	25%
… providing owner-manager targeted support	14%	22%	37%	29%	21%
… providing support focused towards women	9%	22%	28%	14%	15%
… providing support focused towards BME	4%	7%	23%	14%	9%
… requiring mentors to hold accreditation or	26%	37%	19%	43%	26%
… where no mentors offered support elsewhere	57%	15%	16%	29%	40%
… that felt demand had increased significantly	15%	37%	33%	29%	23%
… that view the supply of mentors matches	11%	0%	16%	29%	12%
… identifying significant potential to make more	50%	63%	51%	71%	53%
… that feel there are gaps in provision of	66%	85%	74%	43%	70%
No. of mentors	**399**	**608**	**4,609**	**5,909**	**11,525**
No. of organisations	**105**	**27**	**43**	**7**	**182**

Table 3.5 provides a stylized summary of business mentoring offer by organisational size.

Table 3.5 Business mentoring service offered in organisations by the number of mentors employed

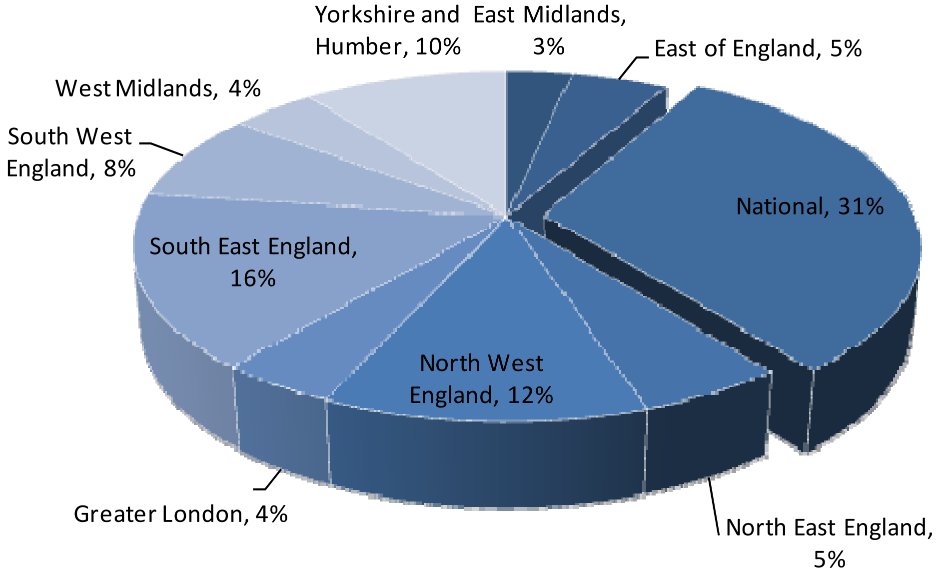
Business Mentoring Service Characteristics by Size Grouping	Small (1-10)	Medium (11-249)	Large (250+)
Geographical coverage	Regional	Regional	National
Delivery system	Face to face	Face to face/ web	Face to face
Business stage target	Start up	All stages	All stages
Business size target	SME	All sizes	All sizes
Targeted support	Sectoral	Owner/ manager	Generic
Experience of demand	Same	Up strongly	Increased
Charge for service	Yes	No/ sometimes	No

3.4 Geographical distribution and coverage of business mentoring organisations

3.4.1 Geographical distribution of business mentoring providers

Business mentoring organisations are based in all of the English regions; one third of organisations provide support across England (31%). When non-national provision is considered, the highest share of business mentoring organisations is based in the South East (16%) and North West (12%). The Greater London (4%), West Midlands (4%) and East Midlands (3%) regions have the lowest share of mentoring organisations providing support within the region.

Figure 3.3 Mentoring organisations provide support across all regions

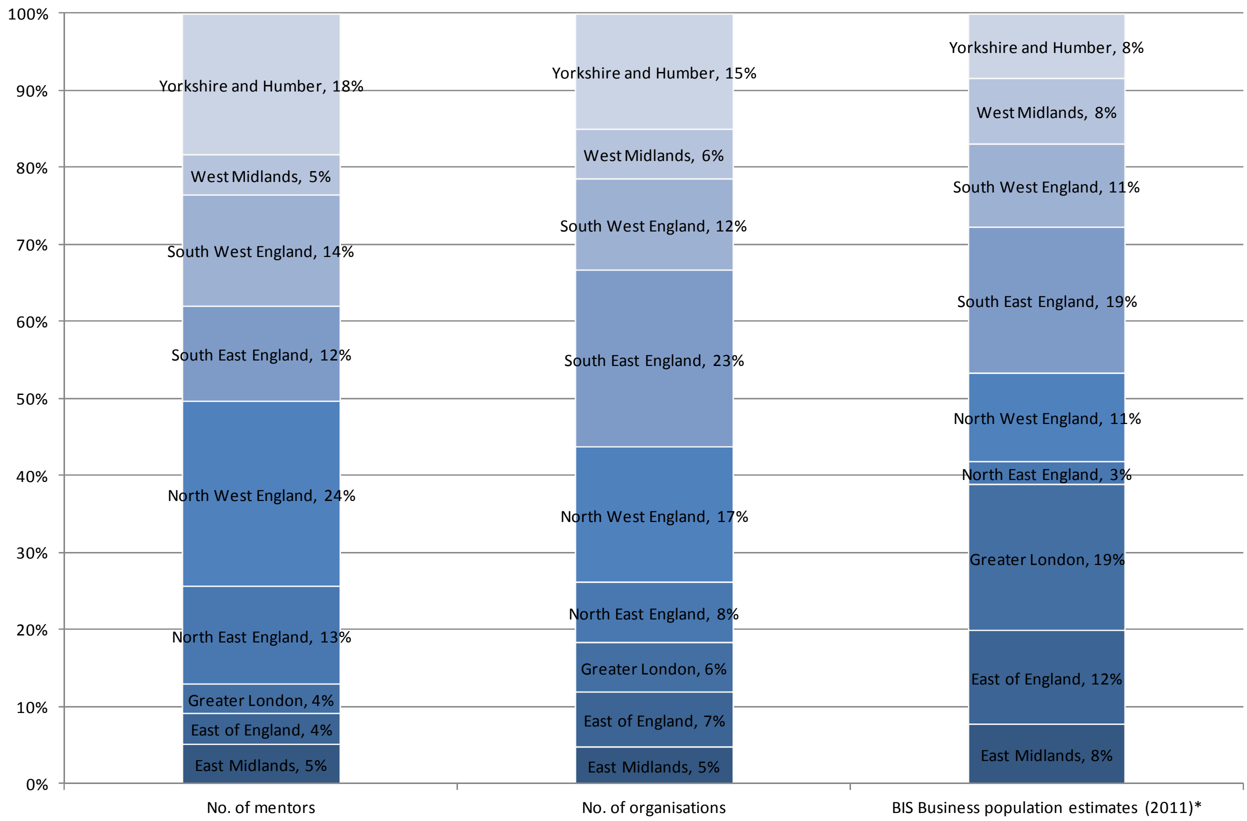


Base: 183 responses

Figure 3.4 provides a breakdown of survey responses by the location of mentoring organisations[19] compared to the wider business population across England using BIS Business Population Estimates for 2011. For instance, 19 per cent of the total English business population resides in the South East of England with a similar share in Greater London. It illustrates that, roughly, the survey population reflects the broader business demography of England, with the exception of there being a slightly higher share of organisations based in the South East, North West and Yorkshire and Humber and a significantly smaller share of organisations based in Greater London and the East Midlands.

[19] Uses location of survey respondent organisations. i.e. organisations that provide national coverage are included in the region the organisation is based in rather than the area within which they provide mentoring support.

Figure 3.4 The spread of organisations by region, largely reflects wider business demography



* Based on GHK analysis of the 2011 BIS Business Population Estimates (Base: 3.97m businesses)

Table 3.6 illustrates that when all mentoring organisations are considered, the majority provide regionally based support (50%) with three in ten providing national support (29%) and one in five targeting local businesses (31%).

Regional support was much more likely in the East of England (100%), South East (83%) and South West of England (80%) than the wider survey cohort. Conversely, support in Greater London was more often locally based (63%).

Table 3.6 Support is primarily targeted at the regional level

Location of support	Local Area	Regional Level	Country Level
East Midlands	33%	67%	-
East of England	0%	100%	-
Greater London	63%	38%	-
North East England	30%	70%	-
North West England	32%	68%	-
South East England	17%	83%	-
South West England	20%	80%	-
West Midlands	50%	50%	-
Yorkshire and Humber	50%	50%	-
National Provision	-	-	100%
All regions	**22%**	**50%**	**29%**

Base: 183 responses

Table 3.7 overleaf provides a summary of all regional responses to the business mentoring survey. It is followed by individual regional narratives.

Table 3.7 Summary of responses to select survey questions by the regional coverage

Share of organisations	East Mids	East of England	Greater London	NE England	NW England	SE England	SW England	West Mids.	Yorks & Humber	National Provision	All regions
… registered on mentorsme	17%	44%	63%	10%	32%	31%	33%	50%	26%	28%	31%
… providing face to face mentoring	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%	98%
… providing web-based mentoring	17%	11%	38%	60%	27%	34%	47%	50%	32%	51%	40%
… providing support nationally	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	-
… targeting ALL business life stages	17%	33%	13%	20%	27%	34%	33%	13%	32%	35%	30%
… targeting start up businesses	83%	56%	75%	70%	59%	52%	60%	63%	58%	44%	55%
… targeting ALL business sizes	0%	0%	13%	10%	18%	17%	13%	0%	11%	37%	20%
… targeting businesses desiring growth	33%	44%	75%	50%	50%	45%	60%	50%	37%	58%	51%
… providing sectorally targeted support (sometimes or always)	0%	11%	25%	20%	32%	21%	13%	38%	21%	32%	25%
… providing owner-manager targeted support (sometimes or always)	33%	22%	25%	0%	18%	14%	7%	0%	37%	30%	21%
… providing support	33%	11%	13%	0%	14%	10%	7%	0%	26%	28%	17%

Share of organisations	East Mids	East of England	Greater London	NE England	NW England	SE England	SW England	West Mids.	Yorks & Humber	National Provision	All regions
focused towards women owners											
… providing support focused towards BME owners	17%	11%	25%	0%	9%	7%	0%	0%	16%	19%	12%
… requiring mentors to hold accreditation or qualification	67%	22%	13%	10%	23%	34%	27%	0%	21%	32%	27%
… where no mentors offered support elsewhere	0%	56%	38%	50%	55%	45%	13%	13%	37%	46%	41%
… that felt demand had increased significantly over the last 6 months	0%	40%	25%	40%	25%	50%	44%	67%	64%	36%	42%
… that view the supply of mentors matches demand for mentoring	17%	22%	0%	0%	18%	3%	13%	25%	11%	12%	11%
… that view there to be significant potential to make more of business mentoring	17%	56%	63%	30%	41%	59%	60%	50%	58%	58%	53%
… that feel there are gaps in provision of mentoring services	67%	67%	88%	40%	77%	76%	87%	75%	58%	65%	69%
Number of mentors	215	169	155	531	1,009	516	606	213	771	7,343	11,528
Number of organisations	6	9	8	10	22	29	15	8	19	57	183

Share of organisations	East Mids	East of England	Greater London	NE England	NW England	SE England	SW England	West Mids.	Yorks & Humber	National Provision	All regions
… registered on mentorsme	17%	44%	63%	10%	32%	31%	33%	50%	26%	28%	31%
… providing face to face mentoring	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%	98%
… providing web-based mentoring	17%	67%	88%	80%	64%	72%	80%	88%	53%	26%	75%
… providing support nationally	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	-
… targeting ALL business life stages	17%	33%	13%	20%	27%	34%	33%	13%	32%	35%	30%
… targeting start up businesses	83%	56%	75%	70%	59%	52%	60%	63%	58%	44%	55%
… targeting ALL business sizes	0%	0%	13%	10%	18%	17%	13%	0%	11%	37%	20%
… targeting businesses desiring growth	33%	44%	75%	50%	50%	45%	60%	50%	37%	58%	51%
… providing sectorally targeted support (sometimes or always)	0%	11%	25%	20%	32%	21%	13%	38%	21%	32%	25%
… providing owner-manager targeted support (sometimes or always)	33%	22%	25%	0%	18%	14%	7%	0%	37%	30%	21%
… providing support focused towards women	33%	11%	13%	0%	14%	10%	7%	0%	26%	28%	17%

Share of organisations	East Mids	East of England	Greater London	NE England	NW England	SE England	SW England	West Mids.	Yorks & Humber	National Provision	All regions
owners											
… providing support focused towards BME owners	17%	11%	25%	0%	9%	7%	0%	0%	16%	19%	12%
… requiring mentors to hold accreditation or qualification	67%	22%	13%	10%	23%	34%	27%	0%	21%	32%	27%
… where no mentors offered support elsewhere	0%	56%	38%	50%	55%	45%	13%	13%	37%	46%	41%
… that felt demand had increased significantly over the last 6 months	0%	40%	25%	40%	25%	50%	44%	67%	64%	36%	42%
… that view the supply of mentors matches demand for mentoring	17%	22%	0%	0%	18%	3%	13%	25%	11%	12%	11%
… that view there to be significant potential to make more of business mentoring	17%	56%	63%	30%	41%	59%	60%	50%	58%	58%	53%
… that feel there are gaps in provision of mentoring services	67%	67%	88%	40%	77%	76%	87%	75%	58%	65%	69%
Number of mentors	215	169	155	531	1,009	516	606	213	771	7,343	11,528
Number of organisations	6	9	8	10	22	29	15	8	19	57	183

3.4.1.5 Provision in the East Midlands

A total of 3 per cent of organisations (6) were based in the East Midlands, providing 2 per cent of the mentoring provision (215 mentors, including national provision). Of these organisations, 17 per cent were registered on mentorsme, the lowest share of all regions. All organisations stated that their mentors provided services elsewhere.

Mentoring organisations in the East Midlands were least likely to provide support to businesses of all sizes (0%) and were less likely to target all business life stages (17%). There was, however, a high level of support to business start ups (83%). Just one third of organisations provided support that targeted businesses who desired growth.

There was no sectoral element to support in the region – however, one third of organisations provided owner-manager targeted support. A similar share of organisations provided women owners with specific support (33%) while 17 per cent of provision was targeted to BME-led business.

Mentoring organisations located in the East Midlands were most likely to require their mentors to hold a qualification or be accredited (67%). When considering the mentoring market, organisations based in the region did not think there had been a significant increase in demand over the last 6 months – in fact 50 per cent cited there had been no change. Organisations in the East Midlands were least likely to consider there was significant potential to make more of business mentoring as a business support activity (17%), however they did consider there to be gaps in the provision of mentoring services (67%).

3.4.1.6 Provision in the East of England

A total of 5 per cent of organisations (9) provided support that targeted the East of England (notwithstanding national provision). These organisations provided 1 per cent of mentoring provision (169). In total, 44 per cent of organisations were registered on mentorsme, compared with just 31 per cent more broadly.

Characteristics of organisations supporting businesses in the region were largely aligned with the broader cohort of organisations. There were a few exceptions, for instance:

- They were the least likely to provide web-based mentoring to their clients (11%);
- They were less likely to provide support that targeted all business sizes (0%) and targeting businesses focused on growth (44%); and,
- Only one in ten offered sectorally focused support, compared to one in four organisations more broadly.

When the wider mentoring market is considered, responses suggest that organisations were twice as likely to consider that the supply of mentors matched demand. However, organisations viewed there to be a similar potential to make more of business mentoring as the wider population (56%) and were as likely to consider there to be gaps in the provision of mentoring services (67%).

3.4.1.7 Provision in Greater London

A total of 8 organisations provided focused support in the Greater London area, providing 155 mentors. This accounted for 4 per cent of mentoring organisations and 1 per cent of business mentoring provision (including national provision). Organisations based in the Greater London area were most likely to be registered on mentorsme (64%) when compared to all regions (31%).

- Greater London based mentoring organisations were aligned with other organisations when web-based support is considered (38%) but were most likely provide face to face support (100%);

- Organisations were less likely to target all business life stages (13%) but there was an increased focus on business start ups (75%) and on businesses desiring growth (75%).

- When considering focused support – there was a higher tendency to provide support to BME-led businesses (25%), while a slightly lower tendency toward supporting women-led business;

- While 42 per cent of organisations considered there to be a significant increase of demand over the last 6 months – in Greater London just 25 per cent agreed. However one in five felt the supply of mentors matched demand from business (22%), double the share of organisations more broadly (11%);

- Organisations were much more likely to view there to be significant potential to make more of business mentoring as a support activity than in other regions (63% compared to 53% across all regions); and,

- Almost all organisations in Greater London (88%) stated that they felt there were gaps in the provision of mentoring services.

3.4.1.8 Provision in the North East England

A total of 5 per cent of organisations provided support targeted towards the North East of England (10 organisations), providing 9 per cent of mentoring capacity (531 mentors, including national provision). Organisations based in the North East were least likely to be registered on mentorsme (10% compared to 31% of all organisations).

The characteristics of organisations in the North East differed to organisations more broadly.

- For instance, provision was more likely to be targeted towards business start up (e.g. start up business support provided by 75% of organisations and 70% supporting pre-starts) while there was less focus on more established business (30% compared to 44% more broadly);

- Similarly, there was a lower tendency to provide support to all businesses regardless of life stage (20% compared to 30% of all organisations);

- Conversely, none of the organisations in the North East targeted specific owner-managers and there was a slightly lower incidence of sectorally targeted support (20%);

- Only one organisation stated that their organisation expected mentors to hold a qualification or accreditation in order to mentor.

When the wider market for mentoring is considered, organisations supporting the North East did not think that the demand for mentoring was matched by provision – with 40 per cent of organisations stating that supply of mentors is greater than demand, and 20 per cent considering supply to be less than demand. Organisations were also less likely to view there to be potential to make more of business mentoring (30%) and were the least likely of all regions to identify that there were gaps in provision of services (40%).

3.4.1.9 Provision in the North West England

Organisations in the North West provided 9 per cent of the mentoring provision (1,009) through 22 organisations (12% of organisations, including national provision). One third of organisations in the North West were registered on mentorsme (32%) with characteristics largely aligned with the broader survey population in regards to the types of businesses supported and any targeting of support.

- Organisations providing support in the North West were slightly less likely to have mentors offering their services elsewhere – with 55 per cent of organisations stating that none of their mentors did so;

- When considering the market for mentoring, organisations in the North West were less likely to consider there had been a significant increase in demand over the last 6 months with 25 per cent identifying a significant decrease in demand over the period;

- While more organisations considered supply and demand of mentoring to be matched (18%), a further 36 per cent considered the supply of mentors to be less than the existing demand;

- While organisations in the region were less likely to view significant potential to make more of business mentoring as a business support activity, 77 per cent of organisations felt there were gaps in the provision of services.

3.4.1.10 Provision in the South East England

A total 16 per cent of organisations (29, including national provision) provided support targeted to the South East of England, accounting for 4 per cent of mentoring provision (516). Of these, 31 per cent of organisations are listed on mentorsme. The characteristics of organisations providing mentoring in the South East in terms of provision largely matched organisations more broadly, however:

- There was a lower tendency to provide owner-manager targeted support, particularly to women and BME-led businesses;

- ▪ One third of organisations expected mentors to hold accreditation, the highest of all regions except the East Midlands;

- There was a slightly higher tendency to agree that demand for mentoring had increased significantly over the past 6 months and few businesses felt that supply of mentors matched demand (3%). In fact, the majority of organisations felt that there was latent demand (34%) with a further one-third deeming there to be greater mentor supply than there is demand for mentoring (31%); aligned with a further perception that there are gaps in the provision of mentoring services (76%).

3.4.1.11 Provision in the South West England

In total, 606 mentors provided support to businesses solely in the South West of England (5%). These mentors were part of 15 organisations accounting for 8 per cent of provision (including national provision). Of these, 33 per cent of organisations were registered on mentorsme. Characteristics include:

- Provision of sectorally specific mentoring in the South West was less likely than across the wider survey population (13% compared to 25%);

- Mentoring organisations were much less likely to provide support to specific owner-managers – this was particularly the case for BME-led business where no organisations provided targeted support;

- Mentors operating as part of organisations based in the South West were more likely to provide their services elsewhere, with just 13 per cent of organisations citing that no mentors provided their services elsewhere; and,

- Organisations based in the South West were much more likely to feel that there were gaps in provision of mentoring services (87%) and slightly more likely to consider that there was potential to make more of business mentoring as a business support activity (60%).

3.4.1.12 Provision in the West Midlands

In total, 2 per cent of mentoring provision was based in the West Midlands (213 mentors) with 4 per cent of organisations providing support targeting the region (8 organisations, including national provision). Half of organisations were listed on mentorsme, compared to 31 per cent of all organisations. Characteristics include:

- Organisations supporting businesses in the West Midlands were the least likely to provide support to all business life stages (13%) with an increased focus on pre-start (50%) and start up (63%) businesses;

- No organisations provided support to all business sizes with an increased focus on sole mentors (75%) and slightly lower focus on all other businesses sizes than the survey population more broadly;

- No organisations provided support that was targeted to owner-managers however there was a slightly higher incidence of sectorally targeted support (38%);

- Only 13 per cent of organisations stated that no mentors offered their services elsewhere suggesting that there could be a high level of double counting among mentors based in the West Midlands;

- A higher incidence of organisations felt there had been a significant increase in demand compared to all other regions (67%), with three quarters of businesses identifying a gap in provision of mentoring services (75%).

3.4.1.13 Provision in the Yorkshire and Humber

In total, 771 mentors provide support solely in the Yorkshire and Humber region, accounting for 7 per cent of total provision, in 19 organisations 9including national provision). One quarter of organisations were registered on mentorsme (26%). Characteristics include

- Organisations based in Yorkshire and Humber were least likely to provide mentoring through web-based support, however 100% provided face to face support;

- Organisations were also less likely to provide focused support to all business sizes (11%) with the majority providing support to different business sizes, but particularly those with between 1 and 9 employees (89%) and sole mentors (79%);

- Organisations were more likely to provide support to all businesses, regardless of their growth strategy (63%);

- Organisations providing support to businesses in the Yorkshire and Humber were the most likely to support owner-manager targeted support (37%), particularly those focused on female owners (26%) and BME led business (16%);

- There was a perception in the region that demand had increased with 64 per cent citing significant increases in demand and further quarter (27%) citing a slight increase;

3.4.1.14 National provision

A total of 31 per cent of organisations (57) and 64% of mentoring provision was provided nationally (7,343 mentors). A total of 28 per cent of organisations that operated nationally were registered on mentorsme.

Nationally focused organisations were much less likely to offer web-based mentoring (26%), telephone discussion (17%) and group discussion (8%) than all other organisations. Focus was largely on face to face support (95%). Characteristics of national provision included:

- National provision was largely focused on all business life stages and all business sizes, with slightly more focus on established businesses (49% compared to 44%) and larger employers (37% supporting employers with over 50 employees, compared to 29% more broadly) than the wider survey cohort;

- National provision was slightly more likely to target specific owner-managers (30%), particularly female owners (28%);

- Organisations providing national support were slightly less likely to have noticed a significant increase in demand over the last 6 months (36%) although 45 per cent considered a slight increase in demand over the same period;

- National providers had similar views to the wider survey cohort as to the wider mentoring market.

3.5 The supply of business mentoring

3.5.1 Business mentoring capacity

Across the 183 mentoring organisations that responded to the survey there was provision of 11,527 mentors[20]. The number of mentors within each organisation varied significantly with, for example, 23 per cent of organisations only comprising one mentor. While the mean number of mentors per organisation was 63, 55 per cent of organisations had 10 mentors or less. That said, two organisations had over 1,000 mentors.

Mentoring organisations estimated that they currently had over 9,000 mentors supporting mentees with a further 2,500 not currently providing support (Table 3.8). Three quarters of this provision was provided nationally (74%). Current mentoring provision was lowest in the East Midlands (73%) and Greater London (74%). When national provision is excluded, Yorkshire and Humber had a relatively high number of mentors with current provision of 541 and a further 230 not currently supporting businesses. When the North West is considered, while there is potential provision for over 1,000 mentors, over half of these are not currently mentoring. Similarly, in the North East while there is potential provision of 530, just 144 are currently mentoring.

[20] Respondents were asked how many mentors worked for their organisation – where a figure could not be provided, a banded figure was provided. Where a business chose ‘100+’ mentors, the calculation has assumed 100 mentors work for the organisation; the estimate of capacity is therefore a minimum estimation.

Table 3.8 The majority of mentoring provision is available through organisations providing mentoring nationally

	No. of mentors (all provision)	No. of mentors not currently mentoring	Current provision of mentors
East Midlands	215	142	73
East of England	169	72	98
Greater London	155	81	74
North East England	531	387	144
North West England	1,009	586	424
South East England	516	146	370
South West England	606	142	464
West Midlands	213	49	165
Yorkshire and Humber	771	230	541
National Provision	7,343	634	6,709
All organisations	11,528	2,467	9,061

Base: 183 responses

Mentors primarily worked on a part time basis. Just under half of organisations cited that less than one quarter of their mentors worked full time (45%). One in three organisations, however, cited that between 76 and 100% of their mentors were full time. The prevalence of organisations citing that over three quarters of their mentors were full time was lowest in Yorkshire and Humber (16%) and highest in the West Midlands (38%).

In order to estimate double counting of provision i.e. mentors providing business mentoring through more than one organisation or network, organisations were asked to estimate the share of their mentors that offered their services elsewhere. A total of 40 per cent of organisations stated that none of their mentors offered business mentoring elsewhere – however, one in five identified that over 76% of their mentors offered support services elsewhere. Organisations with less than ten mentors were most likely to state that between 76 and 100% of their mentors offered services elsewhere (27%) than those with over 250 mentors (0%), as shown in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9 Share of mentors who offer their services elsewhere by the number of mentors

	Share offering services elsewhere	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%	Don't know
Number of Mentors	0 to 10	57%	6%	7%	4%	27%	0%
	11 to 49	15%	44%	19%	7%	15%	0%
	50 to 249	16%	44%	14%	12%	14%	0%
	250 +	29%	29%	29%	0%	0%	14%
	All organisations	40%	21%	11%	6%	21%	1%

Base: 183 responses

A number of organisations identified that some of their mentors were not currently providing mentoring. More specifically, across the 183 organisations providing mentoring, 2,699 of mentors were not currently mentoring. This suggests the current provision of business mentoring within respondent mentoring organisations to be at least 8,800 plus[21].

3.5.1.15 Regional level profile of business mentoring capacity

The organisations that responded to the survey had mentored 18,929 individuals over the past 6 months. Over the next 6 months organisational capacity to support mentees is anticipated to rise by 49 per cent from 19,000 to 28,000 (Table 3.10)[22]. The most significant increase in capacity is anticipated to be in Greater London (95%) compared to a potential decrease in the East of England and West Midlands (-5%)[23]. Capacity among

[21] Respondents were asked how many mentors worked for their organisation – where a figure could not be provided, a banded figure was provided. Where a business chose '100+' mentors, the calculation has assumed 100 mentors work for the organisation; the estimate of capacity is therefore a minimum estimation.

[22] Respondents were asked how many people had been supported – where a figure could not be provided, a banded figure was provided. Where a business chose '100+' individuals supported, the calculation has assumed 100 individuals have (or will be supported); therefore the estimate of capacity is a minimum estimation.

[23] The reduction in capacity may however be attributable to the inability of organisations providing support in these regions to estimate their future capacity leading to a banded figure/ estimation being provided. For instance, one organisation in the East of England stated they had provided support to '100+' mentees over the past 6 months but anticipated they could provide support to '0-10' over the next 6 months.

national providers is anticipated to increase by 85 per cent over the next 6 months and is particularly significant given that future capacity accounts for over 50 per cent of total provision.

Table 3.10 Organisations suggested that they could support an additional 9,000 mentees over the next 6 month period

	Mentees that were supported over the last 6 months (no.)		Mentees that could be supported over the next 6 months (no.)		Increased capacity to support business	% increase in capacity
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
East Midlands	193	1%	322	1%	129	67%
East of England	369	2%	351	1%	-18	-5%
Greater London	553	3%	1,076	4%	523	94%
North East England	1,055	6%	1,692	6%	638	60%
North West England	1,776	9%	2,140	8%	364	21%
South East England	2,121	11%	2,956	10%	836	39%
South West England	886	5%	1,067	4%	181	20%
West Midlands	1,295	7%	1,225	4%	-70	-5%
Yorkshire & Humber	2,281	12%	2,781	10%	500	22%
National Provision	7,904	42%	14,613	52%	6,709	85%
All organisations	18,929	1%	28,222	100%	9,293	49%

Base: 183 responses

3.5.2 Characteristics of business mentors

On average between 26 and 50 per cent of mentors were female (37%), however one in four mentoring organisations had no female mentors. The share of organisations without female mentoring provision was highest in South East England (45%) and the East Midlands (50%), while just one in ten organisations in the North West had no female mentors (9%).

Table 3.11 The incidence of female mentors varied significantly by region

Share of mentors that are female	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%
East Midlands	50%	17%	17%	0%	17%
East of England	22%	11%	44%	0%	22%
Greater London	13%	38%	38%	0%	13%
North East England	30%	30%	40%	0%	0%
North West England	9%	23%	50%	9%	9%
South East England	45%	21%	24%	3%	7%
South West England	13%	20%	60%	0%	7%
West Midlands	38%	50%	13%	0%	0%
Yorkshire and Humber	21%	26%	42%	0%	11%
National Provision	23%	16%	35%	9%	18%
All organisations	**25%**	**22%**	**37%**	**4%**	**11%**

Almost three-fifths of organisations had no BME community mentors providing mentoring through their organisation (58%). Organisations in Greater London were least likely to say that they had no BME mentors (38%) while it was most likely in Yorkshire and Humber (68%), East Midlands (67%) and the East of England (67%).

Table 3.12 Over three in five organisations had no mentors from a BME community and this was the same across the regions

	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%
East Midlands	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
East of England	67%	22%	11%	0%	0%
Greater London	38%	63%	0%	0%	0%
North East England	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%
North West England	50%	45%	0%	5%	0%
South East England	76%	17%	3%	0%	3%
South West England	47%	53%	0%	0%	0%
West Midlands	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Yorkshire and Humber	68%	26%	5%	0%	0%
National Provision	54%	44%	2%	0%	0%
All organisations	**58%**	**38%**	**2%**	**1%**	**1%**

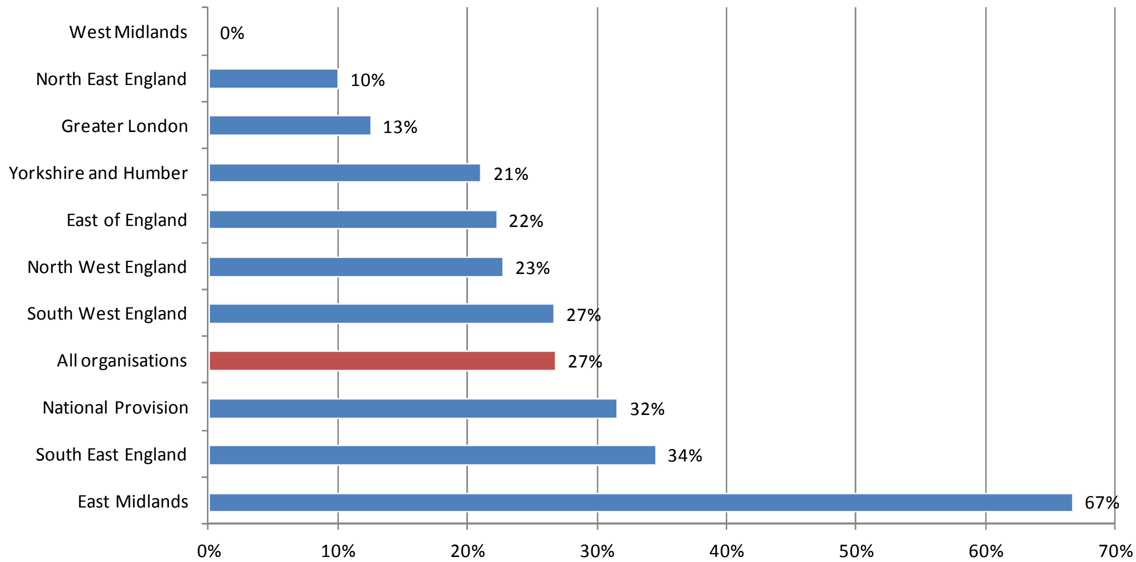
Base: 183 responses

The majority of organisations stated that mentors did not need to be accredited or hold a qualification to mentor. Of those that did expect an accreditation or qualification to be held, one in five expected a SFEDI Level 3 Award in Enterprise Mentoring. A further 14 per cent required either a SFEDI/ILM Level 5 qualification in Coaching and Mentoring or ILM Level 5 Diploma for Professional Management Coaches and Mentors. One in ten organisations required their mentors to have a ILM Level 7 Certificate in Executive Coaching and Leadership Mentoring. 'Other' accreditation included internal accreditation, Masters degrees, CIPD and those citing 'a range of qualifications' rather than a specific requirement.

Organisations with more than 250 mentors were more likely to require ILM Qualifications, with 17% requiring Level 5 Diploma for Professional Management Coaches and Mentors or Level 7 Certificate in Executive Coaching and Leadership Mentoring, while none of these organisations expected SFEDI qualifications to be held. Between 5 and 7% of organisations with up to 249 mentors expected a SFEDI Level 3 Award in Enterprise Mentoring while between 2 and 5% expected a SFEDI/ILM Level 5 qualification in Coaching and Mentoring.

A requirement for accreditation or qualification of mentors was most likely to be present in organisations covering the East Midlands where two thirds of organisations required it (67%). Conversely, no organisations in the West Midlands stated that mentors required either accreditation or a qualification to be held. Organisations providing support nationally were slightly more likely to require qualifications or accreditation to be held (32% compared to 27%).

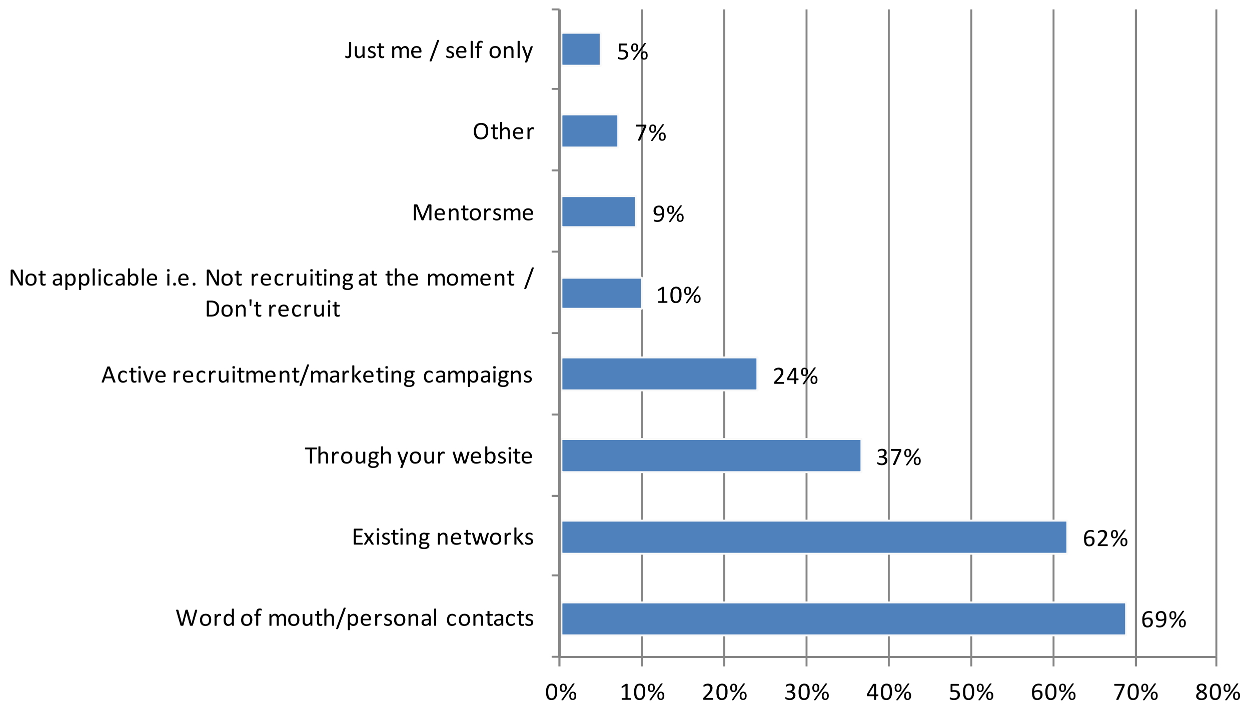
Figure 3.5 Organisations were more likely to require their mentors to have accreditation or qualification in the East Midlands



Base: 183 responses

Recruitment of mentors was largely through word of mouth (69%) and existing networks (62%). Only one in four cited active recruitment and marketing campaigns as a source of recruitment (24%). A number of organisations were not recruiting – either due to being happy with their size or capacity or being self-employed.

Figure 3.6 Word of mouth and existing networks were the key means of recruitment for mentors joining organisations



Base: 183 responses

3.5.3 Types of support provided and targeting of business mentoring offer

Reflecting the stakeholder view that business mentoring should be viewed as part of a wider package of business support activity, almost all the organisations that provided business mentoring were also providing other support services to businesses. When all 183 organisations providing business mentoring are considered, key forms of business support provided by organisations included provision of business advice, training and coaching.

Table 3.13 Organisations providing business mentoring were likely to also provide business advice and networking events to their clients

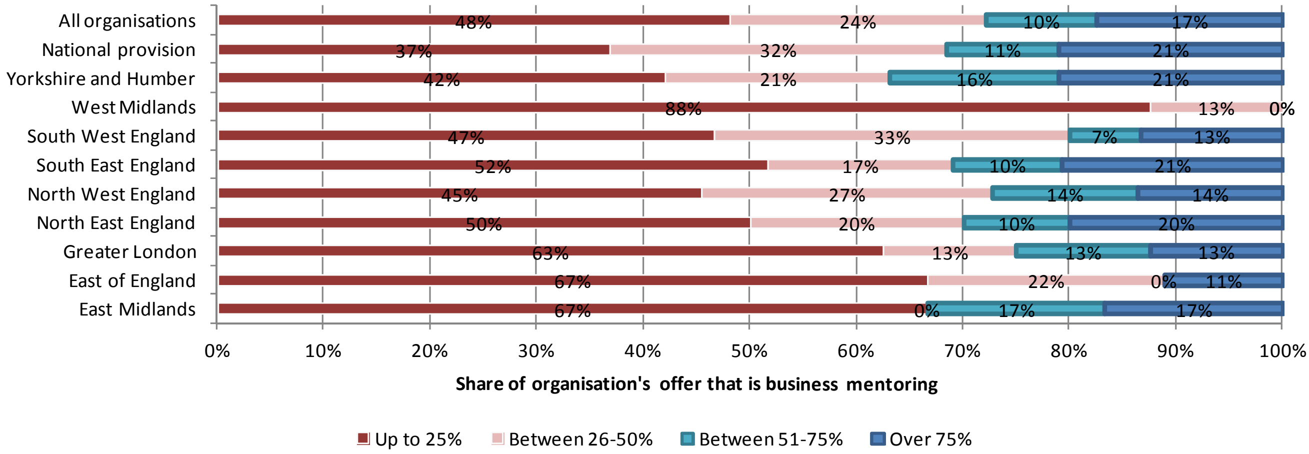
Share of organisations providing other business support services	Providing Business Advice	Coaching	Consultancy	Network events	Training
East Midlands	100%	67%	0%	67%	50%
East of England	100%	56%	22%	78%	56%
Greater London	88%	13%	38%	50%	25%
North East England	90%	60%	10%	70%	60%
North West England	82%	55%	32%	86%	41%
South East England	90%	55%	21%	76%	48%
South West England	80%	40%	27%	67%	40%
West Midlands	100%	50%	38%	88%	50%
Yorkshire and Humber	84%	58%	21%	79%	42%
National	68%	58%	23%	81%	53%
All regions	82%	54%	23%	77%	48%

Base: 183 responses

Around four in five organisations provided business advice (82%) however organisations providing mentoring nationally were slightly less likely than most organisations to provide such support (68%). The prevalence of business coaching was much less evident among organisations providing support to Greater London (13%) compared to two thirds of organisations in the East Midlands (67%). No organisations providing support in the East Midlands provided consultancy support – however, it was offered by one in four organisations more broadly.

Only one organisation within the survey population solely provided business mentoring (Figure 3.7). On the whole, organisations provided other services in addition to business mentoring. In fact, the majority of mentoring organisations (48%) stated that less than a quarter of their service offer was business mentoring (Figure 3.7). When national provision is considered, one fifth of organisations cited that mentoring accounted for over 75 per cent of their service offer (21%). This compared to 0 per cent of organisations providing support in the West Midlands.

Figure 3.7 Only one organisation in the survey population had a sole focus on business mentoring – all others provided other business support to clients



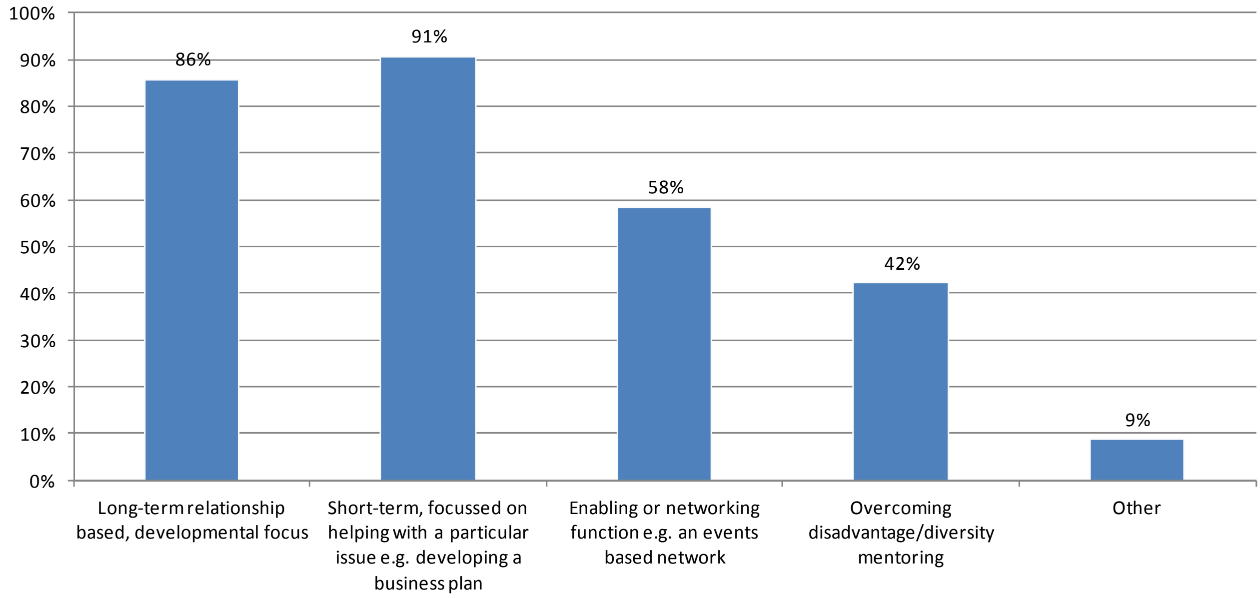
Base: 183 responses

With regard to their mentoring offer, organisations were largely providing either short term support on a particular issue (91%) or longer term developmental support (86%). Three in five also provided support in an enabling or networking capacity. Two fifths offered support to particular disadvantaged enterprise groups.

One in ten identified 'other' support provided, this included:

- Specific support on acquisition, accountancy or environmental issues;
- Peer mentoring;
- Confidence building;
- Specific skills training; and,
- Training of business mentors.

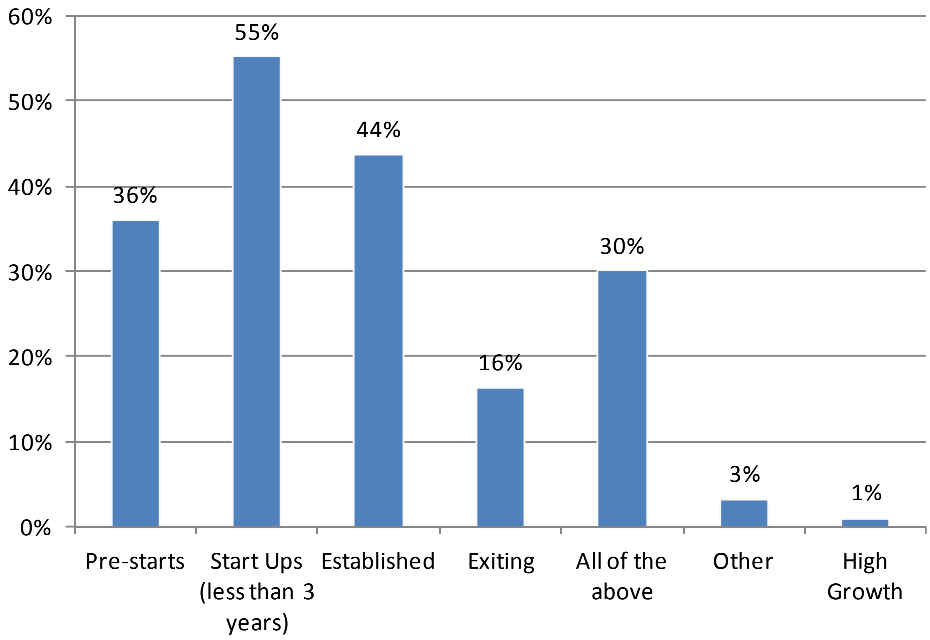
Figure 3.8 Both long and short term mentoring was provided



Base: 183 responses (more than one response could be provided)

Mentoring organisations largely provided support to businesses characterised by earlier life stages – with exiting support provided by just 16 per cent of organisations. It should be noted that 30 per cent of organisations provided support to all businesses regardless of their life stage (Figure 3.9).

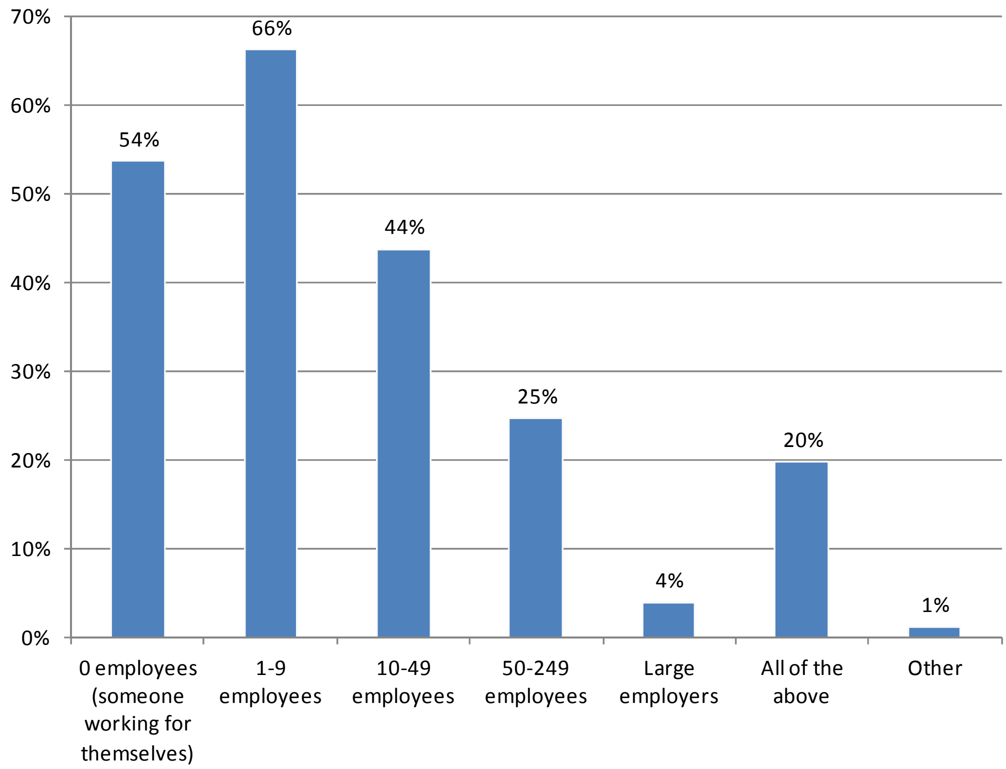
Figure 3.9 Support was largely to targeted to earlier business life stages – however one third of organisations supported all businesses



Base: 183 responses (more than one response could be provided)

Small and micro businesses (i.e. employment of less than 50 employees) were the target of the majority of organisations' mentoring provision (Figure 3.10). Half of organisations targeted self-employed businesses (54%) with two thirds targeting businesses with between 1 and 9 employees (66%). One fifth of organisations supported all business sizes (20%). However, just 4 per cent of organisations provided mentoring to large employers. One organisation based their support on businesses with a turnover of up to £5 million, rather than the number of employees.

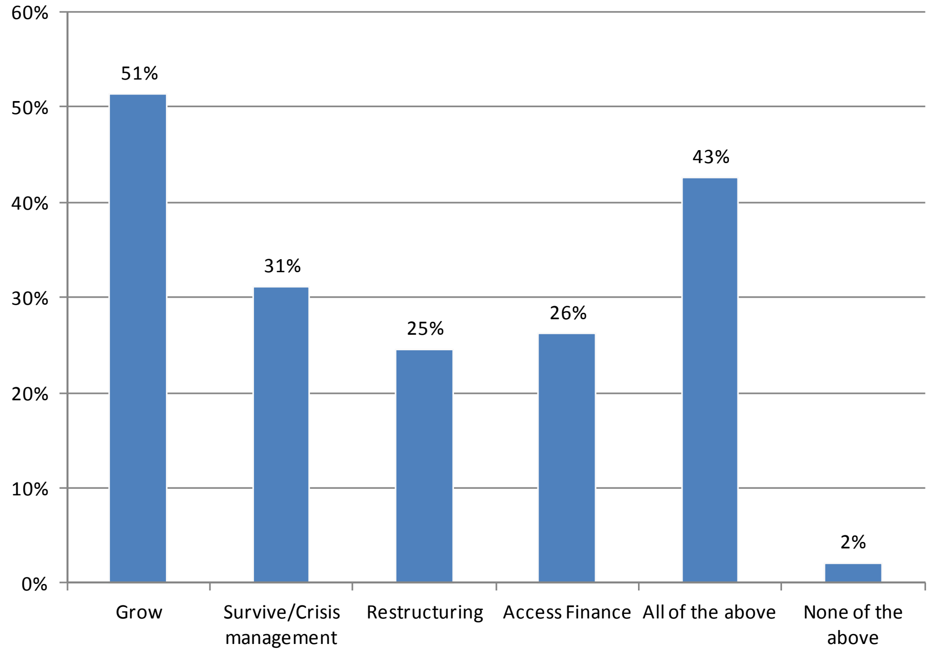
Figure 3.10 Smaller business was the focus of most organisations' mentoring provision



Base: 183 responses (more than one response could be provided)

While there was focus on businesses that desired growth (51%) (Figure 3.11) – 43 per cent of organisations supported businesses that are looking for help with all scenarios (including growth, survival, restructuring, and access to finance).

Figure 3.11 Businesses intending to grow was a key focus of support – however many organisations covered all business strategies



Base: 183 responses (more than one response could be provided)

One fifth of businesses provided support to specific sectors – the coverage of sectors is provided in Table 3.14. Focus was primarily on professional and creative services industries (41%), while there was less provision for those engaged in agricultural/ fishing (7%) or energy and water activities (2%). Hotels and restaurants, transport, warehouse and distribution and biotechnical industries were less targeted (10%).

Table 3.14 Where there was sectoral focus to business mentoring, it was targeted towards professional and business services and creative industries

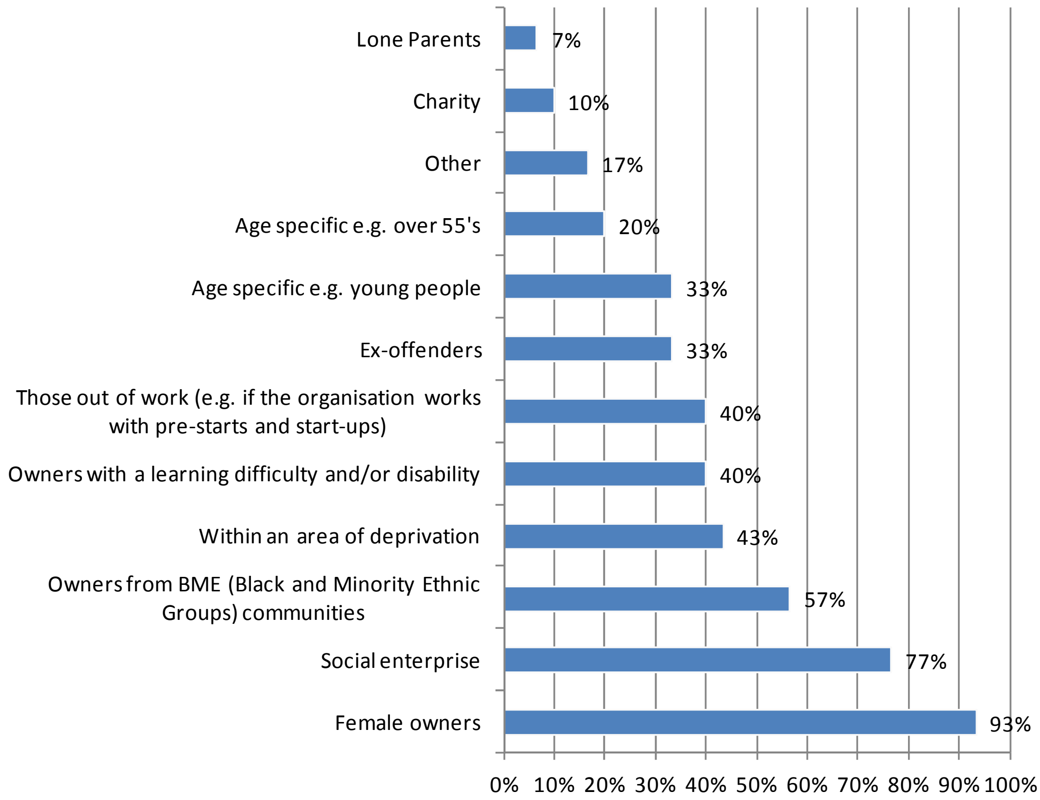
Size of organisation	0 to 10	11 to 49	50 to 249	250 +	Total
Professional and other business services	37%	33%	50%	0%	38%
Creative services and media	30%	33%	50%	0%	33%
Manufacturing and engineering	20%	33%	50%	0%	27%
Consumer products, personal services, retail and wholesale	23%	0%	38%	100%	24%
Information technology and telecoms	23%	33%	13%	0%	22%
Construction and property services	20%	0%	13%	0%	16%
Recreation, culture and tourism	10%	17%	38%	0%	16%
Biotechnical, medical and chemical	10%	0%	25%	0%	11%
Transport, warehouse and distribution	7%	17%	13%	0%	9%
Hotels and restaurants	7%	0%	25%	0%	9%
Energy and water	3%	0%	25%	0%	7%
Agriculture and fishing	3%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Organisations providing sectoral support (yes or sometimes)	30	6	8	1	45

Base: 41 organisations providing targeted support

A total of 16 per cent of organisations provided support that was targeted to a specific type of owner or manager. The types of owners supported are considered in Figure 3.12 –

illustrating focus on female owners and social enterprises. Half of the 41 organisations also targeted owners from BME communities. Age specific support was a focus for fewer organisations but there was still some provision, particularly for ‘young people (33%).

Figure 3.12 Female owners and social enterprises were a key focus of targeted support



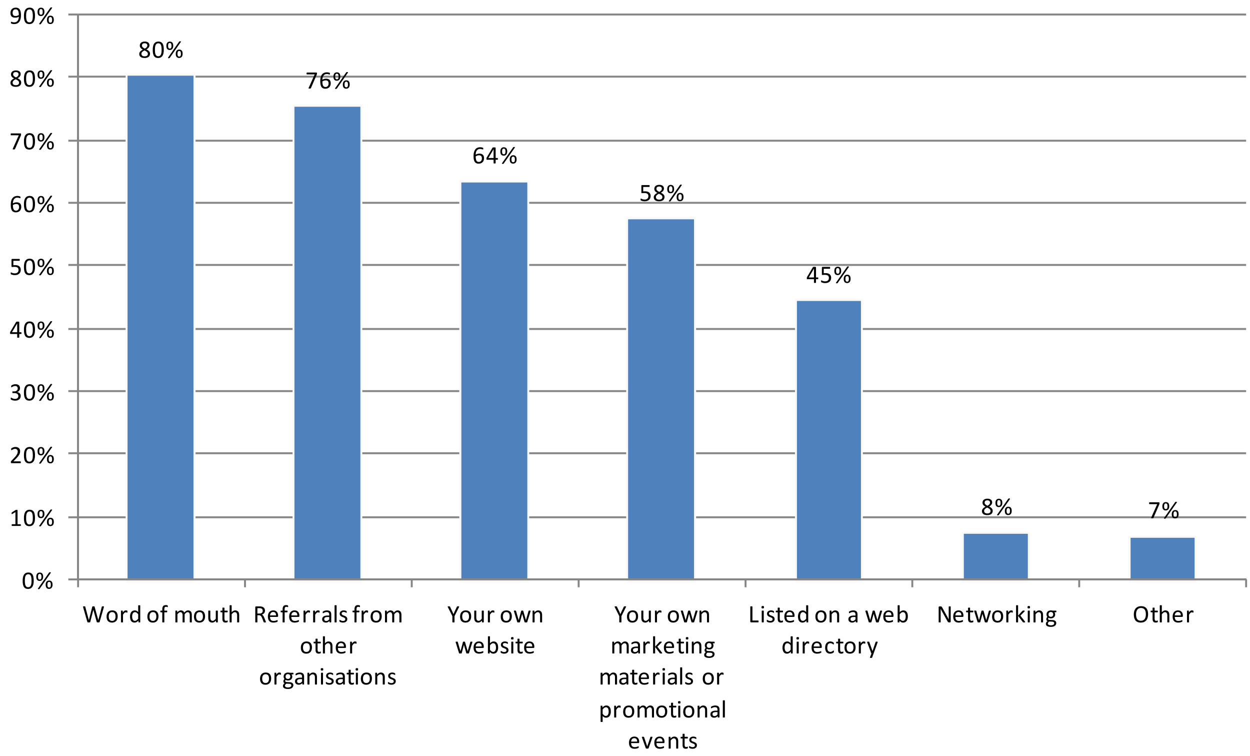
Base: 30 responses

3.5.4 Profile of businesses supported by business mentoring

Referrals were largely through word of mouth recommendations or from other organisations. Organisation promotion and websites also led to new mentors being recruited. Referrals from web directories provided referrals to under half of businesses (45%). Over one third of organisations were not listed on any web directories (39%).

Organisations were slightly more likely to be listed on the Business Link Support Finder (34%) than mentorsme (32%). Other directories included those provided by local authorities, LinkedIn, Chamber of Commerce and the National Enterprise Network.

Figure 3.13 Referrals were primarily gained through word of mouth or from other organisations – half of organisations gained referrals through web directories



Base: 183 responses (more than one response could be provided)

3.5.1 Organisations charging for business mentoring

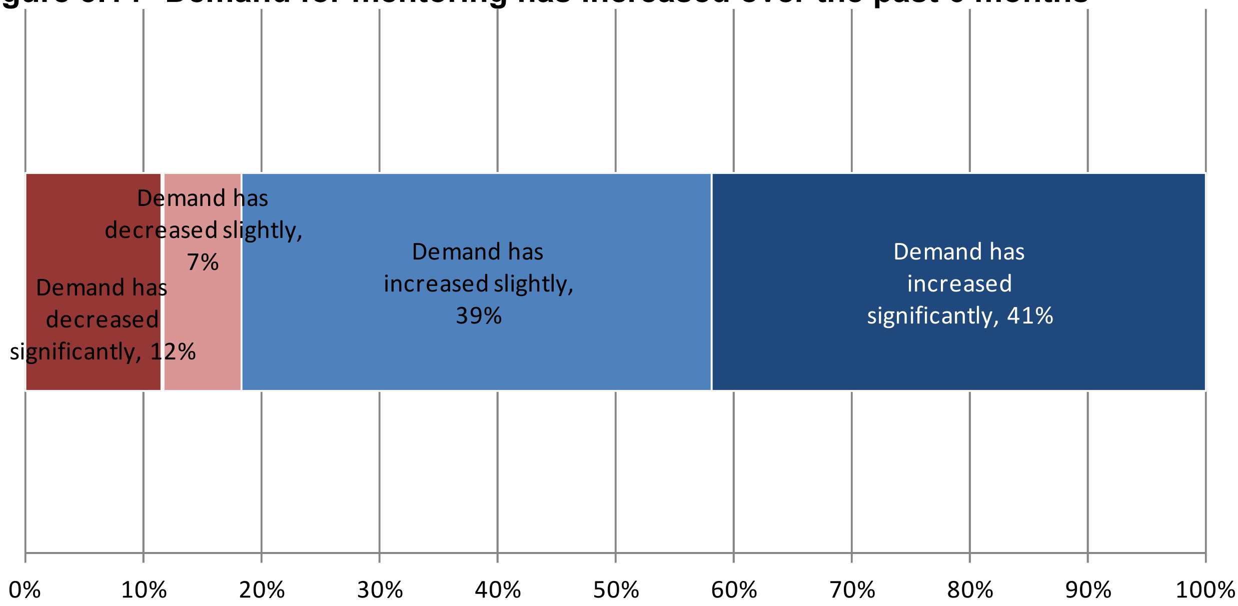
Half of organisations charged for the mentoring provided (50%) with a further one in five (17%) charging 'for some' mentoring. One third of mentoring organisations provided all mentoring at no cost to mentees. In some mentoring organisations, charging models were influenced by the ability of a mentee to pay for services received, for instance, one organisation described a 'robin hood model' where richer or more established businesses pay, but those with less capital get pro bono support. Similarly, some organisations offered commercial and volunteer mentoring which meant a charge was implemented in some cases. Some mentoring provision was government funded and was free at point of delivery; however no further detail was provided by respondents.

Organisations were much more likely to always charge for their mentoring provision if they were providing support in the South East of England (72%) compared to the wider population (50%), while charging was less prevalent in the West Midlands (13%). Organisations based in the East Midlands were more likely to charge 'for some' of their mentoring (33%); for instance dependent on a mentee or organisation's ability to pay.

3.6 The demand for business mentoring

Over half of organisations identified a change in the demand for mentoring over the last 6 months (57%). Of these, 80% had experienced increase in demand: (41% significantly, 39% slightly). One in ten felt that demand had reduced significantly (12%).

Figure 3.14 Demand for mentoring has increased over the past 6 months



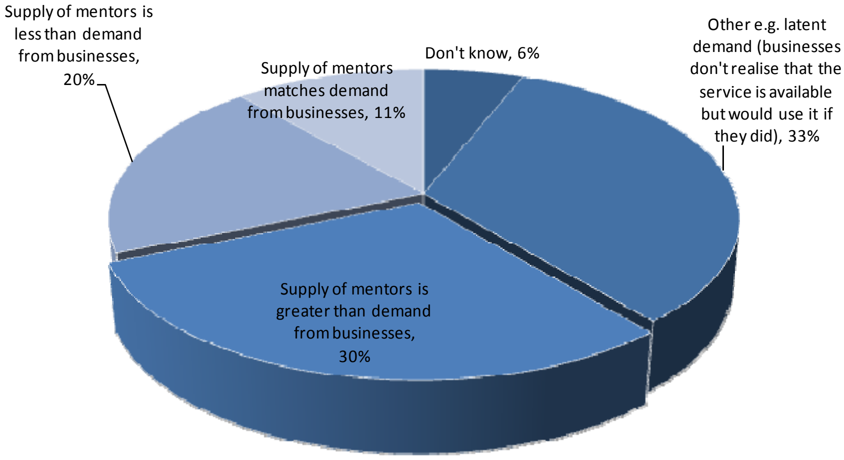
Base: 103 responses

Organisations were asked whether they had been involved in any other mentoring networks in addition to mentorsme - 60 per cent were involved in other networks. The majority of organisations were involved with Chamber of Commerce (62%) or local networks (34%). Despite the prevalence of organisations offering support at the regional level, just one in ten were involved in regional networks.

Views on the market for business mentoring

Two thirds of organisations had not experienced problems with recruitment (69%) although it had been a problem for one in five organisations. Organisations were mixed as to their view on the current market for mentoring - but there was some consensus that there is a latent demand for business mentoring (33%) and the supply of mentors outstrips demand from business (30%) (Figure 3.15). Only 11 per cent of organisations felt that supply and demand for mentoring matched, with one fifth stating there were not enough mentors to meet business demand (20%).

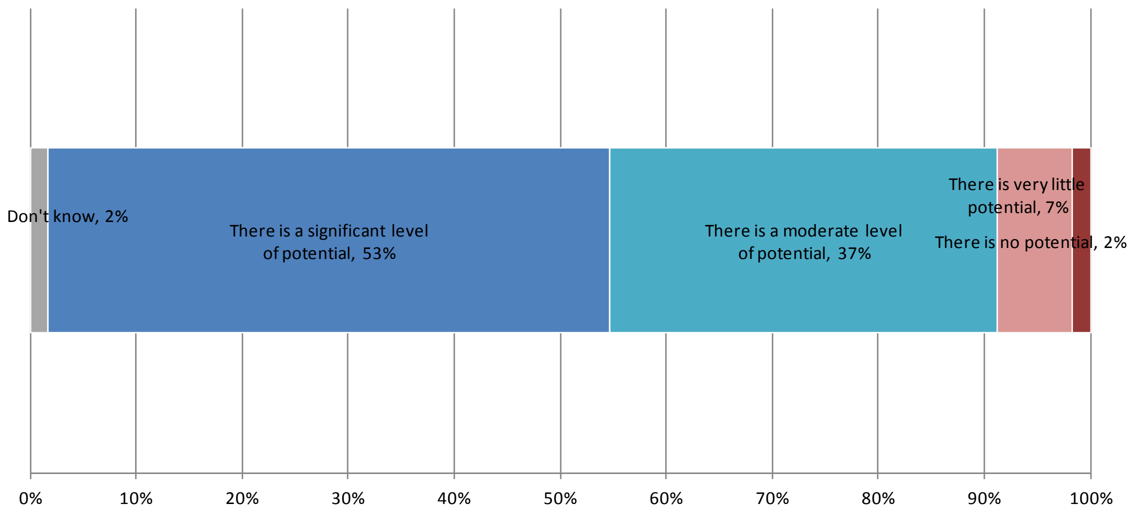
Figure 3.15 Organisations deemed there to be a greater supply of mentors than demand, possibly due to a lack of understanding of the full benefits and offer of business mentoring available to them



Base: 183 responses

A total of 90 per cent of organisations perceived there to be potential to make more of business mentoring in England – over half felt this potential was significant (53%) (Figure 3.16). Only 2 per cent felt that there no potential at all to make more of business mentoring.

Figure 3.16 Organisations viewed there to be potential to make more of business mentoring as a business support activity



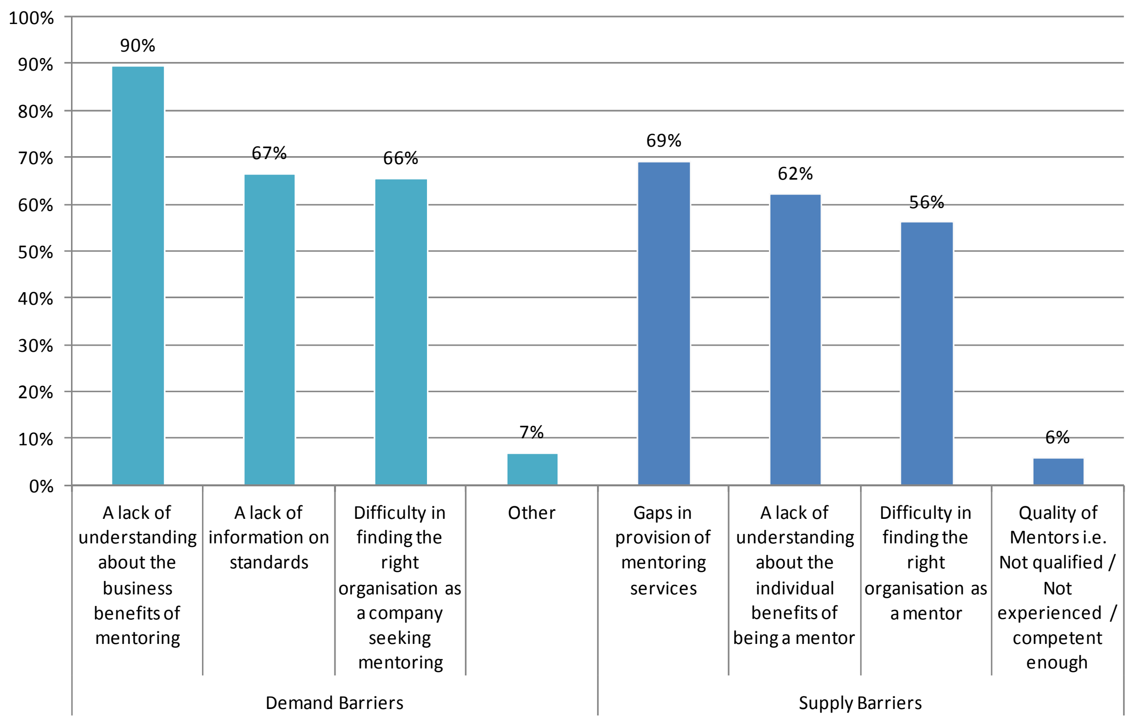
Base: 183 responses

When considering the key issues within the mentoring market, mentoring organisations perceived there to be a lack of understanding of the benefits to business of mentoring

(90%). There is also a lack of information on standards (67%), gaps in the provision of mentoring services (69%) and difficulties in finding the right organisation to provide mentoring (66%). A small share of respondents also perceived there to be an issue with mentoring quality (6%).

There was also felt to be an element of misunderstanding of the benefits of being a mentor, which could reduce the number of individuals becoming mentors. More specifically 62 per cent felt there was a lack of understanding of the benefits of being a mentor as well as difficulties in finding the right organisation as a mentor (56%).

Figure 3.17 Nine in every ten organisations felt there was misunderstanding of the benefits of business mentoring



Base: 183 responses

Further qualification of 'other' issues within the business mentoring market included:

- **Poor quality mentors**

  - No requirement for qualifications among mentors. This included organisations stating that '*people call themselves mentors when they do not have the competence*' and that there is '*nothing to prevent anyone from mentoring*';

  - An oversupply of mentors that do not have experience of business leadership;

- **Lack of understanding of the benefits of business mentoring**
  - A negative perception of business support more broadly (including its standard/ quality) that has disengaged businesses from accessing support. '*A bad legacy from Business Link has put people off*' seeking support;
  - Misunderstanding of what a business can gain through engaging with mentoring;
- **Confusion over the difference between business mentoring and business coaching**
  - Confusion over what defines 'business mentoring' and what support is provided compared to other support, such as coaching;
  - Lack of clarity over what is being delivered by business mentors and the commitment required;
- **Poor clarity of business mentoring offer**
  - Lack of clarity as to the quality of business mentoring – suggestion of need to introduce set standards or a quality mark to boost engagement;
  - Lack of coordination of business mentoring offer;
  - Misunderstanding of what mentorsme offers to businesses;
- **Cost**
  - Inability to balance the benefits of mentoring against the cost;
  - Gaps in the provision of financially accessible mentoring;
- **Lack of wider business support**
  - Loss of other business support mechanisms has led to mentoring providing support that would previously have been gained elsewhere, diluting the key benefits of 'mentoring'

3.7 Business mentoring provision and mentorsme

3.7.1 Comparison of organisations registered and not registered on mentorsme

A total of 31 per cent of organisations were registered on mentorsme compared to 69 per cent that were not. When the geographical coverage of organisations is considered organisations that were not yet registered on mentorsme, largely matched those that were (Table 3.15). However there was a slightly higher incidence of national providers among non-registered organisations and a lower incidence of organisations from the East of England and Greater London, while there was a higher incidence of non-registered organisations operating within the North East.

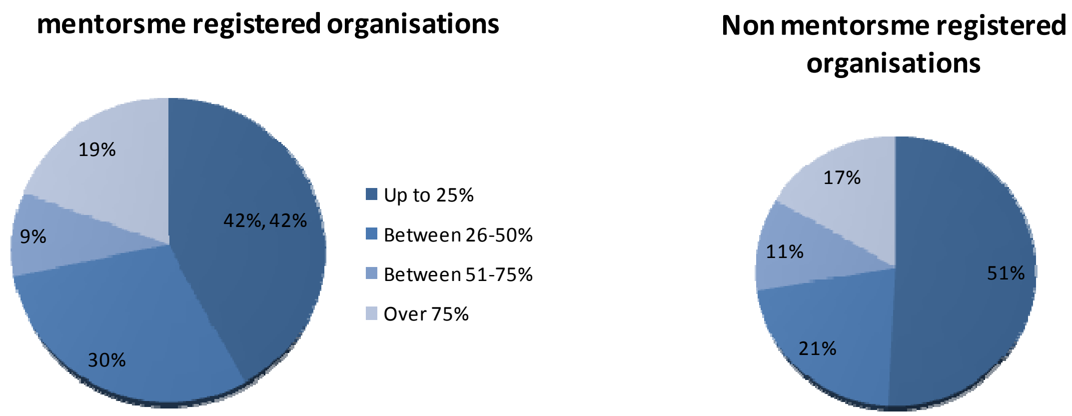
Table 3.15 Geographical coverage of organisations

	Registered	Not Registered
East Midlands	2%	4%
East of England	7%	4%
Greater London	9%	2%
North East England	2%	7%
North West England	12%	12%
South East England	16%	16%
South West England	9%	8%
West Midlands	7%	3%
Yorkshire and Humber	9%	11%
National coverage	28%	33%

Base: 183 responses

Organisations that were registered on mentorsme were more likely to have business mentoring accounting for a higher share of their business activity. For instance, while 42 per cent of registered organisations stated that less than a quarter of their activity was mentoring, over half of non-registered organisations stated the same (51%).

Figure 3.18 Share of business activity that is business mentoring



Base: 57 and 126 responses

Organisations registered on mentorsme were often larger. The majority of non-registered organisations had less than 10 employess (67%) while registered organisations had either between 0 and 10 employees (37%) or between 50 and 249 mentors (37%).

Table 3.16 Comparison of registered and non-registered organisations by the size of organisation (i.e. number of mentors).

	Registered	Not registered
0 to 10	37%	67%
11 to 49	19%	13%
50 to 249	37%	17%
250 +	7%	2%

Base: 57 and 126 organisations

Table 3.17 provides comparison of a number of key factors relating to mentoring provision by whether an organisation has registered on mentorsme. Organisations based on mentorsme were more likely to be providing web-based mentoring (47%) than those that were not (37%), with non-registered organisations slightly less likely to be providing face to face support (98% compared to 100%).

Table 3.17 Summary of responses to select survey questions by registration or non-registration on mentorsme

Share of organisations….	Registered	Non-registered
… registered on mentorsme	31%	69%
… providing face to face mentoring	100%	98%
… providing web-based mentoring	47%	37%
… providing support nationally	28%	33%
… targeting all business life stages	35%	28%
… targeting start up businesses	53%	56%
… targeting all business sizes	23%	18%
… targeting businesses desiring growth	44%	55%
… providing sectorally targeted support (sometimes or always)	25%	23%
… providing owner-manager targeted support (sometimes or always)	28%	18%
… providing support focused towards women owners	19%	13%
… providing support focused towards BME owners	16%	6%
… requiring mentors to hold accreditation or qualification	32%	25%
… where no mentors offered support elsewhere	18%	30%
… that felt demand had increased significantly over the last 6 months	33%	19%
… that view the supply of mentors matches demand for mentoring	7%	13%
… that view there to be significant potential to make more of business mentoring	67%	47%
… that feel there are gaps in provision of mentoring services	79%	65%
Number of mentors	**7,270**	**4,258**
Number of organisations	**57**	**126**

When the types of businesses supported is considered, characteristics were similar. Non-registered organisations were slightly more likely to provide support at the national level, to target start up businesses and businesses desiring growth. However registered organisations were more likely to provide support to all business life stages and all business sizes. Organisations registered with mentorsme were more likely to provide targeted support to specific business owners (28% compared to 18%) – particularly supporting BME owners (16% compared to 6%) and female owners (19% compared to 13%).

Organisations registered with mentorsme were most likely to require their mentors to hold a qualification or be accredited (32% compared to 25%). However their mentors were slightly more likely to offer their services elsewhere; with 30 per cent of non-registered organisations stating that none of their mentors were providing services outside of their organisations, compared to 18 per cent of registered organaistions.

When the mentoring market is considered, views were more mixed when registered mentoring organisations were compared with those that had not registered. For instance, while one third of businesses listed on mentorsme felt that demand had increased signfiicantly in the last six months (33%), the same was true of just one in five non-registered organisations (19%). Registered organisations were also much more likely to view there to be significant potential to make more of business mentoring (67% compared to 47%) and view there to be gaps in the provision of mentoring services (79% compared to 65%). Conversely, while 13 per cent of non-registered organiasations felt that supply of mentors matched demand for mentoring, just 7 per cent was true of registered organisations. Non-registered organisations were more likely to consider there to be a greater supply of mentors than there was demand (22% compared to 14%) with a greater share of registered organiastions identifying latent demand (42% compared to 29%).

3.7.2 Demand for mentoring through mentorsme

Organisations were asked to estimate the quantity of clients gained through mentorsme – and the share of their total mentoring made up of clients that came through mentorsme:

- Over 230 clients had engaged with mentoring organisations through the portal, the substantial majority of these directed to national providers; and,
- The North East, Yorkshire and Humber and East Midlands had gained either no companies or a low number through the portal.

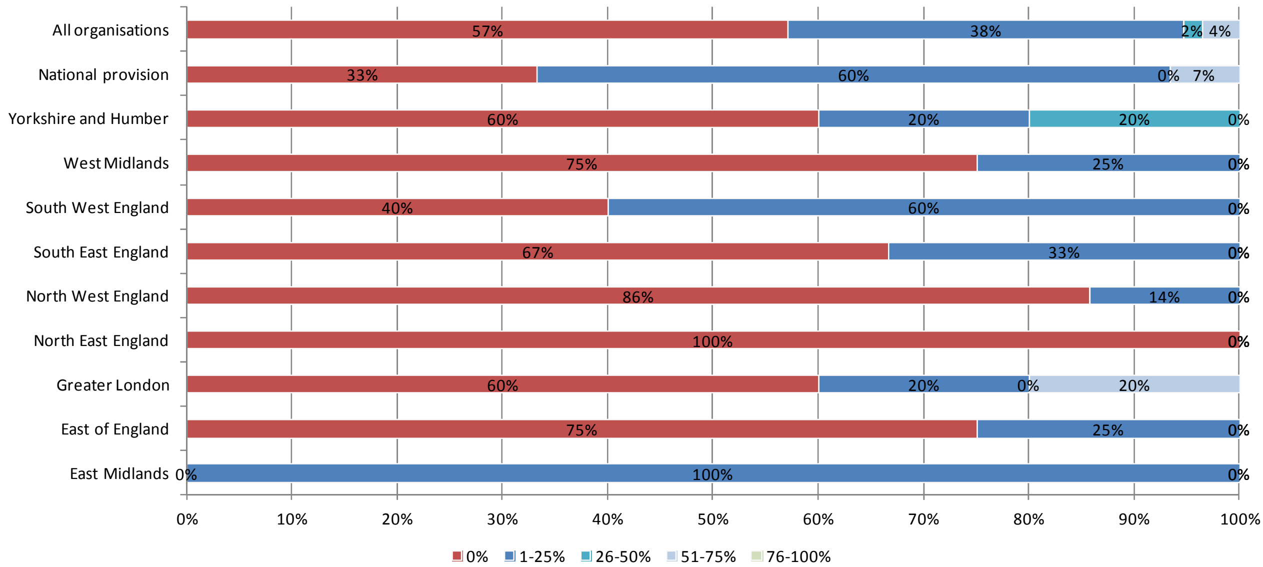
Table 3.18 Organisations in the East of England have a higher prevalence of clients and companies from mentorsme

	No. of companies that have come through mentorsme since launch
East Midlands	1
East of England	4
Greater London	15
North East England	0
North West England	4
South East England	10
South West England	15
West Midlands	6
Yorkshire and Humber	1
National provision	181
All organisations	**237**

Base: 57 responses

Taking the figures from Table 3.18 into account, it is perhaps unsurprising that on average three in five organisations stated that 0% of their current mentoring provision had derived from mentorsme (57%). In the East Midlands all organisations cited that between 1 and 25 per cent of their current mentees had come through mentorsme. Organisations in Greater London (20%) were more likely to suggest that between 51 and 75% of mentoring had come through the portal. No organisations stated that over three quarters of their mentees had come through mentorsme.

Figure 3.19 As a share of total mentoring provision, mentors gained through Mentorsme was low across the regions



Base: 57 responses

3.7.3 Extent of engagement with mentorsme and other directories

Organisations were asked to provide detail on their engagement with other websites or directories (Table 3.19). Engagement with mentorsme was varied. While three in ten of all organisations were listed across the survey population, the same was true for only one in ten organisations in the North East (10%) compared to over six in ten organisations based in Greater London (63%). National providers were slightly less likely to be engaged with mentorsme (28% compared to 31% of all organisations). A number of organisations were also listed on Chamber of Commerce directories.

Business mentoring organisations were slightly more likely to be registered on the Business Link Business Support finder than mentorsme (34% compared to 31%). That said, 36 per cent of organisations were not listed on any directories at all.

Table 3.19 Organisations were more likely to be listed on the Business Link Business Support Finder than Mentorsme

Listings on websites and directories	Mentorsme	Business Link Business Support Finder	None / don't know	Other
East Midlands	17%	17%	83%	0%
East of England	44%	56%	33%	22%
Greater London	63%	38%	25%	25%
North East England	10%	40%	50%	10%
North West England	32%	36%	27%	27%
South East England	31%	38%	31%	31%
South West England	33%	27%	33%	20%
West Midlands	50%	13%	38%	13%
Yorkshire and Humber	26%	11%	47%	21%
National Provision	28%	40%	33%	32%
All organisations	**31%**	**34%**	**36%**	**25%**

Base: 183 responses

3.7.4 The process of engaging with mentorsme

Initial engagement with mentorsme varied by region but was primarily word of mouth, marketing and promotional material or through a direct approach or introduction from BBA, BIS or SFEDI.

3.20 Engagement with mentorsme varied by region

	Word of mouth	Website	Marketing or promotional material	Through attending an event	Direct approach[24]	Through other org.[25]	Don't know	Other
East Midlands	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	17%
East of England	11%	0%	0%	11%	0%	11%	0%	11%
Greater London	0%	13%	13%	0%	13%	0%	13%	13%
North East England	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%
North West England	5%	5%	5%	0%	0%	9%	5%	5%
South East England	3%	3%	10%	3%	3%	3%	0%	3%
South West England	7%	7%	0%	7%	7%	7%	0%	0%
West Midlands	0%	0%	13%	0%	13%	0%	0%	25%
Yorkshire and Humber	5%	0%	0%	0%	11%	11%	0%	0%
National provision	9%	2%	5%	0%	7%	2%	0%	4%
All regions	**5%**	**3%**	**5%**	**2%**	**5%**	**5%**	**1%**	**5%**

Base: 57 responses

Engagement with the mentorsme portal was viewed primarily in either a neutral (42%) or positive (44%) manner by organisations. The highest incidence of organisations viewing their engagement as 'positive' was in Yorkshire and Humber (80%). Half of organisations in the East of England also viewed engagement as positive.

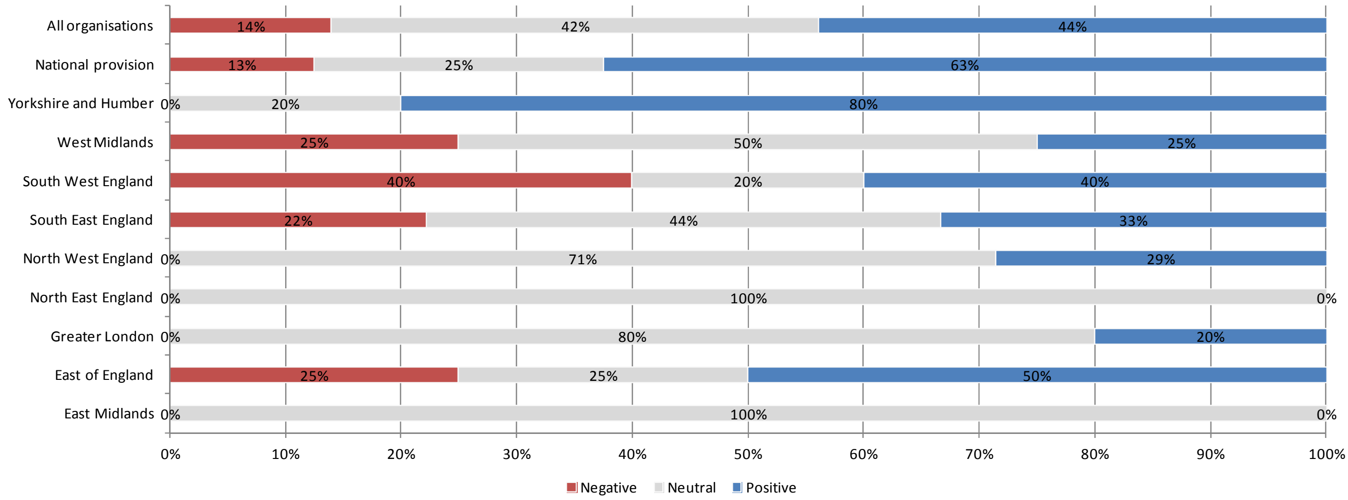
In 14 per cent of organisations the experience of engaging with mentorsme was viewed as negative – such a view was much more prevalent in the South West of England (40%), West Midlands (25%) and South East England (22%). While no organisations in North East England, Greater London or the East Midlands considered their engagement with mentorsme as 'negative' there was a high level of neutrality among these regions' organisations.

---

[24] BBA or mentorsme

[25] BIS, SFEDI, Lloyds

Figure 3.20 Organisations across the regions were primarily 'neutral' or 'positive' about their engagement with mentorsme



Base: 57 responses

3.7.5 Profile of businesses supported by mentorsme registered organisations

Over the last six months, the mentorsme registered organisations had provided support to 6,289 mentees. The expectation was that over the next 6 months there was capacity within organisations to provide support to over 10,566, an increase of 60 per cent compared to the last 6 month period. A total of 30 per cent of capacity over the last 6 months and an anticipated 41 per cent of capacity over the next 6 months was national.

Table 3.21 Mentoring capacity was spread across the regions however a considerable share was national

	No. of mentees supported over the last 6 months	% of capacity	No. of mentees that could be supported over next 6 months	Share of capacity	Change in capacity	Share of increased capacity
East Midlands	50	1%	100	1%	50	1%
East of England	81	1%	140	1%	59	1%
Greater London	203	3%	396	4%	193	5%
North East England	400	6%	800	8%	400	9%
North West England	401	6%	500	5%	99	2%
South East England	1345	21%	1870	18%	525	12%
South West England	491	8%	508	5%	18	0%
West Midlands	1074	17%	953	9%	-121	-3%
Yorkshire and Humber	350	6%	921	9%	571	13%
National provision	1894	30%	4379	41%	2485	58%
All organisations	**6289**	**100%**	**10566**	**100%**	**4278**	**100%**

Base: 57 responses

One third of organisations did not target a specific life stage of business (36%), providing support to all businesses. However, over half (53%) targeted start ups with just under two in five (39%) supporting established businesses. There was a lower level of support for pre-starts (26%) and those focused on exit (16%); however such provision would also be provided by organisations supporting all business life stages.

Over half of mentoring organisations registered on mentorsme provided support at the regional level (53%) with a further one in five focused at local provision (19%). One in five are also providing national support to businesses across England.

3.7.6 Mentoring provision available through mentorsme

The organisations that were registered on mentorsme had 7,270 mentors working for them, with an estimation that 1,188 were not currently providing mentoring. As a result, a minimum of 6,082 mentors are currently providing support. The majority of mentors provide support nationally with 73 per cent of total provision that is currently mentoring provided nationally.

Table 3.22 Mentorsme mentoring provision varied by region, but with significant national coverage

	Total potential mentoring provision	Share of all potential provision	No. not currently mentoring	Share of provision not currently mentoring	Current provision	Share of current provision
East Midlands	200	3%	125	11%	75	1%
East of England	37	1%	16	1%	21	0%
Greater London	137	2%	64	5%	73	1%
North East England	200	3%	150	13%	50	1%
North West England	408	6%	191	16%	218	4%
South East England	420	6%	56	5%	364	6%
South West England	292	4%	70	6%	222	4%
West Midlands	160	2%	29	2%	132	2%
Yorkshire and Humber	555	8%	72	6%	484	8%
National provision	4,861	67%	416	35%	4,445	73%
All organisations	**7,270**	**100%**	**1,188**	**100%**	**6,083**	**100%**

Base: 57 responses

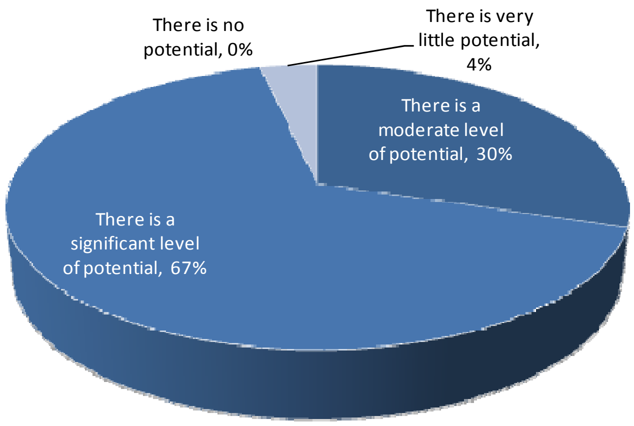
Data from the BBA indicates that there is currently provision of over 10,500 mentors across 87 organisations registered on mentorsme, including a number of organisations covering other parts of the UK. Survey responses were received from 57 of organisations currently registered on mentorsme; however only 34 of these can be identified by name. As such, it is difficult to directly compare the figures provided. Where a name was provided and comparison was possible the survey found that provision of 6,072 mentors existed compared to BBA estimates of 5,413 suggesting that there has been an increase in mentoring provision within these organisations since they initially registered with mentorsme.

The number of mentors provided by organisations varied widely – for instance, one organisation had 2,500 mentors, while a handful had just one. Similarly the extent to which mentors were full time varied. For two fifths of organisations, none of their mentors were full time, compared to 24 per cent where over 75 per cent were considered full time. Similarly, while one quarter of organisations' mentors did not provide mentoring elsewhere, a similar share stated that over 50 per cent of their mentors also provided mentoring elsewhere which could lead to some double counting of provision.

3.7.7 Views of mentorsme registered organisations on 'making more' of business mentoring

There was an overwhelming view of the potential to make more of mentoring as a business support activity (97%) (Figure 3.21). Two thirds of organisations felt that this potential was significant.

Figure 3.21 Organisations felt that there was potential to make more of mentoring as a business support activity



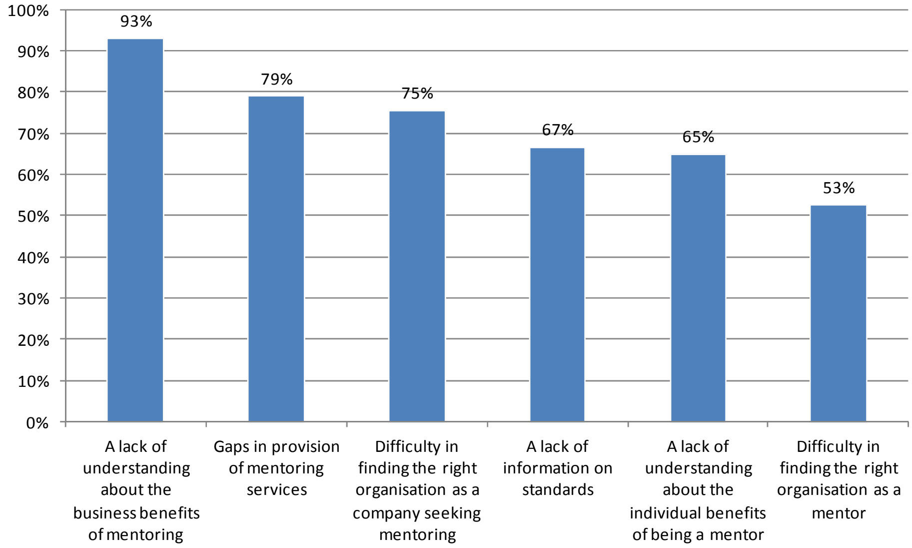
Base: 57 responses

The key issue faced by the business mentoring market is that businesses do not fully appreciate the benefits of business mentoring (93%) (Figure 3.22). Furthermore, organisations listed on mentorsme felt that there were gaps in the provision of mentoring services (79%) and difficulties associated with finding the right type of company to provide mentoring (75%).

Issues relating to mentors themselves were less prevalent in responses provided by mentorsme respondents; however, half of organisations cited there being difficulties in finding the right organisations as a mentor – as well as issues relating to lack of information on the individual benefits to those providing mentoring. Further less frequently cited issues included poor quality of mentors (7%) and the cost of mentoring (7%). Other issues included:

- A misunderstanding that business mentoring is a free service, rather than a commercial offer;
- Poor marketing of the mentorsme portal and a lack of understanding of what the offer is;
- Poor quality mentors due to a lack of consistency as to the qualification undertaken to support businesses.

Figure 3.22 Organisations felt that a number of issues applied to the business mentoring market

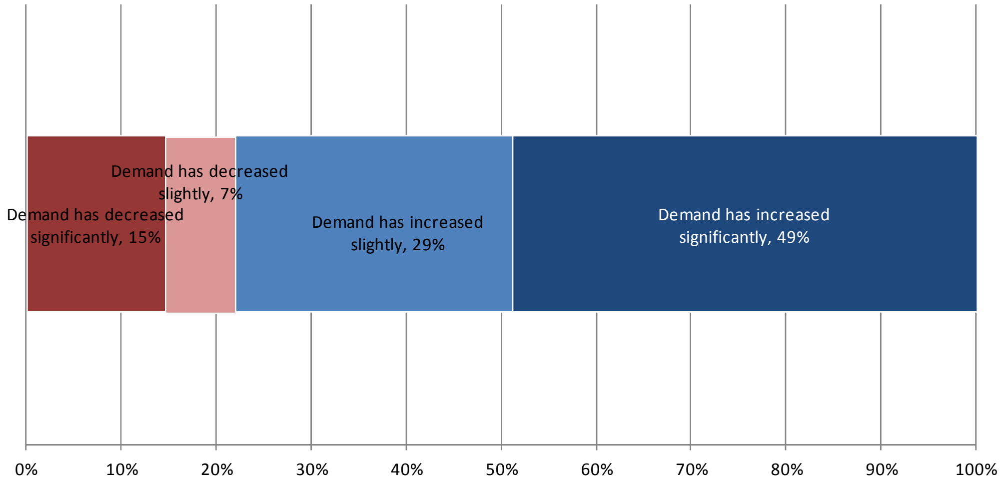


Base: 57 responses

3.7.8 Impact of registering mentorsme on delivery of mentoring

Seven in ten organisations listed on mentorsme had noticed a change in demand for services over the last 6 months – of these the majority felt that demand had increased (Figure 3.23).

Figure 3.23 Almost half of businesses felt that demand for mentoring had increased in the last six months



Base: 41 responses

Organisations gained varying numbers of clients each month through mentorsme – over half stated that they had got no clients through the portal (53%) while 14 per cent gained 1 client per month and a further 10 per cent gained 2 clients. One organisation however estimated 20 clients per month came through mentorsme. When the number of companies coming through the mentorsme portal is considered, a total of 237 companies had been gained. The range was variable – with 50 per cent of organisations gaining no companies, while one organisation had gained 120 companies.

In total, 57 per cent of organisations stated that since they had joined mentorsme, 0% of their total mentoring provision to companies had been gained through the mentorsme portal. A further 37 per cent stated that between 1% and 25% of their provision had been through mentorsme, and 6 per cent of organisations stated that between 26% and 75% of their provision had been through mentorsme.

3.7.9 Recommending mentorsme

Almost two-thirds of organisations would recommend the mentorsme portal to other businesses. The primary reason for this was that it was viewed as a good source of basic referrals, a central portal and ‘one stop shop’ for business mentors (72%). A further one in five felt that it was a valuable and beneficial resource for their organisation to be involved with (17%) and one in ten cited it helped to raise awareness and business profile (11%).

A number of organisations provided further detail on their reasons for recommending mentorsme. These included:

- The portal being nationally recognised and promoted;
- The portal’s credibility provided by the backing of a financial institution;
- The portal’s impartiality, enabling organisations to choose a mentoring organisations and lack of bias towards any organisation;
- A good one-stop shop for enquiries, a positive directory of information, a good central signposting system;
- The portal was viewed as another channel for exposure of organisations;
- Positive experience of engagement with the Portal, including prompt response to queries;
- Encourages people to seek mentoring and encourages potential mentors to be part of the mentoring – it provides a significant benefit to the business community;
- Provision of quality standards to the mentoring market as all organisations are quality checked;
- mentorsme provides organisations that are signed up to it with ‘gravitas’ and helps to raise organisational profiles; and
- Simple to use and with a geographical (regional) focus.

One third of businesses stated that they would not recommend the portal. There were three key reasons for non-recommendation:

- Differences in the quality, standard and reliability of companies listed on the portal;

- A lack of information provided on the website leading to poor understanding for users of the service and its functionality; and,

- Organisations not receiving many referrals through the portal.

A number of other reasons for non-recommendation, albeit less frequently, were also mentioned by organisations;

- Until all mentors are listed on the portal it cannot be a one stop shop that it needs to be;

- Poor search functionality on the website initially put some organisations off from engaging with the portal;

- Poor promotion of the website despite initial promises that it would be well promoted;

- Unwillingness to encourage competition in the mentoring market;

- No work received through the portal;

- While a positive concept, the portal has not worked as it should. Mentees do not fully understand where they have to pay for support and where it is free;

- The portal should be reorganised to better illustrate where free and commercial mentoring is being offered;

- The portal has not yet proved its worth, views on recommendation may change over time if more businesses engage as mentors and mentees;

- Poor understanding of what mentoring is and with requirement for free support;

- Perception that the portal is aimed at micro businesses rather than all businesses;

- Poor awareness of the portal amongst businesses;

- Lack of certainty on the quality of mentors engaged with the portal; and,

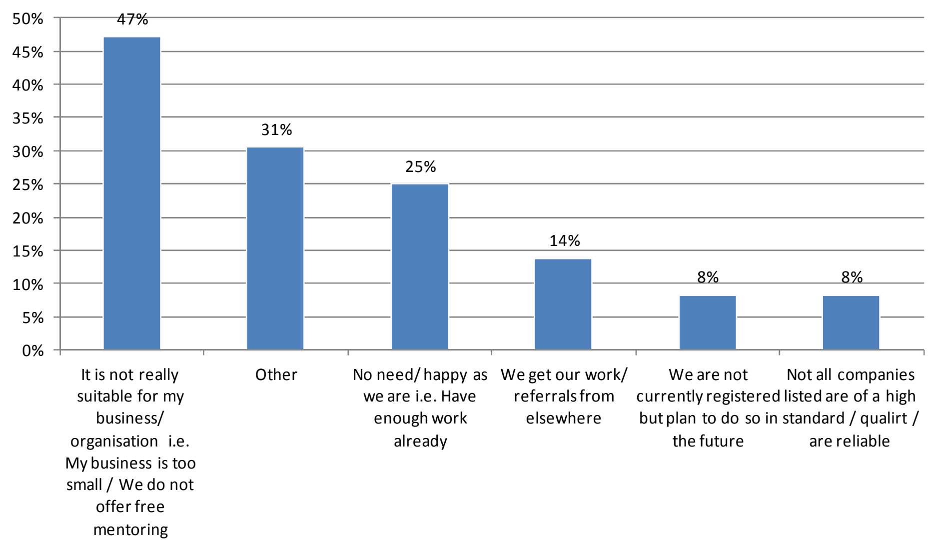
- The concept of web based mentoring is flawed and ineffective.

Almost three in five of organisations registered with mentorsme were also registered with other business mentoring networks (57%). Two thirds of these organisations were involved with Chamber of Commerce with one in five involved with local business networks (21%). Other key networks included the Federation of Small Businesses, Business in the Community, Princes Trust and the Institute of Directors.

3.7.10 Non-engagement with mentorsme

A total of 58 per cent of the businesses that were not registered with mentorsme had not heard of the portal. When those organisations that were aware of mentorsme are considered, over two thirds identified a reason for their organisation not being registered on mentorsme. Half of organisations stated that they did not feel that mentorsme was appropriate for them (47%). This was because the business was too small or they did not offer free mentoring and there was a perception among organisations that meant they could not register with the portal. One in four said they did not need to register because they are happy with their current mentoring provision or workload. One in ten organisations stated that they gained referrals from elsewhere (14%). Just under one in ten planned to register in the future (8%). A total of 8 per cent of organisations stated that they had made the decision not to register due to a perception that companies were not all of a high standard or quality on the portal.

Figure 3.24 The majority of organisations were not registered because they did not feel it was suited to their business



Base: 36 responses

One third of businesses stated that there were ‘other’ reasons for non-engagement, these included:

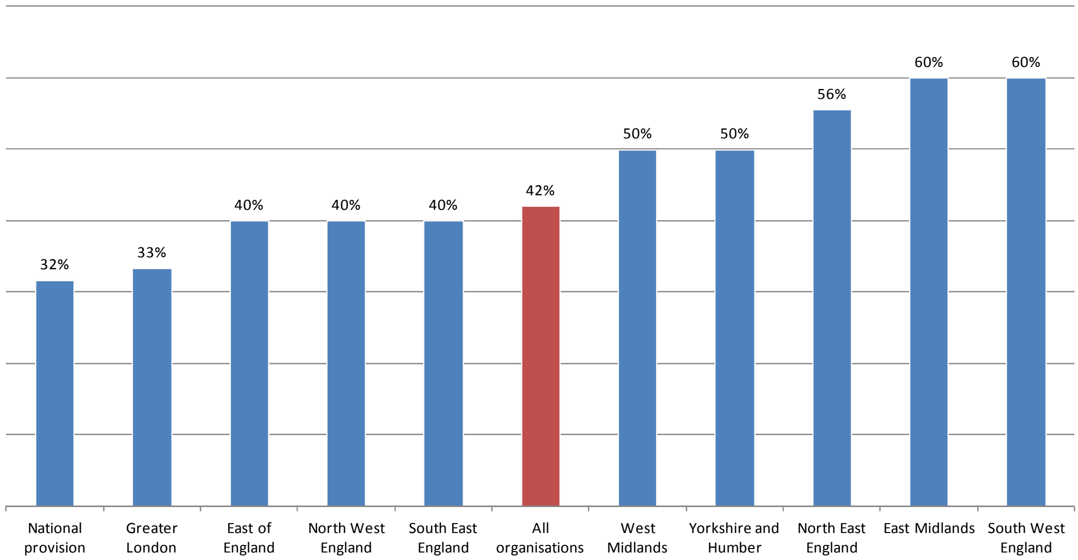
- **Organisational offer not fitting within the remit of mentorsme:**
  - Providing mentoring only to current university students or the university’s graduates rather than all businesses;
  - Lack of clarity over who could sign up to mentorsme – presumption that the portal was only for individual mentors;
  - Business mentoring is only one part of organisational offer – and other parts of the offer are more substantial;

- **Uncertainty over the types of businesses and mentors that could be part of mentorsme**
  - A perception that mentorsme is for general business mentoring rather than the specific expertise or support provided by an organisation;
  - A perception that mentorsme offers free and volunteer mentoring rather than a commercial offer;
  - A perception that mentorsme offers only one to one mentoring rather than peer mentoring;
- **Lack of confidence in other organisations listed on mentorsme**
  - ‘A lot of colleagues in our network had a lack of confidence in mentorsme’;
  - Use of mentorsme as a ‘carrot’ by registered organisations to get people to sign up to fee paying services;
- **Negative perceptions of mentorsme**
  - Poor publicity and marketing of mentorsme;
  - The mentorsme guidelines are not explicit enough and too much time has to be spent explaining the process;
  - A perception that portals or ‘catch all’ lists with no choice of who is mentored or the number of people contacting each mentor;
  - Desire to avoid bureaucracy;
  - Viewed as a political tool – one organisation wished to wait until the ‘dust had settled’ and they had seen it fully functioning prior to committing to the mentorsme portal;
  - Poor design and functionality;

Regardless of these factors, 70 out of 90 businesses stated that they would like more information on mentorsme.

When the 126 organisations that were not registered on mentorsme are considered at the regional level, approximately two in five had heard of the portal. However this ranged from three fifths in South West England and the East Midlands (60%) to one third of organisations providing support nationally.

Figure 3.25 On average two in five of non-registered organisations had heard of mentorsme



Base: 126 responses

3.8 Organisations that did not provide business mentoring

Out of 209 interviews undertaken by the survey team, 23 respondents did not provide business mentoring. These organisations were based across the English regions, although one quarter were found in the South East.

A total of 13 per cent of organisations not currently providing any mentoring have plans to introduce a business mentoring service. These three organisations were based in Greater London, the North West and the West Midlands. One of the organisations further stated that they had previously offered mentoring and it had proved popular, but it was provided through volunteer mentors some of whom did not live up to the standards or expectations of the organisation which led to a number of complaints.

A further 34 per cent may introduce business mentoring in the future. Further qualification of their answers suggested that this was because:

- They have been approached by businesses for support in the past;
- Organisations view the benefits of mentoring and have the facilities in place to offer it;
- They were considering it but were uncertain of how to become a mentor and the training required to do so; and,,
- The BIS mentoring initiative has encouraged them to look into offering mentoring.

The remainder of organisations did not plan on providing mentoring (52%), including due to:

- Acknowledgement of the difference between mentoring and coaching ‘You have to be an expert in some aspect (to be a mentor) but I don’t have a wide enough expertise so I focus on coaching’;
- Lack of time to add to the organisations’ current business offer;
- Funding/ budgetary restrictions;
- Organisational focus is on introducing individuals to mentors rather than providing mentoring per se;
- Perception that only a business owner can offer business mentoring therefore support offered cannot be deemed ‘mentoring’.

3.9 Key findings

Section 3 has provided a systematic presentation of the survey results based upon a number of dimensions – including size, geography and registration with the mentorsme portal. The following outlines key findings which may be drawn on the market for and supply of business mentoring in England in 2012.

Business mentoring as one valuable element of business support

Stakeholders argued that business mentoring should be viewed as part of a potential wider package of support, not as a stand-alone solution, and this was borne out by the provider survey results. None of the organisations surveyed offered business mentoring alone but, rather, it is offered alongside other types of support such as advice, training and coaching.

The business mentoring population

The survey identified provision of more than 11,000 mentors through the sample. From this, a considered calculation of the total business mentoring population for England is in the order of 19,000 mentors (within up to 400 organisations). Taken alongside an expected 15,000 new mentors to be brought forward under Get Mentoring, this suggests a future mentoring population in the order of 30-40,000 business mentors.

Provision and coverage of business mentoring

There remains substantial diversity in the organisational and service provision of business mentoring in England – but the ability also to access a standard set of services. Business mentoring services are available across all of England’s LEPs, partly due to a significant number of national providers. Local and regional provision is still the most common – and all provision still remains very highly focused on face-to-face delivery. A half of organisations were found to charge for their services.

Coverage of business size, stage and strategic need is segmented with a current bias towards start-up, micro and growth businesses but with a significant minority of organisations providing coverage across all types.

Mentoring provision targeted at sector and/or type of owner-manager is patchy – with less than a quarter of organisations, for example, offering targeted support to women owners, BME owners or specific sectors.

One quarter of organisations did not have any female mentors in their organisation – while 58 per cent of organisations had no mentors from a BME community.

The ‘market’ - demand for and supply of business mentoring

Those offering business mentoring predominantly generate referrals through word of mouth, referrals from other organisations, and their own website, marketing and promotional tools. More than half were not listed on a web directory or similar tool, including mentorsme.

In the previous 6 months, around 20,000 clients had received mentoring from the 180 odd interviewed organisations.

The majority of organisations are experiencing growth, feel strongly that the market has potential to grow, and are looking to expand capacity over the next 6 months.

A key barrier to demand is seen as a lack of understanding about the business benefits of mentoring – and when companies area aware of mentoring the difficulties they face finding the right organisation to provide services (and which is compounded by a lack of information on standards). On the supply side, bringing forward latent demand for business mentoring is seen as hampered by gaps in service provision.

Mentorsme

Given only one third of survey respondents were registered on mentorsme, this suggests considerable potential for growth for the portal. This is further suggested by the lack of awareness of the site by a significant number of respondents.

Registered organisations can identify the added value of the site as a credible and impartial ‘one stop shop’.

Non-registered organisations were either unaware of the site, had misconceptions as to why it was not relevant to themselves, had a lack of confidence in the site as a tool to support the business mentoring market or had no need to join due to exiting routes to market.

4 Conclusions and recommendations

This section returns to the study aims and objectives as the basis for outlining a set of conclusions.

4.1 The scale and scope of business mentoring in England

The study suggests that there exist at least 200 business mentoring organisations - and no more than 400 - in England. A quarter of these comprise only one mentor and over half (55%) have 10 or less mentors. Around a dozen organisations employ around half the business mentoring population in England.

In total, this suggests a business mentoring population in England of some 19,000 mentors – with a further 15,000 due to come 'on stream' by summer 2012 through the Get Mentoring initiative.

It should be noted that around 20% of the current mentoring population is not undertaking mentoring provision ('dormant') and, of those that are, only a third work full time.

The survey population accounted for just over 9,000 active business mentors. In the past 6 months, they had provided services to around 20,000 clients.

Business mentoring organisations are consistent in providing a common set of associated services such as business advice, coaching, consultancy and training – with mentoring being the major business activity (over 50%) in only a quarter of instances.

There remains substantial diversity in the organisational and service provision of business mentoring in England – but the ability also to access a standard set of services. Business mentoring services are available across all of England's LEPs, partly due to a significant number of national providers. Targeted offers at business or entrepreneur types are patchier.

4.2 Why aren't all business mentoring organisations registered on mentorsme

Mentorsme was launched in July 2011 as a national portal for small and medium-sized enterprises looking for business mentoring services. As part of this process the British Bankers Association has been seeking registration of business mentoring organisations on the web-site.

The majority of the almost 100 organisations that are registered recognise the added value of the portal and would recommend it although, currently, it remains a minor source of referrals for member organisations.

Two thirds of the survey respondents were not registered with mentorsme. Of these:

- 73 business mentoring organisations surveyed stated that they were unaware of mentorsme. Of these, 62 have expressed an interest in receiving more information;

- 68 per cent of those who had heard about mentorsme stated a reason why they were not registered:

  – a third believed the site was not suited for their organisation (including national organisations). Further investigation suggests a number of both misconceptions and reasons as to why respondents perceived that the portal site may not be suited to the supply of business mentoring provision;

  – a fifth were 'happy as they are' and saw no need to register;

  – similarly, others noted they accessed referrals and work from elsewhere;

  – a few noted concerns as to the standards of companies listed; and,

  – three suggested they planned to register in the future.

In contrast to mentorsme, the traditional route by which demand is accessed - word of mouth and referral from other organisations - is still by far the most dominant source of demand for registered and unregistered organisations alike.

4.3 The gap in mentoring provision accessible through the website, and overall mentoring provision

BBA reports that around 11,000 business mentors are registered through mentorsme.

Calculations derived from this study suggest a potential business mentoring population of some 19,000 mentors (including those currently 'dormant').

Study evidence suggests that there is minimal difference in the service characteristics of those organisations registered with mentorsme compared with those unregistered – in terms of geographical coverage, delivery mode, type of client, etc.

The major distinction is within size of organisation registered. Whilst organisations of all sizes have not registered the least likely to be registered are the smallest. This is likely to be a combination of lack of awareness of or engagement in the objectives of mentorsme, alongside a potential issue of meeting the criteria required for membership.

4.4 Views from mentoring organisations on how effectively the market for business mentoring operates and whether recent initiatives such as mentorsme have or are expected to realise benefits

The business mentoring sector is split in its view on the current market for mentoring.

There is the strongest consensus that there is a latent demand for business mentoring (33%). Nevertheless, currently more organisations believe that the supply of mentors outstrips demand from business (30%) rather than vice-versa (20%).

Almost all respondents believe there to be potential to make more of business mentoring in England – over half felt this potential was significant, and 80 per cent cited an increase in demand over the last 6 months. This view was held equally amongst those registered with mentorsme and those who were not. Respondents noted a planned capacity increase over the next six months of almost 50 per cent.

Whilst it is still early days for mentorsme – and some organisations have only recently registered - survey respondents reported some 240 clients referred through mentorsme (as against around 20,000 clients that they estimated to have dealt with in total in the previous six months).

4.5 The challenges or opportunities to increase demand and supply of business mentoring

Whilst mentoring organisations report growth in the previous six months, and see future growth potential, they were as one (90%) in their belief that a lack of understanding of the benefits to business of mentoring is holding back demand. A lack of information on standards (67%), gaps in the provision of mentoring services (69%) and difficulties in finding the right organisation to provide mentoring (66%) were noted also as major barriers to demand.

This study has found limited evidence of gaps in provision in terms of a standard service directed towards different types of business service but business mentoring for targeted enterprise groups does appear patchy. Additionally, the sector as a whole comprises a substantial diversity of providers with limited common agreement of definitions, standards, service levels and so forth.

Overall, it remains the case that there exists very limited comprehensive information on the nature of demand (latent or existing) as expressed by different businesses and enterprise groups – from their understanding of the value of business mentoring to their expectations of service provision.

Concerning mentors, respondents felt there to be an element of misunderstanding of the benefits of being a mentor also - and which could reduce the number of individuals becoming mentors. It should be noted, however, that few suggested recruitment problems and most noted mentors not currently undertaking activity. Early evidence suggests, also, that Get Mentoring is overcoming such barriers in its recruitment of new volunteer mentors.

4.6 Recommendations

On the basis of the analysis of stakeholder consultation and survey, the following recommendations have been developed:

- Business mentoring holds a distinctive position in the suite of business support products. There remains, however, a need to bring forward an awareness campaign (business-led and supported by government) amongst SMEs in England of the business value and economic benefits of business mentoring.

- The business perspective on business mentoring – and its articulation as a service demand – remains limited (especially within current economic conditions). There exists a need for further research on the demand for business mentoring – the nature of existing and latent demand, expectation of service provision (universal, segmented, tailored?) and how to bring forward enhanced demand.

- Substantial numbers of business support providers and mentors remain unaware and/or misinformed and/or unconvinced by mentorsme. Given this they remain unregistered. There exists a need to further raise awareness and engagement amongst the business mentoring sector of mentorsme (for example, and given the sector's strong basis in regional networks one engagement avenue might be a series of regional roadshows)

- A number of common issues with mentorsme were raised by respondents (whether or not they were registered) concerned with profile, functionality and information provision. Mentorsme/BBA should continue its response to member organisation feedback to identify the potential for further enhancement of the current portal offer

- The business mentoring sector remains emergent, if undergoing substantial change. BIS should support conversations within the business mentoring sector about its continued development given recent transformational change in business support, policy encouragement and initiatives for business mentoring, and a transformed funding environment. An immediate example would be to provide a consistent and concerted message to business as the basis for raising demand.

Annex 1 Delivering the study – method description

A1.1 Stage 1: Scoping and desk research

Following the study inception meeting, discussions were held with key contacts from BIS, the British Bankers Association (BBA), and the UK Sector Skills Council for Enterprise (SFEDI) to introduce the study, gather initial feedback and discuss key issues. These stakeholders each have a different perspective on, and involvement with, the provision of business mentoring. At a glance, these are:

- BIS having responsibility for business mentoring at Ministerial level, and the associated policy and funding arrangements; as well as commissioning this piece of work;

- The BBA, as the organisation which manages and administers the mentorsme portal and, more broadly, is involved with business mentoring across the sector;

- SFEDI as the Government recognised UK Standards Setting Body for Business Support and Business Enterprise. SFEDI researches leading practice, sets standards, principles and guidelines.

Alongside these discussions, a desk research exercise was undertaken to identify existing research into the provision of business mentoring. Materials suggested by the stakeholders noted above were also included in the review. The main purpose of the review was to identify existing evidence around the supply of mentoring in the UK, to profile businesses who are more likely to access mentoring support, and finally to collate information with the purpose of identifying types of mentors operating within the business support landscape.

A1.2 Stage 2: Stakeholder consultation

A1.2.1 Stakeholder contacts

A sample of stakeholders was identified for the consultation. Semi-structured telephone interviews were held with representatives from the following organisations:

- DorMen: the Dorset Business Mentoring Programme;

- ICAEW: the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales;

- NESTA: National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts;

- National Enterprise Network: trading name of National Federation of Enterprise Agencies, NEN members also include Chambers of Commerce, local authorities, specialist enterprise providers, universities and corporate organisations; and,

- The Federation of Small Businesses*

*Provided written submission rather than telephone interview due to time constraints.

A1.2.2 Areas for discussion with stakeholders

The areas covered by the consultation were:

- Individual and organisational role, how this relates to business mentoring. More specifically does the organisation offer or support the delivery of business mentoring? If so, how much of a priority is business mentoring?

- Views on the provision of business mentoring, how important does the respondent perceive business mentoring to be within the wider landscape of business support? How does it fit with other forms of support such as business advice, coaching, etc?

- In terms of the current 'market' for business mentoring, how well does the interviewee feel it operates, does supply match demand? What are they drivers of demand for mentoring? What are their views on the levels of awareness of mentoring?

- Has the respondent (or has their organisation) been involved in specific activities or programmes to promote and/or deliver business mentoring? This might be within their organisation, or more broadly e.g. geographically based or Government led programmes.

- What is their awareness of mentorsme and what has been their involvement with mentorsme to date? What are the strengths of the mentorsme approach? I.e. an online portal, a mechanism to 'match' demand and supply. Are there areas for improvement of mentorsme?

- How do they think businesses view mentoring? How do they perceive mechanisms such as mentorsme?

- As regards the business mentoring landscape more broadly, how many mentors do respondents think there are approximately, operating in England? (Given the target identified by BIS, of a network of 40,000 mentors operating – is this achievable?)

- Given the current Government focus on business mentoring, does their organisation have any specific activity planned in this area?

- Finally, respondents were asked to identify any key issues relating to business mentoring that they feel the study should take into account, from their own perspective. Also they were asked to identify any organisations and/or networks that could be included in the research.

A1.3 Stage 3: Survey of providers of business mentoring

A1.3.1 Developing the survey tool

Building on the stakeholder consultation, the survey tool was then drafted. This was undertaken through a collaborative process, including BIS, GHK, Swift, and Paul Stokes of Sheffield Hallam University. Comments on the questionnaire were also received from the BBA and SFEDI. Key areas covered by the tool included:

- Location, nature and size of the organisation;
- Type of business support, mentoring offered and means of delivery;
- Capacity of business mentoring provision, i.e. number of mentors, number of individuals supported, projected number of individuals to be supported in the short-term;
- Segmenting business mentoring support: targeting support to certain life stages of businesses, particular size of business, sector specific support, offering mentoring to certain types of owner/managers, geographical area of offer;
- Mentors: number and type of mentors engaged with the organisation, what proportion of these are a) women, and b) from a BME community, are mentors required to hold a particular qualification or accreditation certificate, recruitment of mentors;
- The ‘market’ for business mentoring: how well this is working currently, level of potential to increase demand and supply of mentoring, views on the issues affecting the markey for business mentoring.
- Awareness and perception of mentorsme: are they registered on mentorsme? If no, is there a reason why not? If so, what has been their experience of mentorsme, has it been a source of business mentoring requests for them?

A1.3.2 Developing the database of mentoring organisations

The database of mentoring organisations was developed through the following strands of activity:

- BIS desk research: previously BIS had completed a web-based search to identify business mentoring organisations, this provided the starting point for the database development;
- mentorsme: the BBA provided data for those organisations currently registered on mentorsme, these were included in the database;
- Contacts identified through the stakeholder discussions were also included;

- GHK conducted a further desk research exercise on-line to identify any additional organisations delivering business mentoring, these included networks, HEIs, and organisations and individuals offering mentoring;

- Finally, as part of the survey delivery, a ‘snowball’ approach was adopted whereby respondents were asked if they could suggest organisations and/or networks offering business mentoring, that could be approached as part of the research.

In total the finalised database included details for 469 organisations.

A1.3.3 Administering the survey

The survey tool was piloted with a sample of 5 respondents and adjusted accordingly. The full survey then began, Swift interviewers used CATI (Computer-assisted telephone interviewing) software to record responses.

Of the database population of 469, interviews were achieved with 209 organisations/individuals, this represents 44% of the database.

Where the organisation was a provider of business mentoring, the interviews lasted for an average of 25 minutes. In some cases, respondents offered mentoring support but not business mentoring as identified by the Mentorsme definition. In these cases, a shorter interview was undertaken, lasting an average of 10 minutes.

Of the 209, 185 were full interviews, and 23 were the shorter ones. One organisation provided a written response.

There were 70 refusals (15% of the database population). The most common reasons for refusal were that they simply did not wish to participate, a lack of time, or they did not offer business mentoring so did not wish to continue with the survey.

On completion of the interviews all respondents were asked to consent to Swift research passing on a) Their responses and b) Their contact details to GHK. In 46 of cases consent was given only for responses to be passed on, and in 139 cases consent was given for both responses and contacts details to be passed on.

A1.4 Stage 4: Analysis and production of outputs

On completion of the survey, the data gathered was collated and analysis undertaken. The analysis was structured according to the original aims and objectives of the study. Study outputs comprise:

- A presentation of draft results to business mentoring organisations undertaken on 9 May 2012 in London;

- A database of business support organisations; and,

- Final reporting and Executive Summary.

Annex 2 Telephone Survey Tool

Business Mentoring Telephone Survey

Good morning / afternoon. May I speak to (insert name from sample/if no name available ask for owner/manager or for larger organisations, the person in charge of business mentoring)?

My name is .... I am calling from Swift Research, an independent market research agency. We are undertaking a study on behalf of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, exploring the current provision of business mentoring in England and helping to develop support for business mentoring.

The information you provide to us will be treated in the strictest confidence and any views expressed and data provided will be reported anonymously and not attributed to any individual or company.

Please note calls may be recorded or listened into for quality control and training purposes.

The interview will take around 15 minutes, depending on what you have to say. Is now convenient?

INTERVIEWER: If respondent wishes to check that the survey is genuine offer the following contact details and arrange to call back. Jane Sanderson at GHK (Jane.Sanderson@ghkint.com / 0121 2338910) or James Phipps at BIS, (james.phipps@bis.gsi.gov.uk / 0114 207 5216).

<u>SECTION ONE: COMPANY DETAILS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION</u>

1. Please could you confirm your company / organisation's name?

2. What is your position within the company?

Owner	1
Managing Director	2
Chief Executive	3
Operations Manager/Director	4
Business Development Manager/Director	5

Consultant	6
Other (please specify)	7

3. Where is your company based?

INTERVIEWER: NB in most cases this will be the location of the person we're speaking to but for a few larger organisations note company HQ base.

Greater London	1	Go to Q4
South East England	2	Go to Q4
South West England	3	Go to Q4
East Anglia	4	Go to Q4
West Midlands	5	Go to Q4
East Midlands	6	Go to Q4
North East England	7	Go to Q4
Yorkshire and Humberside	8	Go to Q4
North West England	9	Go to Q4
Not in England	10	Thank & close

4. Is the organisation:

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Self-employed individual	1	Social Enterprise	6
Partnership	2	Charity	7
Private Limited Company (Ltd)	3	Public Sector	8
Public Limited Company (plc)	4	Educational establishment (please specify e.g. University)	10
Community / voluntary organisation	5	Other (please specify)	9

SECTION TWO: BUSINESS SUPPORT AND MENTORING PROVIDED BY THE COMPANY

We want to identify what types of business support you provide. We are especially interested in business mentoring.

Business mentoring is defined by BIS (the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills), SFEDI (UK Sector Skills Body for Enterprise) and key stakeholders as follows:

□ a one-to-one relationship over a period of time between a less experienced person (mentee) and an established professional (mentor), which provides support, guidance and practical help.

□ a process by which an experienced professional shares their personal skills, knowledge and experience, enabling a less experienced person to perform at a higher level, through accessing impartial, non-judgmental guidance and support.

□ a two-way process of working together to achieve predetermined goals and objectives, through which both parties derive satisfaction.

5. Please state the types of business support your organisation offers, from the following list:

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Business mentoring	1	If **not** chosen go to Q6 otherwise go to Q8
Providing business advice	2	
Coaching	3	
Consultancy	4	
Network events	5	
Training	6	
Other (please specify)	7	
If a comment is made about the distinction / overlap of business mentoring with advice / coaching / etc. as the list is completed please note the comment here. (specify box)	8	

6. Does your organisation have any plans to begin offering a business mentoring service?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1
No	2
Maybe	3
Don't know (do not read out)	4

7. Why do you say that?

INTERVIEWER PROBE FULLY

GO TO Q55

8. What proportion of your business activity is the provision of business mentoring?

INTERVIEWER IF NECESSARY READ OUT LIST

Up to 25%	1
Between 26-50%	2
Between 51-75%	3
Over 75%	4

9. Which of the following areas tend to be covered by the mentoring that your organisation delivers?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Long-term relationship based, developmental focus	1
Short-term, focussed on helping with a particular issue e.g. developing a business plan	2

Enabling or networking function e.g. an events based network	3
Overcoming disadvantage/diversity mentoring	4
Other (please specify)	5

10. How is business mentoring delivered by your organisation?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Face to face	1
Telephone	2
Web based	3
Group discussion	4
Other (please specify)	5

11. How do you operate as a provider of mentoring? Do you:

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Provide mentoring as an individual	1
Directly employ other mentors who deliver business mentoring	2
Operate a network of affiliated member mentors?	3
Other (please specify)	4

12. Is there a charge made for the provision of mentoring?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1
No	2
For some (please	3

specify)	

13. How many individuals have been mentored by your organisation over the past 6 months?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD ACTUAL NUMBER

IF NOT AVAILABLE READ OUT LIST AND RECORD CORRECT BANDING:

0-10	1
11-20	2
21-30	3
31-40	4
41-50	5
51-60	6
61-70	7
71-80	8
81-90	9
91-100	10
100+	11

14. How many individuals could you currently provide mentoring support to over the next 6 months?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD ACTUAL NUMBER

IF NOT AVAILABLE READ OUT LIST AND RECORD CORRECT BANDING:

0-10	1
11-20	2
21-30	3
31-40	4
41-50	5
51-60	6
61-70	7
71-80	8
81-90	9
91-100	10
100+	11
Don’t know (do not read out)	12

15. What are your main sources of business mentoring requests?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Word of mouth	1	
Your own website	2	
Your own marketing materials or promotional events	3	
Referrals from other organisations	4	
Listed on a web directory	5	
Other (please specify)	6	

16. If you are listed on any website directories for business mentoring, which directories are these?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Mentorsme	1
Business Link Business Support Finder on the website	2
Other (please specify)	3
None	4

17. Does the business mentoring you provide tend to support a particular life stage for businesses?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Pre-starts	1
Start Ups (less than 3 years)	2
Established	3
Exiting	4
All the above	5
Other (please specify)	6

18. Does the business mentoring you provide tend to support a particular size of business?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

0 employees (someone working for themselves)	1
1-9 employees	2
10-49 employees	3
50-249 employees	6
Large employers	4

All the above	5
Other (please specify)	6

19. Does the business mentoring you provide tend to support businesses that are looking for help to?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Grow	1
Survive/Crisis management	2
Restructuring	3
Access Finance	4
All of the above	5
None of the above	6

20. Is the business mentoring you provide focused to any particular business sector?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1	Go to Q21
No	2	Go to Q22
Sometimes	3	Go to Q21

21. Which particular business sector or sectors do you focus on?

INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Agriculture and fishing	1
Energy and water	2
Manufacturing and engineering	3

Transport, warehouse and distribution	4
Construction and property services	5
Biotechnical, medical and chemical	6
Creative services and media	7
Professional and other business services	8
Consumer products, personal services, retail and wholesale	9
Recreation, culture and tourism	10
Hotels and restaurants	11
Information technology and telecoms	12
Other (please specify)	13

22. Do you explicitly offer business mentoring service to certain types of owner/manager for example female owners, business owners from a particular community e.g. BME and/or social enterprise?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

NOTE: BME REFERS TO BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS

Yes	1	Go to Q23
No	2	Go to Q24
Sometimes	3	Go to Q23

23. Which types of owners/managers do you explicitly offer business mentoring to?

INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Female owners	1
Owners from BME communities	2
Ex-offenders	3

Owners with a learning difficulty and/or disability	4
Within an area of deprivation	5
Age specific e.g. over 55's	6
Age specific e.g. young people	7
Those out of work (e.g. if the organisation works with pre-starts and start-ups)	8
Social enterprise	9
Other (please specify)	10

24. Roughly, over what geographical area do you provide your mentoring service?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONLY ONE

Local area	1
Regional	2
Country level (England)	3
Only Outside England (please specify)	4
Other (please describe)	5

25. How many mentors do you have working for your organisation?

INTERVIEWER: THIS CAN BE EMPLOYEES OR PEOPLE THAT WORK FOR THE ORGANISATION ON A MORE TEMPORARY/INFORMAL BASIS.

INTERVIEWER: RECORD ACTUAL NUMBER

IF NOT AVAILABLE READ OUT LIST AND RECORD CORRECT BANDING:

0-10	1
11-20	2

21-30	3
31-40	4
41-50	5
51-60	6
61-70	7
71-80	8
81-90	9
91-100	10
100+	11

26. What percentage of these are full time?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONLY ONE

0	1
1-25%	2
26-50%	3
51-75%	4
76-100%	5

27. Roughly what percentage of these mentors offer their services through other organisations?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONLY ONE

0	1
1-25%	2

26-50%	3
51-75%	4
76-100%	5

28. How many of these mentors are not currently providing mentoring?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD ACTUAL NUMBER

IF NOT AVAILABLE READ OUT LIST AND RECORD CORRECT BANDING:

0-10	1
11-20	2
21-30	3
31-40	4
41-50	5
51-60	6
61-70	7
71-80	8
81-90	9
91-100	10
100+	11

29. Roughly, what percentage of your mentors are women?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONLY ONE

0	1
1-25%	2

26-50%	3
51-75%	4
76-100%	5

30. Roughly, what percentage of mentors are from a BME community?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONLY ONE

NOTE: BME REFERS TO BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS

0	1
1-25%	2
26-50%	3
51-75%	4
76-100%	5

31. Are your mentors required to hold a mentoring qualification or accreditation certificate?

INTERVIEWER CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1	Go to Q32
No	2	Go to Q33

32. Which mentoring qualifications or accreditation certificates are they required to hold?

INTERVIEWER CODE ALL THAT APPLY – IF NECESSARY READ OUT LIST

Info for interviewers:

- SFEDI is the UK Sector Skills Body for Enterprise
- ILM is the Institute of Leadership and Management
- EMCC is the European Mentoring and Coaching Council

SFEDI Level 3 Award in Enterprise Mentoring	1
SFEDI Level 4 Certificate in Enterprise Mentoring	2
SFEDI/ILM Level 5 qualification in Coaching and Mentoring	3
ILM Level 5 Diploma for Professional Management Coaches and Mentors	4
ILM Level 7 Certificate in Executive Coaching and Leadership Mentoring	5
EIA (European Individual Accreditation) from EMCC	6
Other (please specify)	7

33. From where do you recruit the mentors that work with your organisation?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Through our website	1
Word of mouth/personal contacts	2
Existing networks	3
Active recruitment/marketing campaigns	4
Mentorsme	5
Other (please specify)	6

34. Have you experienced difficulties in recruiting mentors?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1
No	2
Don’t know (do not read out)	3

35. In terms of your direct experience how effectively do you feel the current 'market' for business mentoring works, i.e. does supply meet demand?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Supply matches demand	1
Supply is greater than demand	2
Supply is less than demand	3
Other e.g. latent demand (businesses don't realise that the service is available but would use it if they did)	4
Don't know (do not read out)	5

36. Do you think there is potential to make more of mentoring as a business support activity, i.e. to increase the levels of demand for and supply of business mentoring?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

There is a significant level of potential	1
There is a moderate level of potential	2
There is very little potential	3
There is no potential	4
Don't know (do not read out)	5

37. Do you think any of these issues apply to the mentoring market?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

A lack of information on standards	1
A lack of understanding about the business benefits of mentoring	2
A lack of understanding about the individual benefits of being a mentor	3
Gaps in provision of mentoring services	4
Difficulty in finding the *right* organisation as a mentor	5

Difficulty in finding the *right* organisation as a company seeking mentoring	6
None apply	7
Other (please specify)	8

SECTION THREE: AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF MENTORSME

38. Can I just check are you registered on Mentorsme as an organisation offering business mentoring?

INTERVIEWER CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1	Go to Q39
No	2	Go to Q47
Don't know (do not read out)	3	Go to Q47

39. You are registered on Mentorsme as an organisation offering business mentoring. How long have you been registered?

___ MONTHS

□ don't know

40. How did you become aware of Mentorsme?

INTERVIEWER CODE ONE ONLY

Word of mouth	1
Website	2
Marketing or promotional material	3
Through attending an event	4
Other (please specify)	5

41. How would you rate your experience of engaging with Mentorsme?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Positive	1
Negative	2
Neutral	3

42. How many clients each month would you say you are gaining through mentorsme?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD ACTUAL NUMBER

IF NOT AVAILABLE READ OUT LIST AND RECORD CORRECT BANDING:

0	1
1-9	2
10-49	3
50-249	6
Don’t know	5

43. How many of the companies you currently provide mentoring to have come through Mentorsme?

INTERVIEWER: RECORD ACTUAL NUMBER

IF NOT AVAILABLE READ OUT LIST AND RECORD CORRECT BANDING:

0	1
1-9	2
10-49	3
50-249	6

Don't know	5

44. Since you joined mentorsme, how many of the companies you have provided mentoring to, as a percentage of your total mentoring provision, have come from there?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

0%	1
1-25%	2
26-50%	3
51-75%	4
76-100%	5

45. Would you recommend Mentorsme to other mentoring organisations?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1	Go to Q46
No	2	Go to Q46
Don't know (do not read out)	3	Go to Q51

46. Why do you say that?

INTERVIEWER PROBE FULLY

GO TO Q51

CONTINUATION FOR THOSE ORGANISATIONS NOT REGISTERED ON MENTORSME

47. Are you aware of the Mentorsme website?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1	Go to Q48
No	2	Go to Q50

48. Is there any particular reason why your organisation is not registered with Mentorsme?

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1	Go to Q49
No	2	Go to Q50

49. What reason is that?

INTERVIEWER PROBE FULLY

GO TO Q51

50. Mentorsme is a national portal for business mentoring which was launched in July 2011 by the BBA to promote SMEs use of mentoring. Would you be interested in receiving further information about mentorsme with a view to registering? If you would, we will pass your details on to the British Bankers Association who run the mentorsme portal.

Yes	1
No	2

ASK ALL

51. In relation to your business mentoring offer, have you noticed any changes to the level of demand for your services over the last 6 months?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1	Go to Q52
No	2	Go to Q53
Don't know (do not read out)	3	Go to Q53

52. Would you say….?

INTERVIEWER READ OUT LIST AND CODE ONE ONLY

Demand has increased significantly	1
Demand has increased slightly	2
Demand has decreased significantly	4
Demand has decreased slightly	3

53. Are you involved in any business mentoring networks <<other than mentorsme>> ?

This includes both formal and informal networks. For example a local area network such as Business in the Community, or Chamber of Commerce local group, or WiRE Local Networks (Women in Rural Enterprise) or member of a web based network such as HorsesMouth.co.uk or it may be an informal support network?

Yes	1	Go to Q54
No	2	Go to Q55

54. Please could you let me know the details of the networks you are involved in:

INTERVIEWER PROBE FULLY

55. Do you know of any other organisations offering business mentoring that we could approach to take part in this survey?

Yes	1	Go to Q56
No	2	Go to Q57

56. Please provide details of companies we could approach:

INTERVIEWER PROBE FULLY- TRY TO GET AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE

57. Would you be willing to take part in any future research undertaken by BIS (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills) on this subject?

Yes	1	Go to Q58
No	2	If yes at Q50 check contact details otherwise thank & close

58. We would therefore need to pass back to BIS your contact details, would you be happy for us to do so and would it also be alright for us to also pass on your individual identifiable answers?

SINGLE CODE ONLY

Yes – can pass back contact details but **not** identifiable answers	1
Yes – can pass back contact details and identifiable answers	2
No – can not pass back details or identifiable answers	3

IF ANSWER YES AT Q50 AND/OR Q58 PLEASE CONFIRM DETAILS, NAME, TELEPHONE, COMPANY NAME,AND EMAIL OTHERWISE THANK AND CLOSE.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Do you have any questions about the survey? If so, please contact Jane Sanderson at GHK (Jane.Sanderson@ghkint.com or 0121 2338910). If you would like to speak to a contact at BIS regarding the study please contact James Phipps (james.phipps@bis.gsi.gov.uk or 0114 207 5216).

This publication is also available on our website at www.bis.gov.uk

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to:

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET
Tel: 020 7215 5000

If you require this publication in an alternative format, email enquiries@bis.gsi.gov.uk, or call 020 7215 5000.

URN 12/1148