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Research Report

Evaluation of Women and Work Sector Pathways Initiative

Prepared for
UK Commission for Employment and Skills

By
IFF Research

November 08

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Research Report prepared for **UK Commission for Employment and Skills** by **IFF Research Ltd**

1   Executive Summary

1.1   This report presents the findings from quantitative surveys of employers and participants engaged with Phase 1 of the Women and Work Sector Pathways initiative. Under this initiative, 9 SSCs ran projects (which incorporated 21 different strands of activity) which were designed to help women develop skills required to gain employment and/or progress within their chosen fields though completion of learning activities (many of which were designed to lead to achievement of a full or part qualification) or receiving mentoring or coaching. In the longer term it was hoped that these projects would contribute to:

   A.   Increasing the number of women entering and remaining with sectors and occupations where they are currently under-represented (and where skills shortages exist);

   B.   Enabling women to progress in sectors and occupations where they are under-represented in higher ranking positions;

   C.   Increasing the earning potential of women in sectors and occupations where they are under-represented (and skills shortages exist);

   D.   Raising the awareness of employers in these sectors of the challenges that women employees and potential employees face and encouraging them to take action.

1.2   The surveys were conducted by telephone and a census of all employers and all participants (for whom we were able to match a telephone number) was undertaken. This resulted in a total of 357 interviews with employers and 817 with participants.

Profile of those engaged

1.3   Overall the initiative has been most successful in engaging with those employers who have training and development infrastructures and / or monitor gender issues in their workforce. Participating employers tended to be medium or large and small/micro businesses were under-represented across the initiative as a whole. More than half of the employers engaged had 50 or more staff (although employers of this size represent only 2% of employers across England as a whole). Just over three in five employers stated that they already monitored their workplace profile, recruitment and/or pay scales with respect to gender.

1.4   Reflecting the size profile of engaged employers, they were better equipped in terms of planning and budgeting for training than is the case across the country as a whole. Three quarters had a training or development plan for their staff (considerably higher than the national average of 48%) and nearly three in five (57%) had a training budget in place (considerably higher than the national average of 35%).

1.5   Just under half of employers had had previous involvement with their SSC (47%). However, if ConstructionSkills employers are removed (since the relationship between the SSC and employers in this case is unique because of its levy-collection role), then the proportion with prior engagement stands at 36%. Hence, while SSCs have understandably focused on those employers that they know, the initiative has served as a means of introducing new employers to the SSC network.

1.6   Only a quarter of employers (excluding ConstructionSkills employers) had received funding from other external sources for training conducted over the previous 2 years. This indicates that, for the most part, the initiative has been successful in engaging employer who are not the 'usual suspects' in terms of receipt of Government funding.

1.7   In terms of occupation, the profile of participants is slightly skewed towards those in management, administrative or elementary occupations. These account for 19%, 26% and 14% of participants respectively (compared with 12%, 20% and 11% of the female workforce of England as a whole). Employees in sales/customer service and personal service roles are correspondingly under-represented among Phase 1 participants. The over-representation of managers is perhaps a surprise given the overall focus of the Women and Work initiative but these participants are focussed in particular strands looking at leadership and long term careers development.

1.8   Average earnings of participants were slightly higher than the national average (reflecting the higher than average proportion of managers). However half earned under £20,000 per annum and one in six earned under £10,000 per annum. A fifth of participants worked part-time.

1.9   The majority of participants were aged over 40 (58%), by comparison just under half of all working women in England are over 40.

1.10   In terms of qualifications achieved prior to involvement the profile of participants roughly matches the national profile, with around a third of participants having a Level 4 qualification (such as an undergraduate degree) or higher. However the initiative has a slightly higher proportion of those holding no qualifications above Level 1 qualification (e.g. a basic skills course) compared to working age females across England.

1.11   The initiative does seem to have been successful in reaching those who would not normally receive training. Of those who were in employment when they started on the initiative, only 30% had received training in the last 12 months (compared to 63% on average across the country as a whole). Only half had **ever** received off-the-job training from their employer. This is despite the fact that the employers that they worked for were more likely than average to have structured planning for training.

1.12   Evidence that the initiative was successful in reaching women in sectors where they face particular challenges. Of Women and Work participants:

➢   62% agreed that it was harder for women than men to progress to senior roles in their industry;

➢   58% agreed that there were few successful female role models in their industry;

➢   66% agreed that within their organisation there was a clustering of women in low-paid jobs;

➢   61% agreed that there were a low proportion of women in senior management in their organisation;

➢   44% agreed that women were less likely to progress within their organisation than men;

➢   45% agreed that their own job role is traditionally low-paid;

➢   39% agreed that there was no history of women progressing form their role to more senior roles.

Getting involved with the initiative

1.13   Both employers and participants were positive and enthusiastic about participation at the point they got involved; only a few had concerns. Small minorities of participants stated that they felt that they didn't need to develop their skills (17%) or that their employer wanted them to take part but they weren't keen (17%). Reassuringly, few of those who had concerns stated that these turned out to be a big issue (i.e. one that greatly impacted on the success of the initiative for them).

1.14   In terms of objectives from participating, increasing confidence and developing new skills were most likely to be the key objectives of taking part for both employers and participants – although a range of other factors were also important. Reasonable minorities were also looking to change their job role through the initiative – 42% of participants stated that gaining more responsibility at work was a major objective, 36% that obtaining a salary increase was a major objective and 28% that securing a promotion was a major objective. One in five (20%) stated that finding a better job in another organisation was a key objective for them.

1.15   There was some differentiation in objectives among participants following the lines of skill, pay, occupation and qualification – with those at the lower ends of the scale more likely to be aiming for these concrete outcomes.

1.16   Large proportions of employers were also looking to the initiative to improve motivation of staff (72% stated this was a majority objective), increase retention (66%) and raise career aspirations of female employees (63%).

Views on training and development received

1.17   For the slight majority of participants, their experience of the initiative involved a training course at the premises or place of work of their employer (58%). Approaching two fifths (38%) had attended a training course off-site.

1.18   Over two fifths of all participants reported that their programme involved a progress review (44%), with an identical proportion recalling having received an Individual Training Plan.

1.19   For almost half (45%), involvement with the programme had involved some career development materials (whether online or paper based). Smaller proportions had specifically produced or received a career development plan (27%) or been part of a mentor scheme (26%).

1.20   Employers generally found the strand(s) that they participated in to be flexible in terms of delivery (76% stated that it was very or fairly flexible) and content (66% stated that content was very or fairly flexible). Perceptions of flexibility were particularly high among those employers who appeared to be less engaged in training (evidenced by the fact that they did not have training plans or training budgets in place).

1.21   The sector knowledge of SSCs is evident in employer views on the fit of the programme to the requirements of their sector. Half (52%) agreed that the initiative demonstrated excellent understanding of the key skills requirements of their sector (and 39% agreed slightly). A similar proportion agreed that the initiative demonstrated excellent understanding of working patterns in the sector and how to organise training to meet their needs (51% agreed strongly that this was the case and 37% agreed slightly).

1.22   Overall 66% of employers were very satisfied with their involvement with the initiative and 30% were fairly satisfied. Half said that they would proactively recommend the initiative and most of the remainder said that they would speak positively about their experience if asked. There is also evidence that the initiative has served to build strong links between SSCs and employers with 61% stating that they would be very positive about working with the SSC again on similar projects in the future.

1.23   Satisfaction levels were slightly lower among participants themselves with half (51%) stating that they were very satisfied with their experience and 39% that they were fairly satisfied. Half (51%) stated that they would be very positive about recommending the initiative to other women.

1.24   Just under one in five participants stated that they did not feel supported through their time with the Women and Work initiative. Those that did not feel supported were most likely to state that they would have liked better-skilled training providers, better communication or follow-up from their training provider and greater accessibility/flexibility in terms of delivery.

Outcomes and impact

1.25   Employers were very positive about the outcomes achieved from their involvement with Women and Work. From an employer perspective, the proportions of employers (who had had at least one participant complete their involvement at the time of interview) considering that the initiative had been **very** successful were:

➢   67% for increasing the confidence of participants;

➢   62% for meeting previously identified skills gaps;

➢   56% for developing new technical skills;

➢   47% for increasing staff motivation;

➢   47% for increasing retention;

➢   44% for raising career aspirations.

1.26   Overall satisfaction levels with the programme amongst among both employers and participants are high, with nine in ten (90%) participants almost all (96%) employers saying they were quite or very satisfied.

1.27   Views on the success of Women and Work in skills development was particularly high among those that demonstrated little engagement with training (because they had neither a training plan or budget) or had not had pervious contact with their SSC.

1.28   Some of the benefits of taking part in the initiative could be considered to be 'hard outcomes' (we have classified those that have led to changes in job role, pay increases or a qualification). Overall 79% of women participating in the initiative achieved one of these outcomes and half (53%) received

more than one hard outcome. A total of 17% of participants had achieved a pay increase as a result of participation and 15% had received a promotion. Although these proportions are not as large as the proportions stating that these were objectives of their participation, the survey was conducted relatively shortly after participation for some (and some of those who had not achieved their objectives felt that it was more likely to happen in the future as a result of their participation).

1.29   In addition to 'hard outcomes', there were considerable changes in confidence and technical skills as a result of participation:

> 83% reported an increase in confidence as a result of their involvement;

> 68% reported an increase in technical skills;

> 65% reporting an increase in management skills.

1.30   Participants in lower skills, machine operative or elementary occupations were particularly likely to report that their confidence had increased **greatly** (two-fifths compared to a third for other occupations).

1.31   Reflecting the perceptions of employers discussed above, the Women and Work initiative has also had considerable impact in changing the attitudes of women towards the organisation in which they work with 70% stating that they are more likely to remain with the organisation and 74% stating that they have more motivation. This may be partly resulting from the fact that two thirds (64%) feel that their awareness of the opportunities available to them for progression in their organisation has increased. Furthermore 70% report that the extent to which they feel supported by others at the organisation has increased and 65% believe that they have received greater recognition from their employer for their skills since they have taken part.

1.32   Again those in lower paid or lower skilled roles were significantly more likely to find the initiative successful in **greatly** increasing the extent to which they feel supported and the recognition they believe they receive from colleagues and management.

1.33   There is also evidence of a longer-term shift in attitudes towards training indicating that the Women and Work initiative may have served to fuel a ongoing desire for development and progression. Almost nine in ten (86%) participants stated that their willingness to participate in future training had increased to at least some extent (51% greatly) and 84% stated that their awareness of the benefits of undertaking training had increased to at least some extent (44% greatly).

1.34   Similarly employers were positive about continuing participation, with 93% saying they would be very or fairly likely to do so. The vast majority (91%) also reported that they would be positive about working with the relevant SSC again in the future.

Additionality

1.35   In the context of the positive findings outlined above, it is obviously key to understand to what extent the training and development activity that took place would have happened without the existence of the Women and Work strands. This is obviously difficult to do but we did ask direct questions of both employers and participants about their likelihood to have undertaken the same or similar training if the strand(s) they were involved with had not been available.

1.36   For over half of employers (55%), the training and development activity represented something that they had either never thought of providing for their female employees or had considered in the past

and decided against. A further fifth (20%) had only a vague plan to offer this. Of the 19% that were already providing something similar or actively looking to arrange this, 17% state that without Women and Work they would have involved fewer women in this sort of activity and 30% stated that the training would probably have been narrower in scope.

1.37   Among participants themselves, 41% stated that they would not have undertaken this sort of activity if the Women and Work programme had not been available and a further third felt that something similar might have happened for them but at a later date. A quarter (25%) felt that without Women and Work, they would have taken part in another similar programme at approximately the same time. Older women were particularly likely to say that without Women and Work they would not have been involved in this sort of activity at all.

Conclusions

1.38   There is considerable evidence to suggest that the Women in Work programme has been successful in achieving its medium-term objectives.

A. Increasing the number of women entering and remaining with sectors and occupations where they are currently under-represented (and where skills shortages exist);

1.39   Evidence of meeting this objective is apparent in the fact that:

➢   70% of participants stated that they are more likely to remain with the organisation as a result of having taken part in Women and Work;

➢   62% of employers state that the initiative has been **very** successful in meeting previously identified skills gaps;

B. Enabling women to progress in sectors and occupations where they are under-represented in higher ranking positions;

1.40   Evidence of meeting this objective is apparent in the fact that:

➢   15% had received a promotion (and a further 23% felt this was more likely to happen as a result of their involvement) and 13% had secured a job that they wanted in another organisation.

➢   In addition 42% stated that they had been given more responsibility in their job than they had previously

➢   two thirds (64%) feel that their awareness of the opportunities available to them for progression in their organisation has increased.

C. Increasing the earning potential of women in sectors and occupations where they are under-represented (and skills shortages exist);

1.41   Supporting the achievement of this objective is the fact that:

➢   Just under a fifth (17%) of those who has participated in Women and Work had achieved a pay increase (and a further 21% felt that this was more likely to happen in the future);

D. Raising the awareness of employers in these sectors of the challenges that women employees and potential employees face and encouraging them to take action.

1.42   Evidence of progress towards this objective is apparent in the fact that, as a result of involvement, :

➢   28% of employers stated that they are much more likely to invest in training specifically aimed in the future;

➢ 24% stated that they are much more likely to take action to ensure a greater proportion of women reach management positions

➢ 24% stated that they are much more likely to monitor the progression of women within the organisation.

➢ Half (49%) of employers stated that their involvement has had a longer-term impact on attitudes towards the employment and progression of women within their organisation.

1.43 However, there is evidence of some displacement activity with a quarter of participants (25%) and a fifth of employers (20%) stating that they would have undertaken the training and development activity delivered under Women and Work even if the programme had not been available.

2   Background, introduction and methodology

2.1   The Equal Pay Act of 1970 granted individuals the right to have the same contractual pay and benefits as a person of the opposite sex in the same employment, in cases where men and women are doing

> ➢   Like work.
> ➢   Work considered to be equivalent under an analytical job evaluation study.
> ➢   Work that is proved to be of equal value.

2.2   The Equal Pay Act marked the first attempt to legislate to close the gaps between the pay and benefits that men and women receive in the world of work. However, working to ensure equal reward within the same employers is only part of the story. On top of the fact that women have historically received a poorer return at the level of individual employers, they have been more likely to be employed by particular types of employers that offer lower rates of pay and fewer progression opportunities.

2.3   The Women in Work Commission reported in February 2006 that despite considerable progress in ironing out gender inequalities in the workplace over the last 30 or so years since the introduction of the Act, there was still work to be done in terms of widening the horizons of women and ensuring that they are able to achieve their full potential in jobs across the employment spectrum.

2.4   The Commission found that women were still clustered into a relatively narrow range of (largely low-paying) occupations and particularly those that are more likely to offer opportunities to work part-time. The Commission estimated that removing barriers to women working in occupations traditionally filled by men and increasing the participation of women in the labour market per se could be worth between £15 billion and £23 billion or 1.3 to 2.0 per cent of GDP.

2.5   The Commission's report identified a range of activities that could help to ensure that women play a fuller role in the economy from drawing up guidance for teachers and early childcare workers to ensure that the horizons of small children are not limited by gender stereotypes through to establishing a UK-wide part-time work change programme to open-up the highest paid jobs (and those that are stepping-stones to these posts) to those who wish to work part-time.

2.6   A particular role for the Sector Skills Councils in helping to even out discrepancies in the labour market was also identified in the Commission's report. The Commission suggested that the SSCs should work with employers to promote Apprenticeships for women in industries where there are skills shortages and that plans to tackle gender segregation of jobs should be built into every Sector Skills Agreement. The report suggested that the SSCs had a role to play in identifying best practice on career development and working with partner employers to create career paths. It recommended that the SSCs should develop strategies to recruit and retain women into non-traditional jobs and to particularly focus on ensuring career progression for those working part-time.

2.7   Out of these recommendations has grown the Women and Work Sector Pathways Initiative which began in April 2006. The first phase of the initiative ran from April 2006 until March 2008 and aimed to test new career pathways for women in areas of the economy where they are under-represented. This initiative was delivered through 9 SSCs (4 who started delivering in November/December 2006 and a further 5 who started between January and March 2007) and administered by the SSDA.

2.8 Each SSC ran a project tailored to their particular sector. Each project consisted of between 1 and 3 strands of activity (and to some extent each of these strands was a project in its own right). Across all 9 participating SSCs, there were 21 strands of activity inputting to the Sector Pathways Initiative.

2.9 The wide-ranging activities undertaken by SSCs were designed to help women develop skills required to gain employment and/or progress within their chosen fields though completion of learning activities (many of which were designed to lead to achievement of a full or part qualification) or receiving mentoring or coaching. In the longer term it was hoped that these projects would contribute to:

➢ Increasing the number of women entering and remaining with sectors and occupations where they are currently under-represented (and where skills shortages exist);

➢ Enabling women to progress in sectors and occupations where they are under-represented in higher ranking positions;

➢ Increasing the earning potential of women in sectors and occupations where they are under-represented (and skills shortages exist);

➢ Raising the awareness of employers in these sectors of the challenges that women employees and potential employees face and encouraging them to take action.

2.10 The SSDA (as it was then), commissioned IFF Research to undertake quantitative work among participating employers and individuals to input into an evaluation of the Women and Work Sector Pathways Initiative as a whole. These studies were designed to complement case study work that ran concurrently.

2.11 Since this study was commissioned the SSDA, which originally managed the Women and Work initiative has merged with the National Employment Panel to become the new UK Commission for Employment and Skills. UKCES has retained management of the initiative and is now taking the lead in embedding the learning from the pilot phase into the longer term programme. These quantitative studies, as part of the overall evaluation, will now primarily help to identify particular types of projects that have worked well and elements of best practice that can be used to inform decisions about how monies are spent going forward.

2.12 This report looks at the extent to which progress has been made towards the four aims of the initiative (detailed in 2.9 above), both in terms of depth (the change that participation has generated within organisations and among individuals) and breadth (the range of employers and participants reached, whether they are the 'usual suspects' or those that are new to such programmes) of impact.

Objectives

2.13   The specific objectives of the employer survey were to:

> ➢   To look at employer perceptions and experiences of the Initiative;
>
> ➢   Explore the outputs, outcomes and impacts of the Initiative on employers;
>
> ➢   To identify any change in employer practices that have resulted from participation (and the extent to which this might be continued in the future);
>
> ➢   To assess the added value of the strands (i.e. the extent to which they resulted in activity that would not otherwise have taken place);
>
> ➢   To assess the value for money of the Initiative from an employer perspective (i.e. their views on the return on investment for them individually);
>
> ➢   To look at variations in all of the above by projects (i.e. at the level of SSCs), and by groups of strands (i.e. type of activity).

2.14   The specific objectives of the survey of individuals were to:

> ➢   To look at individual perceptions and experiences of the Initiative;
>
> ➢   Explore the outputs, outcomes and impacts of the Initiative on individuals (and the extent to which these will be sustained / developed further in the future);
>
> ➢   To assess the added value of the strands (i.e. the extent to which they resulted in activity that would not otherwise have taken place);
>
> ➢   To look at variations in all of the above by projects (i.e. at the level of SSCs), and by groups of strands (i.e. type of activity).

2.15   As far as is possible, the surveys also look to make an assessment of the additionality delivered by the Women and Work Initiative – i.e. the extent to which it brought about (positive) outcomes which might not otherwise have taken place.

Methodology

2.16   Data was collected through telephone surveys with both employers and participants. The sample for both employers and participants was obtained from the Women and Work database held by UKCES. This database is a full record of involvement with the Phase 1 initiative throughout its life (i.e. from April 2006 to March 2008). The original databases supplied contained details for 1,112 employers and 8,797 individuals.

2.17   Of the employers on the database, we had full contact details for 920 who formed the starting sample for the telephone survey.

2.18   As no telephone numbers were captured for the participants on the database we undertook a telephone matching exercise. Through this process, we were able to obtain telephone numbers for 2,210 participants[1].

2.19   With relatively small numbers of usable contacts available, a census approach was taken for both the employer and participant surveys.

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[1] In some cases the contact details provided on the database were not sufficient for us to attempt to obtain a telephone match (a minimum of surname, first line of address and postcode are required).

2.20   Introduction letters were sent to all the employers. Only a handful requested to be excluded from the research, giving a starting sample of 915.

2.21   Prior to participants being contacted about the research, they were given the opportunity to opt-out of the study. Letters were sent out to all those selected to take part which will gave a dedicated phone number at IFF that they could call if they did not wish to be contacted further. This introductory letter was tailored so that the name used for the strand was one participants should recognise. The level of opt outs was low at just 6%, leaving us with a starting sample of 2,080 participants.

2.22   As shown in Figure 2.1, around a quarter of employers and over a fifth of participants stated that they had not taken part in the initiative. In the case of employers, some stated that although they had registered interest they had not actually participated in the initiative. In some larger employers where no named contact was given or where the named contact had left or changed roles, this lack of recall may simply indicate that knowledge of participation did not extend throughout the organisation. In some cases where participants did not recall taking part in the initiative, this may be a function of the time lag between participation and being interviewed (which could be up to 2 years). In other cases it may reflect the fact that the training and development that they received was not positioned as being part of the Women and Work initiative. (To try to stimulate recall as far as possible participants were prompted with the timing of their involvement with the initiative and (where appropriate) with the training provider that delivered the training component of the initiative.

Figure 2.1: Sampling and response rates

Employers	On database – excluding duplicates	Participants
1112		8797
	Have contact details or able to tele-match	
920 – 83%		2210 – 25%
	No opt out received	
915 – 99%		2080 – 94%
	Contact known and number usable	
862 – 94%		1895 – 91%
	Remembered and participated	
647 – 75%		1481 – 78%
	Definite outcome	
457 – 71%		1033 – 70%
	Completed interview	
357 – 78%		817 – 79%
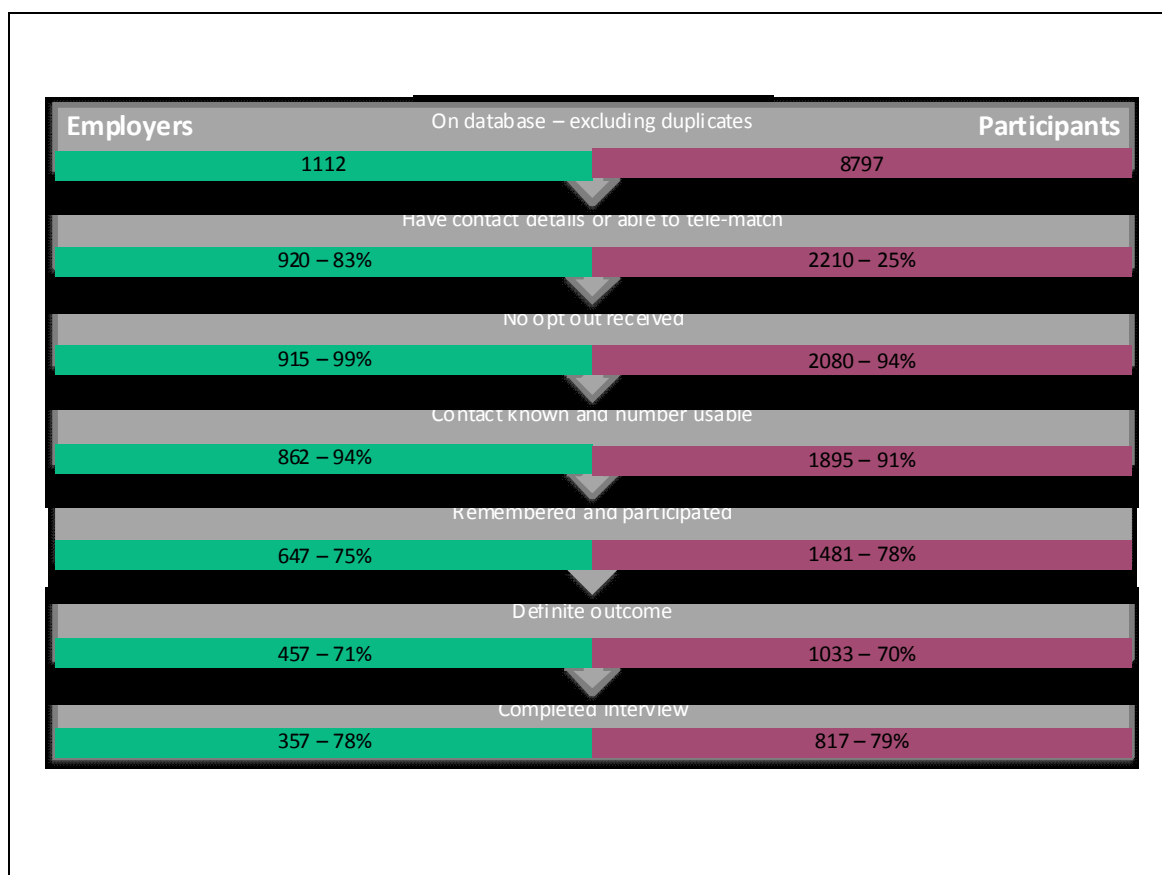
2.23   Excellent response rates were achieved among both employers and participants (78% and 79% respectively), indicating that when involvement with the initiative was acknowledged the majority

were happy to be interviewed. Overall 817 interviews were completed with participants, and 357 with employers.

Questionnaire design

2.24   Interviews with employers and participants lasted 20 minutes on average.

2.25   The development of the questionnaires was informed by:

> Initial tele-depths with SSC project leads – to understand the nature of activities undertaken within each strand and identify a name employers and participants on each strand would recognise;

> A pilot study with participants and employers consisting of a small number of telephone interviews to allow flow and understanding to be gauged. Following this pilot, some refinements were made to the questionnaire and the overall length was reduced slightly.

2.26   In some cases the employers interviewed represented multi-site organisations. These employers were asked to discuss the involvement that their organisation had had with the Women and Work initiative as broadly as they personally had knowledge of / responsibility for; in some instances this meant that the contact interviewed spoke about their site only and in other cases about several sites or even the whole organisation. As such the sample is neither a pure 'establishment-based' or 'organisation-based' sample but it reflects the nature of contacts that SSCs have had with the employers that they have engaged.

2.27   A fifth of employers interviewed had participants spread across more than one site. A small proportion of these indicated they could not answer for all sites, so the data that is based on employers with participants at more than one site accounts for 18% of all interviews. The remaining 82% of interviews involved discussions in relation to one site only.

Profile and weighting

2.28   As discussed above a census approach was taken for both participant and employer elements, so there were no specific quota targets for strands or projects (SSCs) as the aim was to maximise the total number of interviews.

2.29   By SSC completed interviews fell out as detailed in Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.3. Differences in the availability of contact details and in response rates meant that the profile of interviews achieved by SSC did not exactly match the population as a whole. On the employer side both Lantra and Skills for Logistics accounted for a disproportionately large number of interviews (Lantra: 36% of interviews compared with 26% of all participating employers, Skills for Logistics: 22% of interviews compared with 17% of participating employers) while ConstructionSkills employers were underrepresented (they account for 8% of interviews but 26% of all participating employers). Representation of other SSCs was roughly in line with their proportion of the database.

Figure 2.2 Profile of employers by SSC / project[2]

SSC	number of interviews	% of interviews	% of database
Lantra	129	36%	26%
Skills for Logistics	79	22%	17%
Skillfast UK	48	13%	12%
Asset Skills	32	9%	7%
Construction Skills	28	8%	26%
Improve	25	7%	7%
Automotive Skills	14	4%	4%
Energy & Utility Skills	1	*%	1%
SEMTA	1	*%	1%

Figure 2.3 Profile of participants by SSC / project

Strand	number of interviews	% of interviews	% of database
Lantra	169	21%	12%
Construction Skills	58	19%	26%
Asset Skills	158	19%	22%
Automotive Skills	147	18%	18%
Skillfast UK	80	10%	11%
Skills for Logistics	31	4%	3%
SEMTA	29	4%	3%
Improve	26	3%	4%
Energy & Utility Skills	19	2%	2%

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[2] More interviews were conducted with employers and participants from some SSCs than others, as shown in figures 2.2 and 2.3 above.

2.30   Similarly among participants, while the profile of achieved interviews broadly matched the population of participants, a greater proportion of interviews were completed with those who had taken part in the Lantra strand compared to the overall population (21% of interviews, 12% of all participants), and again fewer with those who had participated in a ConstructionSkills strand (19% of interviews, 26% of all participants).

2.31   This pattern is obviously reflected when SSC activity is broken down by strand. Interviews with employers who had participants on *Training Needs Analysis (Lantra)* made up 36% of all interviews compared to 26% of all participating employers and those who had employees on the *LGV Licences (Skills for Logistics)* programme accounted for 21% of interviews versus 16% of all participating employers (Figure 2.5). Employers who had been involved with the *Career Progression and Upskilling (ConstructionSkills)* strand were under represented, accounting for only 7% of interviews compared to 24% of the employer database as a whole.

2.32   As with employers, among participants *Training Needs Analysis (Lantra)* was over represented in the completed interviews (21% compared to 12% of all participants) and *Career Progression and Upskilling (ConstructionSkills)* was under represented, although not to such an extent (18% of interviews compared with 24% of all participants). *Team Leader Roles (Asset Skills)* also accounted for a lower proportion of interviews than of participants as a whole with 6% of interviews compared to 11% of the total participant database.

Figure 2.4: Profile of employers by strand

Strand	Approach	% of interviews	% of database
Training needs analysis (Lantra)	Flexible	36%	26%
LGV licences (Skills for Logistics)	Fixed	21%	16%
Gain additional skills (Skillfast UK)	Flexible	8%	5%
Career progression & up skilling (Construction Skills)	Flexible	7%	24%
Secondment to senior role (Skillfast UK)	Flexible	7%	5%
Supervisory & managerial (Improve)	Flexible	7%	7%
Develop career plans (Asset Skills)	Flexible	5%	4%
Team leader roles (Asset Skills)	Flexible	4%	3%
Customer services skills coaches (Automotive Skills)	Flexible	4%	4%
Enhanced literacy / numeracy skills (Asset Skills)	Fixed	4%	2%
Fashion technical training (Skillfast UK)	Flexible	3%	5%
Graduate routeways (Construction Skills)	Flexible	2%	5%
Leadership & management (Automotive Skills)	Flexible	2%	2%
New recruitment (Automotive Skills)	Flexible	1%	1%
Become trainers (Skillfast UK)	Flexible	1%	*%
Manager roles (Skills for Logistics)	Fixed	1%	1%
Warehouse Operatives (Skills for Logistics)	Flexible	1%	1%
Personal Leadership (Energy & Utility Skills)	Flexible	1%	*%
Long term careers development (SEMTA)	Fixed	*%	1%

Figure 2.5: Profile of participants by strand

Strand	Approach	% of interviews	% of database
Training needs analysis (Lantra)	Flexible	21%	12%
Career progression & up skilling (Construction Skills)	Flexible	18%	24%
Customer services skills coaches (Automotive Skills)	Flexible	16%	16%
Develop career plans (Asset Skills)	Flexible	7%	5%
Gain additional skills (Skillfast UK)	Flexible	7%	7%
Team leader roles (Asset Skills)	Flexible	6%	11%
Enhanced literacy / numeracy skills (Asset Skills)	Fixed	6%	6%
LGV licences (Skills for Logistics)	Fixed	4%	2%
Long term careers development (SEMTA)	Fixed	4%	3%
Supervisory & managerial (Improve)	Flexible	3%	4%
Personal Leadership (Energy & Utility Skills)	Flexible	2%	2%
Secondment to senior role (Skillfast UK)	Flexible	2%	3%
Leadership & management (Automotive Skills)	Flexible	1%	2%
Graduate routeways (Construction Skills)	Flexible	1%	2%
Fashion technical training (Skillfast UK)	Flexible	1%	1%
Become trainers (Skillfast UK)	Flexible	*%	*%
New recruitment (Automotive Skills)	Flexible	*%	*%
Manager roles (Skills for Logistics)	Fixed	*%	*%
Warehouse Operatives (Skills for Logistics)	Flexible	-%	*%

2.33   In order to correct for the imbalances outlined above, both sets of data were weighted to reflect the actual proportion of participants and employers involved in each strand (and therefore by project/SSC) on the database. This ensures that the 'total' figures presented reflect the whole population of employers / participants as far as is possible. Unless indicated otherwise the figures used throughout this report are weighted.

2.34   Following interviews with SSC project leads the strands have been divided into those that are fixed and those that are a flexible offer. Grouping the strands in this way allows for sub group analysis so it is possible to compare the two groups. Figure 2.4 above indicates which strands fall into each category. As shown in Figure 2.6, when weighted the majority of participants and employers were involved with flexible strands (83% and 72% respectively).

Figure 2.6 Profile of employers by approach

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)   Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
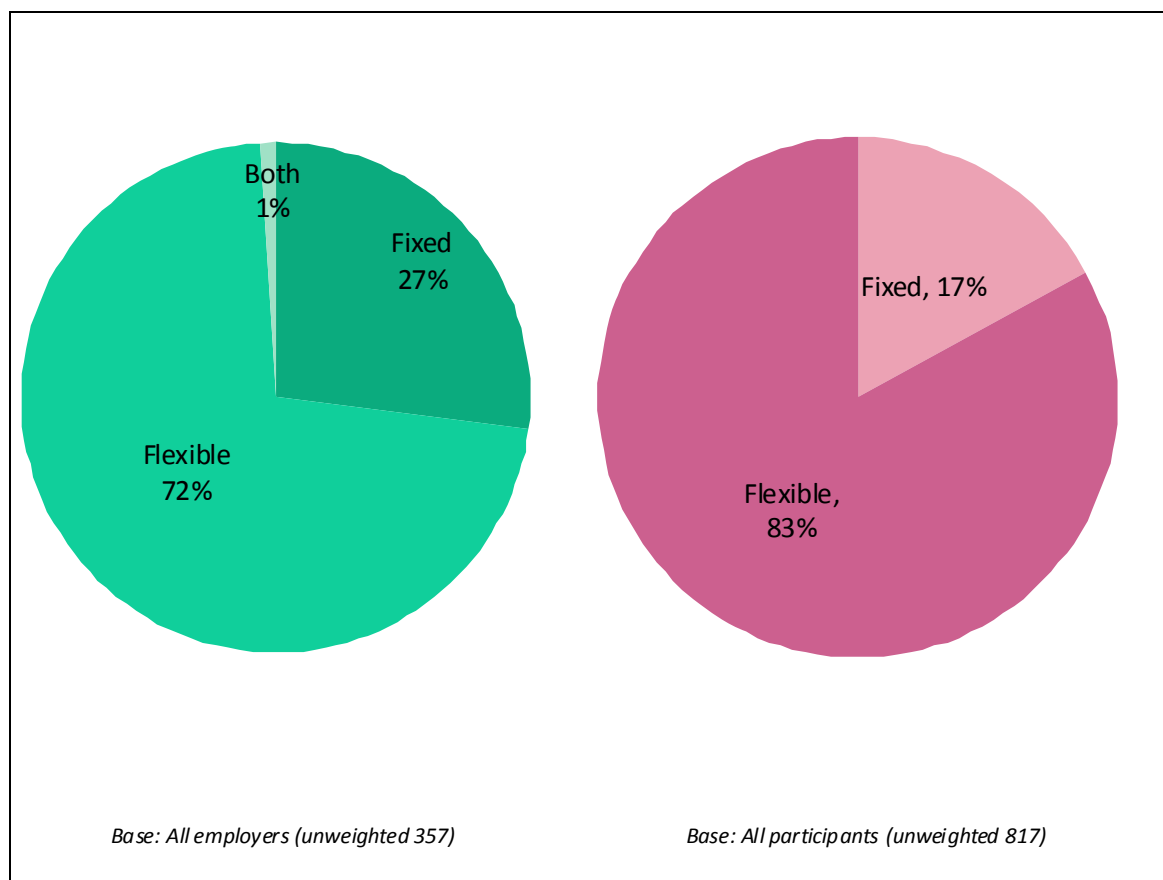
2.35   Just under a tenth of employers (9%) had employees who participated in more than one strand (all were within the same project / SSC). 7% were involved with two strands, and 2% with three strands. Those involved with Automotive Skills, Asset Skills or Skillfast UK were significantly more likely to be involved in multiple strands than those engaged with Skills for Logistics or ConstructionSkills (46%, 28%, 25% compared with 1% and 9% respectively). Other SSCs only offered one strand.

Report Structure

2.36   The rest of this report consists of seven chapters of findings as follows:

➢   Chapter three – Who did the initiative reach?

➢   Chapter four – How and why did employers and participants get involved?

➢   Chapter five – What did employer and participants think about the training and development?

➢   Chapter six – Non- completers

➢   Chapter seven – What benefits and outcomes has the initiative delivered?

➢   Chapter eight - How much training and development did the initiative deliver which would not have happened anyway?

➢   Chapter nine - Conclusions

3   Who did the initiative reach?

3.1   In this chapter we look at the nature of employers and participants that were engaged with the Phase 1 Women and Work Sector Pathways initiative. In terms of employers we look at their size, the nature of their workforce, the learning and training infrastructure that they have in place and whether or not they had previous contact with the SSC leading the strand(s) they were involved with. In the case of participants we look at demographics, employment status and pay as well as previous involvement with training and highest level of qualification obtained prior to involvement win the initiative.

Employers: size

3.2   Large business (those with 250 staff or more) and medium businesses (those with between 50 and 249 staff) were far more likely to be involved in the initiative than micro businesses (one to nine employees) or small businesses (ten to 49 staff). Indeed over half (55%) of those involved with the initiative were large or medium businesses, although they only make up 3% of employers in England.[3] One in three (35%) of those employers involved with the initiative were large companies with over 250 staff. This is a far higher proportion of than in the business proportion as a whole - only 1% of employers in England have 250 staff or more. One in five (20%) of employers involved were medium sized businesses, while only 2% of English companies overall fit into this size bracket.[4]

Figure 3.1 Number of staff in organisation

Base: All employers (weighted 357)

Figure excludes sole proprietorships and companies comprising only the self-employed

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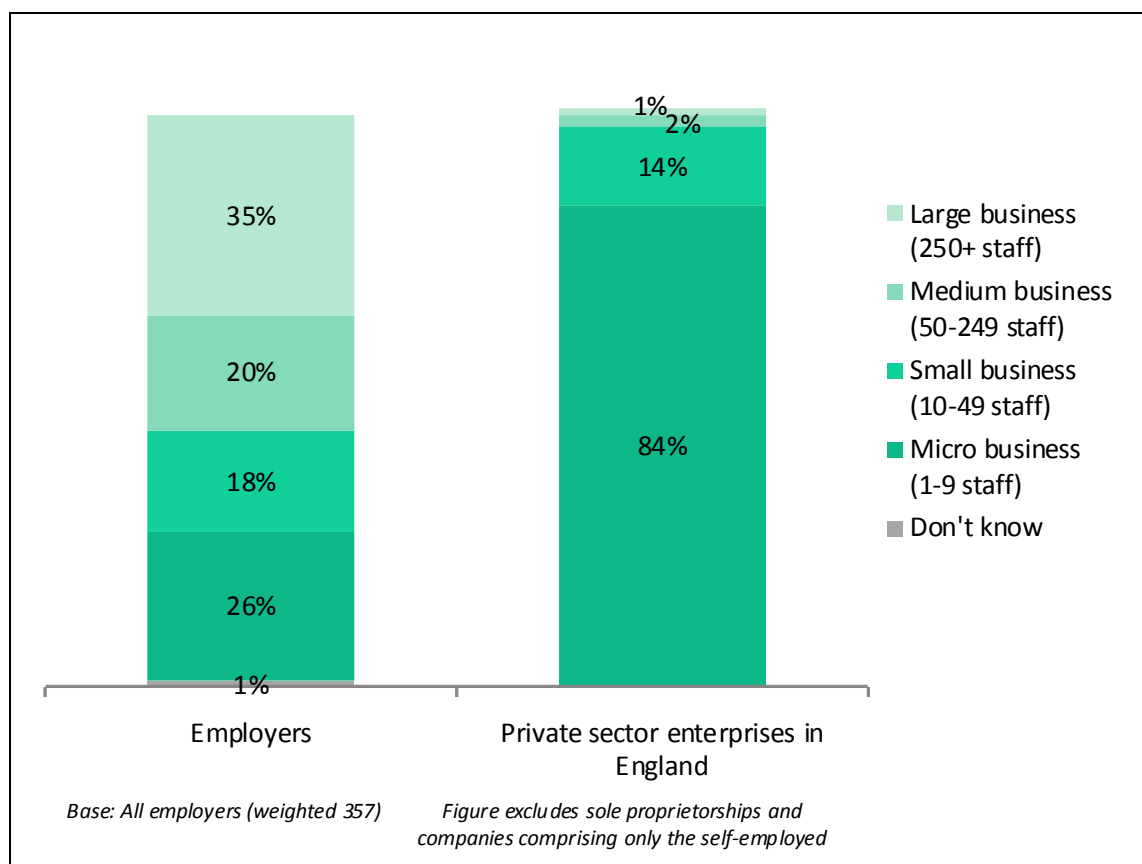
[3] SME STATISTICS 2007, Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform, Enterprise Directorate Analytical Unit. Figure excludes sole proprietorships and partnerships comprising only the self-employed.

[4] All company size figures from SME STATISTICS 2007, Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform, Enterprise Directorate Analytical Unit. Figure excludes sole proprietorships and partnerships comprising only the self-employed.

3.3   Furthermore one in ten (11%) of those involved were very large companies (with over 1,000 members of staff). Nearly a third (28%) of both those that were part of the Asset Skills or the Improve projects were in this category - a significant difference compared to all the other SSCs although Energy and Utility Skills and SEMTA had engaged entirely with employers of this size but due to small base sizes the difference is not necessarily significant. Overall in England less than 1% of employers would be in this size band.[5]

3.4   This has resulted in small and micro businesses being underrepresented among those engaged with the initiative – overall they make up 97% of employers in England but only 44% of employers involved were this size.[6]

3.5   Employers were fairly evenly split between those who had one site (55%) and more than one site (45%) in England. Overall a fifth of those interviewed were responsible for participants across more than one site and 25% of employers worked for multi-site organisations but only discussed participants at their own site.

3.6   Most commonly employers sponsored one participant in the initiative (42%). A quarter had between two and four participants and the remaining third had more than five employees take part, with a small proportion (6%) of these having more than 50 participants (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.2: Number of participants per employer

Base: All employers (weighted 357)
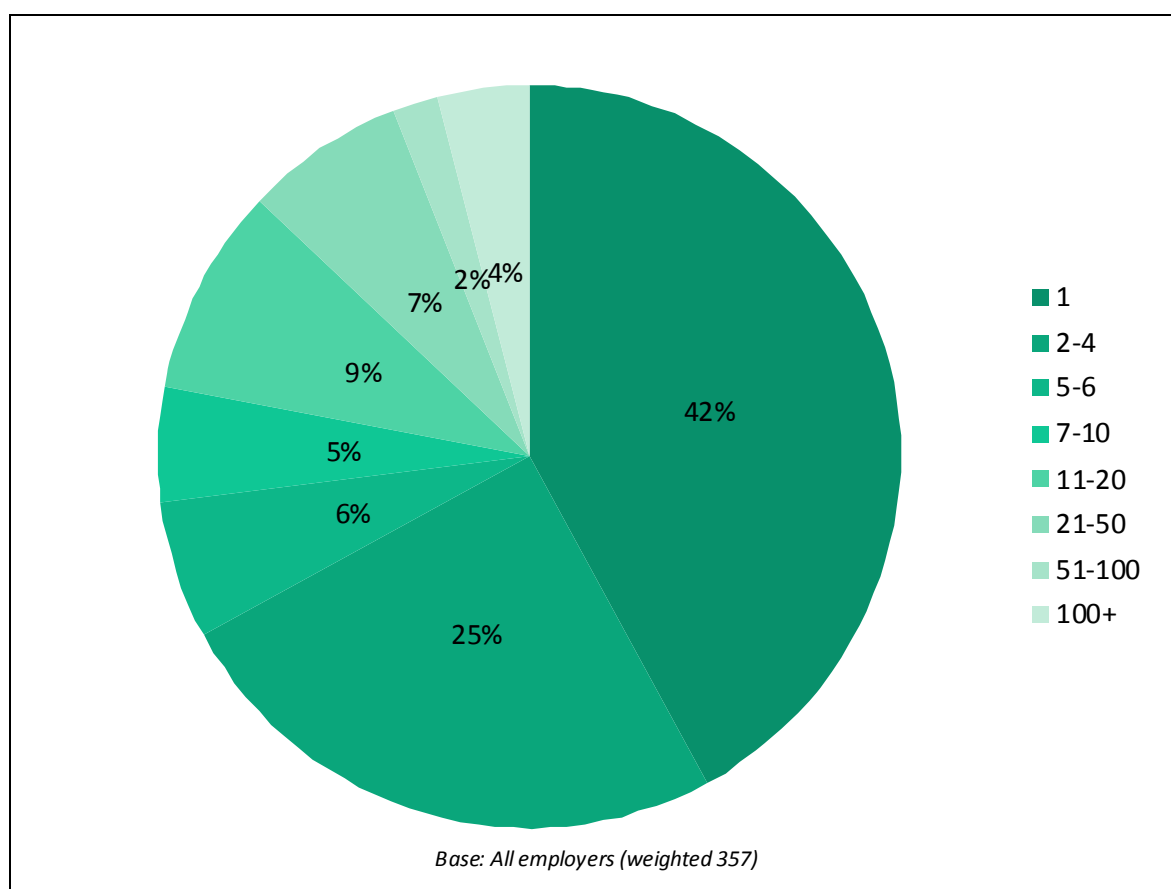
[5] SME STATISTICS 2007, Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform, Enterprise Directorate Analytical Unit. Figure excludes sole proprietorships and partnerships comprising only the self-employed.

[6] SME STATISTICS 2007, Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform, Enterprise Directorate Analytical Unit. Figure excludes sole proprietorships and partnerships comprising only the self-employed.

3.7   The ConstructionSkills project in particular appeared to secure larger groups from individual workplaces. None of their employers had fewer than five participants and only 4% had between five and nine members of staff take part. They were also significantly more likely to have engaged with employers who had a number of workplaces in England (71% multi site). A total of 12% of ConstructionSkills employers supported 100 or more female employees through the initiative (compared with just 1% among other SSCs as a whole).

3.8   Similarly, all Automotive Skills employers had at least 40 participants.

3.9   Both Lantra and Skills for Logistics employers were significantly more likely to be smaller, with around a third having five or fewer employees - 43% and 34% respectively. Those who had participated in a Skills for Logistics, Lantra or Skillfast UK strand were also more likely to be single site than multi site (80%, 73%, 70% were single site). Logically following from the above those included on *Warehouse Operatives (Skills for Logistics)* or *Training Needs Analysis (Lantra)* were significantly more likely to have just the one participant (100% and 60% respectively compared to 42% overall).

3.10   Automotive Skills was the most likely to have employers involved with more than one strand, with almost half (46%) having involvement in more than one part of the project. Around a quarter of Asset Skills and Skillfast UK employers were also multi strand (28% and 25% respectively) while the other SSCs that offered more than one strand (ConstructionSkills and Skills for Logistics) only had tiny proportions of employers involved in more than one strand.

Employers: Workforce structure

3.11   In order to help understand the types of employers that the initiative had reached, employers were asked to provide details on the proportion of their staff that were female, the proportion of their staff in management positions and the proportion of managers that were female. This profiling information is shown in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3 Proportion of female staff, managers and female managers

Proportion of staff in England or at site* that are . . .

staff that are female: 5% | 20% | 12% | 7% | 12% | 18% | 8% 5% | 5% 5% | 2%

staff that are managers: 1% 17% | 26% | 20% | 10% 5% 7% | 4% | 5%

managers that are female: 12% | 9% | 11% | 9% | 7% 7% | 21% | 8% | 2% 1% 10%

Legend: 0% | 1-9% | 10-19% | 20-29% | 30-39% | 40-49% | 50-59% | 60-69% | 70-79% | 80-89% | 90-99% | 100%

Base: All employers (unweighted 357).

*Answering about site only: Those with more than one site in England but
with participants only at one site or not able to answer about sites other than own

3.12 In England overall 52% of those of working age are male, and 48% female,[7] although on average across the sectors represented by the SSCs taking part in the initiative just 28% of the workforce are female with only Asset Skills and Skillfast UK having a workforce more than a third female.[8] Most employers who took part (56%) did indeed have a predominately male workforce. However, just under a fifth of employers (17%) had a workforce more than 70% female, and 5% of employers had a completely female staff.

3.13 Lantra was the SSC most likely to have engaged with completely female organisations, with 10% of their employers having all female staff. However, 12% of their employers had a workforce where less than a fifth were female so these polarised figures are essentially a reflection of the smaller companies they were more likely to have got on board. Overall across the UK in 2004 29% of employees in Lantra's footprint were female.[9]

3.14 Both Asset Skills and Skillfast UK were significantly more likely to have employers with more than three out of five employees female (65% and 59% of employers respectively) compared to other SSCs. This reflects the almost equal gender split within these sectors overall (49% and 43% female in 2004).[10]

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[7] Annual Population Survey, Office of National Statistics [from Nomis October 2008]
[8] Working Futures 2004-2014 (2006), SSDA/LSC/IER/CE, electronic resource
[9] Working Futures 2004-2014 (2006), SSDA/LSC/IER/CE, electronic resource
[10] Working Futures 2004-2014 (2006), SSDA/LSC/IER/CE, electronic resource

3.15   Of the sectors involved in the initiative construction has the lowest proportion of women overall in the UK (just 14% female in 2004), and consequently employers participating on a ConstructionSkills strand were significantly more likely to have an overwhelmingly male workforce. No employers taking part in this project had a workforce where more than 60% of staff were female (among those engaged by other SSCs this was the case for over a third of engaged employers).[11]

3.16   Overall around half of employers had less than one in five of their staff in management positions - a similar level to the average across English businesses as a whole (18% of staff in managerial occupations[12]).

3.17   However, a fifth of those involved had less than one in three in such roles as well as a small proportion (5%) who indicated that all their staff were at a managerial level (predominantly micro companies).

3.18   In general the initiative seems to have mixed results in terms of reaching companies where women are underrepresented at management level. Just over two in five employers had a predominately female workforce (43% have a workforce which is at least half female) and an identical proportion (43%) report either equal numbers of male and female managers or a majority of female managers. That said, a fifth (21%) of employers reported that less than one in ten of their managers were female, and one in eight (12%) of had no women in management positions at all. At the other end of the spectrum one in ten (10%) said that all their managers were female.

3.19   Looking at the proportion of managers that are female compared with the proportion of all staff that all female within each organisation or site, shows that for around half (49%) of all employers women are represented at management level in proportions equal or greater to their representation in the workforce generally. However that left half (51%) of employers for whom the representation of women at management level is less than the proportion of female staff, and where therefore women could be considered to be underrepresented at management level.

3.20   There were some differences by SSC. Women were underrepresented at management level in 70% of participating Skillfast UK employers (that is, the proportion of all managers that were female was less than the proportion of all staff that were female). Although base sizes are very low (14 and 25 respectively), there was some indication that the initiative was also more likely to reach employers in Automotive Skills and Improve where women were underrepresented at management level (71% and 61% of employers respectively reported that the proportion of female managers was less than the proportion of female staff).

3.21   Conversely, Lantra was slightly more likely to have to have engaged with companies with (relatively) higher female representation at management level (approaching three in five – 57% - employers had a proportion of female managers that was equal to or greater than their proportion of female staff); in part this results from the smaller size profile of companies involved in this project, many with all female workforces.

3.22   Overall, a large proportion of the employers engaged under-represent women per se, and many particularly under-represented women at a managerial level.

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[11] Working Futures 2004-2014 (2006), SSDA/LSC/IER/CE, electronic resource
[12] National Employer Skills Survey, 2007

Employers: Occupations participating

3.23   It was most common for employers to report that managerial, associate professional or administrative staff had been involved in the initiative. Fewer than one in ten indicated that they had had staff participate from each of the lower skilled roles of personal services, sales and customer services, machine operatives and elementary occupations.

Figure 3.4: Occupations in which employers had at least one participant

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)
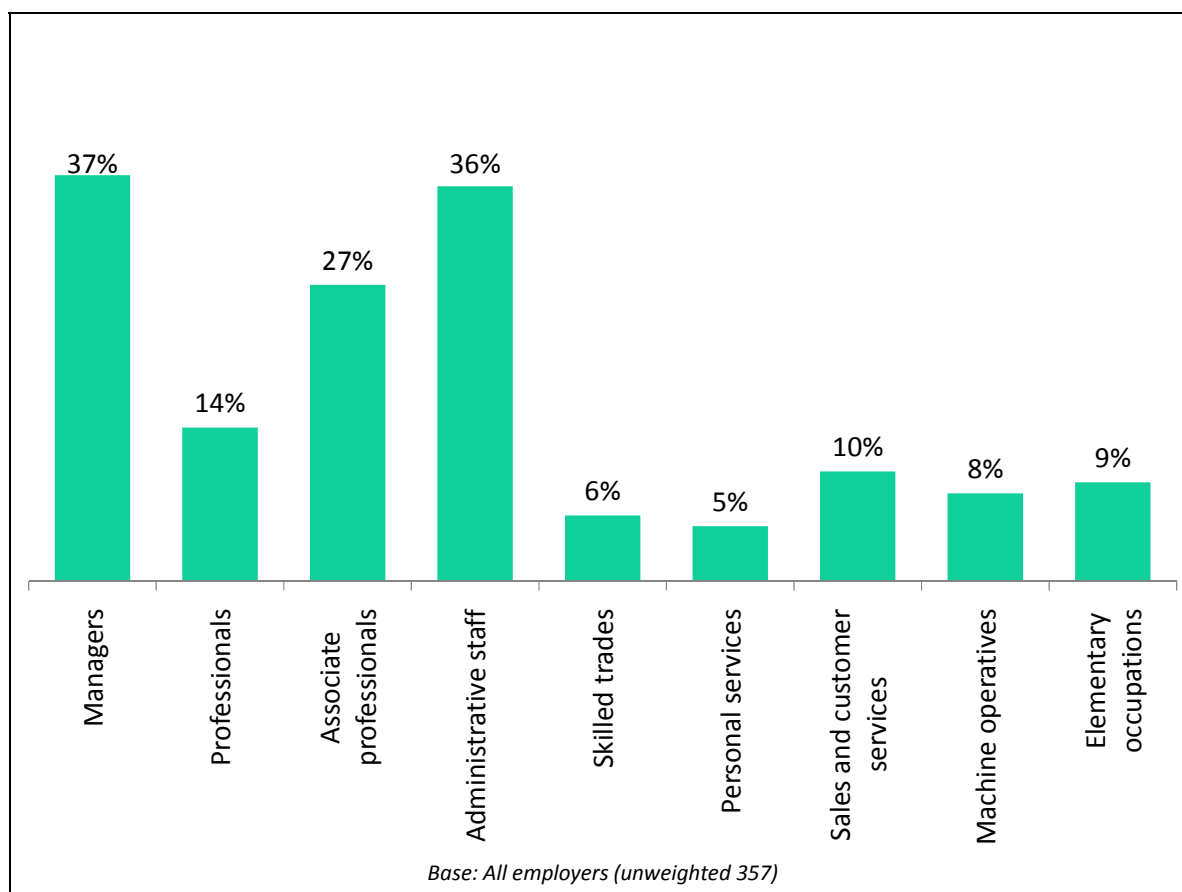
3.24   The proportion of employers with participants in each occupational category varies considerably by SSC. ConstructionSkills employers reported significantly more participants from the top four occupation groups compared to other SSCs as a whole. Over half of ConstructionSkills employers had managers involved compared to less than a third among other SSCs (54% versus 31%), a third had those in professional occupations participating compared to almost five times fewer among other SSCs (33% versus 7%). Nearly half of ConstructionSkills employers had participants with associate professional or technical role whereas among other SSCs less than a fifth did (48% versus 19%), and finally over half of ConstructionSkills employers had those from administrative occupations involved compared to less than a third across other SSCs (54% versus 30%).

3.25   Employers engaged in the Skills for Logistics project were by far the most likely to have employers with personal service role participants (14% of employers in this sector compared to just 5% overall).

3.26   Automotive Skills employers, and to an extent Skillfast UK employers were more likely to have had at least one participant from a sales or customer service role (56% and 23% respectively compared to 10% overall).

3.27   Over a third of Improve employers had a participant from a machine operative role – 36% did so compared to just 8% overall. And nearly three quarters of Asset Skills employers had those from elementary occupations engaged in the initiative while less than one in ten employers did so overall (73% compared to 9%).

Employers: Training plans and procedures

3.28   The Women and Work initiative is aiming to support training and development activity for individuals who otherwise would have been unlikely to receive it. From this perspective, it is interesting to understand the overall approach to training and development taken by the employers who were engaged in the initiative.

3.29   Two thirds of engaged employers had a training or development plan that specified in advance the level and type of training or development their employees would need in the coming year (Figure 3.5). This is a high level compared to the national average of 48%[13]. ConstructionSkills employers were significantly even more likely have a plan (88% did). However, less than half of those employers engaged with Lantra and Skills for Logistics had a training plan (49% and 45% respectively) – a figure closer to the national average.

3.30   The majority of engaged employers (57%) had a budget for training or development. Again this figure is much higher than the national average of 35%[14] and Lantra and Skills for Logistics employers were significantly less likely to have such a high level (45% and 41% with budgets respectively).

3.31   Planning and budgeting for training is strongly correlated with size and to some extent the fact that the incidences reported above are higher than average is a function of the skew towards larger organisations in the profile of employers engaged. The fact that Lantra and Skills for Logistics employers report levels of training closer to the national average reflects the fact that employers engaged with these projects tended to be smaller.

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[13] National Employer Skills Survey, 2007
[14] National Employer Skills Survey, 2007

3.5 Methods of measuring staff skill needs

Conduct staff appraisals — 83%
Conduct train / dev needs assessments — 77%
Have a training / development plan — 67%
Have a training / development budget — 57%
None of these — 9%

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)
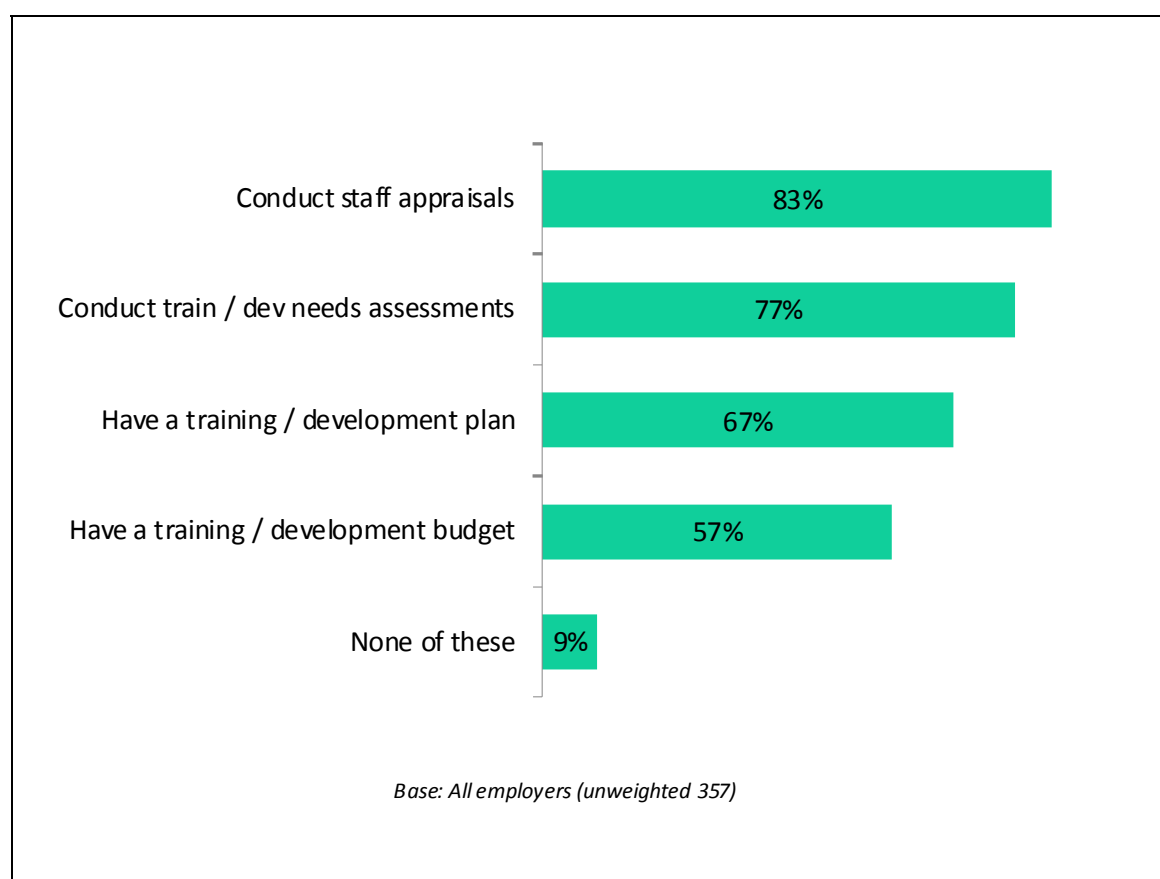
3.32   The conduct of staff appraisals was relatively common as a way of measuring staff skill needs with over four fifths of engaged employers (83%) indicating they carried out either a formal or informal review. Again, although this reveals that the initiative mainly reached those with at least a degree of awareness of staff skills and training Skills for Logistics and Lantra employers have a slightly different story, with only two thirds and three quarters of employers conducting appraisals.

3.33   Over three quarters of employers (77%) said that they complete training or development needs assessments. Once more Skills for Logistics and to an extent, Lantra employers were significantly less likely to do so, (59% and 69%).

3.34   Overall just 9% of employers had none of the methods of measuring and planning for training explored (training needs assessments, staff appraisals, training plan, training budget). More than double this proportion of Skills for Logistics employers had none (23%).

Employers: Prior investment in training

3.35   Again to understand the extent to which SSCs had engaged with employers who were 'new' to investment in training and development of staff, employers were asked how many of the staff who took part in the initiative had received other off-the-job training or development in the last year (excluding those who had been with the company for less than 12 months).

Figure 3.6: Percentage of participants who have been with employer for over 12 months that have undergone other off-the-job training or development over the last year

Base: Employers with at least one participant who has been with company for at least 12 months (unweighted 347)
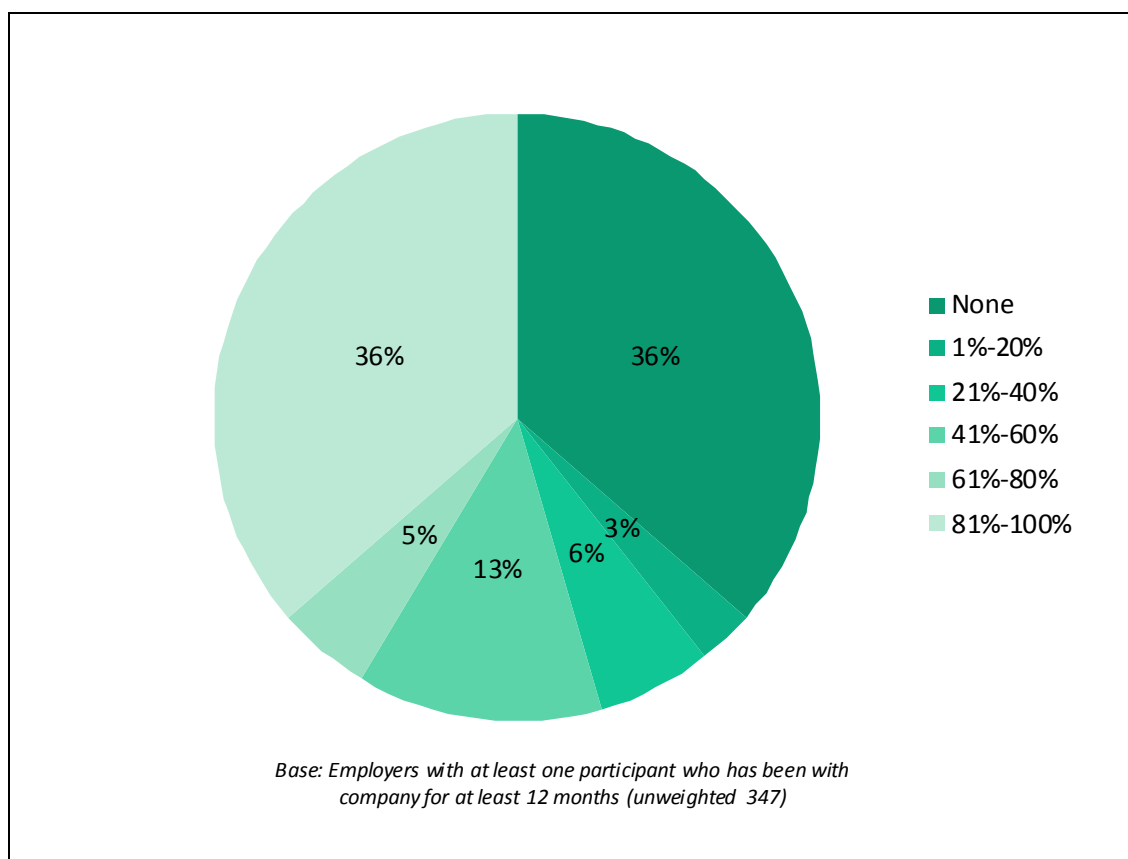
3.36   Employers were polarised in terms of their previous investment in training. Just over a third of participating employers (36%) stated that none of their staff who participated in Women and Work had taken part in off-the-job training over the course of the last 12 months. However, the same proportion said that they had provided other training for 80% of participants over the last 12 months, with 34% saying all these staff had undergone other training or development.

3.37   Employers within most SSCs roughly follow this pattern except for Skills for Logistics and Lantra employers who were more likely to state that none of their participants had undergone other off-the–job training or development in the last 12 months (63% and 46% respectively). All Energy and Utility Skills employers reported that all their participants who had been at the company for longer than 12 months had undergone no other off-the–job training or development (but only a very small number of these employers took part in the research and hence this result should be considered indicative only).

Employers: Monitoring for equal treatment

3.38   Because of the nature of this particular initiative, it was also interesting to understand what procedures employers had in place to monitor equal treatment of their staff by gender. Overall 88% of employers stated that they had an equal opportunities policy in place. Skills for Logistics and Lantra employers were significantly less likely to have one though, with 73% and 81% indicating they did.

3.39   Participating employers were also asked whether they monitored their workforce profile, recruitment and pay with respect to gender. Overall 60% of employers monitored at least one of workforce profile, recruitment or pay. Workforce profile was slightly less likely to be monitored (50% did so compared to 53% monitoring recruitment or pay). Again these activities were less likely to be undertaken by Lantra, Skills for Logistics and Skillfast UK employers, with around half of these employers monitoring none of the listed factors (50%, 52% and 53%), compared to 38% of employers overall monitoring none.

3.40   ConstructionSkills employers were significantly more likely to monitor workforce profile and recruitment than other SSC employers (72% monitored each compared to 43% and 46%). They were also significantly less likely to monitor none of the listed factors (24% compared to 43% non ConstructionSkills employers). Again this reflects the fact that ConstructionSkills employers were likely to be larger.

3.41   An even higher proportion of employers said they had an equal opportunities policy or plan (88%) – although as expected this was lower among Skills for Logistics and Lantra employers (73%, 81%).

Figure 3.7: Factors monitored with respect to gender

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)
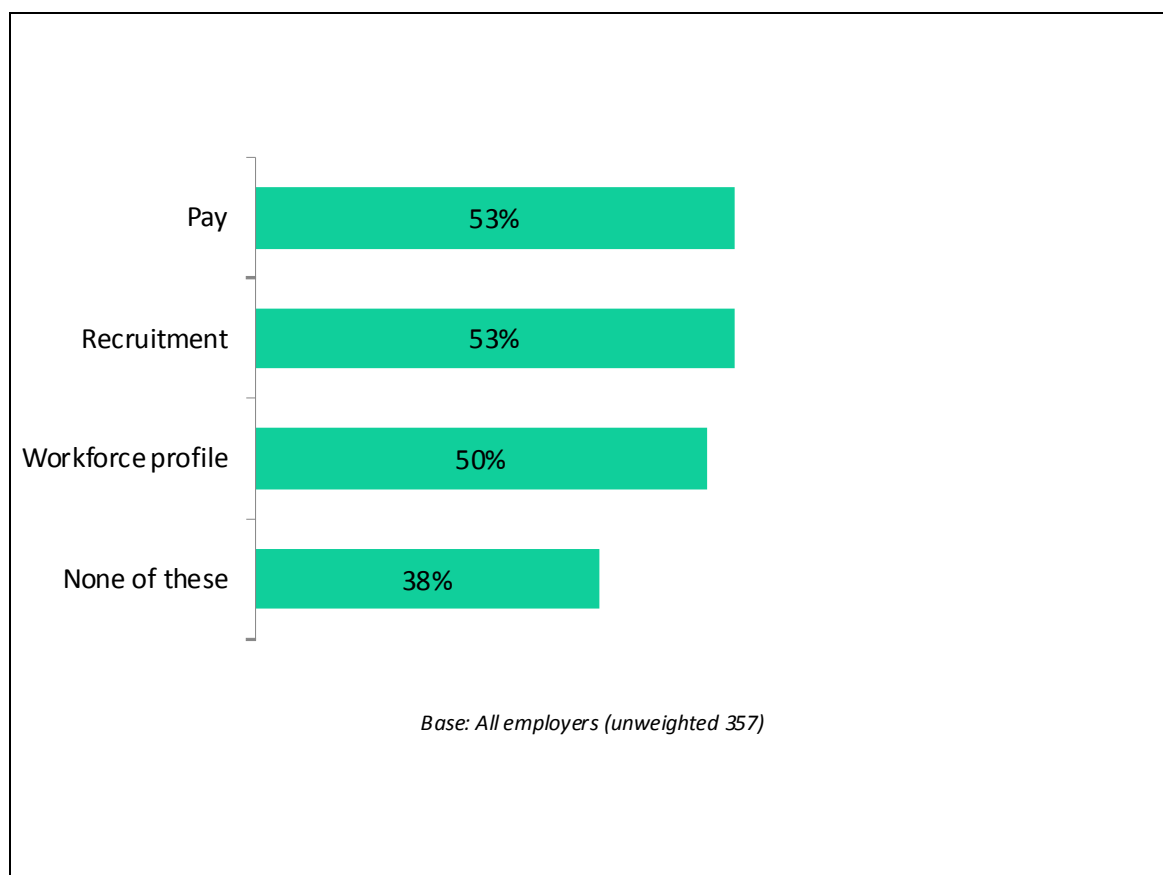
Employers: Prior involvement with SSC

3.42   Just under half of employers involved with the initiative indicated that they had dealt with the SSC previously, before becoming involved in the initiative (47%).

3.43   Because of its role in administering a training levy, ConstructionSkills employers are considerably more likely to have had prior involvement than those falling into the footprints of other SSCs. Indeed, four in five (79%) of employers engaged with the ConstructionSkills project stated that they had previously been involved with the SSC. Excluding ConstructionSkills employers, just over a third (36%) of participating employers had had previous involvement with their SSC.

Employers: Other funding accessed

3.44   Again to help assess the additionality of the first phase of the Women and Work initiative, employers were asked whether they had received funding for training and development from any other external organisation over the previous 2 years.

3.45   Nearly three fifths of employers had previously received funding for training and development from another external organisation (57%). Again ConstructionSkills employers account for a large proportion of those having received prior funding with 63% of their employers having done so compared to only a quarter among other SSCs excluding ConstructionSkills (27%). Lantra, Skillfast UK and Skills for Logistics employers were all significantly less likely to have received any other funding (23%, 16%, 20% having done so respectively). Again this reflects the size of companies involved in these strands, but it also highlights that these projects have reached employers that would not normally decide to take up funding.

3.46   Again reflecting the levy system a large proportion of the ConstructionSkills employers engaged with Women and Work had previously received other funding for training from the SSC itself (43% of employers). Other ConstructionSkills employers had also received funding from Train to Gain (12%), Learning and Skills Council (or National Employer Service) (7%) and European Social Funding (4%). Among SSCs apart from ConstructionSkills, the most common forms of external funding received were Train to Gain (9%), Learning and Skills Council (or National Employer Service) (6%), via a private training company (3%) and European Social Funding (2%).

Participants – demographics

3.47   Having looked in some detail at the profile of employers engaged with the Phase 1 Women and Work initiative, in the rest of this chapter we look at the profile of individual employees who took part in terms of their demographics, employment status and pay levels.

3.48   In terms of age, the majority of participants were aged 40 or over, with over a sixth (17%) aged 55 or over. Just one in ten participants (10%) were under 25 years old (Figure 3.10). The initiative had therefore reached older women as across England only 12% of working women are aged 55 or over whilst one in six (15%) are under 25[15].

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[15] 2001 Census

3.49   The profile of Asset Skills participants was older than average with a significantly higher proportion of participants in the 55 or over age band – 37%, and significantly lower proportions in the 25-39 and under 25 age band. Only a quarter of Asset Skills participants were aged under 40.

3.50   There were other differences by SSC, with three SSC projects having a majority of participants aged under 40 - Skills for Logistics, Energy and Utility Skills, and Improve (65%, 64% and 54% respectively). Two SSCs had more than a sixth of participants aged under 25 (Skills for Logistics, 23%; Automotive Skills, 18%).

Figure 3.8: Age of participants when started initiative

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
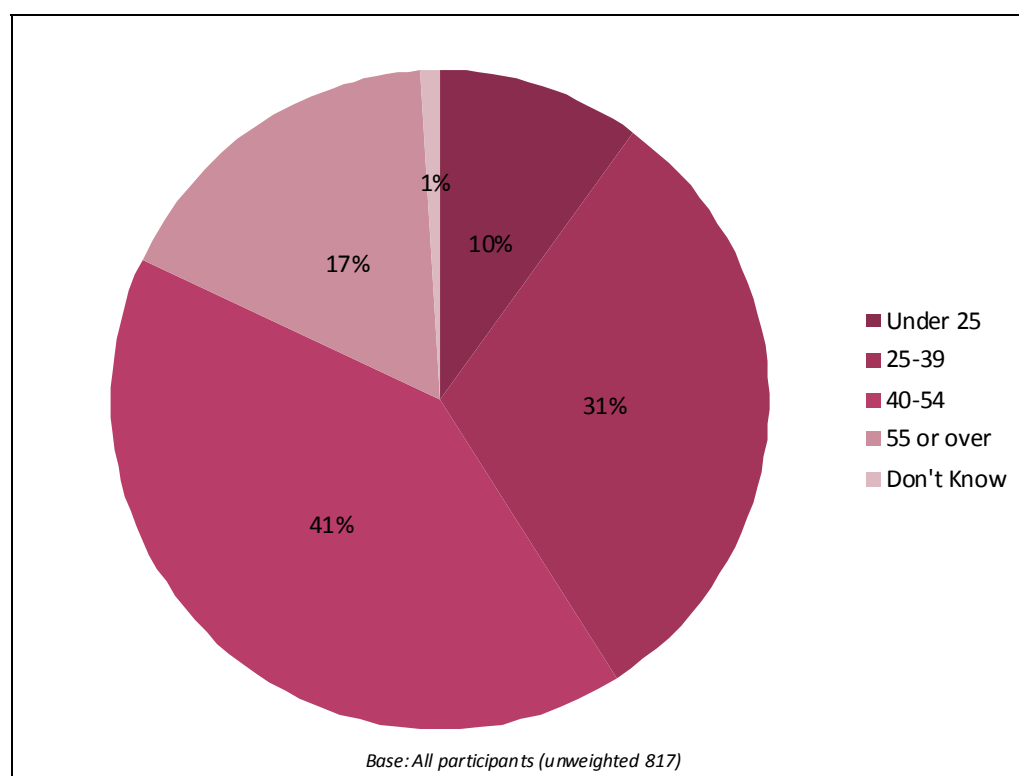
3.51   Just over a quarter of participants stated that they had caring responsibilities (Figure 3.9). This proportion was significantly higher among those participating on a ConstructionSkills strand (38%) compared to other strands. 5% of participants stated that they had a physical or mental disability. Nine tenths of the participants reported their ethnicity as White, and just 2% as another ethnicity.

Figure 3.9: Demographics of participants

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
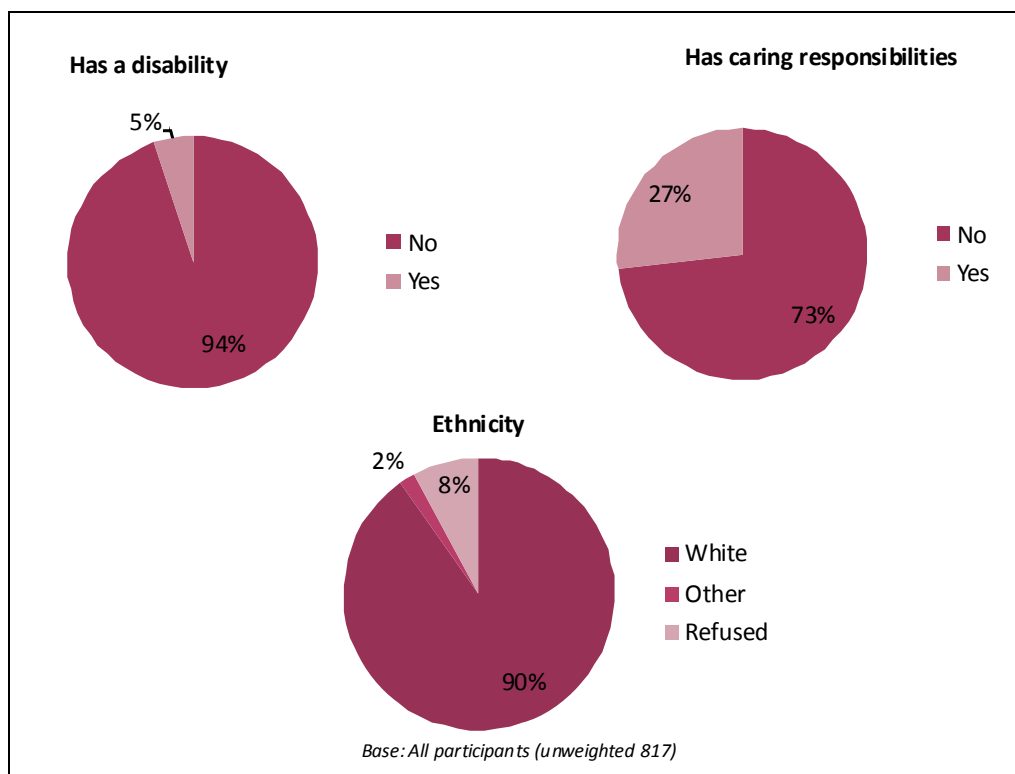
Participants: Working status and occupation

3.52   As would be expected given the nature of the initiative nearly all participants were working for an employer when they began their involvement. Nearly three quarters said they worked full time, meaning that part time females were under-represented as 40% of working women in England are part time (compared to just 18% of participants)[16]. Those participating in a ConstructionSkills strand were significantly more likely to be full time compared to those in other projects (89% versus 73%).

3.53   Although one in five (18%) of participants reported that they worked part time although this amounted to working more than 16 hours a week. Those that worked less than 16 hours a week (4% of participants) were significantly more likely to be involved with an Asset Skills strand (11% of Asset Skills participants worked less than 16 hours a week compared to 4% of participants overall).

Figure 3.10: Employment status when started initiative

Base: All participants (weighted 817)
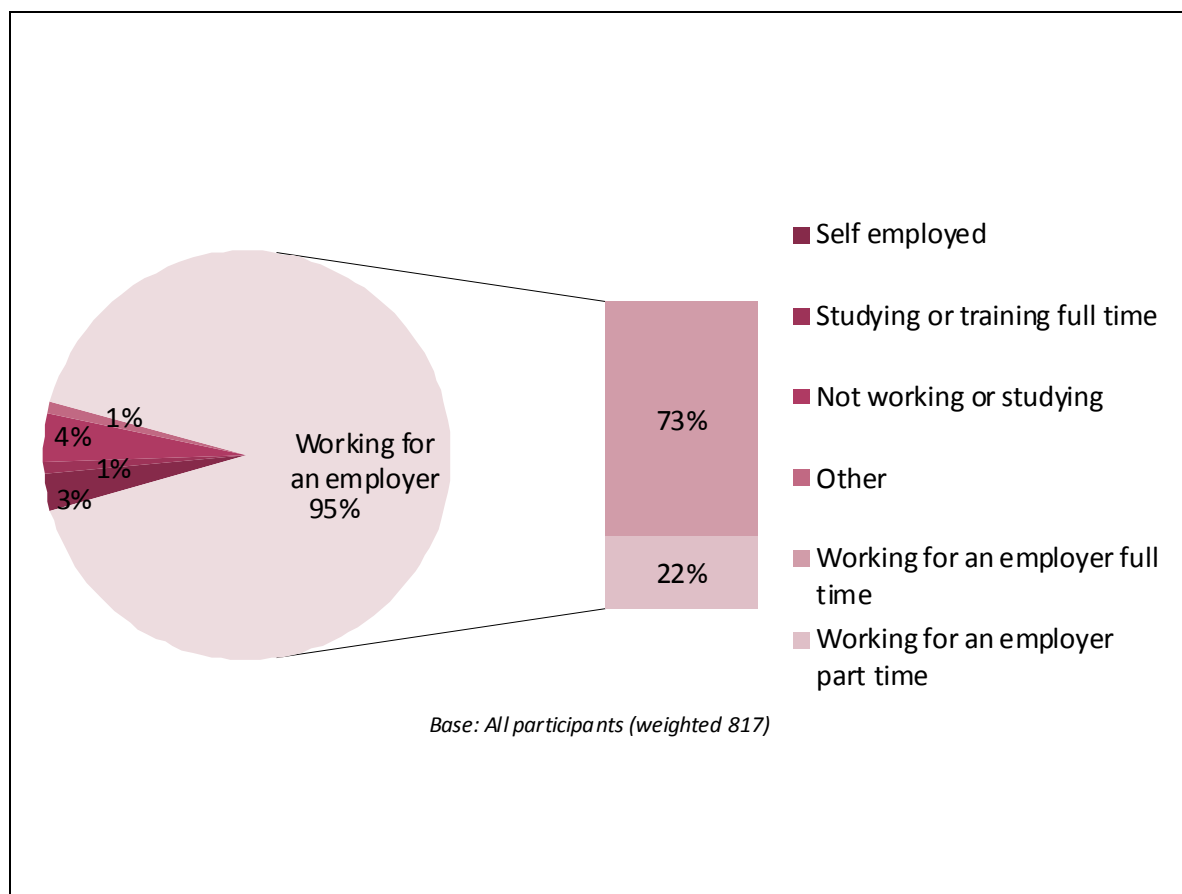
3.54   Nearly three quarters of participants had been with their current employer for over two years, with half having been there over five years and over a quarter for more than ten years (Figure 3.11). Lower paid women, in lower skilled occupations were more likely to have been with their employer for a longer period. 38% of both those that earned less than £10,000, and those in machine operative and elementary occupations when they started on the initiative had worked for their employer for over ten years – compared to 28% overall.

3.55   Asset Skills participants were significantly more likely to have been with employers the longest - 45% for more than ten years compared to 28% overall. ConstructionSkills participants were more likely to have been with their employer for a shorter time – nearly two thirds (65%) of their participants had been with their employer for less than five years compared to less than half (45%) of participants from other SSCs excluding ConstructionSkills.

Figure 3.11: Length of time with employer when started initiative

Base: Participants who were working for an employer when started initiative (unweighted 769)
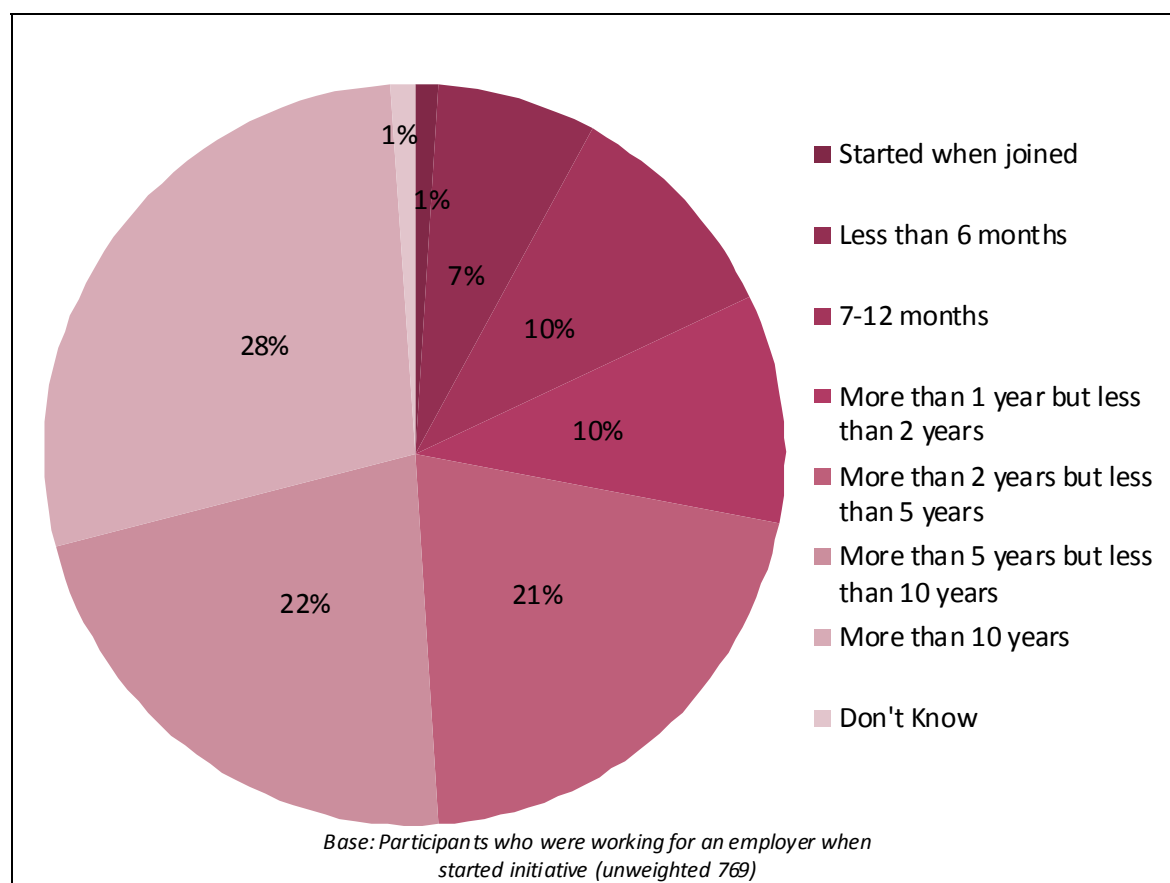
3.56   Figure 3.12 shows the breakdown of participants by occupation. The column on the right shows the profile of Women and Work participants while the column on the left shows the occupational profile of women in England as a whole.

3.57   To an extent the initiative has been successful in targeting women in lower skilled roles – 17% of participants were in occupations classed as machine operative or elementary compared to 13% of women in employment across England as a whole[17]. However some strands had reached higher proportions, notably *Team Leader Roles (Asset Skills)* where over two thirds (70%) of participants were in machine operative or elementary occupations when they joined the scheme. *Enhanced Literacy / Numeracy Skills (Asset Skills)*[18] and *Develop Career Plans (Asset Skills)*, as well as *LGV Licences (Skills for Logistics)*[19] and *Gain Additional Skills (Skillfast UK)* strands also all had over a quarter of participants from these lower skilled occupations (39%, 29%, 28%, and 25% respectively), although the difference is not significant for the *LGV Licences (Skills for Logistics)* strand given the small numbers interviewed.

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[17] Annual Population Survey, Office of National Statistics [from Nomis October 2008] – females in employment in England
[18] Low base – 49 unweighted
[19] Low base - 29 unweighted

Figure 3.12 Participant occupation when started initiative compared to national profile

Females in employment in England
Source : ONS 2007 Annual Population Survey

Participants
Base: Participants in employment at start of programme (unweighted 769)
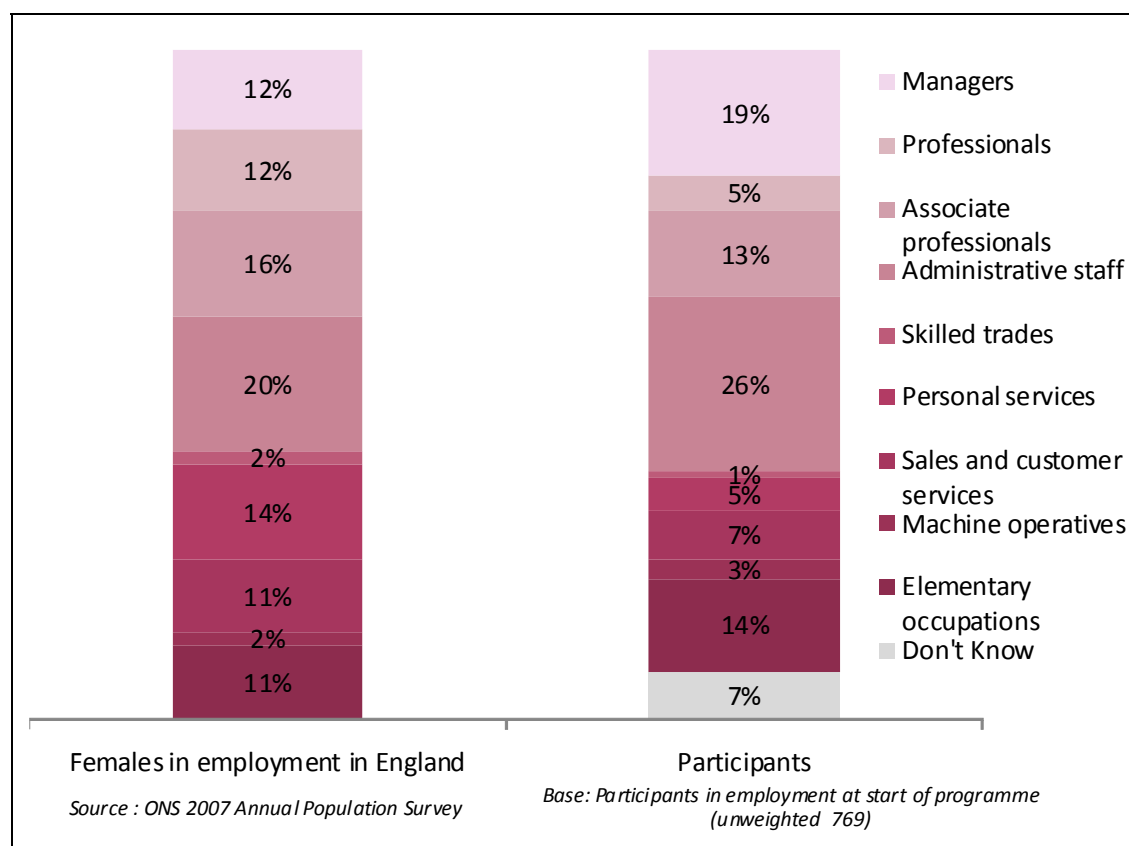
3.58   Reflecting the information provided by employers, those in managerial and administrative roles are also over-represented among Women and Work participants.

3.59   Almost a fifth of participants were in managerial positions when they started on the initiative (compared with 12% of all female employees in England)[20]. As would be expected the proportion of managers was higher on some strands compared to others – over half the participants working for an employer from the start on both *Personal Leadership (Energy and Utility Skills)*[21] and *Secondment to a Senior Role (Skillfast UK)*[22] were in managerial roles (58% for both, significantly higher than the 19% across the initiative as a whole). Around a third of those on *Leadership and Management (Automotive Skills)*[23] and *Long Term Careers Development (SEMTA)*[24] were at a managerial level (36%, 31% respectively). A further four strands had a proportion of over one in five managers (*Supervisory and Managerial (Improve)*[25], 27%; Asset Skills' *Develop Career Plans (Asset Skills)*, 26%; and both ConstructionSkills' *Career Progression and Upskilling*, 24%; and their *Graduate Routeways*[26], 22%).

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[20] Annual Population Survey, Office of National Statistics [from Nomis October 2008]

[21] Low base - 19 unweighted
[22] Low base - 16 unweighted
[23] Low base - 11 unweighted
[24] Low base – 29 unweighted
[25] Low base – 26 unweighted
[26] Low base – 9 unweighted

3.60   At an SSC level managers made up over half of those involved with Energy and Utility Skills (58%), and around a quarter of those involved with ConstructionSkills (24%). Semta, Improve and Skillfast UK also had high levels of managers (31%, 27%, and 24%) although these are not significant differences compared to the other SSCs given the small base sizes.

3.61   The proportion of administrative staff was also higher among participants than the female population as a whole – accounting for just over a quarter of opposed to a fifth nationally.[27] Exceptions were on the *Customer Facing / Service (Automotive Skills)* and *Career Progression and Upskilling (ConstructionSkills)* strands which had significantly higher proportions (49% and 37%) of participants in administrative roles.

3.62   The proportion of Sales and Customer Service staff reached was nearly half that of female employment as a whole (6% compared to 11%)[28]. The notable exception being the *Customer Facing / Service (Automotive Skills)* strand which had 18% of participants in such occupations – possibly a lower proportion than would be expected given the target group.

3.63   Those in personal service occupations were also underrepresented in the initiative – just 5% of participants compared to nearly three times this nationally (14%)[29]. However the *Enhanced Literacy / Numeracy Skills (Asset Skills)* [30] strand had a significantly higher proportion with just over two fifths in a personal service occupation (41%).

3.64   The average (mean) salary of participants is £20,500 – over £2,000 higher than the mean for women in England of £18,300. Just over half the women who were working for employers when they joined the initiative earned less than £20,000 annually with around a sixth of participants being very low paid, earning less than £10,000 per annum. Nationally more than 60% of women earn less than £20,000 per annum, and more than 30% less than £10,000 so as a group the Women and Work participants are better-paid than average[31]. This may well reflect the high proportion of women in management roles.

3.65   *Graduate Routeways (ConstructionSkills)[32]*, *Long Term Careers Development (SEMTA) [33]*, *Leadership and Management (Automotive Skills)[34]* and *Personal Leadership (Energy and Utility Skills)[35]* strands all had significantly higher proportions of participants in the highest income band with 56%, 55%, 45% and 42% respectively of participants earning £30,000 or more.

3.66   *Team Leader Roles (Asset Skills)* was significantly more likely to have participants paid less than £10,000 with 58% in this bracket. *Enhanced Literacy / Numeracy Skills (Asset Skills)[36]* (also Asset Skills) had more than a third in this group (37%).

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[27] Annual Population Survey, Office of National Statistics [from Nomis October 2008] – females in employment in England
– females in employment in England
[28] Annual Population Survey, Office of National Statistics [from Nomis October 2008] – females in employment in England
[29] Annual Population Survey, Office of National Statistics [from Nomis October 2008] – females in employment in England
[30] Low base – 49 unweighted
[31] All national figures referred to from Annual survey of Hours and Earnings - resident analysis, Office of National Statistics [from Nomis November 2008] – females in employment in England
[32] Low base - 9 unweighted
[33] Low base – 29 unweighted
[34] Low base - 11 unweighted
[35] Low base - 19 unweighted
[36] Low base – 49 unweighted

Figure 3.13: Participant annual earnings when started initiative

Base: Participants in employment at start of programme
(unweighted 769).
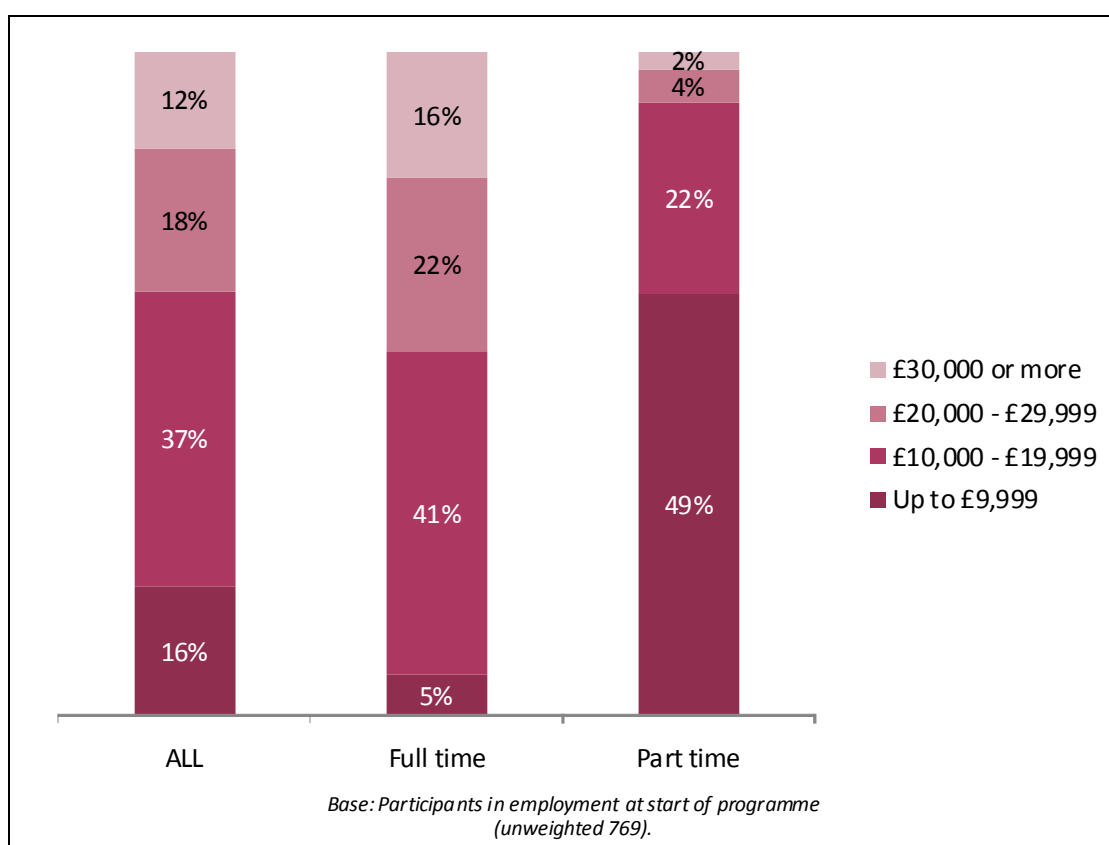
3.67   Looking just at part time participants (who accounted for just under a quarter of participants overall) nearly half earned less than £10,000 – a slightly lower proportion compared to the national figure of more than 60% of females working part time in England. Proportions of those working part time and earning £20,000 or more is similar to the picture across England – both less than 10%.[37]

3.68   However, just looking at full time female workers the initiative seem to have reached slightly fewer in the top pay bracket – just 16% of full time participants earning £30,000 or over compared to more than 20% of full time females in employment in England doing so.[38]

Participants – highest previous qualification and whether trained previously

3.69   Just over a third of participants had a Level 4 qualification (e.g. undergraduate degree, HNC/HND) or higher before they started the initiative – mirroring the profile of working age females in employment across England as a whole.

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[37] All national figures referred to from Annual survey of Hours and Earnings - resident analysis, Office of National Statistics [from Nomis November 2008] – females in employment in England
[38] All national figures referred to from Annual survey of Hours and Earnings - resident analysis, Office of National Statistics [from Nomis November 2008] – females in employment in England

3.70   Similarly the level of those with no qualifications, or qualifications lower than Level 1 mirrored the proportion in England as a whole (although the initiative had engaged slightly more of those with no qualifications at all, 12% compared to 8% of working age females in employment in England). Those with solely a Level 1 qualification made up a larger proportion of participants than the national profile (21% compared to 15%). Only a quarter of participants had either a Level 3 (e.g. two or more A-levels, GNVQ Advanced) or Level 2 (e.g. five GCSEs at grades A-C) qualification compared to the national picture of 35%.

Figure 3.14 Participant highest qualification when started initiative
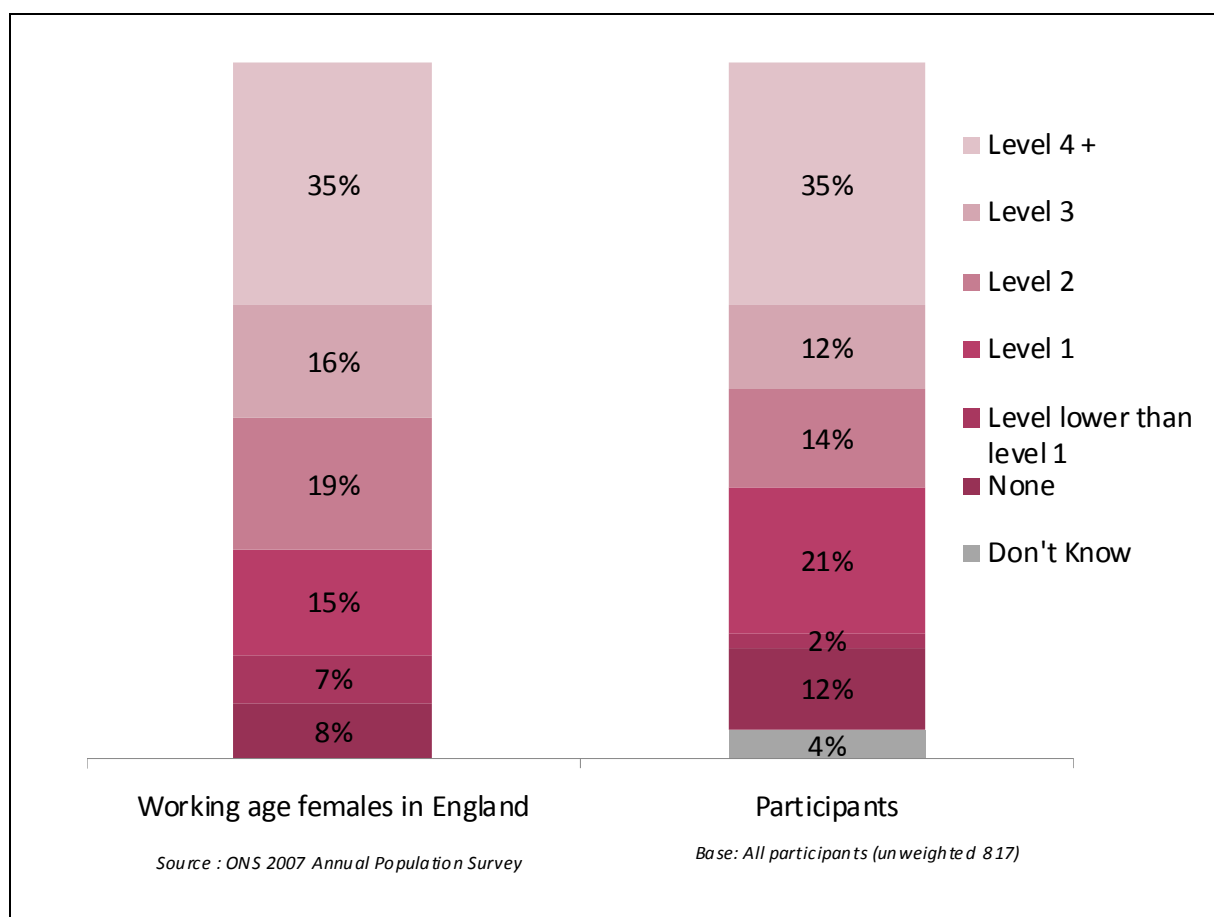
3.71   Again there was wide variation by strand with some reaching those mainly with a similar qualification level and others with a broad spectrum. *Team Leader Roles (Asset Skills)* and *Develop Career Plans (Asset Skills)* strands were significantly more likely to have reached those with either a Level 1 qualification or below or none – 36% and 41% of participants respectively compared to 24% overall across the initiative. However, over two thirds of those on the *Fashion Technical Training (Skillfast UK)[39]*, *Graduate Routeways (ConstructionSkills)[40]*, *Personal Leadership (Energy and Utility Skills)[41]* and *Long Term Careers Development (SEMTA)[42]* strands had a Level 4 qualification or above.

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[39] Low base - 6 unweighted
[40] Low base - 9 unweighted
[41] Low base - 19 unweighted
[42] Low base – 29 unweighted

Participants: Prior involvement with training

3.72   Participants who were working for an employer prior to starting the programme were evenly split between those who reported during that they had received any previous off-the-job training from their employer (49%) and those who reported they had not (50%) (Figure 3.15). Those who had received training were likely to have done so recently, most in the last 12 months – 30% of participants who were employed. However, this is a markedly lower proportion than the 63% of UK employees as a whole who had received off-the-job training in the last 12 months in 2007.[43]

3.73   Participants involved with Energy and Utility Skills, Semta and ConstructionSkills were significantly more likely to have received training (74%, 72% and 63% respectively had done so). Over two thirds of those on an Automotive Skills, Skills for Logistics or Skillfast UK strand had been trained - significantly less than the overall figure (71%, 69% and 68% respectively had not).

3.74   Those in the higher pay brackets or higher skilled occupations were significantly more likely to have received some off-the-job training previously, with over three fifths (63%) of those paid £20,000 (63%) or over or in managerial or professional or associate professional roles (62%) having been trained compared to two fifths of those earning less than £20,000 (42%) or in other lower skilled roles (41%).

Figure 3.15: Whether participants had received any off-the-job training from employer prior to starting programme

Base: Participants who were working for an employer
when started initiative (unweighted 769)

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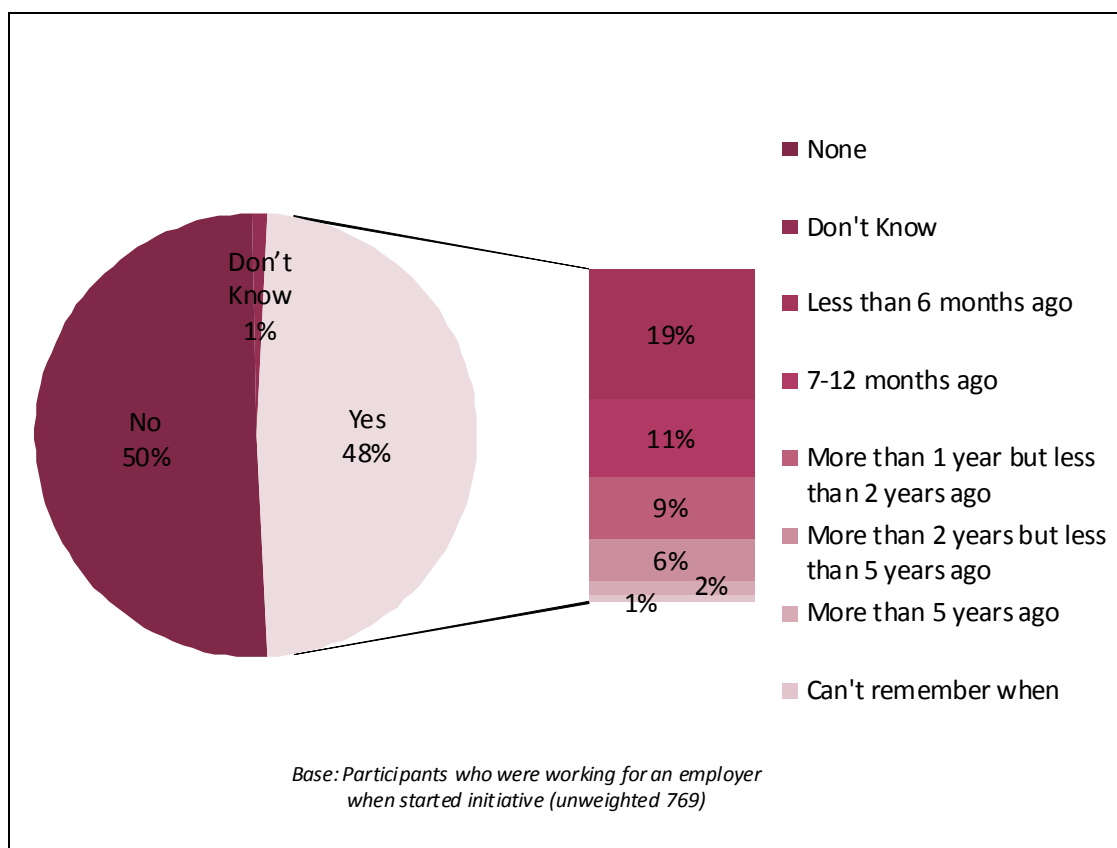
[43] National Employer Skills Survey, 2007

4   How and why did employers and participants get involved?

4.1   In this chapter we look at how employers and participants found out about the Women and Work initiative, their initial reactions to the initiative and how employers recruited participants. We also look at participant views on the participation of women within their sector and within the organisation that they work for.

Finding out about Women and Work

4.2   Employers' initial sources of information about the initiative varied - they were most likely to have found out via a training provider or the relevant SSC although less than a third and a quarter respectively did so. This indicates that training providers can be very useful partners in promotion of and recruitment for initiatives such as these. Only around half of those companies that had previously dealt with their SSC (47%) indicated that they found out about this particular scheme via the SSC (24% of employers overall). The most common way by far that participants found out about the initiative was from their employer (60% did so).

4.3   However interest in the scheme also came from the bottom up with some employees themselves mentioning the initiative both to their employers and to colleagues (a sixth of employers cited employees as the source, and the same proportion of participants referred to colleagues).

Figure 4.1 How first heard about initiative

Base: All employers (unweighted 357);
All participants (unweighted 817)
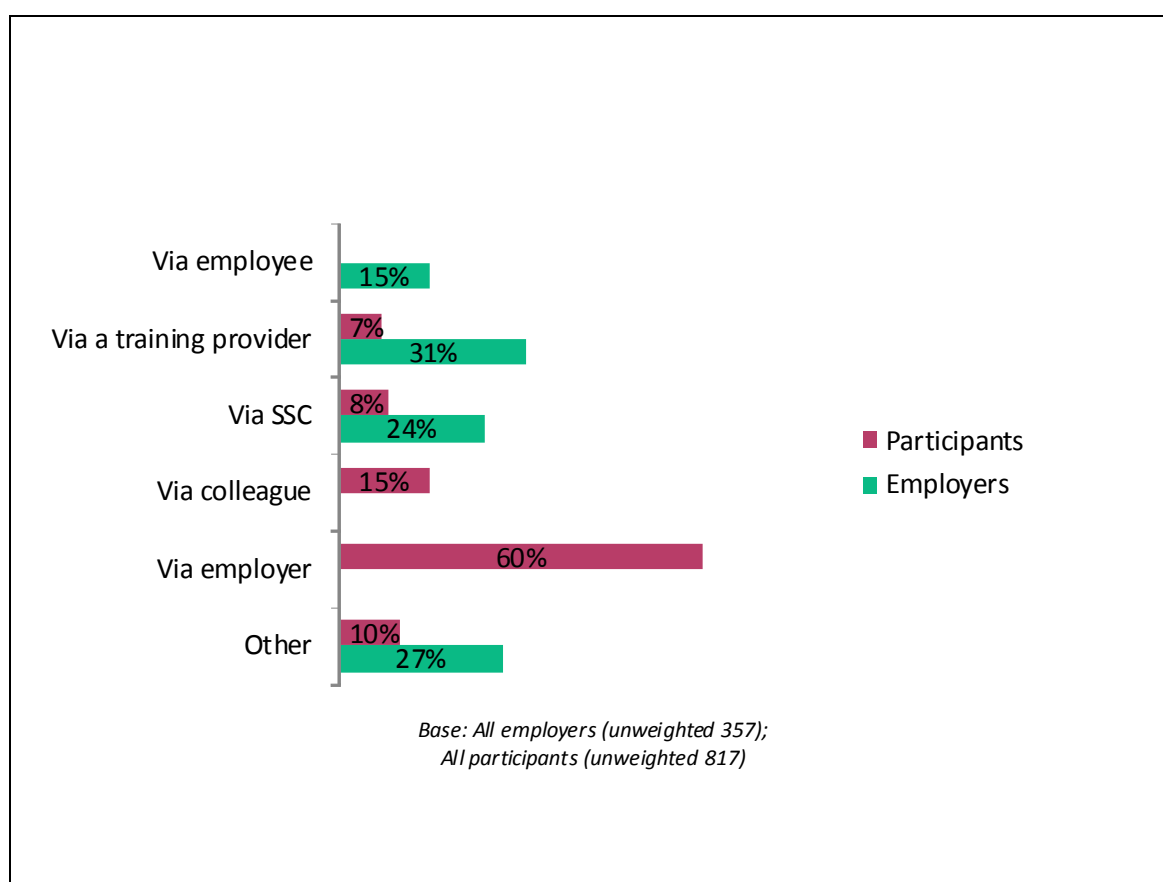
4.4   Employers and participants who became involved with Lantra's project were significantly more likely to have heard about the initiative via a training provider, 46% of employers and 12% of participants had done so compared to 31% and 7% overall. Although employers from both Skills for Logistics and Automotive Skills did not particularly mention having heard about the initiative via a training provider participants in these sectors were significantly more likely to have heard about the initiative in this way(17% and 12% respectively). Indeed Skills for Logistics employers were most likely to have found out from an employee (28% did so).

4.5   Improve and Skillfast UK employers were those most likely to have been contacted by the SSC directly (44% and 41% had been compared to 24% overall). ConstructionSkills employers (who were significantly more likely to have dealt with their SSC previously) were not significantly more likely to have been proactively contacted by them although the proportion was slightly higher (34%) than among other SSCs excluding ConstructionSkills (20%). Among participants it is notable that over one in five of those engaged with Automotive Skills mentioned hearing about the initiative through the SSC while among all other SSCs the proportion was below one in ten (7%).

4.6   Those employers that did hear about the initiative via an SSC were more likely to already monitor at least either overall profile, recruitment or pay with respect to gender among their workforce (30% who monitored heard from SSC versus 16% of those who did not monitor), or to have received funding for training and development previously from an external organisation (32% versus 21%).

4.7   Automotive Skills and Asset Skills employers were the most likely to have heard about the initiative from a professional body or trade association or institute – 19% and 15% respectively did so although the overall proportion of employers mentioning them was only 4%.

Recruiting individuals to participate

4.8   Most employers (three quarters) had taken a top down approach and invited individuals who they felt would be appropriate to participate – around a third of these had also publicised the initiative and invited volunteers, less than one in five (17%) had only taken this latter approach (Figure 4.2).

4.9   Those employers who were most likely to have only to have "selected" individuals to take part included:

➢   Skillfast UK employers (74%)

➢   Those that did not conduct any monitoring of their workforce with respect to gender (64%)

➢   Those that had not received funding for training or development from an external source previously (62%)

4.10   A small cohort (6%) had actually been approached directly by an employee who was keen to take part in the initiative – these were most likely to be those involved with the *LGV Licences (Skills for Logistics)* strand where nearly one in five employers (18%) had heard about the initiative through an employee.

Figure 4.2: Employers' approach to finding employees to take part

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)
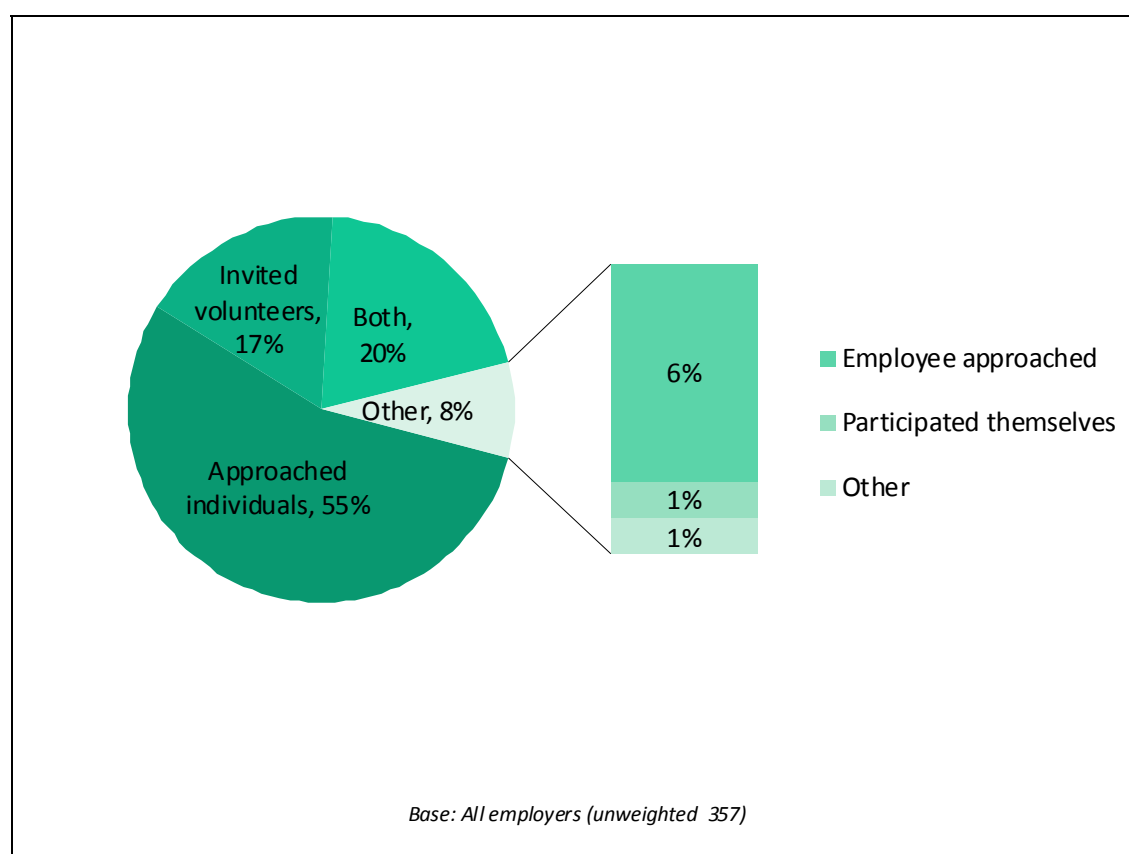
4.11   Nearly all employers found it easy to find women to take part, with only a tenth encountering difficulties (11%). Automotive Skills employers were significantly more likely to have encountered a difficulty though, with nearly a third having done so. Those that had not received funding for training or development from external organisations previously found it easier than those who had not (19% of the former reported difficulties compared to only 6% of the latter) – perhaps indicative of a greater need and desire for involvement, or that they were more likely to have approached individuals directly rather than invite volunteers.

4.12   Those that encountered difficulties most commonly mentioned the following reasons;

- ➢ Employees not interested in progression or promotion, or feeling they did not need training (including some employers feeling they did not have employees of the right 'calibre')

- ➢ Hard to find enough suitable employees (as women under represented in relevant positions)

- ➢ Employees being too busy (either at work or with caring responsibilities at home)

- ➢ Confidence issues – employees having not been involved in training for a number of years, or concerned about the level of training

4.13   Several of these issues could be seen as deriving from the culture of the workplace (or sector) – with employers not creating an atmosphere where progression or time for training is valued. The age profile of participants is perhaps also relevant here (the majority of participants were aged 40 or over, with over a sixth aged 55 or over) – possibly impacting on confidence in a learning environment as well as perhaps a lack of interest in progression for those approaching retirement.

Initial objectives and concerns

4.14   Participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about their feelings when they first became involved with the initiative (Figure 4.3).

4.15   Most participants stated that they felt positive about the initiative when they first heard about it – nearly nine out of ten saw it as an opportunity to progress, and nearly the same proportion were enthusiastic about getting involved. Less than one in five said that their employer wanted them to do it but they themselves were not keen – this is especially positive when bearing in mind that three quarters of employers had approached individuals directly to ask them to participate.

4.16   However, those in lower skilled roles were less likely to be enthusiastic, say they did not see it as an opportunity to progress, or agree that their employer wanted them to do it but they were not keen. Managers were also significantly more likely to have suggested participation to their employers, while machine operatives or elementary workers were less likely to have done so (26% compared to 9%).

Figure 4.3: Feelings when participant first heard about initiative

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
except * statements, base: Those who were employed when started (unweighted 780)
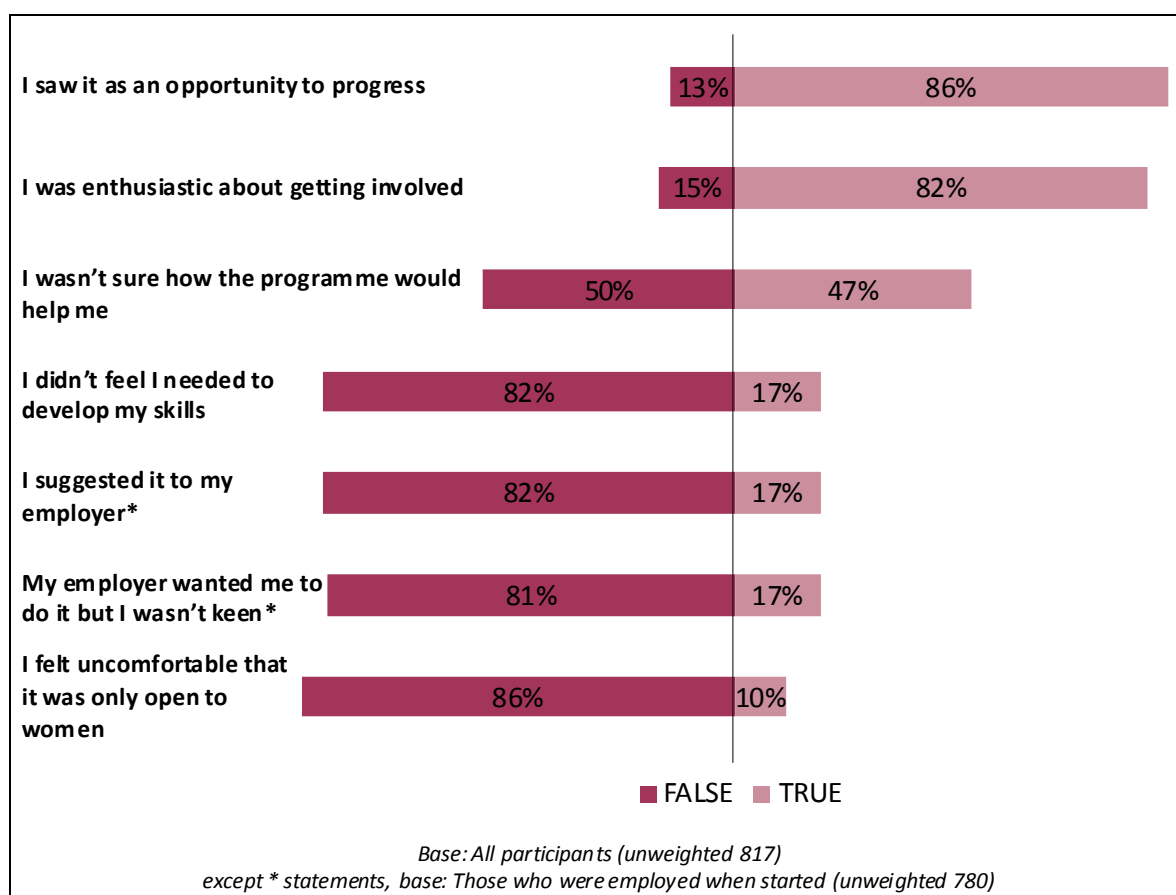
4.17   Less than one in five participants thought they did not need to develop their skills – indicating the relevance of and need for training and development among the group. However, those in lower skilled occupations were significantly less likely to think that they needed to develop their skills – a third (32%) of those in machine operative and elementary occupations and nearly a fifth (18%) of those skilled trades, customer service or sales or personal services roles or administrative occupations thought they did not need to, compared to less than a tenth of managers (9%) and professionals or associate professionals (5%). Concrete understanding of the programme was much lower across the board, with half the participants indicating they were not sure how it would help them personally.

4.18   While the majority did not feel uncomfortable that the programme was only for women still one in ten did.

4.19   Participants were also asked about their objectives for getting involved with Women in Work (Figure 4.4). They were asked to state whether a series of aims were a major objective, a minor objective or not an objective at all. The 'softer' reasons for participating were more important than concrete outputs for most participants, with high proportions citing gaining new skills, feeling more confident and understanding the opportunities in their industry as objectives, and between half and three quarters having these as major objectives. Although the 'harder', more definite objectives suggested (gaining a qualification, a salary increase, a promotion or a new job) were less likely to be objectives they were still important for over half the participants (and were major objectives for around a third).

Figure 4.4: Importance of suggested reasons for participating among participants

	Not an objective at all (3)	Minor Objective (2)	Major objective (1)	MEAN SCORE
Gaining new skills	8%	17%	74%	1.3
Feeling more confident about your abilities	9%	19%	72%	1.4
Obtaining a better understanding of opportunities open to you in the industry	16%	32%	52%	1.6
Gaining a qualification	22%	28%	50%	1.7
Getting more responsibility*	25%	33%	42%	1.8
Obtaining a salary increase*	30%	32%	36%	1.9
Obtaining a promotion*	33%	38%	28%	2.0
Getting a better job in a different organisation*	46%	33%	20%	2.3
Starting your own business**	72%	22%	5%	2.7

*Base: All participants (unweighted 817) except * those working for an employer when started (unweighted 769), **those not self employed when started (unweighted 792)*

4.20   However objectives vary considerably according to type of participant – those on lower wages or in lower skilled roles when they started on the initiative were more likely to rank highly the importance of 'hard outcomes' compared to those on higher wages or in higher skilled positions. For example;

> Those on a lower wage were significantly more likely to get involved in order to get a better job in a different organisation (major objective for 28% earning less than £10,000 but for only 9% of those earning £30,000 or more)

> Obtaining a salary increase was an objective for 56% of those earning £30,000, but it was an objective for 76% of those earning less than £10,000

> Gaining a qualification was also significantly more likely to be important to those on lower pay (a major objective for 61% of those earning less than £10,000 and 56% of those earning £10,000 to £20,000 but for only 27% of those earning £30,000 or more)

> Promotion was only a major objective for one in six (15%) of those in machine operative or elementary occupations compared to nearly one in three (30%) of those in managerial roles.

4.21   In parallel the softer 'gaining new skills' although still important, was least likely to be a major objective for;

> Those in machine operative or elementary occupations (a major objective for 57% compared to the 74% average across all occupations).

> Those with lower qualifications (for 73% of those with a Level 1 qualification or lower or none versus for 79% and 83% of those with Level 4 or 5 or Level 3 respectively)

4.22   A quarter of participants had additional objectives to those that they were prompted within in the questionnaire, the most common being being improving existing skills (6%), being able to do current job better / improve job satisfaction (3%) and networking (3%).

4.23   Age also affected reasons for participating. Older participants were more likely to find nearly all the suggested reasons not objectives at all, compared to younger ones who were more likely to find nearly all the objectives major.

> Obtaining a promotion was not objective at all for over half (52%) of those aged 55 or over in employment compared to less than a quarter (22%) of those under 25.

> Starting their own business was not objective at all for over four in five (83%) of those aged 55 or over (and not self employed at the start of the programme), compared to only just over half (54%) of those under 25.

> Getting a better job in another organisation was not objective at all for over half of those over 55 (55%), compared to only just over a third (35%) of those under 25.

> Gaining news skills were an objective for virtually all those under 25, with only 2% of those under 25 indicating it was not objective at all, compared to one in five of those over 55 (20%).

    Also getting more responsibility was of no interest for more than a third of those aged 55 or over (36%), compared to less than a sixth (13%) of those under 25.

4.24   Employers were also asked to comment on their objectives for taking part in the initiative.

Figure 4.5: Employer objectives of participation.
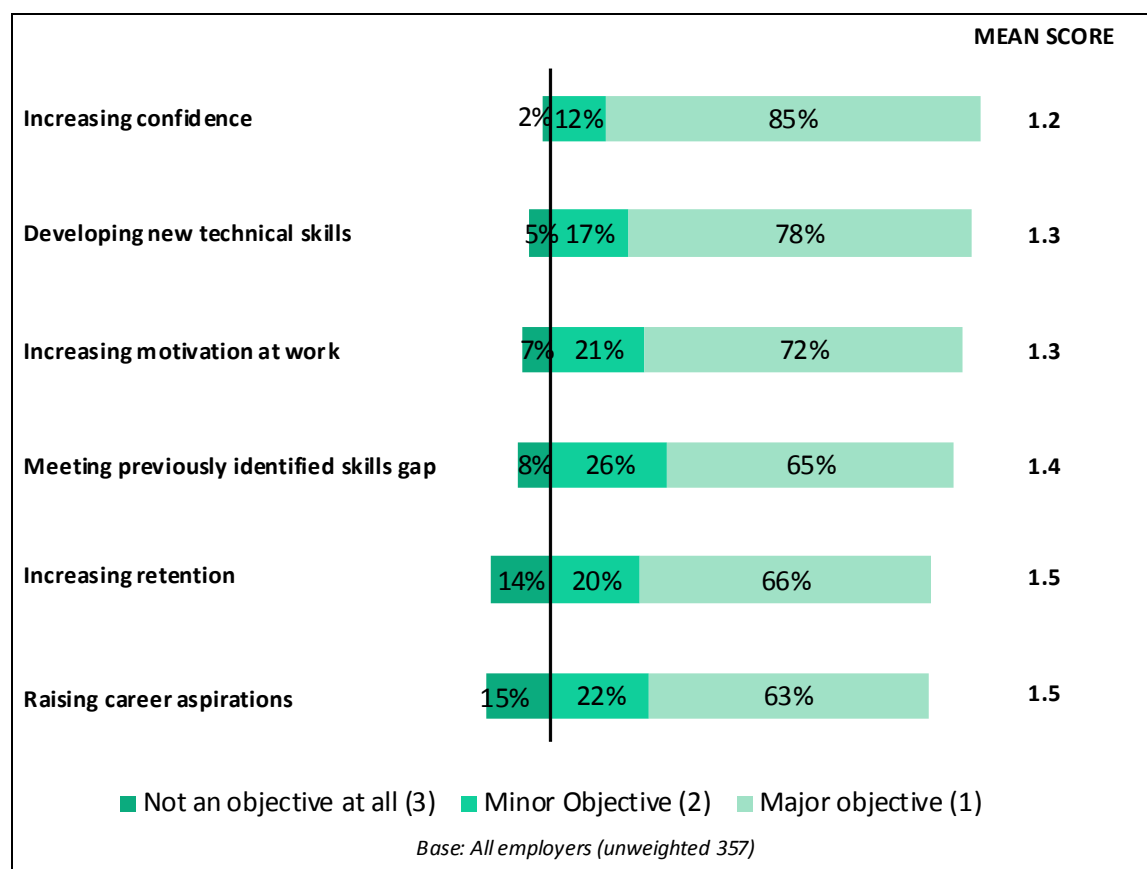
4.25   Among employers the same factors of increasing confidence and obtaining new skills were rated the most important. Increasing confidence of employees was an objective for virtually all (97%), and was a major objective for around five out of six (85%). Similar proportions found developing new technical skills in order to enable participants to do their job better important (an objective for 95%, and a major objective for just under four out of five - 78%).

4.26   Technical skills were significantly more likely to be a major objective for employers on the *Training Needs Analysis (Lantra)* strand (90% compared to 78% overall), and for those on the Asset Skills *Team Leader Roles* strand (100%).

4.27   Raising career aspirations and increasing retention were also important, although slightly less so – for around one in six they were not objectives at all. Employers that had neither training budgets/plans nor had dealt with the SSC previously and those that had not received funding for training or development from an external source before were less likely to rate raising career objectives as a major objective (47% of the former and 57% of the latter compared to around two thirds of those who did have a training budget / plan or had dealt with the SSC previously or had received funding). Those who monitored employees with respect to gender were significantly more likely to rate retention of female staff an important outcome – a major objective for three quarters of these compared to just half of those that did not monitor.

4.28   The majority of participants (85%) stated that they had no initial concerns about participating in the initiative. Small proportions were anxious about the following;

> Time constraints / fitting work around the course (5%)

> Own abilities / confidence (4%)

> Whether course would be beneficial / what it would actually involve (4%)

> Their age (insecurities about being oldest on course, time since last involved with learning) (2%)

4.29   Those who did voice concerns were asked whether these concerns were borne out in the end (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6: Whether participants' initial concerns were borne out

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
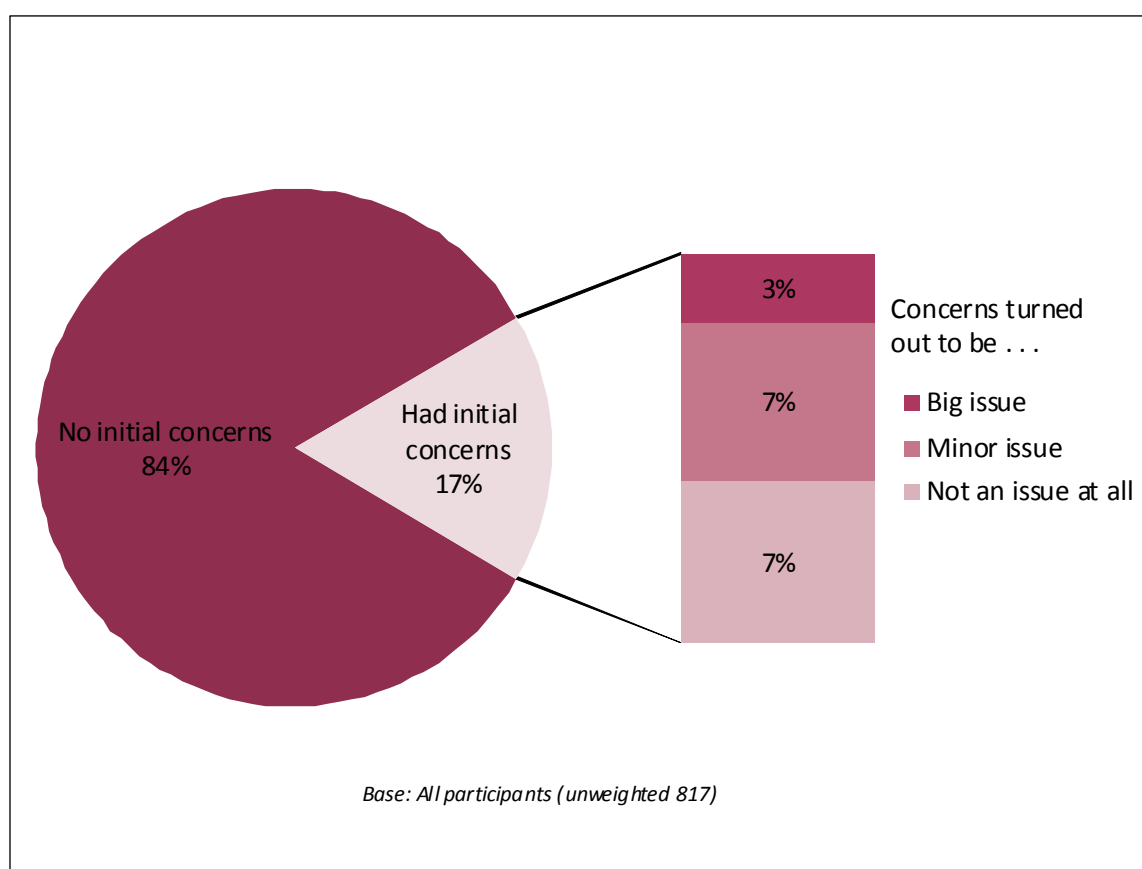
4.30   Among those participants with concerns only one in six (3% of participants overall) found their initial concerns were big issues that greatly impacted on the success of the initiative, and two out of five found them to be minor issues that had a small negative impact on their experience – for the remaining 42% their concerns turned out to not be an issue at all.

4.31   Very positively those that were concerned about their own abilities or confidence, whether the course would be beneficial or were insecure because of their age were most likely to find that these turned out not to be issues at all. It was those concerned about time / fitting the course around their job that were most likely to find their concerns borne out into major issues that greatly impacted upon the success of the initiative for them personally – although this accounts for only 1% of participants overall.

4.32　　Similarly, as shown in Figure 4.7, among employers only small proportions had concerns prior to participating (84% had none). Employers were most likely to be concerned about bureaucracy / there being too much paperwork.

Figure 4.7: Whether employers' initial concerns were borne out

No initial concerns
84%

Had initial concerns
11%

Concerns turned out to be . . .

■ Big issue
■ Minor issue
■ Not an issue at all

3%

4%

4%

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)
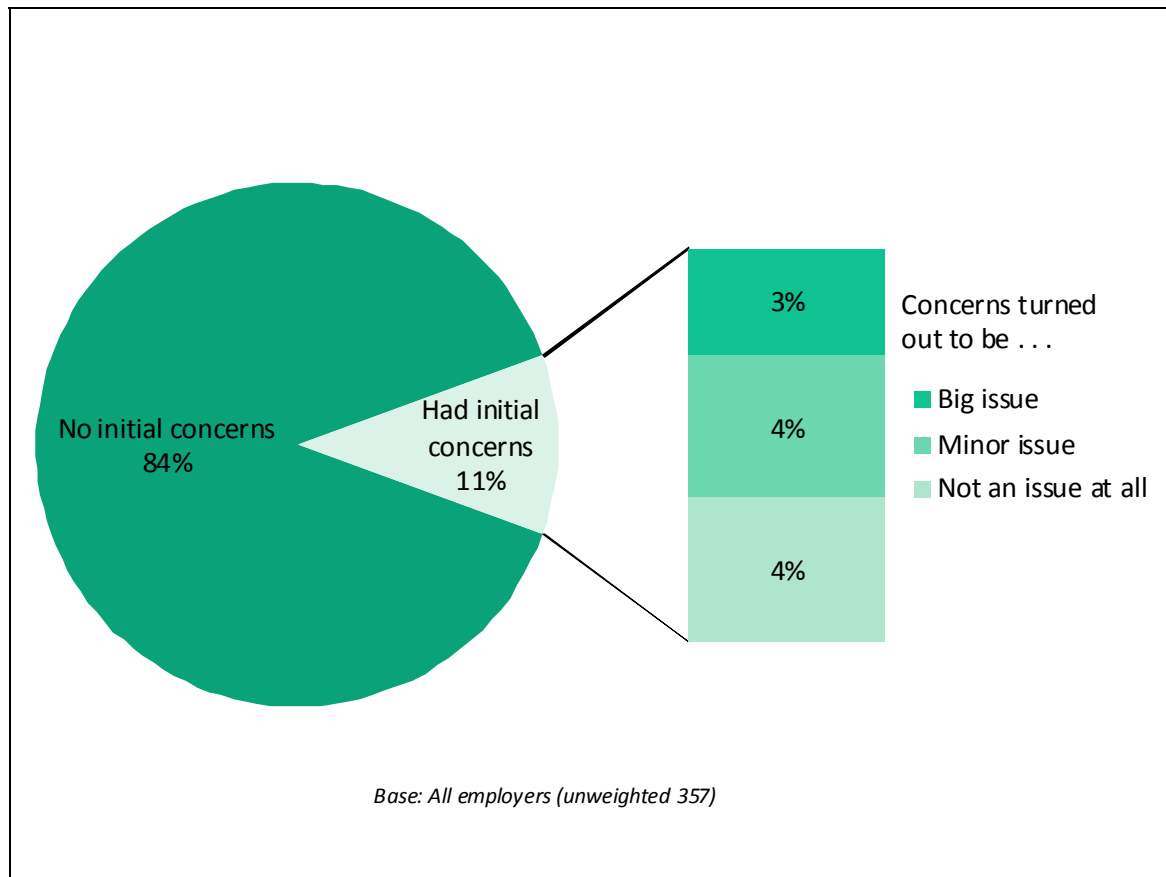
4.33　　Again, only tiny proportions found these to be concerns to be reflected in their actual experience, with again only 3% of employers overall finding their concerns were big issues that impacted on the success of the initiative for them as employers.

Participants' views about industry, employer and job role

4.34　　To help understand participants' views of the challenges that they faced at work, they were asked to state the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements about the position of work within their industry and their organisation in particular. Figure 4.8 shows levels of agreement with statements about their sector as a whole.

4.35　　While the majority of participants agreed that it is harder for women to progress to senior roles than for men in their industry, smaller proportions were willing to agree with some of the possible causes. However, figures still suggest that many participants think they are disadvantaged within their industries. Over half think there are few successful female role models and that there is a lack of flexibility which makes it difficult to balance work with non-work responsibilities. Even the suggestion of a concrete discrimination in terms of men getting more access to training was agreed to by almost a third (although participants were more likely to disagree than agree with this statement).

Figure 4.8: Participants opinion of role of women in their industry

MEAN SCORE

						Mean
Harder for women to progress to senior roles than for men	14%	14%	9%	23%	39%	2.4
Few successful female role models	20%	17%	4%	23%	35%	2.6
Lack of flexibility – difficult to balance work with non-work responsibilities	17%	21%	6%	23%	31%	2.7
Men get more access to training	34%	23%	9%	12%	18%	3.4

■ Strongly disagree (5) ■ Slightly disagree (4) ■ Neither (3) ■ Slightly agree (2) ■ Strongly agree (1)

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)

4.36   Those on higher salaries, in higher skilled roles or with higher qualifications are significantly more likely to agree that it is harder for women to progress to senior roles in their industry;

➢ Over three quarters (77%) of those earning £30,000 or more agreed compared half (49%) of those earning less than £10,000

➢ Nearly three quarters (72%) of managers agreed compared to just over a third (36%) of those in elementary occupations

➢ Seven out of ten (71%) of those with a Level 4 or 5 qualification agreed compared to six out of ten (62%) of those with a Level 1 qualification or below or none.

4.37   In terms of the suggestion of there being few successful female role models in their industry again the higher paid, higher qualified participants in higher skilled roles were more likely to agree (71% of those earning £30,000 more versus 56% of those earning £10,000 or less, 61% of managers compared to 40% of machine operatives / elementary occupations and 64% of those with a Level 4 or 5 qualification compared to 57% of those with a Level 1 qualification or below or no qualification).

4.38   Participants involved with Automotive Skills were significantly more likely to be of the opinion that men get more access to training activities than women (50% agreed compared to 31% overall). Pay was also a factor again – but here the lower the pay bracket the more likely the participant was to agree that men had more access (39% of those earning less than £10,000 versus 16% of those earning £30,000 or more agreed). Managers and those with Level 4 or 5 qualifications were also significantly less likely to agree (23% and 24% respectively compared to 31% overall).

4.39   Figure 4.9 shows perceptions of the prospects of women within participants own organisations.

Figure 4.9: Participants opinion of role of women in their organisation

Base: Participants who were working for an employer
when started initiative (unweighted 769)
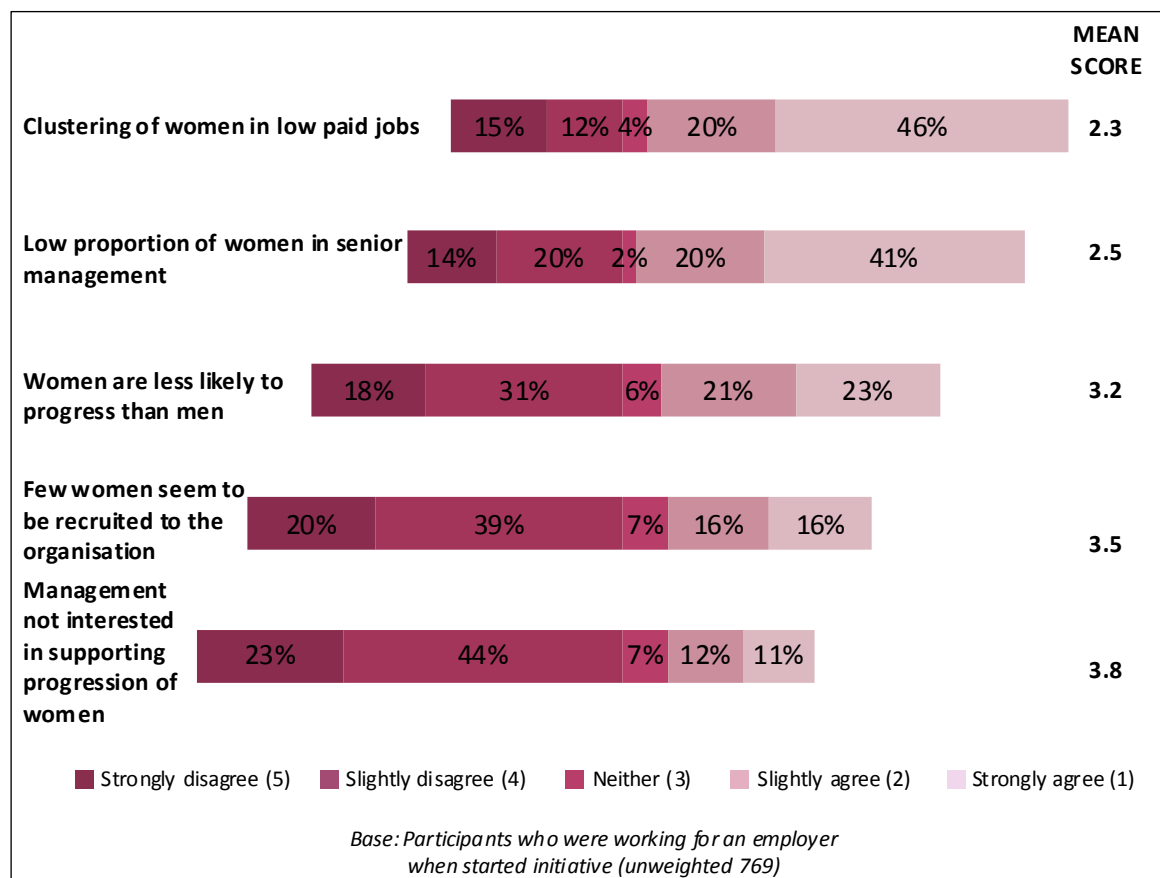
4.40   Within their own company two thirds of participants agreed that there is a clustering of women in low paid jobs, and nearly the same proportion thought that women were under-represented at senior management level. However a lower proportion (less than half) believed that women are less likely to progress. Only a third agreed that few women were recruited to their organisation – indicating issues do not necessarily derive from women being under-represented across the board. Less than a quarter agreed that management in their organisation were not interested in supporting the progression of women (and around two thirds disagreed with this).

4.41   At the level of their own organisation again those who were higher paid, or in a higher skilled role were more likely to agree that women are less likely to progress than men

> More than half (55%) of those earning £30,000 or more agreed compared to 38% of those earning less than £10,000.

> Half (50%) those in managerial, professional or associate professional or administrative roles agreed while only a quarter (26%) of machine operatives or those in elementary occupations and a third (32%) of those in a skilled trade, personal or customer service or sales role did.

4.42   Those earning the lowest wages (less than £10,000) were significantly more likely to agree that the management in their company were not interested in the progression of women (31% did so compared to 23% of those in other pay brackets) while those in the highest pay bracket (£30,000 or more) or in management occupations were significantly more likely to disagree (78% and 76% disagreed compared to 66% of those in lower pay brackets and 68% in other occupations). Similarly those with the highest previous qualifications (Level 4 or 5) were significantly less likely to agree (only 20% did so compared to 25% across other levels). So, while those with higher skilled occupations, better pay and higher qualifications were more ready to agree that women face obstacles in their industry they are less likely to blame this on the management in their own company.

4.43   Sector (defined by which SSC participants were engaged with) was the key differentiator in terms of whether participants agreed that few women were recruited by their employer, and whether their organisation had a low proportion of women in senior management. Skills for Logistics, Automotive Skills and ConstructionSkills participants were significantly more likely to agree that few women were recruited at all (50%, 48%, 40% did so) while Skillfast UK, Asset Skills and Lantra employers were significantly more likely to disagree with this (83%, 77%, 70% did so). This ties in with the workforce profile in these sectors as Chapter 3 - Skillfast UK and Asset Skills both have higher proportions of female staff, and Lantra employers were most likely to have a completely female workforce.

4.44   Participants from the same SSCs (Skillfast UK, Asset Skills and Lantra) were again most likely to disagree that there was a low proportion of women in senior management (60%, 58%, 49% respectively) while Automotive Skills and ConstructionSkills were again significantly more likely to agree (89% and 74% did so), although Skills for Logistics participants were not more likely to do so. SEMTA and Energy and Utility Skills participants were also significantly more likely to agree that there was a low proportion of women in senior management in their company (93% and 89% did so).

4.45   In terms of there being a clustering of women in particular low paid jobs, sector was again the main differentiator of views. Skills for Logistics and Skillfast UK participants were significantly less likely to agree this was the case at their company (only 38% and 42% did so compared to 66% overall), while ConstructionSkills participants were significantly more likely to agree (73% did so compared to 64% agreement among other SSCs excluding ConstructionSkills). This contrasts sharply with the actual pay profile of participants – while Skills for Logistics and Skillfast UK participants had a similar earnings profile to all participants with over half (69% and 53% respectively) earning less than £20,000. ConstructionSkills participants were significantly more likely to be in the higher pay brackets themselves with only a third (32%) earning less than £20,000 – reflecting that participants involved with this project were more likely to be in managerial roles.

4.46   Participants were also asked to comment on the perception of their own job role at the time when they became involved with Women and Work (Figure 4.10).

4.47   Participants were split equally into those that agreed and disagreed that their role was traditionally low paid. Participants were slightly less likely to agree that their particular role had no history of progression to more senior roles for women (around two in five agreed) and even less likely to think that it offered poor job security (around one in four agreed) . However these are still sizeable proportions with concerns around their job role with regard to each factor.

Figure 4.10: Participants opinion of their job when started initiative

Base: Participants who were working for an employer
when started initiative (unweighted 769)
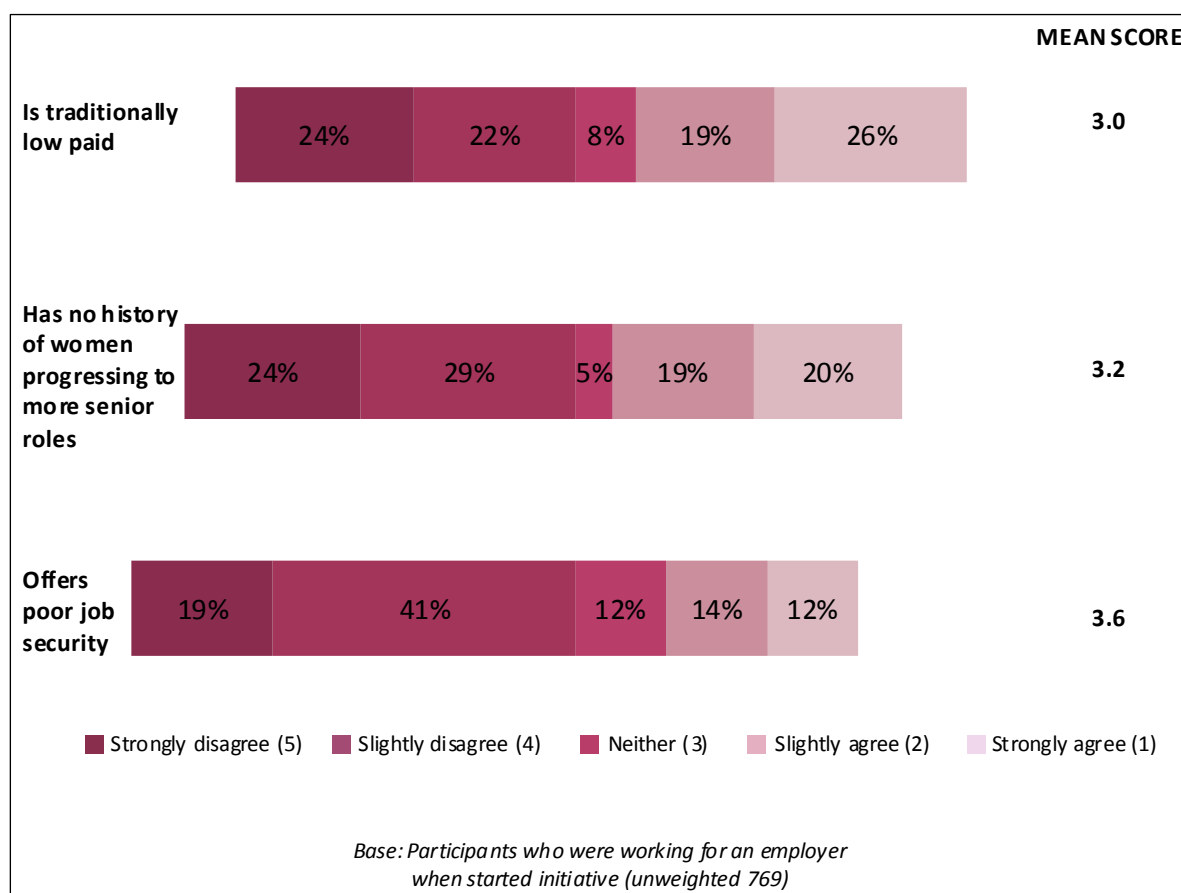
4.48   As would be expected pay and occupation impacted whether participants agreed their role offered poor job security – those who were lower paid (less than £10,000) or in machine operative or elementary roles were significantly more likely to agree with over a third (38% of the former and 36% of the latter) doing so compared to only a fifth (19%) of those earning £30,000 or more and a quarter (24%) of those in other occupations. The same factors obviously also impacted whether the participants thought their role was traditionally low paid (those that were low paid, or in low skilled occupations were significantly more likely to agree).

4.49   There was also some variation by sector – ConstructionSkills and Energy and Utility Skills participants were significantly more likely to disagree with both statements (role offers poor job security and is traditionally low paid) with around two thirds of the former (68% and 63%) and over four fifths of the latter (84% for both) disagreeing. Asset Skills participants were significantly more likely to agree with both statements, with one in three (33%) agreeing they had poor job security and three out of five (59%) agreeing it was traditionally low paid.

5   What did employers and participants think about the training and development?

5.1   This chapter turns to employer and participant views on the programme, and in particular the actual training and development received. In order to provide some context it looks first at the nature of participants' involvement – what type of training or development support did they experience as a result of participation? In setting the scene we also look at whether participants and/or employers made a financial contribution to the training and development accessed.

5.2   We then turn to look at general views on the delivery and content of the programme; exploring issues of flexibility and suitability. The chapter also looks at specific views of particular elements of the programme, such as mentoring schemes, the individual training plan (ITP) or progress reviews. Finally, we conclude with employer and participant overall satisfaction with the programme and their likelihood to recommend it to others.

Nature of involvement

5.3   For the slight majority of participants, their experience of the initiative involved a training course at the premises or place of work of their employer (58%). Approaching two fifths (38%) had attended a training course off-site.

5.4   Over two fifths of all participants reported that their programme involved a progress review (44%), with an identical proportion recalling an ITP. This is perhaps surprisingly low considering these two elements were a mandatory part of all programmes.

5.5   For almost half (45%), involvement with the programme had involved some career development materials (whether online or paper based). Smaller proportions had specifically produced or received a career development plan (27%) or been part of a mentor scheme (26%).

5.6   It was common for participants to have experienced two or more (typically three) of these possible elements of the programme. For example those participants involved in a mentor scheme were also particularly likely to report having had a progress review (75% did so) or a career development plan (58%).

5.7   The nature of the involvement with the programme obviously varies by SSC and by strand (Table 5.1). Participants on Asset Skills and Skillfast-UK strands were the most likely to have attended a training course at their workplace premises (79% and 75% respectively), whereas those working for employers covered by Skills for Logistics, Lantra or Energy & Utility Skills SSC sectors were more likely to have attended an off-site course (90%, 74% and 58% respectively).

Table 5.1: Type of training and development programme by SSC

	Total	Asset Skills	Automotive Skills	ConstructionSkills	E&U Skills	Improve	Lantra	SEMTA	Skills for Logistics	Skillfast-UK
Unweighted base	*(817)*	*(158)*	*(147)*	*(158)*	*(19)*	*(26)*	*(169)*	*(29)*	*(31)*	*(80)*
	%	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*
Training course at premises of employer	58	79	38	3	5	62	56	62	38	75
Online / paper based career development materials	45	42	54	41	42	69	42	62	34	35
Progress review with superior / manager	44	47	24	53	68	35	63	28	52	29
Individual training plan	44	41	34	39	74	46	75	52	66	28
Training course at premises of external provider	38	29	20	52	74	46	58	-	90	24
Career development plan	27	20	19	36	32	31	27	59	17	25
Mentor scheme	26	22	12	27	26	50	50	28	28	15

5.8 Mentor schemes were more likely to be part of the offer from Lantra and Improve SSCs, with half the participants in these SSCs being part of such a scheme. Participants in SEMTA or ConstructionSkills strands were significantly more likely than average to have had the opportunity to create a career development plan (59% and 36% respectively).

5.9 Minorities of participants found that involvement in the programme necessitated a financial cost. Less than one in twelve (7%) made a direct financial contribution to the cost of the programme. Around one in seven (15%) had to pay for any associated travel or study materials and 3% paid for additional childcare as a result of participation.

5.10 However, more common was participants giving up some of their own unpaid time as a consequence of their involvement; almost two in five (38%) overall did so – this rising to between a half and three quarters of participants on programmes delivered by Lantra (55%), Automotive Skills (55%), Skills for Logistics (62%) and Improve (77%).

5.11 Two thirds of employers (66%) made some sort of 'in kind' contribution to the cost of delivering the programme. Among those that did, this was most commonly allowing staff time off work to participate (70%), offering the use of facilities or equipment for the purposes of the programme (25%) or contributing the cost of staff time to administer the scheme (19%).

General views on delivery and content

5.12   Employers were asked to give their overall views on aspects of the programme such as the flexibility of the design and content, the extent to which they considered the initiative innovative and its understanding of the requirements and working patterns of the sector.

5.13   In terms of flexibility, three quarters (75%) found the delivery of the training or development to be flexible and a slightly smaller proportion - two thirds (66%) – reporting that the *content* of the training or development was flexible (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Flexibility of the delivery and content of the programme (employers)

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)
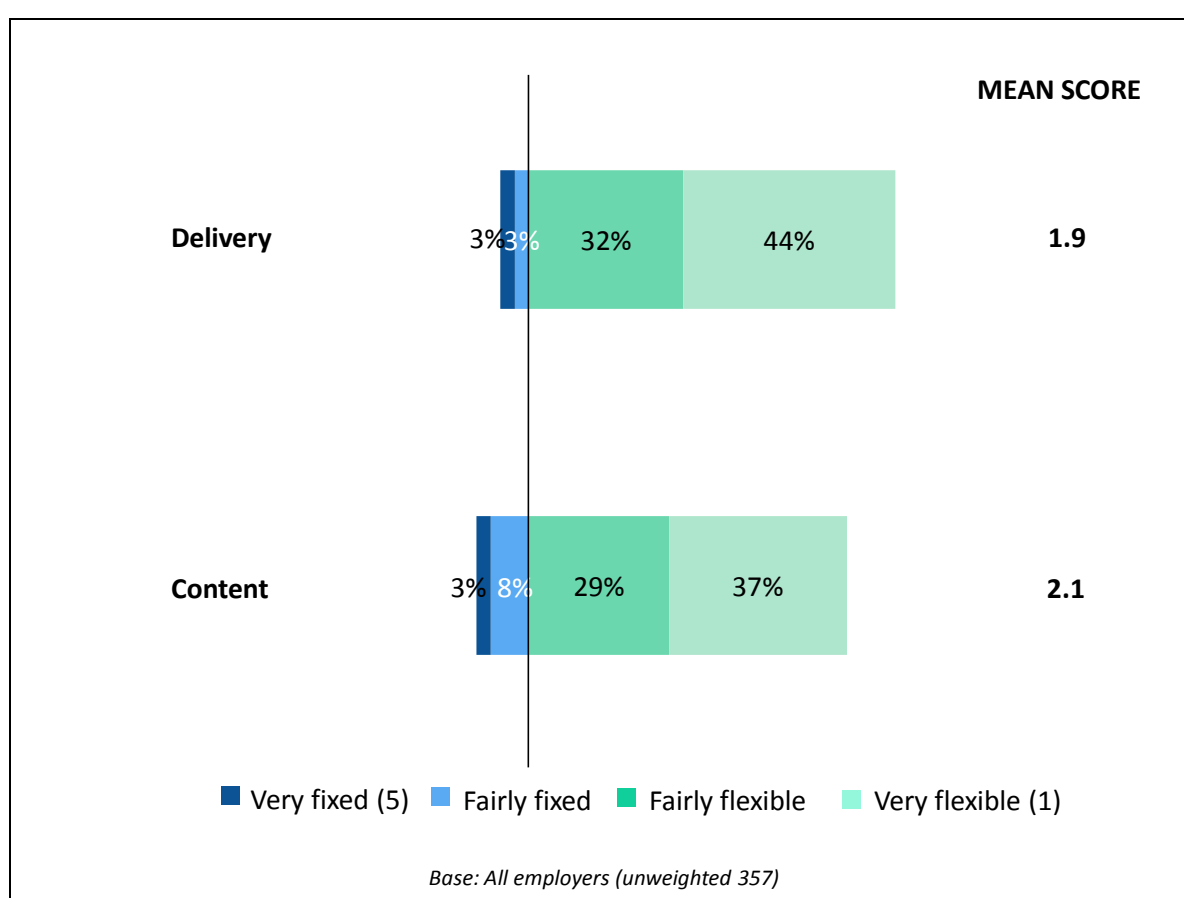
5.14   Perceptions of flexibility were particularly high among those employers that were less engaged with training generally (i.e. those with neither a training budget or plan, and who had not had previous contact with their SSC): almost half (48%) of these employers found the content *very flexible* compared with an average of 37%, and over three in five (62%) felt the delivery of the programme was very flexible (compared with an average of 44%).

5.15 Around nine in ten employers agreed that the programme demonstrated both an excellent understanding of the skills needs (91%) and the working patterns (88%) of the sector (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: Understanding of sector requirements (employers)

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)
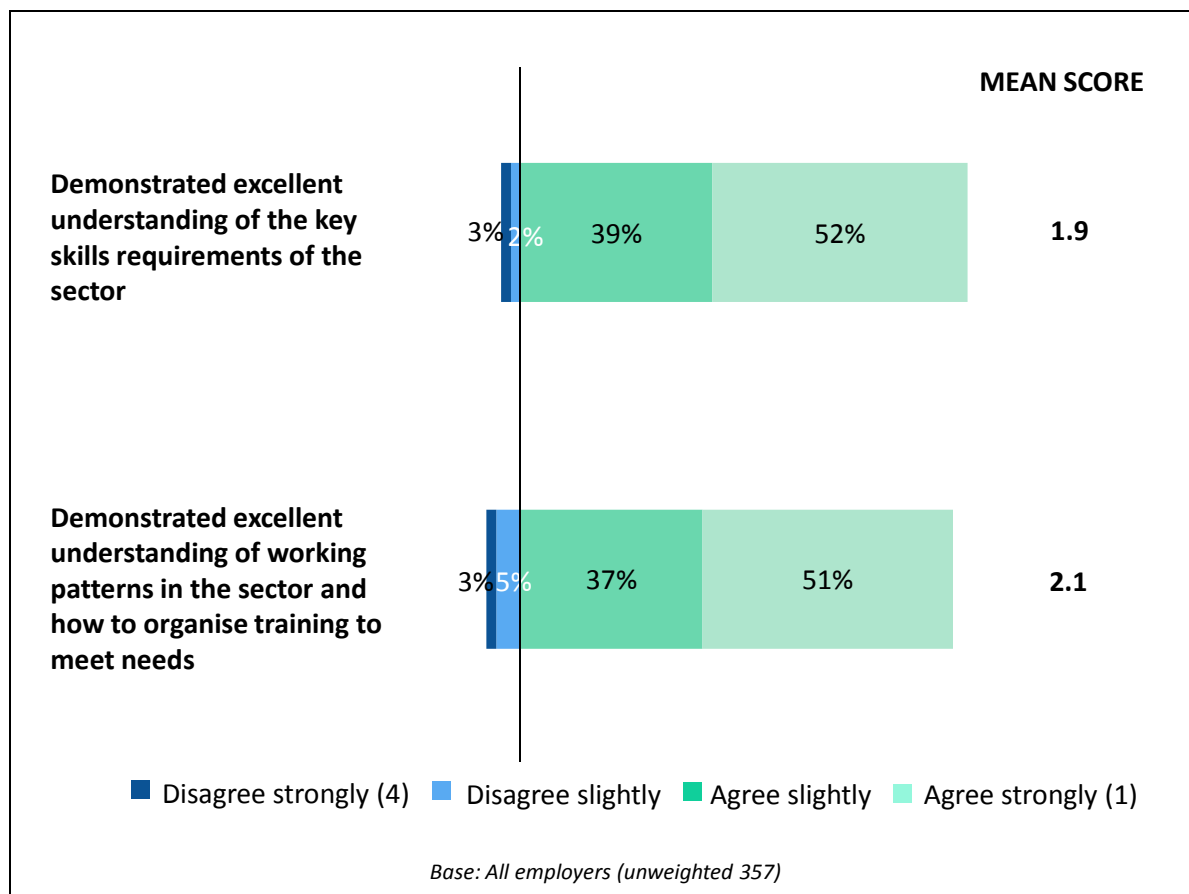
5.16 Just one in twenty five (4%) employers disagreed that the initiative demonstrated an excellent understanding of the sector's skill requirements.

5.17 This perception among employers that the initiative was sector-focussed in terms of skills requirements and working patters was broadly consistent across SSC.

5.18 The programme was also regarded as innovative by employers (Figure 5.3). Two in five (39%) felt it was highly innovative and different from anything else available, with a further 49% reporting it be fairly innovative. Just 3% of all employers thought the initiative was similar to many other programmes available in the industry and not very or not at all innovative.

Figure 5.3: Innovation of the programme (employers)

Base: All employers who think initiative in innovative (unweighted 311)

■ Not at all innovative (4)
■ Not very innovative

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)
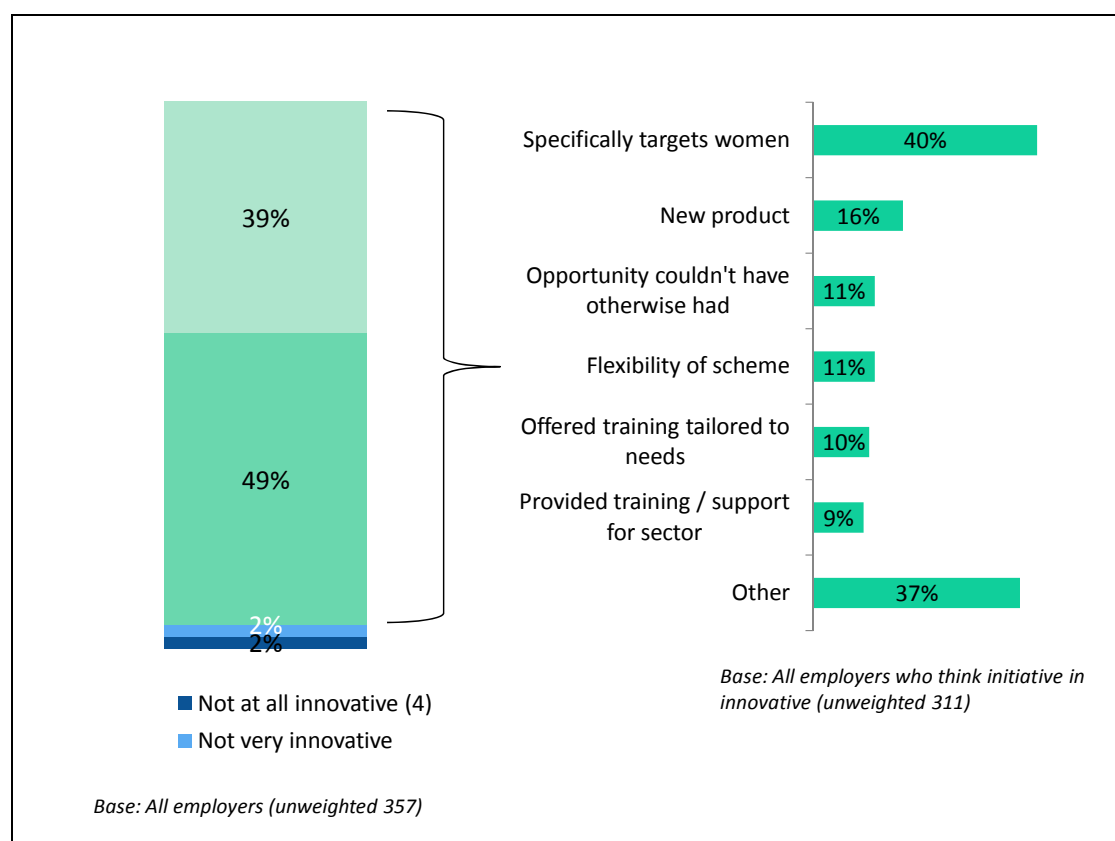
5.19   While this view is shared by employers across all SSCs, those covered by ConstructionSkills SSC were particularly likely to regard the programme was fairly or highly innovative (95%).

5.20   The key reason why the programme is viewed as innovative by employers is because it specifically targets women (40% of those who regarded it as innovative said this was why). However, for some it is because of the level of flexibility or tailoring it offered: around one in ten employers in each case noted it was innovative because of the general flexibility of the scheme (11%), the fact that it offered training tailored to the organisation's need (10%) or because it provided training specifically tailored for the sector (9%).

5.21   Around a fifth of Lantra employers in each case – significantly higher than average – considered the programme innovative because of its flexibility (19%) or because it was tailored to organisational need (20%).

5.22   Overall, two thirds (65%) of employers felt that the initiative could not be improved with respect to meeting the needs of the organisation. Suggested improvements were disparate, but the most common ones were the simplification of paperwork (mentioned by 7% of employers), improved promotion and marketing of the scheme (5%), opening up the programme to men (4%), having more flexible timescales (3%) and making the training more appropriate by including more practical, sector-specific training (3%).

Views on particular elements

5.23   To complement the employer perspective on the overall design and delivery of the programme, participants were asked their views on the specific aspects of the programme that they experienced.

5.24   Figure 5.4 illustrates how useful participants found each element of the programme. Each different type of training and development support is based on those who experienced each type as part of the initiative. All aspects of the programme were seen to be useful by the great majority.

5.25   Attending a training course off-site delivered by an external provider was seen to be the most useful element of the programme with nearly two thirds (64%) of those that had attended such a course reporting this to be very useful and a further third (32%) finding it quite useful.

Figure 5.4: Usefulness of aspects of the programme (participants)

	MEAN SCORE
Training course at the premises of an external training provider (base: 312)	1.4
Training course at the premises or place of work of your employer (base: 474)	1.5
Mentor scheme (base: 209)	1.6
Progress review with your supervisor, manager or employer (base: 358)	1.7
Individual training plan (ITP) (base: 356)	1.7
Online or paper career development materials (base: 365)	1.7
Career development plan (base: 222)	1.8

■ Not at all useful (4)   ■ Not really useful (3)   ■ Quite useful (2)   ■ Very useful (1)

Base: All who have used this element in their training programme (unweighted base)

5.26   While on balance it was still seen as useful (with 84% finding it very or quite useful), around one in seven (15%) who had participated in a scheme involving a career development plan did not find this useful. However, this varied by the occupational group of the participant; over nine in ten (93%) of those in medium or lower skilled roles (skilled trades, personal services, sales and customer services, machine operatives or elementary roles) found their career development plan useful compared with just under three quarters (74%) of those in professional or associate professional occupations.

5.27   Those in managerial occupations when they started the training or development programme were less likely than average to perceive a progress review or mentor scheme as useful (with around a fifth – 19% and 20% respectively – stating that this was not really or not at all useful).   For this group of participants, a training course run by an external training provider was seen as the most useful aspect of the initiative (99% found this useful).

5.28   Perceptions of the usefulness of the ITP also varied by occupation, with almost all of those in machine operative or elementary occupations finding this useful (94%) compared with just under three quarters (73%) of professional or associate professional occupations. As with a progress review and career development plan, those in professional or associate professional occupations are more likely to have experienced formal training and development infrastructures already in their career, whereas for those in lower skilled roles the initiative may have represented their first experience of individualised training or career planning.

5.29   Of those that could remember an ITP, around two fifths (43%) reported having a great deal of involvement in developing their plan, with a further two fifths (42%) having some involvement. Around one in seven (15%) had very little or no involvement at all.

5.30   The extent to which a participant was involved in developing their ITP varied by some demographic and employment characteristics. Participants were more likely to report that they had had little or no involvement in developing their plan if:

> They earned a salary of less than £10,000 when they started the programme (33%);
> They were aged 55 or over (20%).

5.31   Participants involved in a strand delivered by Asset Skills had less involvement in developing their ITP than average, with around a quarter (24%) reporting little or no involvement.

Mentor schemes

5.32   A suite of questions were asked to those who had participated in a strand with a mentor scheme element (representing just over a quarter – 26% - of all participants). Of those that should have been involved in a mentor scheme three quarters (76%) were actually assigned a mentor.

5.33   Among those assigned a mentor, satisfaction levels with the mentor were high with the great majority (86%) saying they were very or quite satisfied; almost two thirds (63%) were very satisfied. However just under one in ten (9%) were dissatisfied with their mentor (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5: Satisfaction with mentor (participants)

MEAN SCORE   1.5

63%

23%

5%
3%

Very satisfied (1)

Quite satisfied

Not very satisfied

Not at all satisfied (5)

Base: All participants who were assigned a mentor (unweighted 182)
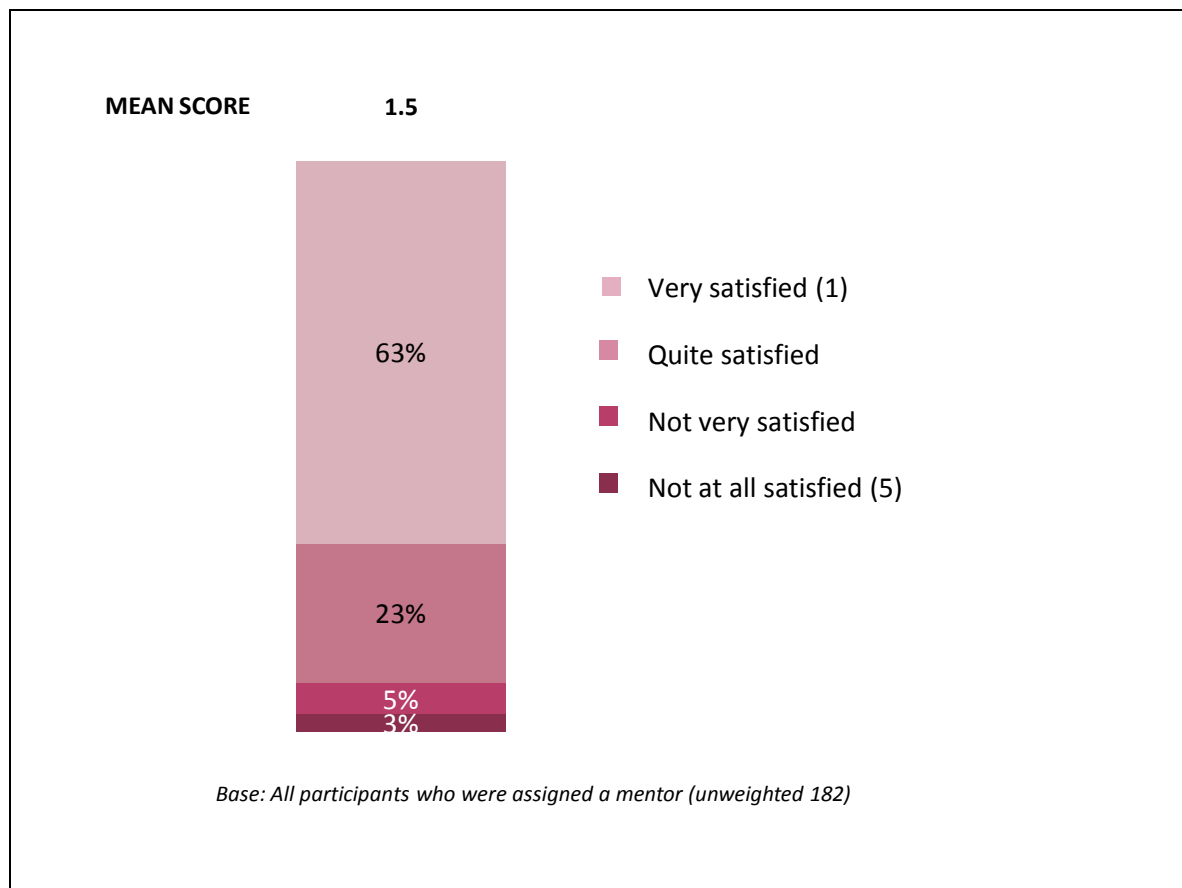
5.34   When asked how the mentoring scheme could have been improved, one in ten (10%) of all those involved in a mentor scheme (irrespective of whether they were assigned a mentor or not) said that they would have welcomed better communication and follow-up contact with their mentor, and 3% would have liked more one-to-one contact.

5.35   As Figure 5.6 illustrates, the most commonly mentioned ways in which participants felt supported by their mentor relate to 'softer' outcomes such as the mentor bringing about an increased confidence in abilities (79%), offering general industry advice (71%) or advice on dealing with workplace problems (64%).

Figure 5.6: Support received as a result of mentor (participants)

Base: All participants who were assigned a mentor (unweighted 182)
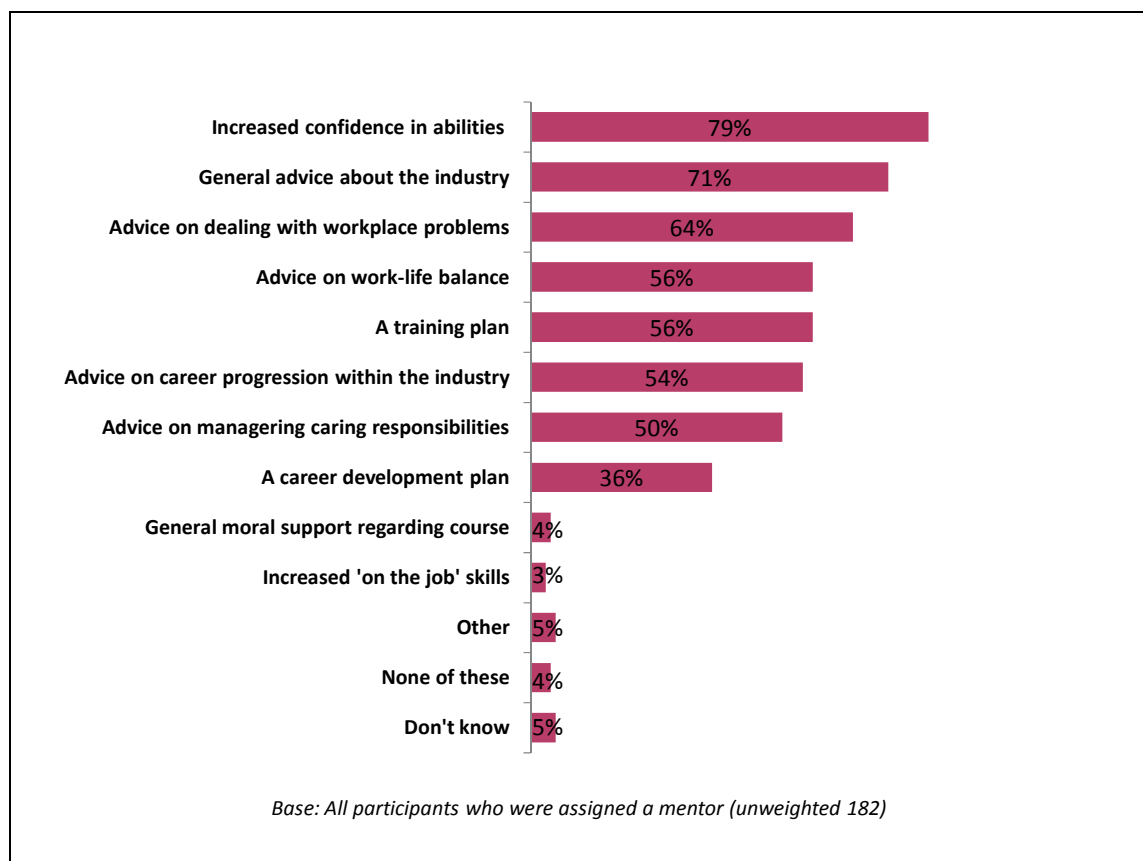
Support received

5.36   All participants were asked how supported they felt during involvement with programme (Figure 5.7). In general participants reported that they did feel supported; around two fifths (42%) felt very supported and a similar proportion (39%) felt quite supported. However, that did leave just under a fifth (17%) who felt not really or not at all supported during their involvement in the programme.

Figure 5.7: How supported felt during programme (participants)

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
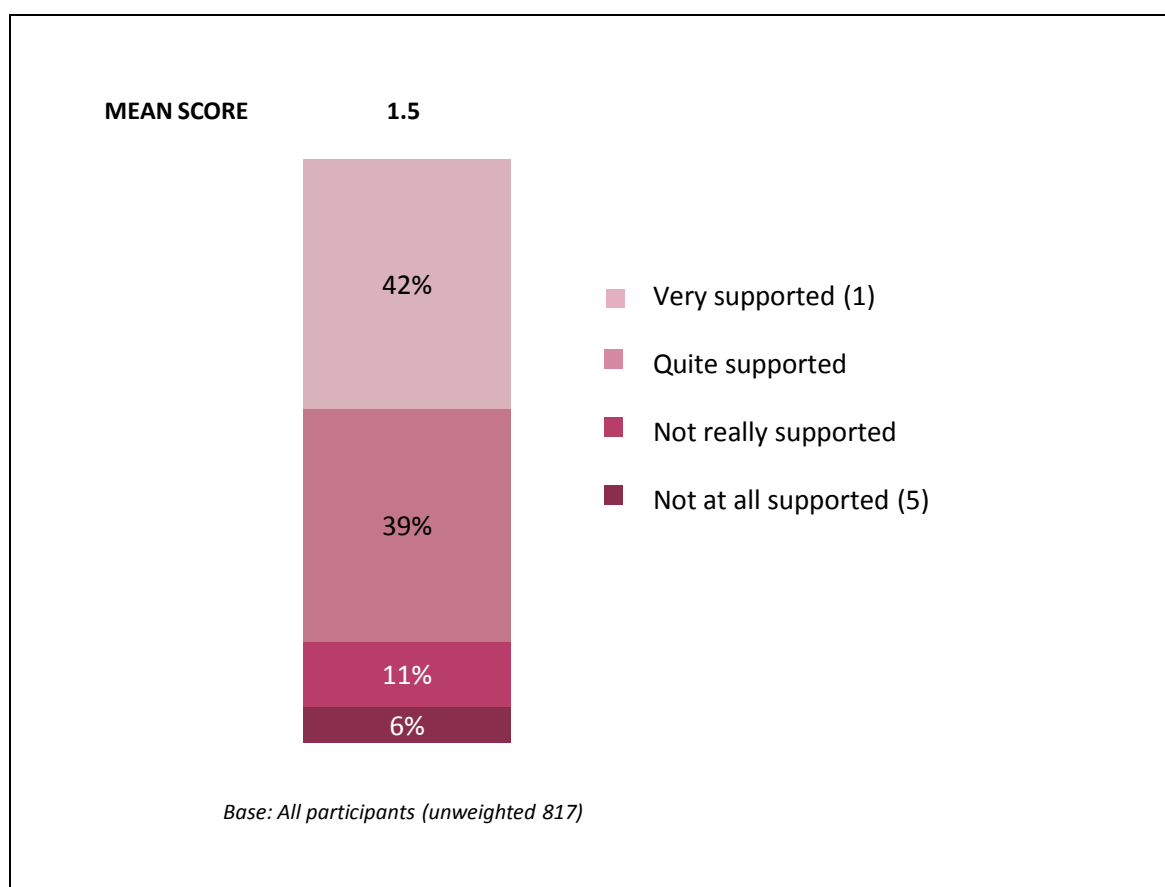
5.37   As one might expect, those who were assigned a mentor were more likely to state that they felt very supported (49%). Those in lower skilled occupations (machine operative or elementary roles) and those women aged 55 or over were particularly likely to feel supported during their involvement with the programme (59% and 52% saying 'very supported' respectively).

5.38   Participants on Automotive Skills strands were the least likely to feel supported – almost two in five (37%) reported feeling not really or not at all supported whilst on the programme.

5.39   Those participants that felt supported where asked what factors made them feel supported. Most commonly, support was provided by the training provider being on hand to answer questions or provide guidance (29%). Just under a quarter (23%) noted that someone (whether this was their mentor or the training provider) was encouraging, enthusiastic or motivational. Around one in seven (14%) mentioned that their employer was keen and helpful, and a similar proportion felt supported by their peers.

5.40   Those on the *Training Needs Analysis (Lantra)* strand were particularly likely to feel supported because of the training provider's availability to answer queries (39% felt supported for this reason).

Figure 5.8: Factors which made participants feel supported

Base: All participants who felt supported during the programme (unweighted 672)
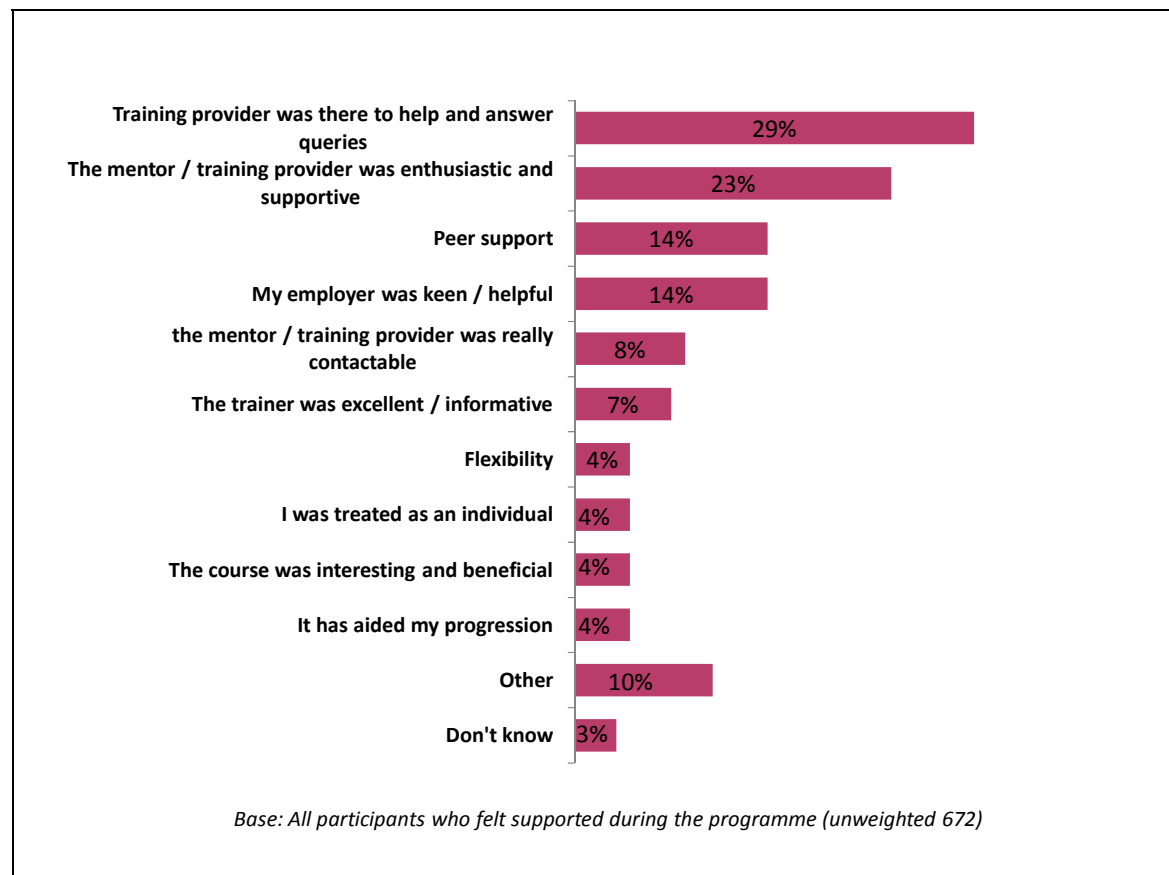
5.41   Those that did not feel supported were asked what additional support they would have welcomed. Just under a third (30%) would have liked better skilled training providers or tutors. Around one in six (16%) noted that they would have wanted the training to be more accessible in terms of providing flexible learning options such as online modules to study at home which would cause less interruption to the working week.

Figure 5.9: Additional support participant would have liked

Base: All participants who felt unsupported during the programme (unweighted 130)
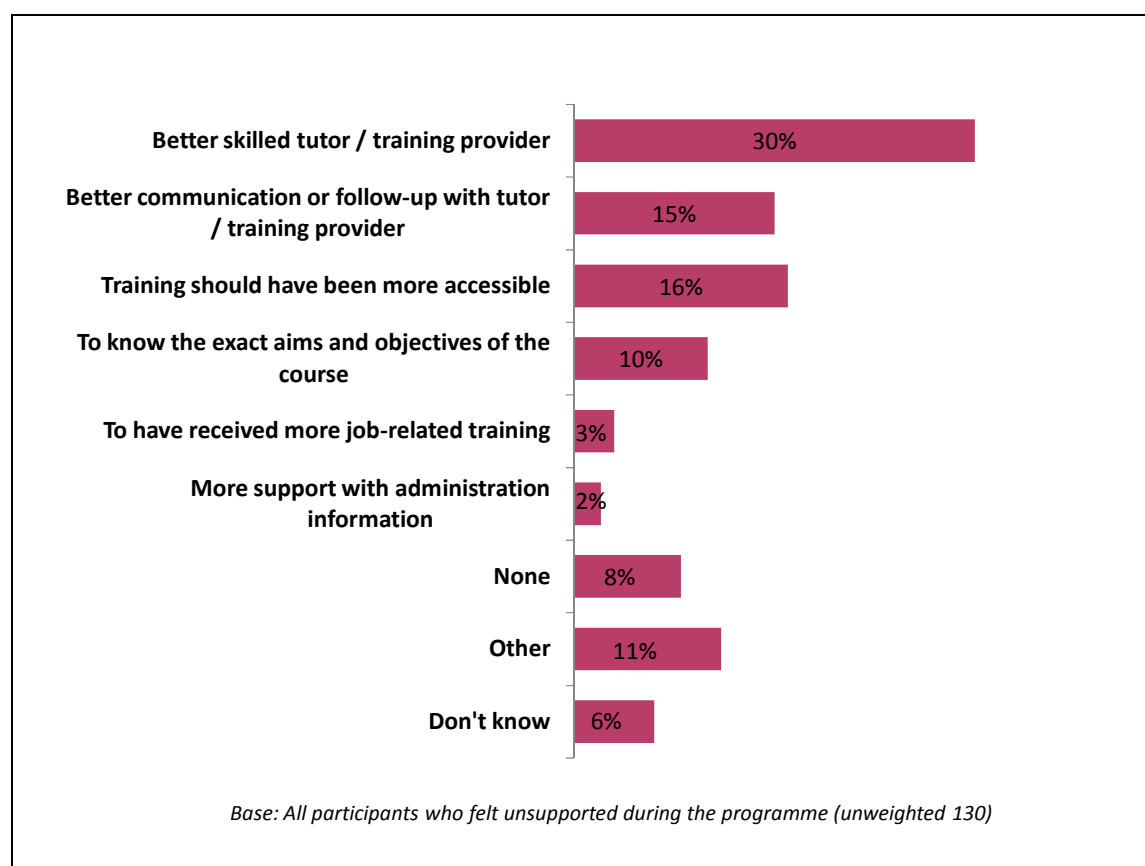
5.42   Around one in seven (15%) would have preferred more communication with their training provider or tutor. One in ten (10%) felt that they were not clear about the overall aims or objectives of the course which led to them feeling unsupported.

5.43   We saw in paragraph 5.38 that those on an Automotive Skills strand were less likely to feel supported generally. For these participants, it seems the lack of flexibility or accessibility of the training was a particular cause for concern; around a third (32%) said that they would have liked the option to study at home or have more choice about the way in which they accessed the training and development.

Overall satisfaction

5.44   Participants were asked to name both the most positive and the most negative aspect of the programme. Figure 5.10 shows the most positive aspects of the programme from a participant perspective.

5.45   Over a quarter (26%) of participants felt that the new skills or knowledge they gained was the most positive aspect of their participation. One in eight (12%) saw their increased confidence as the predominant gain. Following this, around one in ten in each case said the most positive aspect was being able to access training and development activities (11%), mixing with other women in a similar position (10%) and gaining a qualification (10%).

Figure 5.10: Most positive aspect of the programme (participants)

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
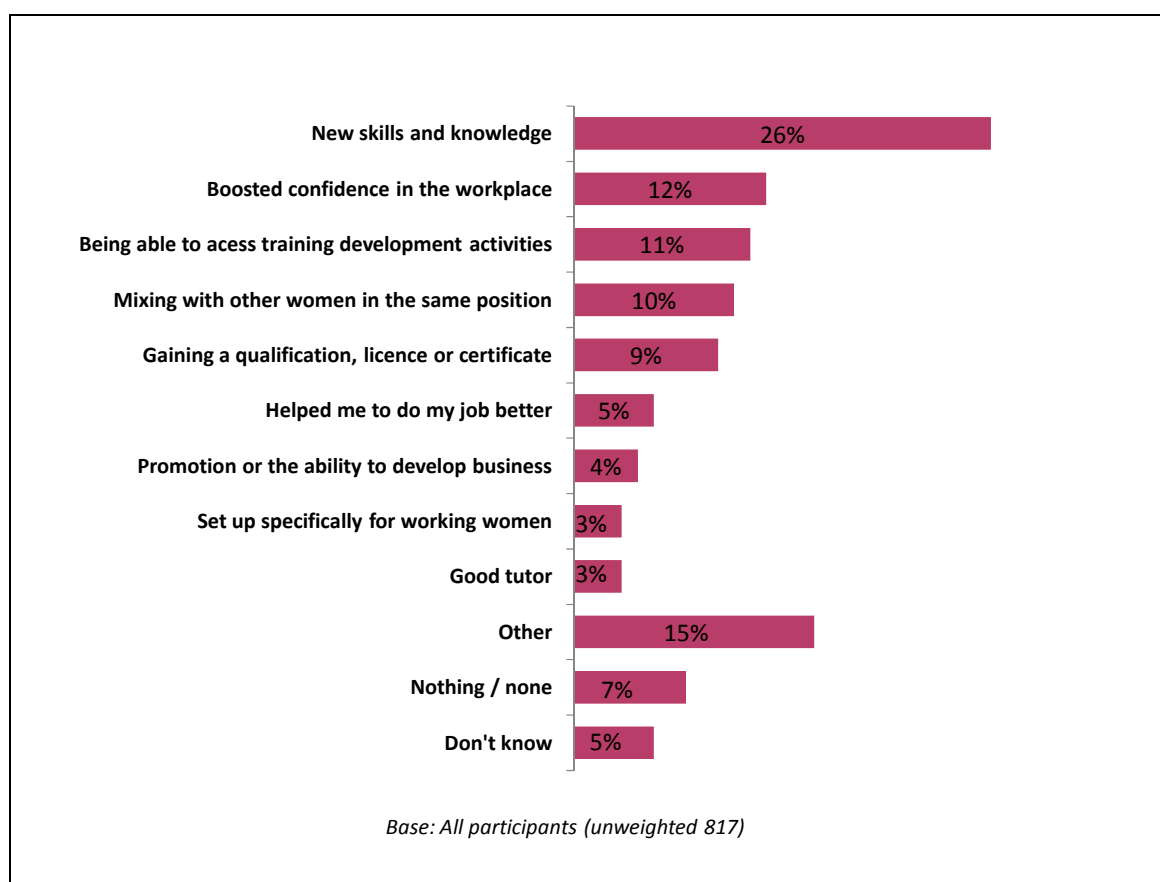
5.46   In terms of the most negative aspect, encouragingly over half (55%) of all participants could not think of a negative aspect at all. Negative aspects were mentioned by small proportions, but the most common complaints (mentioned by 7% in each case) were that the course was extremely time consuming and that there was a lack of support or feedback from tutors.

Figure 5.11: Most negative aspect (participants)

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
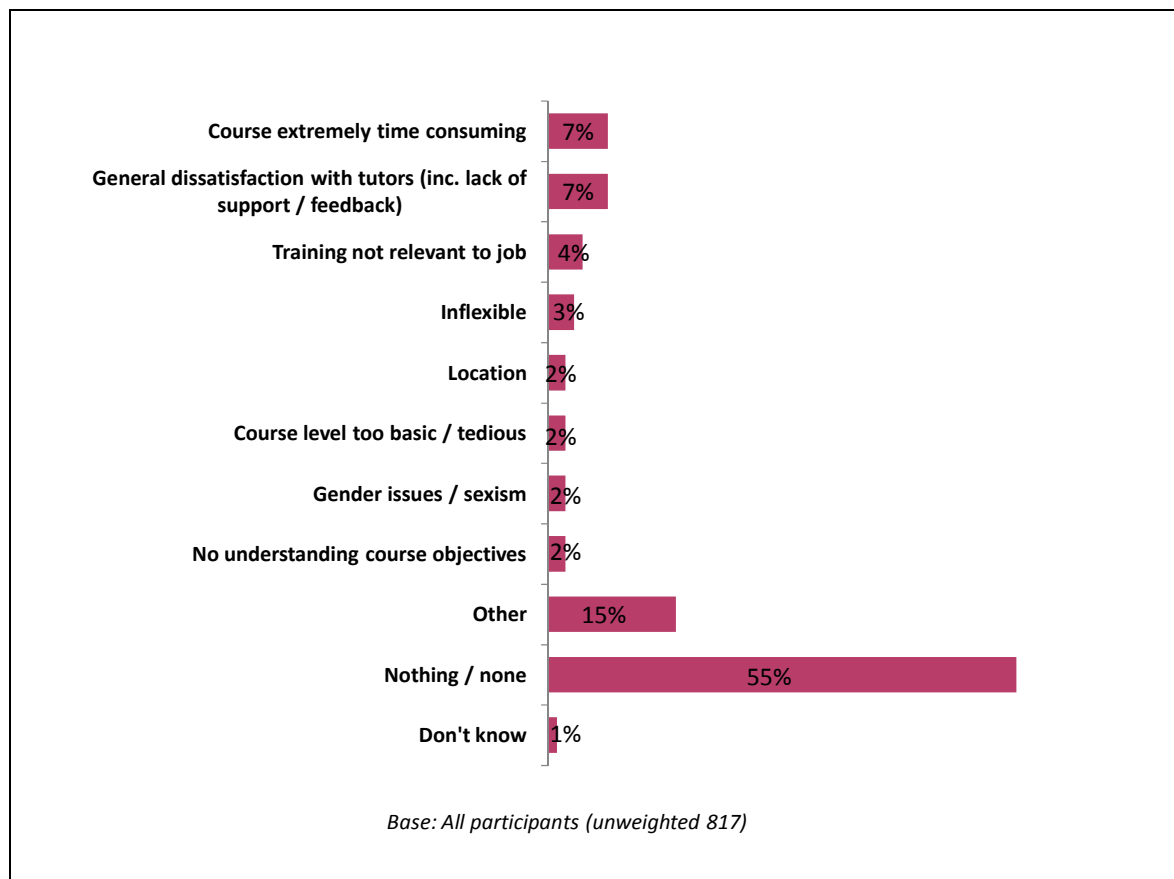
5.47   Participants on Automotive Skills strands were more likely than average to see the time consuming nature of the programme as a negative aspect (17%).

5.48   Those involved with a ConstructionSkills or Asset Skills programme were significantly more likely to report that there were no negatives aspects of involvement; two thirds (65%) in the case of both SSCs.

5.49   Figure 5.12 illustrates overall satisfaction with the programme among both employers and participants. Satisfaction levels among both groups are high, with nine in ten (90%) participants almost all (96%) employers saying they were quite or very satisfied.

Figure 5.12: Satisfaction with the programme

Base: All employers (unweighted 357), all participants (unweighted 817)
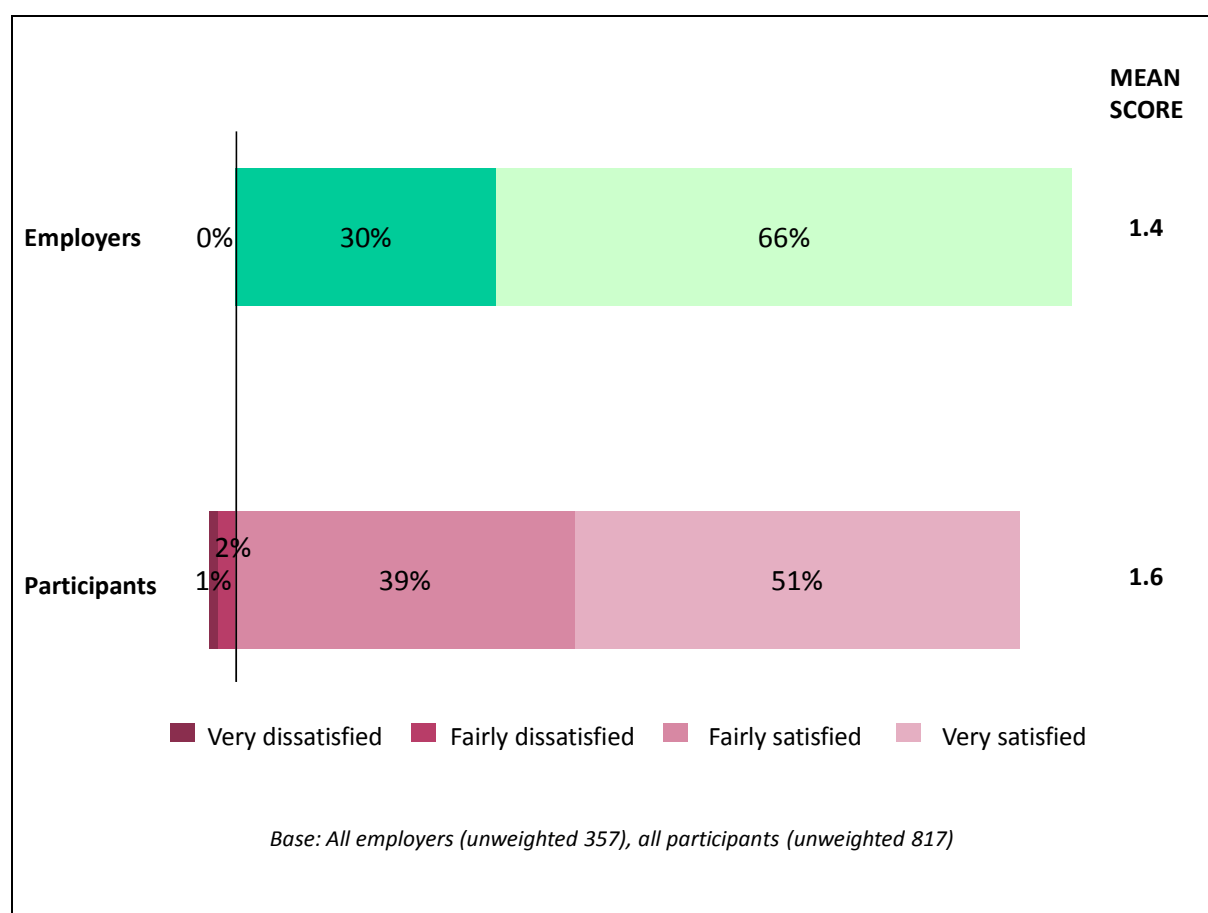
5.50   By SSC, highest satisfaction levels among participants were seen for those involved in a Lantra (95% satisfied) and Energy & Utility Skills (100% - though low base size should be noted) programme. Those on SEMTA and Automotive Skills programmes were more likely than average to report dissatisfaction (17% and 6% respectively).

5.51   Among employers, those involved with Skillfast-UK reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction (with 100% of employers satisfied and 89% very satisfied). Low base sizes by SSC for the employer survey mean it is not possible to analyse employer satisfaction by all SSCs.

5.52   Those employers that did not have a training plan, training budget nor had had any previous involvement with their SSC (and therefore can be assumed to have trained less historically) reported higher levels of overall satisfaction with the initiative than average (with 98% satisfied and 78% very satisfied).

5.53   Those who had participated in a programme involving a mentor scheme reported high levels of satisfaction with the programme generally (96% compared with 88% of those not in a mentor scheme or not assigned a mentor).

Likelihood to participate in future

5.54   Employers were asked how likely they would be to participate if the initiative were to be continued. Over nine in ten (93%) said that they would be very or fairly likely.

5.55   Those employers who had a training plan or budget, or who had had previous dealings with their SSC were more likely to continue than those who did not have this training infrastructure or SSC engagement in place (65% very likely compared with 52%). Presumably this reflects these employers being more readily able to see themselves training per se in future rather than it necessarily being a comment on whether they would be likely to use the initiative to access training.

5.56   One in twenty (5%) employers considered themselves unlikely to continue participating if the initiative was extended. Although base sizes are small, indications are that in the main this is because these employers have no other female employees who would be suitable participants. For just a couple of employers it is because the initiative did not meet their objectives or because the time needed to arrange the training was prohibitive.

5.57   Over nine in ten (91%) of employers felt positive about working with their SSC on other training and development initiatives in future (Figure 5.13). Among those employers that had had no previous dealings with the SSC, 89% felt positive with well over half (57%) reporting that they felt very positive about working with their SSC in future.

Figure 5.13: Likelihood to recommend programme and work with SSC again

Base: All employers (unweighted 357), all participants (unweighted 871)
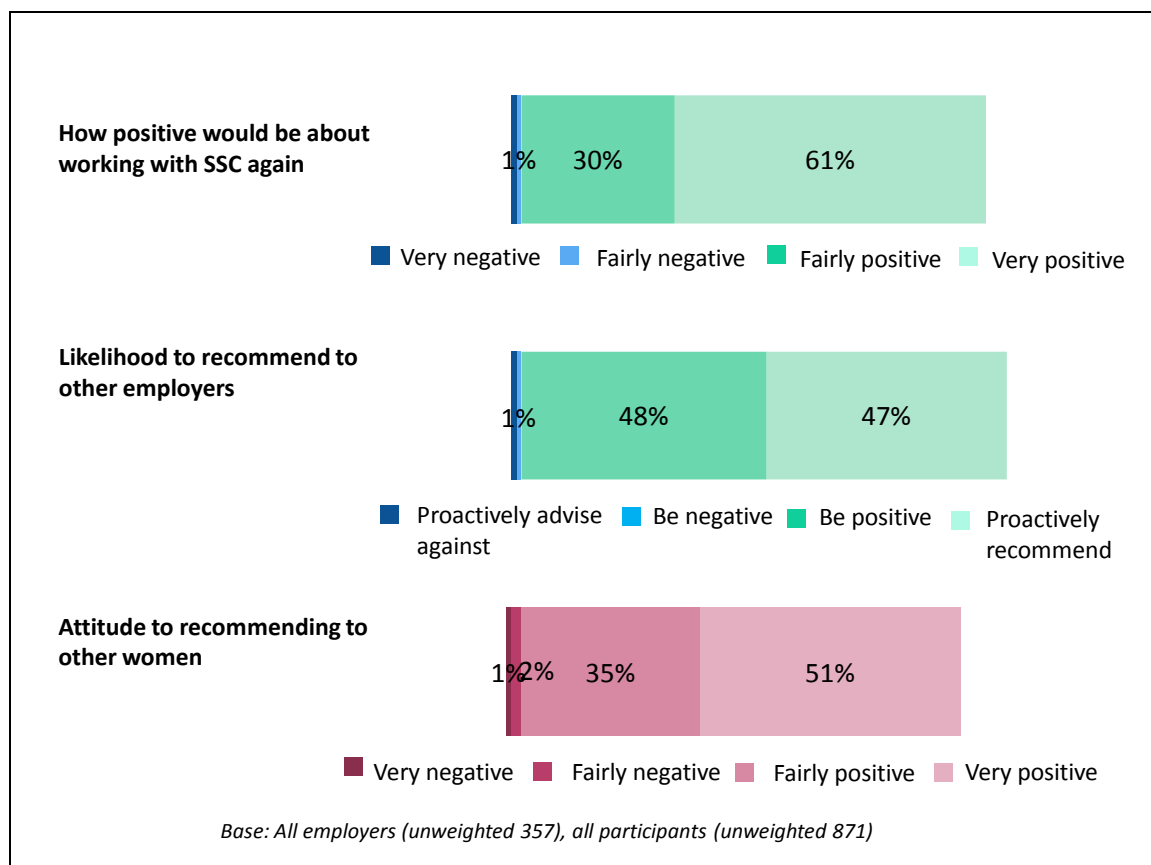
5.58   In terms of advocacy, both employers and participants would speak positively about the programme to others. Almost half (47%) of all employers would proactively recommend the programme to other employers with a further half (48%) saying they would be positive if asked for their opinion. Just one in twenty five (4%) described themselves as 'neutral'. Likelihood to recommend the programme to others was broadly consistent across SSC and type of employer.

5.59   Similarly high levels of advocacy are reported by participants; around half (51%) would be very positive about the programme when speaking to other women and over a third (35%) would be 'fairly positive'. Around one in ten (11%) consider themselves neutral with just 3% saying they would be negative about the programme if talking to other people about it.

5.60   By SSC, those women who took part in an Energy & Utility Skills, Skills for Logistics or Lantra programme would be most likely to positively recommend the programme to other women (with 79%, 86% and 66% respectively saying they'd be very positive). Those on SEMTA or Automotive Skills strands are slightly less likely to recommend the programme to others (with 24% and 36% respectively saying they would be very positive about it when talking to other women).

6   Non - completers

6.1   In this chapter we look briefly at the experiences of women who had not completed the programme in full by the time of interview.

Extent and causes

6.2   Of all participants, over four fifths (83%) went on to complete the programme, and only 5% stopped before completion. Overall a tenth (11%) of the women in the sample had yet to finish the programme when interviewed (despite the fact that interviewing was carried out in July/August 2008 and the last participants were enrolled in March 2008).

6.3   Both ConstructionSkills and SEMTA had significantly higher proportions of participants who had not yet finished the programme (20% and 28% respectively, compared to 11% overall), but SEMTA also had a significantly higher proportion of participants who had stopped without completing at all (21% compared to 5% overall). Participants from the *Career Progression and Upskilling (ConstructionSkills)* strand were significantly more likely to have not yet finished (17% compared to 11% overall).

6.4   Those that were involved with programmes with career development plan or mentor scheme elements had slight but significantly higher proportions of participants who had not yet finished the programme (16% and 15% respectively, compared to 11% overall) – possibly because these types of activity have a less fixed end point than participation in a more traditional training programme.

Figure 6.1: Status according to participant

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
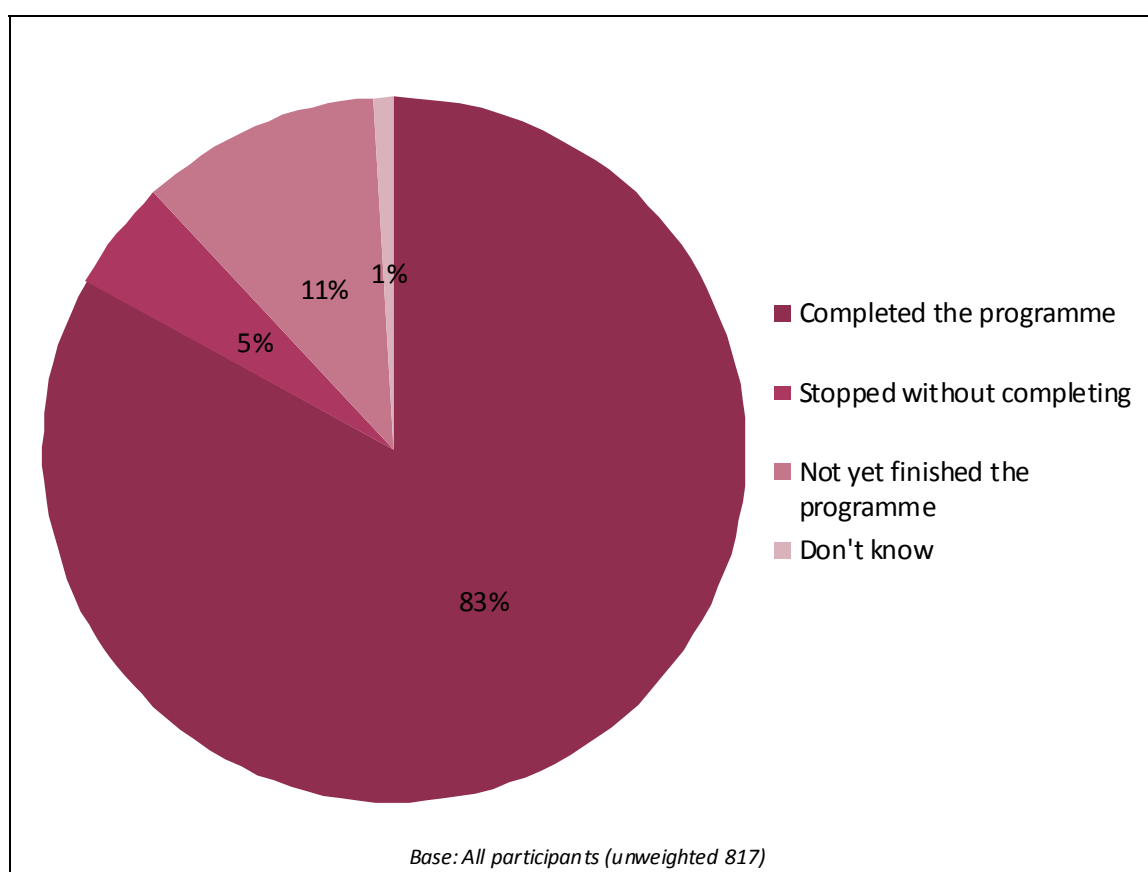
6.5   From an employer perspective, at most employers (79%), all participants involved had gone on to complete the programme. All employers involved with Asset Skills reported that all their participants had completed the programme.

6.6   A significantly higher proportion of employers with participants from the *Gain Additional Skills (Skillfast UK)*[44] strand had participants who had all completed the programme (96% compared with 79% overall) whereas a significantly lower proportion of employers with participants on the *Supervisory and Managerial (Improve)*[45] strand reported all completing the programme (64% compared with 79%). Although these findings are statistically significant it should be noted that the base for these strands is relatively small in size (25 and 30 respondents respectively).

6.7   One in ten employers (10%) stated that none of their employees had completed the programme (and 8% stated that some had done so). The majority of those who had non-completers (12% of employers overall) said this was simply due to the training or development being ongoing, and only 5% of the employers reported that it was solely because their employees had dropped out of the programme. For 1% it was for a combination of these reasons. The actual number of employees who actually dropped out was very low – seven for one employer and three or fewer for the others.

Figure 6.2: Reason why programme has not been completed according to employers

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)

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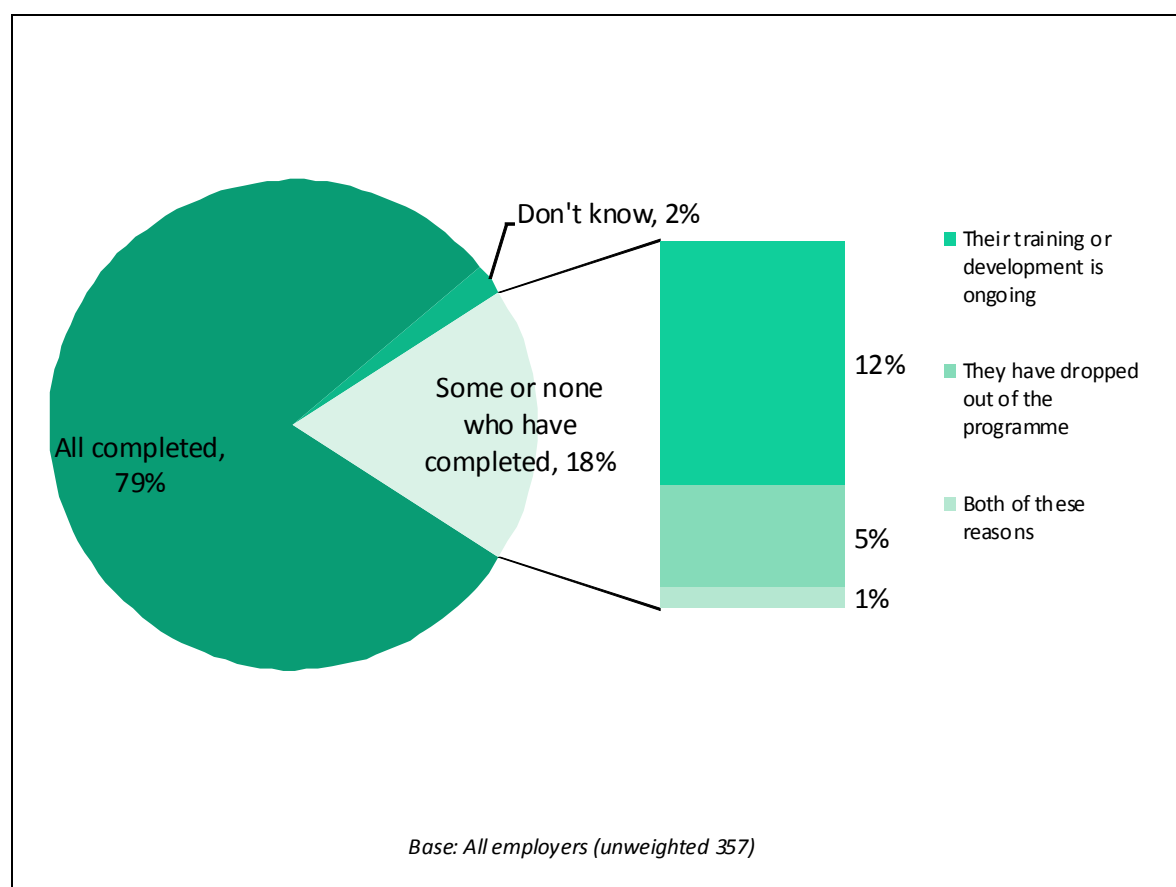
[44] Low base - 30 unweighted
[45] Low base – 22 unweighted

6.8   Employers reported a variety of reasons for employees dropping out before completing the programme. The most common were struggling with the training and not receiving enough support – both mentioned by just under a quarter (23% and 22% respectively) of those who had some employees drop out. However it should be noted that each of these account for less than 2% of employers overall.

6.9   Participants also gave a variety of reasons for leaving the programme before completion with the most common problem (given by 37% of those who stopped without completing) being personal circumstances. A further quarter (25%) of those who had stopped without completing reported that time constraints were an issue. Again overall these problems were encountered by very few participants at an overall level though – amounting to less than 2% of participants overall.

6.10   Around three quarters (74%) of women who left the programme reported that they themselves had made the decision to withdraw from the programme. Very small proportions reported that the trainer / external assessor or their employer (7% and 4% respectively of those who had dropped out) had made the decision that they should withdraw from the training programme.

6.11   When asked if there was any way in which the women could have been persuaded to have complete the programme the majority (54% of those who had stopped without completing) reported that there was not. However, 41% of those who had stopped without completing did state that there would have been a way in which they could have been persuaded to continue. Possible changes included having more time allocated to complete the course and better communication with the tutor or training provider (both mentioned by just under a quarter of those who could have been persuaded - around one in ten of those who left without completing).

6.12   On the whole there is positive picture, with the vast majority of women completing their participation, or being involved with an ongoing activity while very few actually left before completion. However there are some differences to be noted at strand and SSC level.

7   What benefits and outcomes have been achieved

7.1   In this chapter we look at the benefits and outcomes that the Women and Work initiative has delivered for both employers and participants. We first of all look at the success of the initiative from an employer perspective in a number of key areas. We then look at the outcomes achieved for participants, looking at improvements in skills and confidence, changes in attitudes towards their current job/employer, changes in career aspirations, changes in attitudes towards training and finally at 'hard' outcomes (i.e. changes in job role, pay or the achievement of qualifications). We then also look at the proportions of employers reporting that these hard outcomes have been achieved for at least some of their staff. We then also look at the impact that involvement has had on employers' attitudes towards their female staff before finally looking at the issue of value for money.

Employers: success in achieving objectives

7.2   Employers were definite in their rating of the initiative as successful in a range of ways. No more than one employer out of ten of those who had some or all staff complete the programme rated any suggested aspect as unsuccessful – and virtually none of these rated several aspects as unsuccessful.

Figure 7.1: Success of the programme according to employers

Base: Employers who have had at least some staff complete the programme (unweighted 319)
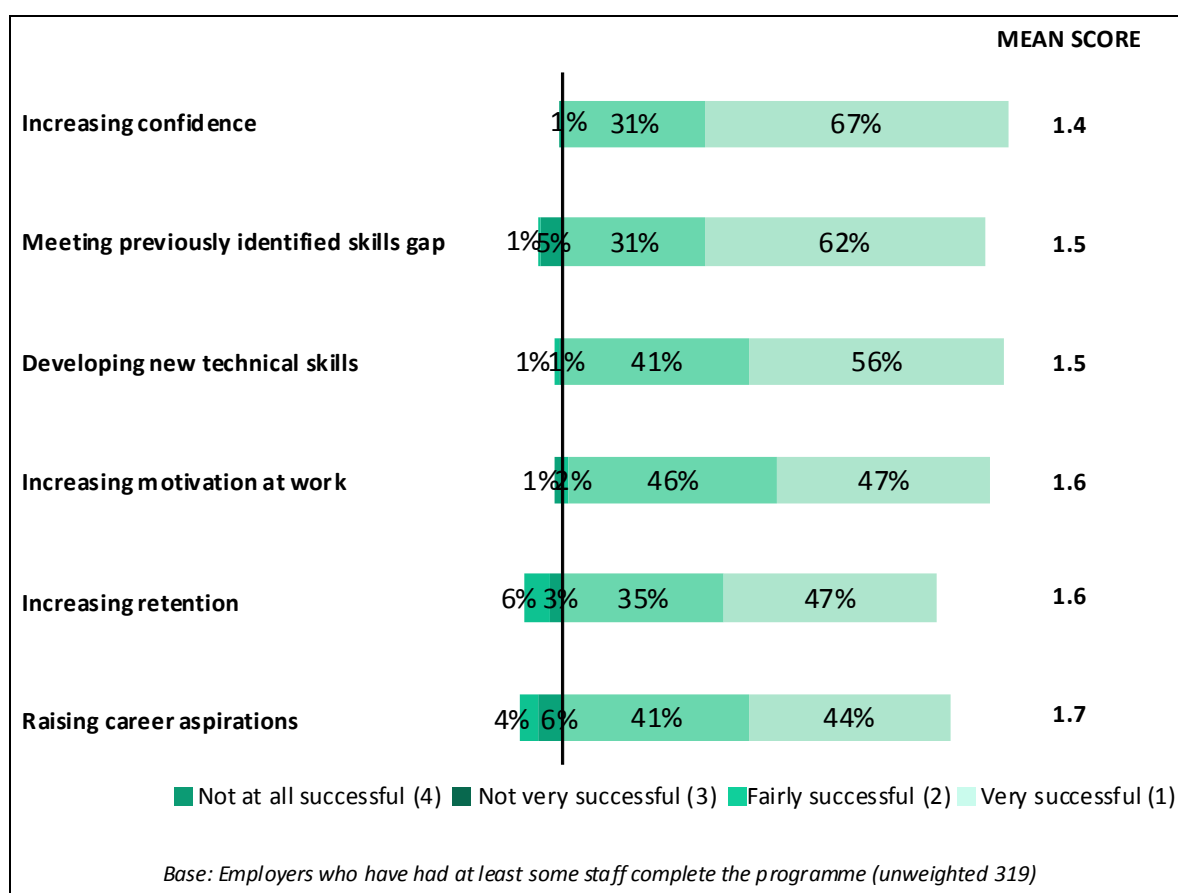
7.3   Even those employers who had no staff complete the programme as yet were very positive based on their experiences so far, with very similar proportions regarding the initiative as likely to be successful (although they were less likely to rank all but one aspect very successful compared to those who had staff that had completed), and again less than one in ten regarding any aspect mentioned as likely to be unsuccessful.

7.4   The pattern here, indicating in which ways employers thought the initiative has been most successful largely mirrors the order of importance employers gave to these objectives when joining the course. Increasing confidence was most likely to be an objective for employers, with 85% stating it was a major objective and was ranked the most successful. Similarly raising career aspirations was least likely to be ranked as an objective (with 63% calling it a major objective), and was ranked as the way in which the project had been least successful.

7.5   Increasing confidence among participants was rated the most successful of the suggested factors, and was thought to have been very successful by two thirds of employers who had some or all participants complete the programme, with nearly all others saying it was fairly successful in achieving this. Among those who had no employees yet complete the programme 46% thought it was likely to be very successful, and the same proportion that it was likely to be fairly successful in increasing the confidence of participants.

7.6   Three out of five employers who had had participants complete the programme (62%) thought that the initiative had been very successful in meeting previously identified skills gaps, and almost a further third (31%) thought it had been fairly successful. Very similar proportions of those who had no participants yet complete thought it would be likely to be successful. Meeting a previously identified skills gap was ranked fourth important as an objective – although it was still a major objective for 65% of employers.

7.7   Developing new technical skills was thought to have been slightly less successful – although over half of employers with at least one participant who had completed (56%) thought it had been very successful and a further 40% thought it had been fairly successful. Those who had not yet had an employee complete participation were less likely to rate this aspect as very successful (40%) although not much less likely to rate it as successful (91% compared to 97%).

7.8   The initiative was also thought to be successful at increasing motivation at work – nearly half (47%) of and the same proportion again thought it had been fairly successful (46%). While the same proportion of those who had some participants complete thought the initiative had been very successful at increasing retention (47%) over 10% fewer (35%) thought it had been fairly successful at doing this, with nearly one in ten of these employers (9%) indicating they thought the initiative had not been successful.

7.9   Raising career aspirations was the way in which the initiative was least likely to be rated successful – but the picture is still very positive with 86% saying it was a success (over half of these judging it to be very successful) and just a tenth (10%) rating it unsuccessful. However, this was not an objective at all for a sixth of employers, and only a minor objective for a further fifth.

7.10   There was some variation by strand with the level of success accorded – employers who had participants complete the *LGV Licences (Skills for Logistics)* strand were significantly more likely to have thought the initiative was very successful at raising career aspirations (56% very successful versus 44%), increasing motivation at work (59% versus 47%) and increasing retention (51% versus 47%).

7.11   Those with participants who had finished the *Customer Facing / Service (Automotive Skills)* [46], *Team Leader Roles (Asset Skills)*[47], and *Gain Additional Skills (Skillfast UK)*[48] strands were significantly less likely to rate the initiative as very successful in raising career aspirations (17%, 18%, 26% respectively compared to 44%).

7.12   Those with participants who had completed the *Supervisory and Managerial (Improve)*[49] strand were significantly less likely to find the programme very successful in increasing retention (23% compared to 47%) or meeting a previously identified skills gap (27% compared to 62%).

7.13   The previous level of engagement with training and development was also a factor – those who had neither training budget nor plan and had not previously had any contact with their SSC were significantly more likely to rate as very successful the impact the initiative has had on meeting previously identified skills gaps and the development of new technical skills among participants to enable them to do their job better (78% and 75% compared to 58% and 52% of those with a training budget or plan or who had previously dealt with the SSC).

Participants: improvements in skills and confidence

7.14   Participants also were very positive about the benefits of the initiative (Figure 7.2). Confidence again was most likely to have improved with over four out of five saying that they felt more confident and a third saying confidence had increased greatly. This was a major objective for almost three quarters of participants, and a minor one for a further fifth.

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[46] Low base - 13 unweighted
[47] Low base - 15 unweighted
[48] Low base - 30 unweighted
[49] Low base – 22 unweighted

Figure 7.2: Success of the programme in developing concrete skills according to participants
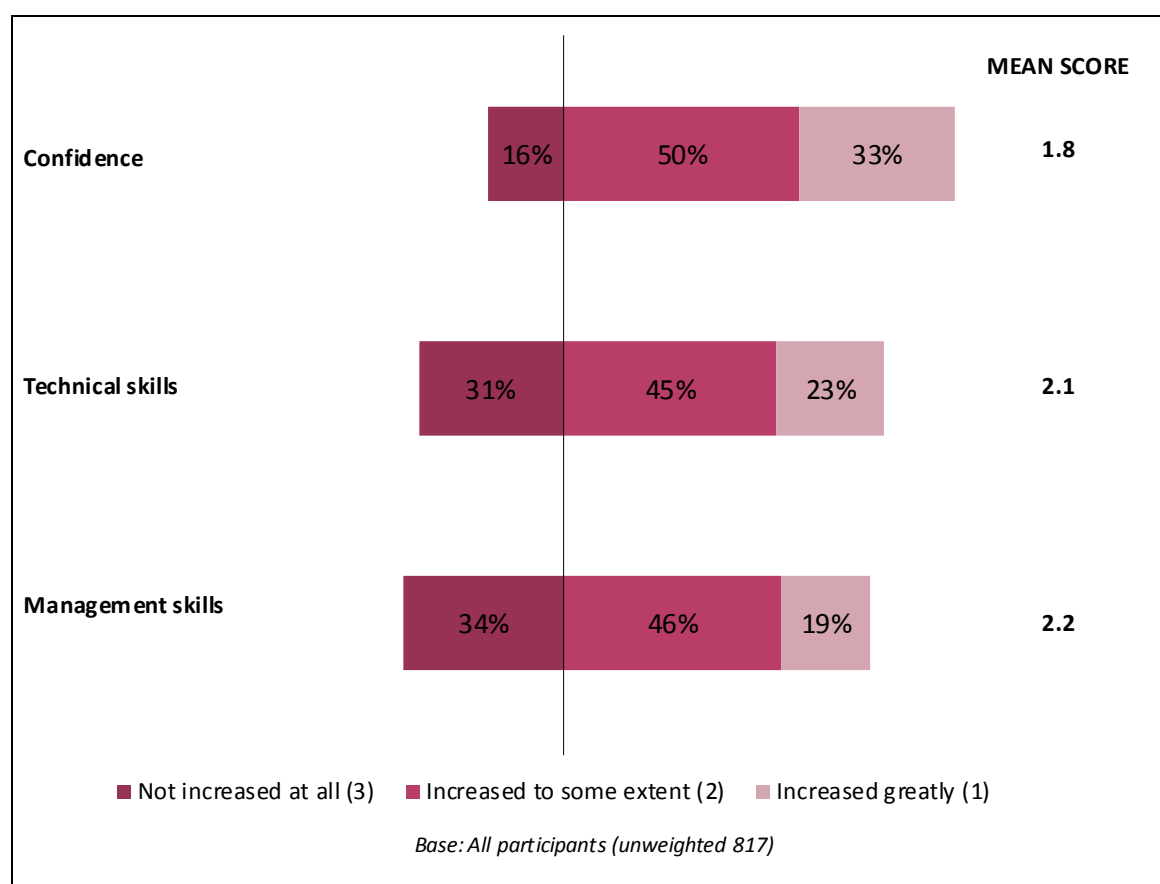
7.15   For around two thirds technical skills had improved (greatly for almost a quarter). Management skills had also improved for approximately two thirds – greatly for almost a fifth. Gaining new skills in general was the objective most likely to have been major for participants (74%, and a minor objective for a further 17%).

7.16   However, participants were more likely than employers to report a lack of success – a sixth (16%) said the initiative had not improved their confidence at all, a third found it had not improved their technical skills at all (31%) and the almost the same proportion that it had not improved their management skills (34%). However, it is worth noting that not all strands were aiming to improve management skills.

7.17   There was again differentiation by strand – those on the *Long Term Careers Development (SEMTA)[50]* strand were significantly more likely to say that each of the three factors (technical skills, management skills and confidence) had not improved at all (79%, 72%, 45% compared to 31%, 34%, 16% overall). Those strands concerned with career progression were on the whole more likely to have been successful in greatly improving participants management skills (*Graduate Routeways (ConstructionSkills)[51], Develop Career Plans (Asset Skills),* and *Personal Leadership (Energy and Utility Skills)[52]* with 56%, 37%, 37% of participants in these strands compared to 19% overall). Those on the *Supervisory and Managerial (Improve)[53]* strand were more likely to say their management skills had improved to some extent (69% compared to 46% overall) but not significantly more likely to

[50] Low base – 29 unweighted
[51] Low base - 9 unweighted
[52] Low base - 19 unweighted
[53] Low base – 26 unweighted

say they had improved a great deal. *Team Leader Roles (Asset Skills)* showed no significant differences.

7.18   Those who were perhaps not so in need of a confidence boost were less likely to find involvement improved it. Nearly one in four (24%) of those on higher pay when they started the initiative were more likely to say involvement had not increased their confidence at all (around one in six, 16% overall). However, confidence had improved greatly for two fifths of those in lower skilled, machine operative or elementary occupations compared to around a third for other occupations.

7.19   Those with the following elements to their programme were significantly more likely to report the programme had been successful in increasing greatly their confidence, technical skills and management skills compared to the overall figures of 33%, 23%, 19%;

➢   Career Development Plan (45% confidence increased greatly, 30% technical skills increased greatly, and 27% management skills increased greatly);

➢   Progress review (43%, 30%, 23%);

➢   Training course at external premises with a training provider (40%, 30%, 23%);

➢   ITP (39%, 28%, 22%);

7.20   Those with a mentor assigned were also significantly more likely to report a great increase (indeed more so than the above). Confidence had increased greatly for 47% compared to 30% of those without a mentor, technical skills for 35% compared to 21% without a mentor and management skills for 28% compared to 16% without a mentor.

Participants: change in attitudes towards employer

7.21   When those participants who were still working for the same employer thought about the benefits of involvement in terms of any change in attitude towards their employer the majority indicated that there had been positive outcomes – with only around a third suggesting there had been no improvement at all.

7.22   Positively for employers seven out of ten (70%) of participants who were with the same employer as when they began the programme said it had increased their likelihood to stay at the organisation (with over four out of ten, 42%, saying it had increased the likelihood a great deal). Three quarters of these participants found involvement had increased their motivation for their job, although less than a third (29%) indicated it had increased a great deal.

7.23   Support from others in the organisation and recognition from others for their skills and experience had also increased for the majority of participants who were still working for the same employer (70% and 65% respectively), and each had increased greatly for over a quarter (27%, 26%).

7.24   A similar proportion (64%) found that the programme benefited them in terms of increasing their awareness of opportunities for progression within the organisation – with again a quarter (24%) indicating this had increased a great deal.

7.25   While these benefits have reached many there is still a sizable proportion (34% to 25%) of those with the same employer who did not find that involvement had made their attitudes towards their role or their employer any more positive (although it does not necessarily follow that these attitudes were negative to start with).

Figure 7.3: Success of the programme in changing attitudes to employer according to participants

	Not increased at all (3)	Increased to some extent (2)	Increased greatly (1)	MEAN SCORE
Likelihood to stay at organisation	29%	28%	42%	1.9
Motivation in job	25%	45%	29%	2.0
Extent to which feel supported by others at organisation	30%	43%	27%	2.0
Recognition received from colleagues and management for skills and experience	34%	39%	26%	2.1
Awareness of opportunities for progression with organisation	34%	40%	24%	2.1

*Base: Participants still working for same employer (unweighted 667)*

7.26   Those working for the same employer and on the *Customer Facing / Service (Automotive Skills)* strand were consistently significantly more likely to have found there had been no increase at all in their likelihood either to stay (46% not increased at all compared to 29% of all participants working for the same employer), their motivation (43% compared to 25%), the support received from others (50% compared to 30%), recognition (59% compared to 34%) or their awareness of opportunities (49% compared to 34%) – at least 15 percentage points difference.

7.27   However those on the *Career Progression and Upskilling (ConstructionSkills)* strand (who were still with the same employer) were significantly more likely to have found the initiative successful in terms of increasing greatly their likelihood to stay at the organisation (56% compared to 42%) and the extent to which they felt supported by others at their organisation (34% compared to 29%).

7.28   Those that were assigned a mentor were significantly more likely to rate the initiative as very successful in increasing greatly all these positive attitudes (likelihood to stay, motivation, support, recognition and awareness of opportunities), as were those who had achieved at least one hard outcome (as detailed in the section below).

7.29   Those with Career Development Plan or Progress Review elements to their programmes were also significantly more likely to have found that all these issues had increased greatly, whilst those with ITPs found all had increased greatly although not significantly more so for the recognition received from colleagues and management, and those who underwent a training course at external premises with a training provider found all had increased significantly except their awareness of the opportunities for progression within their organisation.

7.30   Status when started the programme also impacted on how positive participants were likely to be with those in lower paid or lower skilled roles significantly more likely to find the initiative successful in increasing greatly the extent to which they feel supported and the recognition received from colleagues and management for their skills and experience.

7.31   Those who had higher level qualifications were more likely to find their likelihood to stay or their awareness of opportunities had not increased at all, while those earning over £30,000 at the start of the initiative were more likely to say the recognition they received had not increased at all. Again these are not necessarily negative statements as these participants may have had more positive attitudes towards their employer before they began compared to others.

Participants: changes in attitudes towards career progression

7.32   All participants were asked how successful they thought the initiative was in changing attitudes to long term career progression in terms of understanding how to develop a career in the industry, and their likelihood of aiming for more senior positions. While 71% thought their understanding had increased, only 56% thought it had increased their likelihood of actually aiming for more senior positions (although this in itself is still a positive finding).

7.33   There was little differentiation by strand or SSC in rating the success of improving understanding how to develop a career in the industry. However those involved with Asset Skills were significantly more likely to indicate it had not increased at all their likelihood of aiming for a more senior role (57% compared to 43% overall) while those on the ConstructionSkills scheme were significantly more likely it had increased a great deal (31% compared to 23% overall) – perhaps a reflection of the type of participants reached.

Figure 7.4: Success of the programme in changing attitudes to long term career progression according to participants

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
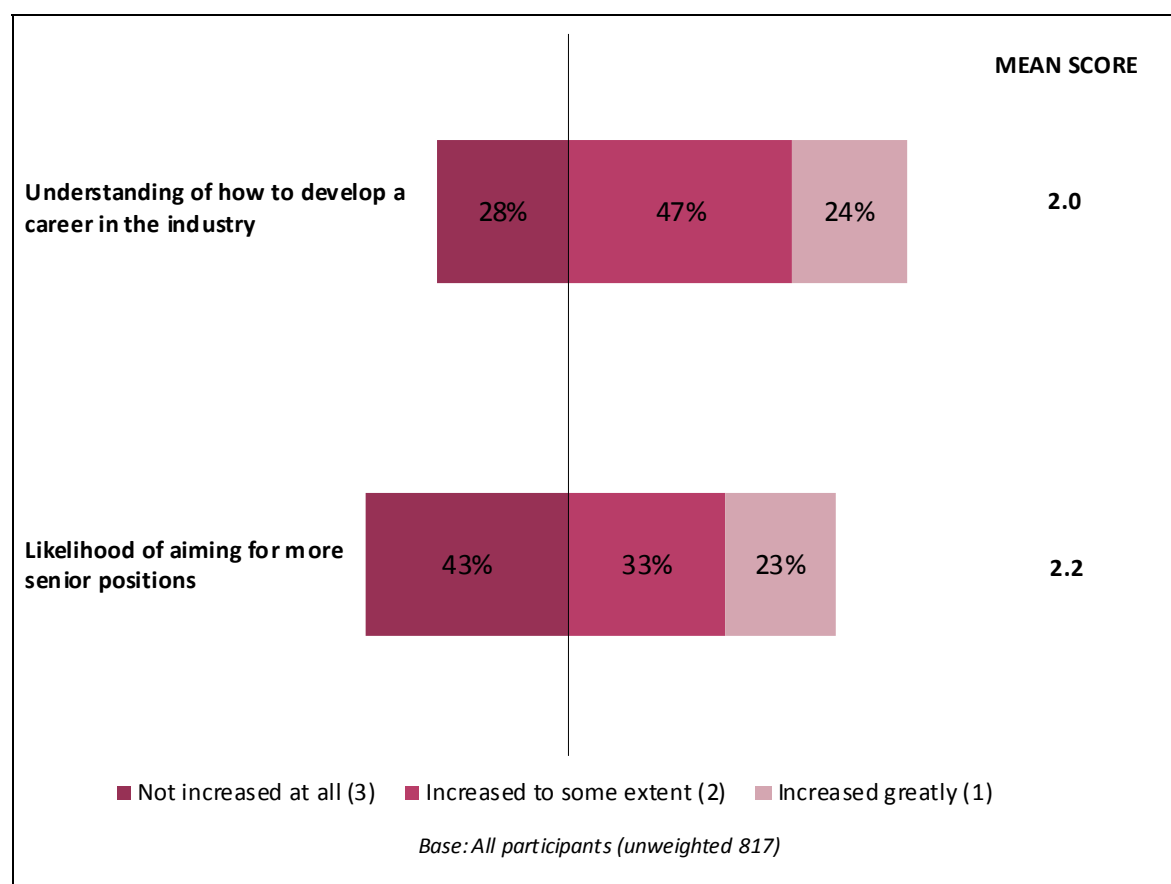
7.34   Again those who were assigned a mentor were more likely to have seen improvement – 33% of the former thought understanding had increased a great deal compared to 22% of those not assigned a mentor or not on a mentor scheme. Likelihood to aim for more senior positions was also significantly more likely to have increased greatly for these participants (33% of those assigned a mentor compared to 20% of those not and 26% of those who had achieved a hard outcome compared to just 9% of those who had not).

7.35   Understanding of how to develop a career had only significantly increased for those with a career development plan or progress review element to their programme, whilst likelihood to aim for more senior positions was significantly more likely to have greatly increased for participants with these elements as well as amongst those with ITP, and progress review elements.

7.36   Pay bracket and occupation also impacted upon whether the likelihood of the participant to aim for a more senior position had increased. Those earning less than £10,000 a year when they started were significantly more likely to say that it had not increased at all (58% compared to 29% of those earning £30,000 or more). 60% of participants in a machine operative or elementary occupation when they joined said it had not increased at all compared to 43% overall.

Participants: changes in attitudes to training and development

7.37   When asked to consider the success of the initiative in changing attitudes to training and development again the vast majority of participants thought there had been a positive impact, with less than one in six (13%) finding their willingness, confidence and awareness of the benefits had not increased at all (Figure 7.5).

Figure 7.5: Success of the programme in changing attitudes to training and development according to participants

		MEAN SCORE
Willingness to undertake more training or development in the future	13% / 35% / 51%	1.6
Confidence in undertaking training or development activities in general	13% / 38% / 48%	1.7
Awareness of the benefits of training or development	13% / 42% / 44%	1.7
Awareness about the types of courses or development activities available	25% / 47% / 27%	2.0

■ Not increased at all (3)   ■ Increased to some extent (2)   ■ Increased greatly (1)

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)

7.38   Willingness to undertake more training or development in the future was way in which the initiative was thought to have increased the most (it was accorded the lowest mean score across all the suggested ways in which the programme could have benefited participants). Over half (51%) of participants thought this had increased greatly as a result, and over a third (35%) thought it had increased to some extent. Confidence (which in general was an objective for nearly all participants) related to involvement in training and development was similarly successfully increased – a great deal for nearly half (48%), and to an extent for over a third (38%).

7.39   Confidence in undertaking training had increased almost across the board, although those involved in with the Automotive Skills or SEMTA projects were significantly more likely to say it had not increased at all (20%, 28% did so compared to 13% overall). Those with a hard outcome again were more positive (53% said it had increased greatly compared to just 27% of those with no hard outcome). They were also significantly more likely to indicate their willingness to undertake training or development activities in future had increased a great deal (57% compared to 29% of those with no hard outcome).

7.40   Awareness of the benefits (which is also reflected in the willingness to participate in again in future) was found to have increased more than awareness about the actual types of course and development activities available – with nearly a quarter of participants indicating the latter had not increased at all. However, the picture again is a very positive one with 86% of participants awareness of benefits having increased, and 74% having an increased awareness of the types of courses and activities available to them (although this had only increased to some extent for most).

7.41   Those assigned a mentor were also significantly more likely to have found awareness on both counts to have increased greatly – 53% reported awareness of benefits had increased greatly compared to 42% of those without a mentor (whether not yet assigned or because not on a scheme involving mentoring), and for 38% awareness of the types of activities and course had increased a great deal compared to for only 24% of those who did not have a mentor.

7.42   Those with ITP, career development plan or progress review elements were also significantly more likely to have found that awareness, willingness and confidence had increased greatly, whilst those with an external training course were significantly more likely to have found all but their awareness of the types of activities available had increased greatly and those that had online or paper based career development materials were significantly more likely to have found all but their awareness of the actual benefits of training or development had increased greatly.

Participants: hard outcomes

7.43   In order to assess the success of the initiative in a more concrete way both participants and employers were asked whether any 'hard outcomes' had been achieved as a result of their involvement. These cover changes relating to participants job role (such a pay increase or promotion) as well as achievements in terms of qualifications.

7.44   Participants were initially asked whether each potential outcome had occurred as a result of their involvement, if it had not they were then asked if they thought involvement had resulted in it being more likely to happen in the future. Hard outcomes achieved and likelihood of them being achieved in future are shown in Figure 7.6.

7.45   Looking at the potential hard outcomes related to employment (which all participants who worked for an employer when they started the initiative were questioned about), participants were most likely to have secured more responsibility in the same job role (42%).

Figure 7.6 Hard outcomes related to employment from participant perspective

	Not at all likely	Slightly more likely	A lot more likely	Has happened
More responsibility in the same job role	40%	14%	1%	42%
Got a job wanted in another organisation	56%	21%	6%	13%
Received a pay increase	58%	17%	5%	17%
Received a promotion	57%	21%	3%	15%
Become self employed*	81%	9%	2%	4%

■ Not at all likely   ■ Slightly more likely   ■ A lot more likely   ■ Has happened

*Base: Those working for an employer when started (unweighted 769),
except *those not self employed when started (unweighted 792)*

7.46   Participants engaged with Improve, Skills for Logistics, Lantra or ConstructionSkills were significantly more likely to have already gained more responsibility in the same role (69%, 62%, 58% and 49% had done so compared to 42% overall), whilst those involved with Asset Skills or Automotive Skills were significantly less likely to have gained more responsibility (only 34% and 29% had done so).

7.47   The elements of the programme also impacted upon the likelihood of gaining more responsibility – those that had a career development plan, a progress review, an ITP, or a training course at the premises of an external training provider were significantly more likely to have reported they had gained more responsibility (60%, 54%, 52%, and 51% respectively compared to 42% overall). Those actually assigned a mentor were also significantly more likely to have more responsibility now (60% compared to 38% of those not).

7.48   Machine operatives and those in elementary occupations were significantly less likely to have more responsibility in the same role, with only 28% reporting this compared to 42% overall – possibly as these roles did not lend themselves to this type of progression.

7.49   As a whole the initiative has produced results in terms of the harder outcomes of a pay increase, getting another job, or receiving a promotion although they were less likely to have happened than the slightly softer outcome detailed above, with almost three out of five of those working for an employer at the start of the initiative indicating each had not happened and was not at all likely to as a result of their involvement, and only around one in six indicating they had already happened. All were almost equally probable to have happened or be thought likely to happen -for around two out of five participants who were working for an employer.

7.50   Those involved with ConstructionSkills were significantly more likely to have received a pay increase or a promotion (25% and 21% had done so compared to 17% and 15% overall), whilst Automotive Skills participants were significantly less likely to have done received a pay increase (only 9%).

7.51   Again, the elements of the programme impacted upon the likelihood of gaining a pay increase or a promotion – those that had a career development plan, a progress review, or a training course at the premises of an external training provider were significantly more likely to have reported they had done so (28%, 26%, and 23%, respectively had received a pay increase compared to 17% overall and 27%, 20% and 19% respectively had received a promotion compared to 15% overall). Those actually assigned a mentor were twice as likely to have received a pay rise (30% compared to 14% of those not), and almost twice as likely to have been promoted (24% compared to 13% without a mentor).

7.52   Those already highly paid (over £30,000) when they began on the programme were significantly less likely to have seen an increase (92% had not compared to 82% overall) and those in a managerial position already were less likely to have been promoted (78% had not been compared to 84% overall).

7.53   Although getting a job in another organisation has so far only been an outcome for 13% of those working for an employer at the start, over a quarter indicated they thought this was more likely – a considerable proportion when this is arguably the greatest change (and involves the participant taking action rather than the employer). Similarly only small proportions had become self employed (4% of those not self employed at the start) or thought it was more likely (11%).

7.54   Of the tiny number (1% of participants) studying or not in employment for another reason when they started the initiative half found a job as a result. Nearly half of those who had not found a job thought it would be more likely as a result of their involvement.

7.55   A tiny proportion (3%) of participants who were working for an employer at the start indicated that they had changed their job role in another way, by moving into another area of the business.

Figure 7.7: Level of pay increase received

Base: Participants who received a pay increase (unweighted 129)
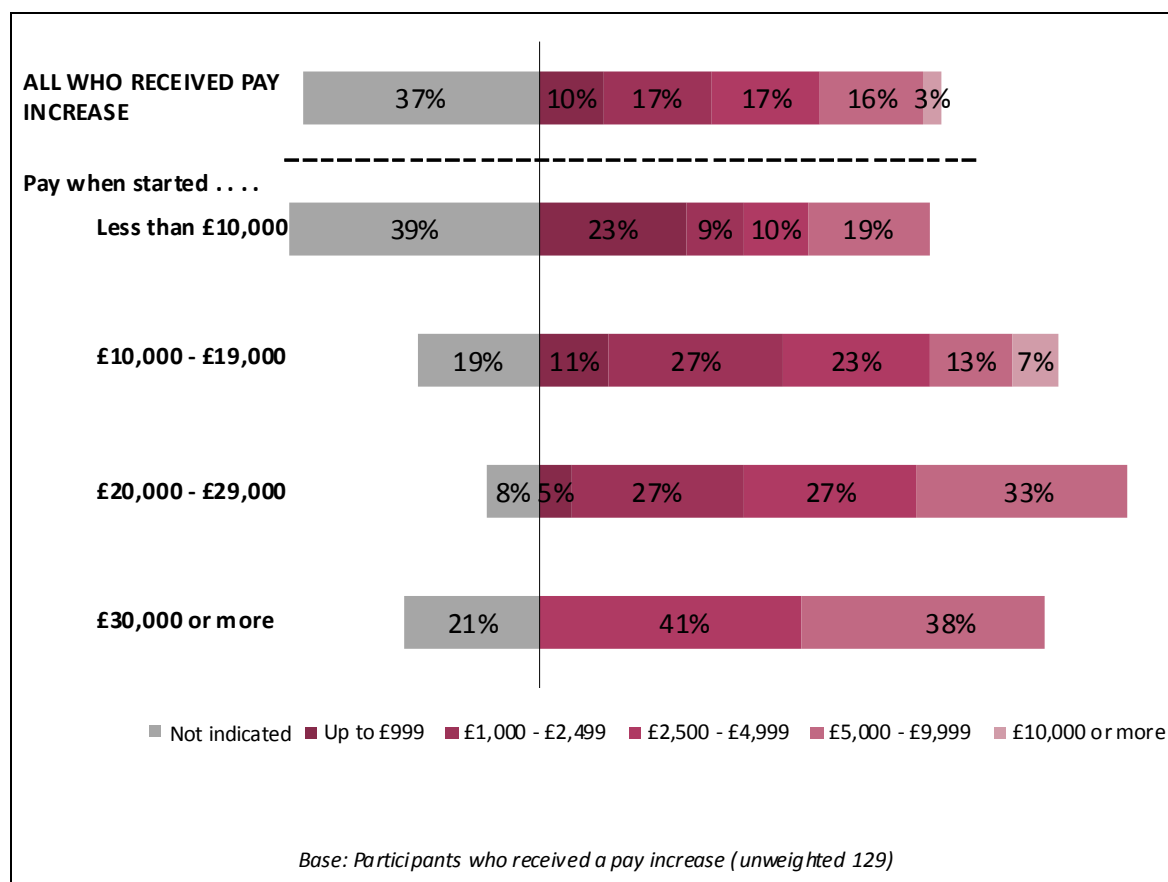
7.56   Among those that received a pay increase (17% of participants in employment when they started the initiative) those that were willing to disclose the amount were most likely to have seen an increase of £2,500 or more per annum (or equivalent). Generally those in lower pay brackets when they started the initiative were more likely to have received a smaller increase while those who earned more when they started were more likely to have received a larger increase.

7.57   Almost a fifth (18%) of participants who were in employment at the start of the initiative had changed their job role by the time interviewing occurred (whether this was a promotion within the same company, or a completely new job with a new employer). With low base sizes when analysed by broad occupational groups there are no significant findings but in general there had not been a great deal of upward movement for these participants, those that were in the mid-categories of Administrative occupations, or Skilled Trades, Personal /Customer Service or Sales occupation s were more likely to have stepped up a level than those in lower skilled categories. However this could mask progression on a smaller scale within occupational category.

7.58   In terms of qualifications just under half of participants had obtained a full or partial qualification as a result of their involvement with the initiative. Most had achieved a full qualification (28% compared to 12% with a partial qualification).

7.59   Those who had a Level 4 or 5 qualification before they started on the initiative were least likely to have obtained a new one (only 39% did so compared to 48% across those with lower level qualifications or no qualifications at all). Gaining a qualification was an aim for some strands and not particularly for others, those on *LGV Licences (Skills for Logistics)*[54], *Supervisory and Managerial (Improve)*[55] and *Team Leader Roles (Asset Skills)* strands were all significantly more likely to have obtained a full or partial qualification (86%, 77% and 72% respectively did versus 45% overall).

Figure 7.8: Hard outcomes related to qualifications from participant perspective

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
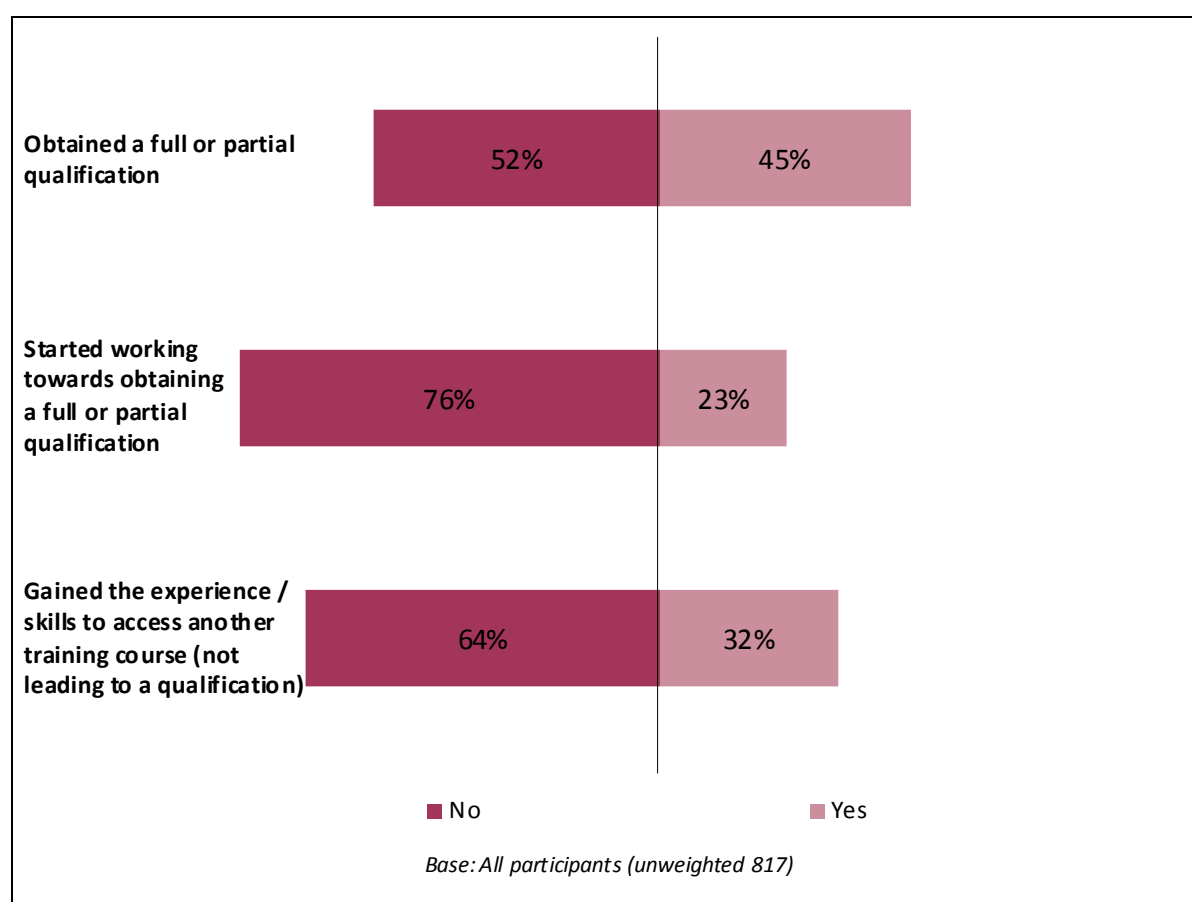
7.60   Almost a quarter had started working towards obtaining a full or partial qualification, this included 30% of those on *Career Progression and Upskilling (ConstructionSkills)* strand and those engaged with this SSC were more likely to have not yet finished the programme.

7.61   Nearly a third (32%) indicated that involvement with the initiative had resulted in them gaining the experience or skills to access another training course (that would not lead to a qualification) that they would not have been eligible for beforehand – this was particularly common among those engaged with Lantra, with nearly half (47%) having this outcome.

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[54] Low base - 16 unweighted
[55] Low base – 26 unweighted

Figure 7.9: Type of qualification achieved

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
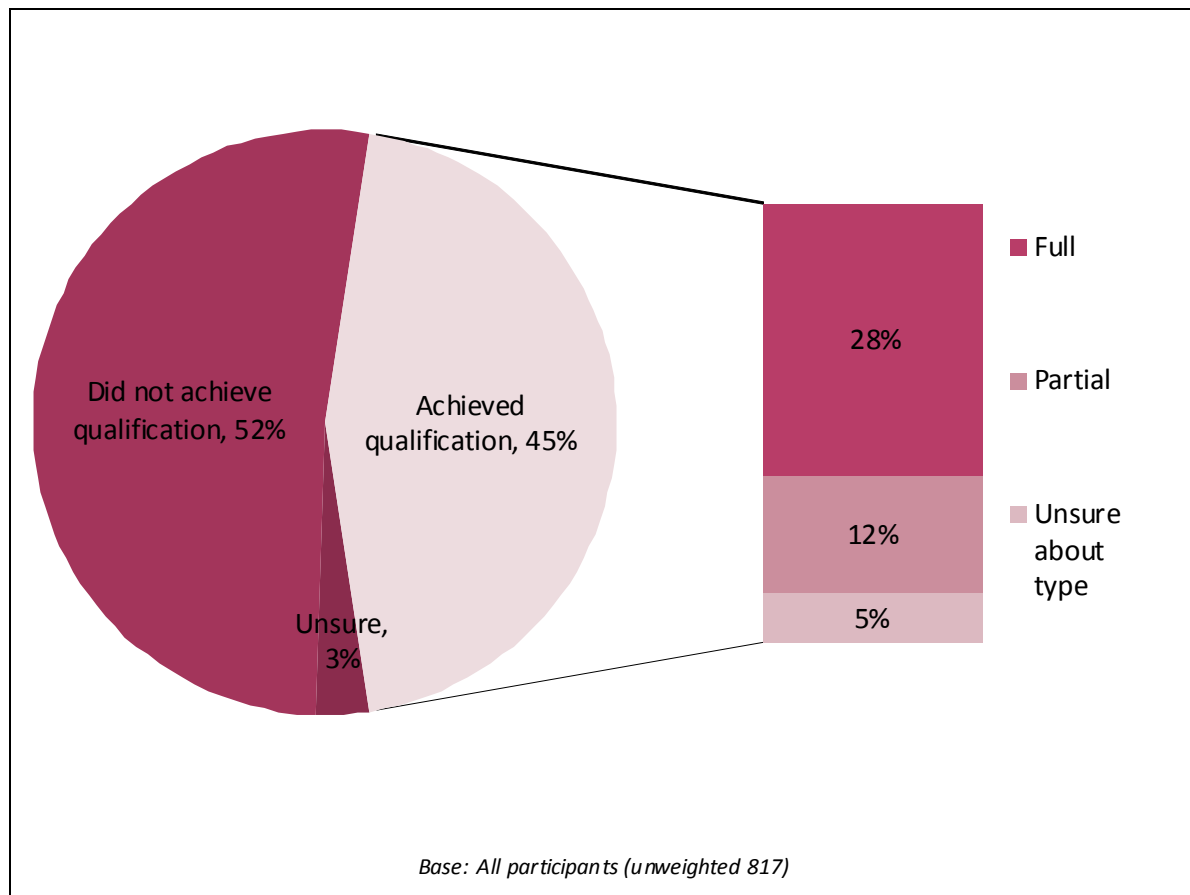
7.62   For most of those who obtained a full or partial qualification this was based on a combination of skills and experiences they already had and the new skills they had gained as a result of involvement with the initiative. A small proportion (17%) of those who had gained a qualification said it was solely based on skills and experiences they already had, while a slightly larger proportion (21%) said it was purely based on the new skills they had gained as a result of their involvement with the initiative, so had benefited to a greater extent. Those involved with Asset Skills were significantly more likely to indicate that they already had the skills and experience (23%), whilst those involved with Improve were significantly more likely to have gained the qualification based on new skills (40%). Those who took part in a training course at their place of work were also significantly more likely to already have the skills and experience needed (21% did).

Figure 7.10: Whether qualification gained was based on existing or new skills

Base: Participants who gained a full or partial qualification (unweighted 372)
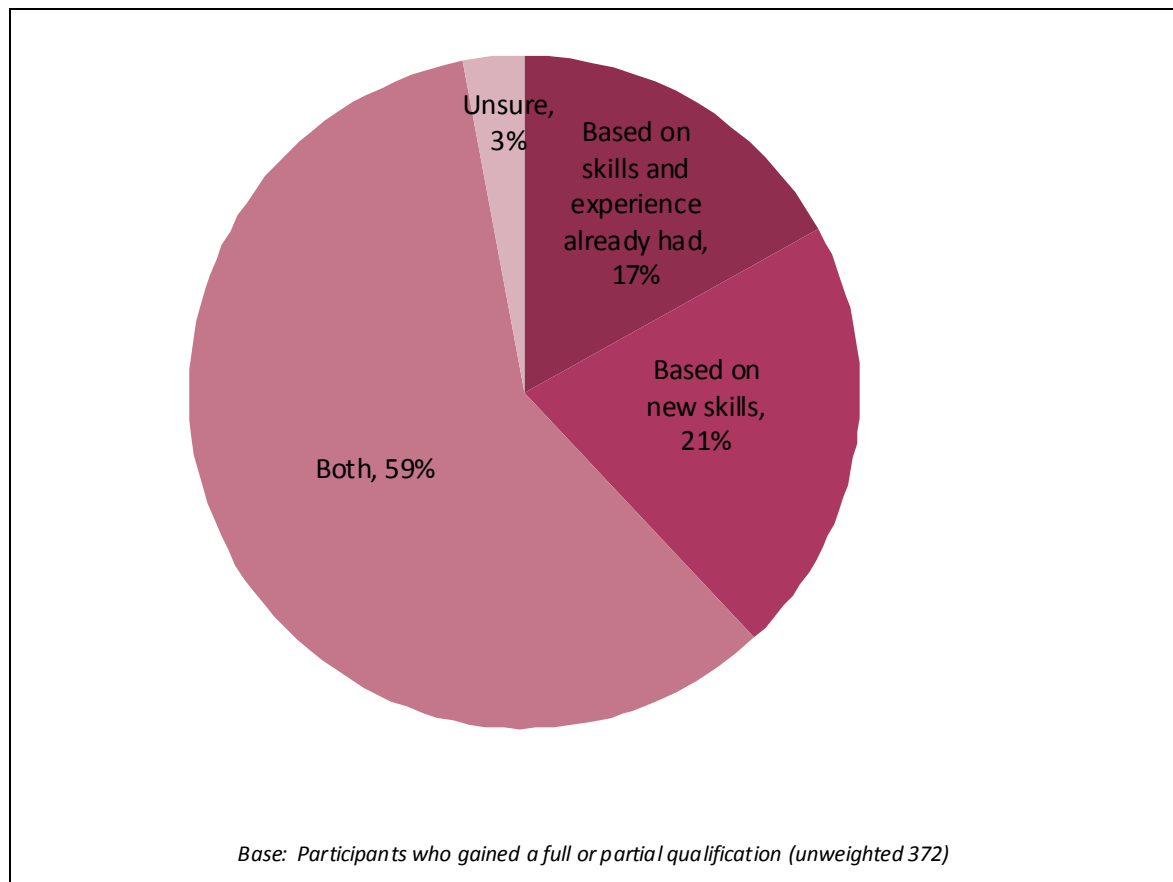
7.63   The overall picture of outcomes achieved is fairly good with almost four out of five participants achieving at least one, and over half (53%) achieving more than one as a result of their involvement with the initiative.

7.64   Those assigned a mentor were significantly more likely to have gained more than one hard outcome, with 72% doing so, compared to 48% of those not assigned a mentor.

7.65   Indeed, all those indicating they had undertaken elements other than a training course at their place of work (an ITP, a career development plan, training course at external premises, a progress review, online or paper based career development materials or a mentor scheme) were significantly more likely to have achieved more than one hard outcome, and significantly less likely to have achieved no hard outcomes whilst those who had been engaged with a programme that involved a training course at their place of work followed the overall pattern. It seems therefore that these other elements were more successful in terms of hard outcomes for participants.

Figure 7.11 Hard outcome summary - participant perspective

No hard outcome, 21%

More than one hard outcome, 53%

One hard outcome, 26%

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
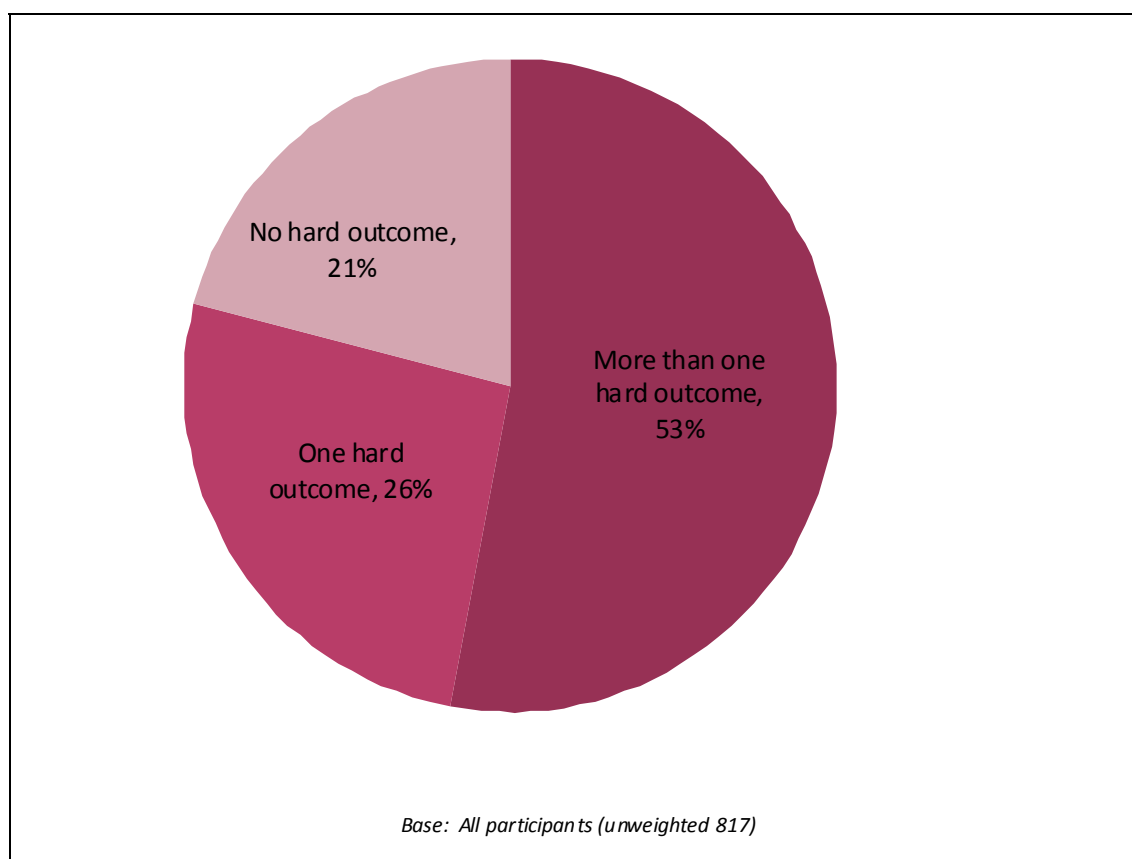
7.66   Amongst participants there is also differentiation by SSC and strand – those that were significantly more likely to have participants achieve more than one hard outcome compared to 54% overall were;

➤   Skills for Logistics (86% more than one hard outcome) – driven by those on the LGV Licence strand

➤   Improve (73%)

➤   Lantra (62%)

7.67   Those involved with the following projects were significantly more likely not to have achieved any hard outcomes at all compared to the overall figure of 21%;

➤   SEMTA (45% no hard outcomes at all)

➤   Skillfast UK (32%) – driven by those on the Gain Additional Skills strand

➤   Automotive Skills (31%) - driven by those on the Customer Facing / Service strand

➤   Energy and Utility Skills had 37% with no hard outcome, but this is not statistically significant given the small base.

7.68   In terms of participant background and employment status there were few differences although those in higher paid roles (over £30,000) when they started were significantly more likely to have achieved no hard outcomes at all, with a third indicating this (32% compared to 18% across the lower income bands).

7.69   Over a third of those in machine operative or elementary occupations had one hard outcome compared to a quarter overall (38% of the latter compared to 26% overall). The only outcome this of group was significantly more likely to have gained was a full or partial qualification (59% in lower skilled roles versus 45% overall).

Participants: change in views on opportunities available for women

7.70   In terms of the opportunities open to women in their industry a third of participants reported feeling differently as a result of their involvement with Women and Work – the vast majority more positive, with over one in ten (13%) feeling a lot more positive. Skills for Logistics participants were significantly more likely to report a change (72% did so), and all said this was a positive one.

7.71   Slightly fewer (28%) felt more positive about the opportunities open within their own organisation.

Figure 7.12: Whether participants feel differently about the opportunities available to women in their industry following participation
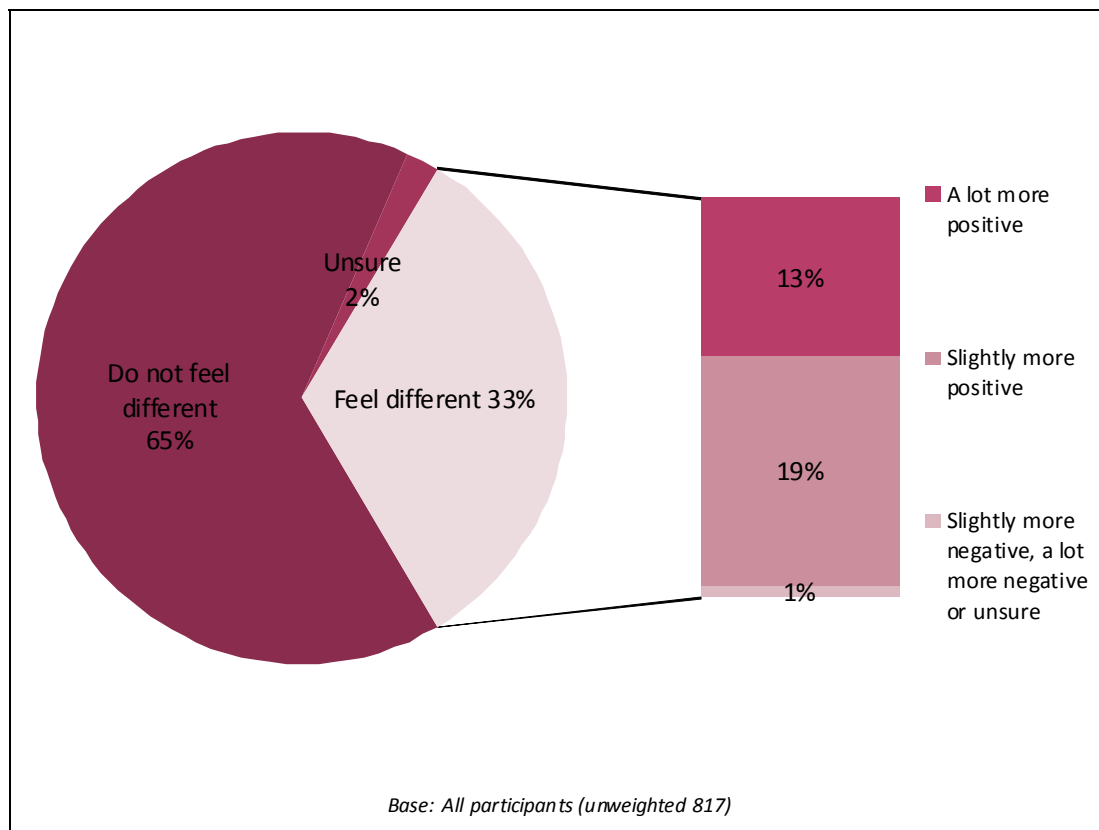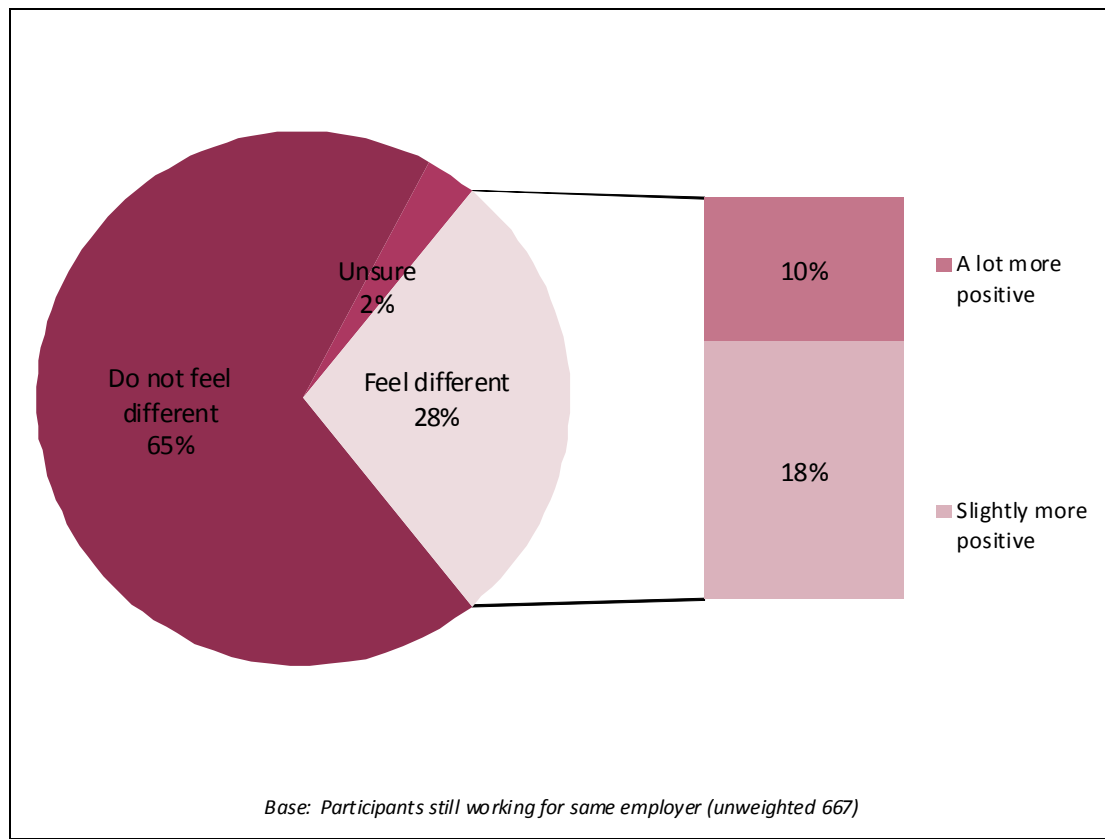

Base: All participants (unweighted 817)

Figure 7.13: Whether participants feel differently about the opportunities available to women in their organisation following participation

Base: Participants still working for same employer (unweighted 667)

7.72   Prior to involvement only a fifth of participants who were working (19%) would have thought it very likely they would have recommended working in their industry to others, and a further fifth (21%) would have thought it unlikely. The remainder (58% of those working, just under three fifths) would have been quite likely to recommend it to others.

7.73   However, almost half of those working (47%) found that involvement with the initiative had made a difference to this – the vast majority (44%) would be more likely to recommend working in their industry to others. A tiny proportion (4% of participants working) were now more negative and would be less likely to recommend working in their industry.

Figure 7.14 Likelihood of participant recommending their industry to others after involvement with the programme

Base: Participants who were working when started initiative (unweighted 807)
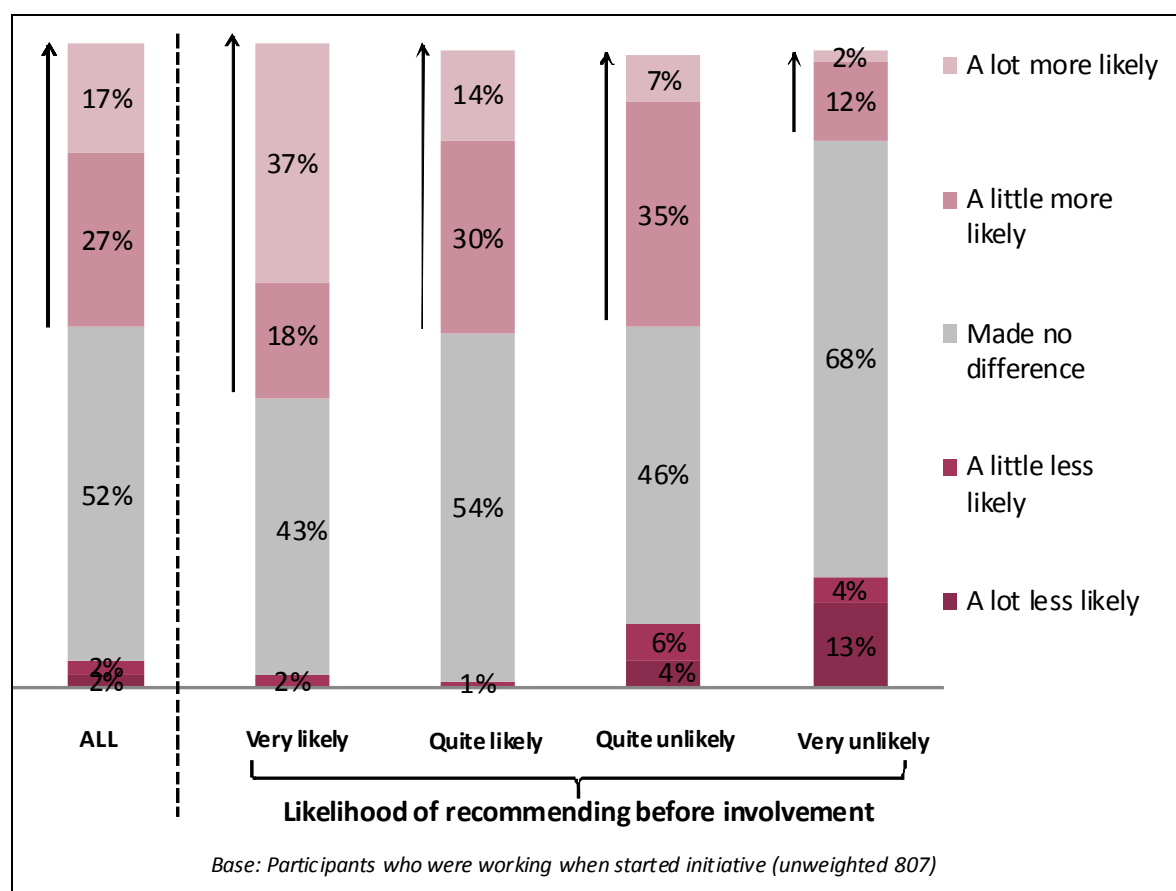
7.74   A third (34%) of those that were unlikely to recommend involvement beforehand were now likely to do so, whilst only 1% of those that were likely to recommend involvement had now become unlikely to do so.

7.75   However those that were very likely to recommend the industry beforehand were the most likely to be even more likely to recommend it after the programme, and those that were very unlikely to recommend working in the industry were the most likely to have found that involvement had made no difference or had made them less likely.

Employers: hard outcomes

7.76   Employers who had seen all or some of their staff complete the programme were also asked whether their employees had achieved a list of outcomes related to their job. They were very positive about whether involvement had improved the career prospects of participants – with almost nine out of ten indicating this was a result for some or all of their employees.

Figure 7.15 Proportion of employees achieving hard outcomes related to employment according to employers

Base: Employers who have had some staff complete the programme (unweighted 319)
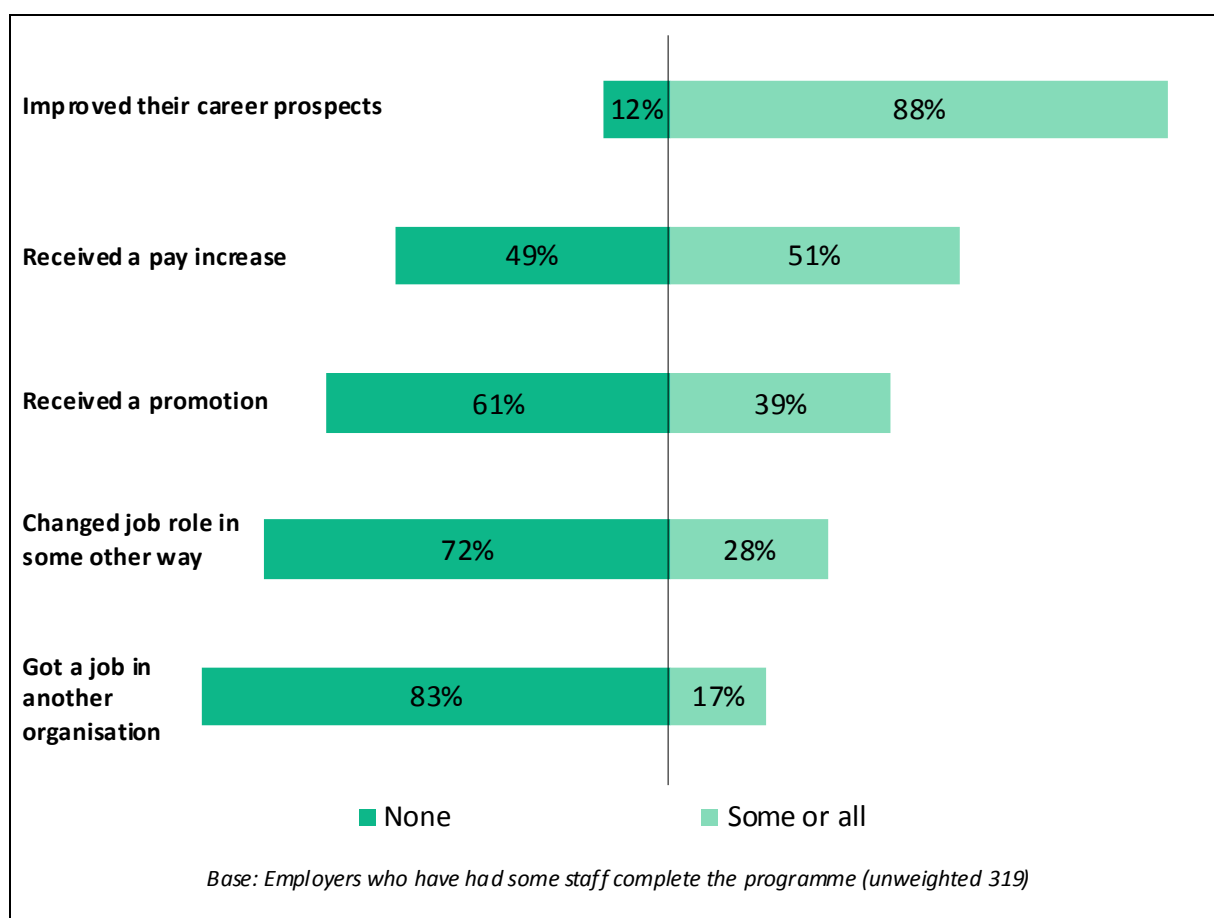
7.77   The more concrete outcomes of pay increases, promotions and leaving for a new job in another organisation were those less likely to have occurred, with at least half the employers who had some employees that had completed saying this had happened to no-one. However half of employers (who had some staff complete the programme) had awarded pay increases to some of their participants, and four out of ten had promoted some or all their participants – considerable levels of hard outcomes.

7.78   Skillfast UK employers were significantly more likely to have given a pay rise (74% compared to 51% overall). Those with a training budget or plan were significantly more likely to have awarded both promotions and pay increases (43% and 54% of employers with who had a participant complete the programme had done so versus 29% and 41% of employers with neither a budget nor plan).

7.79   Just over a quarter of employers (who had some or all participants complete) indicated that some or all participants had changed their job role in some other way. The most common change was employees taking on more responsibilities or broadening their role (significantly more likely amongst Lantra employers), while some had moved into another area of the business (such as a clerical workers moving into construction work).

7.80   A relatively high proportion of employers reported that some participants had left to take another job up with a different organisation – almost one in five (17%).

7.81   Around three in five employers who had some staff who had completed the programme reported that some or all of their engaged employees had obtained a full qualification, and one in four that some or all had obtained a partial qualification. Again those with participants on the *LGV Licences (Skills for Logistics)* strand were significantly more likely to have reported participants achieving a full qualification (96% compared to 61% overall), and those on the *Career Progression and Upskilling (ConstructionSkills)*[56] strand were significantly more likely to have obtained a partial qualification (58% compared to 25% overall).

Figure 7.16 Hard outcomes related to qualifications from employer perspective

Base: Employers who have had some staff complete the programme (unweighted 319)
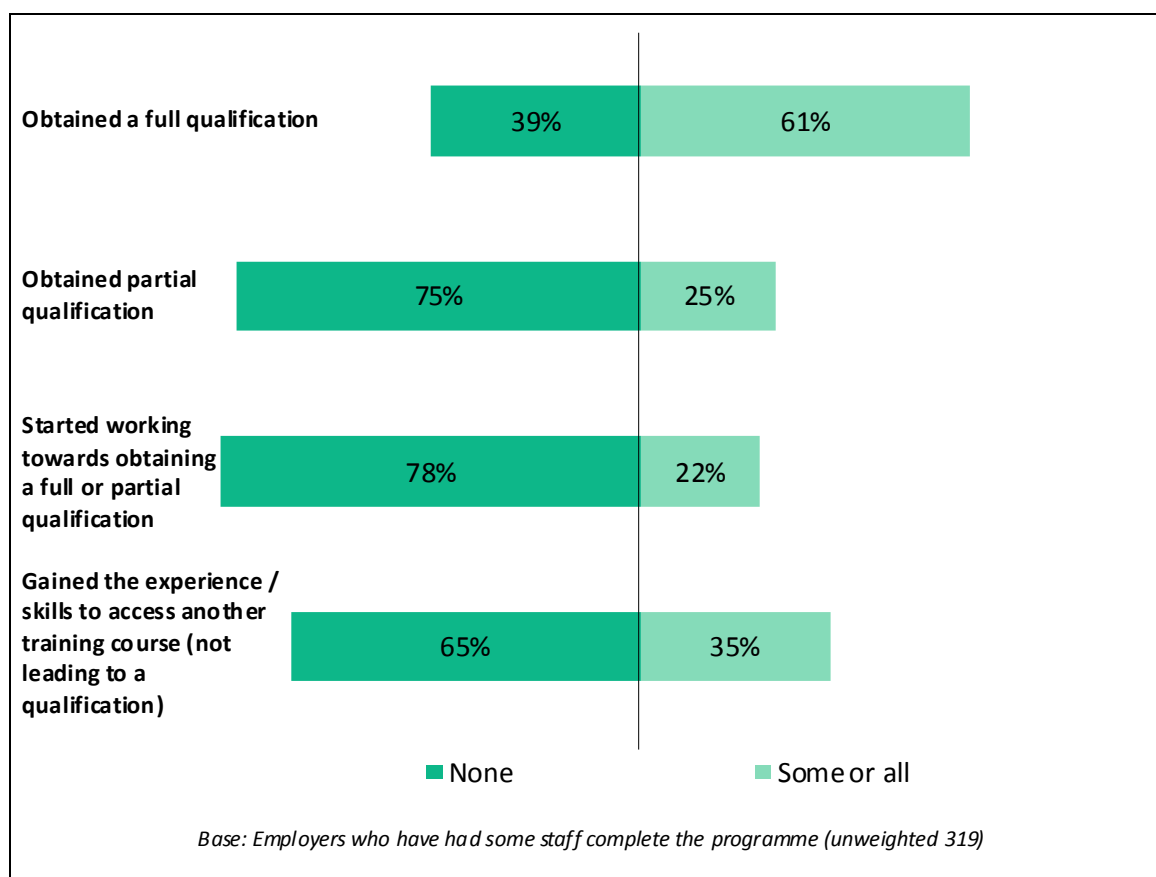
7.82   Over one in five also indicated that some or all of their participants had started working towards obtaining a full or partial qualification; with Automotive Skills and ConstructionSkills employers significantly more likely to report this (44% and 42% compared to half this proportion overall, 22%).

7.83   That involvement would lead to a qualification was important for the majority of employers when making a decision whether to participate or not – 44% of those amongst whom at least one participant had obtained a full or partial qualification thought it very important and a further 35% as fairly important.

7.84   Those engaged with Skills for Logistics or Asset Skills were significantly more likely to have thought it was very important in their decision (69% and 64% respectively compared to 44% of those employers with at least one participant who had achieved a full or partial qualification overall).

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[56] Low base – 20 unweighted

Figure 7.17: Importance of training leading to qualification in employer decision to participate

Base: Employers who have had some staff obtain a full or partial qualification (unweighted 227)
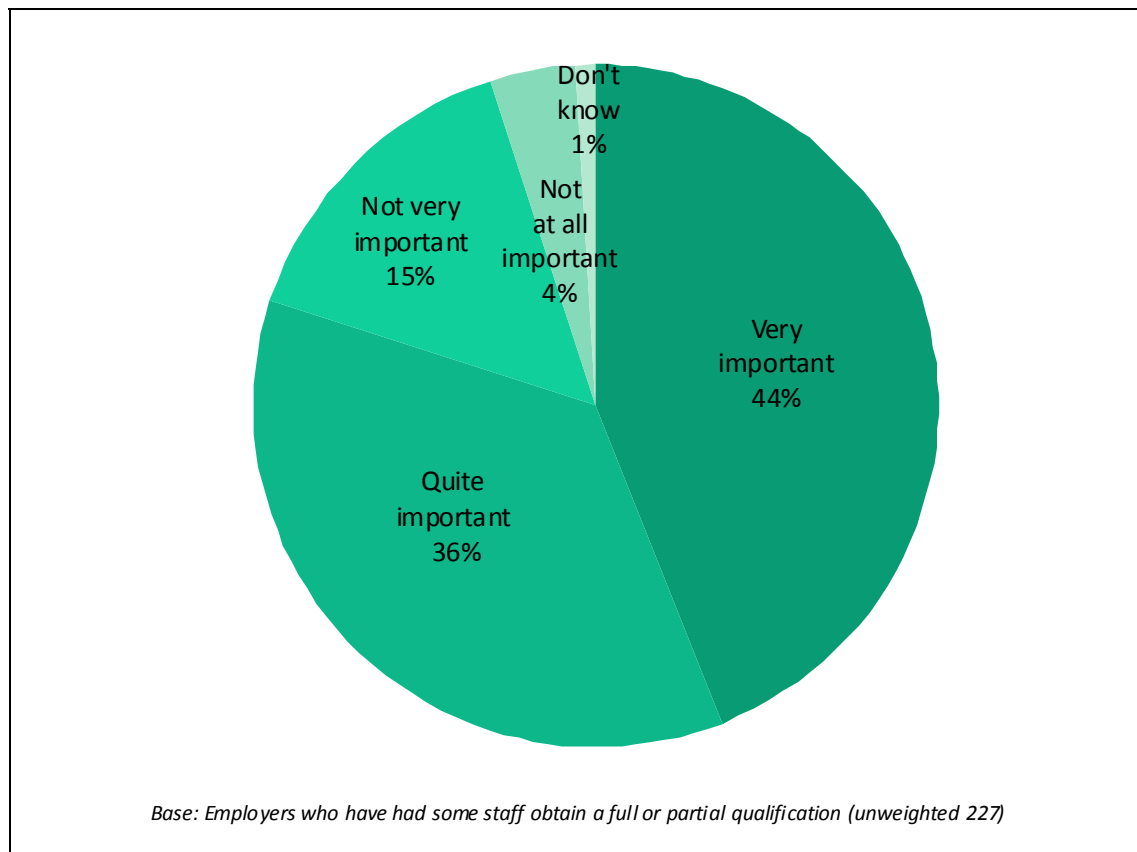
7.85   Over one in three employers who had some staff who had completed the programme (35%) thought that involvement had given their employees the skills or experience to access another training course that they would not otherwise have been eligible for. Automotive Skills employers were significantly more likely to have found this an outcome amongst their employees (72% had done so compared to 35% overall).

7.86   Overall, those employers who have at least one participant who has completed their involvement report excellent levels of outcomes achieved. Virtually all (98%) had at least some participants achieve at least one type of outcome with almost nine out of ten (89%) seeing more than one type of hard outcome (although it cannot be determined whether this was for same participant or different outcomes for different participants).

7.87   With such overwhelming results there was little differentiation amongst employers. However, those with more previous exposure to training and SSC involvement were more likely to see more than one type of hard outcome achieved (91% of employers with a training budget or plan or previous dealings with the SSC who had a participant complete the programme versus 81% of employers with neither a budget nor plan and who had not previously dealt with the SSC).

7.18 Hard outcome summary - employer perspective

*Base: Employers who have had some staff complete the programme (unweighted 319)*
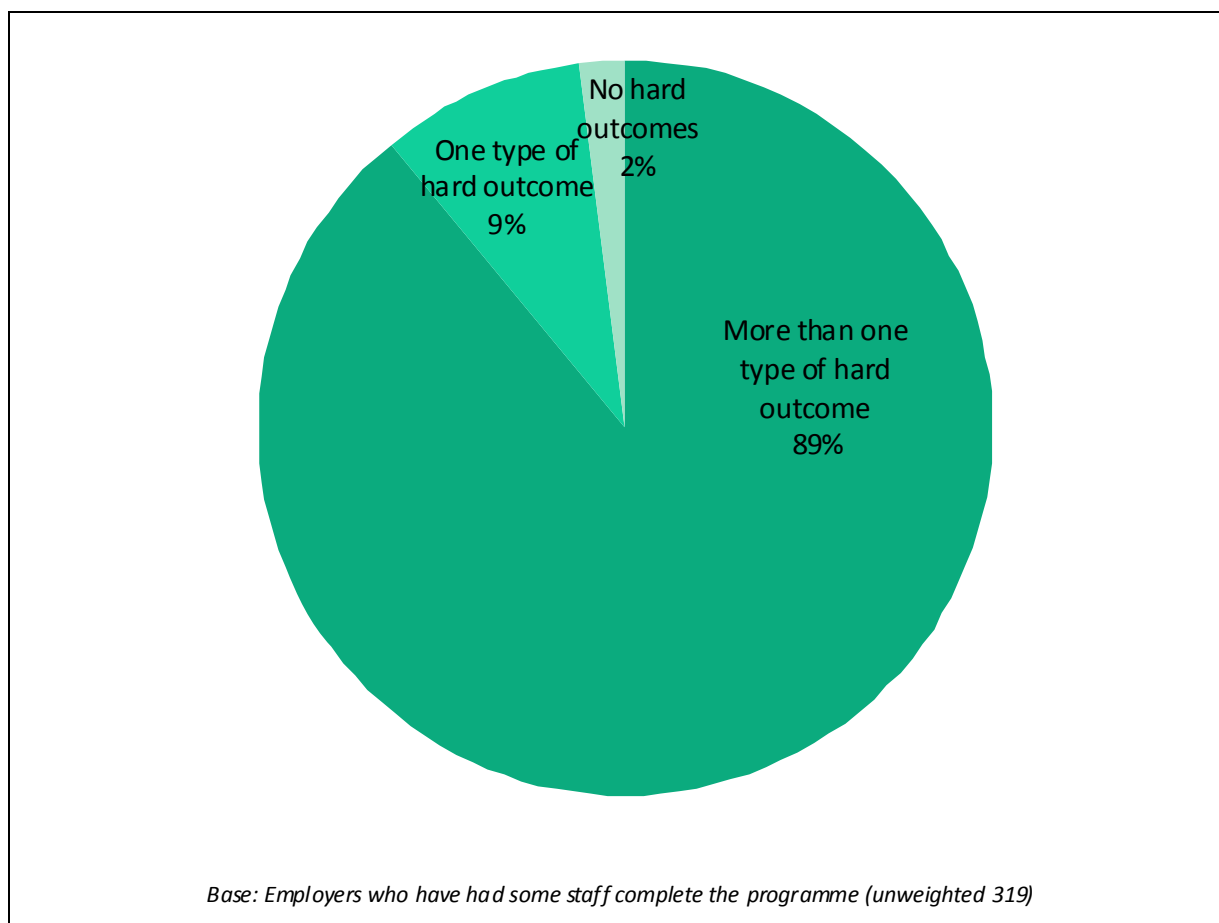
Employers: attitudinal change

7.88   Involvement resulted in attitudinal shifts for the majority of employers in a number of ways. The most likely change was to invest in training specifically for women - 60% of employers would be more likely to do this, split almost evenly between those who would be much more likely and those who would be a little more likely to do so. Those engaged with Lantra however were significantly more likely to indicate involvement had made no difference in their likelihood to do so (not that it necessarily follow that they are unlikely to do so).

7.89   Employers were equally likely to have changed and be more likely to take action to ensure that a greater proportion of women reach management positions, and to monitor the progression of women within their organisation, with over half indicating this impact (55% and 56% respectively). However, the initiative has not necessarily had as much impact among those employers less open to these changes as it is the employers that do not monitor any factors (workforce profile, recruitment or pay) in regard to gender that were most likely to report their involvement had made no difference to their likelihood of either taking action or monitoring (50% and 48% of those who monitor compared to 38% of those who monitor at least one aspect).

7.90   Those that have neither a training budget nor plan were also significantly more likely to indicate it had made no difference. 58% of those with no training budget or plan were no more likely to monitor the progression of women (compared to 38% with a training budget or plan) and 53% of those with no training budget or plan no more likely to take action to ensure that a greater proportion of women reach management positions (compared to 41% of those with a budget or plan).

Figure 7.19: Likelihood of changing practices as a result of initiative
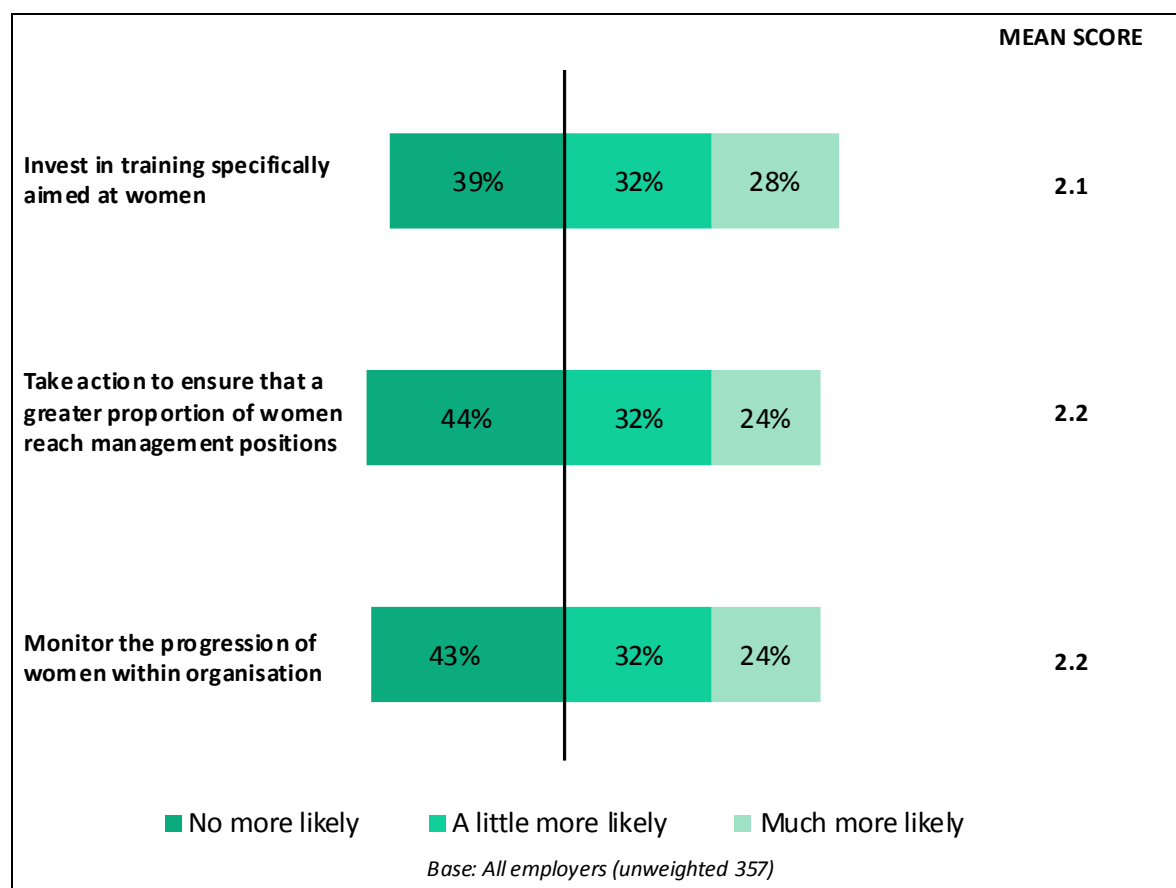
7.91   Two thirds of employers (66%) were exposed to new training providers that they may use in the future through their involvement, and over half (56%) discovered different ways of delivering training that they may adopt in the future. Lantra employers were significantly more likely to have found new trainers that they would use in the future (74%).

7.92   Those with a lower previous commitment to training (had neither a training budget nor plan and had not dealt with their SSC previously) were significantly more likely to have discovered both (74% and 81% compared to 53% and 62% of those with a training budget or plan or who had previously dealt with their SSC).

Figure 7.20: Whether involvement has exposed employer to new training methods or providers

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)
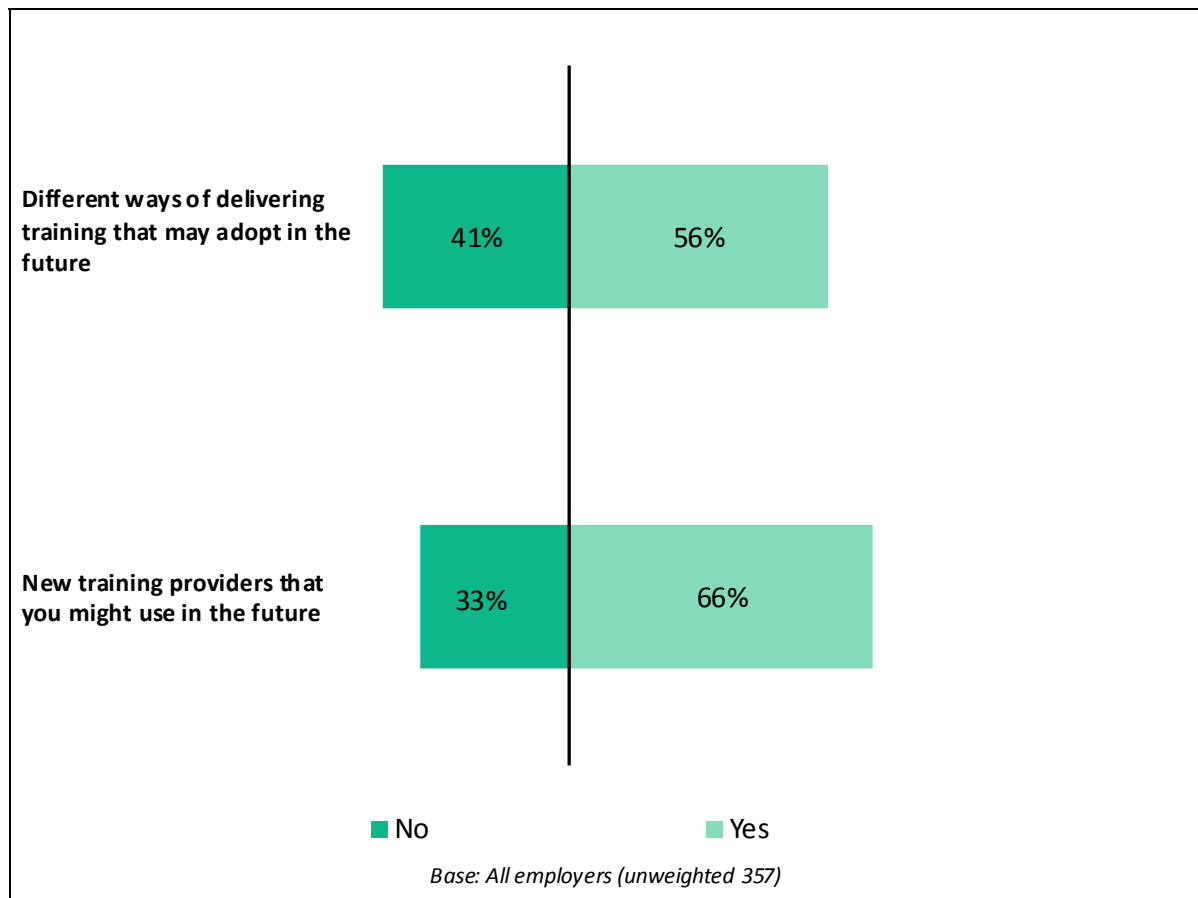
7.93   Employers were fairly evenly split between those who considered that involvement had generated longer term change in attitudes towards the employment and progression of women within the organisation and those where it had not. The most common impacts were raising awareness of the barrier women face or the misconceptions among employers (mentioned by one in ten), making employers more committed to training and developing female staff (7%).

Figure 7.21: Whether involvement had any longer term impact on attitudes towards the employment and progression of women within organisation

Raised awareness of barriers and misconceptions

More committed to training and developing female staff

Increased awareness of training and funding available

Staff became more interested in training and development

Staff can do job better / be more professional

Improved awareness of career opportunities

Enabled to take on more responsibility / new role

Improved efficiency / productivity
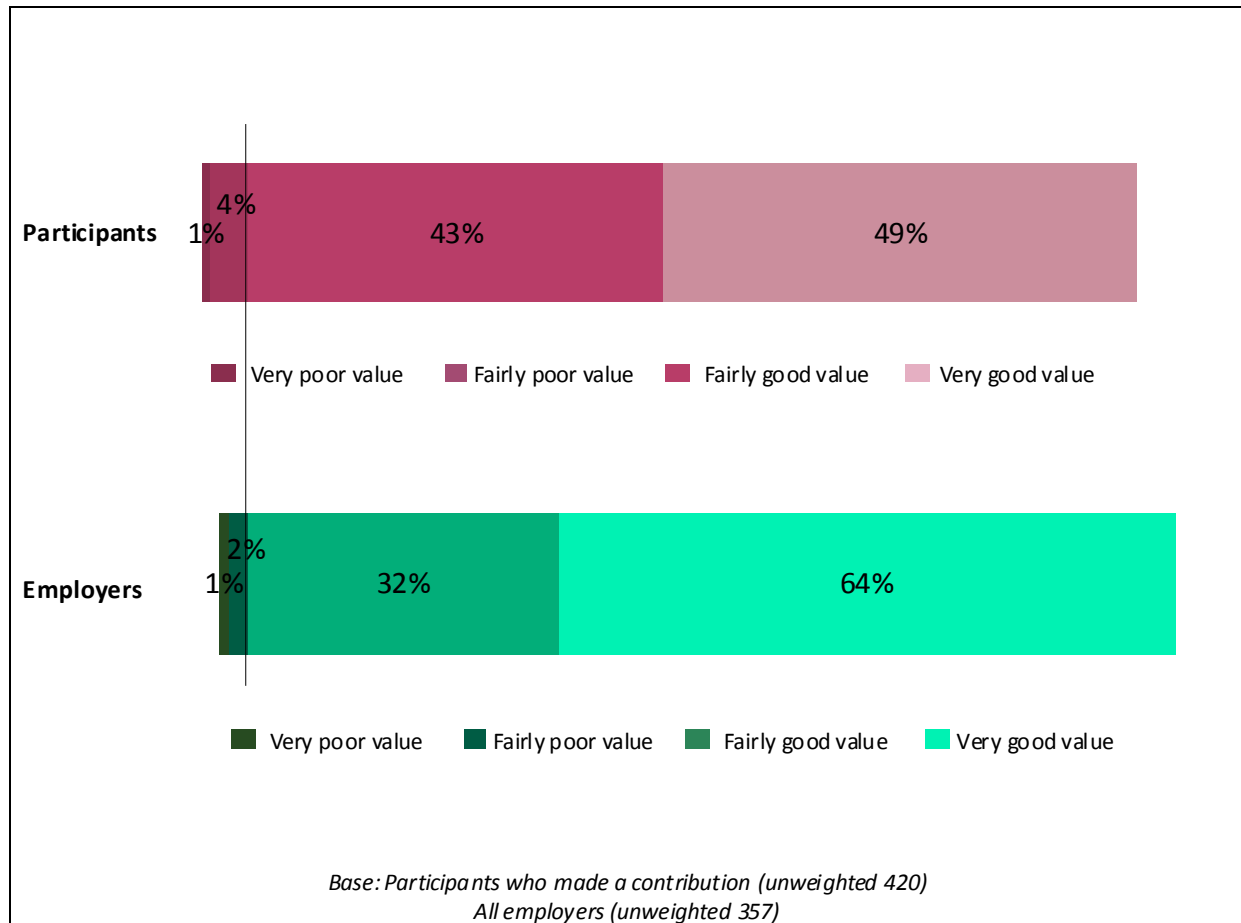
Other

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)

Value for money

7.94   Presumably at least partly as a result of this excellent number of outcomes achieved both participants and employers thought the initiative offered good value for their contributions (whether these were financial, in-kind or of time). Over nine out of ten among both cohorts indicated it represented fairly or good value – employers especially felt it offered very good value with nearly two thirds saying this.

7.95   Participants involved with Skills for Logistics were polarised, being significantly more likely to rate the experience both as very good value and as very poor value (77% very good, 8% very poor compared to 49%, and 1% overall) – this was mainly due to the responses of those on the *LGV Licences (Skills for Logistics)*[57] strand. Skillfast UK and Lantra participants were also significantly more likely to rate the experience as very good value (73% and 62% compared to 49% overall). Automotive Skills participants were significantly likely to be not quite as enthusiastic and rate the experience as fairly good value (56% did so) whilst SEMTA participants were the most likely to rate it very poor value (13%), although it should be borne in mind that these are still very positive ratings.

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[57] Low base - 29 unweighted

7.96   Amongst employers again those involved with the *LGV Licences (Skills for Logistics)* strand were significantly more likely to rate the value for money as very poor (4% did so compared to 2% overall), but this is still a very low proportion. Lantra employers were those more likely to be in the 'fairly good' rather than the 'very good' category (41% fairly good compared to 32% in this category overall).

Figure 7.22 Value for financial / in kind / time contributions

Participants	4% / 1%	43%	49%
	■ Very poor value ■ Fairly poor value ■ Fairly good value ■ Very good value
Employers	2% / 1%	32%	64%
	■ Very poor value ■ Fairly poor value ■ Fairly good value ■ Very good value

Base: Participants who made a contribution (unweighted 420)
All employers (unweighted 357)

8   How much training and development did the initiative deliver which would not have happened anyway?

8.1   As we have seen in the previous chapters, levels of satisfaction with the training and development programme were high among both employers and participants. High proportions of participants achieved a hard outcome and the great majority of employers would work with their SSC on a training initiative in the future. This chapter now turns to look at the extent to which the programme provided training and development *additional* to that which would have happened anyway – did employers view it as a substitute for other training plans or funding streams, or did it result in a type or amount of training and development that otherwise would not have been provided for (female) employees.

8.2   Establishing the counterfactual in this way is important to the overall evaluation of the initiative. To some extent high levels of satisfaction would be expected among employers receiving subsidised training (although the fact that the training was subsidised does not completely explain the very high levels of satisfaction reported across the board). Training and development that is well received *and* that creates development opportunities for women that otherwise would not have happened is a key success metric.

8.3   To this end, Figure 8.1 looks whether employers and participants feel that the training and development would have happened anyway. For over half (55%) of employers the training and development provided by the initiative represented something that they had either never thought of providing for their female employees or they had considered in the past but decided against. For a further fifth (20%) the employer had only a 'vague plan' to provide this type of training.

Figure 8.1: Additionality

Base: All employers (unweighted 357)   Base: All participants (unweighted 817)
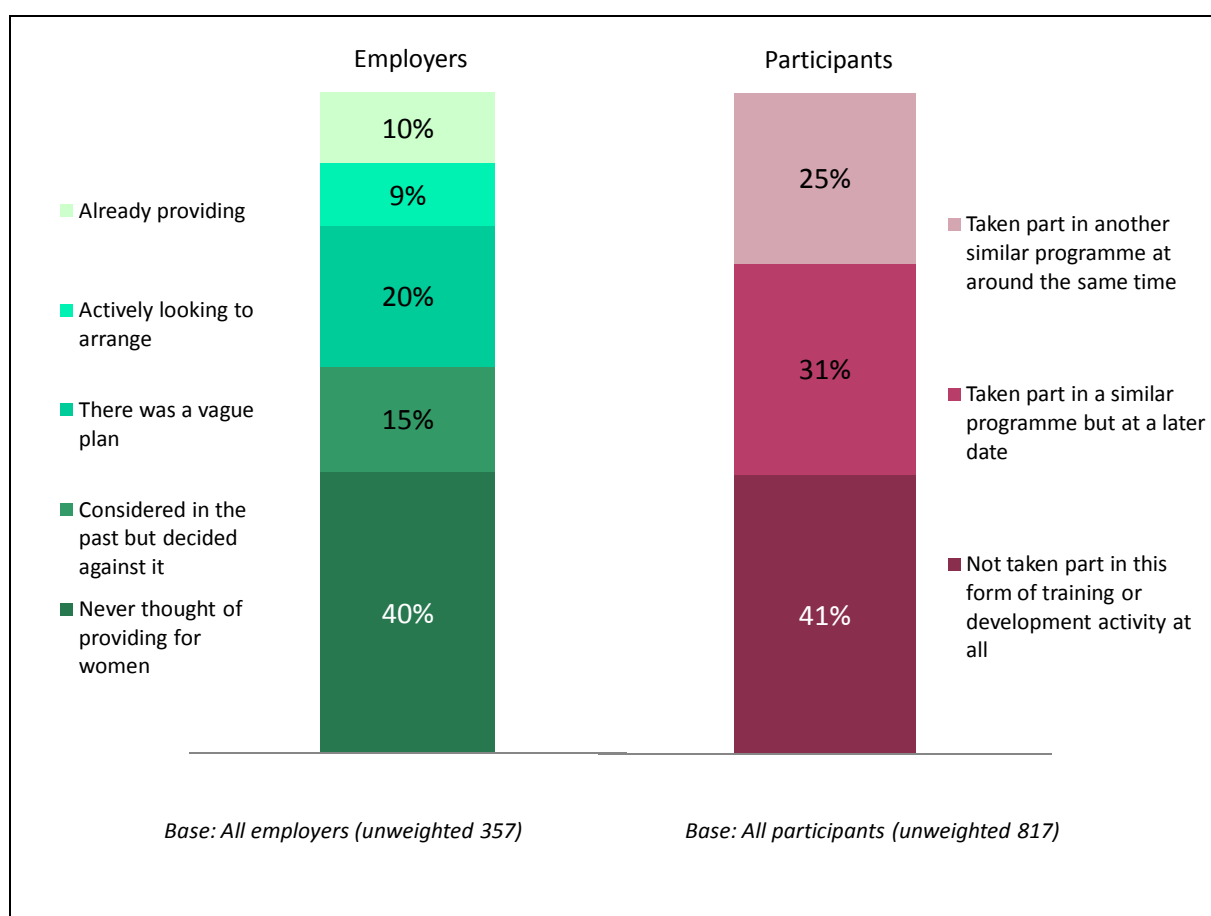
8.4   This picture is reflected by participants; just over two fifths (41%) felt that were it not for their involvement with the initiative they would not have taken part in this type of training or development at all. Just under a third (31%) felt that the initiative resulted in them receiving this type of training sooner – that is if it had not have happened they would have been involved in something similar albeit at a later date.

8.5   However, this does leave a quarter (25%) of participants and a fifth (20%) of employers for whom the initiative provided training that represented something they were likely to have been involved with anyway.

8.6   Among employers there was some variation in whether or not the organisation was already planning or actively looking to arrange this type of training by SSC. Those covered by Skills for Logistics SSC were significantly more likely to report that they had never thought of providing this type of training for women (56% compared with 40% across all SSCs). Conversely, nearly two fifths (39%) of Asset Skills employers said they were either actively looking to arrange or were already providing this type of training, compared with 20% across all SSCs.

8.7   Those employers that had been involved with their SSC prior to their involvement in their scheme were also more likely to have already been providing this type of training (15%) than those that had not had any previous dealings with the SSC (6%).

8.8   From a participant perspective, despite employers covered by Asset Skills SSC being more likely to report that the training aligned with current plans or activities, those women participating in *Enhanced Numeracy and Literacy (Asset Skills)* were in fact significantly more likely to report that they felt they would not have taken part in this sort of training or development activity at all had it not been for the initiative (55% compared with 41% across all participants).

8.9   Participants on ConstructionSkills strands on the other hand were significantly more likely than average to state that they thought they would have taken part in another similar programme at around the same time had they not been involved in the initiative (31% compared with 25%), and were correspondingly less like to have felt that they would not have taken part in this training or development activity at all (33% compared with 41%).

8.10   The initiative has had a particular impact on older participants. Around half (49%) of those aged 55 or over felt that were it not for the initiative they would not have taken part in this form of training and development at all, compared with just over a quarter (28%) of those under 25.

8.11   Among those employers for whom the training and development offered by the initiative represented something they were already providing or were actively looking to arrange, the research explored what would have happened had the Women and Work programme had not been available, in terms of:

> ➢   The number of women they would have provided training for;
> ➢   The anticipated timing of the training;
> ➢   The breadth or scope of the training.

8.12   Figure 8.2 shows that the initiative offered additionality even among some of those employers who were already providing, or actively looking to arrange, a similar sort of training. If these employers had not accessed training and development via the initiative, approaching a fifth (17%) would have trained fewer women, almost half (47%) would have provided training and development later, and three in ten (30%) would have provided training that was narrower in scope.

Figure 8.2: What would have happened if training and development had not have been accessed via initiative

Base: All who already provided or had plans to provide training (unweighted 78)
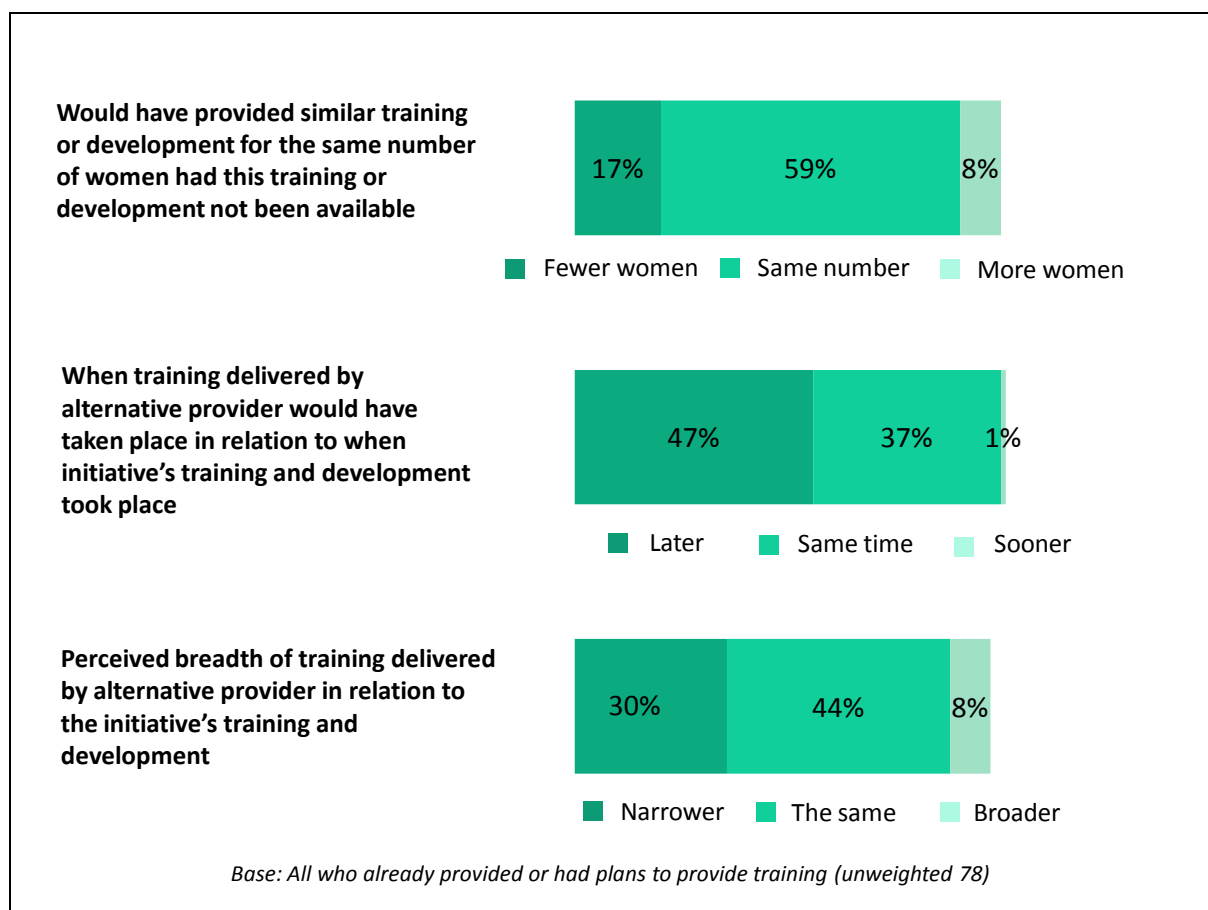
8.13   Of those that would have trained fewer women, all felt that they would have trained less than 10 percent of the women that received training under the initiative in the same timescales.

8.14   Overall, the initiative provided some form of additionality for 85% of employers (those who either had no concrete plans to provide similar training and development or had plans to provide such training but who would have trained less women, would have trained them later or for whom the training would have been narrower in scope). This is broadly consistent across SSC.

8.15   The research also aimed to collect a measure of displacement – that is, to what extent did the initiative provide funding which potentially displaced another funding stream already accessed by the employer. Employers were asked whether they had received funding for training and development from external organisations other than that provided by the initiative over the last 2 years.

8.16   Overall over a third (36%) of all employers had accessed funding for training from another organisation. This rose to almost two thirds (63%) of ConstructionSkills employers, but fell to less than a quarter of employers in Lantra (23%), Skillfast-UK (20%) and Skills for Logistics (16%).

8.17   Among those that had accessed other external funding, this was most commonly explained by ConstructionSkills employers accessing funding from ConstructionSkills SSC (29% of all receiving external funding and 64% of all ConstructionSkills employers receiving external funding).

8.18   Among non-ConstructionSkills employers, the most common source of external funding for training came from the Train to Gain service (accessed by a third - 32% - of these employers over the last 2 years). Just over a fifth (21%) received other funding from the Learning and Skills Council and one in eight (7%) from the European Social Fund. It is reasonable to assume that the funding provided by the Women and Work initiative displaced the funding provided by a proportion of these other funding streams accessed by employers (though it is not possible to estimate how much, or for whom).

9   Conclusions

9.1   Arguably those employers who have been engaged by the Women in Work initiative are those who are more likely to be predisposed to investing in training. Participating employers tended to be medium or large and small/micro businesses were under-represented across the initiative as a whole. Reflecting the size profile of engaged employers, they were better equipped in terms of planning and budgeting for training than is the case across the country as a whole.

9.2   However, only a quarter of employers (excluding ConstructionSkills employers) had received funding from other external sources for training conducted over the previous 2 years. This indicates that, for the most part, the initiative has been successful in engaging employers who are not the 'usual suspects' in terms of receipt of Government funding.

9.3   Despite the fact that engaged employers were more likely than average to have a structured approach to training, the initiative does seem to have been successful in reaching those within these organisations who would not normally receive training. Of those who were in employment when they started on the initiative, only 30% had received training in the last 12 months (around half the national average). Only half had **ever** received off-the-job training from their employer.

9.4   There is considerable evidence to suggest that the Women in Work programme has been successful in achieving its medium-term objectives. Below we lay out the evidence of success under each of the 4 objectives of the initiative as a whole.

A.   Increasing the number of women entering and remaining with sectors and occupations where they are currently under-represented (and where skills shortages exist);

9.5   Evidence of meeting this objective is apparent in the fact that:

➢   70% of participants stated that they are more likely to remain with the organisation as a result of having taken part in Women and Work;

➢   62% of employers state that the initiative has been **very** successful in meeting previously identified skills gaps;

9.6   That said, while the above supports the fact that the initiative has increased the likelihood of women remaining within the sectors covered, the surveys do not deliver any evidence of new women entering the sector. This is largely because initiatives were delivered through employers and hence there was limited focus on recruitment.

B.   Enabling women to progress in sectors and occupations where they are under-represented in higher ranking positions;

9.7   Evidence of meeting this objective is apparent in the fact that:

➢   15% had received a promotion (and a further 23% felt this was more likely to happen as a result of their involvement) and 13% had secured a job that they wanted in another organisation.

➢   In addition 42% stated that they had been given more responsibility in their job than they had previously

➢   two thirds (64%) feel that their awareness of the opportunities available to them for progression in their organisation has increased.

C. Increasing the earning potential of women in sectors and occupations where they are under-represented (and skills shortages exist);

9.8   Supporting the achievement of this objective is the fact that:

➢   Just under a fifth (17%) of those who has participated in Women and Work had achieved a pay increase (and a further 22% felt that this was more likely to happen in the future).

9.9   In relation to objectives B and C, evidence that the initiative was successful in reaching women in sectors where they face particular challenges. Of Women and Work participants:

➢   62% agreed that it was harder for women than men to progress to senior roles in their industry;

➢   58% agreed that there were few successful female role models in their industry;

➢   66% agreed that within their organisation there was a clustering of women in low-paid jobs;

➢   61% agreed that there were a low proportion of women in senior management in their organisation;

➢   44% agreed that women were less likely to progress within their organisation than men;

➢   45% agreed that their own job role is traditionally low-paid;

➢   39% agreed that there was no history of women progressing form their role to more senior roles.

D. Raising the awareness of employers in these sectors of the challenges that women employees and potential employees face and encouraging them to take action.

9.10   Evidence of progress towards this objective is apparent in the fact that, as a result of involvement, :

➢   28% of employers stated that they are much more likely to invest in training specifically aimed in the future;

➢   24% stated that they are much more likely to take action to ensure a greater proportion of women reach management positions

➢   24% stated that they are much more likely to monitor the progression of women within the organisation.

➢   Half (49%) of employers stated that their involvement has had a longer-term impact on attitudes towards the employment and progression of women within their organisation.

9.11   Furthermore, there is also evidence to suggest that the initiative has been successful in strengthening the relationships that SSCs have with employers. The majority of employers (with the exception of those involved with ConstructionSkills strands had no previous involvement with their SSC. Three in five (61%) state that they would be very positive about working with their SSC in the figure (and most of the rest state that they would be fairly positive about doing so).

9.12   However, there is evidence of some displacement activity with a quarter of participants (25%) and a fifth of employers (20%) stating that they would have undertaken the training and development activity delivered under Women and Work even if the programme had not been available.

10   Appendix – key measures by SSC

10.1   Base sizes for participants are too low (below 50 interviews) to allow for meaningful analysis between all SSCs at this level. However bases for Asset Skills, Automotive Skills, Construction Skills, Lantra and Skillfast UK are large enough to split out and key measures are compared for participants in these SSCs in figures 10.1 and 10.2. Throughout the report any significant differences have been highlighted where they may be of interest.

Figure 10.1 Key measures by SSC - participants 1

SSC	Asset Skills	Automotive Skills	Construction Skills	Lantra	Skillfast UK	ALL
Unweighted bases:	*158*	*147*	*158*	*169*	*80*	*817*
% who were very or quite satisfied with programme	93%	85%	89%	95%	92%	90%
% who would be very or fairly positive about recommending	86%	79%	85%	93%	91%	86%
% with at least one hard outcome (e.g. pay increase, promotion)	83%	69%	83%	86%	68%	79%
% who would not have had the opportunity to participate in a similar programme	45%	45%	33%	34%	39%	41%

Figure 10.2 Key measures by SSC - participants 2

SSC	Asset Skills	Automotive Skills	Construction Skills	Lantra	Skillfast UK	ALL
Unweighted bases:	*158*	*147*	*158*	*169*	*80*	*817*
% who felt very or quite supported during programme	87%	61%	83%	92%	86%	81%
% whose likelihood of aiming for more senior positions has increased greatly	17%	19%	31%	21%	16%	23%
% whose confidence in undertaking training or development activities in future has increased greatly	45%	42%	48%	53%	54%	48%

10.2   Base sizes for employers are too low (below 50 interviews) to allow for meaningful analysis between most SSCs at this level. However bases for Lantra and Skills for Logistics are large enough to split out and key measures are compared for employers in these SSCs in figures ??. Throughout the report any significant differences have been highlighted where they may be of interest.

Figure 10.3 Key measures by SSC - employers

SSC	Lantra	Skills for Logistics	ALL
Unweighted bases:	*129*	*79*	*357*
% who had dealt with SSC prior to participation	50%	15%	47%
% who had a training budget and/or plan	61%	58%	76%
% who did not already provide or not looking to arrange similar training before involvement	72%	85%	75%
% who found content of initiative very or fairly flexible	74%	67%	66%
% who were very or fairly satisfied	96%	92%	96%
% who would proactively recommend or be positive if asked by other employers	93%	95%	95%
% who were very or fairly positive about working with SSC again in future	93%	85%	91%