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Skill and Training Requirements in the Vehicle Maintenance Industry in Greater Manchester

Report for Local FE Colleges and Training Providers On Recent Survey Findings

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Introduction

In June-July 2004 the Sector Skills Development Agency commissioned a telephone survey of local employers in selected regions and industries in order to learn more about the skills and training needs of those employers and the extent to which their skill upgrading needs were being met by local FE colleges and commercial training providers.

This report presents the main survey results for vehicle maintenance employers in Greater Manchester and also, by way of comparison, shows results for another very different region of England, namely Devon and Cornwall.

The employers were asked about:

- the main skills upgrading requirements for the occupation groups which they deemed to be most 'critical' to their future performance
- the extent to which they relied – or plan to rely – on FE colleges and other external training providers to help meet these skills upgrading needs
- the main factors which influence them in deciding whether or not to make use of training and related services supplied by local colleges and other external training providers
- the effectiveness of any previous involvements which these firms had had with local colleges and training providers
- the extent of any contacts and enquiries initiated by local colleges and training providers which had been received by these firms

Results

Table 1 shows the distribution by size group of the 63 vehicle maintenance employers in Greater Manchester who were interviewed for the survey.

As expected, the great majority of establishments (79%) employed less than 25 people.

Employers with ten or more employees were asked to identify their ‘core group’ of employees, defined as “the group of employees at this establishment - *excluding managers* - whose skills and knowledge you feel make the greatest contribution to the success of your business”.

Roughly seven in ten establishments in Greater Manchester nominated ‘vehicle trades’ as their ‘core group’ of employees for purposes of answering survey questions (Table 2). Establishments with less than ten employees answered questions about core groups on behalf of all their employees.

Some 71% of vehicle maintenance establishments in Greater Manchester said that the technical and practical skills of their core group employees (mainly in vehicle trades) needed improving or upgrading (Table 3). Other types of skills mentioned as in need of upgrading included ‘generic’ skills such as problem-solving skills, customer handling skills, teamworking skills, communication skills and leadership skills. Table 4 shows that some 54% of the vehicle maintenance establishments in Greater Manchester actually wanted combinations of *both* technical and generic skills to be upgraded.

This survey was able to gather information on the specific types of skills that need improving in more detail than most such surveys. Table 5 groups these detailed responses under several different headings.¹ For example, the technical skill requirements strongly emphasise new skill needs in diagnostics, electronics and keeping up to date with new technology. The IT skill requirements range from use of standard programmes to use of new MOT software and diagnostic equipment. Communication skills need to be upgraded in order to improve employees’ ability to deal with both customers and work colleagues. The survey responses also identify a need for vehicle trades and other employees to develop leadership, motivation and team-working skills that would equip more of them to be promoted to supervisory positions.

¹ Note that the bullet-points under each sub-heading in Table 5 refer to different establishments in each case. Repetition occurs when responses from different establishments were identical. The same applies to Tables 8-9 below.

Not surprisingly, a large proportion of establishments intend to rely heavily on their own resources or to make use of training offered by equipment suppliers in order to meet these skill improvement needs (Table 6). However, a sizeable minority say that they intend to call on the services of other types of external training supplier as well. About 27% of vehicle maintenance establishments in Greater Manchester said they were 'very likely' to make use of FE colleges to meet their training needs and another 27% said they were 'quite likely' to do so. The proportions saying they might call on the services of commercial training providers were somewhat smaller: 10% 'very likely' and another 13% 'quite likely' (Table 7).

Table 8 shows the detailed reasons that were given why these employers would or would not use commercial training providers. The positive reasons cited for using these organisations included the expertise and specialist knowledge which they are regarded as having. However, the list of reasons for not using commercial training providers is much longer, with a lot of emphasis given to their costs and the fact that some employers feel no need to call on external organisations because they regard their internal training resources as sufficient.

Table 9 shows several positive reasons given for making use of FE colleges, in particular, to take advantage of apprenticeship and other training courses and the convenience of their locations for employers. At the same time the reasons for not making use of FE colleges are also extensive, for example, training not relevant to employer needs, insufficient time and a preference for relying on internal training resources.

To what extent are these comments made on the basis of past experience of using commercial training providers and colleges? Some 49% of vehicle maintenance establishments in Greater Manchester have used colleges for technical or practical skills training in the last 2-3 years for technical/practical skills training and 32% of them have used commercial training providers, (Table 10). Much smaller proportions of establishments have used external training providers for generic skills training.

When asked about the effectiveness of the training providers they have used for technical/practical skills training in the last 2-3 years, the responses are generally

positive for both commercial training providers (Table 11) and for colleges (Table 12). This bodes well for colleges and commercial training providers who are wishing to step up their business relationships with vehicle maintenance employers in the future.

Table 12 shows that colleges and training providers in Greater Manchester have apparently not provided course information to as large a proportion of employers as is the case in Devon and Cornwall.² This may be attributable to operating in a large urban area as compared to the smaller towns and semi-rural communities in Devon and Cornwall.

Whatever the reason for this difference, the evidence in this report shows that there are many new opportunities in Greater Manchester for colleges and training providers to approach employers, discuss their skill upgrading requirements and to demonstrate how external providers might be helpful in meeting those training needs.

Table 1: Vehicle maintenance and repair establishments, analysed by size-group

		Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
		<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
Number of Employees	5-9	47	54	50
	10 – 24	42	25	34
	25 – 49	9	17	13
	50 – 99	1	0	1
	100-199	0	0	0
	200 – 249	0	2	1
	250-499	0	2	1
	Total	100	100	100
	<i>n =</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>137</i>

Note:
Regional differences are not statistically significant.

² As it turns out, this is the only important difference between the two regions in the pattern of employers' responses to survey questions shown in this report.

Table 2: ‘Core groups’ of employees nominated by establishments with 10 or more employees

		Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
		<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
SOC code				
212	Engineering professionals	0	4	2
311	Science and engineering technicians	0	4	2
353	Business and finance associate professionals	0	4	2
354	Sales and related associate professionals	5	0	3
412	Administrative occupations: Finance	3	0	2
522	Metal machining, fitting and instrument making trades	3	0	2
523	Vehicle trades	73	71	72
524	Electrical trades	3	0	2
711	Sales assistants and retail cashiers	8	0	5
712	Sales related occupations	0	4	2
813	Assemblers and routine operatives	0	7	3
821	Transport drivers and operatives	5	4	5
822	Mobile machine drivers and operatives	0	4	2
	Total	100	100	100
	<i>n =</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>65</i>

Notes:

(a) Establishments with fewer than 10 employees responded to questions about ‘core groups’ of employees on behalf of all employees. A small number of establishments selected ‘Managers’ as their core groups.

(b) Regional differences are not statistically significant.

Table 3: Types of skill that need improving among core groups of employees

	Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
Types of skills that need improving			
General IT or computing user skills	46	35	41
IT or computing professional skills	11	13	12
Communication skills	38	40	39
Customer handling skills	45	46	45
Team working skills	43	44	44
Foreign language skills	4	2	3
Problem solving skills	49	46	47
Leadership or supervisory skills	31	41	36
Numeracy skills	18	16	17
Literacy skills	20	21	20
Technical or practical skills	69	71	70
None	9	11	10
	<i>n =</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>63</i>
			<i>137</i>

Notes:

(a) Refers to ‘All employees’ in the case of establishments with less than ten employees

(b) Respondents could cite more than one type of skill in need of improvement

(c) No regional differences are statistically significant

Table 4: Combinations of types of skill that need improving among core groups of employees

	Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
Technical/practical, generic & IT skills	30	29	29
Technical/practical and generic skills	27	25	26
Technical/practical & IT skills	5	2	4
Generic & IT skills	7	5	6
Technical/practical skills only	7	16	11
Generic skills only	8	6	7
IT skills only	7	6	7
No skills need improvement	9	11	10
Total	100	100	100
<i>n</i> =	74	63	137

Notes:

(a) Refers to 'All employees' in the case of establishments with less than ten employees

(b) No regional differences are statistically significant.

Table 5: Types of skill that need improving among employees in selected occupations, verbatim responses, establishments in Greater Manchester only

<u>CORE GROUP IS 'SKILLED METAL AND ELECTRICAL TRADES' (SOC 523)</u>
Technical and practical skills
<i>IT skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting familiar with diagnostic programmes
<i>Product knowledge</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping up with product knowledge, and keeping pace with changing diagnostic methods
<i>New technology including operating new machinery and equipment</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New technology • Every vehicle is different and there is always new technology coming up • Keeping pace with developments of modern vehicles can be monthly
<i>Electronic and engineering knowledge</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air conditioning, electrical and all sorts - they change all the time
<i>Technical skills including mechanical and sewing skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are doing bridge; have learn to techniques in this sphere • Welding processes and plastic fabrication • New welding techniques

<i>Practical/general skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to operate in general • General
IT skills
<i>Basic skills/progression (e.g. Word, Excel, communication skills etc.)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic computer skills, Windows • It's always ongoing with computer systems- nothing specific
<i>Company specific skills (systems, databases and software)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ford data bases continually changing- at least 1 month • Specific to industry
<i>Diagnostic skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostics systems for (*manufacturer name*) truck engines. • New diagnostic computers, it will be all it based, we are installing new diagnostic computers in the workshop, fault finding will be all it based, so they will need to know how to use the computer
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles are more dependent on them these days • Specific to industry
<i>Software packages</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer scanners testing machines - specialised programmes
Communication skills
<i>Customers/client services/dealing with customers</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer handling skills negotiations skills • Courtesy and customer service • Always ongoing. Telephone manner and with customers
<i>Teamwork/internal communication/communicating with colleagues</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication between the staff
<i>Face to face</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face
<i>General skills/basic skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General communication skills to ensure they communicate effectively, we need these skills to ensure our staff do the job efficiently • Overcome language barriers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are communicating more with abroad especially Italy so they will need more communication skills generally
Leadership and supervisory skills
<i>Man management skills/management/delegating/team building</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Man management skills
<i>Supervisory skills/supervision</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreman training • I think teamwork and leadership will be more important in the workshop • Teamleading and management
<i>Communication skills/interpersonal skills/passing on of information</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication
<i>Leadership skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passing of info from shop floor to management. • Teamleading and management
<i>General skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think teamwork and leadership will be more important in the workshop
<u>ESTABLISHMENTS WITH FEWER THAN 10 EMPLOYEES (CORE GROUP IS ALL EMPLOYEES)</u>
Technical and practical skills
<i>IT skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update computer skills, diagnosing
<i>New technology including operating new machinery and equipment</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern technology applied to cars is always changing, keep up with progress • New technology • Relevant to new equipment • Glass fitting procedures when new equipment becomes available • New technology every month and need to keep on top of them
<i>The employee's ability to adapt, learn and change</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's just got to be looked at every year, everything changes month-on-month
<i>Diagnostic skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic equipment is more advanced they need mathematics • Improving electrical and diagnostic knowledge • To be able to perform MOT tests on cars.

<i>Changes in legislation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing types of paintwork-changes in legislation regarding solvents
<i>Electronic and engineering knowledge</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving electrical and diagnostic knowledge • Building motor homes; carpentry and woodwork • Electrical skills
<i>Technical skills including mechanical and sewing skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All got to be able to do mots • Mechanical skills • Paint spraying technique skills • For respraying the body work of cars • As new tyres are being developed they have to learn how to fit and remove them
<i>Practical/general skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General skills will need to be improved and NVQ advancement • General overall everyday practices
<i>Nothing/no particular type</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just on the job training • No particular type- its just on going training we need
IT skills
<i>Basic skills/progression (e.g. Word, Excel, communication skills etc.)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General user skills • Basic PC knowledge-get graded • Just basic • Basic use • Everything is becoming computerised, so its just something they need to know
<i>Company specific skills (systems, databases and software)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We're trying to put a training scheme in place to improve IT skills because we are about to install IT so we can build up a database which they will need to use • Currently employees manually log when they start and finish jobs, the company is installing a new computer system where they will have to log jobs, put in hours worked and it will work out wage slips so they will have to be taught how to use this
<i>Diagnostic skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnosis
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They do not need computer skill they wash cars

<i>General</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with it within the industry in a general way.
<i>Industry specific</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of our diagnostic equipment
<u>Communication skills</u>
<i>Customers/client services/dealing with customers</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In house meet and greet. • Customer service skills • I would think telecommunications skills, how to answer the phones and how to deal with customers properly • Communication with the public
<i>Teamwork/internal communication/communicating with colleagues</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamworking skills, communicating amongst staff • Inter staff communication and staff management
<i>Face to face</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with each other • Speaking to people one on one
<i>General skills/basic skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General communication skills • Basic
<i>Telephone manner</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone handling skills • I would think telecommunications skills, how to answer the phones and how to deal with customers properly
<u>Leadership and supervisory skills</u>
<i>Man management skills/management/delegating/team building</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management abilities in workforce motivation • Training another manager
<i>Supervisory skills/supervision</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial management • To be able to work in a team and tackle problems that might arise. • Team building • Today's fitters are tomorrow's management

<i>Leadership skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to show responsibility and show others.
<i>General skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic leadership
<u>CORE GROUP IS 'SALES OCCUPATIONS' (SOC 71)</u>
Communication skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selling insurance
<u>CORE GROUP IS 'TRANSPORT AND MOBILE MACHINE DRIVERS AND OPERATIVES' (SOC 82)</u>
Technical and practical skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New cars require new methods • Ability to use new equipment
Communication skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face • With general public
Leadership and supervision skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading new recruits
<u>Core group is 'Business and public service associate professionals' (SOC 35)</u>
IT skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mailing and sending pictures on the Internet.
Leadership and supervision skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just a general overview of skills

Table 6: Extent of planned reliance by vehicle maintenance establishments on different types of training provision to meet skill improvement needs among core groups of employees

	Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
Own resources, equipment suppliers and other external training suppliers	43	52	47
Own resources & equipment suppliers	14	11	12
Own resources and external (non-equipment) training suppliers	22	22	22
Equipment suppliers and other external training suppliers	3	2	2
Own resources only	8	6	7
External (non-equipment) training suppliers only	7	0	4
No training provision	4	6	5
Total	100	100	100
<i>n</i> =	<i>74</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>137</i>

Notes:

- (a) Refers to ‘All employees’ in the case of establishments with less than ten employees
- (b) Percentages refer to establishments which said that it was either ‘Very likely’ or ‘Quite likely’ that each type of training would be used in the next 12 months.
- (c) No regional differences are statistically significant.

Table 7: Likelihood of using different kinds of external training supplier to meet skill improvement needs of core groups of employees

		Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
		<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
Commercial organisations				
	Very likely	12	11	12
	Quite likely	12	16	14
	Not very likely	18	16	17
	Not at all likely	32	33	33
Non-profit making organisations				
	Very likely	0	5	2
	Quite likely	14	10	12
	Not very likely	20	27	23
	Not at all likely	41	35	38
FE colleges				
	Very likely	22	27	24
	Quite likely	23	27	25
	Not very likely	11	10	10
	Not at all likely	19	13	16
Universities or other Higher Education institutions				
	Very likely	1	2	1
	Quite likely	3	0	1
	Not very likely	12	22	17
	Not at all likely	58	52	55
	<i>n</i> =	<i>74</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>137</i>

Note:

No regional differences are statistically significant.

Table 8: Reasons for using or not using commercial training suppliers to meet skill improvement needs among employees in selected occupations, verbatim responses, establishments in Greater Manchester only

CORE GROUP IS 'SKILLED METAL AND ELECTRICAL TRADES' (SOC 523)
Reasons why employers would consider using commercial training providers
<i>Suitability of courses offered/courses offered at suitable times</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They met our criteria regarding costs
<i>Experience and knowledge of commercial training providers/lack of in-house knowledge</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broader spectrum of experience for our group
<i>To gain knowledge and skills, e.g. Product knowledge, job specific skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase skill levels • They have the specific knowledge
<i>To improve standards/understand new technology/keep up with the industry</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To keep up with the industry
<i>Cost effective</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They met our criteria regarding costs
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because of the industry - quite common - also readily available
Reasons why employers would NOT consider using commercial training providers
<i>No need/not applicable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No need • No need
<i>Cost/charge/too expensive</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost and too far away • Expense. Does not fit in with company policy. • Too expensive, not interested in paying • Cost
<i>They don't provide required training/we're too specialised</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because training is done in-house, and is specific to the group • Not knowledgeable to our industry
<i>Train in-house (inc. Supplier/manufacturer/parent company)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beyond our control – (*manufacturer name*) tells us who to use

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training that we have is generally specified by the manufacturer / also we have used them in the past and their knowledge is not up-to-date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-house training only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We learn more on the job - every car is different
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because training is done in-house, and is specific to the group
<i>Not available locally/location</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost and too far away
<u>ESTABLISHMENTS WITH FEWER THAN 10 EMPLOYEES (CORE GROUP IS ALL EMPLOYEES)</u>
Reasons why employers would consider using commercial training providers
<i>Quality/standard of training</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They train on the products that they use- increases knowledge of technology
<i>Experience and knowledge of commercial training providers/lack of in-house knowledge</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better skills and expertise
<i>Qualifications/certificates</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger people get qualifications and it's on the doorstep
<i>Locality/saving time/reliability</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger people get qualifications and it's on the doorstep
<i>To gain knowledge and skills, e.g. Product knowledge, job specific skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because we are governed by the manufacturers to what training we require we will have to go to them to keep up with changes product knowledge
Reasons why employers would NOT consider using commercial training providers
<i>No need/not applicable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not right for the work we do, but we would if we needed to.
<i>Cost/charge/too expensive</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cost issue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's the cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some are extremely expensive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too expensive

• Cost and quality
• Cost and time
• They don't provide what we need and financial reasons too
• Expense
• Expensive, don't learn a lot
<i>They don't provide required training/we're too specialised</i>
• They don't give good quality training
• Cost and quality
• Never find people who specialise in what we do not many training companies that
• They don't provide what we need and financial reasons too
• Expensive, don't learn a lot
• We don't need the training they have.
<i>Train in-house (inc. Supplier/manufacturer/parent company)</i>
• Already use (*manufacturer name*)
• Use our own
• Everything done in house so no need
• The staff can do training on site
• We train ourselves bucket of water and dirty car is all we need
<i>Not enough time/time</i>
• Cost and time
<i>Our staff are fully trained/arrive fully trained</i>
• No need- employees already proficient
<i>Other</i>
• Time
• For the advancement of the company
• We need them
• We need to
<u>CORE GROUP IS 'SALES OCCUPATIONS' (SOC 71)</u>
Reasons why employers would consider using commercial training suppliers
None listed
Reasons why employers would NOT consider using commercial training suppliers
• In house training

<u>CORE GROUP IS 'TRANSPORT AND MOBILE MACHINE DRIVERS AND OPERATIVES' (SOC 82)</u>
Reasons why employers would consider using commercial training suppliers
None listed
Reasons why employers would NOT consider using commercial training suppliers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not necessary, do it in-house
<u>CORE GROUP IS 'BUSINESS AND PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS' (SOC 35)</u>
Reasons why employers would consider using commercial training suppliers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General knowledge
Reasons why employers would NOT consider using commercial training suppliers
None listed

Table 9: Reasons for using or not using FE colleges to meet skill improvement needs among employees in selected occupations, verbatim responses, establishments in Greater Manchester only

<u>CORE GROUP IS 'SKILLED METAL AND ELECTRICAL TRADES' (SOC 523)</u>
Reasons why employers would consider using FE colleges
<i>For workers and apprentices to gain more knowledge/skills/experience</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More for the administration side of things • It's the only way they can get the knowledge so they can do their job in the workshop on apprenticeships required
<i>Due to the training provided and suitable courses</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost and helps meet our criteria needs • For general training • Need to train young people at college • They are local and they have the specific courses • Their organisational skills
<i>Locality and convenience</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenience and cost • They are local and they have the specific courses • Local • They are local and provide the specific and necessary courses. • Convenient because they can study but whilst they are at work

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are the only people who offer the training needed
<i>Formal qualifications</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprentices to get nationally recognised qualifications
<i>Cost of training</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenience and cost • Cost and helps meet our criteria needs
Reasons why employers would NOT consider using FE colleges
<i>Cost/charge/too expensive</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost
<i>Train in-house (inc. Supplier/manufacturer/parent company)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-house • We'd learn more here than at college • Have own inhouse training
<i>Not enough time/time</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of courses, time and effort
<i>Not available locally/location</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of courses, time and effort
<u>ESTABLISHMENTS WITH FEWER THAN 10 EMPLOYEES (CORE GROUP IS ALL EMPLOYEES)</u>
Reasons why employers would consider using FE colleges
<i>For workers and apprentices to gain more knowledge/skills/experience</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They offer NVQs which is an advantage, they are also able to understand all the jargon practically and technically • Just a way of improving skills generally, the college is local, so they have local knowledge and easier to travel to
<i>Due to the training provided and suitable courses</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We get the relevant training for free • The college's knowledge of the training we need
<i>Locality and convenience</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses offered • For convenience • We have done it for years, they get good results, they are in close proximity

<i>Formal qualifications</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases employee potential; they get the relevant qualifications at the most recognised place. To get the qualification and certificate and for the training as its good quality training We need them for further qualifications for the younger staff Can't get the exams without it
<i>To obtain and have access to technology/equipment</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well we will approach them for it courses, so they can use our it
<i>Benefits to the business e.g. Efficiency, reputation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Just reputation For the advancement of the business
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Already trained
Reasons why employers would NOT consider using FE colleges
<i>No need/not applicable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have no need for them
<i>Cost/charge/too expensive</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost and quality No benefit for industry we're in They don't provide what we need and financial reasons as well Time and expense
<i>They don't provide required training/we're too specialised</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost and quality No other skills they need that are relevant for college courses. They have more practical experience than qualifications Not a great deal of those sorts of places that deal with glass fitting courses. They don't have what we need. They don't provide what we need and financial reasons as well
<i>Train in-house (inc. Supplier/manufacturer/parent company)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because training is provided in house there is no need to go to them It's all on the job training Train our car washers
<i>Not enough time/time</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not enough time. Time and expense

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time is a factor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time; they need people to work in the day and people don't want to go to school
<i>Our staff are fully trained/arrive fully trained</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No need already qualified
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's for managerial really
<u>CORE GROUP IS 'SALES OCCUPATIONS' (SOC 71)</u>
Reasons why employers would consider using FE colleges
None listed
Reasons why employers would NOT consider using FE colleges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large training centre
<u>CORE GROUP IS 'TRANSPORT AND MOBILE MACHINE DRIVERS AND OPERATIVES' (SOC 82)</u>
Reasons why employers would consider using FE colleges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better people, training
Reasons why employers would NOT consider using FE colleges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not relevant
<u>CORE GROUP IS 'BUSINESS AND PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS' (SOC 35)</u>
Reasons why employers would consider using FE colleges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It saves having to do it in-house and the trainees have to take responsibility
Reasons why employers would not consider using FE colleges
None listed

Table 10: Use of external training providers by vehicle maintenance establishments in the last 2-3 years

	Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
A: For technical/practical skills training			
Commercial organisations	31	32	31
Non-profit making organisations	15	13	14
FE colleges	46	49	47
Universities or other HE	4	2	3
Equipment producers/suppliers	58	60	59
B: For generic skills training			
Commercial organisations	7	6	7
Non-profit making organisations	3	0	1
FE colleges	12	19	15
Universities or other HE	1	0	1
<i>n</i> =	<i>74</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>137</i>
Note: No regional differences are statistically significant			

Table 11: Effectiveness of main commercial training providers used for technical/practical skills training in last 2-3 years

	Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
Extent of training providers understanding of companies technical/practical skills needs			
Very good	57	75	65
Quite good	43	20	33
Not very good	0	5	2
Relevance of training providers provision to companies technical or practical skills needs			
Very relevant	70	80	74
Quite relevant	30	15	23
Not very relevant	0	5	2
Flexibility of training provider in adjusting time and mode of technical or practical skills training provision to meet companies needs			
Very flexible	48	50	49
Quite flexible	39	20	30
Not very flexible	9	20	14
Not at all flexible	4	10	7
Cost effectiveness of training providers technical or practical skills training provision			
Very cost-effective	30	25	28
Quite cost-effective	52	70	60
Not very cost-effective	17	5	12
Overall effectiveness of training providers technical practical skills training			
Very effective	48	60	53
Quite effective	52	35	44
Not very effective	0	5	2
Total	100	100	100
<i>n</i> =	23	20	43
Note: No regional differences are statistically significant			

Table 12: Effectiveness of main FE colleges used for technical/practical skills training in last 2-3 years

	Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
Extent of college's understanding of companies technical/practical skills needs			
Very good	44	36	40
Quite good	41	48	45
Not very good	9	16	12
Not at all good	6	0	3
Relevance of college's provision to companies technical or practical skills needs			
Very relevant	50	45	48
Quite relevant	35	48	42
Not very relevant	15	7	11
Flexibility of college in adjusting time and mode of technical or practical skills training provision to meet companies needs			
Very flexible	29	39	34
Quite flexible	35	35	35
Not very flexible	29	16	23
Not at all flexible	6	10	8
Cost effectiveness of college's technical or practical skills training provision			
Very cost-effective	56	45	51
Quite cost-effective	29	45	37
Not very cost-effective	12	3	8
Not at all cost-effective	3	6	5
Overall effectiveness of college's technical practical skills training			
Very effective	41	42	42
Quite effective	47	52	49
Not very effective	9	6	8
Not at all effective	3	0	2
Total	100	100	100
<i>n</i> =	34	31	65
Note: No regional differences are statistically significant			

Table 13: Contacts with vehicle maintenance establishments initiated by external training suppliers

	Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
Course information provided by:			
Local colleges	61***	32	47
Local commercial training providers	47**	27	38
National or non-local providers	35	27	31
Asked views about courses by:			
Local colleges	28	19	24
Other local training providers	11	13	12
National or non-local providers	15	13	14
Involved in curriculum development by:			
Local colleges	16	10	13
Other local training providers	3	3	3
National or non-local providers	5	2	4
Have been offered tailor made courses by:			
Local colleges	9	3	7
Other local training providers	1	5	3
National or non-local providers	7	5	6
<i>n=</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>137</i>
***Regional differences statistically significant at 1% level ** 5% level * 10% level			