



Department  
for Education

# Learners and Apprentices Survey 2018

Technical report

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Social Science in Government

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# 1. Introduction

This technical report accompanies the main research report for the 2018 Learners and Apprentices survey. The survey was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE), to explore the expectations, experiences and outcomes of adults taking Further Education (FE) courses, and apprentices. In particular, the research explored reasons for the high non-completion rates amongst FE learners and apprentices. Further details of the aims and objectives are provided in section 2.1 and in the main report. The survey was carried out using a combination of telephone interviews and an online survey. Learners were sampled from the Individualised Learner Record (ILR).

## 2. Questionnaire and survey design

### 2.1 Coverage of research questions

This research collected a full picture of learners' journeys which can be broken down into three key areas; the learners' past and present socio-economic status, their present perceptions, experiences and barriers to learning; and their future outcomes. The questionnaire was developed to cover these three key areas.

The first research aim was to provide a detailed understanding of the background of FE learners' and apprentices' socio-economic characteristics. This was covered by questions to capture:

- Learners'/apprentices' economic status,
- economic status of learners'/apprentices' parents,
- educational attainment of parents,
- whether they grew up in a single parent household,
- current income (for those in employment),
- housing tenure.

The second aim was to capture information from learners and apprentices on their experiences and perceptions of the course or apprenticeship. A key objective was to understand how these experiences and perceptions varied by different groups, and for those from different socio-economic backgrounds. This would help to identify whether any groups were less likely to complete their apprenticeship or FE course and to understand what barriers they faced, in order to inform effective interventions.

This second aim was covered by a number of research questions including:

- 1) What are respondents' routes onto their learning/apprenticeship?
  - How do these vary for different types of learning?
  - How do these vary for different socio-economic backgrounds?
  - What do respondents intend to do following their learning/apprenticeship, and how does this vary for different groups?
- 2) How experiences and outcomes of FE learning and apprenticeships vary by those characteristics.
- 3) What are respondents' perceptions of the impact that their learning/apprenticeship will have on their outcomes?
  - How do these vary for different groups?

- 4) What barriers did they face in undertaking their learning/apprenticeship, and how do these vary for different groups?
  - What help and support did they receive to overcome these barriers and who provided it?
- 5) Who does not complete their learning/apprenticeship and why?
  - What reasons do they give for not completing their learning/apprenticeship?
  - How do these vary for different socio-economic backgrounds?

The third aim was to obtain consent from respondents for their survey responses to be linked to the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset. This will allow for future analysis of outcomes, for example; to discover if completion of the course does result in socio-economic mobility, whether learners achieve their long-term objectives, and to gain a picture of the long-term outcomes for learners who do not complete their course.

A fourth aim, which was to understand the level of awareness that learners and apprentices had of different FE and Higher Education (HE) options, was dropped following pilot testing of the questionnaire to reduce the survey length.

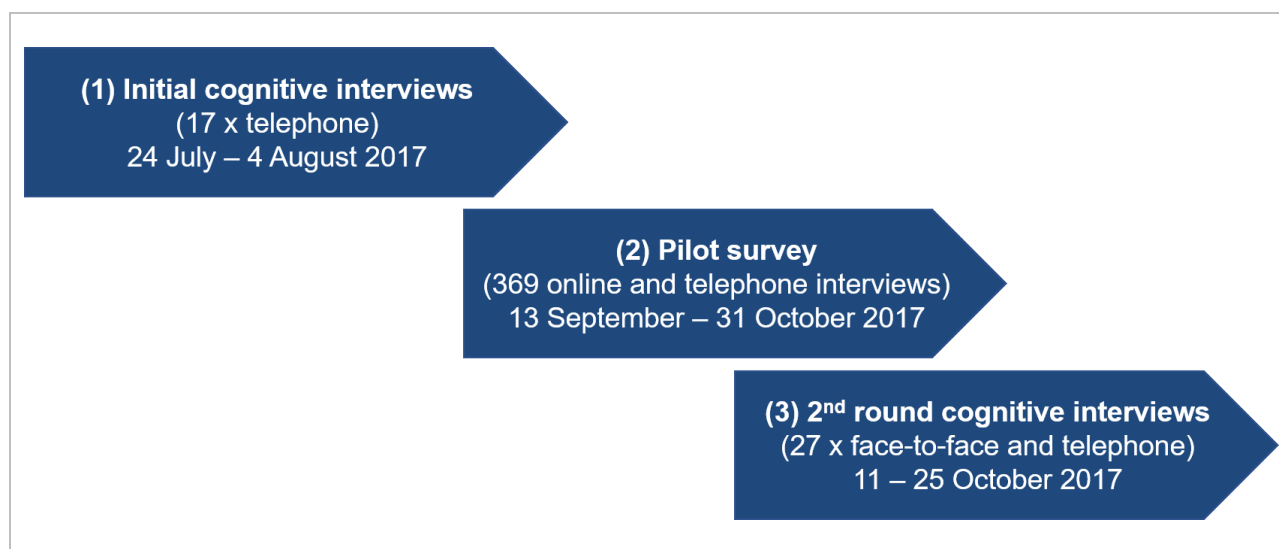
## **2.2 Initial development of the questionnaire**

An initial questionnaire outline was agreed between Kantar Public and DfE which mapped the research questions to survey measures which were suitable for an online / telephone survey. Following this, Kantar Public carried out a desk review of relevant, existing survey questionnaires including; the Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey (AEvS), the Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England (LSYPE), and the Quantitative Programme of Research for Adult English and Maths. Where possible, existing survey measures were used or adapted for the current survey. Based on this review and following initial discussions with DfE, Kantar Public produced an initial draft questionnaire. There were several rounds of comments and refinements to the questionnaire before agreeing the questionnaire for the first round of cognitive testing.

## **2.3 Cognitive interviewing and piloting**

The questionnaire went through several iterative phases of testing. Refinements were discussed and agreed with DfE after each phase of testing. Figure 1 summarises the three main phases.

**Figure 1 – Summary of questionnaire testing phases**



An initial round of cognitive interviewing consisted of 17 telephone interviews carried out between 24<sup>th</sup> July and 4<sup>th</sup> August 2017. This was used to test and refine the first full working draft of the questionnaire. The probes used during this round of cognitive testing focused on the new, untested survey measures to ensure they worked well and collected the data required in a clear and comprehensible way.

The initial round of cognitive interviews was followed by a large-scale pilot survey between 13<sup>th</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017. Two thousand learners and apprentices were invited to take part. The pilot achieved 369 online and telephone interviews. The pilot acted as a field test of the full questionnaire and was also used to accurately measure response rates, assess the risk of non-response bias and rates of consent for data linkage (to LEO). Piloting was mixed mode and used a combination of online and telephone interviewing to replicate the mainstage fieldwork approach. Full details of the pilot can be found in section 3.

A second round of cognitive interviews was carried out between 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017, in parallel with the pilot fieldwork. This round of cognitive interviews was focussed on usability testing and aimed to identify any points in the online or telephone script that would cause respondents to drop out. A mixed mode approach was used to test both the online and telephone data collection methods, with a focus on usability testing for the online survey. Usability testing concentrated on the respondent's experience of the online environment, tested whether the survey is easy to navigate and access, and whether any elements would prevent the respondent from completing the interview. In total, 12 interviews were carried out with the respondent completing the survey online while being observed by a researcher. A further 15 interviews were carried out by phone where the respondent was unable to come into Kantar Public's offices.

## Recommendations and changes following cognitive interviewing

The survey was generally easy to complete, with clear telephone and online instructions. The majority of questions worked well, and participants answered confidently and quickly. However, a number of amendments were suggested following cognitive testing. These are detailed below.

1. **Accuracy of course information on ILR.** Some learners did not recognise the precise name the ILR used for their course. In other cases, the course dates did not match exactly (e.g. end dates varying by a month or more). To address this, additional opening screener questions were added to the script to re-confirm the name of the course and the course end date, to help the learner identify the sampled course. This also allowed questions to be asked about the course within the survey in the terms which learners and apprentices used themselves.
2. **Continuous progression.** Some learners and apprentices started the course for which they were sampled as a direct continuation from a previous course at a lower level. This made questions about why they started the sampled course and the application process difficult to answer. To address this, additional questions were added to the beginning of the interview to establish whether the apprenticeship or course followed on directly from a previous (lower-level) course in the same area. For learners and apprentices who have moved sequentially through different levels over multiple years, questions about the decision making and application processes focussed on the original course the learner applied for.
3. **Sampling based on one specific module or element of learning.** Some learners were sampled based on modules that formed part of a wider qualification (for example an FE module which was actually part of an apprenticeship course). In these cases, respondents struggled to answer about the single sampled module, rather the overarching qualification. To address this, questions were added to the beginning of the survey to confirm if the sampled course was really part of a wider course or package of learning, or if the course was a new stand-alone course. The questionnaire was then tailored to encourage respondents to think about the impact of the entire block of training (the overarching FE course or apprenticeship) rather than just one module where relevant.
4. **Questions on the decision-making process.** The cognitive interviews and pilot revealed that many learners and apprentices appeared not to have gone through a formal decision-making process before applying for their course. They struggled to remember and articulate the options they had considered and what led them to make their final decision. Subsequently these questions were reduced. The decision-making processes of FE learners have been explored separately using qualitative techniques.<sup>1</sup>
5. **Questions about the support learners received during their learning.** As with the questions on decision-making, many learners and apprentices struggled to

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-education-why-adults-decide-to-study>

remember and articulate the types of support they had received or would have liked to receive. In addition, where support had been received, learners and apprentices often struggled to articulate how this support had impacted on completion or non-completion of their learning. The term 'support' was also interpreted in a very broad sense ranging from words of encouragement from friends and relatives to formal sessions with tutors. It was decided to remove these questions as they would be better explored using qualitative methods.

6. **Sources of information, advice and guidance.** Questions on sources and types of information, advice and guidance were difficult to answer. Learners and apprentices could not generally recall the things they had used. The question was also frequently misunderstood, with respondents answering hypothetically about who they would speak to or where they might go *if* they needed information. These questions were removed.

One key aim for the first round of cognitive testing was to determine how clear the socio-economic and demographic questions were and how willing and able learners and apprentices were to answer them. In particular, testing focused on whether respondents could answer questions relating to their circumstances at age 14.<sup>2</sup> Generally, these questions worked well, and no major issues with recall or knowledge were identified. The only problematic questions related to the highest levels of qualifications of learners and apprentices' parents and guardians. Most learners and apprentices had very limited knowledge of parental qualifications. These questions were removed from the survey and replaced with simpler measures to capture whether learners' and apprentices' parents had attended university and whether they had left school with any formal qualifications.

The second round of cognitive interviewing focused on the usability of the online and telephone questionnaires, aiming to identify any points in the online or telephone script that might lead respondents to stop taking part. Some minor technical issues were identified and corrected before the mainstage, but no significant barriers to completion were apparent.

## Recommendations and changes following piloting

Piloting took place concurrently with the second round of cognitive tests. Full details of the pilot approach are provided in section 3. Overall, piloting of the survey went well, with no substantive issues identified. During the pilot, it was found that a significant proportion of learners and apprentices were born outside the UK and it was important to know this in order to put their responses about their family background in context. The pilot identified the need to add an additional question to establish whether the respondent lived in the UK when they were aged 14. Overall, the main issue identified was the survey length, with an

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<sup>2</sup> This included questions on parental occupation at age 14 to establish their socio-economic status at that point in time.



average interview length of 25 minutes. To reduce this to the desired 15-minute average, substantial cuts were made to the number of questions in the survey ahead of mainstage fieldwork based on findings from piloting and the second round of cognitive testing.

In particular, as mentioned in section 2.1, questions relating to the level of awareness that learners and apprentices had of different FE and Higher Education (HE) options were dropped as these were determined to be a lower priority compared with the other research aims. In addition, further questions were removed on:

- Date of course completion – this information could be taken from ILR for those who agreed to data linkage.
- Where learners and apprentices first heard about their course – this was less directly relevant to research questions than other measures in the survey
- Hourly rate of pay for apprentices – this is already assessed by the Apprenticeship Pay Survey.
- Occupational coding of learners and apprentices after completing their learning– a filter was added so these questions were only asked if respondents had changed their job to avoid duplication.

The final version of the questionnaire can be found in appendix A.

### 3. Pilot survey – sampling, fieldwork and response rate analysis

Kantar Public conducted a pilot between Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September and Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017. The aims of the pilot were to:

- Test the data collection methods, particularly the experimental online and telephone design.
- Examine response patterns amongst different groups.
- Develop and test the questionnaire.
- Test levels of data linkage agreement.

#### 3.1 Sample selection for the pilot

The target population for the pilot was broadly the same as for the main stage (described in further detail in section 4.1). The source for the sampling frame was the individualised Learner Records (ILR) snapshot SN14 representing the whole 2016-17 academic year.

The accessible population for the pilot included learners without a telephone number (c. 26% of all eligible learners) to maximise coverage and test the response rate among those who could only be surveyed online.<sup>3</sup>

In the pilot, we wanted to compare response rates for a number of learner groups, to inform the approach used in the main stage. Therefore, the sample was designed to maximise the precision of survey estimates within each learner group and maximise the power to detect differences across groups.

Prior to sampling the frame was stratified by completion status, sample type and course type based on the main aim.<sup>4</sup> A total of 12 (3 x 2 x 2) strata were used. Within each stratum the learners were further sorted by gender, age, health/disability, ethnicity, number of courses and postcode. 2,000 learners were sampled from the frame based on the breakdown shown in table 1.

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<sup>3</sup> Those without a telephone number were not included in the mainstage survey, see section 3.6

<sup>4</sup> The approach to identifying the 'main aim' for each learner followed that used in the main stage and is described in section 4.1.

**Table 1 – Summary of sample strata for the pilot survey**

<b>Strata</b>	<b>Count</b>
FE - Withdrawn from learning – Telephone and online	250
FE - Withdrawn from learning - Online only	83
FE - Completed learning -Telephone and online	250
FE - Completed learning - Online only	84
FE - Unknown status -Telephone and online	250
FE - Unknown status - Online only	83
Apprenticeship - Withdrawn from learning -Telephone and online	250
Apprenticeship - Withdrawn from learning - Online only	84
Apprenticeship - Completed learning -Telephone and online	250
Apprenticeship - Completed learning - Online only	83
Apprenticeship - Unknown status -Telephone and online	250
Apprenticeship - Unknown status - Online only	83
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,000</b>

Comparisons in response rates were made by **Course Type** (Apprentice = 1,000, FE learners = 1,000), **Contact mode** (Telephone & online = 1,500, Online only = 500) and **Completion Status** (Withdrawn = 666, Complete = 667 and Unknown = 666).

### **Weighting pilot data**

Weights for the pilot survey were calculated to account for the sample design (design weights) and to adjust for any differential response probabilities by the following learner and course characteristics (non-response weights); gender, age, ethnicity, course type, completion status, sample type, number of courses, course length and level. This involved a two-stage process, where the design weights were calculated first based on the inverse of the selection probabilities, before rim weighting the design weighted sample to match the target population on the marginal totals.

## 3.2 Pilot fieldwork

The pilot fieldwork approach mirrored the main stage as far as possible, although the fieldwork period was shorter for the pilot.<sup>5</sup> Respondents were initially encouraged to complete the survey online before telephone fieldwork began. All selected learners and apprentices were sent an advance letter notifying them about the survey and inviting them, in the first instance, to take part online. Email notifications were also sent to those who had a valid email address. The text of these documents can be found in annex B.

Learners and apprentices were able to take part online immediately after receiving their advance letter. Telephone interviewing with each sample batch began two weeks after advance letters were sent.<sup>6</sup> Telephone interviewers were briefed face to face by the Kantar Public research team on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September. Calls began Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September and continued until Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Reminder letters and emails were sent to all non-responders two weeks after their initial survey invite (including to those who could be contacted by telephone and online, and those who could be contacted online only). Those who had not provided a telephone number via the ILR, those who had not granted permission to be contacted by phone for research and those who proved uncontactable by phone<sup>7</sup> received further reminders by email and text message (depending on which contact details were usable).

## 3.3 Pilot response rate analysis

A key element of the pilot was to test response rates to the survey and assess the risk of non-response bias to ensure the achieved sample was as representative of the survey population as possible.

Table 2 summarises the conversion and response rates amongst all respondents. The response to the online survey was lower than hoped (5% of the total issued sample took part online). Specifically, the pilot showed that response amongst respondents who could only take part online was low (5% of this group took part). The low response rate from the online only group factored into the decision to remove them from the sample design at the main stage.

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<sup>5</sup> Pilot fieldwork was seven weeks rather than thirteen weeks at the main stage.

<sup>6</sup> Where a telephone number was held for the respondent.

<sup>7</sup> This included respondents who had an invalid telephone number or had been called ten or more times without making any contact.

**Table 2 Pilot response rates: all respondents**

	<b>N</b>	<b>% of total issued sample</b>	<b>% of in-scope cases</b>
<b>Total issued sample</b>	<b>2,000</b>	-	-
<b>Online only sample</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>25%</b>	-
<b>Total issued to telephone unit (excluding already completed online)</b>	<b>1,428</b>	<b>71%</b>	-
Deadwood <sup>†</sup>	355	18%	-
Incapable of interview	26	1%	-
Ineligible - learner said they did not attend course (telephone only)	51	3%	-
<i>Total out of scope</i>	<i>432</i>	<i>22%</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Total in scope</i>	<i>1,568</i>	<i>78%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Online only – did not complete	476	24%	30%
Refusals	182	9%	12%
No contact made - no interview	476	24%	30%
Initial contact made - no interview	65	3%	4%
<b>Total completes (telephone)</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Total completes (online)</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>TOTAL INTERVIEWS</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>24%</b>

<sup>†</sup> Includes invalid and incorrect numbers and cases where the respondent had died.

Table 3 shows response rates amongst respondents who could be contacted by telephone. Response rates were higher amongst this group (32% compared with c.24% when the online only group were included). A relatively large proportion of telephone respondents (45%) were never contacted despite repeated attempts. Two factors were thought to have contributed to this. Firstly, telephone interviews were only carried out for 5 weeks, not the full fieldwork period. Secondly, initial correspondence had solely focussed on online completion, and had not mentioned that Kantar Public would also be in contact by phone. This suggests a higher than expected rate of call screening.

Based on these findings, and the higher response rate achieved by telephone interviews in comparison with the online survey, adjustments were made to the mainstage fieldwork design. The 'online' only group was removed from the main stage sample design, and

correspondence was tailored to encourage respondents to complete by telephone in the first instance, with the secondary option to complete online.

**Table 3 Pilot response rates: telephone respondents**

	<b>N</b>	<b>% of total telephone sample</b>	<b>% of in-scope cases</b>
<b>Total telephone sample</b>	<b>1,500</b>		
Deadwood <sup>†</sup>	355	24%	-
Incapable of interview	26	2%	-
Ineligible - learner said they did not attend course (telephone only)	51	3%	-
<i>Total out of scope</i>	<i>432</i>	<i>29%</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Total in scope<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>1,068</i>	<i>71%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Refusals	181	12%	17%
No contact made - no interview	476	32%	45%
Initial contact made - no interview	65	4%	6%
<b>Total completes (telephone)</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Total completes (online)</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>TOTAL INTERVIEWS</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>32%</b>

<sup>†</sup> Includes invalid and incorrect numbers and cases where the respondent had died.

<sup>1</sup> Includes 72 out of a total of 76 online completes which took place before the start of the telephone survey.

### 3.4 Interview length

The pilot interview length was 25 minutes – significantly longer than the target 15 minutes. The interview length was similar for both the online and telephone survey. Section 2.3 describes the changes made to the questionnaire post-pilot to reduce the interview length.

### 3.5 Agreement for data linkage

A key objective of the pilot was to test the levels of agreement for data linkage. A key objective for the research was to link survey responses and records the government hold

in the LEO dataset to understand the long-term outcomes of learners and apprentices. Ensuring high levels of agreement for data linkage was crucial to this aim.<sup>8</sup>

We asked one question, requesting agreement to full data linkage (to the whole of the LEO dataset):

*'We would like your permission to link your survey answers to records held by the government.*

*Adding these details from existing records will greatly increase the value of the information you give us*

*If you agree, the research team will receive information from other government agencies. Other than information needed to identify your records, we will not pass on any of your survey answers to anyone else.*

*Your information is confidential, and this means that your name and address will never be included in the results. It will be impossible to identify you in reports.*

*If you do give permission to link any of the following administrative records<sup>9</sup> your permission will remain valid indefinitely and information from these records will be collected on an ongoing basis unless you ask us to stop.*

*You can change or withdraw your permissions at any time by contacting the Learners and Apprentices Survey research team using the contact details below, which can also be found on any letters or emails you have received from us. If you withdraw your permission anonymised data that has already been linked will be retained but no future linking will take place.'*

Respondents who did not agree to full data linkage were asked a series of follow-up questions asking for permission to link their survey responses to each of the individual datasets which contribute to LEO.

Six in ten respondents (60%) agreed to full data linkage. There was little variation in agreement by mode of survey completion - 57% of those who took part online agreed to full data linkage, compared with 62% who took part by telephone. A further eight per cent overall agreed to linkage to at least one of the individual datasets which contribute to LEO.

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<sup>8</sup> The LEO dataset includes (amongst others) information from the Department for Education (DfE), the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). This can be used to provide additional information about learners, including their demographic characteristics, education, institutions attended, courses taken and qualifications achieved, employment, income and benefits claimed.

<sup>9</sup> DfE's National Pupil Database (NPD); DfE's Individualised Learner Record; HMRC records including Income Tax, Tax Credits and Child Benefit data; DWP records including information about benefit receipt and participation in employment programs; UCAS data including information about higher education applications and offers; SLC records including information about applications for student finance; HESA records including information about university participation and attainment

In total, this means 68% of all respondents agreed to any data linkage (66% of online respondents and 69% of telephone respondents).

The total consent rate for each of the individual agencies is shown in table 4.

**Table 4 Consent to link data from individual agencies (Pilot study)**

Agency	Percentage
Individual Learner Record (ILR)	76%
National Pupil Database (NPD)	73%
UCAS	72%
HESA	71%
HMRC	71%
Student Loans Company Records	70%
DWP	69%

### 3.6 Outcomes from the pilot

The following actions were taken following pilot fieldwork:

- Agreement to focus on telephone interviewing to achieve the overall number of interviews, given the very low online response rates and overall representativeness of the sample achieved through telephone interviewing. Consequently, the online only group was removed from the main stage sample design.<sup>10</sup>
- Correspondence with respondents was updated to reframe the survey as a telephone interview. Advance letters and reminders were adjusted to emphasise that Kantar Public would call the respondent but they also had the option to take part online if they preferred.
- The length of time between advance letters and emails and telephone interviewing was shortened to nine days, rather than two weeks, to maximise recall of the letters and/or emails, increase the salience of the survey, and reduce the number of learners and apprentices that might screen out calls from Kantar’s telephone centre.

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<sup>10</sup> With an online response rate of 5%, the inclusion of an online only sample of learners would have no substantive effect on the profile of learners and apprentices interviewed.



## 4. Main sample design

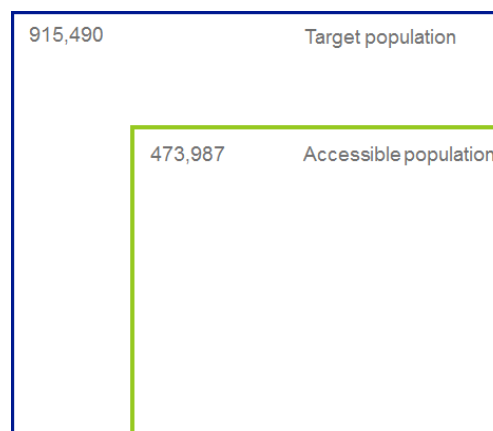
### 4.1 Building a sample frame

#### Target and accessible populations

The first step in building the sample frame was to define the target population. For this survey, the target population was all learners and apprentices aged 19-64 who completed or were due to complete a FE course or apprenticeship between 1 April and 31 December 2017 (this included learners who did not complete their learning or apprenticeship).

At the request of the Department for Education, further exclusions were made from this population. Offenders' *Learning* and Skills Service (OLASS) learners and learners on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), community learning, A-level or degree courses were excluded.

The accessible population is a subset of the target population that we can access for research. Due to the need to send out advance letters and to conduct telephone interviews the accessible population included only those learners with valid contact information (name, address, telephone number) and who had not opted out of taking part in surveys. The chart below provides the target and accessible population counts.



The Individualised Learner Records (ILR) was used as the frame for this survey, snapshot 14 (SN14) - representing the whole academic year 2016-17 and snapshot 3 (SN03) – representing returns from September to November 2017 were combined, de-duplicated and the exclusions noted above made prior to sampling.

#### Identifying the main aim

For the purpose of this research, it was important to understand learners' and apprentices' main learning aims (i.e. the main course undertaken). For those who had only take a single course this was straightforward. For those who had taken multiple courses, identifying the main aim required a combination of steps due to the fact it was not readily

identifiable from frame data alone. Prior to this, we identified all unique learners by combining the learner reference number and the unique learner number. Learners who had taken courses across multiple providers were counted only once.

In collaboration with DfE, a six-step process was developed to identify the main aim. These steps were only relevant for learners who had taken multiple courses in the relevant timeframe (1 April 2017 – 31 December 2017):

- 1) For ESFA funded (FundModel =25) learners the core aim was identified by AimType = 5 (where 5 is core learner aim) this indicates the learner was only undertaking ESFA funded learning).
- 2) Main aim was assigned based on apprenticeship, where a learner was taking an apprenticeship course with one or more FE courses.
- 3) Main aim was assigned based on the aim with the highest regulated credit value
- 4) Main aim was assigned based on highest course level
- 5) Main aim was assigned based on the aim with the longest course length (planned end date – planned start date)
- 6) Main aim was assigned randomly from all aims done by learner.

These 6 steps were sequential, with only those learners where the main aim was not identified at the preceding step moving to the next step. The majority of learners' main aims were identified at steps 2 and 3.

## **4.2 Sample selection for the main survey**

A disproportionate stratified random sample of learners and apprentices was selected from the accessible population within the ILR. Prior to selecting a sample of learners, the sample frame was stratified using a combination of learner and course characteristics as described in table 5. These strata represent important subgroups for the survey that either required boosting and/or were known to be more or less likely than average to respond (based on response rates from the pilot survey). Within each stratum, the sample frame was sorted randomly before selecting a systematic 'one in n' sample. The amount of sample selected by stratum was calculated based on a combination of the target sample size and the estimated response rate. Where the stratum did not require boosting, the target sample size was calculated based on the target population rather than the accessible population, this was to deal with any variation in coverage rates by stratum between the target and accessible populations.

**Table 5 – stratification variables and categories**

<b>Stratification Variable</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Total sample</b>	<b>Sample %</b>
Course Type	1. Apprenticeships	28,972	51%
	2. FE courses	27,414	49%
Tier 1 Subject Areas	1. Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	6,055	11%
	2. Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	4,855	9%
	3. Information and Communication Technology	2,567	5%
	4. All other subjects	42,909	76%
Course completion	1. Complete	29,656	53%
	2. Withdrawn (dropped out)	11,359	20%
	3. Incomplete (unknown)	15,371	27%
Ethnicity	1. White	43,922	78%
	2. Non-White	12,464	22%
Health status	1. Limiting Long term illness/disability	9,221	16%
	2. Other	47,165	84%

## 5. Fieldwork and response rates

### 5.1 Overview of fieldwork approach

The survey was carried out using a combination of telephone interviews and an online survey. Learners were sampled from the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). The ILR is a database held by DfE which contains all learners in England. More detail on the sampling process is covered in section 4.2. In total, 56,386 learners and apprentices were invited to take part in the online survey. Two weeks later, the 52,643 who had not yet completed or opted out were also called to take part in the telephone survey.

#### Online survey

The online survey was open for the full duration of fieldwork, from 8 January to 29 April 2018.

Advance letters were sent to all sampled learners and apprentices. The letter explained the purpose of the research and that they would be called to take part. Alternatively, they could take part online.<sup>11</sup> Contact details were provided for anyone wishing to find out further information about the research or opt out of further contact from Kantar Public regarding the survey. This letter was followed by an email invitation to all sampled learners and apprentices who had provided their email address and had consented to be contacted this way.<sup>12</sup>

Respondents could access the online survey using the hyperlink in the email, or the webpage with log in details (which were provided in the letter). The hyperlink and log in details were unique to each respondent to ensure that the survey was not shared or completed multiple times. The online survey took around 16 minutes to complete.

#### Telephone Survey

Telephone fieldwork began nine days after the online survey opened and ran from 17 January to 29 April 2018. Respondents were encouraged to complete the telephone survey throughout fieldwork. The online survey remained open throughout this period if respondents preferred to complete this way. Telephone fieldwork continued for 13 weeks, with up to 15 calls to respondents at varying times and days of the week to maximise response. A reminder email was sent with a link to the online survey if there was no response after 15 calls. Respondents could arrange appointments if they were too busy to complete at time of contact. The telephone interview took 16 minutes to complete on average, with the shortest interviews lasting less than 10 minutes and with a small number

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<sup>11</sup> The letter included a survey webpage address and unique log in details- See Appendix B

<sup>12</sup> Taken from data in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR)

of interviews lasting around an hour (generally where the respondent had language or other communication difficulties.)<sup>13</sup>

The sample was provided to the telephone unit in batches throughout the fieldwork to monitor response amongst key respondent groups.<sup>14</sup> A total of six batches of sample were contacted during fieldwork. More detail of batching and sample management can be found in section 5.1

## 5.2 Batching sample

The sample was batched into six sub-samples. During fieldwork, the performance of the sample was monitored against the targets by stratum. Batches were provided at regular intervals during fieldwork to ensure target sample sizes were achieved and the sample was as balanced as possible on a larger set of learner and main course characteristics.

## 5.3 Main stage response rates

Kantar Public received 12,872 completed surveys (2,288 online and 10,584 by telephone) which equated to a response rate of 6% online and 27% telephone (33% overall) once deadwood and ineligible cases are taken into account. A breakdown of the response rates (both as a proportion of all issued cases and as a proportion of in-scope cases) is provided in table 6.

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<sup>13</sup> Across the telephone and online surveys, interview lengths for FE learners and apprentices were comparable (16.5 and 15.5 minutes respectively).

<sup>14</sup> Key groups were agreed with DfE and included: FE learners, apprentices, course / apprenticeship completion status, level of course / apprenticeship, gender, age.

**Table 6 Summary of survey response rate**

	<b>N</b>	<b>% of selected cases</b>	<b>% of in-scope cases</b>
<b>Total selected sample</b>	54,328	-	-
Deadwood <sup>†</sup>	12,657	23%	-
Ineligible	1,442	3%	-
Incapable of interview	783	1%	-
<i>Total out of scope</i>	<i>14,882</i>	<i>27%</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Total in scope</i>	<i>39,446</i>	<i>68%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Refusals	5,050	9%	13%
Opt out	235	*	1%
No contact made - no interview	16,935	31%	43%
Initial contact made - no interview	4,354	8%	11%
<b>Total completes (telephone)</b>	<b>10,584</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Total completes (online)</b>	<b>2,288</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>TOTAL INTERVIEWS</b>	<b>12,872</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>33%</b>

<sup>†</sup> Includes invalid and incorrect numbers and cases where the respondent had died.

\* denotes <0.5%

The total number of responses (12,872) consisted of 10,584 telephone interviews and 2,288 responses to the online survey. From this, 5,984 respondents were identified as FE learners and 6,978 were identified as apprentices. Of these learners and apprentices, 2,160 were currently on their course, 9,086 had successfully completed and 1,545 had left before the course or apprenticeship had finished. Learner type and completion status were confirmed with learners and apprentices in the opening questions of the survey. Any respondents who did not identify as having been on a FE course or apprenticeship were screened out and are included as 'ineligible' cases in table 5. The ineligible screen-out rate was very low (3%) as all records were sampled directly from the ILR.

## 6. Weighting and analysis

Weights were calculated in two phases. In phase 1, design weights were calculated to account for the different probabilities of selection by stratum. In phase 2, non-response weights were calculated using a statistical model to predict propensity to respond to the survey. This model was built on the full issued sample and the explanatory variables tested are listed below. Of these, those highlighted (\*) were significant at the five per cent level, and were used in the final non-response model.

- Age group\*
- Gender
- Ethnicity\*
- Health\*
- Region\*
- Course type (Apprenticeship/FE learner)
- Course Length\*
- Course Level\*
- Completion status
- Course Outcome\*
- Number of courses\*
- Course subject area\*
- Index of Multiple Deprivation\*

An estimated response probability was calculated based on our model. A response weight was calculated as follows:

- **Response Weight = 1/estimated response probability**

The final weight, is simply the product of the two weights, as shown below

- **Final Weight = Design Weight X Response Weight**

The final weight has been standardised, so that it sums to the net sample size, with a mean of one.

## Design effect due to weighting

The overall design effect due to weighting was 1.37 for the final weights and 1.35 for the initial design weights.<sup>15</sup> This is an acceptable level and in line with an anticipated design effect of 1.33 (estimated at the sample design stage). The majority of the effects are attributable to the sample design, demonstrating that the work done during the design fieldwork stages successfully helped to mitigate for differential response rates. Table 7 provides a summary of the strata variables,<sup>16</sup> including the profile of the interviewed sample prior to weighting (unweighted) and the profiles once design and final weights were applied.

**Table 7 Profile of interviewed sample before and after weighting**

Variable	Category	Unweighted	Design weighted	Final weighted
Gender	Female	53%	58%	56%
	Male	47%	42%	44%
Age band	19 to 24	38%	30%	31%
	25 to 34	21%	22%	26%
	35 to 44	17%	20%	19%
	45 to 54	16%	19%	16%
	55 to 64	8%	9%	7%
Ethnicity	White	79%	77%	78%
	Mixed	2%	2%	3%
	Asian	9%	10%	9%
	Black	8%	9%	8%
	Other	2%	2%	2%
Limiting long term illness	Learner considers himself or herself to have a learning difficulty and or disability and/or health issue	19%	16%	15%
	Learner does not consider himself or herself to have a learning difficulty and/or disability and/or health issue	80%	81%	83%
	No information provided	2%	2%	2%

<sup>15</sup> The design effect due to weighting is calculated based on the kish formula as described in Kish. L. (1965). Survey Sampling. (Section 11.7) Wiley and Sons, New York.

<sup>16</sup> As noted earlier, not all strata variables were included in the final weighting design.



**Table 7 (continued)**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Unweighted</b>	<b>Design weighted</b>	<b>Final weighted</b>
Region	East Midlands	8%	8%	8%
	East of England	9%	9%	8%
	London	16%	17%	15%
	North East	8%	9%	10%
	North West	14%	14%	15%
	South East	12%	12%	10%
	South West	11%	10%	10%
	West Midlands	11%	11%	12%
	Yorkshire and The Humber	11%	11%	11%
Course Type	FE learners	48%	69%	67%
	Apprenticeships	52%	31%	33%
Course	Length in weeks	40.3	33.2	32.5
Course Level	Entry level	5%	7%	8%
	Level 1	13%	17%	16%
	Level 2	44%	43%	42%
	Level 3	28%	23%	22%
	Level 4	3%	3%	3%
	Level 5+	4%	3%	3%
	Other level	4%	4%	6%
Completion Status	Completed	56%	69%	67%
	Dropped Out	16%	5%	7%
	Incomplete	29%	26%	26%
Course Outcome	Achieved (non AS-level aims)	53%	65%	62%
	Partial achievement	*	*	*
	No achievement	17%	8%	10%
	Study continuing	29%	26%	26%
	Other	1%	1%	1%

\* denotes <0.5%

**Table 7 (continued)**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Unweighted</b>	<b>Design weighted</b>	<b>Final weighted</b>
Number of courses taken by Learner	1 course	27%	37%	35%
	2 courses	22%	24%	24%
	3 courses	20%	16%	15%
	4 courses	11%	9%	9%
	5 courses	16%	11%	12%
	6+ courses	5%	4%	4%
Subject Area Tier 1	Not Applicable	3%	3%	4%
	Unknown	*	*	*
	Health, Public Services and Care	21%	22%	21%
	Science and Mathematics	2%	2%	2%
	Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	2%	2%	2%
	Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	11%	6%	7%
	Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	8%	5%	6%
	Information and Communication Technology	6%	4%	3%
	Retail and Commercial Enterprise	6%	7%	8%
	Leisure, Travel and Tourism	2%	2%	2%
	Arts, Media and Publishing	2%	3%	2%
	History, Philosophy and Theology	*	*	*
	Social Sciences	*	*	*
	Languages, Literature and Culture	2%	3%	2%
	Education and Training	3%	3%	3%
	Preparation for Life and Work	19%	22%	23%
Business Administration and Law	15%	14%	14%	
IMD	Highest 20% Deprivation	29%	30%	33%
	20-40%	23%	24%	24%
	40-60%	19%	18%	18%
	60-80%	16%	15%	14%
	Lowest 20% Deprivation	13%	13%	11%

\* denotes <0.5%

## 6.1 Data processing and coding

Kantar Public combined and cleaned all online and telephone survey data, including coded data, to produce an SPSS file which contained all survey responses.

### Coding

The questionnaire included several open-ended questions. Responses were coded using a web-based package called Ascribe. All coded data were incorporated into the final SPSS datafile. Three types of coding were undertaken:

- Partial open-ended questions allow respondents to enter an answer which cannot be categorised into a pre-existing response option. For each partial open-ended question, the coding team checked whether any of the verbatim responses given in the 'other specify' category could be coded as an existing response option (this exercise is commonly known as back-coding). On questions where the 'other' answer category exceeded 10% of the total number of responses, answers were reviewed and new codes were created if necessary.
- For full open-ended questions, verbatim responses were reviewed by the coding team and a code frame was created out of frequently recurring responses.
- The coding team also coded respondents' answers to a series of standard demographic questions which were designed to capture respondents' employment details. This data was used to categorise respondents using the National Statistics Socio-economic classification (NS-SEC).<sup>17</sup>

Once around 60% of the coding had been completed, the coding was accessed by the research team to check the quality of coders' work in terms of what had been back-coded to each answer category and what new codes had been added to the code frame.

### SPSS output

Kantar Public developed an SPSS output which contained all survey data; coded data; sample variables where learners had agreed to data linkage; derived variables used during analysis; and weighting variables. The data will be deposited at the UK Data Service.

## 6.2 Subgroup analysis

The results for FE learners and apprentices were investigated as two distinct groups due to differences in these populations, most importantly differences in the background,

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<sup>17</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/otherclassifications/thenationalstatisticsocioeconomicclassificationnssecrebasedonsoc2010>

experiences and post-course outcomes. In addition to the FE learner/apprentices split, additional subgroup analysis was carried out on the breaks detailed in table 6.

Subgroup analysis was also carried out on subject area and geographical region. However, there were limited significant findings from these breaks. Differences between subgroups were reported only when they were both statistically significant and relevant to the survey objectives. Additional ad hoc subgroup analysis was used when reporting in order to further investigate any key findings. These breaks are described within the main report.

### **6.3 Statistical significance**

Results from all surveys are attempts to estimate “true values” in a wider population; and therefore, all survey statistics come with an associated margin of error within which the “true” population measure is expected to lie. As such, all differences quoted in the main survey report have been tested for statistical significance; that is, the difference between two compared values are significant even after we have accounted for the margins of error.

Unless otherwise specified, all commentary in the main survey report focuses exclusively on differences that are statistically significant at a 95 per cent confidence level.<sup>18</sup> In basic terms, this means that if the survey was conducted 100 times, a finding of the same nature would be found in at least 95 cases. In a few exceptional circumstances, survey findings which were not statistically significant have been presented where their inclusion was important for context or was consistent with a wider trend. In every case any non-statistically significant results are clearly stated as such.

Applying weights to data as described above, while tending to make the quoted figures more representative of the population of interest, has the effect of reducing the effective sample size of the data. As such the effective base size, which is used in any statistical testing, is smaller than the unweighted base size and this has the effect of increasing the confidence intervals around the survey estimates. This effect has been considered when determining whether or not differences between survey estimates described throughout the report are statistically significant. Therefore, while the base sizes reported throughout this report are the actual base sizes, the statistical analysis is based on the effective base.

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<sup>18</sup> Differences across sub-groups were tested using chi square tests.

**Table 8 – Subgroup breaks**

Subgroup	Categories
<b>Completion status</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Still on course/apprenticeship</li> <li>• Left course/apprenticeship before finished</li> </ul>
<b>FE course level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entry level</li> <li>• Level 1</li> <li>• Level 2</li> <li>• Level 3</li> <li>• Level 4 and above</li> </ul>
<b>Apprenticeship level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 2</li> <li>• Level 3</li> <li>• Level 4</li> <li>• Level 5 and above</li> </ul>
<b>Course length</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less than 1 month</li> <li>• 1 – 3 months</li> <li>• 3 to 6 months</li> <li>• 6 to 12 months</li> </ul>
<b>Gender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male</li> <li>• Female</li> </ul>
<b>Age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 to 24</li> <li>• 24 to 34</li> <li>• 35 to 44</li> <li>• 45 to 54</li> <li>• 55 or over</li> </ul>
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White</li> <li>• BAME</li> </ul>
<b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes – impacts on day to day activity</li> <li>• Yes – does not impact on day to day activity</li> <li>• No</li> </ul>
<b>Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quintiles from lowest to highest 20% deprivation</li> </ul>
<b>English as a first language</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No</li> </ul>

## Appendix A: Questionnaire

### Introduction:

Good morning / afternoon / evening, my name is [name] and I am calling from Kantar Public. We have been commissioned by the Department for Education to carry out some research among learners and apprentices who have started a course or apprenticeship within the last year. We wrote to you recently about the research we are conducting on how further education courses and apprenticeships help learners and will look at barriers to learning so that access to training can be improved. We would like to talk to you about your experiences. Would you be willing to take part in a telephone interview?

**Skip to screener questions if respondent remembers letter/email and is happy to take part.**

IF NECESSARY: The interview will take about 20 minutes and will cover your experiences prior to your [course / apprenticeship], how you found your [course / apprenticeship] and a little about your background. This is so the Department for Education can see how courses and apprenticeships help learners from different backgrounds and make the learning as good as it can be.

IF NECESSARY: We would really like to talk to you even if you did not finish your course. It's very helpful to hear from learners and apprentices who started but did not finish their learning so the Department can understand and support learners and apprentices who may face difficulties during their learning.

IF NECESSARY: Anything you tell us will be held in the strictest of confidence. The information you provide will be used only for research purposes and the research findings will not identify you.

## **SECTION 1 - Intro and confirmation of course/ completion status**

### **DISPLAY ON SCREEN FOR INTERVIEWERS:**

- **Learner name**
- **Learning provider and (for apprentices) employer**
- **Name of course from ILR**
- **Start and planned end dates.**
- **Number of courses in sample frame period**

### **ASK ALL**

#### **AEL\_CHECK**

We are contacting you because we understand that you have been [on a course or training / working as an apprentice] in <TEXT SUB: INSERT NAME OF COURSE FROM SAMPLE>.

This started around [INSERT START DATE] and was due to finish around [INSERT END DATE]. Can I check that this is correct?

IF NECESSARY: The provider for this course was [INSERT PROVIDER AND/OR EMPLOYER NAME]

IF NECESSARY: It does not matter if you did not complete the [course/apprenticeship] or if you attended for a very short period of time.  
SINGLE CODE ONLY.

1. YES, CORRECT – PROCEED WITH INTERVIEW
2. NO, ATTENDED A DIFFERENT COURSE/TRAINING
3. NO, DID NOT ATTEND A COURSE/TRAINING AROUND THAT TIME– CLOSE INTERVIEW

#### **IF AEL\_CHECK = 3**

##### **NEW\_CHECK2**

Have you attended any learning or an apprenticeship in a college or other Further Education setting in the last year?

1. Yes
2. No

#### **IF AEL\_CHECK = 2 OR NEW\_CHECK2 = 1**

##### **NEW\_CORRECT1**

Can I ask the name of the [course/ apprenticeship]?

RECORD NEW NAME

**ASK ALL FE LEARNERS (EXCLUDE APPRENTICES)**

**NEW\_MODCHK**

**Was this course part of a wider qualification or block of training which you are / were taking?**

INTERVIEWER: For example, was this just one module or a small part of a wider block of learning.

1. Yes
2. No

**IF NEW\_MODCHK = 1**

**MODCHK\_2**

**What is/ was the name of the wider qualification that this course was part of?**

RECORD NEW NAME

**IF NEW\_MODCHK = 1**

**MODCHK\_APP**

**[INTERVIEWER: RECORD IF COURSE AT MODCHK\_2 IS AN APPRENTICESHIP]?**

**Can I check, was that course an apprenticeship?**

1. Yes
2. No

**ASK ALL**

**CLS\_COMP**

**Did you complete the [course/ apprenticeship] or did you leave before it had finished?**

INTERVIEWER: BY 'COMPLETED' – WE MEAN ATTENDING MOST OR ALL OF THE [COURSE/ APPRENTICESHIP] AND STAYING ON THE [COURSE/ APPRENTICESHIP] UNTIL IT ENDED

1. Completed the [course/ apprenticeship]
2. Left [course/ apprenticeship] before it finished
3. Still on [course/ apprenticeship]
4. Don't know
5. Refused



## SECTION 2 - REASONS FOR NON-COMPLETION

### IF FE LEARNER

#### AEM\_NONCOMP1

What were the MAIN reasons why you didn't complete the course?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTI CODE.

1. Found a job / paid work
2. Found an apprenticeship
3. Financial reasons
4. Didn't like the course – course content not of interest
5. Course was not suitable for intended outcome
6. Couldn't cope academically with the course
7. Failed, did not pass assessments / exams
8. Couldn't juggle studying with my other commitments
9. Lack of support from family
10. Lack of support from employer
11. Personal/domestic problems
12. Family/childcare commitments
13. Ill health
14. Course no longer relevant to my job
15. Changed mind about future career / type of job I wanted to do in future
16. Changed employer/ Got a new job
17. Did not like tutor / teacher
18. Too much technology used in the lessons
19. The amount of time / hours was too much
20. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
21. Don't know
22. Refused

## **IF APPRENTICE**

### **DOSYP\_NONCOMP2**

What were the MAIN reasons for not completing the full period of your apprenticeship?

DO NOT READ OUT. MULTI CODE

1. Financial reasons – apprenticeship did not pay enough
2. Received offer of paid job
3. Changed mind about future career / type of job I wanted to do in future
4. Left to go on training instead
5. Left to go into full-time education
6. Apprenticeship was stopped / cancelled before completion
7. Too busy with job search and interviews
8. Not compatible with childcare or other family commitments
9. Unable to balance with other commitments (not family related)
10. Did not like – the work
11. Did not like – the training element
12. Did not like – the people
13. Did not like – the hours
14. Did not like – travelling to get there
15. Health issues (including operations, injury caused through work)
16. Other (specify)
16. Don't know

## **ASK ALL FE LEARNER NON COMPLETERS**

### **Train\_EXPECT\_1**

Would you say that your course was...

READ OUT. SINGLE CODED

1. Much better than expected
2. A little better than expected
3. About as good as expected
4. A little worse than expected
5. Or much worse than expected
6. Don't know

**ASK ALL APPRENTICE NON COMPLETERS**

**Train\_EXPECT\_2**

Thinking about the work place based element of your apprenticeship, that is the time you spent on your job with your employer, was the work place based element...

READ OUT. SINGLE CODED

1. Much better than expected
2. A little better than expected
3. About as good as expected
4. A little worse than expected
5. Or much worse than expected
6. Don't know

**ASK ALL APPRENTICE NON COMPLETERS**

**Train\_EXPECT\_3**

And thinking about the training element of your apprenticeship, that is the time spent on any training either in or out of the workplace, would you say this was...

READ OUT. SINGLE CODED

1. Much better than expected
2. A little better than expected
3. About as good as expected
4. A little worse than expected
5. Or much worse than expected
6. Don't know

**IF Train\_EXPECT\_2 OR Train\_EXPECT\_3 = 4 or 5 (apprenticeship was a little worse than expected/much worse than expected)**

**Train\_Whywor\_2**

Why did your apprenticeship not meet your expectations?

OPEN ENDED. TYPE OUT VERBATIM.

Don't know

1. Lack support or contact from provider/college/tutor
2. Badly organised
3. Problems with the time frame/management
4. Didn't learn anything new / too easy
5. Problems with employer placed with
6. The course was irrelevant
7. Lack of / Poor quality training
8. No job at the end of training
9. Long delays with certification
10. Problems with pay
11. Don't know
12. Prefer not to say

**ASK ALL NON COMPLETERS**

**AEM\_PROBLEM**

Many people can experience circumstances that affect their [learning/ training]. Did you experience any of the following that affected your [learning/ training]?

READ OUT

1. An illness that lasted a long time
2. A change in your personal circumstances
3. A change in employment
4. A learning disability
6. A physical disability
7. Mental or emotional difficulties
8. None
9. Don't know
10. Refused

## SECTION 3 PATHWAYS IN AND PRE-COURSE CIRCUMSTANCES

### ASK ALL

#### NEW\_COURSECHK

**Can I check, did this [apprenticeship / course] follow on directly from a previous lower level [apprenticeship / course] in the same subject with the same [employer / college or learning provider]?**

INTERVIEWER: We need to establish whether [the apprenticeship / course] is part of ongoing series with the [employer / college or learning provider]. For example, if you have been doing a level 3 recently, did you previously complete level 2 with the same [employer / college or learning provider]?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

#### IF NEW\_COURSECHK2 = 1

#### NEW\_COURSECHK2

**What was the name of the [course / apprenticeship] which you originally applied for?**

TYPE NAME OF COURSE

**For the next part of the interview, I would like you to think about the time when you originally started the**

TEXTFILL:

IF AEL\_CHECK = 1 AND NEW\_MODCHK = 2 AND NEW\_COURSECHK = 2 [INSERT SAMPLE COURSE NAME]

IF AEL\_CHECK = 2 AND NEW\_MODCHK = 2 AND NEW\_COURSECHK = 2 [INSERT TEXT AT NEW\_CORRECT1]

IF NEW\_MODCHK = 1 AND NEW\_COURSECHK = 2 [INSERT TEXT AT MOD\_CHK2]

IF NEW\_COURSECHK = 1 [INSERT TEXT AT NEW\_COURSECHK2]

**ASK ALL**

**DOSYP\_PRE1**

**What were you doing in the months immediately before starting your [course/ apprenticeship]?**

PROMPT TO PRECODES. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

INTERVIEWER: (if not spontaneously mentioned) Were you looking for work during the months immediately before starting your [course/ apprenticeship]?

1. Looking for work
2. Studying – full time
3. Studying – part time
4. Working – full time
5. Working – part time
6. Apprenticeship
7. Traineeship
8. Unpaid job / volunteering
9. Travelling
10. Looking after family or children
11. Unemployed and not looking for work
12. Retired
12. Other (specify)
13. Don't know

[IF DOSYP\_PRE1 = 4 or 5] And thinking about that job...

---

**What did [your organisation / the organisation you work for] mainly make or do (at the place where you worked)?**

DESCRIBE FULLY - PROBE MANUFACTURING OR PROCESSING OR DISTRIBUTING ETC. AND MAIN GOODS PRODUCED, MATERIALS USED, WHOLESALE OR RETAIL ETC.

**What was your job title?**

OPEN\_ENDED

**What did you mainly do in your job?**

CHECK SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS/TRAINING NEEDED TO DO THE JOB  
OPEN-ENDED

**IF DOSYP\_PRE1 = 4 or 5 (employed)**

**NEW\_SAMEEMP**

Can I check, are you currently still in the same job, with the same employer?

1. Yes
2. No

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**IF DOSYP\_PRE1 <> 4 or 5**

**Qeverjob (AEM)**

**In the period before you started [ TEXTFILL:**

IF AEL\_CHECK = 1 AND NEW\_MODCHK = 2 AND NEW\_COURSECHK = 2 [INSERT SAMPLE COURSE NAME]

IF AEL\_CHECK = 2 AND NEW\_MODCHK = 2 AND NEW\_COURSECHK = 2 [INSERT TEXT AT NEW\_CORRECT1]

IF NEW\_MODCHK = 1 AND NEW\_COURSECHK = 2 [INSERT TEXT AT MOD\_CHK2]

IF NEW\_COURSECHK = 1 [INSERT TEXT AT NEW\_COURSECHK2], **did you EVER have a paid job, apart from casual or holiday work?**

IF YES PROBE -WAS THIS SELF-EMPLOYMENT OR WERE THEY EMPLOYED

1. Yes – employed
2. Yes – self-employed
3. No

**IF EVER WORKED (AT Qeverjob)**

**NEW\_FT\_prior**

**Was the last job you had paid job full or part-time?**

1. Full time (30+ hours a week)
2. Part-time (less than 30 hours a week)
3. Don't know

**ASK ALL**

**Qbenefits (AEM)**

At the time you applied for the [course/ apprenticeship], **were you claiming any State Benefits or Tax Credits, including State Pension, Allowances, Child Benefit or National Insurance Credits?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know
4. Refused



**ASK IF QBENEFITS = 'YES' (CLAIMED BENEFITS IN LAST SEVEN DAYS)**

**Qbenefittype (AEM)**

At the time you applied for the [course/ apprenticeship] **Which types of benefit or Tax Credit were you claiming?**

PROMPT TO PRECODES. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

- Unemployment-related benefits including Universal Credit, or National Insurance Credits
- Income Support (not as an unemployed person)
- Sickness or Disability Benefits (including Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Employment and Support Allowance; not including Tax Credits)
  
- State Pension (including Widowed Parent's and Bereavement Allowance)
- Family related benefits (excluding Child Benefit and Tax Credits)
- Child Benefit
- Housing, or Council Tax benefit
- Tax Credit (including Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit)
- Any other benefits (please specify)
- Don't Know
- Refused

**Still thinking about when you originally applied for**

TEXTFILL:

IF AEL\_CHECK = 1 AND NEW\_MODCHK = 2 AND NEW\_COURSECHK = 2 [INSERT SAMPLE COURSE NAME]

IF AEL\_CHECK = 2 AND NEW\_MODCHK = 2 AND NEW\_COURSECHK = 2 [INSERT TEXT AT NEW\_CORRECT1]

IF NEW\_MODCHK = 1 AND NEW\_COURSECHK = 2 [INSERT TEXT AT MOD\_CHK2]

IF NEW\_COURSECHK = 1 [INSERT TEXT AT NEW\_COURSECHK2]

**APPRENTICES ONLY**

**NEW\_WORK1**

Immediately before you started your apprenticeship, were you already working for the employer that you are now doing an apprenticeship with?

1. Yes
2. No

**ASK ALL**

**AEM\_WHYSTART**

What is the MAIN reason you started this [course/ apprenticeship]?

PROMPT TO PRE-CODES. SINGLE CODE.

1. To help you find work / get a job
2. To help you get a better job
3. Employer offered it as part of your role [apprentices only]
4. Because your employer requires you to do this / it is a requirement of your job
5. For personal enjoyment / interest
6. Because you were encouraged to by a family member / friend
7. To improve your skills or knowledge
8. A stepping stone to other training or qualifications
9. To help pass a citizenship test
10. Some other reason (please specify)
11. Don't know

## SECTION 4 - BARRIERS/ CHALLENGES TO ENTRY

Thinking now about when you were applying for your [course/ apprenticeship]. **[IF NEW\_COURSECHK = 1]: Please think back to when you originally applied to your learning provider or employer.**

**ASK ALL**

### **NEW\_WHOPAY1**

Did you pay a fee for your learning / apprenticeship?

DO NOT READ OUT

1. Yes
2. No
3. There was no fee to be paid
4. Don't know

**IF NEW\_WHOPAY1 = yes**

### **NEW\_WHOPAY2**

How did you pay for this?

*Please think about the way the majority of your course was paid for*

READ OUT. CODE FIRST RESPONSE.

1. Paid the fee directly from your own money
2. Took out an advanced learner loan (FE loan)
3. Took out another form of loan (which was not an advanced learner loan)
4. Borrowed money from friends or family
5. Some other way (please specify)
6. DO NOT READ OUT: Prefer not to say

**IF NEW\_WHOPAY1 = no or don't know**

Who pays/paid for your learning / apprenticeship?

*Please think about the way the majority of your course was paid for*

PROMPT TO PRECODES . (Select all that apply)

1. It was internal training provided by my employer
2. My employer paid
3. Help from my institution e.g. access funds, bursaries etc.
4. Local authority grant
5. Other government funding

6. Charitable trust or other non-government organisation
7. Other (please specify)
8. Don't know

**IF NEW\_WHOPAY1 = yes**

**NEW\_FINANCE2**

How easy or difficult was it to meet these costs?

- Very easy
- Fairly easy
- Neither easy nor difficult
- Fairly difficult
- Very difficult
- Don't know

**ASK ALL**

**NEW\_FINANCE1**

Were there any additional costs which you had difficulty meeting during your [course / apprenticeship]?

IF NECESSARY: This could have been addition childcare or travel costs or buying course materials

PROMPT TO PRE CODES. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

- Loss of earnings while you were training / studying
- Loss of benefits you were claiming while training / studying
- Additional travel costs
- Additional childcare costs
- Additional housing or accommodation costs
- Additional costs for learning materials including books
- Some other financial cost (specify)
- None of these

## SECTION 6 - FUTURE PLANS

Now a few questions about what you are doing currently and what you are thinking about doing in future

---

### COMPLETER AND DROP OUT (EXCLUDING CURRENT LEARNERS) AND NEW\_SAMEEMP = NO

#### AES\_Q13

#### What is your current employment status?

DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

PROMPT IF NECESSARY. IF RESPONDENT MENTIONED MORE THAN ONE, PROBE FOR THE MAIN ACTIVITY.

1. Employed – full time (30 hours or more a week)
2. Employed – part time (between 16 and 30 hours a week)
3. Employed – part time (less than 16 hours a week)
4. Apprenticeship
5. Self-employed (working full-time – 30 hours + per week)
6. Self-employed (working part-time – less than 16 hours per week)
7. Self-employed (working part-time – 16-30 hours per week)
8. Unemployed and looking for work
9. Looking for a training course
10. In training or education (including at school/college)
11. Caring for children or other people
12. Coping with a long term condition or disability
13. Getting better from a temporary illness
14. Unemployed and not looking for work
15. Retired
16. Other (please specify)
17. Don't know
18. Refused

**IF APPRENTICESHIP COMPLETER AND CURRENTLY EMPLOYED (AES\_Q13=1 OR 2)**

**AES\_Q14**

**Are you still employed by the same organisation with whom you completed your Apprenticeship?**

DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

1. Yes
2. No

**IF WITHDRAWN FROM APPRENTICESHIP**

**AES\_Q15**

**Are you still employed by the same organisation with whom you started your Apprenticeship? DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE ONLY.**

1. Yes
2. No

**[IF WORKING =AES\_Q13=1,2,3] AND NEW\_SAMEEMP = NO**

**Thinking about your current job...**

**WORK8**

**What does [your organisation / the organisation you work for] mainly make or do (at the place where you work)?**

DESCRIBE FULLY - PROBE MANUFACTURING OR PROCESSING OR DISTRIBUTING ETC. AND MAIN GOODS PRODUCED, MATERIALS USED, WHOLESALE OR RETAIL ETC.

**WORK9**

**What is your job title?**

OPEN\_ENDED

**WORK10**

**What do you mainly do in your job?**

CHECK SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS/TRAINING NEEDED TO DO THE JOB  
OPEN-ENDED

**ASK ALL (text to vary depending on completion status)**

**NEW\_consider**

**EXCLUDE THOSE WHO ARE WORKING OR TRAINING AT THE MOMENT (AES\_Q13**

**<> 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,10)**

Which of the following are you likely to do [when your current training / apprenticeship comes to an end<sup>19</sup> / in the next 12 months<sup>20</sup>]?

READ OUT – CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Look for (new or different<sup>2</sup>) paid work
2. Look for an apprenticeship
3. Look to move into further (new or different<sup>2</sup>) training or education
4. [DO NOT READ OUT] None of these
5. Don't know

**ASK COMPLETERS AND CURRENT LEARNERS ONLY (EXCLUDE WITHDRAWN)**

**AES\_MEASURES**

E9 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

to “Since [IF COMPLETED: completing] [IF CURRENT: starting] my [course /

E12 Apprenticeship], . . . . READ OUT E9-E12”

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT SCALE AND Probe strength of agreement / disagreement.

READ OUT AND RANDOMISE ORDER OF E17 TO E19. SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Agree strongly	Agree slightly	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree slightly	Disagree strongly	Don't know
E12a	1	2	3	4	5	6
E21.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>My chances of earning a higher wage in future have improved (NEW STATEMENT)</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>My chances of going on to higher levels of training have improved (NEW STATEMENT)</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6

<sup>19</sup> Text for current learners and apprentices

<sup>20</sup> Text for completers and drop outs

## SECTION 7 – SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC MEASURES

This is the final section of the questionnaire. We'd like to ask you a few details about yourself and your family background. This will help us understand how the experiences of learners/Apps differ.

---

### SUB SECTION A – BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS AND BACKGROUND VARIABLES

#### ASK ALL

#### AEM\_LivArr3 (AEM)

#### Who do you currently live with?

PROMPT TO PRECODES. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Living with parent(s)
2. Living with other guardian(s)
3. Living with a partner or husband/wife
4. Living with other family
5. Living with friends
6. Living on your own or with children [single coded]
7. Living with others in shared accommodation
8. No permanent address
9. Other (specify)
10. Don't know

#### IF LIVING WITH PARENTS (CODE 1 AT LivArr3)

#### NEW\_Parents

ASK OR RECORD

#### Do you live with both parents?

DO NOT READ OUT

1. Yes – both parents
2. No – one parent [INTERVIEWER: INCLUDE LEARNERS WHO LIVE WITH BOTH PARENTS SEPARATELY AND MOVE BETWEEN HOMES]
3. Prefer not to say
4. Don't know



**ASK ALL**

**NEW\_Num (Standard measure used frequently)**

**How many people are there in your household altogether, including any children and yourself?**

1. NUMERIC
2. Prefer not to say
3. Don't know

**ASK ALL**

**CHILD**

**Do you have any children of your own, whether they live in your household or not?**

MULTI-CODE

1. Yes – live with me
  2. Yes – live elsewhere
  3. No [SINGLE CODE]
- Refused

**IF CHILD=Yes – live with me**

**CHIAGE (MWA – DWP)**

**And how old is your youngest child who is currently living with you?**

- Range 0-99
- Refused

---

**SUB SECTION B – EDUCATION**

**ASK ALL:**

**HIGHQUAL (Traineeships – trainee survey Wave 1)**

**What is the highest level qualification you had completed before the [training / apprenticeship] we have been talking about during the interview?**

CODE HIGHEST QUALIFICATION USING QUALIFICATIONS CARD.

- Numeric 1-9
- None
- Don't know

QUALIFICATIONS SHOWCARD (NOT IN INTERVIEW SCRIPT – CARD FOR INTERVIEWERS TO USE TO HELP SELECT THE RIGHT CODE)

<b>HIGHEST QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>CODE</b>
<b>Entry Level qualifications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)</li> <li>- Functional Skills at entry level (English, maths and ICT)</li> <li>- Foundation Learning at entry level</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<b>GCSEs D-G, Vocational Level 1 qualifications and equivalent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GCSEs D-G, O-levels below grade C, CSE below grade 1</li> <li>- Standard or O grades below grade 3</li> <li>- NVQs level 1</li> <li>- Key Skills level 1</li> <li>- BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates, Awards (Level 1)</li> <li>- Skills for life</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>
<b>5 GCSEs A*-C, Vocational Level 2 qualifications and equivalent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GCSEs A*-C, O-levels A-C, CSE grade 1</li> <li>- Standard or O grades 1-3</li> <li>- NVQs level 2</li> <li>- Key Skills level 2</li> <li>- BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates, Awards (Level 2)</li> <li>- Skills for life</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>
<b>A-levels, Vocational Level 3 qualifications and equivalent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A-levels</li> <li>- Higher, SCYS (Scottish Certificate of Sixth Year Studies)</li> <li>- NVQs level 3</li> <li>- Key Skills level 3</li> <li>- BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates, Awards (Level 3)</li> </ul>	<b>4</b>
<b>Certificates of Higher Education or equivalent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Certificates of Higher Education</li> <li>- NVQ level 4</li> <li>- BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates, Awards (equivalent to Certificate Higher Education)</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
<b>Higher National Certificates (HNC), Diplomas (HND) or equivalent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Higher National Certificate (HNC) Higher National Diploma (HND)</li> <li>- Foundation degree</li> <li>- BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates, Awards (equivalent to HNC)</li> </ul>	<b>6</b>
<b>First degree or equivalent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bachelors degree, graduate certificates and diplomas</li> <li>- Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)</li> </ul>	<b>7</b>

- BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates, Awards (equivalent to 1 <sup>st</sup> degree)	
<b>Postgraduate degree (Masters) or equivalent</b> - Masters degree - Postgraduate certificate or diploma - NVQs at level 5 - BTEC Advanced Professional Diplomas, Certificates, Awards (equivalent to masters)	<b>8</b>
<b>PhD (Doctoral degree) or equivalent</b> - PhD (Doctoral degree) - Award, Certificate and Diploma in strategic direction or Specialist award equivalent to a PhD	<b>9</b>

**ASK ALL**

**TRAIN\_EngMath**

Before you started your [course / apprenticeship], had you achieved an A\*-C grade at GCSE for English **or** Maths?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY – NEITHER IS AN EXCLUSIVE OPTION

1. Yes - English
  2. Yes - Maths
  3. Neither
- Don't know

---

## **SUB SECTION C – TENURE AND HOUSING TYPE**

### **ASK ALL**

#### **BEIS1 (Heat Network measure)**

**What type of property do you live in?**

PROMPT TO PRECODES

1. Flat or Maisonette
2. Terrace house
3. Semi-detached house / end of terrace house
4. Detached house

### **ASK ALL**

#### **BEIS5 (Heat Network measure)**

**How many bedrooms do you have in your home?**

- NUMERIC
- Prefer not to say
- Don't know

### **ASK ALL**

#### **TENURE (DWP MEASURE)**

**Which of these best describes the accommodation you are living in at the moment?**

READ OUT AND CODE FIRST THAT APPLIES

1. Rented
  2. Owned outright or being bought on a mortgage/bank loan
  3. Shared ownership where pay part rent and part mortgage
  4. Other (specify)
- Don't Know  
Refused

**IF TENURE = 1** (in rented accommodation)

#### **TENURE2 (DWP MEASURE)**

**Is that...**

READ OUT

1. Rented privately
2. Rented from a council or local authority
3. Rented from a Housing Association
4. Other (specify)
5. Don't know

---

**SUB SECTION D – HISTORICAL AND PARENTAL MEASURES (AT TIME OF AGE 14)**

We are interested how people's circumstances change over the course of their life. I'd like to ask a few questions about your personal circumstances at the time when you were 14 years old. Your best estimates are fine.

**ASK ALL**

**LocLive (NEW)**

**Were you living in the United Kingdom (UK) when you were age 14?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. DO NOT READ OUT: Prefer not to say

**ASK ALL**

**ASK OR RECORD**

**SameHome (NEW)**

**Are you still living in the same property and with the same people as you were when you were 14?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. DO NOT READ OUT: Prefer not to say

**ASK ALL (EXCLUDING THOSE IN SAME HOME AS AT 14 SameHome <> 1)**

**BEIS1 (Heat Network measure)**

**What type of property did you live in when you were 14?**

PROMPT TO PRECODES

1. Flat or Maisonette
2. Terrace house
3. Semi-detached house / end of terrace house
4. Detached house

**ASK ALL (EXCLUDING THOSE IN SAME HOME AS AT 14 SameHome <> 1)**

**BEIS5 (Heat Network measure)**

**And how many bedrooms did your home have?**

1. NUMERIC
  2. Prefer not to say
- Don't know

**ASK ALL (EXCLUDING THOSE IN SAME HOME AS AT 14 SameHome <> 1)  
TENURE (DWP MEASURE)**

**Which of these best describes the accommodation you lived in?**

READ OUT AND CODE FIRST THAT APPLIES

1. Rented
  2. Owned outright or being bought on a mortgage/bank loan
  3. Shared ownership where pay part rent and part mortgage
  4. Other (specify)
- Don't Know  
Refused

**IF TENURE = 1 (in rented accommodation) (EXCLUDING THOSE IN SAME HOME AS AT 14 SameHome <> 1)**

**TENURE2 (DWP MEASURE)**

**Is that...**

READ OUT

1. Rented privately
  2. Rented from a council or local authority
  3. Rented from a Housing Association
  4. Other (specify)
- Don't know

**ASK ALL**

**LivArr3 (AEM)**

**Who did you live with when you were 14 years old?**

PROMPT TO PRECODES. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

1. Living with parent(s)
  2. Living with other guardian(s)
  3. Living with other family
  4. Living with friends
  5. Living on your own [single coded]
  6. No permanent address
  7. Other (specify)
- Don't know

**IF LIVING WITH PARENTS (CODE 1 AT LivArr3)**

**NEW\_Parents**

ASK OR RECORD

**Did you live with both parents when you were 14?**

DO NOT READ OUT

1. Yes – both parents
  2. No – one parent
- Prefer not to say  
Don't know

**ASK ALL**

**NEW\_NUMAD**

**How many adults, aged 18 and older, were there in your household altogether when you were aged 14?**

NUMERIC

Prefer not to say  
Don't know

**ASK ALL**

**NEW\_NUMCHI**

**And how many children, aged younger than 18, were there in your household altogether, including yourself, when you were aged 14?**

NUMERIC

Prefer not to say  
Don't know

**ASK ALL**

**CIE (DfT CIE question – F9h from segmentation)**

**Can I just check, which member of your household was the Chief Income Earner when you were 14, that is, the person with the largest income, whether from employment, pensions, state benefits, investments or any other sources?**

**PROMPT TO PRECODES**

1. Respondent's father (or male guardian)
2. Respondent's mother (or female guardian)
3. Someone else (please specify)

Don't know

**ASK IF CIE IS KNOWN (NOT DON'T KNOW AT PREVIOUS QUESTION)**

**Qeverjob (AEM)**

**Did that person have a paid job at the time?**

**IF YES PROBE -WAS THIS SELF-EMPLOYMENT OR WERE THEY EMPLOYED**

1. Yes – employed
2. Yes – self-employed
3. Yes – don't know if employed or self-employed
4. No



**IF EVER WORKED (AT Qeverjob)**

**Thinking about the chief income earners job when you were 14 ...**

---

**What did [their organisation / the organisation they worked for] mainly make or do (at the place where they worked)?**

DESCRIBE FULLY - PROBE MANUFACTURING OR PROCESSING OR DISTRIBUTING ETC. AND MAIN GOODS PRODUCED, MATERIALS USED, WHOLESALE OR RETAIL ETC.

**What was their job title?**

OPEN\_ENDED

**What did they mainly do in their job?**

CHECK SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS/TRAINING NEEDED TO DO THE JOB

OPEN-ENDED

**ASK ALL**

**NEW\_HEI**

**Thinking about your parents or guardians at the time you were 14. Have any of these been to university?**

1. Yes – both parents / guardians

2. Yes – one parent / guardian

3. No

Don't know

Prefer not to say

**IF NEW\_HEI = 3 (neither parent went to university) OR NEW\_HEI = don't know / prefer not to say**

## **NEW\_ANYQUAL**

**Can I check did [both your parents have / your parent have] formal qualifications at the time they left school?**

IF ASKED: By this we mean did they have GCSEs, O-levels, A-levels or any vocational qualifications when they left compulsory education?

INTERVIEWER: If unsure – you can refer the list of qualifications provided as part of your prompt materials.

1. Yes – both parents / guardians
2. Yes – one parent / guardian
3. No
4. Don't know
5. Prefer not to say

---

## **SUB SECTION F – FINAL QUESTIONS – INC. DISABILITY AND ETHNICITY**

### **ASK ALL**

**I have some final questions about you and your household now. This information will be used to analyse the survey findings only. Everything you say will be treated in confidence.**

**The next few questions are about your income and any state benefits or tax credits that you may be receiving or claiming.**

### **ASK ALL**

#### **NEW\_FSM**

**As far as you know, did you receive or were you eligible for Free School Meals at any time whilst you were at school?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Prefer not to say

### **ASK THOSE IN EMPLOYMENT AT TIME OF INTERVIEW AEM\_Incompers (AEM)**

**What is your total personal income before tax? That is from all sources of income you receive, including from work and benefits...**

1. Up to 5200
2. 5201 up to 11500
3. 11501 up to 21000
4. 21001 to 30000
5. 30001 to 45000
6. 45001 and above

Don't Know

Refused

### **ASK IF AEM\_Incompers = don't know or prefer not to say**

#### **AEM\_Incompers2 (AEM)**

**Is your total personal income before tax above £21,000?**

**IF NECESSARY: £21,000 is the income level from which advanced learner loans (or FE loans) are repaid. The Department for Education are interested in the proportion of learners who fall above and below this level.**

1. Yes
2. No

Don't Know

Refused

**ASK ALL**

**Qbenefits (AEM)**

**In the seven days ending last Sunday, were you claiming any State Benefits or Tax Credits, including State Pension, Allowances, Child Benefit or National Insurance Credits?**

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- Don't Know
- Refused

**ASK IF QBENEFITS = 'YES' (CLAIMED BENEFITS IN LAST SEVEN DAYS)**

**Qbenefittype (AEM)**

**Which types of benefit or Tax Credit were you claiming?**

PROMPT TO PRECODES. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

- Unemployment-related benefits including Universal Credit, or National Insurance Credits
- Income Support (not as an unemployed person)
- Sickness or Disability Benefits (including Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Employment and Support Allowance; not including Tax Credits)
  
- State Pension (including Widowed Parent's and Bereavement Allowance)
- Family related benefits (excluding Child Benefit and Tax Credits)
- Child Benefit
- Housing, or Council Tax benefit
- Tax Credit (including Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit)
- Any other benefits
- Don't Know
- Refused

**ASK ALL**

**DISABLE1 (DWP MEASURE)**

**Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?**

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- Don't know

**IF DISABLE1 = YES** (has health problem or disability)

**ILLNESSTYPE (DWP MEASURE)**

**Do any of these conditions or illnesses affect you in any of the following areas?**

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

1. Vision - for example blindness or partial sight
  2. Hearing - for example deafness or partial hearing
  3. Mobility - for example walking short distances or climbing stairs
  4. Dexterity - for example lifting and carrying objects, using a keyboard
  5. Learning or understanding or concentrating
  6. Memory
  7. Mental health
  8. Stamina or breathing or fatigue
  9. Socially or behaviourally - for example associated with autism, attention deficit disorder or Asperger's syndrome
  10. Anything else (specify)
- Refused

**IF DISABLE1 = YES** (has health problem or disability)

**DISABLE2 (DWP MEASURE)**

**Does your condition or illness (do any of your conditions or illnesses) reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities?**

1. Yes, a little
2. Yes, a lot
3. Not at all
4. Don't know

**IF APPRENTICE AND DISABLE1 = YES** (has health problem or disability)

**DISABLE3**

Did you declare your condition or illness to your employer or apprenticeship provider?

1. Yes
  2. No
- Prefer not to say

Don't know

**ASK ALL**

**AES\_G1 (2017 AES)**

**How would you describe your ethnicity?**

DO NOT READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

1. White - English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
2. White - Irish
3. White – Gypsy or Irish Traveller
4. Any other white background
5. Mixed / Multiple Ethnic group – White and Black Caribbean
6. Mixed / Multiple Ethnic group – White and Black African
7. Mixed / Multiple Ethnic group – White and Asian
8. Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background
9. Asian / Asian British - Indian
10. Asian / Asian British - Pakistani
11. Asian / Asian British - Bangladeshi
12. Asian / Asian British - Chinese
13. Any other Asian background
14. Black / African / Caribbean / Black British - African
15. Black / African / Caribbean / Black British - Caribbean
16. Any other Black / African / Caribbean background
17. Other ethnic group - Arab
18. Any other ethnic group
19. Don't know
20. Would prefer not to say

**ASK ALL**

**LANG (DWP MEASURE)**

**Is English your first language?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Refused

## SECTION 8 – RECONTACT / LINKAGE TO LEO

### ASK ALL

#### LSYPE\_LINK1

We would like your permission to link your survey answers to records held by the government.

- Adding these details will increase the value of the information you give us
- Other than information needed to identify your records, we will **not** pass any of your survey answers to anyone else.
- Your information is confidential. This means that your name and address will never be included in the results.
- If you give permission to link any of the following administrative records your permission will remain valid indefinitely. Information from these records will be collected on an ongoing basis.
- You can change or withdraw your permissions at any time by contacting the Learners and Apprentices Survey research team
- If you withdraw your permission data that has already been linked will be retained but no future linking will take place.

[TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS: IF NECESSARY: If you'd like more information please contact the research team on:

Call: 0800 [redacted]

Email: [\[redacted\]@kantarpublish.com](mailto:[redacted]@kantarpublish.com)

#### **HELP SCREEN** - 'Why do you want to add other data about me?'

Adding extra details from administrative records opens up new possibilities for researchers from universities, charities and within government who all use the data to understand the experiences of learners and apprentices and to make the services you use better.

We learn a lot about your experiences from the questions we ask in the study, but adding extra information from administrative records helps us to build a more complete picture of other ways which your course or apprenticeship has helped you.

It also means we can make the data as valuable and accurate as possible, as it allows us to fill in the blanks for any details you may not know or remember and to avoid asking you for some other details during the survey.

**ASK ALL**  
**LSYPE\_LINK2**

We would like your permission to link information from the records held by the following government agencies:

- Department for Education
- Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
- Student Loans Company records
- Higher Education Statistics Agency

Do you give permission for an anonymised reference number to be passed to the Department for Education, so your records can be identified and linked to your survey responses?

1. Yes
2. No

What do these records include?

- **Department for Education's (DfE) National Pupil Database (NPD)** includes information about your participation and achievement in school and further education as well as details about the school, college or training centre you attended.
- **Department for Education's (DfE) Individual Learner Record (ILR)** includes information about your participation and achievement in further education from age 16, as well as details about the college or training centre you may have attended.
- **Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)** records include Income Tax, Tax Credits and Child Benefit data, providing information about employment, earnings, tax, pensions and National Insurance contributions.
- **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)** includes information about benefit receipt and participation in employment programs
- **Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)** includes information about higher education applications and offers.
- **Student Loans Company (SLC)** records include information about applications for student finance)
- **Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)** includes information about university participation and attainment



**If LSYPE\_LINK2 = 2  
LSYPE\_LINK3**

Do you give permission for an anonymised reference number to be passed to the Department for Education, so that **some** of your records can be identified and linked to your survey responses? If so, please can you confirm which records you consent to having your survey responses linked to?

**GRID: YES/ NO**

- Department for Education's National Pupil Database
- Department for Education's Individual Learner Record
- Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
- Student Loans Company records
- Higher Education Statistics Agency

What do these records include?

- **Department for Education's (DfE) National Pupil Database (NPD)** includes information about your participation and achievement in school and further education as well as details about the school, college or training centre you attended.
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- **Student Loans Company (SLC)** records include information about applications for student finance)
- **Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)** includes information about university participation and attainment

**ASK ALL**  
**DWP\_RECONT**

**Would you be willing to be re-contacted by Kantar Public for further studies of this type within the next 12 months? This may mean you would be contacted again in future.**

Please be reassured that the purpose of this re-contact is for research only and that your answers remain confidential.

1. Yes
2. No

# Appendix B: Advance correspondence

## Advance Letter



Department  
for Education

**KANTAR PUBLIC**

Ref:

Dear {First name} {Surname},

### **Learners and Apprentices Survey**

I am writing to ask for your help. The Department for Education, the Government department responsible for education and children's services, has launched the 'Learners and Apprentices Survey'. According to our records, you did [TEXTFILL: a course / an apprenticeship] in the last year.

**This is your chance to have a say about your training and learning. We are interested in talking to all types of learners and apprentices, including those who may have not completed their training.**

An independent research agency, Kantar Public, is carrying out this research on behalf of the Department for Education. The survey should only take about 20 minutes to complete and the results will help to improve the experiences of future learners and apprentices and ensure that courses are accessible to all. The survey covers questions on a range of topics including

reasons for taking the course, your experience on the course and your future plans. Taking part will not affect any courses or apprenticeships which you are currently attending or awaiting results for in any way.

**An interviewer from Kantar Public will call you in the next few weeks to take part in the survey. Alternatively, you can call Kantar Public on 0800 [redacted] to arrange a convenient appointment for someone to call you.**

You can also take part in the survey by going to the website [www.LearnersandApprentices.co.uk](http://www.LearnersandApprentices.co.uk) and entering the username and passcode below:

*Username: {Serial Number}*

*Passcode: {Checksum}*

If you have any questions about the research please contact Kantar Public on 0800 [redacted] or [redacted]@kantarpublish.com and the research team at Kantar Public will be able to help.

I very much hope that you will be able to take part in this important study.

**Thank you in advance for your help.**

Yours sincerely,

**Sarah Hingley**  
Research Manager  
Kantar Public

**Robert Haynes**  
Department of Education



**LEARNERS &  
APPRENTICES  
SURVEY**



### **Why did we choose you?**

You were selected at random from a database of all learners and apprentices held by the Department for Education.

### **Why are my views important?**

We need people from all age groups and backgrounds to take part. Your views are important to us as without them we may not have a representative picture of people's experiences of courses.

### **Who is conducting the survey?**

The survey is being conducted on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE) by Kantar Public, an independent research agency. DfE is the government department responsible for education and children's services.

### **Is this survey confidential?**

Yes. The information that is collected will be used only for research purposes. Your name and address details are kept separate from your answers and will not be passed on to any other organisation without your permission.

No individual will be identifiable from the results unless they give their permission to do so. Your answers will be combined with others that take part in the survey.



### **How do I know that this is a genuine survey?**

The Department for Education (DfE) has commissioned Kantar Public to carry out this survey on their behalf.

Kantar Public is an independent research organisation and is a full member of the Market Research Society. We have a strong track record of conducting high quality research.

You can rest assured that your responses will be treated in strictest confidence.

Kantar Public will not provide DfE with the names of anyone that takes part without their permission; Kantar Public are bound by the Market Research Society Code of Conduct to keep your answers and personal data confidential. Your contact details will be held securely at all times.

### **What do you need to do?**

An interviewer from Kantar Public will contact you by phone to take part in the survey in the next few weeks. You can also complete the survey online with the log in details included in this letter.

### **What if I didn't complete my course?**

We're interested in speaking to all learners and apprentices even if you didn't finish your course. Your experience of the course and background are really important to us so we can understand everyone's experiences.



## Advance Email



Department  
for Education

**KANTAR PUBLIC**

Ref:

Dear {First name},

### **Learners and Apprentices Survey**

I am writing to ask for your help. The Department for Education, the Government department responsible for education and children's services, has launched the 'Learners and Apprentices Survey'. According to our records, you did [TEXTFILL: a course / an apprenticeship] in the last year.

**This is your chance to have a say about your training and learning. We are interested in talking to all types of learners and apprentices, including those who may have not completed their training.**

An independent research agency, Kantar Public, is carrying out this research on behalf of the Department for Education. The survey should only take about 15 minutes to complete and the results will help to improve the experiences of future learners and apprentices and ensure that courses are accessible to all. The survey covers questions on a range of topics including reasons for taking the course, your experience on the course and your future plans. Taking part will not affect any courses or apprenticeships which you are currently attending or awaiting results for in any way.

**An interviewer from Kantar Public will call you in the next few weeks to take part in the survey. Alternatively, you can call Kantar Public on 0800 [redacted] to arrange a convenient appointment for someone to call you.**

You can also take part in the survey by using the link below:

[redacted]

If you have any questions about the research please contact Kantar Public on 0800 [redacted] or [redacted]@kantarpublish.com and the research team at Kantar Public will be able to help.

I very much hope that you will be able to take part in this important study.

**Thank you in advance for your help.**

Yours sincerely,

**Sarah Hingley**  
Research Manager  
Kantar Public

**Robert Haynes**  
Department for Education



LEARNERS &  
APPRENTICES  
SURVEY



Department  
for Education

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