

Research report

European Social Fund Cohort Study: Wave 2

by Emma Drever and Cheryl Lloyd



DWP Department for
Work and Pensions

Department for Work and Pensions

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European Social Fund Cohort Study: Wave 2

Emma Drever and Cheryl Lloyd

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Glossary of terms

Carer	Respondents who have any caring responsibilities for a member of their immediate family or a close relative who has any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity. This may be a member of the household or someone who lives elsewhere.
Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI)	The mode of interview used. The questionnaire is a computer program that specifies the questions, range and structure of permissible answers and instructions for navigating through the questionnaire.
Disability or long-term limiting illness (LTLI)	Respondents who report a long-standing illness, health problem, mental or physical disability or infirmity, which limits their daily activities or the work they can do.
Employment status	Measures based on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of economic activity and European Social Fund (ESF) targets. Status is derived based on respondent's main activity.
NEET and aged 16-19	Not in employment, education or training and aged 16 to 19 years.
Long-term unemployed	Unemployed for 12 months or more and aged 20 years or over.
Unemployed (less than 12 months)	Unemployed for less than 12 months and aged 20 years or over.
Economically inactive	People who are neither in employment or unemployment (only if aged over 20) and includes students. This includes those looking after a home, retired and permanently unable to work.
In employment	People who are employees, self-employed, on a Government supported training scheme or an unpaid family worker.
Ethnic minority groups	Results from this survey combine the 16-point census classification into two summary groups. All non-white ethnic groups are included in the two-group classification as 'ethnic minority groups'.
Full-time work	Respondents who work 31 hours or more per week.
Lone parents	People who said that they did not live with a husband, wife or partner and who had children living with them.
Multiple disadvantages	The number of 'disadvantaged groups' that a respondent belongs to. These include people from an ethnic minority group, those who do not normally speak English at home; those with a disability or long-term limiting illness; lone parents; those with caring responsibilities; those aged over 50; long-term unemployed people (for 12 months or more); young people classified as NEET; returners to the labour market; offenders and ex-offenders; those with issues with alcohol or substance abuse; and those with citizenship and visa issues.

National Qualifications Framework	The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) sets out the levels against which a qualification can be recognised in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
National Vocational Qualifications equivalent qualification Level	Most qualifications can be assigned to a standardised qualification level, often referred to as an National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ)-equivalent level.
Part-time work	Respondents who work less than 31 hours per week.
Qualification levels	<p>Qualification levels have been coded as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Level 1 qualifications include: NVQ qualifications at Level 1; NVQ level unknown/other; Edexcel qualifications at Level 1; Edexcel level unknown/other; GNVQ Foundation Level; GNVQ level unknown/other; OCR Vocational Certificate; OCR level unknown/other; BTEC Introductory Certificate or Diploma; BTEC level unknown/other; City and Guild Level 1 or Part 1; City and Guild level unknown/other; AS Level pass; GCSE and Short Course GCSE pass (for a Level 2 qualification, five GCSEs are required at grades A-C); other vocational or work-related qualifications at NVQ Level 1 (as identified by the respondent); other vocational or work-related qualifications where NVQ level unknown.• Level 2 qualifications include: NVQ qualifications at Level 2; Edexcel qualifications at Level 2; GNVQ Intermediate; OCR Diploma; BTEC First Certificate or Diploma; City and Guild Level 2 or Part 2, Craft or Intermediate; A Level pass/award pending; other vocational or work-related qualifications at NVQ Level 2 (as identified by the respondent).• Level 3 qualifications include: NVQ qualifications at Level 3; Edexcel qualifications at Level 3; GNVQ Advanced Award; OCR Advanced Diploma or Certificate; BTEC National Award, Certificate or Diploma; City and Guild Level 3 or Part 3, Final or Advanced Craft; Access qualification; other vocational or work-related qualifications at NVQ Level 3 (as identified by the respondent).• Level 4 and above qualifications include: NVQ qualifications at Levels 4 and 5; Edexcel qualifications at Levels 4 and 5; BTEC Foundation Degree or HNC; PGCEs; degrees; post graduate qualifications; nursing qualifications; other vocational or work-related qualifications at NVQ Levels 4 and 5 (as identified by the respondent).

Summary

The European Social Fund (ESF) Cohort Study involves a large scale quantitative survey with two waves of interviews. The survey is designed to evaluate the longer-term outcomes of the training and advice provided through the ESF programme. It will also be used to measure a number of indicators and targets that cannot be captured through respondent monitoring information.

Wave 1 of the ESF Cohort Study took place between April and September 2009, and included interviews with 10,947 ESF and match participants. All Wave 1 participants were contacted again between January and March 2010 for Wave 2 of the study. Interviews were achieved with 7,400 ESF and match participants. Most participants were interviewed by phone, although a small number of face-to-face interviews took place with more vulnerable respondents.

This report contains the findings from participants who responded to both waves of the ESF Cohort Study 2008-2010, and uses responses from both interviews. While the Wave 1 study focused on participants' experiences of the programme, Wave 2 has a greater emphasis on the outcomes of participation, exploring, for example, whether participants have gained qualifications or found work since they started training.

Survey data has been weighted so that it is representative of the profile of ESF and match participants according to management information available in April 2009, when the sample for the study was drawn. There were very few significant differences between the profile of Wave 1 and Wave 2 respondents.

The study covered four of the ESF priorities, including: Priorities 1 and 4, which have a focus on extending employment opportunities and tackling barriers to employment; and Priorities 2 and 5, which aim to develop and improve the skills of the workforce.

Respondent characteristics

ESF funding is targeted towards groups that are disadvantaged in the labour market, such as people with disabilities, lone parents, and people aged over 50. The ESF Cohort Study found that:

- 37 per cent of participants were female;
- 16 per cent of all participants were aged over 50;
- 17 per cent were from an ethnic minority group;
- 32 per cent said that they had a disability or long-term limiting illness (LTLI);
- eight per cent of participants were lone parents, while seven per cent had caring responsibilities for a sick, disabled or elderly person;

Projects under Priorities 1 and 4 had an objective to support participants who were out of work, including those who were unemployed, economically inactive and young people who were not in employment, education or training (NEET). The survey found that 94 per cent of participants from both Priority 1 and Priority 4 were out of work, including nine per cent in Priority 1 who were NEET and five per cent in Priority 4 in the week prior to starting their course. Over half of all Priority 1 participants (57 per cent) faced multiple disadvantages (i.e. two or more). This figure rose to 65 per cent among Priority 4 participants.

By contrast, the majority of Priority 2 (79 per cent) and Priority 5 (89 per cent) participants were in employment, in line with the objective of these priorities to develop the skills of the workforce. Twenty-two per cent of employees worked part-time, three-quarters (75 per cent) earned less than £15,000 per year and most (85 per cent) worked for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Expectations and experiences of ESF

Most participants felt that their ESF course was helping them to gain or improve the skills needed for work and that it was boosting their self-confidence about working. The ESF Cohort Study found that:

- in terms of work skills gained, 49 per cent of participants were gaining practical skills relating to a particular job, 35 per cent were improving their basic computing or IT skills and the same proportion (36 per cent) were gaining reading and writing skills;
- 67 per cent of participants said that the course was improving their motivation about working, while 65 per cent said it was helping them with communication skills;
- nine per cent of participants who were parents were receiving help with their childcare responsibilities;
- 22 per cent of participants who were parents and did not receive help with their childcare responsibilities said that they would have liked help with this.

Satisfaction levels with ESF provision were relatively high, with 76 per cent of participants saying that the course was relevant to their needs, 58 per cent saying that the level was 'about right' and 71 per cent confirming that they were 'very or fairly satisfied' with the course.

There were some differences in expectations and experiences of the course among different priorities, funding streams and demographic groups. For example, younger people and women tended to be more satisfied with their course. Generally, people with a disability or LTLI tended to have more negative views about their experiences of the course than people with no disability or LTLI.

Qualifications

Before starting the course, 16 per cent of participants had no qualifications, while a further 26 per cent had qualifications below Level 2 or had 'other' qualifications. Participants who were lone parents or disabled were less likely to have qualifications.

Twenty-seven per cent of participants had gained full qualifications through the course, although this figure was higher in Priority 2 (69 per cent) and Priority 5 (68 per cent). Of these, around half had completed NVQs (54 per cent). Other qualifications that participants had gained included City and Guilds (12 per cent), GCSE (four per cent), OCR (four per cent) and BTEC qualifications (three per cent). Overall, 35 per cent of participants studied towards other work-related qualifications, including IT or basic skills qualifications. Furthermore, nine per cent of participants had gained units or modules towards qualifications. Again, this was higher among Priority 2 (24 per cent) and Priority 5 (19 per cent) participants.

At the time of interview, 26 per cent of Priority 2 participants and 30 per cent of Priority 5 participants had obtained a Level 2 qualification. Almost 20 per cent of participants were still studying towards qualifications at the time of the Wave 2 interview.

Outcomes

The majority of participants (94 per cent) had finished their course when they took part in the Wave 2 ESF Cohort Study.

The study found that the rate of unemployment among Priority 1 and 4 participants fell from 69 per cent in the week before the course to 43 per cent at the time of the Wave 2 interview, while the employment rate rose from six per cent to 27 per cent in the same period. However, the rate of unemployment at the time of interview was similar to the rate among these participants 12 months before the course (42 per cent). As the courses funded by the ESF programme by definition target a group of the population that have become unemployed and have been identified as potentially benefiting from these courses, this is not unexpected. It is also important to note that interviews took place during the economic recession, which may also account for this. Participants with a disability or LTLI were less likely than other groups to have moved into work.

Of those participants who were in employment at the time of the interview and who had been out of work in the week before the course, 22 per cent said that someone on the course had suggested that they apply for their current job, while a similar proportion (22 per cent) had used contacts from the course when applying for their current job.

Of those participants who were unemployed at the Wave 2 interview, most had made job applications (69 per cent) since the Wave 1 interview while over half had been to job interviews (56 per cent). Thirty-three per cent of unemployed participants had used contacts from the course in their job search, while 28 per cent said that someone on the course had suggested that they apply for particular jobs.

Fifty-five per cent of those participants who were employees said that, since they had been on the course, they had improved their job security. Of these, a high proportion (87 per cent) agreed that the course had helped them in this area. The course also seemed particularly beneficial to those employees who had taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer (34 per cent) – with 87 per cent acknowledging that the course had helped them to do this work.

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of European Social Fund programme

The European Social Fund (ESF) is one of the Structural Funds designed to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union. The current programme runs from 2007 to 2013 and geographically covers England and Gibraltar.

The programme supports European Union (EU), national and regional strategies to tackle weaknesses in the labour market. These include: low employment rates and high inactivity rates amongst disadvantaged groups; and, poor basic skill levels and a high number of individuals who lack Level 2 qualifications.

The overall strategic objective of the programme is to support sustainable economic growth and social inclusion in England by contributing to policies to increase the employment rate and to develop a skilled and adaptable workforce.

The ESF programme includes both the Convergence Objective (Cornwall and Isles of Scilly) and the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective (the rest of England and Gibraltar)¹. Within the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective, Merseyside and South Yorkshire receive ring-fenced funding in view of their transitional ‘phasing-in’ status². The programme’s budget is £5 billion (€6 billion) of which the contribution of the ESF is £2.5 billion (€3 billion). Of the ESF funding £164 million (€196 million) is ring-fenced for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and £305 million (€386 million) for the ‘phasing-in’ areas of Merseyside and South Yorkshire³.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has overall responsibility for ESF funds in England and manages this ESF programme at a national level. The programme is managed at regional level by Government Offices (except in London where the London Development Agency performs this role) and is overseen by ESF Regional Committees.

At the regional level, ESF funds are distributed through Co-financing Organisations (CFOs). The Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs)⁴ and DWP are the main co-financing organisations. A small number of other organisations are CFOs (for example, some Regional Development Agencies and local authorities). CFOs bring together ESF and domestic funding for employment and skills so that ESF complements domestic programmes. The CFOs contract with the organisations or ‘providers’ that deliver ESF projects on the ground.

¹ Convergence regions are those eligible for a higher level of funding because their gross per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is less than 75 per cent of the average of the EU25. In England, the only convergence area is Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Regions eligible for funding from the Structural Funds at a lower intensity than those in Convergence areas are covered by the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective.

² ‘Phasing in’ areas are those with Objective 1 status in the 2000-2006 programming period whose per capita GDP exceeds 75 per cent of the average GDP of the EU15. These areas are eligible for regional competitiveness and employment funding at a higher level until 2010.

³ In Merseyside, a complementary strand of delivery also exists, involving six contracts with the Merseyside local authorities that are outside co-financing.

⁴ From 1 April 2010, the Skills Funding Agency took over the ESF CFO responsibilities of the LSC. For ESF provision for 14-19 year olds, the Skills Funding Agency works in partnership with the Young People’s Learning Agency and local authorities.

CFOs are required to match ESF with domestic funding. The intention is that this leads to a more strategic approach to ESF delivery and ensures better alignment of ESF with EU and national employment and skills strategies.

1.2 Aims and objectives of the evaluation

The ESF Cohort Study (2008-2010) is a survey of participants of projects funded by the ESF. The study covers England and aims to provide evidence on the longer-term outcomes of the support provided by the 2007-2013 ESF programme. The Cohort Study will also be used to measure a number of indicators and targets that cannot be captured through respondent monitoring information.

The objectives of the study are to:

- acquire more detailed information on respondents which enables analysis of sub-groups and multiple disadvantages;
- obtain more detail on the type of support offered and the views of respondents on the support they receive;
- understand how individuals come to be on ESF training courses;
- understand what activities they are engaged in on their course; and
- understand their aspirations for their training.

The following research questions will also be addressed:

- What difference has ESF made to the employability and skills of respondents?
- What 'soft outcomes' did respondents gain, in addition to jobs and qualifications?
- What are the outcomes six months after respondents leave ESF and have employment outcomes been sustained?
- How effective is ESF for particular disadvantaged groups (e.g. people with a disability or long-term limiting illness (LTLI), people from ethnic minority groups)?
- Has ESF supported progression at the workplace (e.g. to more skilled and better paid jobs)?

1.3 Evaluation methodology

The ESF Cohort Study involves a large scale longitudinal quantitative survey with two waves of interviews. These are mainly telephone interviews supplemented by a small number of face-to-face interviews with more vulnerable respondents. Wave 1 took place between April and September 2009, during which 10,947 ESF (and match) respondents were interviewed. In Wave 2, which took place between January and March 2010, all respondents from the first wave were contacted again, with interviews being achieved with 7,400 of these ESF and match respondents. (Information about Wave 2 response rates can be found in Appendix B). The Wave 1 report, published on 20 July 2010, focused predominantly on levels of participation in ESF and match provision, and on participants' experiences of the programme⁵. Wave 2 interviews were carried out approximately six months later, providing more information about the longer-term outcomes of participating on ESF courses. Therefore, this report has a greater emphasis on the outcomes of participation, exploring, for example, whether participants have gained qualifications or found work since they started training.

⁵ ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

All differences commented on in this report have been found to be significant at the 95 per cent level. The estimates given represent the mid-point of a range given by their confidence intervals which indicate the range within which the true population value falls. The ESF Cohort Study Technical Report will provide more details about the standard errors for survey estimates.

1.4 Report structure

This report presents the results of the Wave 2 survey. The report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 presents an overview of the characteristics of ESF respondents;
- Chapter 3 considers respondents' expectations and experience of ESF support;
- Chapter 4 explores the qualifications that respondents studied for as part of ESF training;
- Chapter 5 looks at the outcomes of ESF provision, looking at whether ESF respondents found jobs or progressed in their existing employment following their participation in ESF training;
- Chapter 6 reviews the profile of participants in each region, including the demographic characteristics, levels of satisfaction with the course and key outcomes.

2 Respondent characteristics

This chapter considers the characteristics of respondents supported by projects funded by European Social Fund (ESF). The chapter begins with an overview of the ESF Priorities, then considers briefly the profile of respondents, including:

- gender and age;
- ethnicity;
- disability or Long-term limiting illness (LTLI);
- lone parenthood;
- caring responsibilities;
- employment status prior to starting the course; and
- multiple disadvantages.

2.1 Overview of European Social Fund priorities

The ESF programme contains six priorities. There are three key priorities for the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective, which cover the whole of England and Gibraltar except Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. There are also three priorities for the Convergence Objective area or Cornwall and Isles of Scilly. The broader scope of the Convergence Objective priorities reflects the wider range of activities that are eligible within Convergence areas and the higher intensity of Convergence funding.

The ESF Cohort Study covers Priorities 1, 2, 4 and 5. Priorities 3 and 6, which cover technical assistance, are not a focus of the survey.

Priorities 1 and 4 aim to improve the employability and skills of unemployed and inactive people, and tackle barriers to work faced by people with disabilities or health conditions, lone parents, people aged 50 and over, ethnic minorities, people with no or low qualifications, young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and other disadvantaged groups, including people experiencing multiple disadvantages.

The aim of Priorities 2 and 5 is to improve the qualifications and skills of workers without basic skills and with no or low qualifications. These priorities also have a focus on developing managers and workers in small enterprises. Priority 5 also supports Cornwall's higher education and skills strategy.

	Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective (England except Cornwall)	Convergence Objective (Cornwall and Isles of Scilly)
Worklessness	Priority 1: Extending employment opportunities	Priority 4: Tackling barriers to employment
Workforce skills	Priority 2: Developing a skilled and adaptable workforce	Priority 5: Improving the skills of the local workforce
Technical assistance	Priority 3: Technical Assistance	Priority 6: Technical Assistance

Most of the delivery of the ESF programme takes place at a regional level. Each region has its own ESF allocation to fund projects to address its regional jobs and skills needs, within the framework of the two priorities in the England ESF programme.

10 Respondent characteristics

Table 2.1 presents the distribution of ESF Cohort Study respondents by region within priority at the time the sample for the study was drawn. Survey data has been weighted so that it is representative of the profile of participants in Wave 2, according to management information available in April 2009 when the sample for this study was drawn.

Table 2.1 ESF priority, by region

<i>ESF Cohort Study Wave 2</i>						
Region	Priority				Total %	Respondents
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %		
East of England	5	5	N/A	N/A	5	600
London	17	1	N/A	N/A	14	379
East Midlands	8	2	N/A	N/A	7	365
North East	8	2	N/A	N/A	7	377
North West	15	47	N/A	N/A	19	1,106
South East	7	4	N/A	N/A	6	500
South West	10	3	N/A	N/A	8	580
West Midlands	10	10	N/A	N/A	10	779
Yorkshire and the Humber	8	1	N/A	N/A	7	333
Merseyside	8	20	N/A	N/A	10	774
South Yorkshire	4	5	N/A	N/A	4	508
Cornwall	N/A	N/A	100	100	3	1,097
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>3,664</i>	<i>2,641</i>	<i>750</i>	<i>343</i>		<i>7,398</i>

Table 2.2 Region, by funding stream

<i>ESF Cohort Study Wave 2</i>							
Region	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
East of England	5	5	0	3	2	100	5
London	8	19	0	2	0	0	14
East Midlands	8	8	0	6	0	0	7
North East	8	8	0	5	0	0	7
North West	12	15	10	11	60	0	19
South East	5	8	0	4	4	0	6
South West	8	10	0	8	0	0	8
West Midlands	22	7	0	27	2	0	10
Yorkshire and the Humber	4	10	0	0	1	0	7
Merseyside	4	4	90	19	19	0	10
South Yorkshire	9	3	0	0	7	0	4
Cornwall	6	1	0	16	6	0	3
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>2,334</i>	<i>1,952</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>1,724</i>	<i>1,136</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>7,398</i>

Table 2.2 shows a regional breakdown of cases by funding stream within priority. Three types of funding stream have been identified: ESF, match and 'other'. Participants in the 'other' category are on projects funded jointly by ESF and match funding, managed by agencies other than Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

Within Priority 1, more match cases than ESF cases were available when the sample was drawn. As such, Priority 1 totals (which use weighted data) will be weighted towards the match, rather than the ESF sample. It is expected that, as the programme progresses, the proportion of ESF and match cases will even out, and so the final totals for Priority 1 may be less close to the match totals than is currently suggested in the report. Breakdowns by funding stream are presented throughout the report (as in Table 2.2), drawing attention to the main differences between the ESF and match samples.

The availability of Priority 2 match cases was limited at the time when the sample was drawn (in May 2009) – hence, 60 per cent of cases came from the North West region which comprised mostly very young participants. Eighteen per cent of Priority 2 match cases were from Merseyside.⁶ Very few Priority 2 match cases were available in London, the East Midlands, the North East or Yorkshire and the Humber. This point should be borne in mind when considering the Priority 2 match totals throughout the report – they will be currently weighted towards the results for the North West.

These points about the characteristics of the available management information at the time the sample was drawn mean that as the final participant totals for priorities, funding streams and regions change so too will progress towards achieving specific targets.

2.2 Profile of European Social Fund participants

This section provides an overview of the demographic profile of ESF and match participants. More detailed information about the profile of participants (and how this compares to the targets set) can be found in the Wave 1 report⁷. This section presents results for the 7,400 Wave 2 respondents only, while the Wave 1 report provides information about all 10,947 respondents who took part in the Wave 1 interviews. Importantly, no significant differences have been found in the profile of Wave 2 respondents compared with Wave 1, in terms of any of the characteristics reviewed in this chapter.

2.2.1 Gender and age profile of participants

The gender profile of ESF Cohort Study respondents is shown in Tables 2.3 and 2.4. As noted above, survey data has been weighted so that it is representative of the profile of ESF participants (according to management information available in April 2009 when the sample for this study was drawn).

The rate of participation among women was 37 per cent overall. It was lowest in Priority 1 (35 per cent) and highest in Priority 5 (53 per cent; Table 2.3). There were similar proportions of females engaged in the ESF funding stream (38 per cent) in Priorities 1 and 4 and the match funding stream (35 per cent). This was also the case in Priorities 2 and 5 where 45 per cent of the ESF funding stream's participants were women, compared with 48 per cent in the match funding stream (Table 2.4).

⁶ Management information from January 2010 showed that the North West and Merseyside were still the largest regions in terms of participant numbers, comprising around one-third of Priority 2 participants. (However, in terms of participant targets these regions represent only about a fifth of Priority 2 participants.)

⁷ ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

12 Respondent characteristics

Table 2.3 Age and gender, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>						
Age and gender	Priority				Total %	Respondents
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %		
16-19	13	26	9	9	15	1,119
20-24	25	24	14	10	24	967
25-34	18	15	18	22	17	1,188
35-49	28	24	38	40	28	2,433
50+	16	12	21	19	16	1,677
Male	65	54	59	47	63	3,947
Female	35	46	41	53	37	3,453
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,666	2,641	750	343	7,400	

Table 2.4 Age and gender, by funding stream

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Age and gender	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
16-19	13	14	6	1	36		15
20-24	13	28	16	7	31	5	24
25-34	21	16	32	20	13	20	17
35-49	37	25	36	47	14	45	28
50+	16	17	10	25	6	29	16
Male	62	65	67	55	52	71	63
Female	38	35	33	45	48	29	37
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,334	1,952	130	1,724	1,136	124	7,400

Nineteen per cent of Priority 1 participants were aged 50 or over, while the achieved proportion in Priority 4 was 16 per cent⁸. In Priorities 2 and 5, the proportions of participants aged over 50 were 16 per cent and 21 per cent (Table 2.3). (Notably, management information data at the time of writing this report shows that 19 per cent of Priority 2 participants were aged over 50.) A significantly higher proportion of people aged over 50 were engaged in the ESF funding stream (25 per cent) in Priorities 2 and 5 compared with the match funding stream (six per cent). The Priority 2 and 5 match sample was younger in profile, with 67 per cent of respondents aged under 25 (Table 2.4). Overall the match sample was much younger, driven by the young age profile in the North West region.

⁸ Targets for the proportions of participants aged over 50, who are engaged in ESF provision, exclude young people aged 16-19. The figures cited in Table 2.3 include young people aged 16-19.

More detailed information about participation by gender and age – including how this compares to the targets set – can be found in the Wave 1 report⁹.

2.2.2 Ethnicity profile of participants

The majority of ESF participants (83 per cent) were white (Table 2.5). Those who classified themselves as being from an ethnic minority group accounted for 17 per cent of participants. Seven per cent of participants were Asian or Asian British and the same proportion of people were black or black British (seven per cent). Two per cent of participants were mixed race.

The proportion of ethnic minority groups varied by priority. Priority 1 projects had the highest proportion of participants from ethnic minority groups (20 per cent). (There were similar proportions of ethnic minorities among ESF and match participants in Priorities 1 and 4 – Table 2.6.) Seven per cent of participants from Priority 2 were from an ethnic minority group. A higher proportion of ethnic minority participants had been engaged in the ESF funding stream in Priorities 2 and 5, compared with the match funding stream – ten per cent of ESF participants were from ethnic minority groups, compared with only five per cent in the match funding stream (Table 2.6). Two per cent of participants in both Priorities 4 and 5 were from ethnic minority groups.

Table 2.5 Ethnicity, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>						
Ethnic group	Priority				Total %	Respondents
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %		
White	80	93	98	98	83	6,283
Indian	2	2	0	0	2	144
Pakistani	4	1	0	0	3	202
Bangladeshi	1	0	0	0	1	72
Other Asian	1	1	0	0	1	77
All Asian	8	4	0	0	7	495
Black Caribbean	4	1	0	0	3	154
Black African	4	1	0	0	4	205
Other black	1	0	0	0	0	18
All black	9	1	0	0	7	377
Mixed race	2	1	1	1	2	132
Chinese	0	0	0	0	0	10
Other	1	0	0	0	1	58
All Ethnic Minority Groups	20	7	2	2	17	1,072
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,646	2,620	748	341	7,355	

⁹ ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

Table 2.6 Ethnicity, by funding stream

ESF Cohort Study

Ethnicity	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match 5	Other %	
White	79	81	81	90	95	93	83
Indian	3	2	4	3	1	5	2
Pakistani	4	4	0	1	1	0	3
Bangladeshi	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
Other Asian	1	2	0	1	0	1	1
All Asian	9	8	5	5	3	5	7
Black Caribbean	3	4	0	1	0	0	3
Black African	4	4	11	1	0	0	4
Other black	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
All black	8	8	12	3	1	0	7
Mixed race	3	2	1	1	1	1	2
Chinese	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Other	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
All Ethnic Minority Groups	21	19	19	10	5	7	17
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,324	1,941	129	1,704	1,134	123	7,355

More detailed information about participation by ethnicity – including how this compares to the targets set – can be found in the Wave 1 report¹⁰.

2.2.3 Participants with a disability or long-term limiting illness

Of the total sample, 32 per cent of participants had a long-term illness, health problem or disability which limited their daily activities or the work that they could do. The proportion of participants with a disability or long-term limiting illness (LTLI) varied by priority. For example, while 37 per cent of Priority 1 participants had a disability, among Priority 2 participants the figure was eight per cent.

Of those participants who had a disability or LTLI, 50 per cent had a physical disability, 42 per cent had an LTLI and 24 per cent had a mental health problem (Table 2.7).

¹⁰ ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

Table 2.7 Participants with a disability or LTLI, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>						
Disability	Priority				Total %	Respondents
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %		
No disability or LTLI	63	92	40	92	68	5,491
Physical disability	50	40	54	51	50	961
Learning disability/difficulty	5	7	8	8	5	111
Mental health problem	24	17	30	17	24	420
Long term illness	41	50	40	43	42	745
Another type of disability or LTLI	4	1	2	4	3	52
Any disability or LTLI	37	8	60	8	32	1,853
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>3,630</i>	<i>2,627</i>	<i>745</i>	<i>342</i>	<i>7,344</i>	

Please note that participants were able to say an unlimited number of disabilities and illnesses so percentages sum to more than 100.

A higher proportion of match participants (41 per cent) in Priorities 1 and 4 had a disability or LTLI, compared with ESF participants (29 per cent)¹¹. By contrast, the Priorities 2 and 5 ESF sample had a higher proportion of participants with a disability or LTLI than the match sample (11 per cent compared with six per cent) – this is perhaps related to the younger age profile of the Priority 2 match sample (as there tends to be a lower incidence of disability among younger people, Table 2.8).

Table 2.8 Disability and LTLI, by funding stream

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Disability	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
No disability or LTLI	71	59	83	89	94	92	68
Physical disability	52	50	50	49	34	51	50
Learning disability/difficulty	7	5	5	3	11	0	5
Mental health problem	23	24	14	17	18	0	24
Long term illness	36	42	38	47	51	49	42
Another type of disability or LTLI	3	3	6	2	1	0	3
Any disability or LTLI	29	41	17	11	6	8	32
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>2,307</i>	<i>1,941</i>	<i>127</i>	<i>1,714</i>	<i>1,131</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>7,344</i>

Please note that participants were able to say an unlimited number of disabilities and illnesses so percentages sum to more than 100.

¹¹ This is likely to be due to the fact that some of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) match participants were drawn from the Pathways to Work programme, which dealt exclusively with Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) customers.

More detailed information about participation by people with a disability or LTLI can be found in the Wave 1 report¹², which also reviews how rates of participation compare to the targets set.

2.2.4 Participants who are lone parents and carers

Overall, eight per cent of ESF participants were lone parents (Table 2.9). The proportion of participants who were lone parents varied by priority. Nine per cent of Priorities 1 and 4 participants were lone parents.

Table 2.9 Lone parent status, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>						
Lone parent status	Priority				Total %	Respondents
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %		
Not lone parent	91	95	91	96	92	6,709
Lone parent	9	5	9	4	8	666
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,658	2,628	750	339	7,375	

Within Priorities 1 and 4, a higher proportion of ESF participants were lone parents (12 per cent), compared with match participants (eight per cent, Table 2.10).

Table 2.10 Lone parent status by funding stream within Priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Lone parent status	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Not lone parent	88	92	92	95	95	100	92
Lone parent	12	8	8	5	5	0	8
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,328	1,950	130	1,711	1,132	124	7,375

Of the total sample, seven per cent of ESF participants claimed to have caring responsibilities, ranging from six per cent in Priority 2 to nine per cent in Priority 4 (Table 2.11).

¹² ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

Table 2.11 Caring responsibility status, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>						
Caring responsibilities	Priority				Total %	Respondents
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %		
Not carer	93	94	91	92	93	6,757
Carer	7	6	9	8	7	627
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,661	2,633	749	341	7,384	

A slightly higher proportion of carers in Priorities 1 and 4 were in the ESF funding stream (nine per cent), compared with the match funding stream (six per cent). Within Priorities 2 and 5, the proportion of carers was higher in the ESF funding stream (ten per cent) compared with the match funding stream (four per cent, Table 2.12). This may be due to the younger age profile of the Priority 2 match sample (as younger people were less likely to be carers).

Table 2.12 Caring responsibility, by funding stream

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Caring responsibilities	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Not carer	91	94	94	90	96	96	93
Carer	9	6	6	10	4	4	7
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,331	1,949	130	1,716	1,134	124	7,384

More detailed information about rates of participation among lone parents and carers – including a discussion about how this compares to the targets set – can be found in the Wave 1 report¹³.

2.2.5 Employment status of participants in the week before the course started

All respondents were asked about what they were doing in the week prior to starting the ESF course¹⁴. Respondents were categorised based on what their main activity was in the week before the course (for more details please see Appendix C).

¹³ ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

¹⁴ Information about employment status by region is available in Tables A.8 and A.9.

Table 2.13 Employment status, by priority (in week before course)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status	Priority				Total %	Respondents
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %		
NEET and aged 16-19 years	9	5	5	4	9	561
Long term unemployed (aged 20+)	36	1	16	0	30	1,170
Unemployed (less than 12 months) (aged 20+)	25	7	19	2	22	1,229
Economically inactive (aged 20+)	25	9	54	5	23	1,591
In employment	6	79	6	89	18	2,849
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,666	2,641	750	343	7,400	

Table 2.14 Employment status, by funding stream (in week before course)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
NEET and aged 16-19 years	9	10	5	0	7	0	9
Long-term unemployed (aged 20+)	29	37	27	1	1	0	30
Unemployed (less than 12 months) (aged 20+)	33	21	44	14	2	33	22
Economically inactive (aged 20+)	23	27	17	4	11	3	23
In employment	7	5	7	81	80	64	18
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,334	1,952	130	1,724	1,136	124	7,400

Table 2.15 Employment status by age and gender (in week before course)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
NEET and aged 16-19 years	57	0	0	0	0	8	9	9
Long-term unemployed (aged 20+)	0	38	37	33	30	32	25	30
Unemployed (less than 12 months) (aged 20+)	0	35	26	21	19	27	12	22
Economically inactive (aged 20+)	23	11	19	29	34	17	32	23
In employment	20	17	18	18	16	15	22	18
All unemployed	0	73	63	54	49	60	37	51
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,119	967	1,188	2,433	1,677	3,947	3,453	7,400

Nine per cent of participants were NEET and aged 16 to 19 in the week before training, accounting for 57 per cent of participants aged 16 to 19 (see Tables 2.13, 2.14 and 2.15). There was some variation in the proportion of NEET young people by priority; in Priorities 1 and 4, the proportions of young people who were NEET were nine per cent and five per cent respectively. In Priorities 2 and 5, the proportions were five per cent and four per cent respectively (Table 2.13). Among ESF and match participants in Priorities 1 and 4, the proportion of young people who were NEET was similar. However, in Priorities 2 and 5, the proportion of young people who were NEET was higher in the match sample (seven per cent) compared with the ESF sample (0 per cent) (Table 2.14). There was a higher proportion of young people aged 16 to 19 in the Priority 2 and 5 match sample, compared with the ESF sample (see Table 2.14), so this difference is unsurprising.

Fifty-one per cent of participants were unemployed (30 per cent were long-term unemployed, while 22 per cent had been unemployed for less than 12 months)¹⁵. Sixty per cent of Priority 1 participants were unemployed, as were 35 per cent of Priority 4 participants. Levels of unemployment within the Priority 1 and 4 ESF and match samples were similar (61 per cent compared with 59 per cent), although a higher proportion of match participants were long-term unemployed (37 per cent) compared with ESF participants (29 per cent)¹⁶. Unemployment varied by gender, with men (60 per cent) more likely than women (37 per cent) to be unemployed. There was also a higher incidence of unemployment among younger people (Table 2.15).

Participants who were not in employment or unemployment were categorised as economically inactive. This group includes those who were in education and training (such as students), as well as those who were looking after the home or family full-time and those who could not work due to a disability or illness but excludes young people (aged 16-19 years) who were NEET. Twenty-five per cent of Priority 1 participants and 54 per cent of Priority 4 participants were economically inactive. The Priority 1 and 4 match sample had a slightly higher proportion of participants who were economically inactive (27 per cent) compared with the ESF sample (23 per cent). Women (32 per cent) were more likely than men (17 per cent) to be economically inactive¹⁷. Economic inactivity also varied by age, with lower rates amongst those aged 25 to 49 years (Table 2.15).

It is likely that the lower proportion of Priority 1 participants who were inactive, and the higher proportion who were unemployed, reflects the higher proportion of unemployed people in the population more generally, due to the recession. (The MI data indicates that the programme is likely to achieve the target for the number of inactive participants, but not the target for the proportion, due to the higher than expected number of unemployed participants).

¹⁵ The unemployed category included those who were actively looking for work or wanting a job, and who were aged over 20. (Unemployed people aged 16 to 19 were classified as NEET.) The long-term unemployed included those who had been out of work for more than 12 months.

¹⁶ This may be linked to differences in contract types. A large proportion of match participants were on New Deal programmes; the majority of New Deal participants aged under 25 would have been unemployed for six months or over, while those participants aged over 25 would have been unemployed for 18 months or over.

¹⁷ Notably, some of the regions with relatively higher proportions of economically inactive participants also had relatively higher proportions of female participants (see Chapter 6 for analysis by region).

2.3 Profile of European Social Fund participants in employment

This section presents a profile of participants in employment, looking at the types of jobs they were doing. Eighteen per cent of ESF participants were in employment, although this figure was much higher in Priority 2 (79 per cent) and Priority 5 (89 per cent) (Table 2.13).

It may have been expected that the proportion of participants in employment in Priority 2 (and to a lesser extent in Priority 5) would have been even higher, given the focus of these priorities on developing the skills of the workforce. It should be noted, however, that those regions with the highest numbers of Priority 2 participants (particularly, the North West, the West Midlands and Merseyside) had relatively lower rates of employment compared with some of the other regions, which could be skewing results (see Chapter 6).

Furthermore, the lower than expected employment rate of Priority 2 participants could be due in part to the presence in the sample of participants of Response to Redundancy projects, who may have become recently redundant. (Indeed, Priorities 2 and 5 had an objective to target people facing redundancy, which may have become an increasing focus during the economic recession.)

This section considers the profile of participants in employment, and displays results for participants in Priorities 2 and 5 only.

2.3.1 Employment status – socio-economic group

In total, 23 per cent of Priority 2 participants and 28 per cent of Priority 5 participants who were employed were in occupations classified as managerial or professional occupations. Among Priority 2 participants, 39 per cent were in lower supervisory and technical or semi-routine occupations, while 18 per cent were employed in routine occupations. In Priority 5, these proportions were 40 per cent and 11 per cent respectively (Tables 2.16 and 2.17).

The proportion of participants in higher/lower managerial and professional occupations was higher in the ESF sample (41 per cent in Priority 2 and 39 per cent in Priority 5) than in the match sample (14 per cent in Priority 2 and 13 per cent in Priority 5) – perhaps due to the older age profile of the ESF sample. (This may also be a result of ESF in Priorities 2 and 5 increasingly targeting people facing redundancy, including those in managerial positions.) Moreover, a smaller proportion of ESF, compared with match participants were employed in lower supervisory and technical/semi-routine jobs and routine occupations (Tables 2.16 and 2.17).

Table 2.16 Socio-economic group, by funding stream (Priority 2)

Socio-economic group	ESF Cohort Study			
	Funding stream within priority			Total %
	Priority 2			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Higher/lower managerial and professions	41	14	57	23
Intermediate occupations/small employers	17	21	16	20
Lower supervisory and technical/semi-routine	34	42	25	39
Routine occupations	8	23	2	18
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,248	860	77	2,185

Table 2.17 Socio-economic group, by funding stream (Priority 5)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Socio-economic group	Funding stream within priority		
	Priority 5		
	ESF %	Match %	Total %
Higher/lower managerial and professions	39	13	28
Intermediate occupations/small employers	23	19	21
Lower supervisory and technical/semi-routine	30	53	40
Routine occupations	8	15	11
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	198	107	305

2.3.2 Income

Most participants reported an income which was the equivalent of between £5,000 and £9,999 (33 per cent) or £10,000 to £14,999 (29 per cent) per year (Table 2.18).

ESF participants tended to earn more than match participants, reflecting the generally higher socio-economic status of this group. For example, only five per cent of ESF participants earned under £5,000 per year, compared with 16 per cent of match participants. Moreover, 27 per cent of ESF participants earned over £20,000 per year, compared with only six per cent of match participants.

Participants from 'other' programmes tended to earn higher amounts than participants on ESF or match programmes. For example, 26 per cent earned between £30,000 and £49,000 compared with seven per cent of ESF participants and one per cent of match participants (Table 2.18). (It should be noted, however, that the base size of the 'other' sample is relatively small.)

Table 2.18 Income, by funding stream

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>				
Income	Funding stream within priority			Total %
	Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Under £5,000	5	16	0	12
£5,000-£9,999	18	41	4	33
£10,000-£14,999	31	28	29	29
£15,000-£19,999	19	8	17	12
£20,000-£29,999	18	5	20	9
£30,000-£49,999	7	1	26	4
£50,000-£74,999	0	0	3	0
£75,000 or more	0	0	0	0
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,271	845	60	2,176

2.3.3 Hours of work

Seventy-eight per cent of ESF participants who were employees worked full-time, while 22 per cent worked part-time (i.e. less than 31 hours per week). There were no significant differences in the working hours of participants in the ESF sample, compared with the match sample (Table 2.19).

Table 2.19 Part-time/full-time (Priorities 2 and 5)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>				
Hours of work	Funding stream within priority			Total %
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Over 31 hours a week	80	77	89	78
Less than 31 hours a week, but more than 16 hours	17	17	10	17
Less than 16 hours a week	3	6	1	5
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,442	960	77	2,479

Women were more likely than men to work part-time in the Priority 2 sample (32 per cent compared with 11 per cent) and in the Priority 5 sample (40 per cent compared with ten per cent (Tables 2.20 and 2.21)).

Table 2.20 Part-time/full-time by gender (Priority 2)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Hours of work	Priority 2		Total %
	Male %	Female %	
Over 31 hours a week	89	68	78
Less than 31 hours a week, but more than 16 hours	8	25	16
Less than 16 hours a week	2	8	5
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,107	1,068	2,175

Table 2.21 Part-time/full-time, by gender (Priority 5)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Hours of work	Priority 5		Total %
	Male %	Female %	
Over 31 hours a week	90	60	74
Less than 31 hours a week, but more than 16 hours	7	33	21
Less than 16 hours a week	3	7	5
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	138	166	304

2.3.4 Size of employer

Participants were more likely to work for small and medium-sized employers, with most working at businesses with less than 250 employees (Table 2.22). A quarter (25 per cent) worked for micro businesses (1-9 employees). Twenty-five per cent worked for small businesses (10-24 employees) and 35 per cent worked for medium-sized businesses (25-249 employees).

Match participants were more likely than ESF participants to work for smaller employers. For example, while 57 per cent of match participants (who were in employment) worked for organisations employing fewer than 25 members of staff, the same was true of only 36 per cent of ESF participants (Table 2.22).

Table 2.22 Size of employer (Priorities 2 and 5)

Size of employer	Funding stream within priority			
	Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	Total %
1-9 employees	16	29	20	25
10-24 employees	20	27	21	25
25-249 employees	41	31	49	35
250-499 employees	11	4	4	6
500 or more employees	12	8	6	9
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,253	884	67	2,204

ESF Cohort Study

2.3.5 Type of contract

Eighty-five per cent of participants who were employees were in permanent jobs (Table 2.23). The remaining participants were in temporary or casual jobs (eight per cent) or had another type of contract (seven per cent).

Match participants were slightly more likely to have a temporary or casual job (ten per cent) than ESF participants (four per cent) (Table 2.23).

Table 2.23 Type of contract (Priorities 2 and 5)

Type of contract	Funding stream within priority			
	Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	Total %
A permanent job	89	84	89	85
A temporary or casual job	4	10	4	8
Other	6	7	7	7
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,444	967	77	2,488

ESF Cohort Study

2.4 Profile of unemployed/inactive participants

This section presents a profile of unemployed and economically inactive participants. It looks at the barriers to employment faced by participants, as well as whether they were looking for or wanting a job in the week before the course and, if so, the types of job search activities that they were involved in. The majority of participants who were not in work were taking part in projects under Priorities 1 and 4, which had a focus on promoting employability and tackling barriers to employment.

2.4.1 Length of unemployment

Respondents who were not in work in the week before starting their course were asked when they had last been in employment. Twenty per cent of Priority 1 and 4 participants who were not in work had been out of work for less than six months; 33 per cent had been out of work between six months and two years; 32 per cent had been out of work for two years or more; and 16 per cent had never had a job (Table 2.24). (Most Priority 2 and 5 participants were in employment.)

Table 2.24 Length of time out of work (Priorities 1 and 4)

Length of time out of work	<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
	Funding stream within priority			Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Less than 3 months	15	5	20	8
Between 3 and less than 6 months	13	11	19	12
Between 6 and less than 12 months	17	17	15	17
Between 12 months and less than 2 years	13	16	13	15
2 years or more	27	34	21	32
Never had a (full-time) job	15	17	12	16
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,935	1,724	116	3,775

2.4.2 Whether wanted work

The majority of participants were not in employment in Priority 1 (94 per cent) and Priority 4 (94 per cent). Of those who were not in work, 78 per cent were looking for a job and a further 14 per cent wanted to work (but were not actively looking). Only eight per cent of participants, who were out of work, were not looking for or wanting a job (Table 2.25). This proportion was higher among Priority 4 participants at 19 per cent, perhaps reflecting the older age profile of this priority; participants aged over 50 were slightly less likely than those in other groups to be actively looking for work.

Table 2.25 Whether looking for work, by priority (in week before course)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Whether looking for work	Priority		Total %
	1 %	4 %	
Looking for work	79	51	78
Wanting work	14	30	14
Not looking for or wanting work	8	19	8
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,149	675	3,824

ESF participants in Priorities 1 and 4 were more likely than match participants to be looking for work (84 per cent compared with 76 per cent). By contrast, match participants were more likely to want work, but not be actively looking (15 per cent compared with ten per cent) or not looking for or wanting work (nine per cent compared with six per cent) (Table 2.26).

Table 2.26 Whether looking for work, by funding stream (in week before course)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>				
Whether looking for work	Funding stream within priority			Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Looking for work	84	76	86	78
Wanting work	10	15	9	14
Not looking for or wanting work	6	9	5	8
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,086	1,865	124	4,075

Men who were not in employment were more likely to be looking for work (82 per cent) than women who were out of work (70 per cent). Women were more likely to say that they were not looking for, or wanting work (13 per cent), than men (six per cent) (Table 2.27).

Table 2.27 Whether looking for work, by gender (in week before course)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Whether looking for work	Male %	Female %	Total %
Looking for work	82	70	78
Wanting work	12	18	14
Not looking for or wanting work	6	13	8
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,165	1,659	3,824

2.4.3 Barriers to employment

As part of the questionnaire, participants who were looking for work before they started the course were asked what, if anything, made it difficult for them to find work.

Of participants who were looking for work, 56 per cent said that they did ‘not have the right skills’, while a similar proportion (56 per cent) said that they ‘did not have any recent experience of working’. An even higher proportion, 68 per cent, said that there ‘weren’t any jobs where they lived’. Forty per cent faced problems with transport and 17 per cent of those with children could not find suitable or affordable childcare (Table 2.28).

Table 2.28 Barriers to work, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Barriers	Priority		Total %
	1 %	4 %	
Did not have the right skills	56	47	56
Weren’t any jobs where I live	68	60	68
No recent experience of working	57	40	56
Could not find suitable/affordable childcare (parents of dependent children only)	17	23	17
Problems with transport or the cost of transport	40	38	40
Other	41	37	41
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,256	685	3,941

Male participants (91 per cent) were more likely to face any of these barriers than females (86 per cent). In particular, men were more likely than women to say that there ‘weren’t any jobs where they live’ (71 per cent compared with 60 per cent) and that they faced problems with transport (41 per cent compared with 38 per cent). By contrast, women were more likely than men to have problems finding suitable or affordable childcare (24 per cent compared with nine per cent) (Table 2.29).

Table 2.29 Barriers to work, by age and gender

Barriers	Age					Gender	
	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-49	50+	Male	Female
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Did not have the right skills	68	60	65	49	43	57	55
Weren't any jobs where I live	70	76	70	61	62	71	60
No recent experience of working	71	66	57	50	41	54	60
Could not find suitable/affordable childcare (parents of dependent children only)	13	7	23	17	13	9	24
Problems with transport or the cost of transport	43	45	43	35	33	41	38
Other	43	42	42	44	32		
Any barrier	95	96	94	84	80	91	86
No barrier	5	4	6	16	20	9	14
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	790	598	579	1,145	819	2,229	1,712

Participants in the younger age categories were more likely to face barriers to employment. For example, young people aged 16 to 19 (71 per cent) and 20 to 24 (66 per cent) were more likely than people in older age groups to lack recent experience of working (between 41 per cent and 56 per cent of people aged 25 and over faced this barrier). People aged 35 to 49 (49 per cent) and those aged over 50 (43 per cent) were less likely than younger people aged 16 to 19 (68 per cent) to feel that they did not have the right skills (Table 2.29).

There were several differences in the barriers faced by people from disadvantaged groups (Table 2.30). For example, 42 per cent of white people experienced transport difficulties, compared to 29 per cent of people from ethnic minority groups. As may have been expected, lone parents were more likely to have problems finding suitable or affordable childcare (26 per cent) than parents with partners (12 per cent).

Table 2.30 Barriers to work, by disadvantaged groups

Barriers	ESF Cohort Study										
	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	Not ethnic minority %	Ethnic minority %	No disability or LTLI %	Has disability or LTLI %	Has qualifications %	No qualifications %	Total %
Did not have the right skills	55	64	57	43	55	58	59	50	53	70	56
Weren't any jobs where I live	68	61	68	66	69	63	73	60	68	66	68
No recent experience of working	56	60	57	50	55	63	60	51	56	57	56
Could not find suitable/affordable childcare (parents of dependent children only)	12	26	17	20	17	17	20	12	16	20	17
Problems with transport or the cost of transport	40	36	39	43	42	29	42	36	39	42	40
Other	40	45	41	42	44	30	41	40	40	44	41
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,563	370	3,624	311	3,192	728	2,453	1,448	3,337	602	3,941

2.4.4 Attitudes to work

Respondents who were out of work were also asked whether they thought that work was important. Most respondents said that work was very important (72 per cent) with 22 per cent saying it was quite important, and small proportions of respondents saying that work was not important (four per cent) or not at all important (two per cent) (Table 2.31).

Table 2.31 Attitudes to work (Priorities 1 and 4)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>				
	Funding stream within priority			Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			
Whether thought that work was important	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Very important	79	70	81	72
Quite important	18	24	17	22
Not important	3	4	2	4
Not at all important	1	2	0	2
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,941	1,749	117	3,807

ESF participants in Priorities 1 and 4 were more likely to think work was very important (79 per cent) than Match participants (70 per cent). There were few differences in attitudes to work by demographic group, although participants with a disability or LTLI were slightly less likely than those without to regard work as very important.

2.5 Participants with multiple disadvantages

The ESF programme targets those facing more than one type of labour market disadvantage. This section builds on the analysis of disadvantage by looking at the number of participants who fall into more than one disadvantaged group. Each of the following categories, which are described in more detail in the previous sections, has been considered a ‘disadvantaged group’:

- ethnic minorities;
- those who do not normally speak English at home;
- those with a disability or LTLI;
- lone parents;
- those with caring responsibilities;
- those aged over 50;
- the long-term unemployed (for 12 months or more);
- young people classified as NEET.

In addition, those with no qualifications have been counted as having a disadvantage. Chapter 4 provides more information about the qualification levels of participants.

Most people taking part in the programme faced at least one disadvantage, including 86 per cent of Priority 1 and 88 per cent of Priority 4 participants (Table 2.32). Fewer people in the Priority 2 (39 per cent) and Priority 5 (43 per cent) programmes faced disadvantages. The lower levels of multiple disadvantage within Priorities 2 and 5 compared with Priorities 1 and 4 reflect the focus of Priorities 1 and 4 on disadvantaged people outside the labour market. By contrast Priorities 2 and 5 have a focus on those in work, who tend to be less disadvantaged.

Over half of all Priority 1 participants (57 per cent) faced multiple disadvantages (i.e. two or more). This figure rose to 65 per cent among Priority 4 participants (Table 2.32).

Table 2.32 Multiple disadvantage, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>						
Disadvantages	Priority				Total %	Respondents
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %		
No disadvantage	14	61	12	57	21	2,080
1 disadvantage	29	27	24	33	29	2,287
2 disadvantages	26	8	35	8	23	1,615
3 disadvantages	19	2	20	2	16	895
4 disadvantages	10	1	9	0	8	400
5+ disadvantages	3	0	1		2	123
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,666	2,641	750	343	7,400	

Levels of disadvantage also varied by funding stream. Match participants in Priorities 1 and 4 were slightly more likely than ESF participants to face disadvantages. For example, while 16 per cent of ESF participants faced no disadvantages, the same was true of only 12 per cent of match participants¹⁸. By contrast, among Priority 2 and 5 participants, the match sample had a lower incidence of disadvantage – 68 per cent of match participants faced no disadvantages, compared with 48 per cent of ESF participants (Table 2.33).

¹⁸ This variation may be linked to the fact that ESF participants in Priorities 1 and 4 were more likely than match participants to say that they signed up to the course voluntarily (rather than saying that they ‘were made’ to go on it).

Table 2.33 Participants with multiple disadvantages, by funding stream

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Multiple disadvantages	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
No disadvantage	16	12	27	48	68	54	21
1 disadvantage	30	28	36	34	24	35	29
2 disadvantages	28	26	23	12	6	9	23
3 disadvantages	17	20	8	4	2	1	16
4 disadvantages	6	11	4	1	1	1	8
5+ disadvantages	3	3	1	0	0		2
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,334	1,952	130	1,724	1,136	124	7,400

There was also variation by age, with older participants facing higher numbers of disadvantages. This is perhaps unsurprising as being over 50 was itself counted as a type of disadvantage, as were several other characteristics associated with being older, such as having caring responsibilities (Table 2.34).

Women were slightly more likely than men to have multiple disadvantages – again, this may be due to some of the types of disadvantage being associated with being female (for example, being a lone parent or a returner to the labour market) (Table 2.34).

Table 2.34 Participants with multiple disadvantages by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Multiple disadvantages	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
No disadvantage	30	33	23	18	0	23	19	21
1 disadvantage	42	34	30	25	13	30	26	29
2 disadvantages	19	19	26	27	24	22	24	23
3 disadvantages	7	11	14	17	33	15	19	16
4 disadvantages	2	3	5	11	21	8	8	8
5+ disadvantages	1	1	2	2	8	2	3	2
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,119	967	1,188	2,433	1,677	3,947	3,453	7,400

A breakdown of multiple disadvantage by region is shown in Tables A.12 and A.13.

3 Expectations and experience of European Social Fund support

This chapter considers participants' expectations and experiences of European Social Fund (ESF) support. The chapter begins with an overview of the range of activities funded by ESF, then examines the following:

- whether participants finished the course or left early (Section 3.2);
- why people went on the course (Section 3.3);
- the length of time people spent on their courses, and the intensity of the training (Section 3.4);
- the skills gained or improved (Sections 3.5 and 3.6);
- help looking for work (Section 3.7);
- help received with caring responsibilities as part of the course (Section 3.8);
- satisfaction with the course (Section 3.9); and
- awareness of the ESF programme (Section 3.10).

3.1 Overview of European Social Fund activities

This section outlines the various activities funded under each ESF priority.

Within Priorities 1 and 4, which aim to increase employment and to reduce unemployment and economic inactivity, funded activities include:

- job search help, advice and guidance;
- work preparation activities, including work placements;
- advice on self-employment and entrepreneurship;
- skills for life, including basic skills of literacy, numeracy, English for Speakers of Other Languages and ICT;
- vocational training and qualifications for employability;
- job brokerage;
- access to childcare; and
- interventions for people at risk of redundancy.

In addition, various activities are funded under Priorities 1 and 4 to support 14 to 19 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Priorities 2 and 5 have an objective to develop and improve the skills of the workforce. Specific activities include:

- supporting access to and provision of apprenticeships;
- skills for life, including basic skills of literacy, numeracy, English for Speakers of Other Languages and ICT;
- training leading to qualifications at levels 2 and 3; and
- activities to support access to and progression from foundation level up to Level 3.

Priority 5 also supports activities to contribute to the strategy for Higher Education and Skills in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

3.2 Course completion and early leavers

The majority of participants (81 per cent) had already finished their course when they took part in the Wave 1 ESF Cohort Study. At the time of the Wave 2 interview 95 per cent of participants were no longer on their course. Most stayed to the end of their course (73 per cent), while a smaller proportion left early (27 per cent). There was some variation by priority, with participants in Priority 2 (90 per cent) and Priority 5 (90 per cent) more likely to complete their courses than Priority 1 (70 per cent) and Priority 4 (74 per cent) participants. Priority 2 and 5 participants were mostly in employment and, in some cases, would have been attending the course as part of their job. This is a potential reason for participants from these priorities being less likely to leave courses early.

Table 3.1 Course completion, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Course completion	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
Still on course	3	18	6	9	5
No longer on course	97	82	94	91	95
Early leavers					
Finished the course	70	90	74	90	73
Left the course early	30	10	26	10	27
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,666	2,641	750	343	7,400

Please note that participants were able to say an unlimited number of reasons for leaving the course early so percentages sum to more than 100.

In addition, the differences observed in the proportion of participants completing their course by priority may be due to the fact that, in general, participants in Priorities 1 and 4 faced more disadvantages than those in Priorities 2 and 5 (See Section 2.5). Generally, the more disadvantages faced by respondents, the more likely they were to leave the course early. For example, 38 per cent of participants with five or more disadvantages left the course early, compared with 22 per cent with no disadvantages (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Course completion by number of disadvantages

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Course completion	Number of disadvantages						Total %
	None %	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5+ %	
Early leavers							
Finished the course	78	74	70	70	68	62	73
Left the course early	22	26	30	30	32	38	27
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,936	2,122	1,502	893	340	108	6,901

Please note that participants were able to say an unlimited number of reasons for leaving the course early so percentages sum to more than 100.

Match participants in Priorities 2 and 5 were more likely than ESF participants to leave the course early (12 per cent compared with eight per cent). There were no significant differences in the proportions of ESF and match participants leaving the course early in Priorities 1 and 4 (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Course completion by funding stream within Priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Course completion	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Still on course	4	3	5	7	22	1	5
No longer on course	96	97	95	93	78	99	95
Early leavers							
Finished the course	69	70	78	92	88	96	73
Left the course early	31	30	22	8	12	4	27
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,334	1,952	130	1,724	1,136	124	7,400

Please note that participants were able to say an unlimited number of reasons for leaving the course early so percentages sum to more than 100.

There were no significant differences in the proportion of early leavers by gender or ethnicity. The Wave 1 report presents additional information about why participants left the course early¹⁹.

3.3 Why people went on the course

When asked why they went on the course, around a third of participants (32 per cent) said that they were 'made to go on it'. This was higher among Priority 1 (37 per cent) and Priority 4 (23 per cent) participants than Priority 2 (eight per cent) and Priority 5 (nine per cent) participants. Just under one-third of participants were 'given the opportunity to go on it' (31 per cent) or 'decided myself to go on it' (30 per cent) (Table 3.4).

¹⁹ ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

Table 3.4 Why went on course, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Why went on course	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
Made to go on it	37	8	23	9	32
Persuaded to go on it	7	3	7	6	6
Given the opportunity to go on it	28	41	34	39	31
Decide myself to go on it	27	47	35	44	30
Other reason	0	1	1	2	1
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,663	2,638	748	343	7,392

Reasons for going on the course varied starkly by funding stream in Priorities 1 and 4. Almost half (47 per cent) of match participants said that they were 'made to go on the course', compared with only eight per cent of ESF participants (Table 3.5). Conversely, ESF participants in Priorities 1 and 4 were more likely to say that they decided to go on the course themselves (48 per cent), compared with match participants (19 per cent). This may be linked to the higher proportion of participants who wanted work or were looking for work amongst the ESF participants, compared to match participants and reflects the voluntary nature of much of the ESF provision.

Table 3.5 Why went on course, by funding stream

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Why went on course	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Made to go on it	8	47	4	8	8	3	32
Persuaded to go on it	5	7	5	4	2	2	6
Given the opportunity to go on it	38	26	26	46	39	41	31
Decide myself to go on it	48	19	65	40	50	53	30
Other reason	1	0	0	2	1	1	1
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,331	1,950	130	1,721	1,136	124	7,392

The Wave 1 report presents additional information about how participants heard about their courses²⁰.

²⁰ ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

3.4 Time spent on training/intensity of course

This section presents information about the length of time that participants spent on training. Compared with results presented in the Wave 1 report²¹, a smaller proportion of participants in all priorities had spent less than a month on training. It is possible that the Wave 2 results reflect the true situation more accurately, as a higher proportion of participants had finished training at the time of the Wave 2 interview. (The information presented below about the intensity of training is consistent with the Wave 1 results.)

3.4.1 Average length of training course

There was some variation in the average length of participants' training course²². While the overall average course length was 5.0 months, the length of Priority 2 courses had a much higher mean (11.3 months) than Priority 1 (3.8 months), Priority 4 (4.9 months) and Priority 5 (8.2 months) courses (Table 3.6). Looking at the length of training courses within bands shows a similar picture; most Priority 1 courses lasted less than four months (58 per cent), as did over half (52 per cent) of Priority 4 courses. In contrast, higher proportions of Priority 2 and Priority 5 courses lasted a year or more (44 per cent and 30 per cent respectively) (Table 3.6).

Table 3.6 Length of training course, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Length of course	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
Less than a month	20	13	21	19	19
1 month to 4 months	38	11	32	19	33
4 months to 6 months	18	6	18	7	16
6 months to 12 months	18	26	20	25	20
A year or more	5	44	9	30	11
	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months
Average length	3.8	11.3	4.9	8.2	5.0
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,626	2,637	695	336	7,294

Importantly, however, the average course length among match participants in Priorities 2 and 5 was far longer than among ESF participants – 14.5 months compared with only 4.6 months (Table 3.7). This reflects that a lot of people in the match sample were on formal courses which tend to be longer.

²¹ ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

²² Length of course was based on the known start date for the course and date participants said they left their course. The length was derived by calculating the difference in months between start and end dates. (For those participants who were still on the course, their planned end date was used to make this calculation.)

Table 3.7 Length of training course, by funding stream within Priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Length of course	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Less than a month	25	18	37	32	2	72	19
1 month to 4 months	37	38	35	23	6	18	33
4 months to 6 months	14	20	7	9	5	3	16
6 months to 12 months	19	18	16	23	29	6	20
A year or more	6	5	6	12	58	2	11
	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months
Average length	3.7	3.9	3.2	4.6	14.5	1.1	5.0
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,332	1,868	121	1,722	1,129	122	7,294

Younger participants tended to be on courses which lasted longer than older participants. For example, those aged 16 to 19 reported being on courses which lasted nine months while for all other age groups the average course length was between 3.9 and 5.1 months (Table 3.8).

Table 3.8 Length of training course, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Length of course	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Less than a month	10	23	23	19	20	21	17	19
1 month to 4 months	21	31	36	38	37	34	33	33
4 months to 6 months	13	16	15	19	17	17	16	16
6 months to 12 months	28	17	18	18	20	19	20	20
A year or more	29	13	7	6	6	10	14	11
	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months
Average length	9.0	5.1	4.0	4.0	3.9	4.9	5.3	5.0
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,114	958	1,174	2,391	1,641	3,897	3,397	7,294

3.4.2 Time spent on course in average week

There was some variation in the time spent in an average week on ESF courses by priority (Table 3.9).

Priority 1 participants tended to spend longer on their projects than other participants. Fifty-eight per cent of Priority 1 participants spent over two days per week on their course, compared with between 19 per cent and 24 per cent of participants in other priorities. While high proportions of Priority 2 (70 per cent), Priority 5 (71 per cent) and Priority 4 (65 per cent) participants spent one day or less on their projects in the average week, among Priority 1 participants only 35 per cent did so.

Table 3.9 Time spent on course in average week, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>						
Time spent on course	Priority				Total %	Respondents
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %		
Less than half a day	22	34	46	40	25	2,214
Between half and one day	13	36	20	30	16	1,717
More than one and less than two days	7	9	10	11	7	747
More than two and less than five days	40	13	20	14	35	2,023
More than five days	18	8	5	5	16	648
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,649	2,619	742	339	7,349	

Table 3.10 Time spent on course in average week, by funding stream within Priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Time spent on course	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Less than half a day	24	23	23	36	35	11	25
Between half and one day	22	10	24	30	38	31	16
More than one and less than two days	14	5	14	10	8	11	7
More than two and less than five days	32	42	34	15	12	36	35
More than five days	8	21	5	9	7	11	16
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,323	1,939	129	1,707	1,127	124	7,349

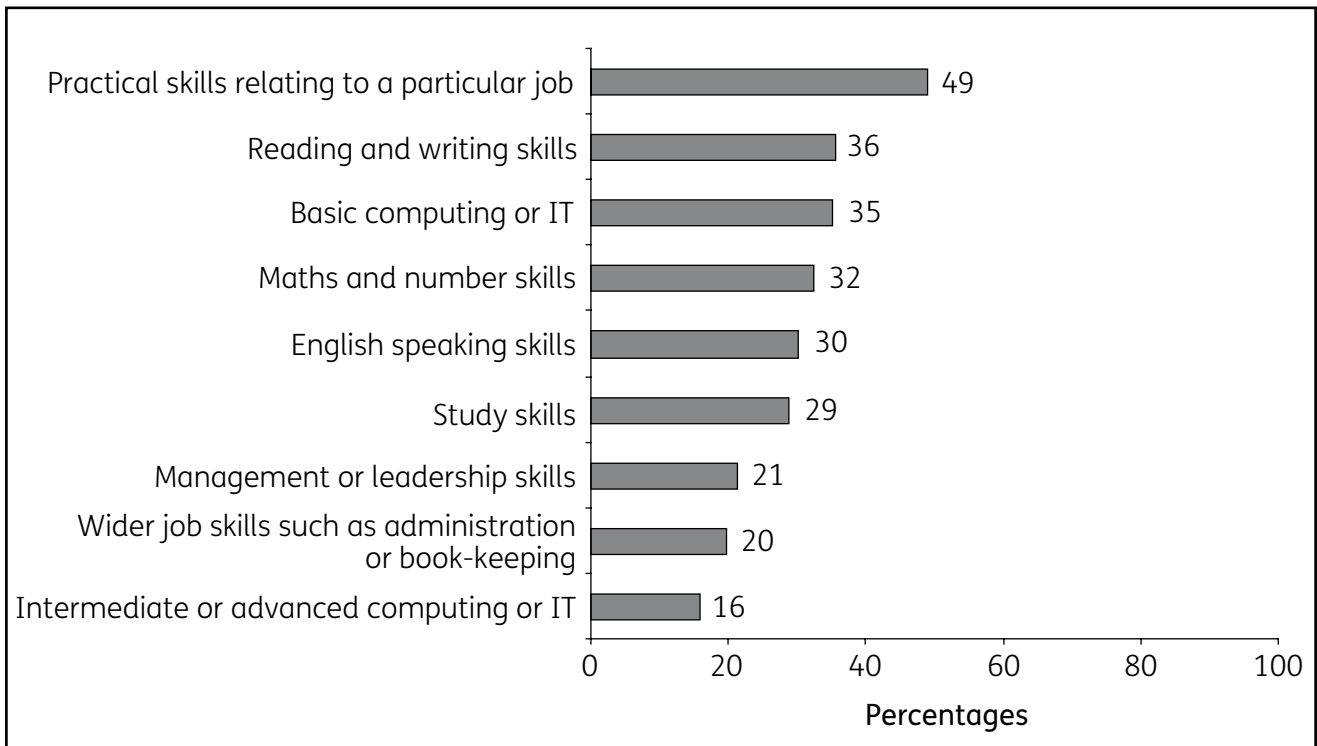
Match participants in Priorities 1 and 4 were more likely than ESF participants to spend over two days per week on their course (63 per cent compared with 40 per cent). By contrast, match participants in Priorities 2 and 5 were slightly less likely than their ESF counterparts to spend over two days per week on their course (19 per cent compared with 24 per cent) (Table 3.10).

3.5 Improving work skills

All participants were asked which work skills they were gaining or improving as part of the course. There were only small differences in the work skills that participants reported in the Wave 2 study, compared with the Wave 1 study, even though six months had elapsed between the Wave 1 and Wave 2 interviews. (All participants have been included in the analysis in this section, including the five per cent of participants who were still on the course.)

The most common skill gained as part of the course was practical skills relating to a particular job (49 per cent). Figure 3.1 shows that around a third of participants had gained skills in reading and writing (36 per cent), basic computing or IT (35 per cent) and maths and number skills (32 per cent).

Figure 3.1 Improving work skills



Participants in Priorities 2 and 5 were more likely to have gained work skills than those in Priorities 1 and 4. For example, while only eight per cent of match participants and 12 per cent of ESF participants in Priorities 2 and 5 claimed that they had not gained any work skills, the same was true of 23 per cent of ESF participants 34 per cent of match participants in Priorities 1 and 4 (Table 3.11).

In Priorities 1 and 4, ESF participants were more likely than match participants to have gained work skills. By contrast, in Priorities 2 and 5, match participants were more likely than ESF participants to have gained skills in this area (Table 3.11). This may be due to the younger age profile of the Priority 2 match sample (see Table 2.4); participants in younger age groups were more likely to say that they had gained work skills (see Table 3.12).

Table 3.11 Work skills, by funding stream

ESF Cohort Study

Work skills	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Practical skills relating to a particular job	53	41	52	70	79	66	49
Basic computing or IT	38	34	33	26	40	27	35
Intermediate or advanced computing or IT	16	15	19	15	22	21	16
Study skills	28	26	27	33	47	15	29
Reading and writing skills	37	33	39	31	52	13	36
Maths and number skills	33	28	37	21	59	19	32
English speaking skills	32	28	39	23	44	10	30
Wider job skills such as administration or book-keeping	19	18	20	24	31	20	20
Management or leadership skills	21	17	24	34	39	32	21
None of these	23	34	23	12	8	15	28
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,320	1,932	130	1,715	1,129	124	7,350

Women were more likely than men to say that they had gained some work skills, these included practical skills relating to a particular job, reading and writing skills, English speaking skills and wider job skills, such as administration or book-keeping (Table 3.12).

There was also a higher incidence of learning in this area among young people. Those participants aged 16 to 19 were more likely than participants from other age groups to say that they had gained practical skills relating to a particular job, reading and writing skills, computing and IT skills (both basic level and advanced), maths and number skills, English speaking skills, study skills, leadership skills, and wider job skills such as administration or book-keeping (Table 3.12).

Table 3.12 Work skills, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Work skills	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Practical skills relating to a particular job	69	51	51	43	36	47	52	49
Basic computing or IT	51	38	33	28	30	34	36	35
Intermediate or advanced computing or IT	25	20	17	11	8	15	17	16
Study skills	42	31	29	25	20	28	30	29
Reading and writing skills	60	38	33	29	24	34	38	36
Maths and number skills	61	36	29	25	17	32	33	32
English speaking skills	52	35	26	24	16	28	33	30
Wider job skills such as administration or book-keeping	34	20	20	15	13	19	22	20
Management or leadership skills	36	22	21	18	14	22	20	21
None of these	11	25	26	33	40	28	27	28
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>1,109</i>	<i>957</i>	<i>1,183</i>	<i>2,418</i>	<i>1,667</i>	<i>3,928</i>	<i>3,422</i>	<i>7,350</i>

Table 3.13 Work skills, by disadvantage

Work skills	Disadvantage									
	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	White %	Ethnic minority group %	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %	Has qualifications %	No qualifications %
Practical skills relating to a particular job	49	46	49	47	49	50	55	36	49	47
Basic computing or IT	36	30	35	32	34	41	39	28	35	34
Intermediate or advanced computing or IT	16	10	16	17	15	19	18	11	17	12
Study skills	29	23	29	27	28	34	32	22	29	28
Reading and writing skills	36	33	36	31	33	47	39	28	34	43
Maths and number skills	33	29	32	32	31	37	37	22	32	32
English speaking skills	31	23	30	28	27	45	34	22	30	29
Wider job skills such as administration or book-keeping	20	18	20	18	19	24	22	15	21	12
Management or leadership skills	22	15	21	26	21	21	24	15	23	15
None of these	27	35	28	25	29	21	22	39	28	28
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	6,666	659	6,707	627	6,237	1,068	5,457	1,838	6,419	923

ESF Cohort Study

Participants who were lone parents were less likely than those who were not lone parents to have gained English speaking skills, intermediate or advanced computing skills, and skills in leadership. There were no differences in the work skills gained by carers, compared with participants who were not carers (Table 3.13).

Participants with a disability or long-term limiting illness (LTLI) were less likely than those without a disability or LTLI to have gained all the types of work skills (including practical skills relating to a particular job, reading and writing skills, computing, maths and number skills, English speaking skills, study skills, management and leadership skills and wider job skills) (Table 3.13).

By contrast, there tended to be a higher incidence of learning in this area among ethnic minority groups. For example, participants from ethnic minority groups were more likely than white people to have gained reading and writing, maths and numerical skills, skills in basic and advanced computing, English speaking skills, study skills and wider job skills (Table 3.13).

Participants with no qualifications prior to starting the course were less likely than those with qualifications to have gained work skills, including skills in intermediate or advanced IT, management and leadership skills and wider job skills, such as administration and book-keeping. However, participants with no qualifications were more likely to have gained reading and writing skills from their course (44 per cent compared to 34 per cent of those with qualifications) (Table 3.13).

Priorities 2 and 5 had targets for the proportion of people gaining basic skills (45 per cent in both Priorities). In fact, 70 per cent of Priority 2 participants had gained basic skills, including 46 per cent who had improved reading and writing skills, and 48 per cent who had improved maths and number skills. In Priority 5, 60 per cent of participants had gained basic skills (Table 3.14).

Table 3.14 Basic skills, by Priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Basic skills	Priority 2 %	Priority 5 %	Total %
Basic computing or IT	36	31	36
Intermediate or advanced computing or IT	20	16	20
Reading and writing skills	46	31	44
Maths and number skills	48	32	46
English speaking skills	37	27	36
None of these	30	40	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,638	342	2,980

One particular target area for ESF courses is improving the skills of women who are working part-time. In most basic skills areas female part-time workers said they had gained similar skills to all participants (Table 3.15). However, female part-time workers were more likely to have gained reading and writing skills (44 per cent compared to 36 per cent of all other respondents), and maths and number skills (46 per cent compared to 32 per cent).

Table 3.15 Basic skills, by female part-time workers

Basic skills	ESF Cohort Study	
	Female part-time worker %	Total %
Basic computing or IT	37	35
Intermediate or advanced computing or IT	16	16
Reading and writing skills	44	36
Maths and number skills	46	32
English speaking skills	35	30
None of these	31	43
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	516	7,387

3.6 Improving soft skills

This section presents information about the types of soft skills that participants had gained from the course. Figure 3.2 shows that soft skills include improving motivation (67 per cent), communication (65 per cent), team working (63 per cent), ability to work independently (61 per cent) and problem solving (60 per cent). These results are similar to the findings presented in the Wave 1 report²³.

Figure 3.2 Improving soft skills


²³ ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

Table 3.16 Soft skills, by funding stream within Priority

ESF Cohort Study

Soft skills	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Expressing yourself/ communication	68	63	69	60	73	48	65
Working as part of a team	66	60	69	61	79	45	63
Solving problems	60	57	66	64	79	58	60
Improving motivation	72	66	71	59	72	54	67
Improving ability to do things independently	65	55	68	63	80	60	61
None of these	15	22	18	15	9	15	19
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,325	,949	130	1,717	1,136	124	7,381

Match participants in Priorities 2 or 5 were more likely to have gained at least one type of soft skill (91 per cent) than ESF participants (85 per cent) in these priorities. By contrast, ESF participants (85 per cent) in Priorities 1 and 4 were more likely than match participants (78 per cent) in these priorities to have gained any soft skills (Figure 3.3, Table 3.16).

Figure 3.3 Any improvement of soft skills, by funding stream within priority

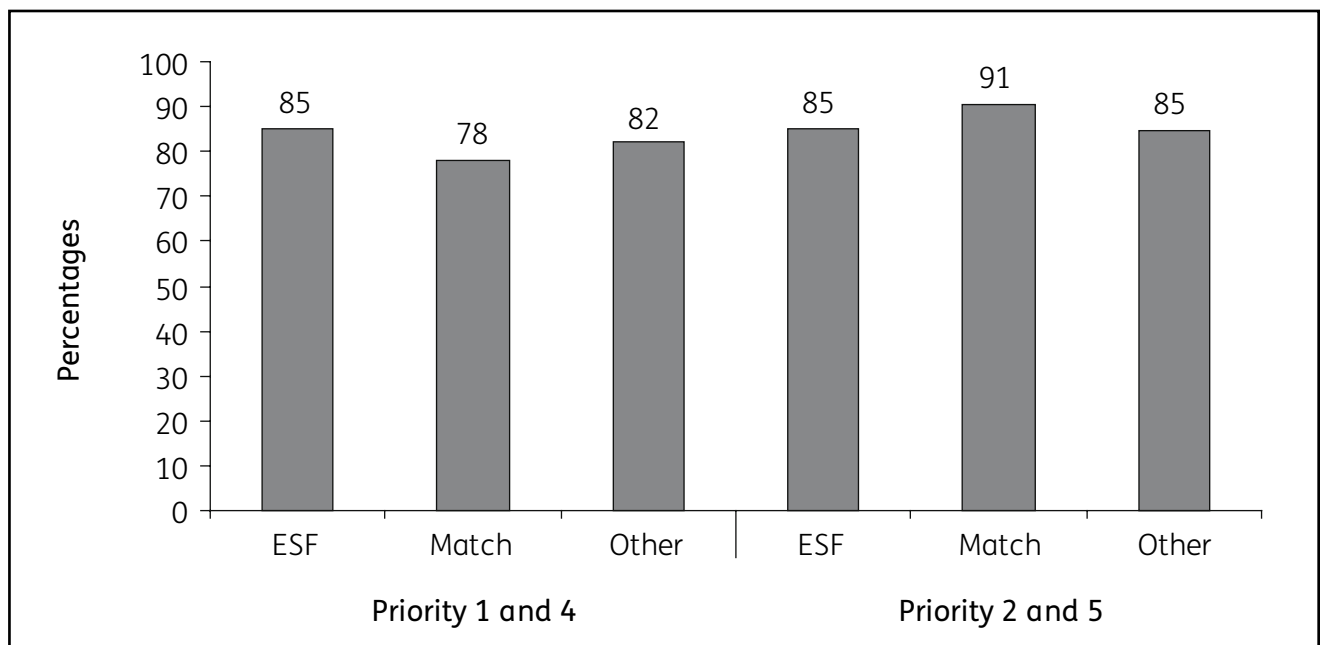


Table 3.17 Soft skills, by age and gender

Soft skills	ESF Cohort Study							
	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Expressing yourself/ communication	83	70	64	59	52	63	68	65
Working as part of a team	86	69	60	55	48	61	67	63
Solving problems	81	64	57	56	47	59	63	60
Improving motivation	81	72	63	66	55	66	70	67
Improving ability to do things independently	82	66	56	56	46	57	67	61
None of these	7	15	23	21	30	21	16	19
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,117	967	1,184	2,428	1,669	3,938	3,443	7,381

Women were more likely than men to feel that the course helped them to improve all these soft skills, with the exception of problem solving (similar proportions of men (59 per cent) and women (63 per cent) said this). Young people aged 16 to 19 were more likely to feel that the course had helped them to improve all of these soft skills (Table 3.17).

There were no differences in the proportions of lone parents (compared with those who were not lone parents) and carers (compared with those who were not carers) reporting that they had gained soft skills in these areas (Table 3.18).

Table 3.18 Soft skills, by disadvantage

Soft skills	ESF Cohort Study									
	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	White %	Ethnic minority group %	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %	Has qualifications %	No qualifications %
Expressing yourself/ communication	65	67	65	68	63	74	69	56	64	67
Working as part of a team	64	60	63	62	62	70	69	52	62	68
Solving problems	61	58	60	60	64	64	64	52	60	61
Improving motivation	67	71	67	69	66	75	71	61	68	67
Improving ability to do things independently	60	65	61	62	59	68	66	50	61	60
None of these	19	16	19	14	20	13	16	26	19	19
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	6,692	665	6,739	627	6,266	1,070	5,481	1,845	6,447	926

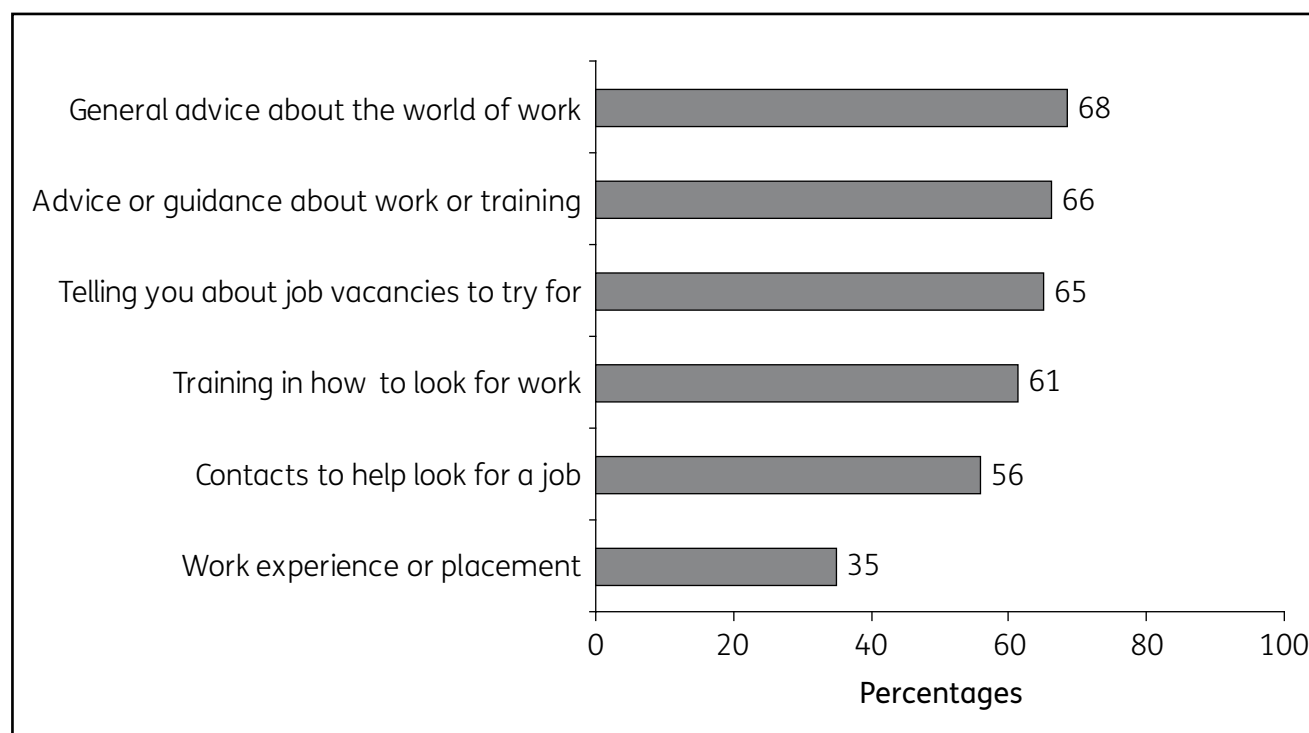
However, participants from ethnic minority groups were more likely than white people to have gained soft skills in most areas (with the exception of solving problems), while people with disabilities or an LTLI were less likely to have gained all types of soft skills. There were no significant differences in the soft skills gained by whether participants had any qualifications prior to the course (Table 3.18).

3.7 Help looking for work

All participants were asked about whether the course was providing them with practical support in finding work. Only those results for participants in Priorities 1 and 4 – which have a focus on providing practical support with finding a job – are included in this analysis. Again, results reflect the findings published in the Wave 1 report²⁴, even though six months had elapsed between the Wave 1 and Wave 2 interviews.

Most commonly, participants received general advice about the world of work (68 per cent), advice or guidance about what work or training they could do (66 per cent) and information about vacancies to try for (65 per cent). Figure 3.4 shows that other types of support received included training in how to look for work (61 per cent), contacts to help look for a job (56 per cent) and work experience (35 per cent).

Figure 3.4 Help looking for work (Priorities 1 and 4)



²⁴ ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

Match participants in Priorities 1 and 4 were generally more likely than ESF participants to have gained support in looking for work. For example, while 38 per cent of match participants had been on work experience or work placement through the course, the same was true of only 25 per cent of ESF participants. Moreover, more match participants than ESF participants had been provided with contacts to help them look for a job, and had been told about employment opportunities to go for (Table 3.19).²⁵

Table 3.19 Help looking for work, by funding stream (Priorities 1 and 4)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>				
	Funding stream within priority			Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			
Help looking for work	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Work experience or placement	25	38	24	35
General advice about the world of work	64	70	66	68
Advice or guidance about work or training	66	67	63	66
Training in how to look for work	56	63	49	61
Contacts to help look for a job	51	58	46	56
Telling you about job vacancies to try for	60	67	50	65
None of these	14	10	17	11
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,326	1,948	130	4,404

There were no significant gender differences in the help looking for work that participants received. Young people tended to be more likely to have received help looking for work. For example, participants aged 16 to 19 were more likely than participants aged 25 and over to have received general advice about work, as well as advice about the types or work or training that they could do. They were also more likely to have received the other forms of support, including training in how to look for work and work experience opportunities (Table 3.20).

²⁵ These results may be somewhat surprising as a smaller proportion of match participants said that the course was helping them to gain work skills compared with ESF participants (Table 3.19). It should be noted, however, that the range of work skills reviewed in Section 3.6 (such as study skills, IT skills and management skills) was quite different from the practical support in finding a job referred to in this section.

Table 3.20 Help looking for work, by age and gender (Priorities 1 and 4)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Help looking for work	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Work experience or placement	50	44	38	26	23	35	34	35
General advice about the world of work	79	77	69	63	56	67	71	68
Advice or guidance about work or training	79	75	68	60	52	66	68	66
Training in how to look for work	73	73	64	53	45	61	62	61
Contacts to help look for a job	64	70	61	45	43	56	56	56
Telling you about job vacancies to try for	71	79	73	55	49	67	62	65
None of these	4	5	8	16	21	11	12	11
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	860	653	675	1,310	894	2,352	2,052	4,404

Participants who were lone parents were less likely to have received advice about vacancies, contacts to help look for work and training in how to look for work than those who were not lone parents. Participants with a disability or LTLI were less likely than people without a disability or LTLI to have received any type of practical help in looking for work, while those with no qualifications were less likely to have got information about vacancies, and work contacts (compared with participants with qualifications) (Table 3.21).

By contrast, ethnic minority participants were more likely than their white counterparts to have obtained general work-related advice, support in looking for work, and information about work contacts (Table 3.21). There were no differences in the help received looking for work by caring responsibilities.

Table 3.21 Help looking for work, by disadvantage (Priorities 1 and 4)

Help looking for work	ESF Cohort Study									
	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	White %	Ethnic minority group %	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %	Has qualifications %	No qualifications %
Work experience or placement	36	30	36	27	35	36	42	24	36	32
General advice about the world of work	68	67	69	64	67	74	71	65	68	69
Advice or guidance about work or training	67	63	66	64	67	64	70	62	67	65
Training in how to look for work	62	50	61	57	60	67	66	53	62	58
Contacts to help look for a job	57	41	56	53	55	61	63	44	58	48
Telling you about job vacancies to try for	66	53	66	55	64	69	72	54	67	55
None of these	11	14	11	14	12	8	9	15	10	15
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,882	514	4,027	371	3,544	838	2,02	1,561	3,720	681

3.8 Help with caring responsibilities

All participants with children under the age of 16 (for whose care and/or support they were responsible) were asked about whether the course provided them with help with their childcare responsibilities.

In total, nine per cent of participants with children under the age of 16 received help with childcare. The proportion of participants who received help was higher in Priorities 1 and 4 (ten per cent and 14 per cent respectively), than Priorities 2 and 5 (three per cent and four per cent respectively). Six per cent of participants received help with the cost of childcare, while five per cent were able to take advantage of the childcare facilities of their course provider. Two per cent of participants received other types of help with childcare (Table 3.22).

Table 3.22 Help with childcare responsibilities, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Help with childcare responsibilities	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
Any support received	10	3	14	4	9
Provided childcare facilities	5	2	7	2	5
Helped with the cost of childcare	6	2	9	2	6
Other help with childcare	2	0	3	1	2
None of these	90	96	86	96	91
<i>Unweighted base</i>	932	899	205	127	2,163

In Priorities 1 and 4 similar proportions of match (ten per cent) and ESF (12 per cent) participants had been provided with support with childcare (Table 3.23).

Table 3.23 Help with childcare responsibilities, by funding stream within Priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Help with childcare responsibilities	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Any support received	12	10	15	5	2	0	9
Provided childcare facilities	8	4	12	4	1	0	5
Helped with the cost of childcare	7	6	13	2	2	0	6
Other help with childcare	2	2	3	1	0	0	2
None of these	88	91	85	95	98	100	91
<i>Unweighted base</i>	731	370	36	653	332	41	2,163

Perhaps unsurprisingly, women were more likely than men to say that they had received help with childcare (14 per cent compared with four per cent). Younger parents were more likely to receive support than older parents (for example, while between 11 per cent and 16 per cent of those aged 16 to 34 received help with childcare, among those aged over 35 the proportion fell to between three per cent and six per cent). This may be due to the fact that younger parents are more likely to have young children.

Table 3.24 Help with childcare, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Help with childcare	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Any support received	11	16	13	6	3	4	14	9
Provided childcare facilities	7	9	7	3	2	4	6	5
Helped with the cost of childcare	8	12	8	3	1	4	8	6
Other help with childcare	2	0	2	3	0	1	3	2
None of these	89	84	87	94	97	93	88	91
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	62	164	487	1,227	220	1,494	663	2,163

Lone parents (12 per cent) were more likely than those who were not lone parents to have received help with childcare (seven per cent) (Table 3.25).

Table 3.25 Help with childcare, by disadvantage

Help with childcare	Disadvantage									
	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	White %	Ethnic minority group %	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %	Has qualifications %	No qualifications %
Any support received	7	12	9	14	8	13	9	9	8	13
Provided childcare facilities	4	6	5	7	4	8	5	4	5	6
Helped with the cost of childcare	4	8	5	8	5	9	7	4	6	7
Other help with childcare	1	3	2	4	2	2	1	4	2	2
None of these	93	88	91	86	92	87	91	91	92	87
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,494	663	1,909	252	1,747	404	1,661	488	1,911	247

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Participants who did not receive any help with their childcare responsibilities were asked whether they would have liked to receive help with this. Participants in Priority 1 (25 per cent) and Priority 4 (19 per cent) were more likely to say that they would have liked help with their childcare responsibilities than those in Priority 2 (15 per cent) and Priority 5 (11 per cent) (Table 3.26).

Table 3.26 Whether would have liked help with childcare responsibilities, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Whether would have liked help with childcare responsibilities	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
Yes	25	15	19	11	22
No	75	85	81	89	78
<i>Unweighted base</i>	786	865	177	122	1,950

There were few differences in whether participants would have liked help with childcare by funding stream (Table 3.27).

Table 3.27 Whether would have liked help with childcare responsibilities, by funding stream within Priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Whether would have liked help with childcare responsibilities	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Yes	29	22	39	14	15	17	22
No	71	78	61	86	85	83	78
<i>Unweighted base</i>	616	316	31	622	324	41	1,950

Participants aged 16-19 years (five per cent) were less likely to say they would have liked help with childcare compared to those aged 20 to 49 where between 21 per cent and 32 per cent of people would have like help with this (Table 3.34). Similar proportions of men (21 per cent) and women (24 per cent) said they would have liked help with their childcare responsibilities (Table 3.28).

Table 3.28 Whether would have liked help with childcare responsibilities, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Whether would have liked help with childcare responsibilities	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Yes	5	21	32	21	16	21	24	22
No	95	79	68	79	84	79	76	78
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	47	128	421	1,142	209	881	1,069	1,950

Participants with caring responsibilities were more likely than those who were not carers to say that they would have liked help with their childcare (38 per cent compared to 21 per cent). However, there were no significant differences in whether participants would have liked help with this by lone parent status, disability or LTLI and qualifications.

People from ethnic minority groups were more likely than white people to say that they would have liked help with childcare (41 per cent compared to 17 per cent) (Table 3.29).

Table 3.29 Whether would have liked help with childcare responsibilities, by disadvantage

		ESF Cohort Study									
		Disadvantage									
Whether would have liked help with childcare responsibilities	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	White %	Ethnic minority group %	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %	Has qualifications %	No qualifications %	
Yes	22	24	21	38	17	41	22	23	23	22	
No	78	76	79	62	83	59	78	77	77	78	
Unweighted base	1,390	555	1,731	218	1,601	337	1,498	438	1,734	211	

Participants who cared for a sick, disabled or elderly person were asked whether they received help with their caring responsibilities through their course. Overall, 12 per cent of participants who were carers received support with these responsibilities (Table 3.30). There were no significant differences in help received between priorities.

Table 3.30 Help with other caring responsibilities, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Help with caring responsibilities	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
Receives help	12	6	15	7	12
Does not receive help	88	94	85	93	88
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	444	300	98	39	881

There were no significant differences in whether participants had received help with caring responsibilities by funding stream (Table 3.31).

Table 3.31 Help with other caring responsibilities, by funding stream within Priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Help with caring responsibilities	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Receives help	12	13	3	5	7	0	12
Does not receive help	88	87	97	95	93	100	88
<i>Unweighted base</i>	330	196	16	221	111	7	881

There were no significant differences in whether participants received help with caring responsibilities by age or gender (Table 3.32).

Table 3.32 Help with other caring responsibilities, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Help with caring responsibilities	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Receives help	15	10	5	15	10	14	8	12
Does not receive help	85	90	95	85	90	86	92	88
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	76	67	105	357	275	391	490	881

There were very few differences in help received with caring responsibilities by disadvantages (Table 3.33). However, lone parents (four per cent) were less likely than partnered parents (13 per cent) to have received help with their other caring responsibilities.

Table 3.33 Help with other caring responsibilities, by disadvantage

		ESF Cohort Study										
		Disadvantage					Ethnic minority group					
		Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	White %	White %	Ethnic minority group %	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %	Has qualifications %	No qualifications %
Help with caring responsibilities												
Receives help	13	4	11	12	11	13	10	13	13	11	17	
Does not receive help	87	96	89	88	89	87	90	87	87	89	83	
Unweighted base	775	106	254	627	735	141	579	294	748	133		

Ten per cent of participants with any form of caring responsibilities (i.e. for dependent children or adults) received help with these. This proportion was higher among Priority 1 participants compared with Priority 2 participants (11 per cent compared with four per cent) (Table 3.34).

Table 3.34 Help with any caring responsibilities

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Help with any caring responsibilities	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
Receives help	11	4	15	5	10
Does not receive help	89	96	85	95	90
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,215	1,083	272	149	2,719

3.9 Satisfaction with the course

This section considers levels of satisfaction with ESF provision. Generally, satisfaction levels were relatively high, with 76 per cent of participants saying that the course was relevant to their needs, 58 per cent saying that the level was ‘about right’ and 71 per cent confirming that they were very or fairly satisfied with the course (Table 3.35). Levels of satisfaction were similar to those presented in the Wave 1 report²⁶.

There was some variation by priority. Priority 1 (73 per cent) participants were less likely than participants of projects in other priorities to say that the course was relevant to their needs (for example, 90 per cent of Priority 2 participants said the course was relevant). Priority 1 participants were also less likely to say that the level of the course was ‘about right’, with 42 per cent feeling that the course was ‘too basic’ (compared with between 20 per cent and 30 per cent of participants in other priorities). General satisfaction levels were also lower among Priority 1 participants; 68 per cent said that they were very or fairly satisfied with the course, compared with 89 per cent of Priority 2 participants (Table 3.35).

²⁶ ESF Cohort Study: Wave 1: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep647.pdf>

Table 3.35 Satisfaction with the course, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Satisfaction	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
Not relevant to needs	27	10	21	10	24
Relevant to needs	73	90	79	90	76
Too basic	42	20	30	24	38
About right	53	77	67	72	58
Too advanced	5	2	3	4	4
Very or fairly satisfied	68	89	77	86	71
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13	5	14	9	12
Fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	19	6	9	5	17
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>3,55</i>	<i>2,638</i>	<i>745</i>	<i>340</i>	<i>7,378</i>

Satisfaction levels were generally higher among ESF participants in Priorities 1 and 4 than among match participants in these priorities. For example, compared with match participants, more ESF participants felt that the course was relevant to their needs (80 per cent compared with 71 per cent), that the level of the course was ‘about right’ (60 per cent compared with 51 per cent) and acknowledged that they were very or fairly satisfied with the quality of the course (78 per cent compared with 64 per cent). There were few differences in satisfaction levels between ESF and match participants in Priorities 2 and 5 (Table 3.26).

Table 3.36 Satisfaction with course, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Satisfaction	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Not relevant to needs	20	29	18	10	10	12	24
Relevant to needs	80	71	82	90	90	88	76
Too basic	36	44	32	20	21	12	38
About right	60	51	65	77	77	85	58
Too advanced	4	5	2	3	2	4	4
Very or fairly satisfied	78	64	83	89	88	91	71
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10	15	6	6	6	5	12
Fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	12	21	11	5	6	4	17
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>2,324</i>	<i>1,948</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>1,719</i>	<i>1,135</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>7,378</i>

Women were slightly more likely to express satisfaction with the course than men. Eighty-one per cent of women said that the course was relevant to their needs compared with 74 per cent of men. Men were more likely than women to say that the level of the course was ‘too basic’ (41 per cent compared with 33 per cent), and were less likely to be ‘very or fairly satisfied’ with the course (68 per cent compared with 77 per cent) (Table 3.37).

Levels of satisfaction tended to decrease with age. While 86 per cent of 16 to 19 year olds felt that the course was relevant to their needs, this proportion fell to 68 per cent among those aged over 50. The 16 to 19 age group were also more likely to say that the course level was ‘about right’ and that they were ‘very or fairly satisfied with the course’ – for example, while 80 per cent of 16 to 19 year olds were ‘very or fairly satisfied’ only 67 per cent of those aged 20 to 24 were of the same opinion (Table 3.37).

Table 3.37 Satisfaction, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Satisfaction	Age					Gender		
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	Total %
Not relevant to needs	14	23	21	26	32	26	19	24
Relevant to needs	86	77	79	74	68	74	81	76
Too basic	29	41	39	38	40	41	33	38
About right	67	56	55	57	53	54	63	58
Too advanced	4	3	5	4	7	5	4	4
Very or fairly satisfied	80	67	68	72	71	68	77	71
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	8	18	14	10	9	13	10	12
Fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	11	15	18	18	19	18	13	17
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,119	965	1,184	2,421	1,673	3,937	3,441	7,378

There was some variation in satisfaction among people with disadvantages. For example, participants who were lone parents were more likely to say that the course level was ‘about right’ (66 per cent compared with 57 per cent of participants who were not lone parents) while similar proportions were very or fairly satisfied with the course (74 per cent compared with 71 per cent) and felt the course was relevant to their needs (77 per cent compared with 76 per cent) (Table 3.38).

White participants (59 per cent) were more likely than ethnic minority participants (48 per cent) to say that the level of the course was ‘about right’ (Table 3.38).

Participants with a disability or LTLI tended to be less satisfied with the course. For instance, they were less likely than people without a disability or LTLI to say that the course was relevant to their needs (68 per cent compared with 80 per cent) and that they were ‘very or fairly satisfied’ with the course (66 per cent compared with 74 per cent) (Table 3.38). However, there was no significant relationship between disability and LTLI status and whether participants felt the course level was ‘about right’.

Table 3.38 Satisfaction, by disadvantage

Help with childcare	ESF Cohort Study									
	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	White %	Ethnic minority group %	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %	Has qualifications %	No qualifications %
Not relevant to needs	24	23	23	31	24	22	20	32	24	25
Relevant to needs	76	77	77	69	76	78	80	68	76	75
Too basic	39	32	38	42	37	44	38	38	40	30
About right	57	66	58	51	59	48	59	54	57	61
Too advanced	5	3	4	6	4	8	3	7	4	9
Very or fairly satisfied	71	74	71	69	71	71	74	66	71	74
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	12	13	12	15	12	14	11	15	12	11
Fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	17	13	17	16	17	15	15	19	17	15
Unweighted base	6,688	665	6,736	626	6,266	1,068	5,480	1,844	6,443	927

Levels of satisfaction also varied by why people went on the course. Generally, participants who said that they were ‘made to go’ on the course were less satisfied than participants in other groups. For example, while 62 per cent of people who were ‘made to go’ on the course said that it was relevant to their needs, this proportion rose to 83 per cent among those who ‘decided myself’ to go on it. Moreover, while 51 per cent of participants who were ‘made to go’ on the course felt that the level was too basic, the same was true of only 33 per cent of those who ‘decided myself’ to go on it. Fifty-four per cent of those who were ‘made to go’ on the course said that they were very or fairly satisfied with the quality of the course, compared with 79 per cent who ‘decided myself’ to go on it.

Table 3.39 Satisfaction, by why went on the course

Satisfaction	Satisfaction					Total %
	Made to go on it %	Persuaded %	Given the opportunity %	Decided myself %	Other %	
Not relevant to needs	38	23	15	17	16	24
Relevant to needs	62	77	85	83	84	76
Too basic	51	46	29	33	14	38
About right	44	51	67	64	84	58
Too advanced	5	3	4	4	2	4
Very or fairly satisfied	54	67	83	79	87	71
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19	15	8	8	7	12
Fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	27	18	9	13	6	17
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,106</i>	<i>401</i>	<i>2,830</i>	<i>2,965</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>7,378</i>

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3.10 Awareness of the European Social Fund

Projects that receive funding from the ESF have an obligation to tell their participants that their course is financed through ESF, for example, at an induction session. In total, 47 per cent of participants were aware that their course had been financed through ESF²⁷. Priority 1 participants were less likely than those in other priorities to know that their course had been funded by ESF (Table 3.40).

²⁷ Respondents taking part in projects funded through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)-match or Learning and Skills Council (LSC)-match have been filtered out of the analysis.

Table 3.40 Awareness of ESF, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Satisfaction	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
Aware of ESF	43	61	52	58	47
Not aware of ESF	57	39	48	42	53
<i>Unweighted base</i>	2,148	1,622	305	218	4,293

Awareness of the ESF was higher amongst men (49 per cent) than women (43 per cent). Young people, aged 16 to 19 were least likely to be aware of the ESF; just over a quarter (27 per cent) of this group had heard of the fund, compared to between 43 per cent and 56 per cent of other age groups (Table 3.41).

Table 3.41 Awareness of ESF, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Awareness	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Aware of ESF	27	43	45	50	56	49	43	47
Not aware of ESF	73	57	55	50	44	51	57	53
<i>Unweighted base</i>	334	416	784	1,642	1,103	2,294	1,999	4,293

4 Qualifications

This chapter explores the range of qualifications gained by participants on the course. Specifically, the chapter reviews:

- the qualification levels of participants before they began the course (Section 4.1);
- the full qualifications gained by participants on the course (Section 4.2). This section also contains a multivariate analysis to look at those characteristics and attitudes associated with gaining qualifications;
- the units/modules towards full qualifications gained by participants on the course (Section 4.3);
- the range of qualification types studied by participants (Section 4.4);
- the profile of participants who stopped studying towards qualifications (Section 4.5); and
- whether participants had undertaken any other type of vocational training since the course, and whether they planned to study any in the future (Section 4.6).

4.1 Qualification level before training

All participants were asked about what qualifications they held before starting the course.

The majority of participants (58 per cent) were educated to Level 2 or above, with 13 per cent educated to Level 3 and 11 per cent educated to Level 4. Sixteen per cent of participants had no qualifications. Participants in Priority 1 were more likely to have no qualifications than those in other priorities. For instance, while 18 per cent of Priority 1 participants had no qualifications, this proportion fell to seven per cent among Priority 2 participants (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Qualification level, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>						
Qualification level	Priority				Total %	Respondents
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %		
Level 4 and above	10	12	16	27	11	1,109
Level 3 – A Level or equivalent	11	21	16	22	13	1,123
Level 2 – GCSE grades A*-C or equivalent	33	45	27	31	35	2,300
Below Level 2	21	12	23	13	20	1,454
Foreign and other qualifications	7	3	4	4	6	474
No qualifications	18	7	13	4	16	932
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>3,663</i>	<i>2,636</i>	<i>750</i>	<i>343</i>	<i>7,392</i>	<i>7,392</i>

Among European Social Fund (ESF) participants in Priorities 2 and 5, a higher proportion of participants were educated to Level 4 and above (26 per cent in Priority 2 and 40 per cent in Priority 5) compared with match participants (five per cent in Priority 2 and nine per cent in Priority 5). A large proportion of match participants in Priorities 2 (54 per cent) and 5 (45 per cent) were educated to Level 2 (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Qualification level, by funding stream within priority (Priorities 2 and 5)

ESF Cohort Study

Qualification level	Funding stream within priority					
	Priority 2			Priority 5		Total %
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	
Level 4 and above	26	5	37	40	9	13
Level 3 – A Level or equivalent	22	21	19	18	26	21
Level 2 – GCSE grades A*-C or equivalent	28	54	16	21	45	44
Below Level 2	12	12	16	11	15	12
Foreign and other qualifications	6	2	6	6	2	3
No qualifications	7	7	5	4	3	7
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,504</i>	<i>1,009</i>	<i>123</i>	<i>218</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>2,979</i>

Priorities 2 and 5 have a specific objective to develop and improve the skills of the workforce, and have particular targets for the proportions of participants taking part in ESF courses at different qualification levels.

For example, Priority 2 projects have a target to ensure that 41 per cent of participants do not have relevant Level 2 qualifications. ESF Cohort Study data suggests that 21 per cent of Priority 2 participants did not have a full Level 2 qualification, although many more may have been educated to Level 2 or above, but without Level 2 qualifications that were relevant to their occupation or sector. Another objective is for 12 per cent of Priority 2 participants to be at Level 2 (but without a relevant Level 3 qualification). Forty-five per cent of Priority 2 participants were educated to Level 2 (but without a full Level 3).

As well as targets for engaging participants with relevant Level 2 and 3 qualifications, Priority 5 has a target to ensure that eight per cent of participants have a Level 3 qualification (but not a full Level 4). Evidence from the ESF Cohort Study indicates that 22 per cent of Priority 5 participants meet this criterion (Table 4.1).

Priorities 2 and 5 also have targets around basic skills provision. Specifically, the aim was for 41 per cent of Priority 2 participants and 36 per cent of Priority 5 participants to have basic skills needs. Participants were not asked specifically whether they had basic skills needs, although a possible proxy for this could be all those participants with no qualifications or with qualifications below Level 2 (19 per cent for Priority 2 and 17 per cent for Priority 5).

Table 4.3 Qualification, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Qualification level	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Level 4 and above	2	8	14	15	11	9	13	11
Level 3 – A Level or equivalent	7	17	16	12	9	13	13	13
Level 2 – GCSE grades A*-C or equivalent	55	43	34	26	19	35	35	35
Below Level 2	24	19	13	20	23	20	18	20
Foreign and other qualifications	1	2	8	9	9	6	6	6
No qualifications	11	11	15	18	28	17	16	16
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,119</i>	<i>967</i>	<i>1,185</i>	<i>2,428</i>	<i>1,677</i>	<i>3,943</i>	<i>3,449</i>	<i>7,392</i>

Female participants (13 per cent) were slightly more likely than male participants (nine per cent) to hold a qualification at Level 4 or above. Qualifications held also varied by age, with younger people less likely to have no qualifications. (For example, while 11 per cent of those aged 16-19 had no qualifications, among those aged 50 and over, this proportion rose to 28 per cent.) Younger participants were also less likely than older age groups to be educated to Level 4 and above, although they were more likely to have Level 2 qualifications (Table 4.3).

Table 4.4 Qualification, by disadvantaged group

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Qualification level	Disadvantaged group							
	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	White %	Ethnic minority group %	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %
Level 4 and above	10	12	11	7	10	11	10	12
Level 3 – A Level or equivalent	13	10	13	12	13	10	14	10
Level 2 – GCSE grades A*-C or equivalent	35	29	35	34	36	28	37	29
Below Level 2	19	20	19	23	21	17	20	19
Foreign and other qualifications	6	5	6	9	4	15	6	7
No qualifications	16	23	17	15	16	18	14	22
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>6,702</i>	<i>665</i>	<i>6,749</i>	<i>627</i>	<i>5,940</i>	<i>962</i>	<i>5,485</i>	<i>1,851</i>

There were small differences in levels of qualification according to whether the participant was from a disadvantaged group (Table 4.4). For example, participants who were lone parents were less likely than those who were not lone parents to have qualifications (23 per cent of lone parents had no qualifications, compared with 16 per cent of non-lone parents). Similarly, those with a disability or long-term limiting illness (LTLI) were less likely to have qualifications than those without (22 per cent compared with 14 per cent).

4.2 Full qualifications gained

In the Wave 1 interview, all participants were asked whether they were studying towards any qualifications as part of the course. The Wave 2 interview asked participants about whether they had successfully gained any full qualifications through the course.

Participants in Priorities 2 and 5 were more likely to have gained qualifications through the course. In fact, 69 per cent of Priority 2 participants and 68 per cent of Priority 5 participants had gained a full qualification as part of the course, compared with only 20 per cent of Priority 1 participants and 28 per cent of Priority 4 participants (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Full qualifications gained, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Qualifications gained	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
No qualifications achieved	80	31	72	32	73
NQF Level 4 and above ¹	1	8	2	8	2
NQF Level 3	1	24	2	17	4
NQF Level 2	5	26	9	30	8
NQF Level 1	13	12	15	13	13
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,451	2,286	710	290	6,737

¹ NQF stands for National Qualifications Framework (please refer to the Glossary of terms for more details).

Given that Priorities 2 and 5 had specific objectives for providing participants with qualifications, this result is unsurprising. Both Priorities 2 and 5 had a target for 40 per cent of participants (without a relevant Level 2) to gain a full Level 2 qualification as part of the course. At the time of interview, 26 per cent of Priority 2 participants and 30 per cent of Priority 5 participants had obtained a Level 2 qualification – showing that the 40 per cent target has not yet been exceeded. (In addition, 12 per cent of Priority 2 participants and 13 per cent of Priority 5 participants had obtained a Level 1 qualification, although there were no targets in this area²⁸ – Table 4.5.).

Importantly, however, participants who were **still studying towards qualifications** at the time of the Wave 2 interview have not been included in this analysis. In fact, almost 20 per cent of participants were still studying towards qualifications at the time of the interview. This was highest among match participants in Priorities 2 and 5 (32 per cent) (Table 4.6). It is possible that targets for the proportion of participants gaining qualifications may be met once these results are taken into account.

²⁸ Details of how qualification levels have been coded are available in the Glossary of terms.

Table 4.6 Whether participants were still studying towards qualifications

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Whether still studying	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Not still studying qualification	86	88	87	82	68	85	81
Still studying qualification	14	12	13	18	32	15	19
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	895	616	46	1,015	1,020	30	3,622

Both Priorities 2 and 5 had a target for 30 per cent of participants (without a relevant Level 3) to gain a full Level 3 qualification as part of the course. In fact, 24 per cent of Priority 2 participants and 17 per cent of Priority 5 participants had gained a Level 3 qualification at the time of interview, less in both cases than the 30 per cent target (Table 4.5). Again, this shortfall may be made up once those participants still studying towards qualifications are taken into account (Table 4.6).

Priority 5 had an additional target for 20 per cent of participants to obtain a full Level 4 qualification as part of the course. At the time of interview, eight per cent of Priority 5 participants had obtained a full Level 4 qualification²⁹. (The proportion was similar in Priority 2, although there were no targets in this area – Table 4.5.)

Table 4.7 Full qualifications gained, by funding stream within Priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Qualifications gained	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
No qualifications achieved	71	83	66	45	20	67	73
NQF Level 4 and above	1	1	2	8	8		2
NQF Level 3	2	1	2	10	32	3	4
NQF Level 2	8	4	7	17	32	4	8
NQF Level 1	19	11	24	20	7	27	13
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,188	1,848	125	1,535	921	120	6,737

ESF participants in Priorities 2 and 5 were far less likely than match participants to have gained a full qualification as part of the course and this finding was also reflected in the multivariate analysis (see Tables 4.8 and 4.9). (ESF participants were also less likely than match participants to still be studying towards qualifications – Table 4.6.) This may reflect the increasing use of ESF to support flexible responses to redundancy provision (which may also explain why those participants aged

²⁹ This proportion is relatively low compared with MI data, possibly due to the fact that Level 4 courses tend to be slightly longer so participants may have still been studying towards qualifications at the time of the Wave 2 interview.

over 50 were less likely than young people to gain qualifications) (see Table 4.8). For example, while 80 per cent of match participants had gained a full qualification on the course, the same was true of only 55 per cent of ESF participants. Correspondingly, ESF participants were less likely than match participants to have gained qualifications at Level 2 (17 per cent compared with 32 per cent) and at Level 3 (ten per cent compared with 32 per cent), although a higher proportion of ESF participants had gained a Level 1 qualification (20 per cent compared with seven per cent of match participants) (Table 4.7).

In Priorities 1 and 4, ESF participants were slightly more likely than match participants to have gained a full qualification (29 per cent compared with 17 per cent) (Table 4.7). Notably, however, there were no targets in Priorities 1 and 4 for the proportion of participants gaining qualifications.

Table 4.8 Full qualifications gained, by age and gender (Priority 2)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Qualification level	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
No qualifications achieved	23	20	27	38	47	35	26	31
NQF Level 4 and above	7	8	10	8	7	7	9	8
NQF Level 3	23	43	31	12	10	23	25	24
NQF Level 2	42	23	20	24	18	20	32	26
NQF Level 1	4	6	13	18	19	15	8	12
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	134	222	383	901	643	1,247	1,039	2,286

Table 4.9 Full qualifications gained, by age and gender (Priority 5)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Qualification level	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
No qualifications achieved			38	33	42	30	34	32
NQF Level 4 and above			8	6	7	3	13	8
NQF Level 3			16	21	13	13	21	17
NQF Level 2			27	27	25	37	24	30
NQF Level 1			11	14	14	17	9	13
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	15	21	65	107	82	129	161	290

Figures for 16-19 and 20-24 have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

Priorities 2 and 5 have a requirement to measure the proportion of female participants gaining full qualifications at Levels 2 and 3, although there are no specific targets in this area. ESF Cohort Study data indicates that female participants were more likely than male participants to have gained full qualifications at Level 4 (nine per cent compared with seven per cent in Priority 2 and 13 per cent compared with three per cent in Priority 5) and at Level 3 (25 per cent compared with 23 per cent in Priority 2 and 21 per cent compared with 13 per cent in Priority 5). Female Priority 2

participants were more likely to have gained qualifications at Level 2 (32 per cent compared with 20 per cent). They were less likely, however, to have gained qualifications at NQF Level 1 (in Priority 2, 15 per cent of male participants had gained qualifications at Level 1, compared with eight per cent of females) (Tables 4.8 and 4.9). The multivariate analysis showed that, when other variables were considered, gender was a significant predictor of gaining qualifications, with females being more likely than men to have gained full qualifications as part of the course.

There is also a requirement to record the proportion of participants aged over 50 gaining full qualifications as part of the course in Priorities 2 and 5. Participants aged over 50 were less likely than participants in younger age groups to have gained qualifications. For example, while 53 per cent of Priority 2 participants aged over 50 had gained qualifications, this proportion rose to 77 per cent among 16 to 19 year olds (Tables 4.8 and 4.9). (The multivariate analysis also indicated that people aged over 50 were less likely to have received qualifications than younger age groups, see below.)

In Priority 2, 67 per cent of participants with a disability or LTLI had gained a qualification. Again, there was a requirement to measure the proportion of participants from this group gaining full qualifications, but no specific targets were set. There were no statistically significant differences in the proportions of people gaining any full qualifications by disability or LTLI status, although participants with a disability or LTLI were less likely than those without to have gained a full Level 3 qualification (15 per cent compared with 25 per cent) (Table 4.10). In the multivariate analysis, disability was not a significant predictor of whether participants had gained qualifications on the course.

There was also a requirement to record the proportion of ethnic minority participants who gained full qualifications. Results from the ESF Cohort Study suggest that, in Priority 2, 68 per cent of ethnic minority participants had gained qualifications, and that this was not significantly different from the proportion of white participants who gained qualifications (70 per cent) (Table 4.10). There were no significant differences in the proportion of participants gaining full qualifications by lone parenthood, carer status or whether they had qualifications prior to the course (Table 4.10). Similarly, the multivariate analysis showed that ethnicity and lone parent status were not significant predictors of whether participants gained qualifications on the course.

(The proportion of participants from disadvantaged groups gaining full qualifications in Priority 5 has not been shown due to the small base sizes.)

Table 4.10 Full qualifications gained, by disadvantage (Priority 2)

Qualification level	ESF Cohort Study									
	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	White %	Ethnic minority group %	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %	Has qualifications %	No qualifications %
No qualifications achieved	31	30	31	30	30	32	30	33	30	33
NQF Level 4 and above	8	11	7	14	8	13	7	12	8	11
NQF Level 3	24	21	25	13	25	16	25	15	25	11
NQF Level 2	26	24	26	26	26	23	26	23	25	32
NQF Level 1	12	14	12	17	12	16	12	16	12	13
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,147	129	2,070	209	2,020	197	2,041	231	2,062	219

Table 4.11 Full qualifications gained, by part-time females (Priority 2)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Qualification level	Females in employment		Total %
	Full-time %	Part-time %	
No qualifications achieved	28	22	26
NQF Level 4 and above	8	9	9
NQF Level 3	27	28	25
NQF Level 2	28	32	32
NQF Level 1	8	9	8
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	610	317	1,039

Table 4.12 Full qualifications gained, by part-time females (Priority 5)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Qualification level	Females in employment		Total %
	Full-time %	Part-time %	
No qualifications achieved	26	45	34
NQF Level 4 and above	15	11	13
NQF Level 3	28	12	21
NQF Level 2	22	19	24
NQF Level 1	8	13	9
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	82	61	161

Priorities 2 and 5 have a requirement to measure the proportion of part-time female workers gaining full qualifications as part of the course. ESF Cohort Study data shows that 78 per cent of part-time female workers in Priority 2 and 55 per cent in Priority 5 gained full qualifications through the course. There were no significant differences in the proportion of part-time female workers gaining qualifications compared with full-time female workers (Tables 4.11 and 4.12). Similarly, in the multivariate analysis, working part-time (compared with working full-time) was not a significant predictor of whether participants had gained qualifications on the course.

4.2.1 Factors associated with gaining qualifications

Multivariate analysis was carried out to look at the predictors of Priority 2 and 5 participants gaining qualifications on the course³⁰.

Multivariate methods can add an extra dimension to the analysis. It is possible that a statistically significant association can appear between two variables because both variables may be related to a third variable (for instance, ethnic background is related to age; both may be related to whether participants gained qualifications). Multivariate analysis, such as logistic regression, looks at all

³⁰ More detailed information about the multivariate analysis can be found in Appendix C.

the variables in relation to each other, as well as in relation to the outcome variable; in this case qualifications gained at Wave 2. In instances where two variables are both strongly related to employment status, but also strongly related to each other, the analysis will suggest which variable has the stronger relationship with qualifications gained.

The following variables were considered in the model³¹:

- gender;
- age;
- funding stream;
- region;
- ethnicity;
- lone parent status;
- whether the participant was a carer;
- whether the participant was an offender or ex-offender;
- disability variables (e.g. whether the respondent had a physical disability, learning disability, mental health problem, LTLI or other disability);
- whether the participant had qualifications before the course;
- whether the participant had dependent children;
- tenure;
- satisfaction with the course, in terms of relevance, quality and level;
- why participants had signed up to the course;
- intensity of the course;
- employment status at the time of the Wave 2 interview (full-time/part-time/not in employment);
- employment status 12 months before the course (in employment/unemployed/inactive);
- whether the participant gained work skills, soft skills or practical help in finding work on the course; and
- income.

³¹ Whether participants had finished the course or left early was not included in the model. Similarly, the model did not include variables about the length of time that people spent on the course, or about the length of time since they left the course. It was felt that these variables were too closely linked with the outcome variable. Generally, most participants who had gained qualifications had finished their courses, had been on longer courses and (as qualifications were not awarded immediately) had finished the course longer ago on average. It was important to ensure that the model measured the demographic and attitudinal characteristics of participants who had gained qualifications. The inclusion of these related variables made the model less adequate in this regard.

The multivariate analysis found that people from the following groups, and with the following characteristics, were more likely have gained a qualification through the course:

- female participants, compared with male participants;
- participants aged 20 to 49 compared with those aged over 50;
- participants on match-funded projects, compared with those on projects funded by ESF;
- participants who said that they had gained work skills on the course; and
- participants who said that they gained confidence on the course.

The following groups less likely have gained a qualification through the course:

- participants of projects in the East of England, the East Midlands, the South West and the West Midlands, compared with participants of projects in Cornwall;
- participants who were ‘neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’ with the course or who were ‘fairly or very dissatisfied’ with it, compared with those who were ‘very or fairly satisfied’;
- participants who were out of work at the time of the Wave 2 interview, compared with those who worked full-time.

4.3 Units/modules gained towards full qualifications

The Wave 2 interview asked participants about whether they had gained any units or modules towards a full qualification on the course. In Priorities 2 and 5, the proportion of participants saying that they had obtained units or modules towards full qualifications was 24 per cent and 19 per cent respectively. The proportion was much less in Priorities 1 and 4, at six per cent (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13 Partial qualifications gained, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Qualifications gained	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
No qualifications achieved	94	76	94	81	91
NQF Level 4 and above	1	8	1	8	2
NQF Level 3	0	6	0	5	1
NQF Level 2	1	6	1	5	2
NQF Level 1	4	5	3	1	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,666	2,641	750	343	7,400

Within Priority 2 and 5, there is a requirement to record the proportion of participants gaining units or modules towards qualifications. ESF Cohort Study data indicates that six per cent of Priority 2 participants had gained units or modules towards a Level 2 qualification and five per cent of Priority 5 participants had gained units or modules at this level. The proportions of participants in these priorities gaining units or modules towards Level 3 qualifications was similar – six per cent in Priority 2 and five per cent in Priority 5. Eight per cent of participants in both Priorities 2 and 5 had gained units or modules towards Level 4 qualifications (Table 4.13).

Table 4.14 Partial qualifications gained, by funding stream within Priority

ESF Cohort Study

Qualifications gained	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
No qualifications achieved	91	94	94	84	72	95	91
NQF Level 4 and above	1	1	1	6	9	1	2
NQF Level 3	1	0	2	2	7	1	1
NQF Level 2	2	1	1	4	7	1	2
NQF Level 1	6	3	2	5	4	2	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,334	1,952	130	1,724	1,136	124	7,400

Match participants in Priorities 2 and 5 were slightly more likely than ESF participants to have gained units or modules towards full qualifications. For example, while 28 per cent of match participants had gained units or modules towards full qualifications, this proportion fell to 16 per cent among ESF participants (Table 4.14).

Table 4.15 Partial qualifications gained, by age and gender (Priority 2)

ESF Cohort Study

Qualification level	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
No qualifications achieved	64	75	80	82	87	74	79	76
NQF Level 4 and above	10	8	9	7	4	8	8	8
NQF Level 3	9	7	5	2	2	6	5	6
NQF Level 2	11	6	3	3	4	7	5	6
NQF Level 1	5	4	4	6	3	5	4	5
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	235	283	441	996	682	1435	1,206	2,641

Table 4.16 Partial qualifications gained, by age and gender (Priority 5)

Qualification level	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
	No qualifications achieved		67	79	88	81	83	
NQF Level 4 and above		13	6	5	9	4	11	8
NQF Level 3		11	5	4	4	5	5	5
NQF Level 2		7	10	2	3	8	2	5
NQF Level 1		2		1	3		3	1
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	20	30	69	125	99	154	189	343

Figures for 16-19 age group have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

There were no significant differences in the proportions of men and women achieving units or modules towards qualifications. Thirteen per cent of Priority 2 participants and 19 per cent of Priority 5 participants aged over 50 had gained units or modules towards qualifications. Generally, a higher proportion of participants in younger age groups had gained partial qualifications (Tables 4.15 and 4.16).

In Priority 2, 35 per cent of participants with a disability or LTLI had gained units or modules as part of the course, compared with a lower proportion (23 per cent) among participants with no disability or LTLI. Among ethnic minority participants in Priority 2, 22 per cent had gained units or modules towards qualifications; this was similar to the proportion of white people (24 per cent; Table 4.17). (It was not possible to show the proportion of lone parents, carers, ethnic minority groups, disabled people or people with no qualifications gaining full qualifications in Priority 5 due to the small base sizes.)

Table 4.17 Partial qualifications gained, by disadvantage (Priority 2)

Qualification level	ESF Cohort Study									
	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	White %	Ethnic minority group %	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %	Has qualifications %	No qualifications %
No qualifications achieved	76	81	76	73	76	78	77	65	76	78
NQF Level 4 and above	8	9	8	13	8	10	8	9	8	10
NQF Level 3	6	3	6	4	6	2	6	2	6	1
NQF Level 2	6	0	6	6	6	7	5	13	6	5
NQF Level 1	5	7	5	5	5	3	4	11	5	5
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,490	138	2,404	229	2,342	219	2,371	256	2,403	233

Table 4.18 Partial qualifications gained, by part-time females (Priority 2)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Qualification level	Females in employment		Total %
	Full-time %	Part-time %	
No qualifications achieved	81	78	79
NQF Level 4 and above	7	9	8
NQF Level 3	6	5	5
NQF Level 2	3	6	5
NQF Level 1	2	2	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	702	366	1,206

Table 4.19 Partial qualifications gained, by part-time females (Priority 5)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Qualification level	Females in employment		Total %
	Full-time %	Part-time %	
No qualifications achieved	81	75	79
NQF Level 4 and above	11	13	11
NQF Level 3	4	6	5
NQF Level 2	1	5	2
NQF Level 1	3	1	3
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	98	68	189

There is a requirement to measure the proportion of part-time female workers gaining units or modules towards full qualifications as part of the course in Priorities 2 and 5. Twenty-two per cent of part-time female workers in Priority 2 and 25 per cent in Priority 5 gained units or modules towards qualifications. There were no significant differences in the proportion of part-time female workers gaining units or modules compared with full-time female workers in either Priority (Tables 4.18 and 4.19).

4.4 Types of qualifications studied

This section looks at the types of qualifications studied by participants on the course³². National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) were the most common type of qualification studied by participants (54 per cent). Among match participants in Priorities 2 and 5, the proportion of people who studied NVQs was particularly high, at 93 per cent. Overall, 35 per cent of participants studied towards other work-related qualifications, including IT or basic skills qualifications. The proportion of participants

³² The section includes data about participants who had not gained a full or partial qualification through their studies, including those who were still studying towards qualifications and those who had stopped studying towards qualifications without achieving an award.

who studied other qualifications was higher in Priorities 1 and 4 than in Priorities 2 and 5. Other relatively common qualification types studied by participants were: City and Guild (12 per cent), GCSE (four per cent), OCR (four per cent) and BTEC qualifications (three per cent) (Table 4.20)³³.

Table 4.20 Types of qualification studied, by funding stream within priority

Qualifications studied	Funding stream within priority						Total ¹ %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
GCSE	6	5	1	1	1		4
A Level	3	3	0	1	1		2
AS Level	1	1	0	0	0		1
NVQ	29	34	32	65	93		54
BTEC	3	2	2	3	3		3
Edexcel	2	1	0	2	0		1
City and Guild	16	14	13	9	9		12
OCR	8	4	5	3	1		4
GNVQ	1	1	0	0	0		1
Access	1	0	4	1	1		1
HNC	1	0	0	1	1		1
Short course GCSE	1	2	1	1	1		1
Other	49	47	41	21	13		35
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	814	573	41	959	1,019	26	3,432

Figures for 'other' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

¹ The total sums to more than 100 per cent as some participants were studying towards more than one type of qualification.

4.5 Participants who have stopped studying towards qualifications

Sixteen per cent of participants stopped studying towards qualifications without achieving a full or part qualification.

³³ Table 4.16 excludes qualification types studied by fewer than 0.5 per cent of participants (including degrees, post graduate qualifications, nursing qualifications and Advanced Vocational Certificate of Educations (AVCEs)).

Table 4.21 Whether stopped studying qualifications, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Whether stopped studying	Priority				Total %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
Did not stop studying qualification	79	91	86	92	84
Stopped studying qualification	21	9	14	8	16
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,333	1,783	188	243	3,547

This proportion was higher in Priority 1 than in Priority 2; while 21 per cent of Priority 1 participants had stopped studying towards qualifications, this proportion was only nine per cent among Priority 2 participants (Table 4.21).

Table 4.22 Whether stopped studying qualifications, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Whether stopped studying	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Did not stop studying qualification	81	78	85	91	91		84
Stopped studying qualification	19	22	15	9	9		16
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	870	606	45	979	1,020	27	3,547

Figures for 'other' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

Within Priorities 1 and 4 and Priorities 2 and 5, there were no significant differences in the proportions of ESF and match participants who stopped studying towards qualifications (Table 4.22).

Table 4.23 Whether stopped studying qualifications, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Whether stopped studying	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Did not stop studying qualification	85	83	85	85	80	84	84	84
Stopped studying qualification	15	17	15	15	20	16	16	16
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	727	464	547	1,131	672	1,853	1,694	3,547

Moreover, there was no significant variation in the proportion of participants who stopped studying qualifications by age and gender (Table 4.23).

Table 4.24 Partial qualifications gained, by disadvantage (Priorities 2 and 5 only)

		ESF Cohort Study									
Whether stopped studying	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	Not carer %	Carer %	Disadvantage				Has a disability or LTLI %	Has qualifications %	No qualifications %
					White %	Ethnic minority group %	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %			
Did not stop studying qualification	84	82	83	89	83	87	85	79	85	76	
Stopped studying qualification	16	18	17	11	17	13	15	21	15	24	
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,263	271	3,254	284	2,987	409	2,873	650	3170	373	

There were few significant differences in the proportion of participants from disadvantaged groups who had stopped studying towards qualifications compared with people without disadvantages. However, people without qualifications were more likely than those with qualifications to have stopped studying (24 per cent compared with 15 per cent; Table 4.24).

Table 4.25 Reasons for stopping studying qualifications

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Reason stopped studying	Priority				Total¹
	1	2	4	5	
	%	%	%	%	%
Not satisfied with course	11	16			12
Course not relevant to job	9	12			10
Started another qualification	6	5			6
Financial issues	4	4			4
Caring responsibilities	2	2			2
Disability	5	1			4
Illness	6	1			5
Personal/domestic issues	3	8			4
Other reason	59	61			59
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	269	154	26	18	467

Figures for Priorities 4 and 5 have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

¹ The total amounts to more than 100 per cent as participants could give more than one reason for stopping studying.

Twelve per cent of participants who stopped studying towards qualifications said that they were 'not satisfied with the course' while ten per cent felt that it was 'not relevant to their job'. Several participants cited disabilities (four per cent) and illness (five per cent) as their reason for stopping studying. Most participants (59 per cent) gave other reasons for having stopped the qualification (Table 4.25).

4.6 Vocational training undertaken since the course

Participants who had finished the course at the time of the Wave 2 interview were asked about any vocational training they had undertaken since leaving the course.

Table 4.26 Vocational training undertaken since the course, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Vocational training	Priority				Total¹ %
	1 %	2 %	4 %	5 %	
Training in basic computer or IT skills	9	7	8	6	8
Training in intermediate or advanced computing or IT skills	4	6	4	6	4
Training in how to look for a job	13	5	10	2	12
Training in reading or writing skills	8	5	7	2	8
Training in maths or number skills	9	9	7	6	9
General training in the world of work	13	18	12	11	14
Training in personal skills	16	18	17	8	16
None	70	68	68	76	69
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,484	2,385	701	310	6,880

¹ The total sums to more than 100 per cent as some participants were studying towards more than one type of qualification.

Thirty-one per cent of participants had taken part in some form of vocational training since the course. Most commonly, participants had received training in personal skills (16 per cent), followed by general training in the world of work (14 per cent) and training in how to look for a job (12 per cent). Furthermore, nine per cent of participants had received training in maths or number skills, while eight per cent had been training in reading or writing skills and a similar proportion (eight per cent) had received help with basic IT skills (Table 4.26).

Table 4.27 Whether course helpful in finding training

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Whether course helpful	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Did help	67	60	64	46	66		62
Did not help	33	40	36	54	34		38
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	761	611	44	417	269	25	2,127

Figures for 'other' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

Of those participants who had been on vocational training since the course, 62 per cent felt that the original course (i.e. the original ESF or match-funded course) had helped them to find this additional training (Table 4.27).

Table 4.28 Whether would have done training without original course*ESF Cohort Study*

Whether would have done training	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Yes	45	46	55	51	42		46
No	55	54	45	49	58		54
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	731	585	43	413	261	24	2,057

Figures for 'other' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

In fact, 54 per cent of participants said that they would not have done the additional training if it had not been for the original course (Table 4.28).

Table 4.29 Likelihood of doing further training in future*ESF Cohort Study*

Likelihood	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Very likely	38	33	35	42	39	30	35
Fairly likely	35	38	43	34	38	28	37
Fairly unlikely	14	14	6	14	14	21	14
Very unlikely	13	15	15	10	9	21	14
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,108	1,779	121	1,564	951	119	6,642

Seventy-three per cent of participants said that they were very likely or fairly likely to undertake training in the future (Table 4.29). The likelihood of doing training in the future decreased with age. In particular, only 49 per cent of those aged over 50 said that they were 'very likely' or 'fairly likely' to do training in the future, compared with 81 per cent of those aged 16 to 19 (Table 4.30).

Table 4.30 Likelihood of doing further training in future, by age and gender*ESF Cohort Study*

Likelihood	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Very likely	41	38	41	35	20	33	39	35
Fairly likely	41	40	34	40	29	39	35	37
Fairly unlikely	10	16	14	11	19	14	13	14
Or very unlikely	9	6	11	14	32	14	13	14
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	943	864	1,086	2,204	1,533	3,542	3,100	6,642

5 Outcomes

This chapter explores the outcomes of participants:

- Section 5.1 provides an overview of the employment status of all course leavers;
- Section 5.2 looks in more detail at the employment status at the Wave 2 interview of Priority 1 and 4 participants (who had mostly been out of work before the course). This section includes a multivariate analysis to explore the characteristics of those participants who had found work at the time of the Wave 2 interview in more detail;
- Section 5.3 provides a profile of participants who entered employment since going on the course;
- Section 5.4 offers information about those participants who were in employment at the Wave 2 interview, who had also been in employment in the week before the course; and
- Section 5.5 sheds light on those participants not in work at the Wave 2 interview.

This chapter only considers outcomes for those participants who had finished the course at the time of the Wave 2 interview, accounting for 94 per cent of participants.

5.1 Employment status of course leavers – overview

Course leavers were asked about their employment status at four points in time: 12 months before they started the course; in the week before the course; at the time of the Wave 1 interview (where they had already finished the course); and at the time of the Wave 2 interview (again, where participants had finished the course).

Table 5.1 Employment patterns of course leavers, by priority (Priorities 1 and 4)

Employment status	Priority							
	Priority 1				Priority 4			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	26	6	21	27	35	6	26	30
Unemployed	42	69	50	43	21	39	25	25
Economically inactive	32	25	29	30	44	55	49	45
<i>Unweighted bases¹</i>	3,513	3,513	3,011	3,513	705	705	552	705

¹ This Wave 1 base excludes Wave 2 respondents who had not completed the course at the time of the Wave 1 interview.

The rate of unemployment among Priority 1 participants decreased by over 25 percentage points from the week before the course to the time of the Wave 2 interview (from 69 per cent to 43 per cent). However, the rate of unemployment at the time of Wave 2 interview (43 per cent) was similar to what it had been among these participants 12 months before the course (42 per cent). In Priority 4, the unemployment rate decreased from 39 per cent to 25 per cent although, again, it was similar at the time of the Wave 2 interview to what it had been 12 months before the course (21 per cent).

The employment rate among Priority 1 participants rose from six per cent in the week before the course to 27 per cent at the time of the Wave 2 interview (although it was similar to what it had been 12 months before the course, which was 26 per cent). The employment rate rose from six per cent to 30 per cent among Priority 4 participants over the same period of time. It had been at 35 per cent 12 months before the course (Table 5.1).

Table 5.2 Employment patterns of course leavers, by priority (Priorities 2 and 5)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Employment status	Priority							
	Priority 2				Priority 5			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	71	80	79	85	85	89	89	89
Unemployed	3	12	13	8	1	6	4	4
Economically inactive	26	8	9	7	13	5	6	7
<i>Unweighted bases</i> ¹	2407	2407	1926	2407	312	312	241	312

¹ This Wave 1 base excludes Wave 2 respondents who had not completed the course at the time of the Wave 1 interview.

Among participants in Priority 2 (which did not have a specific objective to help participants into work), there was a small rise in the employment rate from the week before the course (80 per cent) to the time of the Wave 2 interview (85 per cent). (There was no rise in employment rate among Priority 5 participants over the same period.) During this period, there was a corresponding decrease in the rate of unemployment, from 12 per cent to eight per cent in Priority 2 (Table 5.2).

5.2 Employment status of Priority 1 and 4 participants

Table 5.3 Employment patterns of course leavers, by funding stream (Priorities 1 and 4)

Employment status	Funding stream							
	ESF				Match			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	35	8	30	38	22	5	18	22
Unemployed	31	70	46	39	45	68	51	45
Economically inactive	34	22	24	23	33	27	31	33
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,222	2,222	1,858	2,222	1,871	1,871	1,594	1,871

ESF Cohort Study

From the week before the course to the time of the Wave 2 interview, rates of unemployment fell by a higher proportion among European Social Fund (ESF) participants in Priorities 1 and 4 than among match participants (unemployment fell by 31 percentage points among ESF participants compared with 23 percentage points among match participants). (This finding was reflected in the multivariate analysis, see Tables 5.4 and 5.5.)

Rates of employment increased by a higher proportion among ESF participants compared with match participants (employment rates rose by 30 percentage points among ESF participants compared with 17 points among match participants). However, match participants in Priorities 1 and 4 tended to start from a lower rate of unemployment – 12 months before the course, fewer match participants than ESF participants were in employment (22 per cent compared with 35 per cent) while more were unemployed (45 per cent compared with 31 per cent). At the time of the Wave 2 interview, rates of employment and unemployment among match participants were similar to what they had been 12 months before the course. Among ESF participants, rates of unemployment actually rose during this period (from 31 per cent to 39 per cent), although employment rates also rose slightly and rates of inactivity fell (Table 5.3).

Table 5.4 Employment patterns of course leavers, by gender (Priority 1)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status	Gender							
	Male				Female			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	6	6	19	24	6	6	26	32
Unemployed	76	76	58	50	57	57	37	30
Economically inactive	18	18	24	26	37	37	37	38
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,855	1,855	1,590	1,855	1,658	1,658	1,421	1,658

Among male participants, rates of employment rose by 18 percentage points among Priority 1 participants from the week before the course to the time of the Wave 2 interview. During the same period, the rate of employment among female participants rose by 26 percentage points. (The multivariate analysis also found that female participants were more likely than male participants to have found work at the time of the Wave 2 interview.) Unemployment rates among male and female participants from the week before the course to the time of interview fell by similar amounts (26 and 27 percentage points respectively). However, while the economic inactivity rate among women was similar in the week before the course (37 per cent) and at the time of the Wave 2 interview (38 per cent), the economic inactivity rate among men rose slightly during this period (from 18 per cent to 26 per cent) (Table 5.4).

Table 5.5 Employment patterns of course leavers, by gender (Priority 4)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status	Gender							
	Male				Female			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	5	5	27	31	6	6	25	29
Unemployed	48	48	31	29	27	27	16	19
Economically inactive	47	47	42	40	67	67	59	52
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	393	393	313	393	312	312	239	312

Among Priority 4 participants, rates of employment among men rose by 26 percentage points from the week before the course to the time of the Wave 2 interview; among women, it rose by a similar amount (23 percentage points). During the same period, unemployment rates fell by 19 percentage points among men and by nine percentage points among women. Rates of inactivity fell by seven percentage points among men and by 15 percentage points among women during this period (Table 5.5).

Among Priority 1 participants, employment rates from the week before the course to the time of the Wave 2 interview rose by a similar amount among those aged 16 to 19 year olds and those aged 20 to 49, although the rise in the employment rate was lower among those aged over 50. (Reflecting this finding, the multivariate analysis found that participants aged 16 to 19 and those aged 20 to 49 were more likely to have entered employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview than those aged over 50.) For example, while the rate of employment among those aged over 50 rose by ten percentage points, among those age 16 to 19, it rose by 21 percentage points. During this same period, the rate of unemployment fell more among those aged 20 to 49, compared with those aged 16 to 19 and those aged over 50; for example, unemployment fell by 27 percentage points among those aged 20-49 and by 21 percentage points among those aged over 50. (Generally, those aged 16 to 19 were starting from a lower base; 12 months before the course, only 13 per cent were in employment – 27 per cent were unemployed and 60 per cent were inactive – Table 5.6.)

Table 5.6 Employment patterns of course leavers, by age (Priority 1)

Employment status	ESF Cohort Study											
	Age 16-19				Age 20-49				Age 50+			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	13	8	18	29	27	5	23	29	30	6	15	16
Unemployed	27	68	52	44	45	73	53	45	42	55	39	34
Economically inactive	60	24	30	27	28	22	24	26	27	38	46	50
Unweighted bases	758	758	623	758	2,077	2,077	1,797	2,077	669	669	582	669

Table 5.7 Employment patterns of course leavers, by age (Priority 4)

Employment status	ESF Cohort Study											
	Age 16-19				Age 20-49				Age 50+			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	26	9	31	41	34	4	26	30	44	8	25	27
Unemployed	14	37	19	24	23	44	27	25	14	25	20	22
Economically inactive	60	53	50	35	43	52	47	45	42	67	54	50
Unweighted bases	36	36	26	36	472	472	358	472	196	196	167	196

Among Priority 4 participants, rates of unemployment from the week before the course to the time of the Wave 2 interview fell more among those aged 16 to 19 and those aged 24 to 49 compared with those aged over 50; unemployment fell by only three percentage points among those over 50 compared with 13 percentage points among those aged 16 to 19 and by 18 percentage points among those aged 24 to 49. However, among those aged over 50, rates of inactivity during this period fell by 16 percentage points, compared with only seven percentage points among those aged 20 to 49 (Table 5.7).

Table 5.8 Employment patterns of course leavers, by ethnicity (Priority 1)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Employment status	Ethnicity							
	White				Ethnic minority			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	26	6	21	26	17	5	20	26
Unemployed	43	72	52	46	45	68	49	43
Economically inactive	31	23	27	29	38	27	31	31
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,548	2,548	2,189	2,548	702	702	593	702

There were no significant differences in the employment patterns of Priority 1 participants from ethnic minority groups compared with those of white people (Table 5.8)³⁴. The multivariate analysis also found that ethnicity was not a significant predictor of employment status at the Wave 2 interview.

³⁴ It has not been possible to produce a table showing the employment patterns of course leavers by ethnicity for Priority 4 participants, due to small base sizes. (Only two per cent of Priority 4 participants were from an ethnic minority group.)

Table 5.9 Employment patterns of course leavers, by disability (Priority 1)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status	Disability							
	Does not have disability				Has a disability			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	27	6	26	32	24	5	13	18
Unemployed	45	80	58	50	38	50	36	30
Economically inactive	29	14	17	18	38	45	51	52
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,483	2,483	2,148	2,483	1,026	1,026	859	1,026

By contrast, participants with a disability or long-term limiting illness (LTLI) were less likely than those without to find work between the time they started the course and the Wave 2 interview. (This was also a finding of the multivariate analysis.) For example, among Priority 1 participants, the employment rate rose by 13 percentage points in this period among people with a LTLI or disability compared with a rise of 26 percentage points among non-disabled people, while the unemployment rates fell by 19 percentage points and 30 percentage points respectively. Among disabled people in Priority 1, the rate of economic inactivity rose across the four points of time (from 38 per cent 12 months before the course to 52 per cent at the time of the Wave 2 interview) (Table 5.9). It is unclear why this has happened, although it should be noted that Priority 1 (specifically the match-funded element) works with particularly disadvantaged groups.

Table 5.10 Employment patterns of course leavers, by disability (Priority 4)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status	Disability							
	Does not have disability				Has a disability			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	39	7	43	48	33	5	16	19
Unemployed	27	58	33	29	17	28	20	22
Economically inactive	34	35	25	23	50	67	65	59
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	222	222	181	222	483	483	371	483

The pattern was similar among Priority 4 participants. Among people with a disability or LTLI, the employment rate rose by 15 percentage points from the time they started the course to the Wave 2 interview, compared with a rise of 41 percentage points among non-disabled people. Correspondingly, the rate of unemployment over the same period fell by 29 percentage points among non-disabled people (from 58 per cent to 29 per cent), while among disabled people the fall was only six percentage points (from 28 per cent to 22 per cent) (Table 5.10).

Table 5.11 Employment patterns of course leavers, by lone parent status (Priority 1)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status	Lone parent status							
	Not lone parent				Lone parent			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	27	6	21	26	13	6	25	32
Unemployed	42	71	53	45	40	49	24	26
Economically inactive	31	23	26	29	46	45	51	42
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	3,080	3,080	2,627	3,080	426	426	377	426

Table 5.12 Employment patterns of course leavers, by lone parent status (Priority 4)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status	Lone parent status							
	Not lone parent				Lone parent			
	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	12 months before course %	Week before course %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	37	5	26	31	14	8	29	23
Unemployed	21	40	26	24	21	29	14	26
Economically inactive	42	54	48	45	65	63	57	51
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	640	640	505	640	65	65	47	65

From the week before the course started to the time of the Wave 2 interview, the employment rate rose by 26 percentage points among lone parents in Priority 1 (from six per cent to 32 per cent). By contrast, it rose by only 20 percentage points among those who were not lone parents (from six per cent to 26 per cent). (Importantly, however, lone parent status was not found to be a significant predictor of employment status in the multivariate analysis.) Among Priority 4 participants, there were no significant differences in the proportion of lone parents finding work compared with those who were not lone parents (Tables 5.11 and 5.12).

Table 5.13 Employment status – compared with 12 months before the course (Priority 1)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>				
Employment status 12 months before the interview				
Employment status at Wave 2 interview	In employment %	Unemployed %	Economically inactive %	Total %
In employment	36	20	28	27
Unemployed	39	56	30	43
Economically inactive	26	24	42	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>948</i>	<i>1,130</i>	<i>1,435</i>	<i>3,513</i>

Table 5.14 Employment status – compared with 12 months before the course (Priority 4)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>				
Employment status 12 months before the interview				
Employment status at Wave 2 interview	In employment %	Unemployed %	Economically inactive %	Total %
In employment	41	19	27	30
Unemployed	23	44	17	25
Economically inactive	36	37	56	45
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>253</i>	<i>133</i>	<i>319</i>	<i>705</i>

Perhaps unsurprisingly, participants who were in employment 12 months before the course were more likely than participants who were unemployed or inactive to be in work at the time of the Wave 2 interview (Tables 5.13 and 5.14). For example, 36 per cent of Priority 1 participants and 41 per cent of Priority 4 participants in employment 12 months before the course started were also in employment at the Wave 2 interview.

Table 5.15 Employment status – compared with the week before the course (Priority 1)*ESF Cohort Study*

Employment status at Wave 2 interview	Employment status in week before the course			Total %
	In employment %	Unemployed %	Economically inactive %	
In employment	56	25	24	27
Unemployed	19	53	22	43
Economically inactive	25	22	55	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	284	2,246	983	3,513

Table 5.16 Employment status – compared with the week before the course (Priority 4)*ESF Cohort Study*

Employment status at Wave 2 interview	Employment status in week before the course			Total %
	In employment %	Unemployed %	Economically inactive %	
In employment	58	38	22	30
Unemployed	18	37	16	25
Economically inactive	25	24	62	45
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	33	254	418	705

Participants who were in employment in the week before the course were more likely than participants who were unemployed or inactive at this point in time to be in work at the time of the Wave 2 interview (Tables 5.15 and 5.16). Fifty-six per cent of Priority 1 participants and 58 per cent of Priority 4 participants in employment a week prior to the course starting were in employment at Wave 2. There were also some changes in economic status; for example, among Priority 1 participants, 28 per cent of those who were economically inactive 12 months before their course started were in employment at Wave 2 (Tables 5.15 and 5.16).

Table 5.17 Employment status – compared with time of Wave 1 interview (Priority 1)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status at Wave 2 interview	Employment status at time of Wave 1 interview			Total %
	In employment %	Unemployed %	Economically inactive %	
In employment	84	13	11	27
Unemployed	12	69	23	43
Economically inactive	4	19	66	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	807	1,367	837	3,513

Table 5.18 Employment status – compared with time of Wave 1 interview (Priority 4)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status at Wave 2 interview	Employment status at time of Wave 1 interview			Total %
	In employment %	Unemployed %	Economically inactive %	
In employment	80	23	9	30
Unemployed	13	49	18	25
Economically inactive	7	28	73	45
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	138	131	283	705

Generally, the rate of employment among participants increased between the Wave 1 and 2 interviews. Of those Priority 1 participants who had found employment at the time of the Wave 1 interview, most (84 per cent) were still in employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview. Among Priority 4 participants, the proportions were similar – 80 per cent of participants were still in employment at Wave 2, with 13 per cent now unemployed and seven per cent now economically inactive.

Thirteen per cent of Priority 1 participants and 19 per cent of Priority 4 participants, who had been unemployed at the Wave 1 interview, had moved into employment at Wave 2. Similarly, 11 per cent of Priority 1 participants, and 27 per cent of Priority 4 participants, who were economically inactive at Wave 1 had moved into employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview (Tables 5.17 and 5.18).

Table 5.19 Employment status, by length of unemployment (Priority 1)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status at Wave 2	Length of unemployment (in week before the course)						Total %
	Less than three months %	Between three and less than six months %	Between six and less than 12 months %	Between 12 months and less than two years %	Two years or more %	Never had a (full-time) job %	
In employment	51	31	28	22	18	24	25
Unemployed	26	52	58	58	55	53	53
Economically inactive	23	17	14	20	27	24	22
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	273	280	359	296	586	419	2,246

Table 5.20 Employment status, by length of unemployment (Priority 4)

ESF Cohort Study

Employment status at Wave 2	Length of unemployment (in week before the course)						Total %
	Less than three months %	Between three and less than six months %	Between six and less than 12 months %	Between 12 months and less than two years %	Two years or more %	Never had a (full-time) job %	
In employment	66	57	26		15		38
Unemployed	16	30	39		55		37
Economically inactive	18	13	36		30		24
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	51	40	38	28	76	18	254

Figures for 'never had a (full-time job)' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

Generally, the longer participants had been unemployed in the week before the course, the less likely they were to be in employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview. (This was also a finding of the multivariate analysis.) For example, 51 per cent of Priority 1 participants who had been unemployed for less than three months were in work at the time of the Wave 2 interview, compared with 18 per cent among those who had been out of work for two years or more (Tables 5.19 and 5.20).

Table 5.21 Employment status, by satisfaction with the course (Priorities 1 and 4)

ESF Cohort Study

Relevant to needs	Employment status at time of Wave 1 interview			Total %
	In employment %	Unemployed %	Economically inactive %	
Not relevant	19	27	34	27
Relevant	81	73	66	73
Level of the course				
Too basic	36	47	40	42
About right	61	49	53	53
Too advanced	3	4	8	5
Satisfaction				
Very or fairly satisfied	75	66	64	68
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	12	13	15	13
Fairly or very dissatisfied	12	21	21	19
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,432	1,483	1,289	4,204

Participants who were in employment at Wave 2 were more likely to say that the course had been relevant to their needs (81 per cent), compared with those who were unemployed (73 per cent) or inactive (66 per cent). Participants who were unemployed at Wave 2 were more likely than those in employment to say that the course was too basic (47 per cent compared with 36 per cent). Participants in employment were more likely to say that they were 'very or fairly satisfied' with the quality of the course (75 per cent), compared with those who were unemployed (66 per cent) or economically inactive (64 per cent) (Table 5.21). (The multivariate analysis found that, once other factors were taken into consideration, perceptions about the relevance, level and quality of the course were not found to be significant predictors of employment status at Wave 2.)

Table 5.22 Employment status, by where heard about the course (Priority 1 and 4)

Employment status at Wave 2 interview	Where heard about the course							Total %	
	From a jobcentre %	From a college/school %	From a youth offending team/probation courts %	From another local community organisation %	From a friend/family member %	From an advert %	From an employer %		Other %
In employment	25	38	21	29	38	44	66	30	27
Unemployed	46	26	69	35	32	19	23	35	43
Economically inactive	29	36	11	36	30	37	11	35	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,463	235	31	437	307	142	58	524	4,218

ESF Cohort Study

Participants who had heard about the course from a school or college (38 per cent), from a friend or family member (38 per cent), from an advert (44 per cent) or from an employer (66 per cent) were more likely to be in employment than those who had heard about the course from a jobcentre (25 per cent (Table 5.22)). However, when other variables were also considered in the multivariate model, how participants heard about the course was not found to be a significant predictor of employment status at the time of the Wave 2 interview.

Table 5.23 Employment status, by why went on the course (Priorities 1 and 4)

Employment status at Wave 2 interview	Why went on the course					Total %
	Made to go on it %	Persuaded %	Given the opportunity %	Decided myself %	Other %	
In employment	17	25	33	35		27
Unemployed	52	45	37	35		43
Economically inactive	31	30	30	30		30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	816	270	1,452	1,654	22	4,218

Figures for 'other' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

Where participants had been 'made to go on the course', they were less likely to be in employment (17 per cent) at the time of the Wave 2 interview than those who had been 'persuaded' to go on it (25 per cent), 'given the opportunity' to go on it (33 per cent) or 'decided themselves' to go on it (35 per cent) (Table 5.23). This was also a finding of the multivariate analysis.

Table 5.24 Employment status, by length of course (Priorities 1 and 4)

Employment status at Wave 2 interview	Length of course					Total %
	Less than a month %	One month to four months %	Four months to six months %	Six months to 12 months %	A year or more %	
In employment	35	28	20	24	24	27
Unemployed	42	43	45	40	51	43
Economically inactive	23	29	35	36	25	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	874	1,507	658	854	257	4,218

Generally, participants who attended shorter courses lasting less than a month were more likely to be in employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview than those on longer courses; for example, 35 per cent of participants on courses lasting less than one month were in work compared with 24 per cent who had been on a course lasting six months or more (Table 5.24). This result, which is also reflected in the multivariate analysis, is perhaps unsurprising; participants who are closer to the labour market may have been on shorter courses.

Table 5.25 Employment status, by intensity of course (Priorities 1 and 4)

Employment status at Wave 2 interview	Intensity of course					Total %
	Less than half a day %	Between half and one day %	More than one and less than two days %	More than two and less than five days %	More than five days %	
In employment	27	30	34	29	18	27
Unemployed	26	35	38	49	57	43
Economically inactive	47	35	28	22	25	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>1,078</i>	<i>703</i>	<i>437</i>	<i>1,542</i>	<i>435</i>	<i>4,218</i>

ESF Cohort Study

Participants who had been on a relatively intensive courses, taking up five days per week or more, were more likely to be unemployed (57 per cent) at the time of the Wave 2 interview than those on courses taking up less than half a day per week (26 per cent) – but were less likely to be economically inactive (25 per cent compared with 47 per cent; Table 5.25). (The multivariate analysis found that those on courses lasting five days per week or more were less likely than those on shorter courses to be in employment at Wave 2.)

Table 5.26 Employment status, by qualification level (Priorities 1 and 4)

Employment status at Wave 2	Qualification level before course						Total %
	Level 4 and above %	Level 3 – A Level or equivalent %	Level 2 – GCSE grades A-C or equivalent %	Below Level 2 %	Foreign and other qualifications %	No qualifications %	
In employment	39	42	29	20	23	17	27
Unemployed	33	32	44	49	46	43	43
Economically inactive	28	26	27	31	31	40	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>479</i>	<i>506</i>	<i>1,320</i>	<i>965</i>	<i>291</i>	<i>654</i>	<i>4,218</i>

ESF Cohort Study

Generally, participants with higher levels of qualifications were more likely to be in work at the time of the Wave 2 interview. (The multivariate model also found that participants with qualifications were more likely than those without to be in employment at Wave 2.) For example, 39 per cent of participants who were educated to Level 4 or above were in employment, compared with 17 per cent of participants with no qualifications. Correspondingly, while 83 per cent of participants with no qualifications were unemployed or economically inactive, this proportion fell to 61 per cent among those with qualifications at Level 4 or above (Table 5.26).

Table 5.27 Employment status, by time since leaving the course (Priorities 1 and 4)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Employment status at Wave 2 interview	Time since leaving the course				Total %
	Up to four months %	Four months to six months %	Six months to 12 months %	A year or more %	
In employment	21	28	27	28	27
Unemployed	42	40	42	44	43
Economically inactive	36	32	31	28	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	159	145	1,764	1,872	4,218

As outlined in Chapter 3, courses lasted for different lengths of time and varied in their intensity. Participants also had a variety of start dates (generally between 1 August 2008 and 1 January 2009) and end dates. Wave 1 interviews (conducted between April and September 2009) were carried out at a distribution of times after participants had started the course. Wave 2 interviews (conducted between January and March 2010) were carried out with a similar distribution, except six months on. There were no significant differences in the rates of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity among participants who had left the course up to four months before the Wave 2 interview, compared with those who had left the course longer ago (Table 5.27). This was also found to be the case in the multivariate analysis.

Table 5.28 Employment status, by time since leaving the course (Priorities 1 and 4)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>				
Employment status	Time since leaving the course (at Wave 2)			
	Six months to 12 months		A year or more	
	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %	Wave 1 interview %	Wave 2 interview %
In employment	21	28	22	28
Unemployed	50	42	50	44
Economically inactive	29	31	28	28
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,581	1,581	1,872	1,872

Among those who had left the course between six and 12 months ago, 21 per cent were in employment at Wave 1 compared with 28 per cent at Wave 2. Among those who had left the course over a year ago, the result was similar, with the rate of employment rising from 22 per cent to 28 per cent over the same period (Table 5.28).

5.2.1 Factors associated with Priority 1 and 4 participants finding work

Multivariate analysis was carried out to look at the predictors of Priority 1 and 4 participants (who had been unemployed or inactive in the week before the course) being in employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview. The following variables were entered into the model³⁵:

- gender;
- age;
- funding stream;
- region;
- ethnicity;
- lone parent status;
- whether the respondent was a carer;
- disability variables (e.g. whether the participant had a physical disability, learning disability, mental health problem, LTLI or other disability);
- whether the participant had qualifications;
- whether the participant had dependent children;
- whether the participant was an offender or ex-offender;
- tenure;
- whether the participant was a returner to the labour market;
- length of unemployment;
- employment status 12 months before the course³⁶;
- why participants had signed up to the course;
- whether participants finished the course or left early;
- time spent on the course;
- intensity of the course;
- highest qualification gained on the course;
- perceived barriers to employment;
- attitudes to work (i.e. whether the respondent thought that finding work was important)³⁷;
- where participants heard about the course;

³⁵ More information about the multivariate analysis can be found in Appendix C.

³⁶ Variables relating to employment status at the Wave 1 interview and employment status at the end of the course were not included; these were too similar to the outcome variable (employment status at Wave 2).

³⁷ Whether respondents thought that they were likely to find work in the next six months was not included in the model. Again, this was felt to be too similar to the outcome variable (employment status at Wave 2) as one of the possible response options was 'I have found work already'.

- satisfaction with the course, in terms of relevance, quality and level;
- time since finished the course; and
- whether the participant gained work skills, soft skills or practical help in finding work on the course.

The multivariate analysis found that people from the following groups, and with the following characteristics, were **more likely** to be in work at Wave 2:

- female participants compared with male participants;
- participants aged 16 to 19 or 20 to 49 compared with those aged over 50;
- participants who had been ‘persuaded’ to go on the course, ‘given the opportunity’ to go on it or ‘decided themselves’ to go on it, compared with those who had been ‘made to go’ on the course;
- participants who said that they improved their skills on the course.

People with the following characteristics and attitudes were **less likely** to have been in work at Wave 2:

- participants of match-funded projects compared with those participants on projects financed by ESF;
- participants with physical disabilities, mental health issues and an LTLI;
- participants with no qualifications compared with those who had qualifications;
- participants who were offenders or ex-offenders compared with those who were not;
- participants living in rented accommodation, or living in accommodation owned or rented by someone else, compared with those who owned their properties outright;
- participants who had been unemployed for longer than three months when they started the course, and those who had never had a full-time job, compared with those who had been out of work for less than three months;
- participants who had been on courses lasting between four and 12 months, compared with those on short courses lasting less than a month;
- participants who had spent more than five days a week on their course, compared with those who had spent less than half a day per week on it;
- participants who thought that having a job was ‘quite important’ compared with those who thought that it was ‘very important’; and
- participants facing transport issues.

5.3 Profile of participants who have entered employment

This section presents a profile of participants who had found work since going on the course.

5.3.1 Socio-economic group

The majority of participants who had found work since going on the course were in lower supervisory and semi-routine roles (53 per cent). Nine per cent were in higher/lower managerial and professional jobs, 19 per cent were in intermediate occupations, while a similar proportion (19 per cent) were in routine occupations. There was no significant variation in socio-economic group by priority. Within

Priorities 2 and 5, ESF participants were more likely than match participants to be employed in managerial or professional jobs (14 per cent compared with three per cent) (Table 5.29).

Table 5.29 Socio-economic group, by funding stream within priority

Socio-economic group	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Higher/lower managerial and professions	10	9	7	14	3	14	9
Intermediate occupations/small employers	18	18	31	17	17	23	19
Lower supervisory and technical/Semi-routine	48	56	48	50	61	41	53
Routine occupations	24	17	14	18	20	22	19
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	705	368	60	187	77	37	1,434

ESF Cohort Study

There were no significant differences in socio-economic group by gender. Young people aged 16 to 19 were less likely to be in managerial or professional jobs than participants in older age groups. Two per cent of 16 to 19 year olds were in managerial or professional roles compared with between eight per cent and 12 per cent of participants aged 20 and over. Participants aged 16 to 19 were also less likely than those aged between 20 and 49 to be in intermediate occupations (Table 5.30).

Table 5.30 Socio-economic group, by age and gender

Socio-economic group	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
	Higher/lower managerial and professions	2	8	10	12	11	9	
Intermediate occupations/small employers	10	21	16	23	18	17	21	19
Lower supervisory and technical/Semi-routine	63	59	60	45	40	52	54	53
Routine occupations	25	12	14	20	30	21	15	19
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	229	192	244	478	288	801	633	1,434

ESF Cohort Study

5.3.2 Income

The majority of participants who had found work since going on the course were earning less than £10,000, with 40 per cent earning between £5,000 and £9,999 and 18 per cent earning under £5,000. Twenty-six per cent of participants were earning between £10,000 and £14,999, while 16 per cent were earning £15,000 or more (Table 5. 31).

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Participants in Priorities 1 and 4 were more likely than those in Priorities 2 and 5 to earn less than £5,000. Within Priorities 2 and 5, ESF participants tended to earn less than match participants. For example, 66 per cent of ESF participants earned more than £10,000 compared with 37 per cent of match participants (Table 5.31).

Table 5.31 Income, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Income	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Under £5,000	15	20	14	8	14	0	18
£5,000-£9,999	37	42	45	26	48	6	40
£10,000-£14,999	30	23	28	38	21	44	26
£15,000 or more	19	15	13	29	16	50	16
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>641</i>	<i>336</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>164</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>1,310</i>

Women were more likely than men to earn £9,999 or less while, correspondingly, men were more likely to earn over £10,000. For example, while 27 per cent of women earned less than £5,000, the same was true of only 11 per cent of men. This discrepancy may be due to the fact that female participants were more likely to be working part-time. (An income breakdown for full-time workers only is presented in Table A.16.) Young people aged 16 to 19 were more likely than participants aged over 35 to be earning under £5,000 and between £5,000 and £9,999 (Table 5.32).

Table 5.32 Income, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Income	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
	Under £5,000	23	18	21	13	18	11	
£5,000-£9,999	53	41	31	43	27	36	46	40
£10,000-£14,999	19	28	30	21	38	30	20	26
£15,000 or more	5	14	17	23	17	23	7	16
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>212</i>	<i>178</i>	<i>228</i>	<i>430</i>	<i>260</i>	<i>734</i>	<i>576</i>	<i>1,310</i>

5.3.3 Type of contract

Of those participants who had found work since going on the course, 53 per cent had found a permanent job while 24 per cent had found temporary or casual work. Twenty-three per cent had another type of contract (Table 5.33).

Table 5.33 Type of contract, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Type of contract	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Permanent job	53	55	45	48	54	62	53
Temporary or casual job	22	23	28	31	23	16	24
Other	25	22	27	21	23	21	23
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	702	366	59	187	77	37	1,428

There was no significant variation in type of contract by priority, by funding stream within priority or by age and gender (Tables 5.33 and 5.34).

Table 5.34 Type of contract, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Type of contract	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Permanent job	42	54	55	60	47	51	56	53
Temporary or casual job	29	30	23	18	20	25	21	24
Other	29	17	22	22	33	23	23	23
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	229	189	242	476	289	799	629	1,428

5.3.4 Hours of work

Fifty-two per cent of participants who had found a job since going on the course were working full-time, that is over 31 hours a week. Thirty-seven per cent were working less than 31 hours a week, but more than 16 hours, while 11 per cent were working less than 16 hours per week (Table 5.35).

Participants in Priorities 2 and 5 were more likely than those in Priorities 1 and 4 to be working full-time. Within Priorities 1 and 4, match participants were less likely than ESF participants to be working full-time, that is over 31 hours per week (57 per cent of ESF participants compared to 44 per cent of match participants) (Table 5.35).

Table 5.35 Hours of work, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Hours of wor	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Over 31 hours a week	57	44	62	72	76	92	52
Less than 31 hours a week, but more than 16 hours	34	43	33	20	16	6	37
Less than 16 hours a week	9	13	6	8	8	2	11
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	709	365	61	196	96	39	1,466

Working hours varied by gender, with male participants being more likely to work full-time (66 per cent) than female participants (33 per cent). There were few significant differences in working hours according to age (Table 5.36).

Table 5.36 Hours of work, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Hours of wor	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Over 31 hours a week	59	53	50	51	49	66	33	52
Less than 31 hours a week, but more than 16 hours	30	33	39	42	40	29	49	37
Less than 16 hours a week	10	14	12	8	12	5	18	11
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	229	192	254	490	299	820	646	1466

5.3.5 Helpfulness of course

Those participants who had found work since attending ESF or match-funded training were asked about the usefulness of the course in terms of helping them to secure employment. Twenty-two per cent affirmed that someone on the course had suggested that they apply for their current job, while a similar proportion (22 per cent) had used contacts from the course when applying for their current job. Twenty-three per cent of participants said that someone from the course had contact with either themselves or their employer to discuss their progress in a new job (Table 5.37).

Table 5.37 Helpfulness of course, by funding stream within priority

ESF Cohort Study

Helpfulness of course	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Someone on course suggested that participant applied for current job	19	26	20	7	21	5	22
Participant used contacts from course when applied for current job	18	25	18	7	16	8	22
Someone from the course had contact with participant or their employer to discuss progress in new job	18	26	23	5	33	8	23
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>700</i>	<i>367</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>187</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>1,428</i>

Participants from Priorities 1 and 4 were more likely than participants from Priorities 2 and 5 to have had their current job suggested to them by someone on their course. They were also more likely to have used contacts from the course when applying for their current job. Within Priorities 1 and 4, match participants were more likely than ESF participants to have used contacts from the course (25 per cent compared with 18 per cent) and were also more likely to have had someone from the course keep in touch with them or their employer to discuss progress (26 per cent compared with 18 per cent) (Table 5.37).

Table 5.38 Helpfulness of course, by age and gender

ESF Cohort Study

Helpfulness of course	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Someone on course suggested that participant applied for current job	28	18	23	25	17	22	23	22
Participant used contacts from course when applied for current job	23	18	27	22	19	20	24	22
Someone from the course had contact with participant or their employer to discuss progress in new job	33	15	19	25	28	22	24	23
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>229</i>	<i>190</i>	<i>243</i>	<i>475</i>	<i>288</i>	<i>799</i>	<i>629</i>	<i>1,428</i>

There were no significant differences by gender in perceptions about the helpfulness of the course, and few significant differences by age – although young people aged 16 to 19 were more likely than the 20 to 24 year age group to have had someone from the course discuss their progress in a new job with either themselves or their employers (33 per cent compared with 15 per cent) (Table 5.38).

5.4 Profile of participants in employment (who were also in employment in the week before the course)

Most participants who were in jobs in the week before the course were also in employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview. This section looks at perceptions of whether – and in which ways – the course has impacted on those in employment.

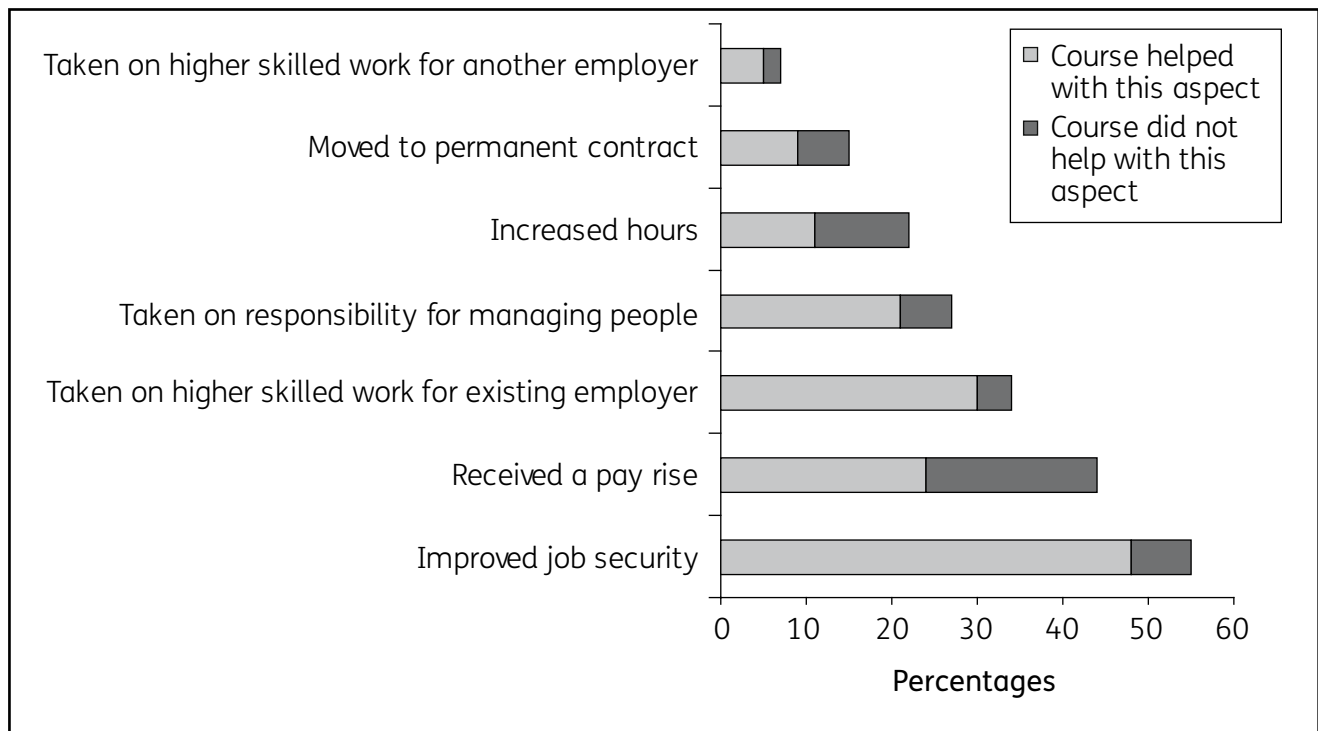
Participants were asked whether a number of things (e.g. pay, hours of work, job security) had changed/improved in their jobs since going on the course, and where there had been a positive change, whether the course helped them to improve this aspect of their work.

Table 5.39 Impact of course on employees

	<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>						
	Priority 1 and 4			Improvement			
			Priority 2 and 5				
	Moved to permanent contract %	Received a pay rise %	Taken on higher skilled work for existing employer %	Taken on higher skilled work for another employer %	Taken on responsibility for managing people %	Improved job security %	Increased hours %
Hours of work							
Job status improved	15	44	34	7	27	55	22
Whether course helped							
Helped a lot	39	34	57	39	46	53	28
Helped a little	24	19	30	30	32	35	21
Not helped at all	37	46	13	31	22	13	50
Course helped with improvement (Total)	9	24	30	5	21	48	11
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	258	1,010	728	156	671	1,210	453

Fifty-five per cent of participants said that, since they had been on the course, they had improved their job security. Of these, a high proportion (87 per cent) agreed that the course has helped them in this area (with 53 per cent saying that the course had ‘helped a lot’) (Figure 5.1 and Table 5.39).

Figure 5.1 Changes in employment status



The course also seemed particularly beneficial to those participants who had taken on higher skilled work either for an existing employer (34 per cent) or for another employer (seven per cent) – with 87 per cent of those who had taken on work for an existing employer, and 69 per cent of those doing higher skilled work for another employer, acknowledging that the course had helped them to do so.

A relatively high proportion of the participants who had taken on responsibility for managing people also gave credit to the course. Of the 27 per cent of participants who had taken on management responsibilities since the course, 78 per cent said that the course had helped them in this area.

Forty-four per cent of participants had received a pay rise since the course, while 22 per cent had increased their hours and 15 per cent had moved from a temporary to a permanent contract. In these areas, the course was deemed slightly less useful; 46 per cent of participants who had received a pay rise, 50 per cent of those who had increased their hours, and 37 per cent of those who had moved to a permanent contract felt that the course had ‘not helped at all’ in these areas.

Table 5.40 Changes in working conditions (Priorities 2 and 5)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
	Priority		Total
	2	5	
Changes in working conditions	%	%	%
Moved to a permanent contract	13	9	15
Course helpful in this area?	67	42	63
Received a pay rise	47	36	44
Course helpful in this area?	57	31	54
Taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer	36	23	34
Course helpful in this area?	89	88	87
Taking on higher skilled work for another employer	7	6	7
Course helpful in this area?	68	72	69
Taken on responsibility for managing people	29	22	27
Course helpful in this area?	79	78	78
Improved job security	54	44	55
Course helpful in this area?	91	87	87
Increased hours	18	17	22
Course helpful in this area?	57	39	50
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>2,007</i>	<i>284</i>	<i>2,438</i>

The majority of participants who had been in work in the week before the course (and were still in work at the time of the Wave 2 interview) were from Priorities 2 and 5. Priority 2 participants were more likely than Priority 5 participants to have received a pay rise (47 per cent compared with 36 per cent), taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer (36 per cent compared with 23 per cent), taken on responsibility for managing people (29 per cent compared with 22 per cent) and improved their job security (54 per cent compared with 44 per cent). Generally, Priority 2 participants found the course more helpful than Priority 5 participants in terms of helping them move to a permanent contract and helping to secure a pay rise (Table 5.40).

Table 5.41 Changes in working conditions, by funding stream (Priorities 2 and 5)

Changes in working conditions	Funding stream		
	ESF %	Match %	Total %
Moved to a permanent contract	8	15	12
Helpfulness of course?	50	69	65
Received a pay rise	40	50	46
Helpfulness of course?	40	61	55
Taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer	29	37	35
Helpfulness of course?	82	91	89
Taking on higher skilled work for another employer	6	7	7
Helpfulness of course?	79	63	68
Taken on responsibility for managing people	29	28	29
Helpfulness of course?	77	81	79
Improved job security	46	57	53
Helpfulness of course?	90	91	91
Increased hours	17	19	18
Helpfulness of course?	45	60	55
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,341	877	2,291

Match participants were more likely than ESF participants in Priorities 2 and 5 to have improved their employment status. (This is likely to be due to the different characteristics of the match sample. Match participants tended to be younger and faced fewer disadvantages – Table 2.33.) For example, while eight per cent of ESF participants had moved to a permanent contract, this proportion rose to 15 per cent among match participants. Match participants, who had experienced changes in their working conditions, were also more likely than ESF participants to say that the course had helped them with these changes. For example, match participants were more likely than ESF participants to say that the course had helped them to move to a permanent contract, to receive a pay rise, to take on higher skilled work and to increase their hours (Table 5.41).

Table 5.42 Changes in working conditions, by age

Changes in working conditions	<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>		
	16-19 %	Age 20-49 %	50+ %
Moved to a permanent contract	27	14	5
Helpfulness of course?	71	60	55
Received a pay rise	63	41	34
Helpfulness of course?	70	52	24
Taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer	48	32	25
Helpfulness of course?	95	87	67
Taking on higher skilled work for another employer	5	8	4
Helpfulness of course?	71	68	70
Taken on responsibility for managing people	27	28	21
Helpfulness of course?	92	76	72
Improved job security	61	55	43
Helpfulness of course?	94	86	82
Increased hours	24	22	21
Helpfulness of course?	58	47	52
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	153	1,655	627

Since going on the course, younger people aged 16 to 19 were more likely than participants in older age groups to have moved to a permanent contract, received a pay rise, taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer and improved their job security. Younger people were also more likely than older participants to say that the course had been helpful to them, particularly in terms of receiving a pay rise, taking on higher skilled work for an existing employer, taking on responsibility for managing people and improving job security (Table 5.42).

Table 5.43 Changes in working conditions, by gender

Changes in working conditions	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
	%	%	%
Moved to a permanent contract	15	15	15
Helpfulness of course?	58	68	63
Received a pay rise	41	47	44
Helpfulness of course?	60	48	54
Taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer	35	33	34
Helpfulness of course?	83	91	87
Taking on higher skilled work for another employer	7	6	7
Helpfulness of course?	68	71	69
Taken on responsibility for managing people	27	26	27
Helpfulness of course?	75	82	78
Improved job security	58	51	55
Helpfulness of course?	86	89	87
Increased hours	24	20	22
Helpfulness of course?	50	49	50
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,209	1,229	2,438

Male participants were more likely than female participants to say that they had improved their job security since going on the course (58 per cent compared with 51 per cent). In terms of the usefulness of the course in these areas, men were more likely than women to say that the course had helped them in receiving a pay rise (60 per cent compared with 48 per cent), while women were more likely to say that the course had helped them to take on higher skilled work for an existing employer (91 per cent compared with 83 per cent) Table 5.43).

Table 5.44 Changes in working conditions, by lone parent status

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Changes in working conditions	Lone parent status		Total %
	Not lone parent %	Lone parent %	
Moved to a permanent contract	16	9	15
Helpfulness of course?	63	56	63
Received a pay rise	44	41	44
Helpfulness of course?	55	32	54
Taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer	35	23	34
Helpfulness of course?	87	87	87
Taking on higher skilled work for another employer	7	5	7
Helpfulness of course?	68	77	69
Taken on responsibility for managing people	27	23	27
Helpfulness of course?	78	78	78
Improved job security	55	47	55
Helpfulness of course?	87	89	87
Increased hours	22	25	22
Helpfulness of course?	51	24	50
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,296	126	2,438

There were no statistically significant differences in improvements to working conditions by lone parent status. However, participants who were not lone parents were more likely to say that the course was useful in terms of helping them to receive a pay rise (55 per cent compared with 32 per cent) and to increase their number of hours (51 per cent compared with 24 per cent) (Table 5.44).

Table 5.45 Changes in working conditions, by ethnicity

Changes in working conditions	Ethnicity		
	White	Ethnic minority	Total
	%	%	%
Moved to a permanent contract	15	27	15
Helpfulness of course?	67	36	63
Received a pay rise	45	30	44
Helpfulness of course?	54	56	54
Taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer	35	29	34
Helpfulness of course?	87	92	87
Taking on higher skilled work for another employer	7	5	7
Helpfulness of course?	69	61	69
Taken on responsibility for managing people	27	32	27
Helpfulness of course?	78	84	78
Improved job security	54	67	55
Helpfulness of course?	87	94	87
Increased hours	22	30	22
Helpfulness of course?	52	30	50
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,187	165	2,438

White participants (45 per cent) were more likely than participants from ethnic minority groups (30 per cent) to have received a pay rise since going on the course. By contrast, ethnic minority participants were more likely to have moved to a permanent contract (27 per cent compared with 15 per cent), improved their job security (67 per cent compared with 54 per cent) and increased their hours (30 per cent compared with 22 per cent). Notably, however, ethnic minority participants were less likely than their white counterparts to rate the course as useful in terms of helping them to move to a permanent contract (36 per cent compared with 67 per cent) and increasing their hours (30 per cent compared with 52 per cent) (Table 5.45).

Table 5.46 Changes in working conditions, by disability

ESF Cohort Study

Changes in working conditions	Disability		Total %
	No disability or LTLI %	Has a disability or LTLI %	
Moved to a permanent contract	15	15	15
Helpfulness of course?	63	69	63
Received a pay rise	45	37	44
Helpfulness of course?	55	44	54
Taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer	35	30	34
Helpfulness of course?	88	69	87
Taking on higher skilled work for another employer	7	7	7
Helpfulness of course?	69	64	69
Taken on responsibility for managing people	27	20	27
Helpfulness of course?	78	83	78
Improved job security	55	52	55
Helpfulness of course?	88	82	87
Increased hours	22	25	22
Helpfulness of course?	47	71	50
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,188	236	2,438

There were no significant differences in improvements to working conditions by disability or LTLI status. However, participants without a disability or LTLI were more likely to say that the course had been useful in helping them to take on higher skilled work for an existing employer (88 per cent compared with 69 per cent of disabled people) and that it had helped them to improve their job security (88 per cent compared with 82 per cent). By contrast, participants with a disability or LTLI were more likely than those without to say that the course had helped them increase their hours (71 per cent compared with 47 per cent) (Table 5.46).

Table 5.47 Changes in working conditions, by socio-economic status*ESF Cohort Study*

Changes in working conditions	Socio-economic status				Total %
	Higher/lower managerial and professions %	Intermediate occupations/ small employers %	Lower supervisory and technical/ semi-routine %	Routine occupations %	
Moved to a permanent contract	11	16	17	20	15
Course helpful in this area?	41	67	70	66	63
Received a pay rise	47	42	48	41	44
Course helpful in this area?	47	47	57	58	54
Taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer	39	38	33	34	34
Course helpful in this area?	86	85	86	91	87
Taking on higher skilled work for another employer	7	7	7	4	7
Course helpful in this area?	71	66	63	75	69
Taken on responsibility for managing people	34	21	30	21	27
Course helpful in this area?	74	71	80	86	78
Improved job security	53	58	56	59	55
Course helpful in this area?	86	86	87	89	87
Increased hours	17	15	25	28	22
Course helpful in this area?	42	50	53	42	50
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	674	355	871	311	2,438

Participants in lower supervisory and routine occupations were more likely than those in managerial or professional occupations to have moved to a permanent contract and to have increased their hours since going on the course. However, participants who were in managerial and professional roles were more likely than those in intermediate and routine occupations to have taken on responsibility for managing people – although those in routine occupations were more likely than people in managerial or professional jobs to say that the course had been ‘helpful’ or ‘very helpful’ in supporting them in this area (Table 5.47).

Table 5.48 Changes in working conditions, by income

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>				
	Income			Total %
	Under £9,999 %	£10,000 - £19,999 %	£20,000 and over %	
Changes in working conditions				
Moved to a permanent contract	20	16	8	15
Course helpful in this area?	60	71	66	63
Received a pay rise	39	48	48	44
Course helpful in this area?	46	63	50	54
Taken on higher skilled work for an existing employer	32	38	40	34
Course helpful in this area?	86	90	85	87
Taking on higher skilled work for another employer	4	10	6	7
Course helpful in this area?	62	76	72	69
Taken on responsibility for managing people	20	32	33	27
Course helpful in this area?	83	79	74	78
Improved job security	57	57	58	55
Course helpful in this area?	84	90	91	87
Increased hours	29	21	18	22
Course helpful in this area?	38	65	43	50
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	547	975	549	2,438

Participants who were paid less than £10,000 per year were more likely than those paid over £20,000 to have moved to a permanent contract since going on the course and were more likely than people paid over £10,000 to have increased their working hours. They were less likely, however, to have received a pay rise and taken on responsibility for managing people. In terms of the perceived usefulness of the course, participants who were paid less than £10,000 were less likely than those paid between £10,000 and £19,999 to say that the course had helped them to receive a pay rise, improve their job security and increase their hours (Table 5.48).

5.5 Profile of participants who were not in work at the Wave 2 interview

5.5.1 Participants who had left jobs

Twenty per cent of participants, who were not in work at the time of the Wave 2 interview, had left jobs since starting the course, for a number of reasons including redundancy or end of temporary contract (56 per cent), health reasons (18 per cent) and finding another job (six per cent) (Table 5.49).

Table 5.49 Why left jobs, by funding stream within priority*ESF Cohort Study*

Whether left job	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Has not left job	77	82	74	58	44		80
Has left job	23	18	26	42	56		20
Why left job							
Found another job	6	5	7	11	14		6
To do more education and training	6	4	7	11	17		5
Health reasons	13	20	4	7	12		18
Caring responsibilities	4	2		4	6		3
Other personal reasons	20	24	15	14	20		22
Redundancy/end of contract	52	56	71	70	59		56
Other reason	20	20	10	5	26		20
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>1,416</i>	<i>1,441</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>190</i>	<i>127</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>3,245</i>

Please note that participants were able to say an unlimited number of reasons for leaving their job so percentages sum to more than 100.

Figures for 'other' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

Within Priorities 1 and 4, ESF participants were more likely than match participants to have left a job (23 per cent compared with 18 per cent). Reasons given for leaving jobs did not vary significantly by funding stream (Table 5.49).

Table 5.50 Why people left jobs, by age and gender

Whether left job	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Has not left job	74	71	79	87	85	78	82	80
Has left job	26	29	21	13	15	22	18	20
Why left job								
Found another job	12	3	8	4	4	6	6	6
To do more education and training	16	5	4	2	0	4	9	5
Health reasons	15	9	21	15	42	14	27	18
Caring responsibilities	2	1	6	4	3	2	5	3
Other personal reasons	29	25	22	22	8	21	27	22
Redundancy/end of contract	45	59	67	56	50	59	48	56
Other reason	28	21	19	16	12	19	21	20
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	608	477	482	927	743	1,790	1,455	3,245

Please note that participants were able to say an unlimited number of reasons for leaving their job so percentages sum to more than 100.

Compared with participants aged over 35, young people aged 16 to 19 were more likely to have left a job since going on the course. Participants aged 16 to 19 were more likely to have left jobs to do more education and training (16 per cent of 16 to 19 year olds cited this reason compared with between 0 and five per cent of people in older age groups). Participants aged over 50 were more likely than those in younger age groups to have left jobs for health reasons (42 per cent compared with 15 per cent among 16-19 year olds). Women were more likely than men to leave jobs due to health reasons (27 per cent compared with 14 per cent) and to do more education and training (nine per cent compared with four per cent) (Table 5.50).

5.5.2 Length of unemployment

Respondents who were not in work at the time of the Wave 2 interview were asked when they had last been in employment. Eleven per cent of participants who were not in work had been out of work for less than six months; 27 per cent had been out of work between six months and two years; 50 per cent per cent had been out of work for two years or more; and 12 per cent had never had a job (Table 5.51).

Table 5.51 Length of unemployment, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Length of time out of work	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Less than three months	9	3	16	27	21		5
Between three and less than six months	6	5	6	9	19		6
Between six and less than 12 months	8	7	6	14	23		7
Between 12 months and two years	21	20	19	28	21		20
Two years or more	42	54	39	15	5		50
Never had a (full-time) job	14	11	14	7	12		12
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,405	1,433	56	189	124	13	3,220

Figures for 'other' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

ESF participants in Priorities 1 and 4 were more likely than match participants to have been out of work for less than three months (nine per cent compared with three per cent) and, correspondingly, were less likely to have been out of work for two years or more (42 per cent compared with 54 per cent) (Table 5.51).

Table 5.52 Length of unemployment, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Length of time out of work	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Less than three months	6	8	4	4	3	6	4	5
Between three and less than six months	11	8	5	4	2	6	4	6
Between six and less than 12 months	13	9	11	4	4	8	5	7
Between 12 months and less than two years	14	25	17	19	21	21	17	20
Two years or more	14	36	58	65	68	50	52	50
Never had a job	42	14	6	4	2	9	17	12
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	602	470	477	924	739	1,776	1,444	3,220

Young people aged 16 to 19 were more likely than older participants to say that they had never had a job (42 per cent compared with between two per cent and 14 per cent of participants aged 20 and over). Women were also more likely than men to say that they had never worked (17 per cent compared with nine per cent) (Table 5.52).

Compared with participants who were out of work at the Wave 2 interview (and who had also been unemployed or inactive in the week before the course), those who were in employment were more likely never to have had a full-time job. This may be linked to the fact that older people aged over 50 (who were more likely than younger people to have worked full-time in the past) were less likely to have moved into employment.

5.5.3 Whether participants want or are looking for work

Participants who were not in work at the time of the Wave 2 interview were asked whether they were currently looking for work. The majority of participants (71 per cent) said that they were looking for work, while 15 per cent wanted a job but were not actively looking. Fourteen per cent of participants were not looking for or wanting work (Table 5.53).

Table 5.53 Whether participant wants work, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Whether looking for work	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Looking for work	77	70	75	68	70		71
Wanting work	14	16	17	16	16		15
Not looking for or wanting work	8	15	8	16	13		14
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,408	1,434	56	190	127	14	3,229

Figures for 'other' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

ESF participants in Priorities 1 and 4 were more likely than match participants to be looking for a job (77 per cent compared with 70 per cent). Conversely, match participants in these priorities were more likely not to want a job or be looking for one (15 per cent compared with eight per cent) (Table 5.53).

Table 5.54 Whether participant wants work, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Whether looking for work	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Looking for work	79	85	79	64	50	77	59	71
Wanting work	12	8	15	20	22	13	21	15
Not looking for or wanting work	9	7	6	16	28	10	21	14
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	604	475	479	923	740	1,780	1,449	3,229

Generally, younger people were more likely to be looking for work than older people. For example, while 79 per cent of those aged 16 to 19 said that they were looking for jobs, the same was true of only 50 per cent of people aged over 50 while for other age groups this was between 64 per cent and 85 per cent. Men were also more likely than women to be looking for work (77 per cent compared with 59 per cent) (Table 5.54).

Those participants who were not looking for or wanting work gave various reasons for this. Most commonly, they were not able to work because of an illness or health problem (55 per cent). Eleven per cent of participants were looking after the family or home, while seven per cent were not looking or wanting work because of a disability and a similar proportion (seven per cent) were studying full-time (seven per cent) (Table 5.54).

Table 5.55 Why not looking for work, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Why not looking for work	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Unable to work because of illness or health problem	13	37	49	66	65	59	50	55
Unable to work because of disability	0	0	12	9	7	9	4	7
Waiting to start a paid job already accepted	2	1	3	1	1	2	1	2
Studying full-time	47	11	4	2	0	7	7	7
Looking after the family/home	18	35	17	7	1	1	21	11
Caring for an elderly, ill or disabled relative or friend	0	0	2	9	4	5	4	5
Financially secure and don't need to work	0	4	0	1	0	2	0	1
Retired		0	0	0	18	9	2	6
Prefer to work part-time	1	4	0	0	1	0	2	1
Some other reason	18	8	10	5	2	6	7	6
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	148	97	158	341	307	453	600	1,053

Older people were more likely to be unable to work because of an illness or health problem. For example, while 65 per cent of those aged over 50 cited this reason, among 16 to 19 year olds the proportion fell to 13 per cent. By contrast, those aged 16 to 19 were more likely to be studying full-time (47 per cent compared with between 0 and 11 per cent of people in older age groups). Women (21 per cent) were more likely than men (one per cent) to say that they were unable to work because they were looking after the family or home (Table 5.55).

5.5.4 Job search activities of those out of work

Participants who were not in work were looking for jobs in a number of ways. Looking at adverts (91 per cent), going to Jobcentre Plus (89 per cent) and using the internet (89 per cent) were the most common forms of job search activities. Asking friends or relatives (86 per cent) and contacting employers directly (77 per cent) were also relatively common activities. Fifty-five per cent of respondents had visited recruitment agencies as part of their job searches (Table 5.56).

Table 5.56 Job search activities, by priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>					
Job search activities	Priority				Total¹
	1	2	4	5	
	%	%	%	%	%
Looking at adverts	91	90	89	94	91
Going to Jobcentre Plus	89	89	78	68	89
Using the internet	89	88	85	97	89
Asking friends or relatives	86	80	74	73	86
Contacting employers directly	77	80	69	72	77
Going to recruitment agencies	56	47	39	44	55
Other ways	8	10	8	21	8
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,724	197	225	14	2,160

¹ The total sums to more than 100 per cent as some participants were studying towards more than one type of qualification.

Table 5.57 Job search activities, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Job search activities	Age					Gender		Total
	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-49	50+	Male	Female	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Looking at adverts	87	89	95	91	93	92	89	91
Going to Jobcentre Plus	88	90	93	89	84	90	86	89
Using the internet	91	94	94	87	74	89	89	89
Asking friends or relatives	88	88	83	87	80	88	81	86
Contacting employers directly	78	82	78	74	68	78	74	77
Going to recruitment agencies	46	59	58	56	49	58	48	55
Other ways	11	8	8	7	8	7	12	8
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	456	376	319	576	428	1,320	840	2,160

Participants aged over 50 were less likely to be looking for work by using the internet or asking friends and family compared with young people aged 16 to 19. Men were more likely than women to carry out several of the job search activities listed. For example, they were more likely than women to be going to Jobcentre Plus (90 per cent compared to 86 per cent), asking friends or relatives (88 per cent compared to 81 per cent) and going to recruitment agencies (58 per cent compared with 48 per cent) (Table 5.57).

Table 5.58 Job search activity – Wave 1 compared to Wave 2

Job search activities	Survey Wave	
	Wave 1	Wave 2
	%	%
Looking at adverts	92	92
Going to Jobcentre Plus	92	91
Using the internet	84	90
Asking friends or relatives	75	88
Contacting employers directly	69	79
Going to recruitment agencies	57	58
Other ways	8	8
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,562	1,562

Participants who were looking for jobs in both the Wave 2 and the Wave 1 interview were more likely to be using the internet (90 per cent compared with 84 per cent), asking friends and relatives (88 per cent compared with 75 per cent) and contacting employers directly (79 per cent compared with 69 per cent) at the time of the Wave 2 interview (Table 5.58).

5.5.5 Barriers to employment

Participants who were looking for work at the Wave 2 interview were asked what, if anything, made it difficult for them to find work.

Of participants who were looking for work, 54 per cent said that they did ‘not have the right skills’, while 59 per cent said that they ‘did not have any recent experience of working’. An even higher proportion, 64 per cent, said that there ‘weren’t any jobs where they lived’. Forty per cent faced problems with transport and five per cent could not find suitable or affordable childcare (Table 5.59).

Table 5.59 Barriers, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Barriers	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Did not have the right skills	58	54	50	50	23		54
Weren't any jobs where I live	68	63	69	66	64		64
No recent experience of working	59	60	45	39	34		59
Could not find suitable/ affordable childcare	8	3	11	7	9		5
Problems with transport or the cost of transport	44	40	35	20	29		40
Other	12	10	10	12	6		10
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,408	1,433	56	190	127	14	3,228

Figures for 'other' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

ESF participants in Priorities 1 and 4 were more likely than match participants to say that they could not find suitable or affordable childcare (eight per cent compared with three per cent) (Table 5.59). Within Priorities 2 and 5, match participants were less likely than ESF participants to say they had the right skills to find work. This is possibly linked with the younger age profile of the Priority 2 match sample. Indeed, young people aged 16 to 19 were more likely than those aged over 35 to say that they did not have the right skills to find work and that they did not have any recent experience of working (Table 5.60).

Table 5.60 Barriers, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Barriers	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Did not have the right skills	63	59	58	55	38	53	58	54
Weren't any jobs where I live	68	66	74	62	52	68	56	64
No recent experience of working	70	65	65	54	42	59	58	59
Could not find suitable/ affordable childcare	5	4	7	6	1	2	10	5
Problems with transport or the cost of transport	41	41	45	39	36	41	39	40
Other	5	9	8	13	11	9	13	10
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	605	474	480	924	737	1,783	1,445	3,228

Young people aged 16 to 19 were also more likely than participants aged over 50 to say that there were not any jobs where they lived. Men were more likely than women to say that there ‘weren’t any jobs where they live’ (68 per cent compared with 56 per cent). By contrast, women were more likely than men to have problems finding suitable or affordable childcare (ten per cent compared with two per cent) (Table 5.60).

Table 5.61 Barriers, by survey wave

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>		
Barriers	Survey Wave	
	Wave 1 %	Wave 2 %
Did not have the right skills	57	54
Weren’t any jobs where I live	69	64
No recent experience of working	58	60
Could not find suitable/affordable childcare	2	3
Problems with transport or the cost of transport	41	40
Other	10	10
None of these	10	11
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,762	2,762

In the Wave 2 interview, a slightly smaller proportion of participants who were out of work felt there were no jobs where they lived – 64 per cent compared with 69 per cent of those who were also out of work at the time of the Wave 1 interview (Table 5.61).

5.5.6 Likelihood of finding work

All participants who were actively looking for jobs at the time of the Wave 2 interview were asked about their likelihood of finding work in the next six months. Fifty-five per cent of participants said that they were ‘very likely’ or ‘fairly likely’ to find employment, while 44 per cent said that they were ‘fairly unlikely’ or ‘very unlikely’ to do so (Table 5.62).

Table 5.62 Likelihood of finding work, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Likelihood of finding work	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Very likely	20	16	30	28	31		18
Fairly likely	36	38	33	25	39		37
Fairly unlikely	20	19	15	14	16		19
Very unlikely	23	26	18	33	10		25
Found work already	1	1	4	1	4		1
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,317	1,367	49	178	121	13	3,045

Figures for ‘other’ have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

Generally, Priority 2 and 5 participants rated their chances of finding work more highly than Priority 1 and 4 participants. However, there was no significant variation by funding stream within priority (Table 5.62).

Table 5.63 Likelihood of finding work, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Likelihood of finding work	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Very likely	18	18	26	15	12	18	16	18
Fairly likely	53	47	32	32	23	40	31	37
Fairly unlikely	14	18	22	18	21	19	18	19
Very unlikely	13	15	18	33	44	21	35	25
Found work already	1	1	2	1	0	2	1	1
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	586	454	453	859	686	1,684	1,361	3,045

Compared with the youngest age group, participants aged over 50 were more likely to say that they were unlikely to find work in the next six months. For example, while 44 per cent of participants aged over 50 felt that they were ‘very unlikely’ to find a job, only 13 per cent of 16 to 19 year olds said this. Men rated their chances of finding work slightly more highly than women. Fifty-eight per cent of men said that they were either ‘fairly likely’ or ‘very likely’ to find work, compared with 47 per cent of women. Conversely, 52 per cent of women felt that they were very or fairly unlikely to find a job in the next six months, compared with 40 per cent of men (Table 5.63).

Table 5.64 Likelihood of finding work, by survey wave

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>		
Barriers	Survey Wave	
	Wave 1 %	Wave 2 %
Very likely	13	17
Fairly likely	34	38
Fairly unlikely	21	19
Very unlikely	27	25
Found work already	5	1
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	2,497	2,497

Participants who were looking for work at both the Wave 1 and the Wave 2 interviews rated their chances of finding work more highly at Wave 2. Specifically, 46 per cent of participants said that they were ‘very likely’ or ‘fairly likely’ to find jobs at Wave 1, rising to 55 per cent at Wave 2 (Table 5.64).

5.5.7 Confidence about finding work

Almost 70 per cent of participants said that they were more confident about finding work since going on the course. There was no significant variation by priority or by funding stream within priority (Table 5.65).

Table 5.65 Confidence about finding work, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
More confident about finding work since going on the course?	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Yes	69	68	72	66	83		69
No	31	32	28	34	17		31
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,014	871	43	121	76	11	2,136

Figures for ‘other’ have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

Since going on the course, young people aged 16 to 19 were more confident about finding work than participants aged over 35. There was no significant variation by gender (Table 5.66).

Table 5.66 Confidence about finding work, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
More confident about finding work since going on the course?	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Yes	78	75	68	61	59	68	72	69
No	22	25	32	39	41	32	28	31
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	453	374	314	567	422	1,306	830	2,136

Participants were also asked whether they were now better skilled for the type of job they were looking for, as a result of going on the course. Fifty-seven per cent of participants said that they were, although the proportion was higher among Priority 2 and 5 participants than among participants from Priorities 1 and 4. There was no significant variation by funding stream within priority (Table 5.67).

Table 5.67 Whether better skilled since course, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Better skilled since going on the course?	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Yes	59	56	59	75	78		57
No	41	44	41	25	22		43
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,010	866	43	121	76	11	2,127

Figures for 'other' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

Younger people also felt that they were better skilled as a result of the course. For example, while 67 per cent of 16 to 19 year olds agreed that they were better skilled, among those aged 25 and over this proportion fell to between 47 per cent and 55 per cent. There was no significant variation by gender (Table 5.68).

Table 5.68 Whether better skilled since course, by age and gender

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>								
Better skilled since going on the course?	Age					Gender		Total %
	16-19 %	20-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50+ %	Male %	Female %	
Yes	67	62	51	55	47	57	57	57
No	33	38	49	45	53	43	43	43
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	448	371	317	566	420	1,306	821	2,127

5.5.8 Interviews and applications

Of those participants out of work at the time of interview, the majority (69 per cent) had made job applications since the Wave 1 interview. In fact, on average, participants had made almost 40 job applications during this period. A further 56 per cent of participants had attended job interviews since the Wave 1 interview, with participants attending an average of 6.7 interviews during this period. For 28 per cent of participants, someone from the course had suggested that they apply for at least one of these jobs, while 33 per cent had used contacts from the course in their job applications.

Compared with Priority 4 participants, Priority 1 participants were more likely to have made job applications (70 per cent compared with 42 per cent) and had also made more job applications on average (40.2 compared with 21.9). However, there were no significant differences in the proportion of Priority 1 participants who had been to job interviews compared with Priority 4 participants (or in the average number of interviews attended). Priority 1 participants were more likely than Priority 4 participants to have had someone on the course suggesting that they apply for a job (29 per cent compared with 18 per cent) and to have used contacts from the course (34 per cent compared with 18 per cent; Table 5.69).

Table 5.69 Interviews and applications (Priorities 1 and 4)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Job search activities	Priority		Total %
	1 %	4 %	
Has made job applications	70	42	69
Average number of job applications	40.2	21.9	40.0
Whether someone on course suggested that apply for job	29	18	29
Whether used contacts from course	34	18	34
Has been to job interviews	56	53	56
Average number of interviews	6.8	5.6	6.8
<i>Unweighted base</i>	2,362	533	2,895

Participants in Priorities 1 and 4 had made more job applications and had been to more interviews on average than participants in Priorities 2 and 5. They were also more likely to have made use of contacts from the course to apply for jobs (Table 5.69).

Within Priorities 1 and 4, ESF participants were more likely than match participants to have made job applications (74 per cent compared with 68 per cent), although match participants had made a higher average number of applications (41.4 compared with 35.0). Match participants had also attended a higher average number of interviews than ESF participants (7.0 compared with 6.3) and were more likely to have used contacts from the course in applying for jobs (Table 5.70).

Table 5.70 Interviews and applications, by funding stream within priority

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>							
Job search activities	Funding stream within priority						Total %
	Priority 1 and 4			Priority 2 and 5			
	ESF %	Match %	Other %	ESF %	Match %	Other %	
Has made job applications	74	68	82	68	72		69
Average number of job applications	35.0	41.4	33.4	28.2	25.2		39.5
Whether someone on course suggested that apply for job	24	30	16	12	12		28
Whether used contacts from course	28	36	15	5	13		33
Has been to job interviews	58	56	57	52	70		56
Average number of interviews	6.3	7.0	4.6	3.6	3.0		6.7
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,404	1,435	56	190	127	14	3,226

Figures for 'other' have not been included in the table, due to small base sizes.

Men were more likely to have applied for jobs than women (75 per cent compared with 58 per cent) and, on average, had submitted more applications than women (42.3 compared with 32.2). There were no gender differences in use of contacts from the course to apply for jobs, or in whether participants had been to job interviews (56 per cent for both men and women). However, on average, men had been to more interviews than women (7.6 compared with 4.3) (Table 5.71).

Table 5.71 Interviews and applications, by gender

Job search activities	Gender		
	Men	Women	Total
	%	%	%
Has made job applications	75	58	69
Average number of job applications	42.3	32.2	39.5
Whether someone on course suggested that apply for job	29	25	28
Whether used contacts from course	33	32	33
Has been to job interviews	56	56	56
Average number of interviews	7.6	4.3	6.7
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,783	1,443	3,226

Participants aged over 50 were less likely than younger participants to have made job applications (46 per cent compared with 74 per cent among those aged 16 to 19). Those aged between 20 and 49 had made a higher number of applications on average, and had also attended more job interviews, than participants aged 16 to 19 and those aged over 50. There were no significant age differences in use of contacts from the course to apply for jobs (Table 5.72).

Table 5.72 Interviews and applications, by age

Job search activities	Age			
	16-19	20-49	50+	Total
	%	%	%	%
Has made job applications	74	74	46	69
Average number of job applications	32.7	42.5	30.0	39.5
Whether someone on course suggested that apply for job	53	59	48	56
Whether used contacts from course	27	34	34	33
Has been to job interviews	53	59	48	56
Average number of interviews	4.7	7.4	3.9	6.7
<i>Unweighted base</i>	605	1,877	736	3,226

6 Regional analysis

This chapter explores the profile of participants by region, looking specifically at:

- the demographic characteristics of participants in each region;
- levels of satisfaction with the course in each region; and
- outcomes in each region – for example, looking at whether participants had found work since going on the course and whether they had gained qualifications on the course.

In Section 6.1, the regional profile of Priorities 1 and 4 is considered, while Section 6.2 looks at the profile of the Priorities 2 and 5. Given limitations in the availability of the sample³⁸, it has not been possible to present regional breakdowns for Priority 2 participants in London, East Midlands, North East and Yorkshire and the Humber.

³⁸ The availability of Priority 2 match cases was limited at the time when the sample was drawn (in May 2009). Very few Priority 2 match cases were available in London, the East Midlands, the North East or Yorkshire and the Humber.

Table 6.1 Demographic characteristics, by region (Priorities 1 and 4)

Characteristic	ESF Cohort Study																						
	Regions																						
	East of England		London		East Midlands		North East		North West		South East		South West		Yorkshire and the Humber		Merseyside		South Yorkshire		Cornwall		Total
Women	32	41	44	27	27	32	30	30	40	40	34	33	30	30	43	41	43	41	35	35			
Ethnic minorities	10	56	10	2	11	11	9	9	7	7	30	15	4	4	12	1	12	1	18	18			
Disabled people	36	52	50	16	34	34	36	36	43	43	40	31	16	16	25	60	25	60	37	37			
Lone parents	6	11	11	6	9	9	5	5	9	9	8	12	7	7	11	9	11	9	9	9			
Carers	8	10	8	5	4	4	6	6	7	7	9	5	5	5	8	9	8	9	7	7			
No qualifications	11	20	17	17	20	20	24	24	22	22	19	19	11	11	16	13	16	13	18	18			
Long-term unemployed aged 20+	35	37	29	40	38	38	36	36	28	28	29	53	29	29	37	16	37	16	35	35			
Returners	12	25	33	6	25	25	18	18	31	31	24	4	7	7	19	48	19	48	21	21			
NEET and aged 16-19 years	8	4	7	14	10	10	8	8	9	9	16	5	14	14	15	5	15	5	9	9			
Aged over 50	17	21	27	10	16	16	25	25	16	16	16	11	8	8	8	21	8	21	17	17			
Multiple disadvantages (more than 1)	44	80	65	36	55	55	59	59	56	56	66	54	33	33	47	65	47	65	57	57			
Unweighted bases	273	336	265	244	578	578	271	271	317	317	438	293	353	353	296	750	296	750	4,416	4,416			

Table 6.2 Satisfaction with course, by region (Priorities 1 and 4)

Satisfaction	ESF Cohort Study													
	Regions													
	East of England %	London %	East Midlands %	North East %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	West %	Yorkshire and the Humber %	Merseyside %	Yorkshire %	South %	Cornwall %
Improved skills needed at work	69	65	65	66	71	56	61	66	71	76	80	71	67	
Improved self-confidence	70	73	75	73	79	60	70	73	70	79	76	70	73	
Got practical help finding a job	68	67	65	72	67	56	59	59	68	64	67	50	65	
Work experience/ placement	44	23	33	46	40	37	27	25	54	35	52	15	35	
Information about vacancies	67	63	65	80	69	64	57	61	73	59	73	38	65	
Relevant to needs	70	70	73	73	74	68	74	72	71	81	84	79	73	
Very or fairly satisfied	63	68	65	66	72	59	71	65	59	77	75	77	68	
Unweighted bases	273	336	265	244	578	271	317	438	293	353	296	750	4,416	

6.1 Regional analysis (Priorities 1 and 4)

6.1.1 East of England

Participant profile

Thirty-two per cent of Priority 1 participants in the East of England were women, which was not significantly different from the national average of 35 per cent.

Reflecting the demography of the region, there were fewer than average participants from ethnic minority groups in the East of England (ten per cent of participants from the East of England were from an ethnic minority group compared with a national average of 18 per cent).

The proportions of disabled participants (36 per cent), participants who were lone parents (six per cent) or carers (eight per cent) and participants with no qualifications (11 per cent) were not significantly different from the national average.

There was a smaller than average proportion of participants who were returners to the labour market in the East of England (12 per cent compared with 21 per cent). However, the proportions of people who were long-term unemployed and aged 20 or over (35 per cent) or not in employment, education or training (NEET) young people (eight per cent) were in line with the average.

The proportion of participants in the East of England who were aged over 50 was the same as the national average at 17 per cent.

Significantly fewer than average participants in the East of England had multiple disadvantages (44 per cent compared with 57 per cent).

Satisfaction with the course

Sixty-nine per cent of East of England Priority 1 participants thought that the course was improving their work skills, 70 per cent said it was boosting their self-confidence about working and 68 per cent felt that it was giving them practical help in finding work. These proportions were not significantly different from the national averages.

The proportion of participants undertaking work experience or a work placement as part of the course was 44 per cent, higher than the average of 35 per cent. Sixty-seven per cent of participants were getting information about vacancies; a similar proportion to the national average (65 per cent).

Seventy per cent of participants said that the course was relevant to their needs, while 63 per cent were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the quality of the course. Again, these proportions were not significantly different from the national averages.

Employment outcomes

In the East of England, 29 per cent of participants were in employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview compared with six per cent in the week before the course. The unemployment rate fell from 76 per cent to 41 per cent in the same time period, although the rate of economic inactivity had risen (from 18 per cent to 30 per cent). At the time of the Wave 2 interview, rates of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity in the East of England were similar to what they had been 12 months before participants started the course (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4 Employment outcomes (East of England, Priority 1)

Employment status	Point in time			
	12 months before course %	In week before course %	At Wave 1 interview %	At Wave 2 interview %
In employment	31	6	20	29
Unemployed	41	76	56	41
Economically inactive	28	18	24	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	273	273	232	273

ESF Cohort Study

Compared with other regions, there was no significant difference in the East of England in terms of the proportion of participants who had found work since going on the course (24 per cent) (Table 6.3).

6.1.2 London

Participant profile

In London, the proportion of female participants was 41 per cent, which was not significantly different from the national average.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, at 56 per cent, the proportion of London participants from ethnic minority groups was higher than in any other region. The proportion of disabled participants was also higher than average (52 per cent compared with 37 per cent).

The proportions of participants who were lone parents (11 per cent), carers (ten per cent) and those who had no qualifications (20 per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages.

The proportions of participants in London who were long-term unemployed (37 per cent), returners to the labour market (25 per cent) and aged over 50 (21 per cent) were also similar to the national averages. However, at four per cent, London had a relatively low proportion of NEET participants.

London had the highest proportion of participants with multiple disadvantages of any region, at 80 per cent compared with an average of 57 per cent. (Ethnic minority status was counted as a type of disadvantage, which would have affected this measure.)

Satisfaction with the course

The proportions of Priority 1 participants in London who said that the course was helping them with their work skills (65 per cent), improving their self-confidence about working (73 per cent) and giving them practical help in finding a job (67 per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages.

A smaller than average proportion of participants in London were undertaking work experience as part of the course (23 per cent compared with 35 per cent), although the proportion of people receiving information about vacancies was in line with the average (63 per cent compared with 65 per cent).

The proportions of people saying that the course was relevant to their needs (70 per cent) and that they were satisfied with the quality of the course (68 per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages.

Employment outcomes

Twenty-one per cent of Priority 1 participants in London were in employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview, compared with six per cent in the week before the course. The rate of unemployment had fallen from 64 per cent to 39 per cent during this period, while the rate of economic inactivity had risen from 30 per cent to 40 per cent. The proportion of participants in employment at the Wave 2 interview (21 per cent) was similar to the proportion 12 months before the course (22 per cent) (Table 6.5).

Table 6.5 Employment outcomes (London, Priority 1)

Employment status	Point in time			
	12 months before course %	In week before course %	At Wave 1 interview %	At Wave 2 interview %
In employment	22	6	17	21
Unemployed	44	64	44	39
Economically inactive	34	30	39	40
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	336	336	259	336

ESF Cohort Study

Nineteen per cent of participants in London had found employment since going on the course (Table 6.3). This proportion was not significantly different from the national average.

6.1.3 East Midlands

Participant profile

Within Priority 1, the East Midlands had a higher proportion of female participants (44 per cent compared with an average of 35 per cent).

The proportion of ethnic minority participants in the East Midlands was smaller than average (ten per cent compared with 18 per cent), which reflects the demographic characteristics of the region, although the region had a higher than average proportion of disabled participants (50 per cent compared with 37 per cent).

The proportions of lone parents (11 per cent), carers (eight per cent) and people with no qualifications (17 per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages.

Similarly, the proportions of people who were long-term unemployed (29 per cent) and NEET (seven per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages, although, corresponding with the higher than average proportion of female participants, the region had a higher than average proportion of returners to the labour market (33 per cent compared with 21 per cent).

There was also a higher than average proportion of participants aged 50 or over in the East Midlands (27 per cent compared with 17 per cent).

Sixty-five per cent of participants faced multiple disadvantages, which was not significantly different from the national average.

Satisfaction with the course

Levels of satisfaction with the course in the East Midlands were in line with the national averages. Sixty-five per cent of participants said that the course improved their work skills, 75 per cent said that it improved their self-confidence about working and 65 per cent received practical help in finding a job. A third (33 per cent) undertook work experience placements as part of the course and 65 per cent got information about job vacancies.

Seventy-three per cent of participants said that the course was relevant to their needs, which was similar to the national average, while 65 per cent were very or fairly satisfied with the quality of the course (which was not significantly different from the average).

Employment outcomes

Among Priority 1 participants in the East Midlands, 24 per cent of participants were in work at the time of the interview. The employment rate had risen from five per cent in the week before the course. Correspondingly, the proportion of unemployed participants had fallen from 58 per cent in the week before the course to 44 per cent at the time of the Wave 2 interview. The rate of economic inactivity had not changed significantly during this period (Table 6.6).

Table 6.6 Employment outcomes (East Midlands, Priority 1)

Employment status	Point in time			
	12 months before course %	In week before course %	At Wave 1 interview %	At Wave 2 interview %
In employment	29	5	21	24
Unemployed	36	58	42	44
Economically inactive	35	37	37	33
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	265	265	211	265

ESF Cohort Study

Twenty-two per cent of Priority 1 participants in the East Midlands had moved into employment since going on the course (Table 6.3). This proportion was not significantly different from other regions.

6.1.4 North East

Participant profile

The proportion of female participants in the North East (27 per cent) was significantly lower than average.

At two per cent, the proportion of participants from ethnic minority groups was smaller than the national average of 18 per cent, fewer than any other region except Cornwall. (This reflects the population of the North East more generally, which has a smaller than average proportion of ethnic minorities.) The North East also had a small proportion of disabled Priority 1 participants (16 per cent).

The proportions of participants who were lone parents (six per cent), carers (five per cent) and who had no qualifications (17 per cent) – as well as those who were long-term unemployed (40 per cent) or NEET (14 per cent) – were not significantly different from the national averages.

However, at six per cent, the proportion of participants who were returners to the labour market was smaller than average (21 per cent). This is likely to be associated with the smaller than average proportion of females in the region. The proportions of people aged over 50 (ten per cent compared with 17 per cent) and people with multiple disadvantages (36 per cent compared with 57 per cent) were also smaller than average.

Satisfaction with the course

In the North East, 66 per cent of Priority 1 participants were improving their work skills on the course, 73 per cent were improving their self-confidence about working and 72 per cent were gaining practical help in finding work. These proportions were not significantly different from the national averages.

A higher than average proportion of participants were undertaking work experience as part of the course (46 per cent compared with 35 per cent). Eighty per cent of participants were receiving information about job vacancies to try for; this was compared with an average of 65 per cent.

In line with the national averages, 73 per cent felt that the course was relevant to their needs and 66 per cent were satisfied with its quality.

Employment outcomes

The employment rate among Priority 1 participants in the North East had risen from seven per cent in the week before the course to 28 per cent at the time of the Wave 2 interview. The rate of unemployment had fallen from 84 per cent to 53 per cent in the same period, while the rate of economic inactivity had risen from nine per cent to 19 per cent. Changes in the employment status of participants at the Wave 2 interview compared with 12 months before the course were not significant (Table 6.7).

Table 6.7 Employment outcomes (North East, Priority 1)

Employment status	<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
	12 months before course	In week before course	At Wave 1 interview	At Wave 2 interview
	%	%	%	%
In employment	22	7	21	28
Unemployed	53	84	59	53
Economically inactive	25	9	20	19
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	244	244	201	244

Twenty-four per cent of participants in the North East had found work since going on the course (Table 6.3). This was not significantly different from the national average.

6.1.5 North West

Participant profile

At 32 per cent, the proportion of Priority 1 participants in the North West who were women was not significantly different from the national average (35 per cent).

The proportion of participants from ethnic minority groups was smaller than the national average (11 per cent compared with 18 per cent), reflecting the demography of the population, but the proportions of disabled participants (34 per cent) and lone parents (nine per cent) were similar to the averages.

The North West had a smaller than average proportion of participants who were carers (four per cent compared with an average of seven per cent).

Twenty per cent of participants in the North West had no qualifications, which was not significantly different from the average. Similarly, the proportions of Priority 1 participants in the North West who were long-term unemployed (38 per cent), returners to the labour market (25 per cent), NEET (ten per cent), aged over 50 (16 per cent) or who had multiple disadvantages (55 per cent) were similar to the national averages.

Satisfaction with the course

Among Priority 1 participants in the North West, 71 per cent said that the course had improved their work skills, 79 per cent acknowledged that it had boosted their self-confidence about working and 67 per cent said that they have received practical help in finding work. These proportions were not significantly different from the national averages.

Similarly, the proportions of participants undertaking a work placement as part of the course (40 per cent), getting information about job vacancies (69 per cent), saying that the course was relevant to their needs (74 per cent) or claiming to be satisfied with the course (72 per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages.

Employment outcomes

In the North West, the proportion of participants in employment rose from six per cent in the week before the course to 29 per cent at the time of the Wave 2 interview. Correspondingly, the rate of unemployment fell from 68 per cent to 41 per cent during the same period. Rates of employment, unemployment and inactivity at the time of the Wave 2 interview were similar to what they had been 12 months before the course (Table 6.8).

Table 6.8 Employment outcomes (North West, Priority 1)

Employment status	<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
	Point in time			
	12 months before course	In week before course	At Wave 1 interview	At Wave 2 interview
	%	%	%	%
In employment	26	6	23	29
Unemployed	41	68	48	41
Economically inactive	33	26	30	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	578	578	472	578

Twenty-five per cent of Priority 1 participants in the North West had found work since going on the course, which was not significantly different from the national average.

6.1.6 South East

Participant profile

Thirty per cent of Priority 1 participants in the South East were women, which was not significantly different from the national average (35 per cent).

Reflecting the demographic characteristics of the region, a smaller than average proportion of participants in the South East were from ethnic minority groups (nine per cent compared with 18 per cent), although the proportion of disabled people (36 per cent) was in line with the national average (37 per cent).

The proportions of participants who were lone parents (five per cent), carers (six per cent) and those who had no qualifications (24 per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages.

Similarly, the proportions of people who were long-term unemployed (36 per cent), NEET (eight per cent), returners to the labour market (18 per cent) or who had multiple disadvantages (59 per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages.

Twenty-five per cent of participants in the South East were aged over 50, compared with a national average of 17 per cent.

Satisfaction with the course

A smaller than average proportion of Priority 1 participants in the South East felt that they were gaining work skills as part of the course (56 per cent compared with 67 per cent). Similarly, the proportion of participants saying that the course boosted their confidence about working was smaller than average (60 per cent compared to 73 per cent).

At 56 per cent, the proportion of participants gaining practical help in finding a job was not significantly different from the national average. Similarly, the proportions of South East participants undertaking a work placement (37 per cent), receiving information about vacancies (64 per cent), saying that the course was relevant to their needs (68 per cent) or saying that they were satisfied with the quality of the course (59 per cent) were not significantly different from the averages.

Employment outcomes

Twenty-four per cent of Priority 1 participants in the South East were in work at the time of the Wave 2 interview, compared with five per cent in the week before the course. The unemployment rate had fallen from 74 per cent to 46 per cent during this period, while the rate of inactivity had risen from 21 per cent to 30 per cent. Generally, rates of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity were similar at the time of the Wave 2 interview to what they had been 12 months before the course (Table 6.9).

Table 6.9 Employment outcomes (South East, Priority 1)

Employment status	Point in time			
	12 months before course	In week before course	At Wave 1 interview	At Wave 2 interview
	%	%	%	%
In employment	26	5	20	24
Unemployed	48	74	57	46
Economically inactive	27	21	23	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	271	271	220	271

ESF Cohort Study

The proportion of Priority 1 participants finding work since going on the course was 20 per cent (Table 6.3). This was not significantly different from the national average.

6.1.7 South West

Participant profile

The proportion of female participants in the South West was 40 per cent, which not significantly different from the national average of 35 per cent.

Seven per cent of participants were from ethnic minority groups. This was smaller than the national average of 18 per cent, and reflects the demographic characteristics of the region. At 43 per cent, the proportion of disabled people was not significantly different from the national average (37 per cent).

The proportions of participants who were lone parents (nine per cent) and carers (seven per cent) were similar to the national averages, as was the proportion of participants with no qualifications (22 per cent).

A smaller than average proportion of participants in the South West were long-term unemployed (28 per cent compared with 35 per cent), although a higher proportion were returners to the labour market (31 per cent compared with 21 per cent).

The proportion of NEET participants in the South West (nine per cent) was similar to the national average, as were the proportions of participants aged over 50 (16 per cent) and those with multiple disadvantages (56 per cent).

Satisfaction with the course

Sixty-one per cent of Priority 1 participants in the South West said they had improved work skills on the course, while 70 per cent had boosted their self-confidence, 59 per cent had received practical help in finding work and 27 per cent had undertaken work experience as part of the course. These proportions were not significantly different from the national averages.

The proportion of participants in the South West gaining information about job vacancies on the course was 57 per cent, which was below the average of 65 per cent.

Seventy-four per cent of participants in the South West said that the course was relevant to their needs, while 71 per cent were satisfied with the course quality. These proportions were not significantly different from the national averages.

Employment outcomes

Eight per cent of Priority 1 participants in the South West were in employment in the week before starting the course. This rose to 30 per cent at the time of the Wave 2 interview, while the unemployment rate fell from 58 per cent to 34 per cent during the same period. The proportions of participants who were in work, unemployed and inactive at the Wave 2 interview were not significantly different compared with 12 months before the course (Table 6.10).

Table 6.10 Employment outcomes (South West, Priority 1)

Employment status	Point in time			
	12 months before course	In week before course	At Wave 1 interview	At Wave 2 interview
	%	%	%	%
In employment	28	8	23	30
Unemployed	35	58	46	34
Economically inactive	37	34	31	35
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	317	317	260	317

ESF Cohort Study

Twenty-five per cent of Priority 1 participants in the South West had found work since going on the course, which was not significantly different from the national average.

6.1.8 West Midlands

Participant profile

In the West Midlands, the proportion of female participants in Priority 1 was similar to the national average (34 per cent compared with 35 per cent).

The proportion of people from ethnic minority groups (30 per cent) was higher than the national average (18 per cent), reflecting the demographic profile of the region, but there was no significant difference in the proportion of disabled participants (40 per cent) compared with the average (37 per cent).

There were no significant differences in the proportions of participants who were lone parents (eight per cent), carers (nine per cent) or who had no qualifications (19 per cent) compared with the national averages.

Similarly, the proportions of participants who were long-term unemployed (29 per cent) or returners to the labour market (24 per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages. At 16 per cent, there was a higher than average proportion of NEET young people in the West Midlands.

The proportion of participants aged over 50 (16 per cent) was similar to the average (17 per cent).

A higher proportion of participants in the West Midlands had multiple disadvantages (66 per cent) compared with the average (57 per cent).

Satisfaction with the course

In the West Midlands, 66 per cent of Priority 1 participants had improved their work skills on the course, 73 per cent had boosted their self-confidence about working and 59 per cent had received practical help in finding work. These proportions were not significantly different from the national averages.

At 25 per cent, the proportion of participants undertaking a work placement in the West Midlands was smaller than average (35 per cent), although the proportion receiving information about job vacancies (61 per cent) was not significantly different from the average.

Seventy-two per cent said that the course was relevant to their needs, while 65 per cent were satisfied with the course quality. These proportions were not significantly different from the national averages.

Employment outcomes

The proportion of Priority 1 participants in the West Midlands who were in work rose from six per cent in the week before the course to 28 per cent at the time of the Wave 2 interview. In the same period, the unemployment rate fell from 66 per cent to 40 per cent. Generally, rates of employment, unemployment and inactivity were similar at the time of the Wave 2 interview to what they had been 12 months before the course (Table 6.11).

Table 6.11 Employment outcomes (West Midlands, Priority 1)

Employment status	Point in time			
	12 months before course	In week before course	At Wave 1 interview	At Wave 2 interview
	%	%	%	%
In employment	28	6	24	28
Unemployed	36	66	49	40
Economically inactive	36	28	27	32
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	438	438	371	438

ESF Cohort Study

In the West Midlands, 23 per cent of participants had found work since going on the course, which was not significantly different from the national average (Table 6.3).

6.1.9 Yorkshire and the Humber

Participant profile

The demographic profile of participants in Yorkshire and the Humber was generally similar to the national average. Indeed, the proportions of women (33 per cent), ethnic minorities (15 per cent), disabled people (31 per cent), lone parents (12 per cent), carers (five per cent) and people with no qualifications (19 per cent) were not significantly different from the national average.

At 53 per cent, the proportion of participants in Yorkshire and the Humber who were long-term unemployed was higher than in any other region.

Similarly, the proportion of participants who were NEET (five per cent) was not significantly different from the average (nine per cent), although there was a smaller proportion of participants who were returners to the labour market in Yorkshire and the Humber (four per cent) compared with an average of 21 per cent.

Eleven per cent of Priority 1 participants in Yorkshire and the Humber were aged over 50. This was not significantly different from the national average.

The proportion of participants with multiple disadvantages was 54 per cent which, again, was not significantly different from the national average of 57 per cent.

Satisfaction with the course

Among Priority 1 participants in Yorkshire and the Humber, 71 per cent said that the course had helped them to improve their work skills, 70 per cent had gained self-confidence about working, and 68 per cent had received practical help in finding work. These proportions were not significantly different from the national averages.

The proportion of participants undertaking work experience as part of the course was relatively high at 54 per cent compared with an average of 35 per cent.

The proportions of participants receiving information about job vacancies (73 per cent) and those saying that they thought the course was relevant to their needs (71 per cent) or that they were satisfied with the course quality (59 per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages.

Employment outcomes

The rate of employment among Priority 1 participants in Yorkshire and the Humber rose from four per cent in the week before the course to 22 per cent at the time of the Wave 2 interview. During the same period the unemployment rate fell from 80 per cent to 52 per cent, while the rate of economic inactivity rose from 16 per cent to 26 per cent. Rates of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity at the time of the Wave 2 interview were not significantly different from what they had been 12 months before the course (Table 6.12).

Table 6.12 Employment outcomes (Yorkshire and the Humber, Priority 1)

Employment status	Point in time			
	12 months before course %	In week before course %	At Wave 1 interview %	At Wave 2 interview %
In employment	18	4	18	22
Unemployed	56	80	59	52
Economically inactive	26	16	23	26
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	293	293	249	293

ESF Cohort Study

Twenty per cent of Priority 1 participants in Yorkshire and the Humber had found work since going on the course, which was not significantly different from the national average.

6.1.10 Merseyside

Participant profile

The proportion of Priority 1 female participants (30 per cent) in Merseyside was not significantly different from the national average (35 per cent).

Reflecting the regional population, a smaller proportion of Merseyside participants were from ethnic minority groups compared with the average (four per cent compared with 18 per cent). Moreover, a smaller proportion had a disability or long-term limiting illness (LTLI) compared with the average (16 per cent compared with 37 per cent). They were also less likely have no qualifications – 11 per cent of Merseyside participants had no qualifications compared with an average of 18 per cent.

The proportions of participants who were lone parents (seven per cent) or carers (five per cent) were not significantly different from the national average.

Similarly, the proportion of participants who were long-term unemployed (29 per cent) was not significantly different from the national average, although a smaller proportion of participants were returners to the labour market (seven per cent compared with an average of 21 per cent) and a higher proportion were NEET (14 per cent compared with an average of nine per cent).

At eight per cent, the proportion of participants aged over 50 was smaller than average.

Merseyside also had the smallest proportion of participants with multiple disadvantages of any region, except the North East – 33 per cent of Priority 1 participants in Merseyside had multiple disadvantages, compared with an average of 57 per cent.

Satisfaction with the course

A higher than average proportion of Priority 1 participants in Merseyside said that they had improved their work skills on the course (76 per cent compared with 67 per cent). Similarly, the proportion saying that they had improved their confidence about working was higher than average (79 per cent compared with 73 per cent).

The proportions of participants receiving practical help in finding work (64 per cent), undertaking work experience as part of the course (35 per cent) and receiving information about job vacancies (59 per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages.

Eighty-one per cent of participants in Merseyside felt that the course was relevant to their needs, which was higher than average (73 per cent). At 77 per cent, the proportion of participants who were satisfied with the course was also higher than average (68 per cent).

Employment outcomes

In Merseyside, the proportion of Priority 1 participants in work at the time of the Wave 2 interview was 39 per cent, compared with five per cent in the week before the course. During the same period, the rate of unemployment fell from 75 per cent to 40 per cent. The employment rate at the time of the Wave 2 interview was similar to what it had been 12 months before the course (Table 6.13).

Table 6.13 Employment outcomes (Merseyside, Priority 1)

Employment status	Point in time			
	12 months before course %	In week before course %	At Wave 1 interview %	At Wave 2 interview %
In employment	38	5	29	39
Unemployed	31	75	48	40
Economically inactive	32	20	23	21
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	353	353	303	353

ESF Cohort Study

Thirty-six per cent of Priority 1 participants in Merseyside had found work since going on the course, which was higher than the average for all regions of 24 per cent (Table 6.3).

6.1.11 South Yorkshire

Participant profile

Forty-three per cent of Priority 1 participants in South Yorkshire were women. This was higher than the national average of 35 per cent.

The proportion of ethnic minority participants in South Yorkshire (12 per cent) was smaller than the national average (18 per cent), reflecting the demographic profile of the region, as was the proportion of the participants with a disability or LTLI (25 per cent compared with 37 per cent).

In South Yorkshire, the proportions of participants who were lone parents (11 per cent), carers (eight per cent) and those with no qualifications (16 per cent) were not significantly different from the national average.

Similarly, the proportions of participants who were long-term unemployed (37 per cent) or returners to the labour market (19 per cent) were in line with the national average, although there was a higher than average proportion of NEET participants (15 per cent compared with an average of nine per cent).

Eight per cent of Priority 1 participants in South Yorkshire were aged over 50. This was fewer than the national average of 17 per cent.

A smaller proportion of participants in South Yorkshire had multiple disadvantages compared with the average (47 per cent compared with 57 per cent).

Satisfaction with the course

In South Yorkshire, a higher than average proportion of Priority 1 participants said that they had gained work skills on the course (80 per cent compared with 67 per cent), although the proportions of participants who had improved their self-confidence about working (76 per cent) and who had received practical help in finding work (67 per cent) were in line with the national averages.

The proportions of participants undertaking work experience on the course (52 per cent) and receiving information about vacancies (73 per cent) were significantly higher than the national averages.

Similarly, participants in South Yorkshire were more likely than average to say that the course was relevant to their needs (84 per cent compared an average of 73 per cent), while the proportion of people saying that they were satisfied with the quality of the course (75 per cent) was in line with the national average.

Employment outcomes

The rate of employment among Priority 1 participants in South Yorkshire rose from five per cent in the week before the course to 26 per cent at the time of the Wave 2 interview. During the same period the unemployment rate fell from 71 per cent to 54 per cent. The rate of employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview was higher than the rate 12 months before the course (26 per cent compared with 17 per cent). While the unemployment rate had also risen during this period (from 41 per cent to 54 per cent) the economic inactivity rate had fallen (from 41 per cent to 20 per cent) (Table 6.14).

Table 6.14 Employment outcomes (South Yorkshire, Priority 1)

Employment status	<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
	Point in time			
	12 months before course	In week before course	At Wave 1 interview	At Wave 2 interview
	%	%	%	%
In employment	17	5	16	26
Unemployed	41	71	57	54
Economically inactive	41	25	27	20
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	296	296	231	296

Twenty-four per cent of Priority 1 participants in South Yorkshire had found work since going on the course, which was similar to the national average (Table 6.3).

6.1.12 Cornwall

Participant profile

In Cornwall, 41 per cent of Priority 4 participants were women, higher than the national average of 35 per cent for Priorities 1 and 4.

Only one per cent of participants in Cornwall were from an ethnic minority group, compared with an average of 18 per cent. However, Cornwall had the highest proportion of disabled participants of any region (with the exception of London), at 60 per cent compared with an average of 37 per cent.

The proportion of participants who were lone parents (nine per cent) and carers (nine per cent) was in line with the national average. Fewer than average participants in Cornwall had no qualifications (13 per cent compared with 18 per cent).

Reflecting the demography of the region, a smaller proportion of participants in Cornwall were long-term unemployed compared with the average (16 per cent compared with 35 per cent) or NEET (five per cent compared with nine per cent). However, the proportion of returners to the labour market (48 per cent) was higher in Cornwall than in any other region (the average was 21 per cent).

Twenty-one per cent of participants in Cornwall were aged over 50 compared with an average of 17 per cent.

A higher proportion of participants in Cornwall had multiple disadvantages (65 per cent compared with an average of 57 per cent).

Satisfaction with the course

In line with the national averages (for Priorities 1 and 4), 71 per cent of Priority 4 participants in Cornwall said that they had gained work skills on the course, while 70 per cent had improved their self-confidence about working.

A smaller than average proportion of participants had received practical help in finding work (50 per cent compared with 65 per cent). Reflecting this, the proportions of participants undertaking work placements as part of the course (15 per cent) and receiving information about job vacancies (38 per cent) were also smaller than average.

Despite this, participants in Cornwall were generally more likely to say that the course was relevant to their needs (79 per cent compared with an average of 73 per cent) and that they were satisfied with the quality of the course (77 per cent compared with 68 per cent).

Employment outcomes

The employment rate among Priority 1 participants in Cornwall had risen from six per cent in the week before the course to 30 per cent at the time of the Wave 2 interview. The rate of unemployment had fallen from 38 per cent to 25 per cent in the same period, while the rate of economic inactivity had fallen from 56 per cent to 45 per cent. Changes in the employment status of participants at the Wave 2 interview compared with 12 months before the course were not significant (Table 6.15).

Table 6.15 Employment outcomes (Cornwall, Priority 4)

	<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
		Point in time		
Employment status	12 months before course	In week before course	At Wave 1 interview	At Wave 2 interview
	%	%	%	%
In employment	35	6	26	30
Unemployed	20	38	25	25
Economically inactive	44	56	49	45
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	750	750	552	750

Compared with other regions, there was no significant difference in Cornwall in terms of the proportion of participants who had found work since going on the course (26 per cent) (Table 6.3).

6.2 Regional analysis (Priorities 2 and 5)

Table 6.16 Demographic characteristics by region (Priorities 2 and 5)

Characteristics	Regions								Total %
	East of England %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	Cornwall %	
Women	35	51	67	62	19	46	38	53	47
Ethnic minorities	11	4	15	8	15	4	2	2	6
Has a LTLI or disability	8	6	10	7	13	7	12	8	8
NEET	0	7	0	1	0	6	0	4	5
Aged over 50	27	3	20	20	33	7	20	19	12
Level 4 and above	25	6	17	37	12	15	6	27	13
Level 3 – A Level or equivalent	20	23	12	20	17	24	10	22	21
Level 2 – GCSE grades A-C or equivalent	21	56	27	21	29	52	27	31	44
Below Level 2	17	10	20	14	21	6	31	13	12
Foreign and other qualifications	6	0	14	6	8	1	6	4	3
No qualifications	11	5	10	3	13	3	21	4	7
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	327	528	229	263	341	421	212	347	2,984

ESF Cohort Study

Table 6.17 Satisfaction with course by region (Priorities 2 and 5)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>									
Characteristics	Regions								Total %
	East of England %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	Cornwall %	
Improved skills needed at work	85	91	89	89	80	93	84	83	88
Improved self-confidence	71	85	81	82	73	82	70	75	80
Relevant to needs	87	91	89	90	88	91	86	89	90
Very or fairly satisfied	89	89	90	89	89	89	89	85	88
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	327	528	229	263	341	421	212	347	2,984

Table 6.18 Qualifications gained by region (Priorities 2 and 5)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>									
Qualifications gained	Regions								Total %
	East of England %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	Cornwall %	
No qualifications gained	45	31	34	52	53	37	26	36	37
Level 4 and above	5	11	10	6	5	8	7	9	9
NQF Level 3	7	27	19	12	3	27	16	16	21
NQF Level 2	24	26	26	15	10	21	39	27	24
NQF Level 1	20	5	11	15	28	7	11	12	10
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	327	528	229	263	341	421	212	347	2,984

Table 6.19 Improvement in job situation (Priorities 2 and 5)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>									
Improvement	Regions								Total %
	East of England %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	Cornwall %	
Moved from a temporary to a permanent contract since course started	8	12	12	7	15	17	7	8	12
Received a pay rise since course started	35	51	46	41	29	53	30	35	46
Taken on higher skilled work with your existing employer since course started	25	40	27	35	24	41	23	22	34
Taken on higher skilled work with another employer since course started	7	8	7	6	2	8	6	6	7
Taken on responsibility for supervising or managing other people since course started	22	30	35	32	24	30	26	22	28
Improved your job security since course started	51	54	52	51	52	62	45	43	53
Increased hours of work since course started	19	18	20	20	21	19	13	17	18
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	270	387	210	230	120	358	189	298	2,357

6.2.1 East of England

Participant profile

There was a smaller than average proportion of female Priority 2 participants in the East of England (35 per cent compared with 47 per cent). The proportion of participants from an ethnic minority group was above average (11 per cent compared with six per cent), while the proportion of disabled participants was similar to the average (eight per cent).

Within Priority 2, none of the young people in the East of England were NEET before starting the course, although they may have been ‘at risk of becoming NEET’. The proportion of participants aged over 50 was above average (27 per cent compared with 12 per cent).

A slightly higher than average proportion of participants from the East of England had no qualifications (11 per cent compared with seven per cent). (The multivariate analysis – see Chapter 4 – also indicated that, even when other variables were considered, participants in the East of England were less likely to have gained full qualifications than participants in Cornwall.)

Satisfaction with the course

Eighty-five per cent of Priority 2 participants in the East of England felt that the course had improved the skills needed at work, which was in line with the national average. Seventy-one per cent reported that they had improved their self-confidence about working, below the national average of 80 per cent.

The proportions of participants saying that the course was relevant to their needs (87 per cent) and that they were satisfied with the quality of the course (89 per cent) were in line with the national averages.

Outcomes

Forty-five per cent of Priority 2 participants in the East of England had not gained qualifications on the course. This was higher than the national average of 37 per cent. The proportion of participants gaining Level 2 qualifications, however, was in line with the national average at 24 per cent.

Compared with the average, Priority 2 participants in the East of England were less likely to have received a pay rise since going on the course (35 per cent compared with an average of 46 per cent) and were also less likely to have taken on higher skilled work with an existing employer (25 per cent compared with 34 per cent)³⁹.

6.2.2 North West

Participant profile

In the North West, the proportions of Priority 2 female participants (51 per cent), participants from an ethnic minority group (four per cent) and disabled participants (six per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages.

Seven per cent of participants were NEET, which was above average (five per cent). The proportion of participants aged over 50 was three per cent, which was below average (12 per cent).

Generally, the qualification levels of participants from the North West were not significantly different from the average. A high proportion of participants (56 per cent) were educated to Level 2.

Satisfaction with the course

Ninety-one per cent of Priority 2 participants in the North West said that they had improved their work skills in line with the national average. The proportion of participants who felt that they had improved their self-confidence on the course was higher than average (85 per cent compared with 80 per cent).

³⁹ Table 6.19 only provides information about reported improvements in participants’ employment situations. Whether or not these improvements are attributable to the course is not considered here.

The proportions of participants saying that the course was relevant to their needs (91 per cent) and that they were satisfied with the quality of the course (89 per cent) were close to the national averages.

Outcomes

Priority 2 participants in the North West were slightly more likely than participants in other regions to have gained qualifications on the course (particularly at Level 3); 69 per cent had gained full qualifications, compared with an average of 63 per cent.

In terms of improvements in job situation reported by participants in the North West, these were not significantly different from the national averages.

6.2.3 South East

Participant profile

At 67 per cent, the proportion of female participants in the South East was higher than the average (47 per cent), as was the proportion of participants from an ethnic minority group (15 per cent compared with the average of six per cent). The proportion of disabled participants was in line with the average.

Within Priority 2, none of the young people in the South East were NEET before starting the course, although they may have been 'at risk of becoming NEET'. However, the proportion of participants aged over 50 was above average (20 per cent compared with 12 per cent).

In terms of qualification levels, participants in the South East were less likely than average to be educated to Level 3 (12 per cent compared with 21 per cent) or to Level 2 (27 per cent compared with 44 per cent).

Satisfaction with the course

In the South East, 89 per cent of Priority 2 participants had improved their work skills, 81 per cent had improved their self-confidence about working, 89 per cent said that the course was relevant to their needs, and 90 per cent were satisfied with the quality of the course. Generally, satisfaction levels in the South East were not significantly different from the national averages.

Outcomes

In the South East, the proportions of Priority 2 participants gaining full qualifications at Level 2 (26 per cent) and at Level 3 (19 per cent) were in line with the national averages.

Similarly, the improvements to job situation reported by participants in the South East were not significantly different from the national averages.

6.2.4 South West

Participant profile

Sixty-two per cent of Priority 2 participants in the South West were women, higher than the national average of 47 per cent. The proportions of participants who were from an ethnic minority group (eight per cent) or disabled (seven per cent) were in line with the national averages.

There was a smaller than average proportion of NEET participants in the South West (one per cent compared with an average of five per cent), but the proportion of participants aged over 50 was higher than average (20 per cent compared with 12 per cent).

A high proportion of participants in the South West were educated to Level 4 and above (37 per cent compared with an average of 13 per cent). However, the proportion of participants with no qualifications (three per cent) was also smaller than average (seven per cent).

Satisfaction with the course

Eighty-nine per cent of Priority 2 participants in the South West had improved their work skills on the course, while 82 per cent had improved their self-confidence about working. Moreover, 90 per cent said that the course was relevant to their needs, while 89 per cent were satisfied with the quality of the course. Generally, satisfaction levels in the South West were not significantly different from the national averages.

Outcomes

Priority 2 participants in the South West were less likely to have gained qualifications than participants in other regions. For example, 48 per cent of participants in the South West had gained qualifications, compared with a national average of 63 per cent. Fifteen per cent of participants had gained Level 2 qualifications compared with an average of 24 per cent. (This was also reflected in the multivariate analysis – see Chapter 4 – which showed that, even when other variables such as age and gender were considered, participants in the South West were less likely to have gained full qualifications than participants in Cornwall.)

Participants in the South West were less likely to have moved from a temporary to a permanent contract since going on the course (seven per cent compared with an average of 12 per cent). With regards to other types of improvements to job situation (for example, taking on responsibility for managing people), the South West region was in line with the national averages.

6.2.5 West Midlands

Participant profile

At 19 per cent, the West Midlands had the lowest proportion of female Priority 2 participants of any region (with the exception of Yorkshire and the Humber). However, the proportions of ethnic minority (15 per cent) and disabled (13 per cent) participants were higher than the national averages (six per cent and eight per cent respectively).

Within Priority 2, none of the young people in the West Midlands were NEET before starting the course, although they may have been 'at risk of becoming NEET'. A high proportion of participants in the West Midlands were aged over 50 (33 per cent compared with an average of 12 per cent).

In terms of qualification levels, participants in the West Midlands were more likely than average to have no qualifications (13 per cent compared with seven per cent) and less likely to have qualifications at Level 2 (29 per cent compared with 44 per cent) and at Level 3 (17 per cent compared with 21 per cent).

Satisfaction with the course

The proportions of Priority 2 participants in the West Midlands who had improved their work skills on the course (80 per cent compared with an average of 88 per cent) and who had improved their self-confidence about working (73 per cent compared with an average of 80 per cent) were below average.

Despite this, the proportions of participants saying that the course was relevant to their needs (88 per cent) and that they were satisfied with the quality of the course (89 per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages.

Outcomes

Participants in the West Midlands were significantly less likely to have gained full qualifications than Priority 2 participants in other regions. For example, only ten per cent had gained a Level 2 qualification compared with an average of 24 per cent. The proportion of participants gaining qualifications at Level 3 was also below average (three per cent compared with 21 per cent). (The multivariate analysis – see Chapter 4 – also showed that, even when other variables were taken into consideration, participants in the West Midlands were less likely to have gained full qualifications than participants in Cornwall.)

Just under 30 per cent of Priority 2 participants in the West Midlands had received a pay rise since going on the course, which was below the average of 46 per cent. The proportion of participants who had taken on higher skilled work for another employer was also smaller than average (two per cent compared with seven per cent).

6.2.6 Merseyside

Participant profile

In the Merseyside, the proportions of Priority 2 participants who were women (46 per cent), ethnic minorities (four per cent) disabled (seven per cent) and NEET (six per cent) were not significantly different from the national averages. However, there was a lower than average proportion of participants aged over 50 (seven per cent compared with 12 per cent).

Fifty-two per cent of participants in Merseyside were educated to Level 2, which was higher than the national average of 44 per cent. The proportion of people educated to Level 4 or above was also slightly higher than average (at 15 per cent compared with 13 per cent).

Satisfaction with the course

In Merseyside, 93 per cent of Priority 2 participants had improved their work skills on the course, while 82 per cent had improved their self-confidence about working. These proportions were not significantly different from the national averages. Similarly, the proportions of participants saying that the course was relevant to their needs (91 per cent) and that they were very or fairly satisfied with the quality of the course (89 per cent) were in line with the national averages.

Outcomes

Generally, the proportion of Merseyside participants gaining full qualifications as part of the course was not significantly different from the national average.

Priority 2 participants in Merseyside were more likely than average to have improved their job security since going on the course (62 per cent compared with 53 per cent). In terms of other job situation improvements, participants in Merseyside were not significantly different from the national averages.

6.2.7 South Yorkshire

Participant profile

The proportion of Priority 2 female participants in South Yorkshire was below average, at 38 per cent compared with the average of 47 per cent. At two per cent, the proportion of ethnic minority participants was also below the average of six per cent, although this may reflect the smaller than average proportion of people from ethnic minority groups in the regional population as a whole.

The proportion of participants with a disability or LTLI (12 per cent) was not significantly different from the average (eight per cent).

None of the young people surveyed were defined as NEET, although they may have been 'at risk of becoming NEET'.

The proportion of participants aged over 50 was higher than average (20 per cent compared with 12 per cent).

Participants in South Yorkshire tended to have lower than average qualification levels. For example, ten per cent were educated to Level 3 compared with an average of 21 per cent and 27 per cent were at Level 2 compared with an average of 44 per cent. A high proportion of participants in South Yorkshire (21 per cent) had no qualifications.

Satisfaction with the course

Eighty-four per cent of Priority 2 participants in South Yorkshire had improved their work skills on the course, in line with the national average. The proportion of participants who had improved their self-confidence about working was below the national average (70 per cent compared with 80 per cent).

Eighty-six per cent of participants said that their course was relevant to their needs and 89 per cent were satisfied with the quality of the course. These proportions were not significantly different from the national averages.

Outcomes

In South Yorkshire, Priority 2 participants were more likely than average to have gained qualifications at Level 2 (39 per cent compared with an average of 24 per cent).

However, the proportion of participants moving from a temporary to permanent contract since going on the course was below average (seven per cent compared with 12 per cent), as was the proportion of people receiving a pay rise (30 per cent compared with 46 per cent), taking on higher skilled work for an existing employer (23 per cent compared with 34 per cent) and improving their job security (45 per cent compared with 53 per cent).

6.2.8 Cornwall

Participant profile

Fifty-three per cent of Priority 5 participants in Cornwall were women, which was higher than the national average of 47 per cent.

Reflecting the demographic profile of the region, the proportion of participants from ethnic minority groups in Priority 5 was two per cent, below the national average of six per cent. The proportion of disabled participants was similar to the national average at eight per cent.

Similarly, at four per cent, the proportion of NEET participants was in line with the national average (five per cent), although a higher than average proportion of participants in Cornwall was aged over 50 (19 per cent compared with an average of 12 per cent).

Twenty-seven per cent of participants in Cornwall were educated to Level 4 or above, which was higher than the national average of 13 per cent.

Satisfaction with the course

Priority 5 participants in Cornwall were less likely than average to say that they had improved their work skills on the course (83 per cent compared with 88 per cent) and that they had improved their self-confidence about working (75 per cent compared with 80 per cent).

The proportions of participants saying that the course was relevant to their needs (89 per cent) and that they were satisfied with the quality of the course (85 per cent) were in line with the national averages.

Outcomes

Generally, the proportion of Priority 5 participants in Cornwall who gained full qualifications as part of the course was in line with the national average.

Participants in Cornwall were less likely than average to have received a pay rise (35 per cent compared with 46 per cent). They were also less likely to have taken on higher skilled work for their existing employer (22 per cent compared with 34 per cent), taken on responsibility for managing people (22 per cent compared with 28 per cent) and to have improved their job security since going on the course (43 per cent compared with 53 per cent).

Appendix A

Tables

Age and gender by region

Table A.1 Age and gender, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study																									
		Regions																									
		Priority 1								Priority 4																	
Age and gender	East of England %	London %		East Midlands %		North East %		North West %		South East %		South West %		West Midlands %		Yorkshire and the Humber %		Merseyside %		South Yorkshire %		Cornwall %		Total %			
		16-19	14	5	10	17	15	9	14	20	10	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
20-24	22	17	23	32	30	24	26	17	36	17	26	11	12	19	19	19	19	19	23	23	28	28	28	28	28	28	24
25-34	19	19	16	19	20	16	11	12	19	12	11	11	12	19	19	19	19	19	22	22	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
35-49	29	37	25	21	19	27	33	35	24	35	33	33	35	24	24	24	24	24	28	28	26	26	26	26	26	28	28
50+	17	21	27	10	16	25	16	16	11	16	16	16	16	11	11	11	11	11	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	17	17
Male	68	59	56	73	68	70	60	66	67	66	60	60	66	67	67	67	67	67	70	70	57	57	57	57	57	65	65
Female	32	41	44	27	32	30	40	34	33	34	40	40	34	33	33	33	33	30	30	43	43	43	43	43	35	35	
Unweighted bases	273	336	265	244	578	271	317	438	293	438	317	317	438	293	293	293	293	353	353	296	296	296	296	296	750	4,416	

Table A.2 Age and gender, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study																		
		Regions																		
		Priority 2					Yorkshire and the Humber					Priority 5								
Age and gender	East of England %	East Midlands		North East		North West		South East		South West		West Midlands		Merseyside		South Yorkshire		Cornwall		Total %
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%		
16-19	0	10	1	3	42	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	29	0	9	24				
20-24	6	10	4	5	32	7	10	4	10	10	10	10	36	4	10	23				
25-34	23	30	23	13	13	24	25	16	14	14	16	16	11	23	22	16				
35-49	44	29	51	46	11	49	40	46	36	36	46	46	17	53	40	25				
50+	27	21	20	33	3	20	20	34	40	40	34	34	7	20	19	12				
Male	65	38	46	47	49	33	38	81	85	85	81	81	54	62	47	53				
Female	35	62	54	53	51	67	62	19	15	15	19	19	46	38	53	47				
Unweighted bases	327	43	100	133	528	229	263	341	40	40	341	341	421	212	343	2,984				

Ethnicity by region

Table A.3 Ethnicity, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study											
		Regions											
Ethnicity	%	Priority 1						Yorkshire and the Humber			Priority 4		
		East of England %	London %	East Midlands %	North East %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	Cornwall %	Total %
White	90	45	90	97	89	93	67	85	87	85	98	80	
All ethnic minority groups	10	55	10	3	11	7	33	15	13	15	2	20	
Unweighted bases	269	335	264	244	574	315	437	292	352	294	748	4,394	

Table A.4 Ethnicity, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study											
		Regions											
Ethnicity	%	Priority 2						Yorkshire and the Humber			Priority 5		
		East of England %	London %	East Midlands %	North East %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	Cornwall %	Total %
White	90	47	94	98	95	93	83	82	97	98	98	94	
All ethnic minority groups	10	53	6	2	5	7	17	18	3	2	2	6	
Unweighted bases	325	42	98	132	524	256	340	40	419	211	341	2,961	

Main language spoken at home by region

Table A.5 Main language spoken at home, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study													
		Regions												Priority 4	
Language	East of England %	Priority 1						Yorkshire and the Humber				Priority 4		Total %	
		London %	East Midlands %	North East %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Yorkshire %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	Cornwall %			
English	96	84	98	99	95	97	99	90	95	95	93	100	94		
Other language	4	16	2	1	5	3	1	10	5	5	7	0	6		
Unweighted bases	271	336	264	244	576	271	316	437	292	353	294	749	4,405		

Table A.6 Main language spoken at home, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study													
		Regions												Priority 5	
Language	East of England %	Priority 2						Yorkshire and the Humber				Priority 5		Total %	
		London %	East Midlands %	North East %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Yorkshire %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	Cornwall %			
English	96	83	87	99	99	94	96	95	90	100	99	98	98		
Other language	4	17	13	1	1	6	4	5	10	0	1	2	2		
Unweighted bases	327	43	99	133	527	229	261	341	40	420	212	343	2,979		

Disability by region

Table A.7 Long-term limiting illness (LTLI) and Disability status, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study													
		Regions													
Disability	East of England %	Priority 1						Yorkshire and the Humber				Priority 4			
		London %	East Midlands %	North East %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Yorkshire %	and the Humber %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	South West %	Cornwall %	Total %
No LTLI or disability	67	49	54	81	67	60	50	60	72	83	76	38	63		
Any LTLI or disability	33	51	46	19	33	40	50	40	28	17	24	62	37		
Unweighted bases	273	336	265	243	576	271	317	438	293	352	296	749	4,411		

Table A.8 Long-term limiting illness (LTLI) and Disability status, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study													
		Regions													
Disability	East of England %	Priority 2						Yorkshire and the Humber				Priority 5			
		London %	East Midlands %	North East %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Yorkshire %	and the Humber %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	South West %	Cornwall %	Total %
No disability	94	92	96	86	95	89	97	87	86	94	92	94	94		
Any disability	6	8	4	14	5	11	3	13	14	6	8	6	6		
Unweighted bases	326	43	99	132	525	228	262	340	40	420	212	343	2,974		

Lone parent status by region

Table A.9 Lone parent status, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study															
		Regions															
		Priority 1						Priority 4									
Lone parent status	East of England %	East Midlands		North East		North West		South East		South West		Yorkshire and the Humber		South Yorkshire		Total	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Not lone parent	94	89	89	94	91	91	91	95	91	92	88	93	89	91	91	91	91
Lone parent	6	11	11	6	9	9	9	5	9	8	12	7	11	9	9	9	9
Unweighted bases	273	335	265	242	576	317	438	292	353	296	750	4,408					

Other caring responsibilities by region

Table A.10 Other caring responsibilities, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study															
		Regions															
		Priority 1						Priority 4									
Lone parent status	East of England %	East Midlands		North East		North West		South East		South West		Yorkshire and the Humber		South Yorkshire		Total	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Not carer	92	90	92	95	96	93	91	94	93	95	95	92	91	93	93	93	93
Carer	8	10	8	5	4	7	9	6	7	5	5	8	9	7	7	7	7
Unweighted bases	273	335	265	244	577	317	438	292	353	296	749	4,410					

Table A.11 Other caring responsibilities, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study													
		Regions													
Lone parent status	East of England %	Priority 2				Priority 5				Yorkshire and the Humber					
		London %	East Midlands %	North East %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Yorkshire and the Humber %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	Cornwall %	Total %		
Not carer	93	93	85	87	96	88	93	90	85	96	92	92	94		
Carer	7	7	15	13	4	12	7	10	15	4	8	8	6		
Unweighted bases	326	43	100	133	527	226	263	340	40	419	212	341	2,974		

Multiple disadvantage by region

Table A.12 Multiple disadvantage, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study													
		Regions													
Disadvantage	East of England %	Priority 1				Priority 4				Yorkshire and the Humber					
		London %	East Midlands %	North East %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Yorkshire and the Humber %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	Cornwall %	Total %		
No disadvantage	20	3	15	23	14	13	12	11	16	25	12	12	14		
1 disadvantage	36	17	20	41	31	28	32	23	30	41	42	24	29		
2 disadvantages	25	26	24	19	23	31	33	30	26	23	24	35	26		
3 disadvantages	10	28	33	14	19	17	13	22	16	7	14	20	19		
4 disadvantages	7	20	7	3	10	11	8	10	8	3	7	9	10		
5+ disadvantages	1	7	2	0	3	1	2	5	4	1	2	1	3		
Unweighted bases	273	336	265	244	578	271	317	438	293	353	296	750	4,416		

Table A.13 Multiple disadvantage, by region, within priority

		ESF Cohort Study													
		Regions													
Disadvantage	East of England %	Priority 2						Yorkshire and the Humber				Priority 5			
		London %	East Midlands %	North East %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Merseyside %	South Yorkshire %	Cornwall %	Total %			
No disadvantage	51	18	41	41	71	39	57	37	32	69	50	57	61		
1 disadvantage	33	46	34	45	21	40	30	38	40	26	31	33	27		
2 disadvantages	12	28	17	11	6	16	10	16	18	4	15	8	8		
3 disadvantages	2	6	6	3	2	4	2	7	3	0	3	2	2		
4 disadvantages	1	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	5	0	1	0	1		
5+ disadvantages	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0		
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	327	43	100	133	528	229	263	341	40	421	212	343	2,984		

Barriers to work prior to course by region

Table A.14 Barriers to work prior to course, by region, within priority

Disadvantage	ESF Cohort Study																		
	Regions																		
	Priority 1																		
	East of England				North				South				Yorkshire and the Humber				Priority 4		
%	London	East Midlands	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	West Midlands	Yorkshire and the Humber	Merseyside	South Yorkshire	South Yorkshire	Cornwall	Total	%				
Did not have the right skills	61	58	59	63	59	57	64	64	55	59	59	59	300	56					
Weren't any jobs where I live	70	55	67	74	66	65	69	69	69	70	70	70	395	68					
No recent experience of working	60	59	54	62	52	56	58	58	64	52	66	256	56						
Could not find suitable/affordable childcare (parents of dependent children only)	12	6	24	24	23	16	11	11	29	17	18	23	17						
Problems with transport or the cost of transport	43	25	44	43	38	41	38	38	36	32	38	245	40						
Other	50	38	47	42	40	43	43	43	47	47	46	56	41						
Unweighted bases	244	302	240	225	235	274	399	399	249	326	249	685	3,941						

Whether completed the course by reason went on the course

Table A.15 Course completion, by reason went on the course

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>						
	Why went on course					Total %
	Made to go on it %	Persuaded to go on it %	Given the opportunity to go on it %	Decide myself to go on it %	Other reason %	
Finished the course	73	71	73	72	84	73
Left the course	27	29	27	28	16	27
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	1,070	383	2,655	2,722	65	6,901

Table A.16 Income, by gender (full-time only)

<i>ESF Cohort Study</i>			
Income	Male %	Female %	Total %
Under £5,000	3	6	3
£5,000-£9,999	24	30	26
£10,000-£14,999	40	47	42
£15,000 or more	33	18	29
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	520	190	710

Appendix B

Response rates

As shown in Table B.1, from the 10,947 cases issued, a total of 7,400 interviews were achieved, this comprised 7,250 telephone and 150 face-to-face interviews.

The proportion of achieved interviews, when calculated from all of the issued sample was 68 per cent. The response rate based on in-scope cases (i.e. total eligible cases assuming that all non-contacts were eligible) was 69 per cent. Wave 2 fieldwork took place between 7 January and 25 March 2010.

Table B.1 Response outcomes⁴⁰ for all issued cases

Response outcomes	Number	Percentage of issued cases	Percentage of in-scope cases
Total issued	10,947	100	
Total ineligible respondents	289	3	
Total eligible (in-scope addresses)	10,658	97	100
Total non-contact	1,549	14	15
Total refusals	1,521	14	14
Total other unproductive	175	2	2
Total other face-to-face unproductive	13	0	0
Total interviews	7,400	68	69

⁴⁰ Response group descriptions

Ineligible response outcomes include people who say that they have not been on a work-related training course (the majority of this group), deceased respondents, and other people who say they are ineligible.

Non-contact outcomes include no contact with any residents, telecommunication problems with contacting respondents and other reasons for not being able to contact respondents.

Refusals include all refusals (e.g. to the office, at the introduction or during the interview).

Other unproductive outcomes include people who are away or ill throughout the fieldwork period and people who are unable to do the telephone interview due to language difficulties, learning or physical difficulties.

Total interviews is the number of full and partial interviews achieved.

Appendix C

Multivariate analysis

Summary

The modelling was undertaken in two stages.

First, a stepwise logistic regression model was used to identify the variables that predicted the outcome variable (e.g. qualifications gained/finding employment). The stepwise model identified the variables that were significantly related to the outcome variable, narrowing down the range of variables that were entered in the model at the second stage.

At the second stage, these variables were entered into a backwards regression model using the Complex Sample function of SPSS. This approach allows elements of the sample design (such as the stratification) to be taken into consideration when generating standard errors. The model was further refined by dropping any variables that were not significant (had a p-value more than 0.1).

Details of the two stages of modelling for both models are given below.

Model 1: Predictors of gaining full qualifications on the course

The aim of this analysis was to understand the predictors of Priority 2 and 5 participants gaining full qualifications on the course.

Variables added in Stage 1 (stepwise logistic regression)

As an initial step, age, gender, funding stream and region were locked into the model. The following variables were then added to the model using stepwise logistic regression:

- employment status at the time of the Wave 2 interview (full-time/part-time/not in employment);
- whether the participant gained work skills on the course;
- whether the participant gained confidence on the course; and
- satisfaction with the course, in terms of quality.

The following variables were tested but were not found to be significant:

- ethnicity;
- lone parent status;
- whether the participant was a carer;
- whether the participant was an offender or ex-offender;
- disability variables (e.g. whether the respondent had a physical disability, learning disability, mental health problem, long-term limiting illness (LTLI) or other disability);
- whether the participant had qualifications before the course;
- whether the participant had dependent children;

- tenure;
- whether the participant thought that the course was relevant to their needs;
- satisfaction with the course, in terms of level;
- why participants had signed up to the course;
- intensity of the course;
- whether the participant gained practical help in finding work on the course; and
- income.

Variables removed at Stage 2 (logistic regression with complex survey design)

The following variables were removed at Stage 2 (as they were found to be not significant):

- employment status 12 months before the course (in employment/unemployed/inactive).

Final model output

Table C.1 Predictors of gaining full qualifications

Variable	Odds Ratio	Linearised Std Error	P	Sig
Gender				
Male				
Female	1.25	0.10	0.02	*
Age				
Over 50				
16-19	0.92	0.18	0.63	NS
20-49	1.32	0.13	0.03	*
Funding stream				
ESF				
Match/other	2.27	0.12	0.00	**
Region				
Cornwall				
East of England	0.44	0.23	0.00	**
London	1.14	0.56	0.81	NS
East Midlands	0.44	0.33	0.01	*
North East	1.19	0.34	0.61	NS
North West	1.25	0.17	0.20	NS
South East	0.76	0.25	0.27	NS
South West	0.59	0.27	0.05	*
West Midlands	0.66	0.19	0.03	*
Yorkshire and the Humber	1.69	0.63	0.40	NS
Merseyside	0.79	0.17	0.17	NS
South Yorkshire	0.93	0.26	0.78	NS

Continued

Table C.1 Continued

Variable	Odds Ratio	Linearised Std Error	P	Sig
Has gained work skills				
No				
Yes	1.80	0.15	0.00	**
Has improved confidence				
No				
Yes	1.62	0.12	0.00	**
Satisfaction with the course				
Very or fairly satisfied				
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0.61	0.18	0.00	**
Fairly or very dissatisfied	0.41	0.21	0.00	**
Employment status				
In full-time employment				
In part-time employment	0.89	0.13	0.35	NS
Not in employment	0.65	0.13	0.00	*

* Significant to the 90 per cent level.

** Significant at least to the 95 per cent level.

Model 2: Predictors of being in employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview

This analysis aimed to understand the predictors of Priority 1 and 4 participants (who had been unemployed or inactive in the week before the course) being in employment at the time of the Wave 2 interview.

Variables added in Stage 1 (stepwise logistic regression)

Firstly, age, gender, funding stream and region were locked into the model. The following variables were then added to the model using stepwise logistic regression:

- whether the participant had a physical disability;
- whether the participant had a mental health issue;
- whether the participant had LTLI;
- whether the participant had qualifications;
- whether the participant was an offender or ex-offender;
- tenure;
- highest qualification gained on the course;
- length of unemployment;
- time spent on the course;

- intensity of the course;
- whether participants said that access to transport was a barrier to them finding work;
- attitudes to work (i.e. whether the respondent thought that finding work was important);
- whether the participant finished the course or left early;
- whether the participant thought that the course was relevant to their needs;
- time since finished the course; and
- whether the participant gained work skills on the course.

The following variables were tested but were not found to be significant:

- ethnicity;
- whether the participant had a learning difficulty or other type of disability;
- lone parent status;
- whether the respondent was a carer;
- whether the participant had dependent children;
- whether the participant was a returner to the labour market;
- why participants had signed up to the course;
- where participants heard about the course;
- whether participants said that lack of experience was a barrier to them finding work;
- whether participants said that lack of skills was a barrier to them finding work;
- whether participants said that lack of jobs in their local area was a barrier to them finding work;
- employment status 12 months before the course;
- whether the participant had gained confidence on the course;
- whether the participant had gained practical help in finding work on the course;
- satisfaction with the course in terms of level; and
- satisfaction with the course in terms of quality.

Variables removed at Stage 2 (logistic regression with complex survey design)

The following variables were removed at Stage 2 (as they were found to be not significant):

- highest qualification gained on the course;
- whether participants finished the course or left early; and
- whether the participant thought that the course was relevant to their needs.

Final model output

Table C.2 Predictors of being in employment at Wave 2

Variable	Odds Ratio	Linearised Std Error	P	Sig
Gender				
Male				
Female	1.24	0.08	0.01	*
Age				
Over 50				
16-19	1.36	0.17	0.07	NS
20-49	1.49	0.11	0.00	**
Funding stream				
ESF				
Match	0.77	0.09	0.00	**
Other	2.02	0.25	0.00	**
Region				
Cornwall				
East of England	1.06	0.18	0.77	NS
London	0.77	0.18	0.14	NS
East Midlands	0.98	0.18	0.91	NS
North East	0.86	0.19	0.44	NS
North West	1.20	0.15	0.21	NS
South East	0.93	0.19	0.70	NS
South West	1.19	0.17	0.32	NS
West Midlands	0.75	0.16	0.07	NS
Yorkshire and the Humber	1.20	0.18	0.31	NS
Merseyside	0.76	0.19	0.15	NS
South Yorkshire	0.74	0.18	0.10	NS
Has physical disability				
No				
Yes	0.52	0.11	0.00	**
Has mental health issue				
No				
Yes	0.41	0.17	0.00	**
Has LTLI				
No				
Yes	0.46	0.13	0.00	**
Has qualifications				
Yes				
No	0.68	0.11	0.00	**

Continued

Table C.2 Continued

Variable	Odds Ratio	Linearised Std Error	P	Sig
Offender or ex-offender				
No				
Yes	0.47	0.19	0.00	**
Tenure				
Owned outright				
Mortgage	1.28	0.18	0.19	NS
Rent	0.58	0.17	0.00	**
Not home owner/renter	0.56	0.17	0.00	**
Time spent on course				
Less than a month				
1 month to 4 months	0.91	0.10	0.38	NS
4 months to 6 months	0.73	0.13	0.02	**
6 months to 12 months	0.70	0.12	0.00	**
A year or more	0.81	0.18	0.25	NS
Length of unemployment				
Less than 3 months				
Between 3 and less than 6 months	0.57	0.16	0.00	**
Between 6 and less than 12 months	0.49	0.15	0.00	**
Between 12 months and less than 2 years	0.45	0.16	0.00	**
2 years or more	0.34	0.14	0.00	**
Never had a (full-time) job	0.38	0.16	0.00	**
Not known	0.46	0.31	0.01	*
Why went on the course				
Made to go on it				
Persuaded	1.60	0.18	0.01	*
Given the opportunity	1.72	0.12	0.00	**
Decided myself	1.74	0.13	0.00	**
Time spent on course in average week				
Less than half a day				
Between half and one day	0.84	0.12	0.16	NS
More than one and less than two days	0.96	0.14	0.77	NS
More than two and less than five days	0.84	0.11	0.11	NS
More than five days	0.63	0.15	0.00	**
Access to transport is barrier				
No				
Yes	0.73	0.08	0.00	**

Continued

Table C.2 Continued

Variable	Odds Ratio	Linearised Std Error	P	Sig
Attitude to work				
Very important				
Quite important	0.78	0.10	0.01	**
Not important	0.99	0.20	0.95	NS
Not at all important	0.93	0.36	0.84	NS
Has improved skills on the course				
No				
Yes	1.33	0.09	0.00	**

* Significant to the 90 per cent level

** Significant at least to the 95 per cent level

The European Social Fund (ESF) Cohort Study explores the longer-term outcomes of the training and advice provided through ESF. ESF provision comprises a range of courses and training for helping people into jobs and provision for upskilling employees.

Wave 1 of the ESF Cohort Study took place between April and September 2009, and included interviews with 10,947 ESF and match participants. Wave 1 participants were then re-contacted between January and March 2010 for Wave 2 of the study. For the second wave, interviews were achieved with 7,400 participants.

NatCen was commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to carry out the study in 2008. The research was part-funded by European Social Fund technical assistance under the 2007-13 England and Gibraltar ESF programme evaluation strategy. This report contains the findings of the Wave 2 survey. The report has a specific focus on the outcomes of ESF provision, looking at whether participants have entered employment or progressed in their existing jobs following the interventions.

The evaluation was part-funded by European Social Fund technical assistance under the 2007-2013 England and Gibraltar ESF programme evaluation strategy.

For more information see www.esf.gov.uk

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