

**National
Employers Skills
Survey 2007:
Key Findings for
the London Region**

May 2008

Of interest to everyone involved in improving skills and learning opportunities in the workforce across London

The National Employers Skills Survey 2007 (NESS07) provides detailed information on the incidence, extent and nature of skills problems facing employers, in terms of both recruitment and skills gaps within their existing workforce. It explores employers' activities and expenditure in relation to training.

Introduction

The National Employers Skills Survey 2007 (NESS07) was commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) along with its partners, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA).

The overarching aim of NESS07 is to provide the LSC and its partners with robust and reliable information from employers in England on skills deficiencies and workforce development to serve as a common basis to develop policy and assess the impact of skills initiatives.

It is the latest in a series of employer surveys which includes NESS05, NESS04 and NESS03, as well as the earlier Employer Skill Survey (ESS) series commissioned by the DfES. NESS07 further develops this trend data on skills issues. Nationally it incorporates responses from just over 79,000 employers and thus represents by far the largest and most comprehensive source of information on current skills issues affecting employers in England.

It is a key source of labour market information on skill-shortage vacancies, skills gaps and workforce development activity, and is a crucial part of the evidence to inform skills policy. Results from NESS05, for example, were quoted extensively in the Leitch report *Prosperity for all in the Global Economy – world class skills* published in 2006. Also, the survey, in reporting regionally and by SSC sector, can inform: regional strategic plans being drawn up by regional partners to identify priority areas; the sector skills agreements being developed by the sector skills councils to identify sector priorities and to influence the supply of learning and training to meet employer needs; and national level policy papers.

The scope of the survey

The survey was designed to incorporate employers across all sectors of business activity in England. 'Employers' were defined as establishments (individual sites) rather than enterprises; hence some enterprises may be represented in the survey by more than one of their sites. The sample for the survey was drawn from Experian's National Business Database.

All establishments with at least two people working in them were within the scope of the sample, but single-person establishments were excluded.

Data measuring this population were established through the Office of National Statistics (ONS), based on the Inter-departmental Business Register (IDBR) counts for March 2006. These indicated a total population across England of 1.45 million employers with 22.3 million people working within them, and in London approaching a quarter of a million employers (231,199), with just under 3.9m staff.

In total just over 79,000 employers were interviewed nationally. In London a total of 12,077 interviews were conducted for the main NESS07 study.

In addition to the main NESS07 survey a separate follow-up survey was conducted with employers identified during the main interview as providing training to their staff. The purpose of this subsidiary research was to estimate the cost to employers of providing training. A total of 7,190 employers provided data for the cost of training survey (1,077 based in London), with the sample selected such that it was representative of the profile of employers providing training by establishment size, region, sector and the type of training provided (off-the-job only, on-the-job only or both). The main NESS07 survey data was used to derive these population profiles.

All fieldwork within London was undertaken by IFF Research.

The following table summarises the number of interviews conducted and the employer and employment populations for London for NESS from 2003 to 2007.

Table A: Interviews and population estimates NESS 2003 – 2007 (London region).

	2003	2004	2005	2007
<i>Main survey:</i>				
Number of interviews	13,381	3,966	12,100	12,077
Grossed up employer population	365,404	232,375	225,545	231,199
Number of employees (grossed up)	4.0m	3.9m	3.8m	3.9m
<i>Cost of Training follow-up survey:</i>				
Number of interviews	n/a	n/a	901	1,077
Grossed up employer population	n/a	n/a	138,012	153,870

Structure of this report

This report presents key findings from NESS07 for the London region. A more detailed investigation of the data can be found in the full report – *National Employers Skills Survey 2007: Main Report for the London region*.

The remainder of this Key Findings report separated into the following sections:

- Key findings
- Recruitment and recruitment problems
- Skills gaps
- Recruitment of young people
- Training activity and expenditure

Throughout differences by size and by sector of establishment are discussed, and London results are compared with the national data. We also examine longitudinal findings for the London region.

Key findings

Of all the LSC regions, the London region in 2007 has a pattern of recruitment, recruitment difficulties and skill gaps (and to a lesser extent training) which is the most distinct from the England-wide norm. In particular:

- It is the region where the highest proportion of the workforce is considered to lack full proficiency (7 per cent) – in all other regions 5 or 6 per cent of staff have skills gaps.
- London has more employers with vacancies (21 per cent), hard-to-fill vacancies (8 per cent) and skill-shortage vacancies (7 per cent) than any other region.
- It has the most buoyant labour market when taking the size of the workforce into account, with the highest number of vacancies as a proportion of total employment (3.3 per cent – the England-wide figure was 2.8 per cent).
- In volume terms it has more vacancies which are proving hard-to-fill because of skill shortages than any other region (approximately 33,000 at the time of interview, a quarter of the country's total). This is not just because of the buoyant labour market, as it also reflects the fact that a much higher proportion of vacancies are hard-to-fill because of skill shortages in applicants in London (26 per cent) than elsewhere (21 per cent nationally).
- London employers were the least likely to have recruited any 16-year-olds straight from school in the last 12 months (4 per cent) and the most likely to have recruited HE leavers to their first job (14 per cent). Related to this they were the least likely to have recruited, offer or employ any Apprentices.
- Employers in London had trained a higher proportion of their workforce over the last 12 months (67 per cent) than any other region (the national average is 63 per cent), and spend more on training per employee (£2,075) than in any other region.
- London employers had the lowest level of engagement with FE colleges, whether looked at in terms of the proportion of all employers using an FE college for training over the previous 12 months (13 per cent compared with 17 per cent across England as a whole), or the proportion of those training using an FE college (19 per cent compared with 26 per cent England-wide).
- Employers in London that train are the least likely of any region to train to qualifications or specifically NVQs. For example only 18 per cent of London employers that train had had any staff undertake an NVQ in the last 12 months compared with 27 per cent nationally.
- Awareness and involvement with Train to Gain was lower in London than elsewhere.

The key headline findings from NESS07 are listed in Table 1. Comparisons for London from previous NESS surveys in 2003, 2004, 2005 are also shown, together with national 2007 results (in the final column of data).

Table 1: NESS07 headline findings 2003 – 2007.

	2003	2004	2005	2007	2007
Recruitment problems	LONDON				ENGLAND
% of establishments with any vacancies	12%	14%	17%	21%	18%
% of establishments with any hard-to-fill vacancies	4%	5%	6%	8%	7%
% of establishments with skill-shortage vacancies (SSVs)	3%	4%	4%	7%	5%
% of all vacancies which are SSVs	21%	17%	22%	26%	21%
Number of vacancies	104,950	89,175	87,450	126,875	619,675
Number of SSVs	22k	15k	19k	33k	130k
Number of SSVs per 1,000 employees	5	4	5	8	6
Skill gaps					
% of establishments with any staff not fully proficient	16%	14%	13%	17%	15%
% of staff not fully proficient	10%	5%	6%	7%	6%
Training					
% of establishments training staff over the last 12 months	55%	58%	62%	67%	67%
% providing off-the-job training in the last 12 months	n/a	40%	38%	47%	46%
% of those training using an FE college	20%	n/a	21%	19%	26%
% of establishments with a training plan	37%	42%	45%	46%	48%
% of establishments with a budget for training	30%	33%	35%	37%	35%
% of employees trained over the last 12 months	52%	62%	58%	67%	63%
Training expenditure in last 12 months	n/a	n/a	£5.8bn	£8.1bn	£38.6bn

- The level of recruitment activity recorded in London in 2007 (measured by the proportion of employers with vacancies at the time of interview and the number of vacancies) is far higher than in the period 2003-2005.
- Partly as a result, the number of employers experiencing recruitment difficulties generally, and those caused by skill-shortages in applicants specifically, and the number of these vacancies, is far higher in 2007 than in previous NESS studies. However, it is also the case that the proportion of vacancies where skill-shortages are encountered is also much higher in 2007 (26 per cent) than previously (17 - 22 per cent in the 2003 to 2005 period).
- Still only a small minority of London employers are experiencing skill-shortage vacancies at any one time (7 per cent at the time of interview), and the number of SSVs still only represents 8 for every 1,000 employees. The number of skill-shortage vacancies per 1,000 employees in 2007 is twice the 2004 level.

- Skills gaps among the existing workforce are experienced by a minority of London employers (17 per cent), though this is higher than found previously, and higher than the national average in 2007 (15 per cent). Similarly, a relatively small proportion of the total workforce are considered to lack full proficiency (7 per cent) – this is higher than in 2004 and 2005, though lower than 2003.
- Findings in relation to both skill-shortage vacancies and skill gaps suggest high demand for skilled positions and increasing problems in the labour market delivering the skills required.
- In absolute, volume terms skills gaps are most likely to be found in the following occupational groups: sales and customer service (57,000 staff not fully proficient), administrative and secretarial staff (50,200), managers (46,000) and elementary positions (42,000). These four groups account for over two thirds of all staff that lack full proficiency (68 per cent), higher than their share of overall employment (62 per cent). In density terms (the proportion of staff in each occupational group with skill gaps), skills gaps are highest among sales and customer service occupations, where 11 per cent of staff are considered to lack full proficiency, and also above average among elementary staff and those in administrative / secretarial positions (each 9 per cent).
- Two-thirds of employers provide training for at least some of their staff (67 per cent), continuing a steady increase since this was first measured in 2003 (55 per cent). Similarly the proportion of the workforce receiving training (67 per cent) has also increased over time, from 52 per cent in 2003.
- There has been an increase compared with 2005 in the number of days training provided per annum by London employers whether looked at in terms of days per employee (from 8 to 10 days) or per person trained (14 to 15 days). These figures are very close to the England average.
- Use of FE colleges among London employers that train is little changed from previous years (19 per cent), and remains lower than found across England as a whole.
- The cost to employers in London of providing training (including labour costs) totalled £8.1bn for the 12 months prior to NESS07, up 39 per cent on 2005. Providing training is estimated to cost an average of £2,075 per employee or £3,100 per person trained, both higher than the national average.

Recruitment and recruitment problems

Recruitment difficulties are relatively uncommon and affect only a minority of employers. At the time of interview, 8 per cent of establishments reported having any hard-to-fill vacancies and 7 per cent reported having any skill-shortage vacancies. As illustrated in Table 1 London employers are more likely than those across England as a whole to be experiencing hard-to-fill or skill-shortage vacancies, indeed the figures in London were higher than any other region.

In total there were approximately 32,850 skill-shortage vacancies being experienced by London employers at the time of interview. This equates to just over a quarter of all vacancies: 26 per cent of all vacancies in London were hard-to-fill because of skill shortages among applicants. The intensity of recruitment problems caused by skill shortages in London is clear in that across England as a whole the proportion of vacancies where skill shortages were experienced was substantially lower (21 per cent).

The concentration of recruitment difficulties in London, and specifically those caused by skill shortages, is also illustrated by the fact that while the capital accounts for 18 per cent of total employment across England, it accounts for 20 per cent of all vacancies, 22 per cent of all hard-to-fill vacancies and 25 per cent of all skill-shortage vacancies. This suggests high levels of competition for skilled workers in the capital.

The number of vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies (HtFVs) and skill shortage vacancies (SSVs) in London are far higher than found in previous years (Table 2).

Table 2: Trends in the number of vacancies and recruitment difficulties 2004-2007.

	2003	2004	2005	2007	2007 79,018
<i>Unweighted base (employers)</i>					
	LONDON				ENGLAND
Total employment (million)	4.0m	3.9m	3.8m	3.9m	22.3m
Number of vacancies	104,950	89,175	87,450	126,875	619,675
Number of HtFVs	30,075	19,150	24,558	40,311	183,475
Number of SSVs	21,575	15,275	18,950	32,850	130,000
Vacancies as proportion of all employment	2.6%	2.3%	2.3%	3.3%	2.8%
HtFVs as a proportion of vacancies	29%	21%	28%	32%	30%
Proportion of vacancies which are SSVs	21%	17%	22%	26%	21%
SSVs per 1000 employees	5	4	5	8	6

Source: NESS07, NESS05, NESS04, NESS03

Base: All employers.

Note: Vacancies figures rounded to the nearest 25.

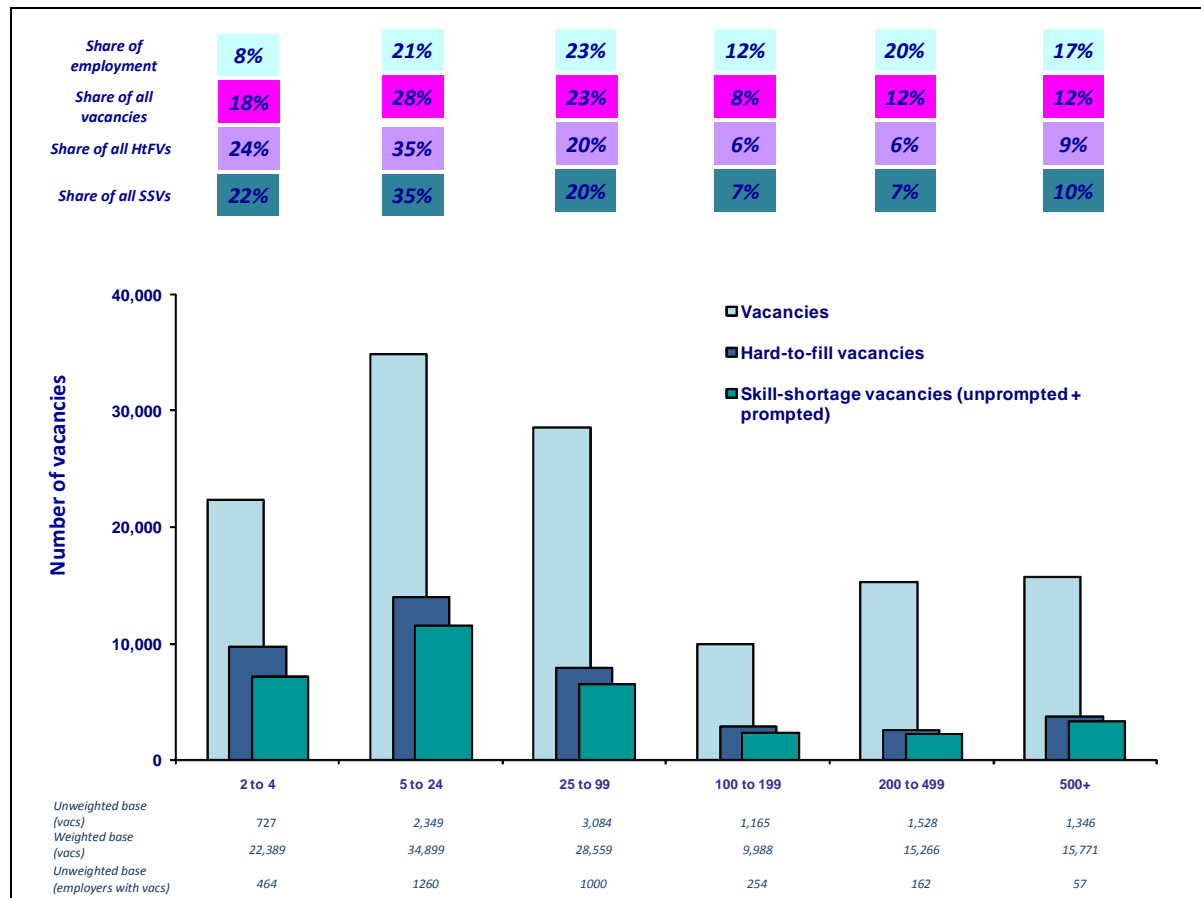
The rise in the number of SSVs from 2005 to 2007 is a result of increased recruitment activity combined with skill-shortages being encountered in a higher proportion of vacancies.

Recruitment difficulties by size of establishment

Predictably larger employers are more likely to have vacancies, hard-to-fill and skill-shortage vacancies. Just over three fifths of those with 100 or more staff have vacancies and just over a fifth have any skill-shortage vacancies. These proportions vary very little between those with 100-199, 200-499 and 500 or more staff, hence in regard to incidence of these types of vacancy the 100 plus mark appears to be the key divide.

However, in volume terms a disproportionately large number of vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies and skill-shortage vacancies occur among smaller establishments. Establishments with fewer than 25 staff account for 29 per cent of total employment, yet almost half (46 per cent) of all vacancies at the time of the study, and approaching three-fifths of all hard-to-fill vacancies (59 per cent) and specifically skill-shortage vacancies (57 per cent). Hence while part of the disproportionately high volume of recruitment difficulties compared with employment among smaller establishments is a result of high levels of recruitment activity relative to employment, it is also the case that there is a high level of difficulties relatively to the level of recruitment activity.

Figure 1: Number and share of vacancies, hard-to-fill vacancies and skill-shortage vacancies by size of establishment.



Base: All vacancies.

The pattern of recruitment difficulties by occupation

Table 3 illustrates how vacancies and recruitment difficulties differ by occupation, showing the numbers of vacancies and SSVs reported for each occupational group, and then the prevalence of SSVs by occupation in terms of employment density (SSVs per 1,000 employees) and in relation to recruitment activity (as a proportion of all vacancies). Examples of the types of job covered by each broad occupational group below are given in Annex B.

Table 3: Vacancies and SSVs by occupation

	Vacancies	SSVs	% of vacancies that are SSVs		SSVs per 1,000 employees	
			London	England	London	England
			%	%	N	N
All London	126,875	32,850	26%	21%	8	6
Managers and senior officials	9,950	2,625	26%	21%	3	2
Professionals	17,075	5,200	31%	28%	13	7
Associate professionals	26,225	7,500	29%	22%	18	14
Administrative and secretarial	17,400	2,500	14%	12%	4	3
Skilled trades	8,055	3,475	43%	37%	22	14
Personal service	9,525	2,450	26%	21%	12	8
Sales and customer service	16,575	3,875	23%	15%	7	4
Machine operatives	5,325	1,275	24%	24%	8	7
Elementary occupations	12,925	3,050	24%	15%	6	4

Base: All vacancies.

Note: Weighted figures rounded to the nearest 25.

Employers report the greatest volume of SSVs in associate professional, professional, sales / customer service and skilled trades occupations. These four occupations account for approximately three-fifths of all SSVs (61 per cent) as compared with 44 per cent of employment. For associate professional, professional and skilled trades positions the number of SSVs as a proportion of employment is at least twice the London average, and is particularly high for skilled trades positions (22 SSVs per 1,000 employees) and associate professionals (18).

For administrative and secretarial positions, the volume of skill-shortages vacancies is low as a proportion of both vacancies and employment in the occupation.

For managers and senior officials, the proportion of all vacancies which are hard-to-fill because of skill shortages is in line with the region average (26 per cent), but the number of SSVs is low in relation to employment (3 SSVs per 1,000 managers employed) because the number of vacancies is low relative to employment. Overall, 20 per cent of the workforce is employed in managerial positions yet only 8 per cent of vacancies at the time of interview were for managerial level jobs.

Skills lacking in connection with skill-shortage vacancies

Technical, practical and job-specific skills continue to be at a particular premium where SSVs exist, and are lacking in over half of all instances of SSVs (56 per cent). Oral communication skills and customer handling skills are also often lacking in applicants, each mentioned in connection with just over two in five of all instances of SSVs. Other skills quite often lacking among recruits include problem-solving, written communication, team working and management skills, each experienced in around a third of hard-to-fill vacancies where skills are lacking.

Table 4 both details the skills lacking at overall level (the far right column) and how the pattern of skills challenges varies by occupation. The findings highlighted in red indicate the occupations in which particular skills are at a premium (here taken to be 9 per cent or more above the average), though in some cases it should be noted that these skill shortages are not necessarily the most prevalent in that occupation.

Table 4: Main skills lacking by occupation where skill-shortage vacancies exist.

	Managers	Professionals	Associate prof.	Administrative	Skilled trades	Personal service	Sales	Operatives	Elementary	Overall
<i>Column percentages</i>										
<i>Unweighted base (SSVs)</i>	228	500	505	178	271	133	311	151	194	2,517
<i>Weighted base (SSVs)</i>	2,629	5,210	7,501	2,492	3,484	2,449	3,884	1,284	3,051	32,857
<i>Unweighted base (establishments with SSVs in occupation)</i>	123	202	251	119	146	69	133	50	83	1,023
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Technical and practical skills	65	50	61	46	69	41	52	35	55	56
Oral communication skills	33	35	48	35	58	48	53	42	32	44
Customer-handling skills	37	20	44	36	46	53	58	51	35	41
Management skills	53	30	44	21	32	44	30	13	13	34
Problem-solving skills	20	22	41	24	49	41	36	31	25	34
Team working skills	24	18	35	17	41	55	28	12	28	31
Written communication skills	28	26	28	37	29	41	41	29	18	30
Literacy skills	19	21	16	30	27	37	32	37	19	24
Foreign language skills	21	20	13	21	21	33	23	13	18	21

IT professional skills	11	12	33	22	28	12	13	9	2	18
Office/admin skills	17	9	20	24	9	14	20	10	8	16
Numeracy skills	15	12	13	21	20	22	17	21	14	16
General IT user skills	11	10	14	21	5	23	17	14	11	15

Base: All skill-shortage vacancies.

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 since multiple responses were allowed. Red text indicates particularly high values.

Recruitment difficulties across the sectors

As seen in previous NESS surveys, there is substantial variation in the extent of recruitment difficulties across different industry sectors. Other than the relatively large number of employers not covered by an SSC, the largest volume of SSVs are found among employers covered by the following SSCs: People 1st (13 per cent of the region's SSVs), ConstructionSkills (9 per cent), Skillset (8 per cent) and Asset Skills (6 per cent). In all these sectors their share of London's total number of SSVs is higher than their share of employment.

In general, each sector's share of total SSVs quite closely matches its share of employment, though there are some sectors where a very high proportion of vacancies are hard-to-fill because of skill-shortages and which employers are therefore experiencing skills difficulties when recruiting. This includes employers covered by ConstructionSkills SSC (44 per cent) and Skillset (43 per cent), and to a lesser extent Cogent, Semta, Skillfast-UK, Automotive Skills, Skills for Logistics and People 1st, for whom around a third of vacancies encounter skills shortages in applicants.

Table 5 illustrates the sectoral pattern of skill shortages in volume and density terms. Low base sizes in some sectors (described in the footnote to the table) means results should be treated with a degree of caution.

Table 5: Vacancies and skill-shortage vacancies by Sector Skills Council in London

	Employment	Vacancies	HtFVs	SSVs	% of vacancies that are SSVs	SSVs per 1,000 employees
						N
London overall	3,899,801	126,872	40,311	32,857	26%	8
	%	%	%	%		
<i>Lantra</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Cogent</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>38%</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Proskills UK</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Improve Ltd</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Skillfast-UK</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>34%</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Semta</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>34%</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Energy & Utility Skills</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>34%</i>	<i>2</i>
ConstructionSkills	3.6	5.6	9.5	9.4	44%	22
SummitSkills	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	29%	10
Automotive Skills	1.1	0.9	1.1	1.2	34%	7
Skillsmart Retail	9.1	6.5	5.7	4.9	20%	5
People 1 st	8.2	10.5	12.8	13.1	32%	13
GoSkills	3.6	3.0	2.1	2.1	19%	5
Skills for Logistics	2.0	1.0	1.2	1.4	35%	6
Financial Services Skills Council	7.6	7.6	3.9	4.6	16%	5
Asset Skills	5.3	5.8	6.3	6.3	28%	10
e-skills UK	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.6	27%	8
<i>Government Skills</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Skills for Justice</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>1</i>
Lifelong Learning UK	3.4	2.7	2.0	2.2	21%	6
Skills for Health	6.2	3.3	1.5	1.5	12%	2
Skills for Care & Development	3.0	4.0	2.5	2.5	16%	7
Skillset	1.8	4.6	6.8	7.7	43%	37
Creative & Cultural Skills	2.2	2.6	2.5	2.5	25%	9
SkillsActive	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.7	20%	6
Non-SSC employers	28.8	32.2	32.8	31.3	25%	9

Note: Low base sizes in some SSC sectors should be noted. In Energy & Utility Skills, Government Skills and Skills for Justice, fewer than 50 interviews were conducted (46, 34 and 45 respectively). Other sectors shown in italics on the table are those where fewer than 25 respondents were experiencing skill-shortage vacancies.

Skills Gaps

The previous section examined difficulties experienced when recruiting staff, in particular those relating to skills shortages amongst applicants. This section discusses internal skills gaps which employers experience in their existing workforce.

Incidence and extent of skills gaps

Employers are described as having a 'skills gap' in cases where they have staff who they believe to be not fully proficient at their job.

Skills gaps were reported by 17 per cent of employers in London. This is higher than the England-wide figure (15%), and only in the North East was the figure higher (19 per cent). While across England the proportion of employers with skill gaps has fallen consistently from 2003 to 2007, in London the figure increased from 2005 to 2007 (13% to 17%).

The proportion of the workforce considered to be not fully proficient was 7 per cent, up from 6 per cent in 2005. In total approximately 287,300 staff in London were described as having skill gaps. This represents just over a fifth of the England total (21 per cent), higher than the proportion of employees falling within the region (18 per cent).

Table 6: Skills gaps 2003 to 2007

	2003	2004	2005	2007
London:				
Percentage of establishments with a skills gap	16%	14%	13%	17%
Percentage of staff described as having a skills gap	10%	5%	6%	7%
% of England's skill gaps falling in London region	17%	14%	17%	21%
England:				
Percentage of establishments with a skills gap	22%	20%	16%	15%
Percentage of staff described as having a skills gap	11%	7%	6%	6%

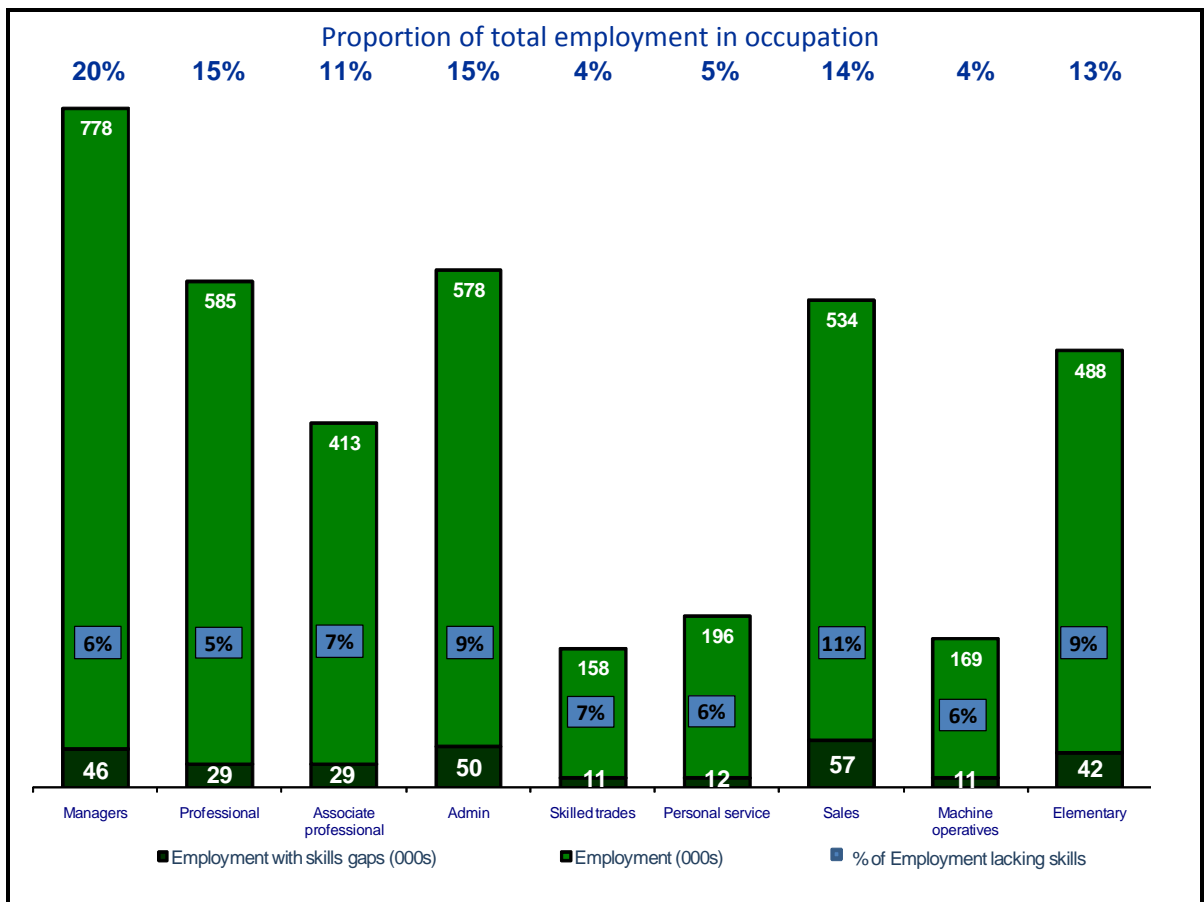
The incidence of skills gaps increases markedly with the size of establishment: 8 per cent of those with 2-4 employees have any skill gaps, rising to a quarter (24 per cent) of those where 5-24 staff are employed, and half (49 per cent) where 200 or more employees work at the establishment.

It is also the case that the proportion of staff described as lacking full proficiency increases by size of establishment, from 4 per cent where 2-4 staff are employed, 6 per cent where

there are 5-24 staff, 7 per cent where 25-499 staff are employed up to 11 per cent among the very largest establishments.

Figure 2 shows the number of workers (in thousands) in each major occupational category described as not fully proficient at their job (the numbers on the lower part of each column). The full height of each column (and the figure shown at the top of each column, again in thousands) shows total employment within each occupation. The boxed percentage figure within each column of data shows the **proportion** of each occupation described as not fully proficient. The percentages along the top of Figure 3 show the proportion of the workforce working in each of the nine occupational groups.

Figure 2: The distribution of skills gaps by occupation



Base: All employment.

In absolute, volume terms skills gaps are most likely to be found in the following occupational groups: sales and customer service (57,000 staff not fully proficient), administrative and secretarial staff (50,200), managers (46,000) and elementary positions (42,000). These four groups account for over two thirds of all staff that lack full proficiency (68 per cent), higher than their share of overall employment (62 per cent).

In density terms (the proportion of staff in each occupational group described as lacking skills), this is highest among sales and customer service occupations, where one in nine of staff (11 per cent) are considered to lack full proficiency by employers. It is also above

average among elementary staff and those in administrative / secretarial positions (each 9 per cent). While the volume of managers lacking skills is high this essentially reflects the large number of staff in managerial positions, and in fact the proportion on managers with skill gaps (6 per cent) is below the London average (7 per cent).

The occupational group with the lowest proportion of staff with skills gaps is professionals (5 per cent).

Reasons why staff lack skills

As in previous years, and as found nationally in 2007, a lack of experience and staff having been recently recruited was by far the most common cause of skills gaps, with almost three quarters of skills gaps discussed being attributed, at least in part, to this cause.

Two other factors relating to recruitment – high staff turnover and recruitment problems – are also quite commonly mentioned: each forms part of the cause of around one in six skills gaps. In both cases the underlying implication is that experienced staff have left and employers have had to fill vacancies with inappropriately skilled people.

A lack of staff motivation (32 per cent), failure to train and develop staff (26 per cent), and the failure of staff to keep up with change (25 per cent) were also common causes.

While for all of the main occupational groups, lack of experience/recently recruited staff is the most common cause of skills gaps, the secondary reasons vary. For managerial staff the second most common cause of skills gaps is felt to be the company's own failure to train (explaining, at least in part, 37 per cent of managerial skills gaps, much higher than mentioning this factor for other occupations). For professionals the inability of staff to keep up with change was the second most likely cause, closely followed by the company's own failure to train. For all other occupations a lack of motivation among staff was the second most common causes of skills gaps.

The nature of skills gaps

When describing the skills lacking among their staff, employers generally focus on oral communication skills (57 per cent of staff lacking full proficiency lack this skill), customer handling skills (50 per cent), team working (47 per cent) technical, practical or job-specific skills (44 per cent) and problem solving skills (41 per cent).

Less common, were a lack of written communication skills and management skills (though still found in around a third of cases where staff lacked proficiency) and general user IT skills, office admin skills and literacy skills (each lacking in around a quarter of cases where staff lacked proficiency).

The skills that staff lack vary by occupation as follows:

- In 85 per cent of cases where **managers** lack proficiency, they specifically lack management skills. They are also more likely than average to lack team working and oral communication skills.
- **Professionals** who lack proficiency most often lack management skills (62 per cent), while around half lack problem solving, written and oral communication and technical and job-specific skills.
- Skills gaps among **associate professionals** are very focused in the area of oral communication skills, lacking in almost two thirds of those not fully proficient (64 per cent).
- Unsurprisingly, office administration skills are the most common skills gap for **administrative and clerical staff**, mentioned in connection with well over half (58%) of those lacking skills. A lack of written and oral communication and IT skills were also common, mentioned in connection with around half the cases where these staff are not fully proficient.
- Skills gaps among **skilled trades** are concentrated in technical, practical or job-specific skills, with these mentioned in three fifths of cases.
- **Personal service staff** were reported as lacking the widest range of skills, and just over half of those with skill gaps were described as lacking job-specific / practical skills (56 per cent), team working (52 per cent), oral and written communication skills (56 and 59 per cent respectively), customer handling skills (56 per cent) and literacy skills (51 per cent).
- For **sales** staff, customer handling skills and written communication skills are the main gaps, these each contributing to around two-thirds of skills gaps in this occupation.
- The skill most often seen as lacking among **plant and machine operatives** is customer handling skills (61 per cent). However, basic literacy skills deficiencies are also much more common than average among this occupational group (38 per cent).
- A lack of literacy is also more common than average among **elementary** staff who are not considered to be fully proficient (mentioned in connection with almost two-fifths of elementary skills gaps), but the main gaps are for oral communication (66 per cent), team working and customer handling skills (each 61 per cent).

The impact of skills gaps

An increased workload for other staff was by far the most common negative impact experienced as a result of staff having skills gaps (reported by 67 per cent of establishments with skills gaps). Increased operating costs, difficulties meeting quality standards and difficulties introducing new working practices were each reported by just over a third of those with skills gaps, all factors which clearly directly or potentially affect profitability and productivity. Overall 28 per cent of those with skill gaps (equivalent to 5 per cent of all employers) say they have lost business to competitors as a result, and 27 per cent have had to delay developing new products or services as a result of skill gaps (again equivalent to 5 per cent of all employers).

Skills gaps appear to affect employers in London more than elsewhere: and each negative impact is mentioned by around 10 per cent more London employers with skill gaps than was the case nationally (and in London 17 per cent of employers with skill gaps said they caused no particular difficulty, compared with 26 per cent nationally).

The vast majority of employers with skill gaps respond in the same way, by increasing their training activity and / or increasing their trainee programmes (70 per cent). Far fewer react by providing greater staff supervision (13 per cent), or by providing more staff appraisal (12 per cent), the next most common responses. Just 10 per cent of employers with skills gaps are taking no action to overcome their staff's skills deficiencies. This broad pattern of response to skill gaps in London is very close to the national picture.

The sectoral picture of skills gaps

Table 7 shows the incidence, number and density of skills gaps by SSC sector. SSC sectors have been ranked in descending order of the proportions of staff described as having skills gaps (the third column of data). Table 7 also shows in the final two columns of data the profile of skills gaps against employment.

The vast bulk of skills gaps occur in retail, hospitality and then employers not covered by an SSC. These three groups account for over half of all skills gaps (54 per cent), higher than their share of employment. In all three, the proportion of the workforce with skill gaps is above average – in retail and hospitality, for example, 9 per cent of the workforce is described as lacking full proficiency.

The density of skill gaps is also above average in a number of other SSC sectors, though these tend to be quite small in employment terms, and hence unlikely to be priority areas for the LSC (these include Lantra, Cogent and Skillfast-UK, which combined account for around 1.5 per cent of employment across the region). Employers covered by e-skills UK SSC have the highest proportion of the workforce with skill gaps (11 per cent), and this is clearly a large employer in the capital (accounting for around 4 per cent of employment).

The volume of skill gaps is also quite large in some sectors where the density of skills gaps is below average but where the sector is quite large. This includes employers covered by the following SSCs: Skills for Health and Financial Services (each employing 5 per cent of the region's workforce that are not fully proficient), Asset Skills (4 per cent), and ConstructionSkills, Skills for Care and Development, GoSkills and Lifelong Learning UK (each employing 3 per cent of the region's workforce with skill gaps).

Most sectors fall into three broad categories in terms of the types of skills lacking in their workforces. There are those where technical, practical and job-specific skills are critical (including the sectors covered by Semta, Improve, Proskills, Cogent, Energy and Utility Skills, SummitSkills and, on the services side, Financial Services); those where customer handling and oral communication skills are particularly likely to be lacking (covering Skillsmart Retail, People 1st, Skills for Logistics, e-skills UK and Skills for Health); and the remainder, where a range of skills are lacking without any being predominant.

Table 7: Incidence and number of skills gaps by Sector Skills Council sector

	% of establishments with any skills gaps	Number of employees not fully proficient (i.e. number of skills gaps)	% of staff reported as having skills gaps	Share of employment	Share of all skills gaps
		Row percentages		Column percentage	
Overall	17	287,300	7	100	100
e-skills UK	14	15,600	11	4	5
Cogent	19	2,100	10	1	1
Skillsmart Retail	21	32,300	9	9	11
People 1 st	21	29,200	9	8	10
Non-SSC employers	15	95,500	8	29	33
Skillset	10	5,800	8	2	2
Skillfast-UK	13	2,400	8	1	1
Lantra	17	600	8	*	*
Government Skills	31	5,400	7	2	2
Skills for Care and Development	22	7,900	7	3	3
Skills for Logistics	18	5,700	7	2	2
Energy & Utility Skills	11	1,900	7	1	1
SummitSkills	18	1,800	7	1	1
Skills for Health	14	13,600	6	6	5
ConstructionSkills	15	9,000	6	4	3
Lifelong Learning UK	22	7,700	6	3	3
Automotive Skills	21	2,700	6	1	1
SkillsActive	22	2,100	6	1	1
Improve	19	1,700	6	1	1
Financial Services	21	15,200	5	8	5

Asset Skills	14	10,800	5	5	4
GoSkills	21	7,300	5	4	3
Creative and Cultural	12	4,000	5	2	1
Semta	15	2,600	5	1	1
Proskills	14	1,300	4	1	*
Skills for Justice	25	3,100	4	2	1

Base: First column all establishments, remainder all employment.

Notes: The number of employees not fully proficient has been rounded to the nearest 100.

Recruitment of young people

Across England as a whole, a quarter of employers (26 per cent) had recruited at least one young person under 24 to their first job on leaving education. More had recruited 17- or 18-year-olds school or college leavers to their first job (12 per cent) than had taken on graduates (10 per cent) or 16 year old school leavers (7 per cent).

London is the only region where the incidence of recruitment of 16- to 24-year-olds leaving education varies much from the England-wide pattern. Employers in London were considerably less likely than average to have recruited a 16-year-old straight from school in the previous 12 months (4 per cent), were also less likely to have taken on a 17- or 18-year-old school or college leaver (9 per cent), and were by far the *most* likely to have recruited graduates straight from higher education (14 per cent). This repeats the situation seen in 2005.

Table 8: Recruitment of 16 to 24 year olds straight from education to their first job.

	2005	2007	2007
<i>Unweighted base (employers)</i>			79,018
	LONDON		ENGLAND
% recruiting any under 24s straight from education in the last 12 months	24%	25%	26%
% recruiting 16-year-old school leaver	4%	4%	7%
% recruiting 17- or 18-year-old school or college leavers	9%	9%	12%
% recruiting university or HE institution leavers	13%	14%	10%

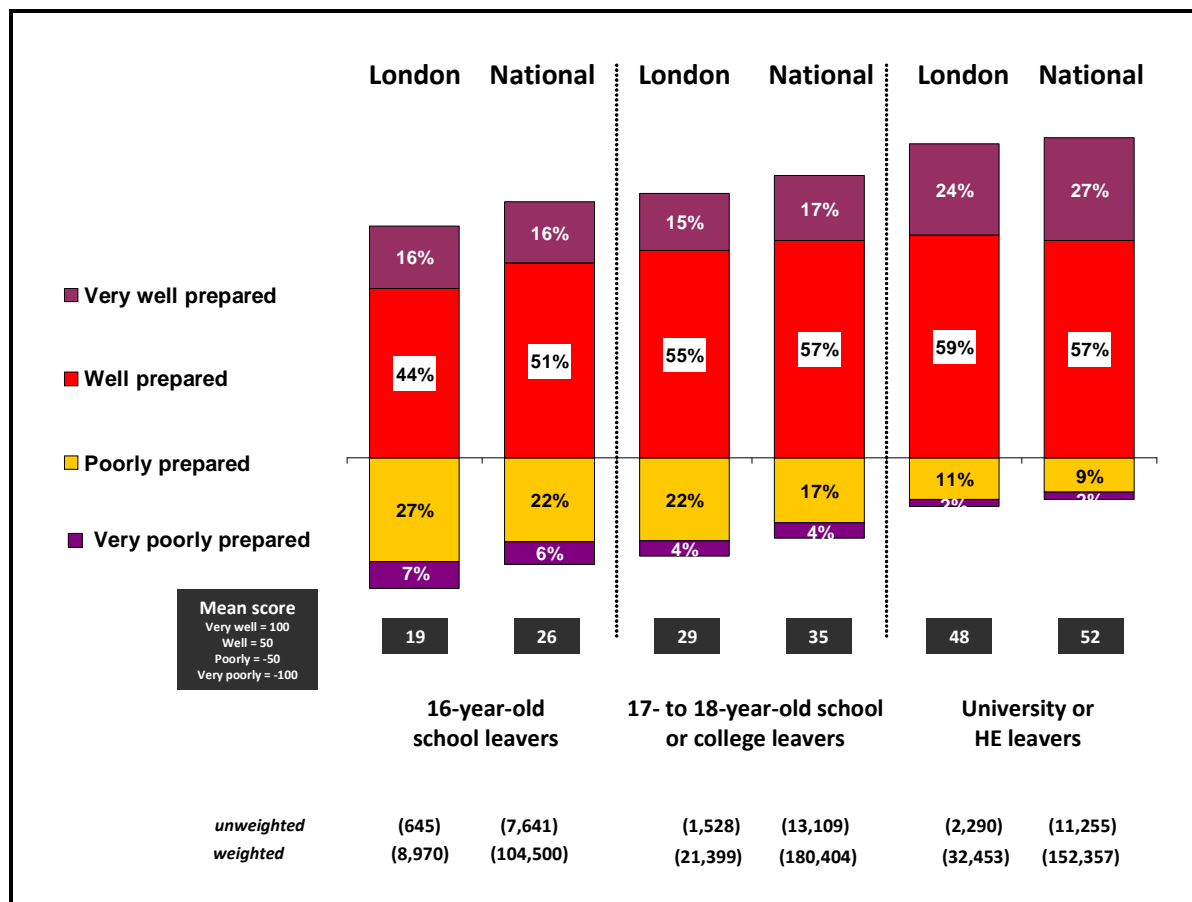
Source: NESS07 and NESS05

Base: All employers.

Employers who had taken on young recruits direct from education were asked whether they considered recruits to be very well prepared, well prepared, poorly prepared or very poorly prepared for work. Results are presented in Figure 3 for 2005 and 2007. Mean scores are also shown (using a scale of 100 for 'very well prepared', 50 for 'well prepared', -50 for 'poorly prepared' and -100 for 'very poorly prepared').

While the majority of London employers that had taken on young people thought them well prepared, in the case of 16-year-old school leavers a third thought them poorly prepared. London employers rate all three groups of leavers from education less positively than found England-wide.

Figure 3: Work-readiness of 16- to 24-year-old leavers from education



Base: All employers that have recruited each type of 16- to 24-year-old leaver from education in the previous 12 months.

Different skills and types of skills were reported to be lacking for the different groups.

- The skills that were more commonly reported as lacking in young recruits from higher education were technical, practical or job-specific (mentioned by 31 per cent of employers experiencing poorly prepared graduate recruits), followed by a lack of experience of the working world (18 per cent), poor oral communication skills (16 per cent) and poor customer service skills (14 per cent).
- A lack of oral communication skills and/or customer service skills are two of the most commonly cited problems across all three groups; the former was mentioned by 16 to 21 per cent, and the latter by 12 to 15 per cent of employers reporting that recruits within each group had been poorly prepared for work.
- Responses relating to poor motivation, commitment and/or attitude, including an unwillingness to work long hours, are commonly reported by employers experiencing poorly prepared 16- and 17- or 18-year-old leavers from education.

For the first time, NESS07 contained a series of questions relating to employers' use of Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships (referred to collectively as 'Apprenticeships' throughout this section). Employers were asked to focus specifically on Apprenticeships for which they or a training provider working on their behalf had received government funding. NESS07 explored the use of Apprenticeships within the workforce as a whole and the number of young people recruited to start Apprenticeships.

Table 9: Recruitment of Apprenticeships.

<i>Unweighted base (employers)</i>	12,077	79,018
	LONDON	ENGLAND
% of establishments offering Apprenticeships	9%	14%
Had staff undertake an Apprenticeship in the last 12 months	5%	8%
Recruited any Apprentices aged 16-24 in the last 12 months	4%	6%
Recruited any Apprentices aged 16-18 in the last 12 months	2%	5%
Number of Apprentices aged 16-24 recruited per 1,000 employees	5	9
Number of Apprentices aged 16-18 recruited per 1,000 employees	2	5

Source: NESS07 and NESS05

Base: All employers.

Overall, 9 per cent of London employers offer Apprenticeships, though only 5 per cent had actually had any staff undertaking an Apprenticeship at any point in the last 12 months. In total 4 per cent of employers had recruited at least one 16- to 24-year-old to start an Apprenticeship in the last 12 months and 2 per cent had recruited at least one 16- to 18-year-old to an Apprenticeship. Engagement of London employers with Apprenticeships on any of these measures is lower than for any region.

The same is true for the number of Apprentices taken on as a proportion of the workforce. The number recruited aged 16 to 24 by London employers is equivalent to five per 1,000 people in the workforce, whereas the England average is nine.

Training activity and expenditure

In total two-thirds of employers (67 per cent) had provided any training or development for their staff in the previous 12 months. This matches the England-wide figure. The proportion of London establishments providing training has risen with each NESS survey, from a base of 55% in 2003.

Employers provided training for around 2.6m million staff in the 12 months prior to NESS07; this is equivalent to 67 per cent of all staff receiving training. This is much higher than found in previous years in London, and is higher than found nationally in 2007 (63 per cent).

Table 10 summarises overall findings from NESS07 and provides comparison with previous employer surveys.

Table 10: Training and workforce development activity and planning

	2003	2004	2005	2007	2007
	LONDON				ENGLAND
Establishments training staff in the last 12 months	55%	58%	62%	67%	67%
% providing off-the-job training in the last 12 months	n/a	40%	38%	47%	46%
% providing on-the-job training in the last 12 months	n/a	47%	50%	55%	54%
% of those training using an FE college in the last 12 months	20%	n/a	21%	19%	26%
Establishments with a training plan	37%	42%	45%	46%	48%
Establishments with a budget for training	30%	33%	35%	37%	35%
Proportion of employees receiving training	52%	62%	58%	67%	63%

The larger the establishments the more likely they are to provide training. Larger establishments also provide training for a greater proportion of their workforce. In establishments with 25 or more staff over seven in ten workers had received training in the 12 months prior to NESS07, varying little above this size of establishment as staff numbers increase. In establishments with between 5 and 24 staff 62 per cent of staff had received training. This falls to just 47 per cent in establishments with between 2 and 4 staff.

Training planning and budgeting

The proportion of establishments with a training plan and the proportion with a specific training budget have all increased slightly since 2005, and 46 per cent of employers report having a training plan and 37 per cent a training budget. The former is below the national average, the latter below it (each by 2 percentage points).

Just over three-quarters of London employers provide formal written job descriptions for at least some of their staff (78 per cent), no change from 2005, though the proportion of staff covered by formal job descriptions has increased slightly. Formally assessing whether staff have gaps in their skills has also not changed (56 per cent in both 2005 and 2007).

The nature and extent of training provision

Overall 10 per cent of employers providing off-the-job training and 8 per cent providing on-the-job training had only arranged health and safety or induction training for their staff, suggesting that most employers are providing training with skill development in mind rather than simply inducting new staff or meeting health and safety requirements.

Employers in London that train are the least likely of any region to train to qualifications or specifically NVQs. For example only 18 per cent of London employers that train had had any staff undertake an NVQ in the last 12 months compared with 27 per cent nationally. In total the number of staff trained to an NVQ in the last 12 months is equivalent to 3 per cent of the workforce in London. This is half the level across England as a whole (6 per cent).

The full report for London looks at the occupational pattern of training provision, and the extent to which different occupational groups are more or less likely to be trained both off- and on-the-job.

Table 11 summarises results on the volume of training in terms of total training days, and what this is equivalent to first in terms of days training for each worker in the region and then for each person trained.

Table 11: Training days per annum (overall and per capita)

	London 2005	London 2007	England 2007
Total training days (millions)	30.3m	38.0m	218m
Training days per employee	8	10	10
Training days per person trained	14	15	16

Overall, London employers funded or arranged a total of 38 million days of training in the 12 months prior to NESS07. This is the equivalent of every worker in London each receiving 10 days training over the course of the year, and every person trained receiving 15 days of training. Each of these figures has increased by a day on 2005, and the intensity of training in London in days per employee and trainee is very close to the England average.

Use of training providers and Train to Gain

Around a fifth of those providing training in the last 12 months used an FE college (19 per cent), equivalent to 13 per cent of all employers. This is lower than in any other region - nationally 17 per cent of all employers had used an FE college in the previous 12 months. Findings on the use of FE match those of 2005, then too 13 per cent of all London employers had used an FE college in the last 12 months and then too engagement with FE was far lower in London than in any other region.

The great majority of those using FE colleges were very satisfied (42 per cent) or satisfied (40 per cent) with this provision – 6 per cent were dissatisfied (the remainder were neither one nor the other or it was too early to say). Results here are very similar to the England average.

Also new to NESS07 were measures of awareness and involvement with the recently established Train to Gain service, which rolled out nationally in the second half of 2006 (the survey fieldwork took place in the summer of 2007). Awareness (23 per cent) and involvement (3 per cent) among London employers was below the national average (28 per cent and 3 per cent respectively), indeed it was lower for both measures than any other region.

Employer expenditure on training

In addition to the main NESS07 survey, a follow up survey to measure employer training expenditure was conducted among employers who reported during the main interview that they had funded or arranged training in the previous 12 months. This repeated an exercise first conducted as part of NESS05.

In 2005 total training expenditure among London employers in the previous 12 months, including labour costs, was £5.8bn. In 2007 total training expenditure (including labour costs) over the last 12 months had risen to £8.1bn. This represents an increase of 39 per cent on 2005 figure. This is equivalent to 32 per cent in real terms¹, more than the real increase across England as a whole (10 per cent).

The total training costs and the individual components from which these totals are calculated are shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Total training costs and training cost components

	NESS 07			
	London		National	
Total	£8.1bn		£38.6bn	
		%		%

¹ Inflation is calculated using the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) for August 2005 to August 2007. The total compound inflation over this period is 5.3 per cent.

Off-the-job training: course-related	3.2bn	40	£16.0bn	41
Off-the-job training: other (seminars, workshops etc.)	£0.5bn	7	£2.4bn	6
On-the-job training	£4.3bn	53	£20.3bn	53

A slight majority of expenditure is due to the costs of providing on-the-job training (53 per cent of the total). This is exactly the proportion found across England-wide.

Total employer expenditure on training is equivalent to:

- £2,075 per employee (higher than the England-wide average of approximately £1,750), indeed the figure was higher than any other region (the North East was the next highest at £2,000).
- £3,100 per person trained. This is again higher than the England average (£2,775), and second only to the North West (where the average spend per trainee is £3,225).

Reasons for not providing training

By far and away the most common reason employers give for not having provided training in the last 12 months is the belief that their workforce are fully proficient already (62 per cent). The next most common responses - that staff learn by experience (7 per cent) and that training is not needed due to the establishments' small size (4 per cent) - are similarly making a claim that training is not necessary in their organisation. In contrast, relatively few employers cite issues relating to problems of training supply, such as the courses employers want not being available locally (3 per cent) or external courses being too expensive (4 per cent).

Government support for training

Employers were asked to give their opinions first on the *importance* of six areas in which government might provide support to employers in developing their workforce, and then their rating of the government's performance in giving this support. Each was rated out of 10, importance from 'not at all important' to 'essential' and performance from 'extremely badly' to 'excellent'. Factors are ranked in order of importance for employers in London (the order would be the same for employers across England as a whole).

Table 13: Importance and rating of government support (mean scores 1-10)

	NESS 07			
	London		National	
	Importance	Rating	Importance	Rating
Young people leaving compulsory education who are well prepared for work	8.1	4.5	7.9	4.5
Providing funding for training your employees	6.8	4.0	7.0	4.1
A national system of vocational qualifications to accredit achievement in training	6.7	4.7	6.6	4.7
Help in understanding and meeting your training needs	6.3	4.0	6.5	4.1
Good quality training provision through FE colleges for your existing workforce	6.1	4.4	6.2	4.4
Good quality training provision through universities for your existing workforce	5.7	4.4	5.3	4.2

Employers in London consider providing young people leaving compulsory education who are well prepared for work to be the most important of the areas discussed, with a mean importance rating of 8.1, markedly higher than that for any other area. Providing funding for training employees (a mean importance of 6.8 out of 10) is considered the second most important of the six. London employers rate the six factors in the same order of importance as employers nationally, though they attach greater emphasis relatively speaking on training for their workforce available through universities.

Government performance was rated most highly with regard to the provision of a national system of vocational qualifications to accredit achievement in training (a mean rating still at only 4.7). Provision of funding for training employees and of help understanding and meeting training needs were considered the government's weakest areas (means of 4.0 respectively). Ratings of government performance in London are very similar to those of employers in general, and the order in which the six factors are rated is the same England-wide as in London.

Annex A: Sector Definitions

Sector analysis of NESS07 defines sectors in a manner consistent with sector skills council (SSC) definitions of the sectors they cover. The SSCs are listed in the following table together with a description of the sector. Estimates for April 2007 suggest that nationally 89% of the workforce were covered by an SSC. A process of sector integration is taking place in the Skills for Business network which will take the network's coverage of the UK workforce to an estimated 95 per cent. The category 'Non-SSC employers' represents those SICs not allocated to an SSC at the time of the study.

SSCs are ordered in the table below according to where the 'core' of the industry which the SSC represents falls, running through from primary, manufacturing to service sectors.

Table A.1: Sector skills council names and description.

SSC Name	Description
Lantra	Environmental and land-based industries
Cogent	Chemicals, nuclear, oil and gas, petroleum and polymer industries
Proskills UK	Process and manufacturing of extractives, coatings, refractories, building products, paper and print
Improve Ltd	Food and drink manufacturing and processing
Skillfast-UK	Apparel, footwear and textile industry
Semta	Science, engineering and manufacturing technologies
EU-skills	Electricity, gas, waste management and water industries
ConstructionSkills	Development and maintenance of the built environment
SummitSkills	Building services engineering (electro-technical, heating, ventilating, air conditioning, refrigeration and plumbing)
Automotive Skills	Retail motor industry
Skillsmart Retail	Retail industry
People 1st	Hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism
GoSkills	Passenger transport
Skills for Logistics	Freight logistics industry
Financial Services Skills Council	Financial services industry

SSC Name	Description
Asset Skills	Property, housing, cleaning and facilities management
e-skills UK	IT, telecoms and contact centres
Government Skills	Central government
Skills for Justice	Custodial care, community justice and police
Lifelong Learning UK	Community-based learning and development, further education, higher education, library and information services, work-based learning
Skills for Health	NHS, independent and voluntary health organisations
Skills for Care and Development	Social care including children, families and young children
Skillset	Broadcast, film, video, interactive media and photo imaging
Creative & Cultural Skills	Arts, museums and galleries, heritage, crafts and design
SkillsActive	Sport and Recreation, health and fitness, playwork, the outdoors and caravans.
Non-SSC employers	All sectors not covered by an SSC at this point in time, spread across manufacturing and service sectors.

Annex B: Descriptions of occupational categories

<p>Managers: This covers occupations where the main tasks consist of direction and co-ordination of organisations and businesses, including internal departments / sections. It excludes supervisors. For the police it covers inspectors and above.</p>
<p>Professionals: Professional occupations will almost always require a degree or equivalent formal qualification. It includes high-level occupations in the natural, life and social sciences, engineering, humanities and related fields where job-holders will either be practically applying extensive theoretical knowledge; increasing the stock of knowledge through research or communicating knowledge by teaching. Examples include: professional engineers, software and IT professionals, accountants, chemists and scientific researchers, solicitors and lawyers, economists, architects, actuaries, doctors, psychologists, teachers, social workers, librarians.</p>
<p>Associate professional and technical occupations: They will usually require an associated high level vocational qualification, often involving substantial period of full time training or further study. Main tasks require experience and knowledge to assist in <i>supporting</i> professionals or managers. Examples include: science and engineering, lab, IT and accounting technicians, insurance underwriters, finance and investment analysts and advisers, writers/journalists, buyers, sales reps, estate agents, train drivers/pilots, graphic designers, fitness instructors, nurses, junior police/fire/prison officers, therapists, paramedics, community workers, careers advisors, health and safety officers, housing officers.</p>
<p>Administrative and secretarial occupations: They undertake general admin, clerical, secretarial work and perform a variety of specialist client-orientated clerical duties. Examples include: secretaries, receptionists & PAs, telephonists, book-keepers, credit controllers/wage clerks, assistants / clerks, market research interviewers, pension and insurance clerks, civil service executive officers.</p>
<p>Skilled trades occupations: They require a substantial period of training. Main tasks involve the performance of complex physical duties that normally involve initiative, manual dexterity and other practical skills. Examples include farmers, electricians, motor mechanics, machine setters/tool makers, TV engineers, plumbers, carpenters, plasterers, printers, chefs, butchers, furniture makers.</p>
<p>Personal service occupations: These involve the provision of service to customers whether in a public protective or personal care capacity. Main tasks usually involve the care of the sick, elderly and children and the provision travel care and hygiene services. These job-roles generally require a good standard of general education. Examples include: care assistants, nursery nurses, childminders, travel agents, sport / leisure assistants, hairdressers and beauticians, ambulance staff, pest control officers, dental/ veterinary nurses, and caretakers.</p>
<p>Sales and customer service occupations: These require knowledge and experience necessary to sell goods and services, accept payment and replenish stocks, provide information to potential clients and additional services to customers after the point of sale. Examples include sales assistants and retail cashiers, telesales, call centre agents, customer care occupations</p>
<p>Process, plant and machine operatives: They require knowledge and experience to operate vehicles and other machinery, and monitor industrial and plant equipment, or to assemble products. Most will not have a particular standard of education but will usually have formal experience related training. It includes plant and machine operators plus routine operatives (sorters, assemblers) and HGV, van, fork lift, bus, taxi drivers (train drivers are not included)</p>
<p>Elementary occupations: Perform mostly routine tasks usually involving use of simple hand held tools and in some cases physical effort. Most do not require formal educational qualifications. Examples include labourers, packers, goods handling and storage staff, security guards, cleaners, bar staff, shelf fillers, kitchen/catering assistants, waitresses, postal workers.</p>

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