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What's achievement got to do with it?

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to adults

August 2008

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Prepared for the Learning and Skills Council
by IFF Research

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Tracking London's Learners: What's achievement got to do with it?

Research report prepared for Learning and Skills Council (LSC)
London Region by IFF Research Ltd
May 2008

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents key findings from a study involving 2,400 telephone interviews with learners aged 19-50 who were due to complete a Level 2 or Level 3 course at a London Further Education (FE) college in 2007. Fieldwork took place in February and March 2008.
- 1.2 The LSC London region undertook a number of Learner Tracker studies in 2007 assessing the impact of Level 2, Level 3 and Skills for Life learning. The research investigated the impact of FE study on self-confidence, basic skills, employability and career progression.
- 1.3 Following on from this work, the LSC wished to investigate further some of the issues explored in the initial study, looking particularly (among adult Level 2 and Level 3 learners) whether achieving a qualification 'makes a difference'. The research presented in this report looks at differences between learners who:
- completed their course and achieved their qualification aim ('**Achievers**', 1,593 interviews conducted, making up 65 per cent of the weighted sample);
 - completed their course but did not achieve their qualification aim ('**Non-achievers**', 199 interviews conducted, making up 9 per cent of the weighted sample);
 - dropped out of their course without completing ('**Early Leavers**', 608 interviews conducted, making up 26 per cent of the weighted sample).
- 1.4 Note that for simplicity, the short-hand abbreviations for these groups (in brackets above) have been used throughout this report.
- 1.5 The specific objectives of the research were to investigate whether achievement (and/or completion) makes a difference to employment status, employment prospects, career development, or progression into higher learning. Other areas covered include the motivations of learners for taking the course, and their attitudes to learning. The findings highlight the role of FE in raising employability, tackling unemployment, and increasing progression into Higher Education.
- 1.6 The report is structured with each chapter examining a key research issue identified by the LSC, as follows:

- What effect does achievement have on the benefits derived from FE?
- What are the effects of achievement in FE on the employability of learners?
- What's achievement got to do with undertaking further learning and training?
- How does prior educational attainment affect learning outcomes in FE?
- What are the effects of achieving an FE qualification for the unemployed?
- What is the impact of FE learning for those who leave their course early or who do not achieve a qualification?
- What are the demographic differences between learners who achieve a full qualification in FE and those who do not achieve or do not complete?
- What are the effects of FE for learners who first hear about their course through their employer?
- What are the effects of achieving an FE qualification in helping the self-employed and boosting entrepreneurship?
- How do learner motivations for FE study affect learning outcomes?
- Learner views on the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

- 1.7 In addition to this report of findings, a separate technical report has been produced for the LSC.
- 1.8 The survey data presented in this report has been weighted to ensure that it is representative by age, gender and level of all learners completing or withdrawing from a Full Level 2 or Level 3 qualification in 2007 at London FE colleges.

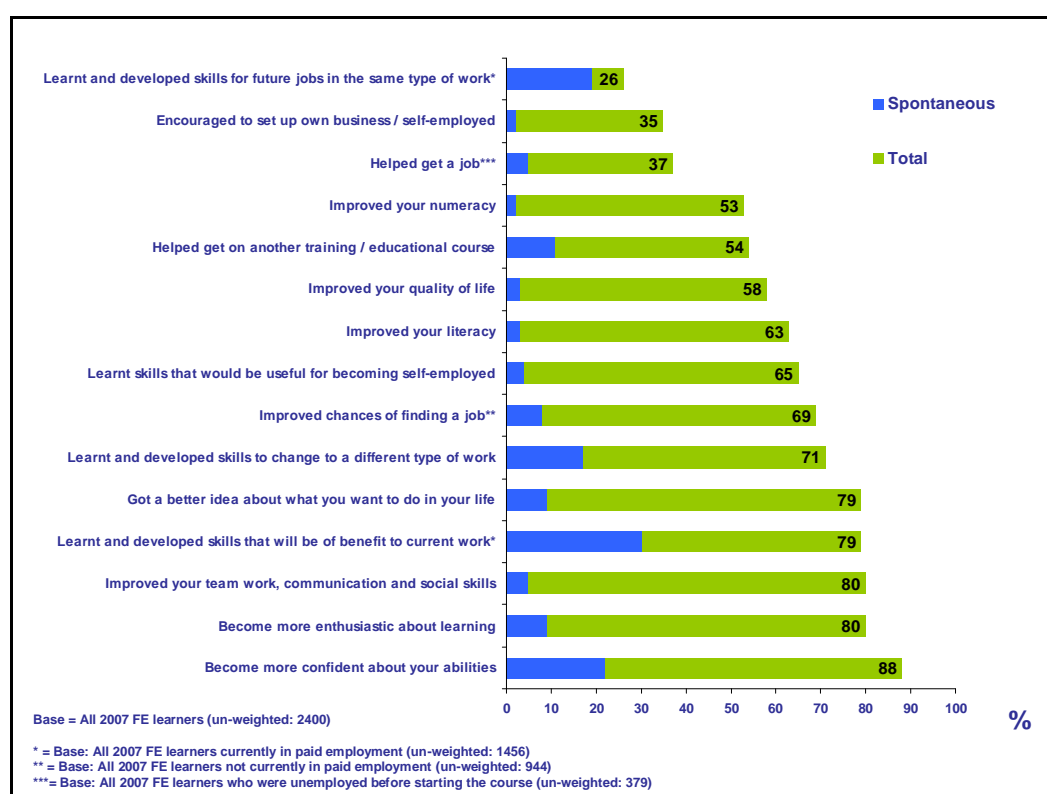
2 What effect does achievement have on the benefits derived from FE?

- Nine in ten learners have become more confident about their abilities as a result of taking a course of FE study (88 per cent).
- Over half of learners report that the FE study has improved their numeracy (53 per cent) and / or literacy skills (63 per cent).
- Achievers are more likely to find employment after the course or progress into further learning than Early Leavers.

Benefits of FE study

- 2.1 The most commonly (spontaneously) reported benefit amongst FE learners is an increase in the learner's general confidence in their abilities (22 per cent). Amongst learners currently in employment, frequently reported benefits include having gained skills that will be of benefit to their current work (23 per cent) or skills relevant for future jobs in the same type of work as their current job (20 per cent).

Figure 2.1 – Reported benefits of FE study – spontaneous and total in agreement



Note: Respondents could report more than one benefit of study, meaning that the data presented here sums to over 100 per cent.

- 2.2 When prompted with different factors, learners were most likely to agree that they have become more confident (88 per cent agree), that they have become more

enthusiastic about learning (80 per cent agree) and that they have developed 'soft' core skills such as team work, communication and other general social skills (80 per cent agree). Figure 2.1 shows the benefits of FE study as reported by learners, both spontaneously, and then when prompted.

The effects of completion and achievement on the benefits gained by learners

- 2.3 There are substantial differences in the extent to which learners have experienced these benefits according to whether they completed their course, and whether they successfully achieved their full qualification aim. When prompted, Achievers were significantly more likely than those learners who left the course early to report a whole range of benefits (see Appendix A for full details).
- 2.4 Completing and achieving the qualification appears to make a particularly big difference to:
- The prospects of finding a job for those learners currently not in paid employment. Among Achievers not in paid employment 42 per cent feel their prospects of finding work in the future have *significantly* improved because of the course, and a further 41 per cent feel they have slightly more chance of finding work as a result of the course. Among Non-achievers not working only 20 per cent feel their chances of finding work have improved significantly because of the course, though overall 78 per cent feel their chances have improved at least slightly. Among Early Leavers not in paid employment, however, only 13 per cent feel the course had significantly improved their chances of finding work, and less than half (46 per cent) feel the course has helped their job prospects at all.
 - Helping the learner to get onto another training or educational course (63 per cent of Achievers think this has been a benefit of the FE study, compared to 32 per cent of Early Leavers). At the time of interview, over a third of Achievers were engaged with further study (37 per cent), compared to only 17 per cent of Early Leavers.
 - Almost two fifths (38 per cent) of previously unemployed Achievers have actually now found work or set up as self-employed, compared to 31 per cent of Early Leavers. Previously unemployed Achievers working as employees at the time of interview were much more likely to say the course was *vital* in helping them get their job (41 per cent) than Early Leavers (3 per cent), as shown in the following table.

Table 2.1: Role the course played in helping those previously unemployed who are now working as employees in getting their job

<i>Row %</i>	<i>Base</i>		Vital	Helped	Not a factor / unsure
Achievers	72	%	41	40	19
Early Leavers	46	%	3	30	67

Non-achievers have not been shown due to a low base size (9 respondents)

- 2.5 Achievement is particularly beneficial for those learners who were previously unemployed. Learners who were out of work before starting their FE study are much more likely to report that studying has been beneficial if they achieved the full qualification. **Amongst those unemployed before the course, Achievers are significantly more likely than Non-Achievers and Early Leavers to:**
- Report increased confidence in their abilities (Achievers: 95 per cent, Non-Achievers: 91 per cent, Early Leavers: 83 per cent), and to state that the course has led to them having a better idea of what to do with their life (AC: 90 per cent, NA: 86 per cent, EL: 74 per cent);
 - Say that the course has given them the skills required to enter a different field of work (Achievers: 82 per cent, Non-Achievers: 63 per cent, Early Leavers: 60 per cent).
 - Report improved literacy (Achievers: 72 per cent, Non-Achievers: 55 per cent, Early Leavers: 48 per cent), numeracy (Achievers: 67 per cent, Non-Achievers: 41 per cent, Early Leavers: 43 per cent) and team working and communication skills (Achievers: 88 per cent, Non-Achievers: 83 per cent, Early Leavers: 71 per cent).
- 2.6 Non-Achievers were more likely than Early Leavers to report that they have experienced benefits from undertaking the FE course (91 per cent and 74 per cent respectively).
- 2.7 Simply attending and completing the course, without achieving the full qualification, seems to bring the same benefits for learners in terms of gaining skills for developing or changing their career, in gaining confidence, and in gaining core skills including literacy, numeracy and team working. Non-Achievers are as likely as Achievers to say that they have become more enthusiastic about learning as a result of the course.

2.8 However, there are a number of benefits that learners are more likely to experience if they achieve the full Level 2 or Level 3 qualification, rather than merely completing the course. **Achievers are significantly more likely to report that:**

- The FE course has helped them access further learning or training;
- They have found a job or have improved chances of finding a job as a result of their study;
- They have developed skills that will be directly relevant and beneficial in their current job role.

2.9 **Where FE learners have continued in the same employment as they had before starting their course**, Achievers are much more likely to have experienced tangible benefits as a result of the course;

- Two in five Achievers (39 per cent) feel that they now have better job security as a result of the course (Non-Achievers, 17 per cent; Early Leavers 17 per cent).
- Three in ten Achievers (30 per cent) have gained an increase in their hourly pay rate as a result of the course (Non-Achievers, 15 per cent; Early Leavers 10 per cent);
- One fifth of Achievers (22 per cent) report that the course has helped them gain a promotion, compared to 6 per cent of Non-Achievers, and 10 per cent of Early Leavers;

2.10 **Among learners who have got a job at a new employer** following their course, two thirds (65 per cent) have moved into a higher level job role. Achievers who have changed employer are more likely than Early Leavers to have moved into a higher level job role (71 per cent and 54 per cent respectively). Two thirds of learners who have found a job with a new employer (68 per cent) are now on a higher rate of pay.

3 What are the effects of achievement in FE on the employability of learners?

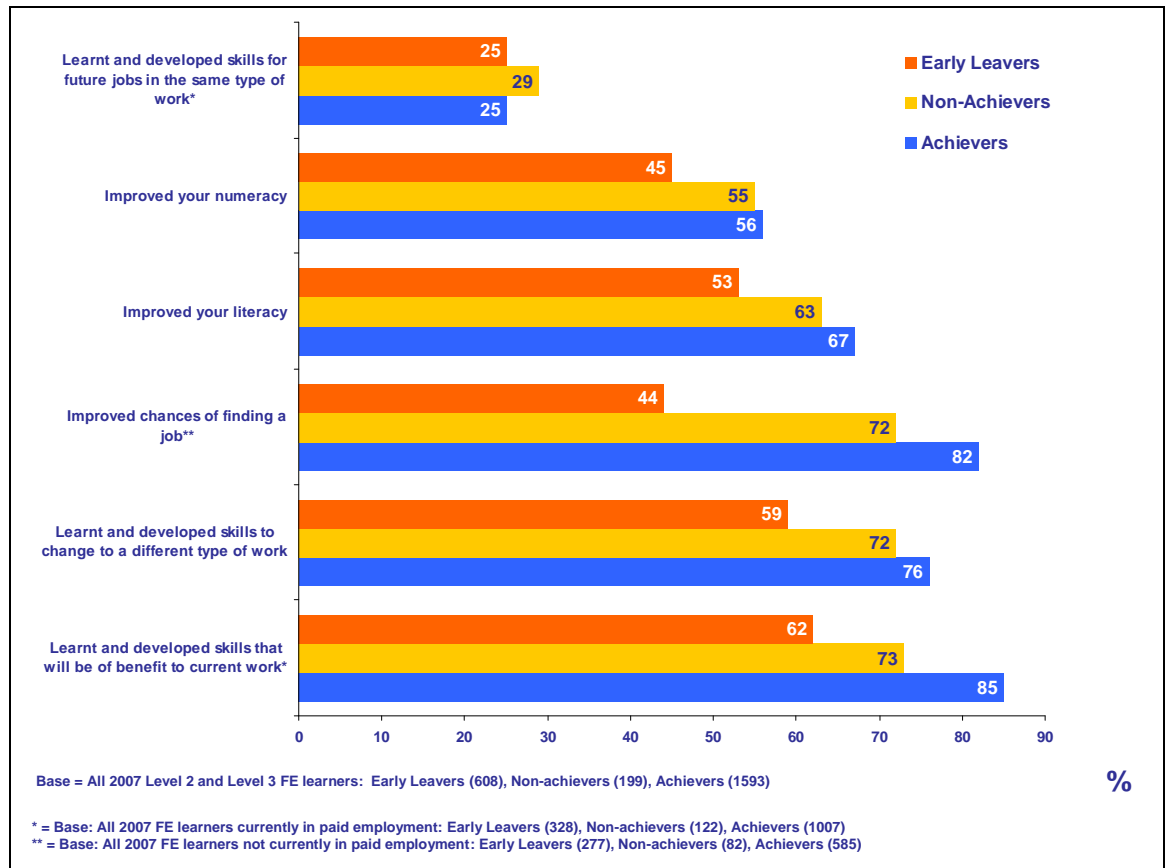
- Achievers are more likely to report that they have developed skills of benefit to their current work through FE (85 per cent of those currently in employment), compared to Non-Achievers (73 per cent) and Early Leavers (62 per cent).
- Achievers who are currently out of work are much more likely to say that FE study has improved their chances of finding a job (82 per cent, compared to 72 per cent of Non-Achievers, and 44 per cent of Early Leavers).
- Achievers are also more likely than Non-Achievers and Early Leavers to say that their numeracy and literacy skills have improved as a result of FE study.

3.1 Two complimentary approaches can be taken to assessing whether attending and / or completing a course of FE study at Level 2 or 3 can enhance an individual's employability. The first focuses on whether individuals have developed skills and knowledge useful for employers as a result of their course. The second approach looks at changes in employment status, for example the extent to which individuals have found employment after being unemployed, or have managed to progress within their career path, either by being promoted or moving on to a better role at another organisation.

Learner views on their own improved employability

- 3.2 The majority of learners feel that as a result of their FE course they have gained or developed skills that will help them in their working life.
- 3.3 This includes having developed skills that might allow the individual to change to a different type of work (cited as a benefit by 71 per cent of all learners). Among individuals currently in work, increased employability is evident through those learners saying that they have gained skills that will be of benefit in their current job role (79 per cent). Among individuals not in paid employment, well over two thirds (70 per cent) feel that their employment prospects have improved as a result of attending the FE course.
- 3.4 Early Leavers are significantly less likely than Non-Achievers and Achievers to report these improvements in their job related skills and employability. Figure 3.1 shows differences between Achievers, Non-Achievers and Early Leavers. Achievers are more likely to report that they have developed skills that will benefit them in their current work (85 per cent, compared to 73 per cent of Non-Achievers, and 62 per cent of Early Leavers), or that they developed skills which will allow them to change to a different type of work or career (76 per cent, compared to 72 per cent of Non-Achievers, and 59 per cent of Early Leavers).

Figure 3.1 – Reported benefits of FE study (prompted) by achievement status



Note: Respondents could report more than one benefit of study, meaning that the data presented for each group sums to over 100 per cent.

- 3.5 Achievers are also more likely to say that their numeracy and literacy skills have improved. Similarly, Achievers who are currently out of work are much more likely to say that a benefit of studying in FE has been that it has improved their chances of finding a job (82 per cent, compared to 72 per cent of Non-Achievers, and 44 per cent of Early Leavers).
- 3.6 These effects on employability for Achievers are similar to those seen for learners achieving Full Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in **2006**, as reported in the previous London Learner Tracker research.¹ Three quarters of learners who achieved a Full Level 2 or Full Level 3 qualification in 2006 (75 per cent) said that one of the benefits of the course was having developed skills to allow them to change to a different type of work, compared to 76 per cent of 2007 Achievers. However, there has been an increase on 2006 in number of learners who have gained skills relevant to their work, from 76 per cent of Achievers in work in 2006, to 85 per cent of the equivalent Achievers in 2007.

¹ 'Tracking London's Learners: an FE research report'. Prepared for the LSC by IFF Research, March 2007. This research focused on individuals completing a Full Level 2 or Full Level 3 qualification at one of six London FE Colleges in 2006.

Increases in the qualification level of the workforce

- 3.7 The individual's qualification level is an important factor in their overall employability. Just under half (45 per cent) of Level 2 Achievers and two thirds (66 per cent) of Level 3 Achievers gained their first qualification at those levels through their FE study. These FE courses have therefore raised the qualification level of these learners rather than just giving them different skills at the same level.

Changes in employment status

- 3.8 Improvements in the qualification level and in skills are reflected in the increased rates of employment and the extent of career progression following the FE learning:
- One third (34 per cent) of learners who were unemployed before starting the course are now employed either as an employee or on a self-employed basis. Just over half of these individuals (52 per cent) are working in jobs which are directly or broadly related to the course they completed; indicating the role played by their FE study.
 - Of those learners working for the same employer as before the course, 24 per cent have had a promotion (a clear indicator of improved employability) and most say either that this was definitely a result of the learning (42 per cent) or the course helped (38 per cent).
- 3.9 Full Level 2 or Level 3 Achievers are more likely to have experienced these beneficial changes in their employment situation, and are also more likely to attribute these positive outcomes to the effects of their FE study.
- 3.10 More details on the changes in employment status before and after the course of study can be found in Appendix B.

4 What's achievement got to do with undertaking further learning and training?

- There has been an overall increase in participation in learning and government-supported training following the engagement with FE (33 per cent of 2007 FE learners now in learning or training compared with 26 per cent before starting the course).
- Achievers are much more likely than Non-Achievers to be on a course at a higher level than their FE study (33 per cent of all Achievers compared to 14 per cent of Non-Achievers, and 6 per cent of Early Leavers)
- Three fifths of all 2007 Achievers who are currently engaged with further study are on a HE level course (equivalent to 22 per cent of all Achievers).

Participation in further study or training

- 4.1 A substantial proportion of learners have continued in learning following their FE course. At the overall level, one third of learners who started a Full Level 2 or 3 course in 2007 (33 per cent) are now engaged in further learning or training. This figure is higher for those whose course was at Level 3 (40 per cent), compared to learners who were studying at Level 2 (26 per cent).
- 4.2 There has been an overall increase in participation in learning and government-supported training. The 33 per cent of 2007 FE learners in learning or training at the time of interview compares with a figure of 26 per cent who were studying or engaged with training immediately before starting the FE course.
- 4.3 Amongst learners engaged in further formal study:
- Over three quarters (78 per cent) are studying on a higher level course (equivalent to 24 per cent of all learners)
 - Over half (56 per cent) are now studying in Higher Education (equivalent to 17 per cent of all learners).

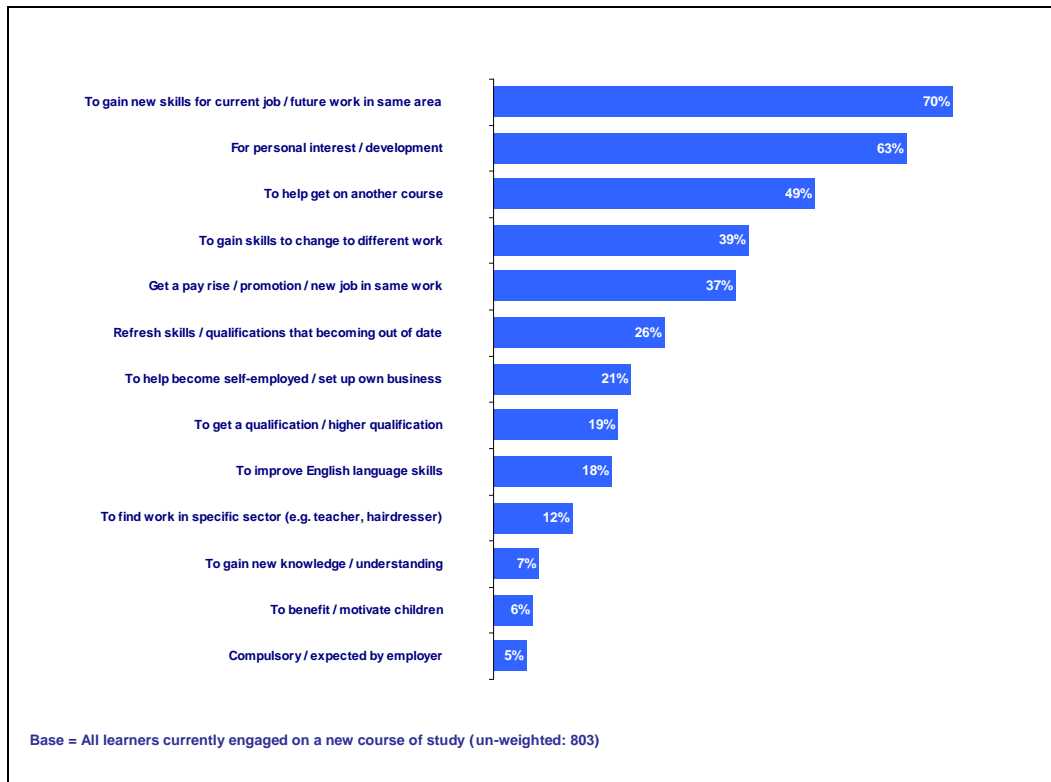
The effect of completion and achievement on progression to further study

- 4.4 Early Leavers are the least likely to have progressed into further learning or training. Just under one fifth of Early Leavers are currently studying on another course (18 per cent), compared to one quarter (25 per cent) of Non-Achievers, and close to two fifths (37 per cent) of Achievers.
- 4.5 In terms of the likelihood of learners progressing onto **higher level** courses, there are benefits associated with achieving the FE qualification rather than simply completing the course:
- Achievers are much more likely than Non-Achievers to be on a course at a higher level than their FE study (33 per cent of Achievers overall, compared to 14 per cent of Non-Achievers, and 6 per cent of Early Leavers). To some extent, this reflects the higher proportion of Achievers going onto **any** new course of study (37 per cent compared to 25 per cent of Non-Achievers and 18 per cent of Early Leavers), but even amongst those learners who *have* gone on to further study, Achievers are more likely to be studying at a higher level,
 - Achievers are significantly more likely to be currently working towards a qualification in Higher Education (22 per cent, compared to 13 per cent of Non-Achievers and 5 per cent of Early Leavers).
- 4.6 Three fifths (61 per cent) of all 2007 Achievers who are currently engaged with further study are on a HE level course.

Motivations for further study

- 4.7 FE learners have a wide range of motivations for pursuing further study, as illustrated in Figure 4.1 overleaf. The key reasons for undertaking further study were:
- To gain or develop skills in order to progress in the learner's current job or chosen career (a key motivation for 70 per cent of those currently studying).
 - For personal interest, development and enjoyment (cited as key for 63 per cent of learners). As might be expected, this is more of a motivation for those who are doing a lower level course than their FE study (71 per cent).
 - As a stepping-stone into more education and training (key for 49 per cent). Achievers are more likely to report this as a key reason for further study than Early Leavers (50 per cent v 40 per cent), suggesting that learners who fail to complete their initial FE qualification may be subsequently less interested or confident in pursuing further study opportunities.
- 4.8 One fifth of learners undertaking further study (18 per cent) reported that a key reason for doing so has been to improve their English language skills.

4.9 **Figure 4.1 – Key reasons for undertaking further study (prompted)**



Note: Respondents could report more than one reason for study, meaning that the data presented here sums to over 100 per cent.

Willingness to invest in lifelong learning

- 4.10 The majority of individuals say that undertaking their FE course has made them more enthusiastic about learning. Predictably, this is higher amongst Achievers (84 per cent) and Non-Achievers (81 per cent) than Early Leavers (70 per cent), although it is clear that the vast majority of Early Leavers have not had their enthusiasm for learning diminished.
- 4.11 Based on their experience of their FE course, more than two thirds of former learners (69 per cent) would be willing to pay for further learning and training. Those who failed to complete their FE course (i.e. Early Leavers) are no less willing to invest in training in the future.
- 4.12 Two thirds of learners (66 per cent) say that a system in which credit is awarded for small steps of learning would make them more likely to undertake further learning in the future. Early Leavers were particularly likely to see a modular award system as a good idea; over three quarters (77 per cent) said that this would encourage them to undertake further learning, compared with three fifths (61 per cent) of Achievers.

5 How does prior educational attainment affect learning outcomes in FE?

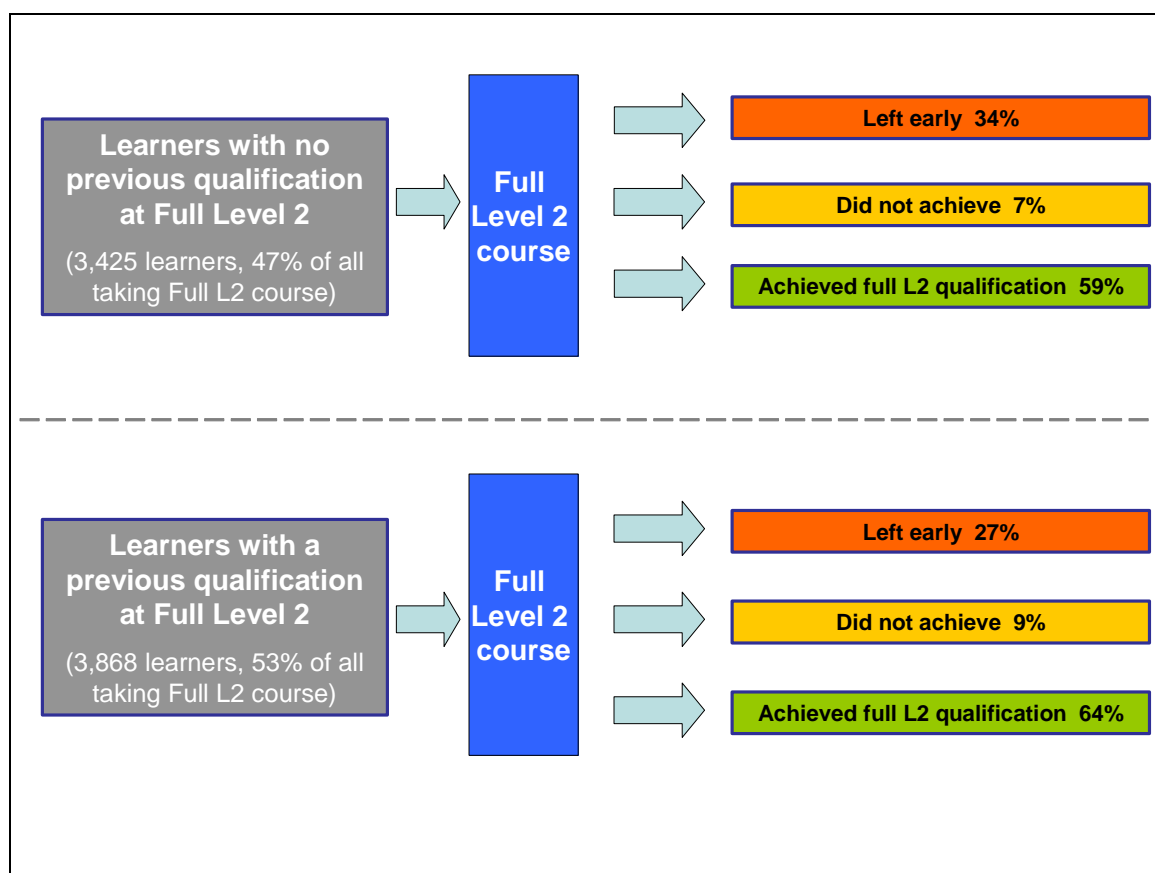
- 27 per cent of those who started a Full Level 2 course (equivalent to 45 per cent of Level 2 Achievers) successfully completed their first qualification at Full Level 2.
- 45 per cent of those who started a Full Level 3 course (equivalent to 66 per cent of Level 3 Achievers) went on to successfully complete their first qualification at Full Level 3.
- Learners who did not have a Full Level 2 qualification before completing their Level 2 or Level 3 course are particularly likely to report improvements in their literacy and team working skills.

- 5.1 In this section we look at the effects of prior educational achievement on the likelihood of succeeding in FE and the impact of the learning.
- 5.2 For many individuals in our cohort, the FE course represented their first experience of learning at NQF Full Level 2 or 3:
- One in ten learners (9 per cent) had no prior qualifications when embarking on their course.
 - Almost half (47 per cent) of those who started a Full Level 2 course had no prior qualifications at this level.
 - Two thirds (67 per cent) of learners starting a Full Level 3 course had not achieved a Level 3 qualification before, and one third (32 per cent) had not achieved a Full Level 2 qualification either.

Achievement rates for learners without prior attainment at Full Level 2 or Level 3

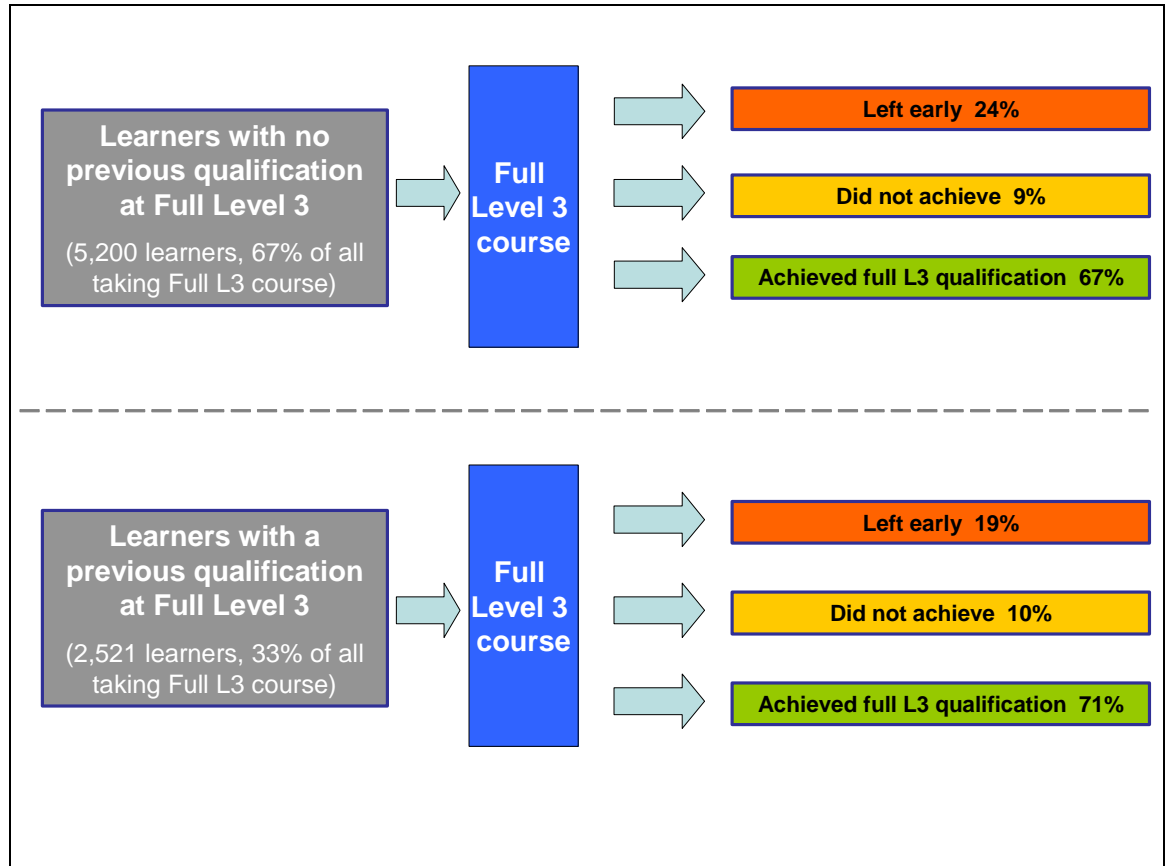
- 5.3 As the cohort includes some Early Leavers and Non-Achievers who came away from their course without achieving their original qualification aim, the proportion of learners who actually achieved their qualification at Level 2 and 3 is as follows:
- 27 per cent of those who **started** a Full Level 2 course went on to achieve their first qualification at Full Level 2. Among specifically Achievers, 45 per cent did not have a Full Level 2 qualification prior to the course.
 - 45 per cent of those who **started** a Full Level 3 course went on to achieve their first qualification at Full Level 3. Among specifically Achievers two thirds (66 per cent) did not have a Full Level 3 qualification prior to the course.

Figure 5.1 – Proportion of Level 2 learners with and without prior attainment at Full Level 2 completing and achieving their FE course



- 5.4 Individuals with no previous qualifications at Full Level 2 who undertake a Level 2 course are significantly more likely to leave their FE course early (34 per cent did so), in comparison to those who have already attained this level (27 per cent).
- 5.5 The same is true for those undertaking Level 3 courses, as shown in Figure 5.2, with those with no previous qualification at this level slightly more likely to leave early (24 per cent) than those with a previous Full Level 3 qualification (19 per cent).

Figure 5.2 – Proportion of Level 3 learners with and without prior attainment at Full Level 3 completing and achieving their FE course



Benefits of FE reported by learners without prior qualifications at Full Level 2

5.6 In this sub-section, we look at learners without a Full Level 2 qualification prior to their course, whether they are doing a Level 2 or Level 3 course. At the overall level, learners who did not have a Full Level 2 qualification before their course are as likely to report benefits in relation to enhanced soft skills, confidence, vocational skills and employment prospects as those with prior attainment at the course level. They are, however, **more** likely to feel that they have improved their literacy skills (66 per cent of all learners without prior Level 2 qualifications report this as a benefit, compared to 61 per cent of those who have already attained this standard before). Those learners without a prior Full Level 2 qualification who go on to successfully achieve their qualification are even more likely to report benefits in terms of literacy (67 per cent), and also in terms of their team work and communication skills (84 per cent).

- 5.7 Two thirds (64 per cent) of learners who did not have a Level 2 qualification before starting their course are now in work, a marginal increase of 2 per cent on the proportion of these individuals working before undertaking the course. Amongst those learners for whom the FE course represented their first study at Full Level 2 and who have stayed working for the same employer:
- 18 per cent say that the course led directly to them gaining a promotion or that the course helped them to achieve this, and 22 per cent say the course led directly or helped towards them gaining an hourly pay rise;
 - 32 per cent say that the FE course has led directly to improvements in their job security, or that doing the course contributed to some degree to these improvements.
- 5.8 For learners who did not have a Full Level 2 qualification before starting their course, and ***who have now found a new job with a different employer.***
- Two thirds (67 per cent) are now working in a higher job role;
 - Two thirds (67 per cent) are being paid more;
 - The most common change reported is increased job satisfaction, reported by 82 per cent of this group;
 - Overall, 95 per cent of those moving employer report some positive change in their employment situation. Among these learners 25 per cent credited at least one of these improvements directly to their course, and 64 per cent said the course at least helped them achieve these improvements.
- 5.9 ***For those unemployed pre the course*** (a base of 180 learners) 31 per cent are now working (full time, part time or on a self-employed basis); and 25 per cent are engaged in further study.
- 5.10 ***Among those currently looking for work*** (a base of 148 learners) 27 per cent feel they have significantly more chance of finding a job as a result of completing the course.

6 What are the effects of achieving an FE qualification for the unemployed?

- Learners who were unemployed immediately prior to the course are much more likely to leave their course early (43 per cent, compared to an average of 26 per cent).
- A third of previously unemployed individuals have now found work or set up on a self-employed basis.
- Among previously unemployed learners still seeking work after the course, 66 per cent feel that the course has improved their chance of finding employment.

6.1 One out of every seven London learners starting a Level 2 or Level 3 course in FE in 2007 was unemployed immediately before starting their course of study (14 per cent). Most of these were actively looking for work. A slight majority of the unemployed (53 per cent) had been out of work for more than a year; we refer to these individuals as being 'long term unemployed' in this section. This section examines the outcomes of FE for this unemployed group, and the overall impact that FE has in terms of improved skills and employability.

Achievement rates for previously unemployed learners

6.2 Learners who were unemployed before starting their course are much less likely to complete the course and achieve a qualification than the average FE learner overall. 43 per cent of previously unemployed learners left their FE course without completing it, compared to a rate of 26 per cent across all learners. Only half successfully achieved the full qualification (49 per cent), compared to two thirds of the whole 2007 cohort (65 per cent).

6.3 The achievement rate was slightly lower for those who were long-term unemployed at the start of their course, among whom 45 per cent passed the qualification they were aiming for.

The benefits of FE for previously unemployed learners

6.4 Despite the fact that many previously unemployed learners dropped out of their course early, the vast majority report significant benefits from their undertaking FE study. The vast majority say that they have become more confident about their abilities (89 per cent) and now have more idea about what they would like to achieve in life (83 per cent, 87 per cent among the long-term unemployed).

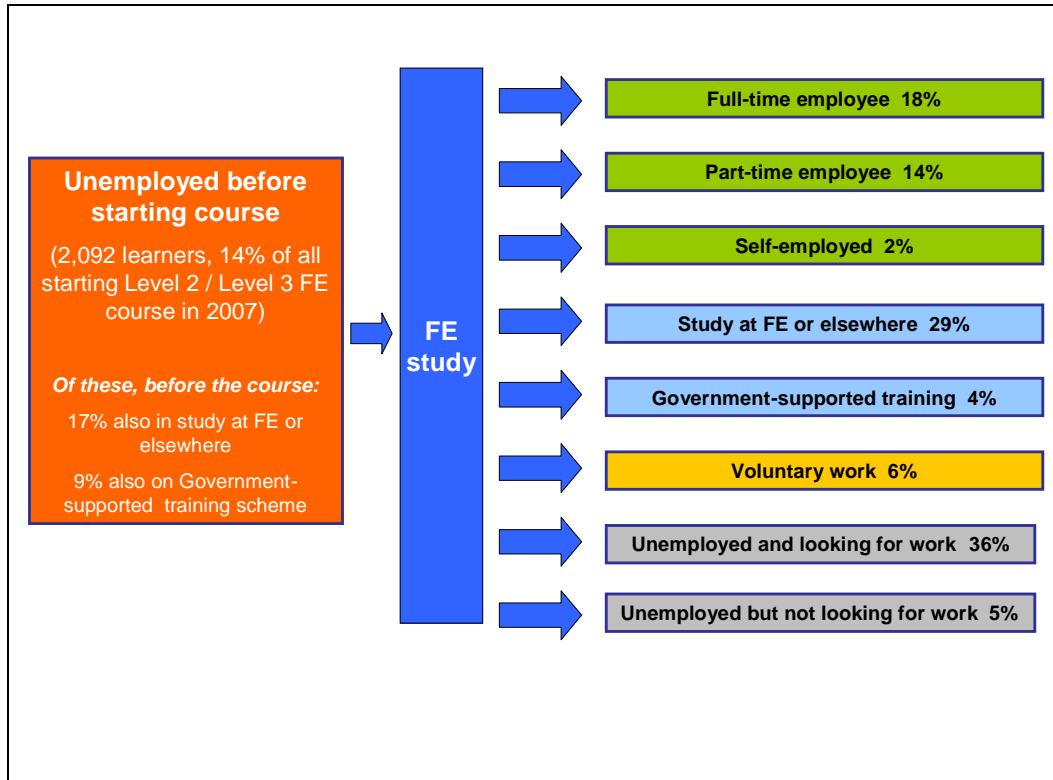
6.5 Attending an FE course has a substantial effect on the motivation of previously unemployed learners to continue in education and training. Four fifths (80 per cent) have become more enthusiastic about learning, and almost half (48 per cent) say that the original FE study improved their chances of getting onto another training course.

- 6.6 Three in ten (29 per cent) previously unemployed learners are currently engaged in further study, most of these on higher level courses, and around half in HE. A further 4 per cent have started on a government-supported training programme.
- 6.7 Most learners who were unemployed before the course feel that the FE course has given them skills that will allow them to enter a new area of work (71 per cent), and many report improvements in their basic literacy and numeracy skills (60 per cent and 55 per cent respectively).

Changes in employment status

- 6.8 Comparison of the employment situation of previously unemployed learners following the FE course shows numerous positive outcomes:
- 34 per cent of previously unemployed individuals have now found work or set up on a self-employed basis (32 per cent amongst the long-term unemployed).
 - One quarter of those who have found employment (25 per cent) say that the FE course was vital in enabling them to get their new job, with a further 35 per cent saying that it helped.
 - Most learners who have got into employment are working in permanent roles, in jobs that are related to their course, and that they see themselves working in in two year's time.
- 6.9 Two fifths of learners who were unemployed before taking the FE course (41 per cent) are still out of work (see Figure 6.1). Most of these learners are unemployed but looking for work. Those looking for work are generally active in the job market; 52 per cent have applied for jobs since finishing their course, and 13 per cent have started a job but subsequently left.
- 6.10 Those previously unemployed learners still seeking work after the course were asked directly whether they felt that undertaking the course had improved their chances of finding employment. Two thirds (66 per cent) feel that their chances of success in their search for employment have increased as a result of the FE learning, one quarter (27 per cent) significantly so.

Figure 6.1 – Changes in the status of previously unemployed learners as a result of Full Level 2 or Full Level 3 study in FE



Note: There is overlap between categories (e.g. learners may be unemployed and studying following the course) and therefore the figures do not sum to 100 per cent.

- 6.11 The main barriers to finding work among those still looking for work include a lack of qualifications that employers are looking for (24 per cent, reflecting the relatively low proportion of unemployed learners who achieved the qualification), a lack of experience in the specific sector or occupation that the person would like to move into (23 per cent), and difficulties in finding and affording appropriate childcare (8 per cent). A smaller number of learners still looking for work cited a shortage of jobs available as a barrier to employment (7 per cent).

7 What is the impact of FE learning for those who leave their course early or who do not achieve a qualification?

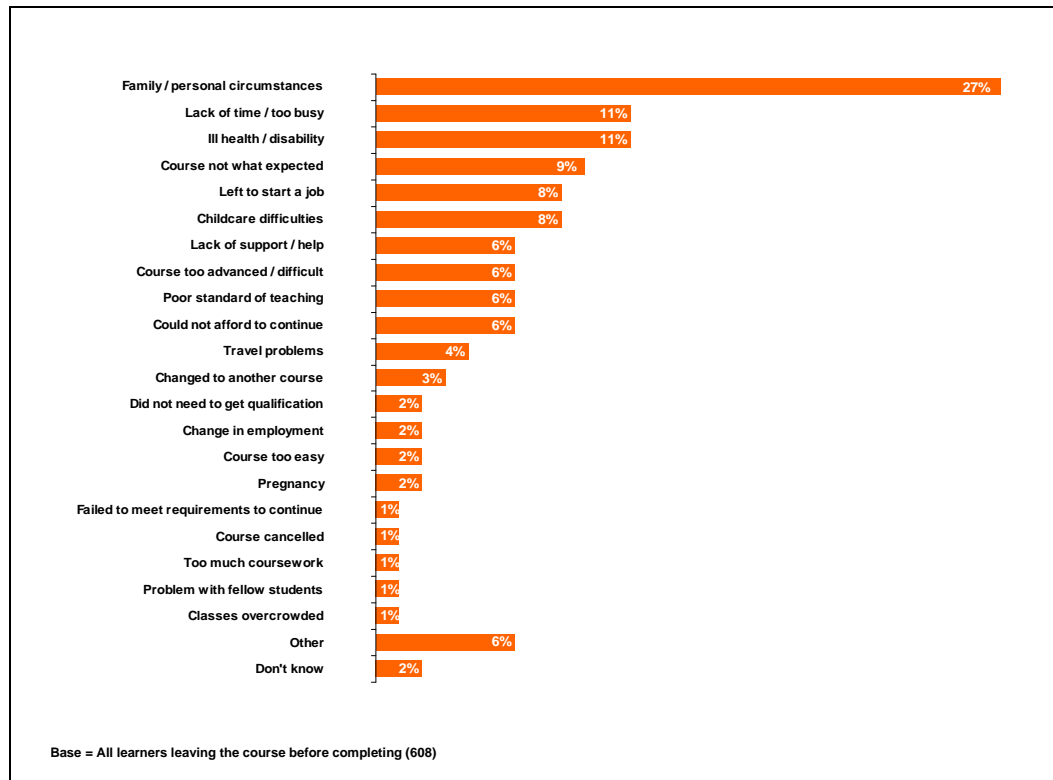
- The majority of learners who left their course early (74 per cent) feel that they would now be in a better situation had they completed the course and achieved the qualification.
- Early Leavers and Non-Achievers are less likely than Achievers to progress into further learning at a higher level.
- Amongst those Early Leavers who are currently unemployed and looking for work, one in seven (14 per cent) believe that they would now be in employment if they had stayed on the course.

7.1 One quarter of London learners starting a Level 2 or Level 3 course in FE in 2007 left their course early (26 per cent), and a further one in ten (9 per cent) completed their course but did not achieve their qualification aim. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Early Leavers and Non-Achievers are less likely to gain the full benefits of FE study compared to individuals who achieve a full Level 2 or Level 3 qualification. They are also at a marked disadvantage in terms of progressing into further learning at a higher level, and specifically, in terms of accessing Higher Education. This section explores in more depth the reasons for non-achievement, the outcomes for Early Leavers and Non-Achievers, and learner views on how their situation might now be different had they attained the qualification aim.

Reasons for leaving FE study without completing the course

- 7.2 Figure 7.1 shows the main reasons why Early Leavers left their course early. This reveals a wide mix of factors.
- 7.3 The most common factors that 'force' individuals to leave study are changes in their personal circumstances (27 per cent), a lack of time available to devote to learning (11 per cent), and the effects of ill health or a disability (11 per cent). Aspects of the course itself also play a part in putting people off completing the course; one in ten Early Leavers (9 per cent) said that they left because the course was not what they expected or were hoping for, 6 per cent because the work was too difficult, and the same proportion because they were unhappy with the standard of teaching. The first two of these reasons suggest that more could be done to inform learners about the nature of the study and the degree of commitment it will entail.
- 7.4 Other difficulties included not being able to afford to continue (6 per cent) and travel problems (4 per cent).
- 7.5 Clearly, not all the reasons have negative connotations; for instance, around one in ten Early Leavers left the course early to start a new job, or to change to a different course.

Figure 7.1 – Reasons for leaving the FE course before completing



Note: Respondents could report more than one reason for leaving their course early, meaning that the data presented here sums to over 100 per cent.

The outcomes of FE for Early Leavers

7.6 Compared to the situation prior to starting the course, there has been a net increase of three percentage points in the proportion of Early Leavers in employment or self-employment (compared to a 1 per cent increase among Achievers), and a fall in the unemployment rate (23 per cent unemployed prior to the course, compared to 18 per cent now). Fewer Early Leavers are now engaged with study or training compared to the situation before they embarked on their FE course in 2007 (19 per cent now compared to 25 per cent prior to the course).

7.7 The majority of Early Leavers (74 per cent) feel that they would now be in a better situation had they completed the course and achieved the qualification they were originally working towards. The main advantages that Early Leavers think they would have gained by achieving the qualification were:

- They would have been able to continue in education and training following completion (26 per cent);
- They would now have a better job, or improved job prospects (23 per cent);
- They would be able to be working in the specific industry or job role that they were training for e.g. as a hairdresser, nurse or teacher (17 per cent);

- They would have gained a useful formal qualification or would have been better qualified (15 per cent).

7.8 Amongst those Early Leavers who are currently unemployed and looking for work, one in seven (14 per cent) believe that they would now be in employment if they had finished the course and managed to achieve the qualification.

The outcomes of FE for Non-Achievers

7.9 There has been little change in the actual employment status of Non-Achievers following the course. There has been no overall increase in the proportion employed. However, there has been an increase in unemployment²; 17 per cent of Non-Achievers are currently unemployed and looking for work, compared to 11 per cent before the course.

7.10 Like the learners who left their course early, most Non-Achievers think that they would be in a better position if they had achieved the qualification. Only 3 per cent of Non-Achievers said that they had not been interested or concerned about gaining the formal qualification at the end of their course. These learners tended to feel that they did not need the qualification to succeed in their current role, that they had already gained the skills and knowledge they required from attending the course, or that they were only ever studying for personal interest.

7.11 Over three quarters of Non-Achievers feel that they would be more successful now had they gained the full qualification. The key opportunities that these learners feel that they have missed out on include:

- gaining a better job (31 per cent of all feeling that their situation would have been improved by achieving the qualification);
- being able to continue in education (25 per cent);
- and being better able to find employment (19 per cent).

² Note that 'unemployment' here includes those learners falling into the two survey categories 'Unemployed and looking for work' and 'Unemployed but not looking for work.' It does not include other individuals not in paid employment, such as those looking after their children or family.

8 What are the demographic differences between learners who achieve a qualification in FE and those who do not achieve or do not complete?

- Early leavers and Non-Achievers are slightly older than the Achievers cohort; 70 per cent are aged 25 or older, compared to 63 per cent of Achievers.
- Achievers are more likely to have been in employment prior to starting their course.
- Learners who were unemployed immediately prior to embarking on their FE study are much more likely to end up leaving the course early (42 per cent do so, compared to 26 per cent of learners overall).

8.1 In this section, we highlight the differences between the three key groups of learners who are compared throughout this report:

- **Early Leavers** - Learners who left their course early without completing;
- **Non-Achievers** - Learners who completed their course but did not attain their qualification aim;
- **Achievers** - Learners who completed their course and attained the qualification aim.

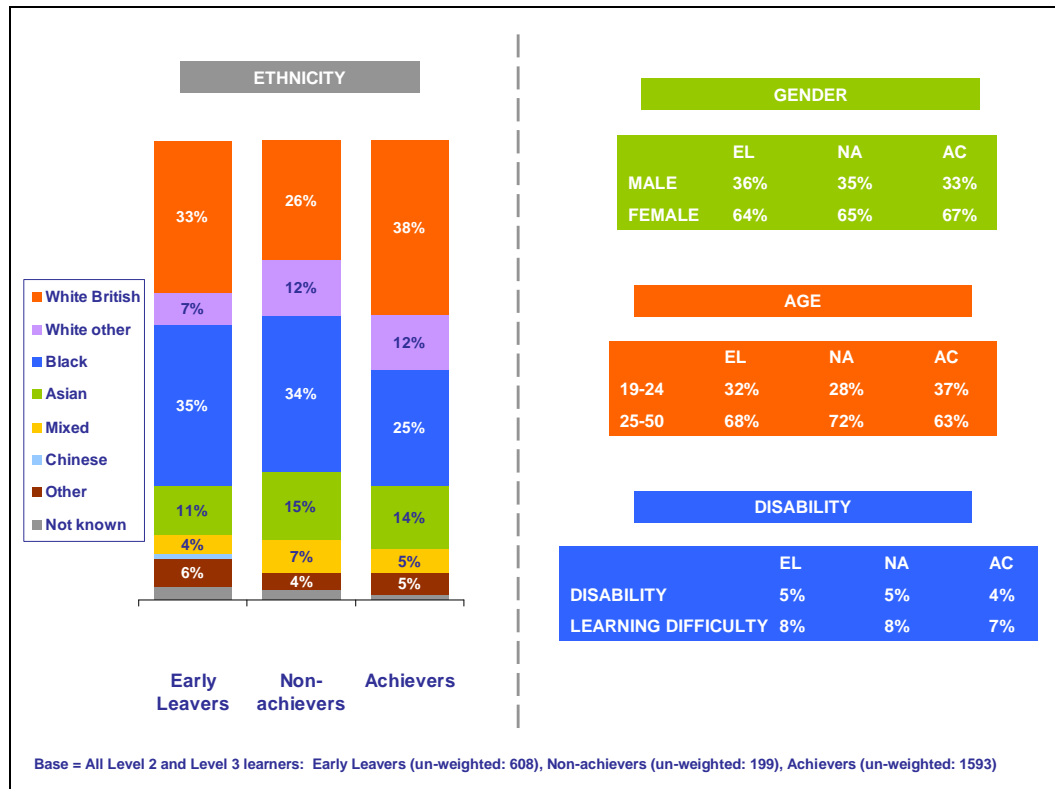
8.2 **Ethnicity** - As shown in Figure 8.1, the Early Leaver cohort includes a higher proportion of Black and Black British learners (35 per cent) than the Achievers cohort (25 per cent). The Achievers cohort includes a higher proportion of White British learners (38 per cent) compared to the Early Leavers and Non-Achievers groups (33 per cent and 26 per cent respectively).

8.3 **Age** - Early leavers and Non-Achievers are slightly older than the Achievers cohort; 70 per cent across the two former groups are aged 25 or over, compared to 63 per cent of Achievers.

8.4 **Gender** - There are no significant gender differences between the groups.

8.5 **Residence** - There are a greater proportion of learners who are resident in London East amongst the Achiever cohort who successfully completed an FE qualification in 2007 (they account for 29 per cent of Achievers compared to 23 per cent of Early Leavers / Non-Achievers).

Figure 8.1 – Demographic profile of adult FE learners – by achievement status



- 8.6 **Employment profile** - Achievers are more likely to have been in paid employment prior to starting their course (69 per cent) compared to Non-Achievers (64 per cent) and Early Leavers (55 per cent). Conversely, those learners leaving the course early were the most likely to have been unemployed before embarking on the FE study; over one fifth (22 per cent) of Early Leavers were out of work immediately prior to starting their course, compared to only one in ten (10 per cent) of those learners who went on to successfully achieve a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification. Furthermore, Early Leavers are more likely to have been long term unemployed (that is, out of work for 12 months or more) prior to their course than Achievers (13 per cent of early leavers, compared to 5 per cent of Achievers).
- 8.7 Learners studying for a Full Level 2 qualification are more likely to end up leaving the course early (30 per cent) than those aiming for a Level 3 qualification (23 per cent). Where Level 2 learners do go on to complete the course, however, they are just as likely to successfully gain the qualification they were aiming for as Level 3 learners. Learners studying for their *first* qualification at Level 2 are more likely to leave their course early (34 per cent) compared to those with prior attainment at Level 2 who undertake a Level 2 course (27 per cent).

9 What are the effects of FE for learners who first hear about their course through their employer?

- One fifth (20 per cent) of all FE learners first heard about the opportunity to do their course through their employer.
- These learners are significantly more likely to have achieved the qualification (80 per cent, compared to 65 per cent of learners overall).
- Two fifths of these learners who have stayed with the same employer believe that the course has improved their longer term pay and promotion prospects.

9.1 One fifth (20 per cent) of all FE learners first heard about the opportunity to do their course through the employer they were working for at the time. A small minority (1 per cent) of learners said that the key reason they did the course was because this was compulsory in their job role, or that it was expected by their employer. This chapter explores the extent to which the experiences of learners who are supported in their FE study by their employer differ from other learners studying on Level 2 and Level 3 courses.

Who are those FE learners who first heard about their course through their employer?

9.2 Learners who first heard about the opportunity to do their FE course through their employer are mostly female (74 per cent), and are generally older than the average Level 2 / Level 3 learner (87 per cent are aged 25-50, compared to 65 per cent of the cohort overall). They are relatively evenly split between those studying at Level 2 (53 per cent) and those studying at Level 3 (47 per cent). Two fifths (39 per cent) had no previous qualifications at NQF Full Level 2 before starting their course of FE study, the same proportion as seen amongst the whole cohort of Level 2 and Level 3 learners.

The outcomes of FE study

9.3 Individuals who first heard about their course through their employer are significantly more likely than average to have achieved their qualification (80 per cent have done so, compared to 65 per cent of learners overall). Those currently in paid employment are more likely to report (spontaneously or when prompted) that as a result of the course they have developed skills that will be of benefit for their current job role (88 per cent vs. 79 per cent overall), and to mention spontaneously that the course has helped them to gain a promotion, pay rise or other financial benefits.

- 9.4 In terms of their situation after the course, the majority of 'employer-driven' learners are in full time or part time employment (91 per cent), with the majority of these having stayed with the same employer. One fifth (21 per cent) have gone on to study on another course, and 6 per cent are on a government-supported training and employment programme. A small number (4 per cent) have moved into self-employment, whilst 2 per cent have left their former employment and are now not working.
- 9.5 Those individuals who are still working for the employer who suggested they take the course have gained more benefits in their working situation than other learners now in employment:
- One third say that the course has helped them gain an increase in their hourly rate of pay (33 per cent compared to 25 per cent of all learners continuing in employment);
 - Two fifths feel that the course has contributed to their job security (41 per cent, compared to 33 per cent of all learners continuing in employment);
 - Two fifths believe that the course has improved their longer term pay and promotion prospects (45 per cent, compared to 34 per cent of all learners continuing in employment).
- 9.6 Most of the learners who are still working for the employer who suggested they take an FE course are committed to that employer for the long term; three quarters (76 per cent) report that they anticipate being in the same job role in 2 years time.
- 9.7 These findings point to a mutually beneficial relationship between employers and employees, where the learning and training leads the learner to develop relevant skills that are of benefit to their employer, but that also allow them to progress in their own career.

10 What are the effects of achieving an FE qualification in helping the self-employed and boosting entrepreneurship?

- There has been a marginal increase of 1 per cent in the proportion of learners in self-employment following the FE course;
- The majority of learners for whom a key objective of study was to become self-employed have learnt relevant skills, although only 10 per cent have actually set up their own business as yet.

The effects of FE in boosting self-employment

- 10.1 One in twenty five learners (4 per cent) are now self-employed or running their own business, a slight increase on the number who were running their own business prior to embarking on their course of FE study (3 per cent). The low total numbers of FE learners who are currently running their own business makes it difficult to look reliably at the effect of achieving a formal qualification in FE in enabling or encouraging individuals to become self-employed.
- 10.2 It might be expected that the increase in self-employment following the FE study might be more substantial given that two fifths of learners (39 per cent) said that at least part of the reason for undertaking the course was to help set up their own business. Only 10 per cent of learners who cited help with becoming self-employed as a key reason for going on the course have actually succeeded in setting up a business, although it may yet be too early to see the effects of the 2007 courses on self-employment rates.
- 10.3 Encouragingly, the majority of those learners for whom one of the key objective of study was to be able to become self-employed said that they have been further encouraged to set up their own business through attending the course (76 per cent), and that they have learnt skills that would assist them in doing so (86 per cent).
- 10.4 Amongst the group of learners who were looking to the course to help them become self-employed, Achievers were more positive about the benefits of the course in this regard than Early Leavers; 82 per cent of Achievers have been further encouraged to become self-employed and 90 per cent have gained the relevant skills to allow them to do so, which compares to 64 per cent and 76 per cent of Early Leavers citing these benefits respectively.
- 10.5 Among Early Leavers, 4 per cent feel that they would now be better placed to set up their own business or become self-employed if they had completed the course and achieved the FE qualification.

Remaining barriers to self-employment

- 10.6 At the overall level, over a third (36 per cent) of learners reported that at least part of the reason for undertaking a Level 2 or 3 FE course was to help them set up their own business or become self-employed but that they are not currently working on a self-employed basis. The vast majority (81 per cent) of these learners are still interested in becoming self-employed. The key barriers that have so far prevented these learners from becoming self-employed include:
- Concerns over / difficulties with raising capital (46 per cent);
 - A lack of experience in the particular field of employment, or of running a business (12 per cent);
 - Not having the relevant qualifications (10 per cent), or needing to do more study in order to be confident in becoming self-employed (5 per cent);
 - Concerns about finding and accessing suitable help and support (7 per cent).
- 10.7 Where learners indicate that they were motivated to do the course in order to become self-employed but that they are not interested in doing so at this point, this is either because they currently prefer the security of paid employment (19 per cent), that they feel it would now be too difficult or too much effort to start the process of setting up a business or becoming self-employed (15 per cent), or that they have simply changed their career plans (9 per cent). A smaller number (7 per cent) feel that it would be too much work to run their own business once set up, or that they do not have, or would not be able to access, sufficient financial support (7 per cent). In total, 7 per cent of these learners stated that although they are not pursuing the option of self-employment at this point in time, they are hoping that engaging with further study or gaining further qualifications will allow them to do this in the future.
- 10.8 Two fifths (43 per cent) of learners who have started a new course of study since finishing their 2007 FE course say that part of their motivation for this is to help them set up their own business or become self-employed. Hence it appears as if the initial FE learning may still contribute to further increases in self-employment rates.

Benefits of study for those self-employed prior to starting their FE course

- 10.9 Of those learners who were self-employed immediately prior to starting their course of FE study:
- 47 per cent are still working on a self-employed basis;
 - 38 per cent have become employees;
 - 29 per cent have moved into further study, either in FE or elsewhere;
 - 7 per cent are neither working nor studying.
- 10.10 The majority of learners who have continued to work on a self-employed basis have seen their situation improve since undertaking their course of study. One third (31 per cent) have seen their hourly earnings increase, three quarters (72 per cent) are enjoying greater job satisfaction and three fifths (59 per cent) feel that they now have greater job security and increased long-term earning potential. The majority (82 per cent) of individuals reporting improvements in their work or situation feel that this was in some measure due to the FE learning that they had undertaken.

Benefits of study for the newly self-employed

- 10.11 The overall effect of FE in 2007 has been a 1 percentage point net increase in the numbers of individuals in self-employment. These newly self-employed learners are mostly working in construction-related skilled trades occupations, with the main other groups being childminders, hairdressers and florists.
- 10.12 Among those new to self-employment, most had previously been working for as employees (78 per cent), although 7 per cent had been unemployed and looking for work immediately prior to starting the FE course.
- 10.13 Of those learners who are newly self-employed, well over one third (38 per cent) feel that attending the course was vital in terms of giving them the skills in order to set up on a self-employed basis, with a further 40 per cent stating that the course of study had helped.
- 10.14 Many of those learners who are now self-employed but who were working as an employee before starting the course said that they had benefited from this change. The majority are getting more job satisfaction now that they are self-employed (78 per cent), a similar proportion feel that their long term earning potential has increased (83 per cent) and two thirds have already seen an increase in their weekly income (66 per cent). Almost three quarters think that these beneficial changes have come about at least in part because of their attending their FE course.

11 How do learner motivations for FE study affect learning outcomes?

- Learners are more likely to achieve a qualification in FE if their motivations for study include:
 - progressing into further study or HE
 - gaining a promotion or pay rise
 - the fact that the course is a requirement of their job
- One third (35 per cent) of learners for whom part of the reason for doing the course was to help them get a job have now found either part-time or full-time employment, and 4 per cent are working on a self-employed basis.

11.1 The reasons and motivations learners have for studying in FE have a significant effect on the outcome of the learning, and on the benefits that the learner derives from the course.

Motivations that make learners less likely to complete their course

11.2 Learners are more likely to leave the course without finishing it and without achieving a qualification if their key reasons for taking the course include:

- A desire to develop or gain new knowledge, understanding and skills;
- To provide inspiration to their children in terms of ambition to learn;
- And the hope that the course will assist them in getting a job.

Motivations that make learners more likely to complete their course

11.3 Conversely, certain motivations appear to make it more likely that the learner will see the course through and end up successfully attaining a qualification as a result. These motivations tend to be more 'concrete' i.e. focused on getting the qualification to meet a specific aim. Learners are significantly more likely to achieve their Full Level 2 or 3 qualification at the end of their course in situations where:

- They are undertaking the course as a stepping stone into further education, for instance as a springboard to HE;
- Where attaining the qualification is a legal requirement within their current or desired job role, or where their employer has stated that taking the course is compulsory or expected if the individual wants to progress within their current employment;
- Where the learner hopes or expects to be able to gain a pay rise or other financial benefit following completion of the course of study.

Do learners achieve the objectives they had when embarking on a course of FE study?

11.4 Generally, there appears to be some correlation between learner motivations for study and the outcomes of learning. For instance, amongst learners for whom a key reason for undertaking FE study is to **help them to get a pay rise or promotion**, and who have stayed with the same employer:

- One third (31 per cent) report that their course has allowed them to gain a promotion;
- Two fifths (38 per cent) have gone on to achieve an hourly pay rise that they feel that they would not have got without engaging with FE study;

11.5 Similarly, almost nine in ten learners (86 per cent) who went into the course hoping that it would **help them to set up their own business or become self-employed** subsequently report that they have developed skills that would help them to do so.

11.6 The majority of learners who were not working before the course (85 per cent) stated that at least part of the reason for undertaking study was to **help them get a job**. Of these learners, one third (35 per cent) have now found either part-time or full-time employment, and 4 per cent are working on a self-employed basis. Amongst learners who hoped the course would help them find a job, but who have not yet found work, half (51 per cent) think that they now have a better chance of gaining employment as a result of their FE study.

11.7 Individuals whose key reason for taking an FE course was to **develop their English language skills** are particularly likely to say that doing the course has helped them get into further training and that they have gained skills that has allowed them to change their line of work.

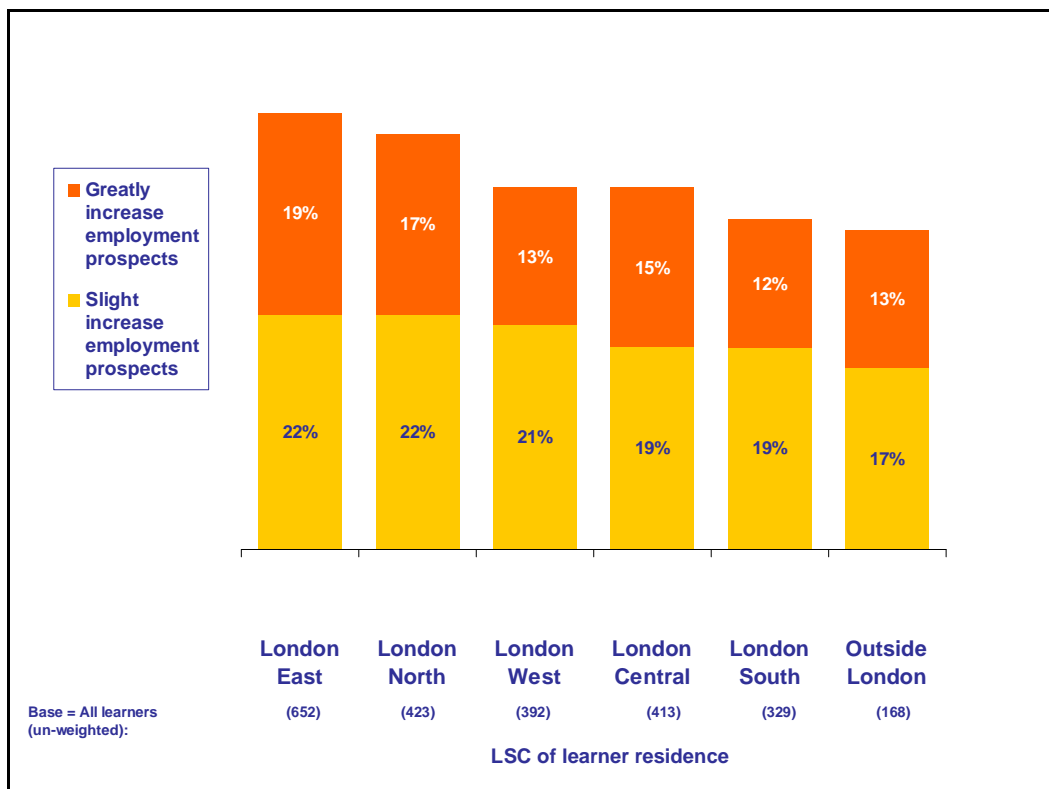
12 Learner views on the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

- Just over one third of FE learners feel that the approach of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will lead to an improvement in their employment prospects (36 per cent).
- 32 per cent feel that the Games will increase their motivation to continue in study.
- Learners who are currently self-employed are the most likely to think that their employment prospects will improve greatly as a result of the Games.
- There are no differences between Achievers, Non-Achievers and Early Leavers in terms of their views on the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

- 12.1 This research aimed to gauge what London FE learners think about the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and whether they are likely to be inspired by and engage with the opportunities that the Games will bring to the city. FE students were asked whether they feel that the London's hosting of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will improve their employment prospects, and whether it will increase their motivation to undertake further learning and training.
- 12.2 Overall, just over one third of individuals who have been studying for a Full Level 2 or Level 3 qualification in 2007 feel that the approach of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will lead to an improvement in their employment prospects (36 per cent), with around half of these (15 per cent overall) anticipating that their prospects are likely to improve greatly. Individuals who are currently unemployed and looking for work are the most likely group to anticipate an improvement in their employment prospects (22 per cent expect their prospects to improve greatly, compared to 12 per cent of learners overall).
- 12.3 Learners who embarked on their course of FE study with the key motive of becoming self-employed or setting up their own business are the most likely to feel that the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will have a beneficial effect on their employment prospects (27 per cent think that their prospects will improve greatly, and 26 per cent think they will improve slightly). Similarly, just under a quarter of learners who are currently self-employed think that their prospects will improve greatly as a result of the Games (24 per cent, compared to 15 per cent overall).

- 12.4 It is hoped that the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will inspire individuals to undertake further learning and training in order to engage with any new employment and volunteering opportunities associated with the Games. One in eight learners (12 per cent) say that the London 2012 Games will greatly increase their motivation to engage in further learning or training in FE or elsewhere, with a further 20 per cent stating that the Games would slightly increase their motivation to continue in study. Individuals who are already engaged in further study following their course in 2007 are particularly likely to expect to be motivated by the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, with 36 per cent saying that the Games will increase their desire to continue their current course and to move on to higher study.
- 12.5 Achievers are no more likely than Non-Achievers or Early Leavers to anticipate that their employment prospects or the likelihood of engaging with further learning will be influenced by London's hosting of the 2012 Olympics. This was also the case when learners were asked to think about the likely effect of the Olympics on their motivation to pursue further learning and training; again, whether the learner achieved or did not achieve the qualification they were working towards in their recent course made no difference to their motivations.

Figure 12.1 – Anticipated effect of the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games on employment prospects – by residence



- 12.6 The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will be hosted by five London Boroughs; Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. Full Level 2 or Level 3 learners resident in London East LSC (which covers the first four of these Boroughs) are the most likely to believe that the Games will directly improve their job prospects (41 per cent do so, compared to 36 per cent of learners overall). However, they are no more likely than learners living in other LSC areas to report a beneficial impact on their motivation and drive to engage with further learning.
- 12.7 Individuals who live in London South LSC and those who travelled in from their home outside of London to attend a London FE college are the least likely to feel that the Olympic and Paralympic Games will boost their employment prospects to any degree (although as many as 3 in 10 in each region do still anticipate a beneficial effect).

Appendix A – Benefits of FE study by achievement status

Table A.1 – Main benefits of FE learning by completion and achievement status

Benefit of FE learning	Total			
	ALL	EL	NA	AC
<i>Base = All 2007 London L2 / L3 learners in FE (unweighted)</i>	2400	608	199	1593
Become more confident in abilities	88	76	86	93
Become more enthusiastic about learning	80	70	81	84
Improved team work, communication and social skills	80	69	81	84
Learnt / developed skills that will be of benefit in current work*	79	62	73	85
Got a better idea about what want to do in life	79	69	82	83
Learnt / developed skills to change to a different type of work	71	59	72	76
Improved chances of finding a job**	69	44	72	89
Learnt skills that would be useful if you wanted to set up your own business or become self-employed	65	52	69	69
Improved literacy	63	53	63	67
Improved quality of life	58	45	59	63
Helped get on another training / educational course	54	32	52	63
Improved numeracy	53	45	55	56
Helped me get a job	37	22	38	50
Encouraged you to set up your own business or become self-employed	35	29	36	37
Learnt / developed skills that will be of benefit for future jobs or same type of work as you do currently *	26	25	29	25
<p><i>KEY: EL = Early Leaver; NA = Completed but did not achieve; AC = Completed and achieved</i> <i>Figures shown in red are significantly different from the overall figures for all learners, at the 95 per cent confidence level.</i></p> <p>* = Base: All 2007 FE learners currently in employment (unweighted: 1456) ** = Base: All 2007 FE learners not currently in employment (unweighted: 944)</p>				

Appendix B – Change in employment status before and after the course of study – by achievement status

Table B.1 – Main employment / education status before and after FE course

Main employment / education status	Before course				After leaving course			
	ALL	EL	NA	AC	ALL	EL	NA	AC
<i>Base = All 2007 London L2 / L3 learners in FE (unweighted)</i>	2400	608	199	1593	2400	608	199	1593
Working as a full time employee (30 hours a week or more on average)	39%	31%	35%	42%	40%	38%	41%	41%
Working as an employee part time (less than 30 hours a week on average)	23%	20%	27%	24%	22%	26%	36%	41%
Self-employed / running own business	3%	4%	2%	3%	4%	9%	6%	13%
Doing unpaid voluntary work	8%	8%	10%	7%	5%	16%	15%	16%
Doing a course of study at FE or elsewhere	23%	21%	24%	23%	31%	17%	25%	37%
On a government-supported training and employment programme (such as New Deal)	6%	7%	7%	5%	5%	4%	10%	6%
Unemployed and looking for work	12%	20%	11%	9%	13%	16%	17%	11%
Looking after children or family	7%	8%	7%	7%	6%	11%	6%	4%
Unemployed but not looking for work	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%
<i>KEY: EL = Early Leaver; NA = Completed but did not achieve; AC = Completed and achieved</i>								

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