



# BMG Research Report

**Rochdale Learner Survey  
June 2006**

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Because people matter.

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
	Methodology	3
	Report Contents	3
	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Main Findings</b>	<b>8</b>
	College attended	8
	Profile of students attending the top 5 colleges	9
	Travel/transport to college	13
	Reasons for attending chosen college	17
	Rating of Colleges Outside of Rochdale	22
	Reasons why respondents travel out of the Rochdale Borough	23

## 1 Introduction

This report summarises the findings from the Rochdale Borough Learner Survey, carried out using a postal and online research methodology in April and May 2006.

In October 2004 LSC Greater Manchester began a review of 14-19 year old education in the Rochdale area. The report produced following the review identified a number of issues, with one being the fact that a significant number of young people leave Rochdale Borough to access education elsewhere; 32% of 16-18 year old learners (around 880 individuals) travel to Bury or Oldham for Level 3 provision.

The primary aim of the Rochdale Borough Learner Survey was therefore to: -

*Discover the underlying reasons why young people from Rochdale choose to travel elsewhere for their provision*

### Methodology

A self-completion postal survey was mailed to 3639 students in Rochdale. In order to encourage young people to participate in the survey, respondents were offered the opportunity to be entered into a prize draw to win £100, £50 or £25 in Whsmith vouchers.

Following the original mailing and a reminder 796 students completed the survey, giving a response rate of 22%.

Respondents were given the option to complete the survey on paper by returning their questionnaire or they could complete their survey online. In total, 38 respondents completed the survey using the online service, leaving the vast majority (758 or 95%) who completed the survey on paper.

The questionnaire used for the Rochdale Borough Learner survey covers the reasons behind choosing a college and the importance of factors affecting these choices. The survey also asks respondents to rate four colleges (Bury College, Holy Cross College, Oldham Sixth Form College and The Oldham College) on five different aspects ('Range of courses', 'Quality of teaching', 'Quality of Facilities', 'Ease of access from your home' and 'Overall reputation').

### Report Contents

This report contains a written analysis of the findings of the postal and online survey; including significant findings only. Figures and tables are used throughout the report to assist explanation and analysis.

A sample of 796 is subject to a maximum standard error of 3.4% at the 95% confidence level on an observed statistic of 50%. Thus, we can be 95% confident that responses are representative of those that would be given by the total Rochdale learner population if a census had been conducted, to within 3.4% of the percentages reported.

Occasional anomalies appear due to 'rounding' differences, these are never more than +/-1%. These occur where rating scales have been added to calculate proportions of respondents who think that an aspect of a college is good or excellent for example. In these instances, respondents who rate 'good', or 'excellent' are added to those who place their rating at the strongest end of the scale, i.e., excellent.

A separate data report is available, containing cross-tabulations by gender, age, college attended, distance travelled to college, method used to travel to college, and type of course being studied. Data on disk is also available.

## Executive Summary

- The top five colleges that learners living in Rochdale attend are Hopwood Hall College (38%), Bury College (19%), Oldham Sixth Form (15%), Holy Cross College (6%) and The Oldham College (4%).
- In total, around 6 in 10 learners living in Rochdale travel outside the Rochdale Borough to attend college.
- In terms of the gender split, Hopwood Hall seems to attract a similar proportion of males and females to that present in the total student population. Holy Cross and The Oldham College seem to be more popular amongst females.
- The age profile of those attending Hopwood Hall College is also similar to the total sample of Rochdale learners, whereas Bury College, Holy Cross and Oldham Sixth Form College all seem to have a higher than average proportion of students aged 17-18 years and The Oldham College seems to attract a higher than average proportion of 19 year olds.
- Hopwood Hall College has a higher than average proportion of students from Central Rochdale and Milkstone and Deeplish.
- Hopwood Hall College is chosen more so by students wishing to do NVQ's or BTEC's than by those wanting to study A or AS Levels. Nearly half of Hopwood hall students say they are studying for BTEC's and around a quarter are taking NVQ's.
- In contrast, almost all learners at Holy Cross College and Oldham Sixth Form College are studying A or AS Levels, compared with just 1 in 10 learners at Hopwood Hall. While Bury College has more of an even balance of A/AS level learners and NVQ/BTEC learners, and The Oldham College is more similar to the profile of Hopwood Hall learners.
- The length of time taken to travel to college by Rochdale learners varies quite considerably, with around 1 in 6 students spending less than 15 minutes travelling to college, while around 1 in 5 travel at least 45 minutes to get to their chosen college.
- As one would expect those attending Hopwood Hall College have the shortest journey to college. More than three quarters of those who attend Hopwood Hall say their journey takes less than half an hour. Whilst at least a fifth of those who attend each of the main colleges outside of Rochdale are prepared to spend 45 minutes or more travelling to their chosen college.
- The most popular method of travelling to college is by bus, for all colleges, but especially Bury College, Holy Cross College and Oldham Sixth Form College. While bus is also the most common mode of transport to Hopwood Hall College, around a fifth of learners walk there.

- The 'Availability of courses' seems to be the top consideration when students choose which college to attend, followed by the 'Quality of teaching', 'Quality of facilities' and 'Ease of access from home'.
- A fifth of all respondents say a 'Lack of suitable provision in the Rochdale area' is one of the reasons why they chose to attend their college. A view particularly felt amongst students studying A or AS levels.
- The top two reasons for students choosing to study at Hopwood Hall College are the availability of courses and the ease of access from the respondents home.
- Compared with colleges outside of Rochdale, significantly fewer students who attend Hopwood Hall College mention either the quality of teaching or the quality of facilities as a reason for choosing this college.
- Two fifths of students who attend Holy Cross College or Oldham Sixth Form College, and a quarter of those who attend Bury College, chose to do so because of the lack of suitable provision in the Rochdale area.
- When colleges located outside of Rochdale were rated on various aspects it was found that:-
  - o Bury College comes out top for the range of courses, closely followed by Oldham Sixth Form College.
  - o Holy Cross College achieves the highest mean score for quality of teaching, with Oldham Sixth Form College again coming a close second.
  - o For the quality of facilities, ease of access from home and overall reputation Oldham Sixth Form College achieves the best rating score, out of the four colleges.
  - o Except for ease of access from home, The Oldham College has the lowest mean score for each attribute.
- When learners living in Rochdale were asked directly, to specify in their own words any reasons why they travel outside of the Rochdale Borough for their education the top comment is that the college in Rochdale didn't offer the course they wanted. However, significant proportions of learners mention 'Better standard of education elsewhere', and that 'Rochdale hasn't got a good reputation'. Others mention that 'other colleges' results are better; 'better facilities' (at other colleges); 'other colleges have a better reputation and 'standard of education in Rochdale is poor'.

- Based on learners reasons for choosing to study at Hopwood Hall College and their unprompted reasons for choosing to study outside of Rochdale it would seem that if Hopwood Hall had been included as one of the colleges rated on various aspects it would probably be rated similar to The Oldham College, i.e. generally not as favourably as Bury College, Holy Cross College and Oldham Sixth Form College.

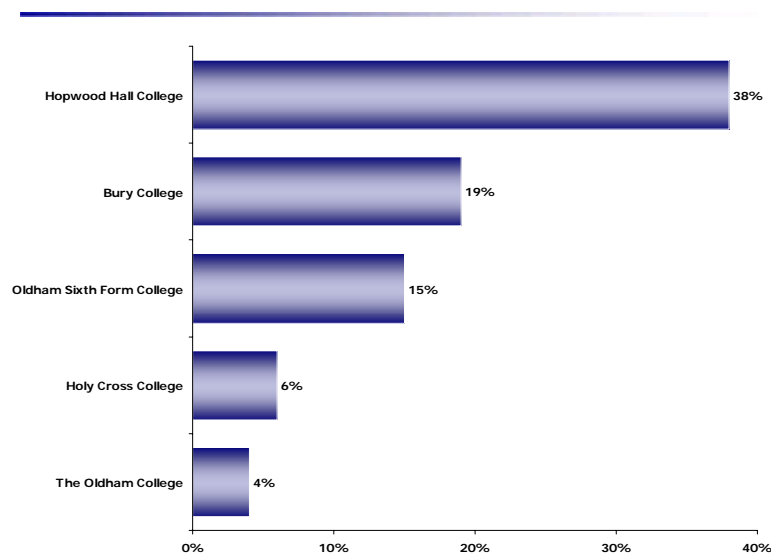
## 2 Main Findings

### College attended

Respondents were first asked which college they attend. When presented with a list of different colleges, they were asked to indicate just one of these colleges. If the college did not appear on the list, they were asked to write the name of their college. The chart below highlights just the top five colleges attended by students living in the Rochdale borough.

Figure 1

TOP FIVE COLLEGES RESPONDENTS ATTEND – PROMPTED (ALL RESPONDENTS)



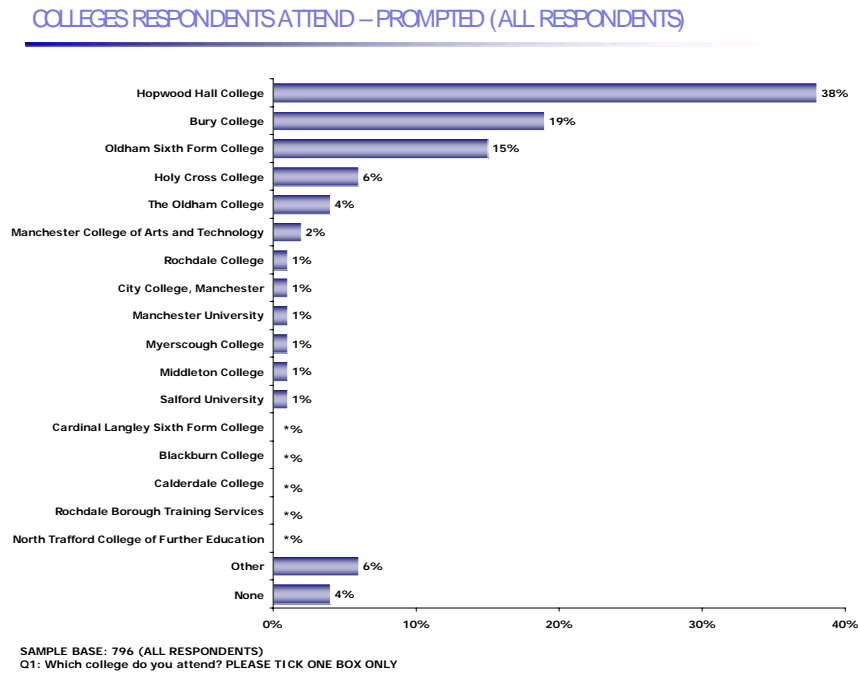
SAMPLE BASE: 796 (ALL RESPONDENTS)  
Q1: Which college do you attend? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Hopwood Hall College is clearly the most popular college for students living in the Rochdale area. Nearly two fifths of Rochdale learners attend Hopwood Hall College. With a further 1% of respondents mentioning 'Rochdale college', and 4% saying they no longer attend college, this leaves nearly 6 in 10 learners living in Rochdale that have chosen to attend a college outside of Rochdale.

Bury College (attended by 1 in 5 learners), followed by Oldham Sixth Form College (attended by 1 in 7 learners) are the two most popular colleges for Rochdale learners who have chosen to carry on their education outside of the Rochdale area. Holy Cross College and The Oldham College are then the next most popular, with around 1 in 20 Rochdale learners choosing to study there.

As Figure 2 shows, all other colleges are each attended by less than 4% of all respondents.

Figure 2



### Profile of students attending the top 5 colleges

The following section of the report compares the profile of those attending each of the top 5 colleges, compared with the profile of the total sample, so that we may better understand how the students attracted to each of the five main colleges may differ.

#### Gender

Table 1

<b>PROFILE OF THOSE ATTENDING EACH COLLEGE – BY GENDER (Base: ALL RESPONDENTS)</b>						
<b>(FIGURES IN BOLD ARE HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE AMONGST ALL RESPONDENTS)</b>						
	<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE</b>	<b>BURY COLLEGE</b>	<b>HOLY CROSS COLLEGE</b>	<b>OLDHAM SIXTH FORM</b>	<b>THE OLDHAM COLLEGE</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	47	45	48	38	51	40
Female	53	55	52	<b>62</b>	49	<b>60</b>
<b>SAMPLE BASES</b>	302	151	54	117	29	151

In terms of the gender split, Hopwood Hall seems to attract a similar proportion of males and females to that present in the total student population. Holy Cross and The Oldham College seem to be more popular amongst females, than compared with other colleges on average.

## Age

Table 2

PROFILE OF THOSE ATTENDING EACH COLLEGE – BY AGE (Base: ALL RESPONDENTS) (FIGURES IN BOLD ARE HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE AMONGST ALL RESPONDENTS)						
	ALL RESPONDENTS	HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE	BURY COLLEGE	HOLY CROSS COLLEGE	OLDHAM SIXTH FORM	THE OLDHAM COLLEGE
	%	%	%	%	%	%
17	19	20	23	17	23	12
18	47	46	50	<b>61</b>	<b>56</b>	31
19	32	33	26	23	21	<b>54</b>
<b>SAMPLE BASES</b>	302	151	54	117	29	151

The age profile of those attending Hopwood Hall College is also similar to the total sample of Rochdale learners, whereas Bury College, Holy Cross and Oldham Sixth Form College all seem to have a higher than average proportion of students aged 17-18 years (73%, 78% and 79% respectively, compared with the average of 66%), and The Oldham College seems to attract a higher than average proportion of 19 year olds.

## Ward lived in

The following table shows that learners from certain wards are over-represented at some colleges i.e. compared with the proportion they account for in the total sample of Rochdale learners. However some caution is needed when looking at these figures because of the small base sizes involved.

Table 3

PROFILE OF THOSE ATTENDING EACH COLLEGE – BY WARD LIVED IN (Base: ALL RESPONDENTS) (FIGURES IN BOLD ARE HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE AMONGST ALL RESPONDENTS)						
	ALL RESPONDENTS	HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE	BURY COLLEGE	HOLY CROSS COLLEGE	OLDHAM SIXTH FORM	THE OLDHAM COLLEGE
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Balderstone and Kirkholt	4	7	1	0	5	4
Bamford	4	1	9	<b>11</b>	3	3
Castleton	5	4	9	5	3	9
Central Rochdale	9	<b>14</b>	5	0	8	4
East Middleton	4	2	1	3	7	<b>23</b>
Filey	*	0	0	0	0	0
Healey	5	5	3	<b>13</b>	7	0
Hopwood Hall	5	4	9	<b>13</b>	1	3
Kingsway	6	7	2	0	<b>10</b>	6
Littleborough Lakeside	3	4	3	0	3	0
Milkstone and Deeplish	12	<b>16</b>	7	6	15	9
Milnrow and Newhey	4	3	0	0	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>
Norden	4	3	6	<b>15</b>	2	0
North Heywood	4	3	<b>11</b>	6	1	0
North Middleton	4	3	2	0	7	4
Smallbridge and Firgrove	5	8	3	0	3	4
South Middleton	4	1	4	7	5	<b>10</b>
Spotland and Falinge	5	6	3	0	7	3
St Peter's	*	0	0	0	0	0
Todmorden	*	*	0	0	0	0
Wardle and West Littleborough	2	4	0	2	1	0
West Heywood	5	1	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	0	0
West Middleton	5	4	6	3	4	3
<b>SAMPLE BASES</b>	302	151	54	117	29	151

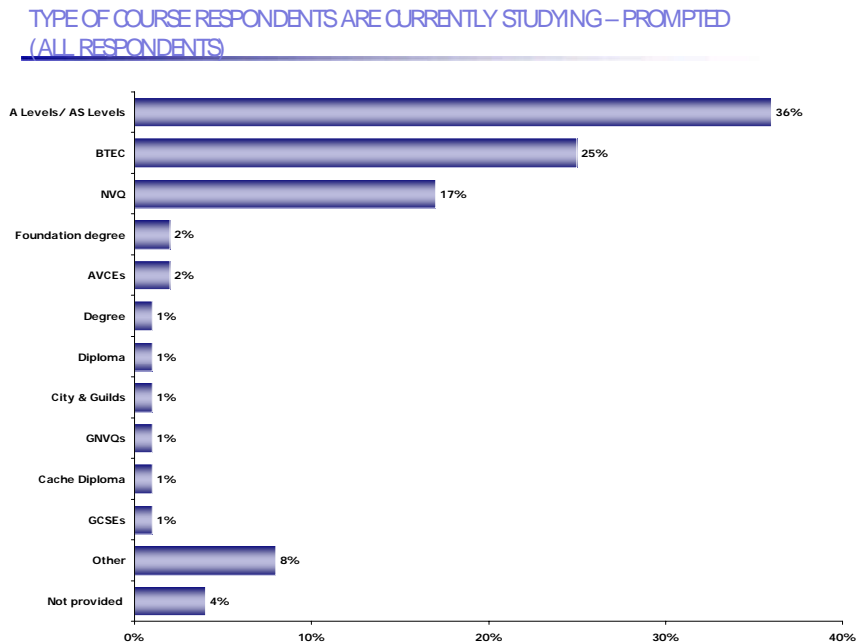
Bearing in mind the caution, the indication is that:-

- Hopwood Hall College has a higher than average proportion of students from Central Rochdale and Milkstone and Deeplish.
- Bury College has a higher than average proportion of students from North Heywood and West Heywood.
- Holy Cross College has a higher than average representation of learners from Bamford, Healey, Hopwood Hall, Norden and West Heywood.
- Oldham Sixth Frm College has above average attendance from learners living in Kingsway and in Milnrow and Newhey.
- The Oldham College has a higher than average proportion of students from East Middleton in particular, but also South Middleton and Milnrow and Newhey.

**Course being studied**

As the following chart indicates, overall, A or AS Levels are the courses most commonly studied by learners living in Rochdale, with over a third of all respondents undertaking these qualifications. BTEC’s followed by NVQ’s are the second and third most popular courses; one in four respondents (25%) are studying for a BTEC and just less than one in five respondents (17%) are studying for an NVQ.

Figure 3



SAMPLE BASE = 796  
Q6: What type of course are you studying? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

The following table compares the courses being studied by students at each of the top 5 colleges, compared with the averages across the total sample.

Table 4

<b>PROFILE OF THOSE ATTENDING EACH COLLEGE – BY COURSE STUDIED (Base: ALL RESPONDENTS) (FIGURES IN BOLD ARE HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE AMONGST ALL RESPONDENTS)</b>						
	<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE</b>	<b>BURY COLLEGE</b>	<b>HOLY CROSS COLLEGE</b>	<b>OLDHAM SIXTH FORM</b>	<b>THE OLDHAM COLLEGE</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
A Levels/ AS Levels	36	10	<b>49</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>94</b>	4
NVQ	17	<b>24</b>	15	0	0	<b>24</b>
BTEC	25	<b>45</b>	19	2	1	<b>37</b>
GCSEs	1	1	1	0	0	3
AVCEs	2	2	2	2	3	0
GNVQs	1	0	5	0	0	0
Foundation degree	2	2	1	2	0	6
City & Guilds	1	*	0	0	0	4
Diploma	1	1	1	0	0	0
Degree	1	0	0	0	0	0
Other	8	9	5	2	1	12
Not provided	4	3	2	0	1	9
<b>SAMPLE BASES</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>151</b>

This table clearly shows that Hopwood Hall College is chosen more so by students wishing to do NVQ's or BTEC's than by those wanting to study A or AS Levels. Nearly half of Hopwood hall students say they are studying for BTEC's and around a quarter are taking NVQ's.

Almost all learners at Holy Cross College and Oldham Sixth Form College are studying A or AS Levels, compared with just 1 in 10 learners at Hopwood Hall. This could simply be a reflection of the courses that are offered at these two colleges.

Bury College has more of an even balance of A/AS level learners and NVQ/BTEC learners, whereas the profile of Rochdale learners at The Oldham College is more similar to Hopwood Hall learners.

### **Travel/transport to college**

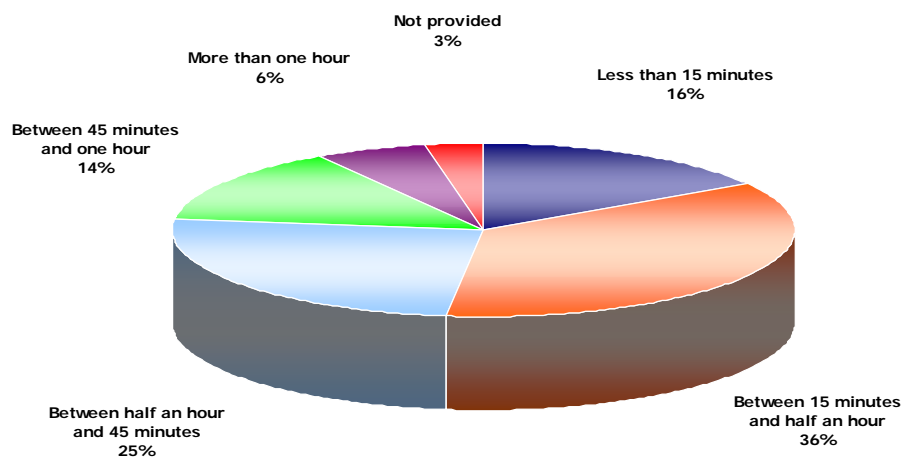
All learners were asked about how long it takes them to travel to their college and how they travel to college.

### Time taken to travel to college

As the following chart shows, the length of time taken to travel to college by Rochdale learners varies quite considerably, with around 1 in 6 students spending less than 15 minutes travelling to college, while around 1 in 5 travel at least 45 minutes to get to their chosen college.

Figure 4

DISTANCE TO COLLEGE RESPONDENT ATTENDS – PROMPTED (ALL RESPONDENTS)



SAMPLE BASE = 796  
Q5: How do you normally travel to your college? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

The following table compares the journey length for students attending each of the five main colleges.

Table 5

<b>LENGTH OF TIME TAKEN TO TRAVEL TO COLLEGE (Base: ALL RESPONDENTS)</b>						
<b>(FIGURES IN BOLD ARE HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE AMONGST ALL RESPONDENTS)</b>						
	<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE</b>	<b>BURY COLLEGE</b>	<b>HOLY CROSS COLLEGE</b>	<b>OLDHAM SIXTH FORM</b>	<b>THE OLDHAM COLLEGE</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Less than 15 minutes	16	<b>29</b>	6	4	4	10
Between 15 minutes and half an hour	36	48	35	38	29	40
Between half an hour and 45 minutes	25	13	<b>37</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>39</b>	27
Between 45 minutes and one hour	14	8	17	15	18	19
More than one hour	6	3	3	5	8	3
Not sure	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>SAMPLE BASES</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>151</b>

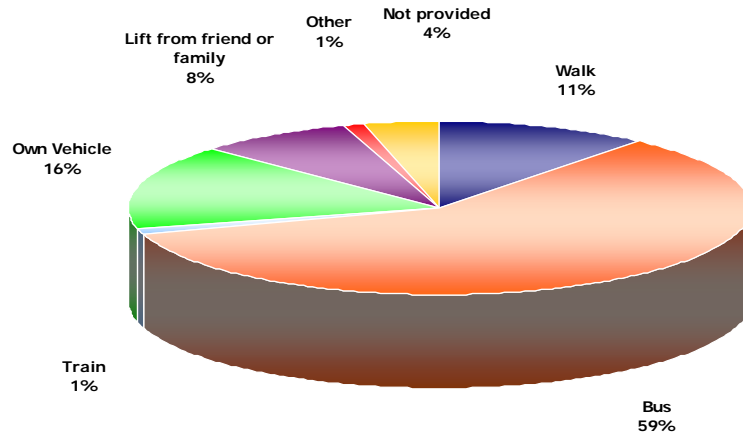
As one would expect, those attending Hopwood Hall College, which is of course based in Rochdale, have the shortest journey to college. More than three quarters of those who attend Hopwood Hall say their journey takes less than half an hour (77%).

At least 1 in 5 learners, who live in Rochdale but attend colleges outside of Rochdale, are prepared to spend 45 minutes or more travelling to their chosen college (20% spend 45 minutes or more travelling to Bury College or Holy Cross College, 22% spend this time travelling to The Oldham College and 26% travel for this length of time to get to Oldham Sixth Form College).

Remaining on the subject of the journey to college, respondents were then asked, 'How do you normally travel to your college'? They were presented with a list of six different methods of travelling, and asked to indicate just one of these methods.

Figure 5

MAIN METHOD OF TRANSPORT USED BY RESPONDENTS TO TRAVEL TO COLLEGE – PROMPTED (ALL RESPONDENTS)



SAMPLE BASE = 796  
Q5: How do you normally travel to your college? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

The most popular method of travelling to college is by bus. Nearly three fifths (59%) of all respondents use the bus as a means of transport to college.

Buses are even more likely to be used by those who have a relatively longer journey to college. Only one in five respondents who have a journey time of 'Less than 15 minutes' take the bus to college (20%), whereas around 4 in 5 respondents whose journey takes '30 to 45 minutes' (77%) or '45 to 60 minutes' (80%) use this form of transport.

Own vehicles are the second most popular method of travelling to college, followed by walking and then getting a lift from family or friends. Just 1% of Rochdale students travel to college by train.

The following table shows how students' mode of transport differs according to the college they attend.

Table 6

METHOD OF TRANSPORT USED TO TRAVEL TO COLLEGE (Base: ALL RESPONDENTS) (FIGURES IN BOLD ARE HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE AMONGST ALL RESPONDENTS)						
	ALL RESPONDENTS	HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE	BURY COLLEGE	HOLY CROSS COLLEGE	OLDHAM SIXTH FORM	THE OLDHAM COLLEGE
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Walk	11	<b>21</b>	1	4	0	0
Bus	59	49	<b>82</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>77</b>	66
Train	1	0	0	0	1	0
Bicycle	0	0	0	0	1	0
Own Vehicle	16	16	12	19	13	<b>25</b>
Lift from friend or family	8	11	5	6	6	0
Other	1	1	0	0	0	0
<b>SAMPLE BASES</b>	302	151	54	117	29	151

Given the relatively shorter journeys that students travelling to Hopwood Hall College have, it is not surprising that these learners are more likely to walk to college than students attending any of the other main colleges. While the highest proportion take the bus (nearly half), around a fifth walk to Hopwood Hall, compared with hardly any students that walk to colleges based outside of Rochdale.

Travel by bus is especially popular amongst students attending Bury College, Holy Cross College and Oldham Sixth Form College.

### Reasons for attending chosen college

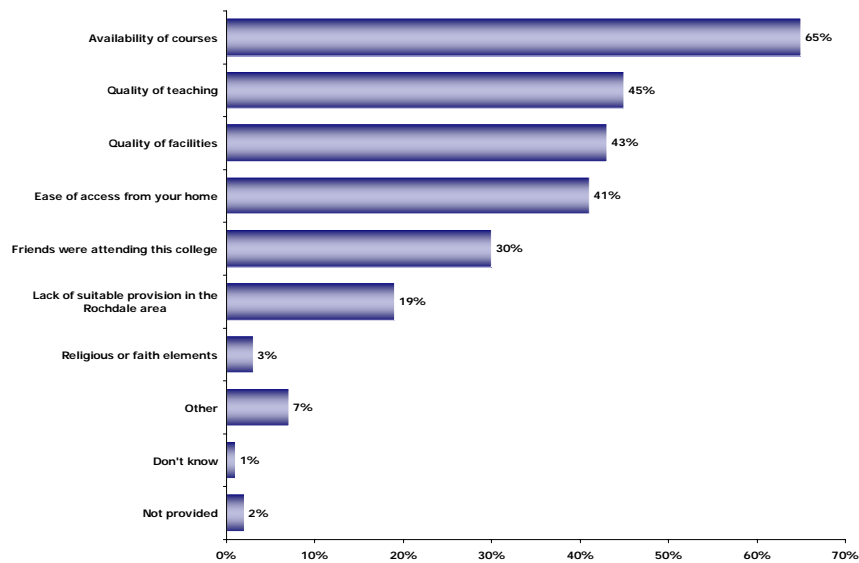
Respondents were presented with a list of reasons for choosing their college and were asked to indicate all that applied.

As the chart that follows indicates, the most common reason behind the choice of a college is the availability of courses. Over two thirds (65%) of all respondents claim the 'Availability of courses' as a reason for attending their college.

The 'Quality of teaching', 'Quality of facilities' and 'Ease of access from home', each mentioned by around two fifths of all respondents, are also key factors in the decision as to which college respondents attend.

Figure 6

REASONS WHY RESPONDENTS ATTEND THE COLLEGE THEY GO TO – PROMPTED (MULTIPLE RESPONSE, ALL RESPONDENTS)



SAMPLE BASE: 796 (ALL RESPONDENTS)  
Q2: What were your reasons for choosing this college? PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY

For a fifth of all respondents (19%) a 'Lack of suitable provision in the Rochdale area' is mentioned as one of the main reasons why students chose to attend their college. This view is particularly felt amongst students studying A or AS levels, with 34% of these students giving this reason to explain their choice of college.

The following table compares the reasons students gave for attending their college, by the college they attend: -

Table 7

<b>REASONS FOR ATTENDING COLLEGE – (Q2) (Base: ALL RESPONDENTS)</b>						
<b>(FIGURES IN BOLD ARE HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE AMONGST ALL RESPONDENTS)</b>						
	<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE</b>	<b>BURY COLLEGE</b>	<b>HOLY CROSS COLLEGE</b>	<b>OLDHAM SIXTH FORM</b>	<b>THE OLDHAM COLLEGE</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Availability of courses	65	<b>72</b>	64	53	60	<b>76</b>
Quality of teaching	45	26	<b>54</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>72</b>	37
Quality of Facilities	43	21	<b>66</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>76</b>	40
Ease of access from your home	41	<b>61</b>	36	23	25	42
Friends were attending this college	30	31	33	35	42	27
Lack of suitable provision in the Rochdale area	19	8	25	<b>39</b>	<b>41</b>	15
Religious or faith element	3	1	1	<b>23</b>	3	0
Other	7	7	6	6	5	6
Don't Know/Not provided	3	1	1	0	0	0
<b>SAMPLE BASES</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>151</b>

The top two reasons for students choosing to study at Hopwood Hall College are the availability of courses and the ease of access from the respondents home. These two reasons are stated more so by respondents who attend Hopwood Hall, than by respondents on average.

Looking further at the reasons given for attending Hopwood Hall College, compared with those given for attending colleges outside of Rochdale, a cause for concern may be that significantly fewer students who attend Hopwood Hall College mention either the quality of teaching or the quality of facilities as a reason for choosing this college.

Students are more likely than average to have chosen to study at Oldham Sixth Form College and especially Holy Cross College because of the quality of the teaching at these establishments.

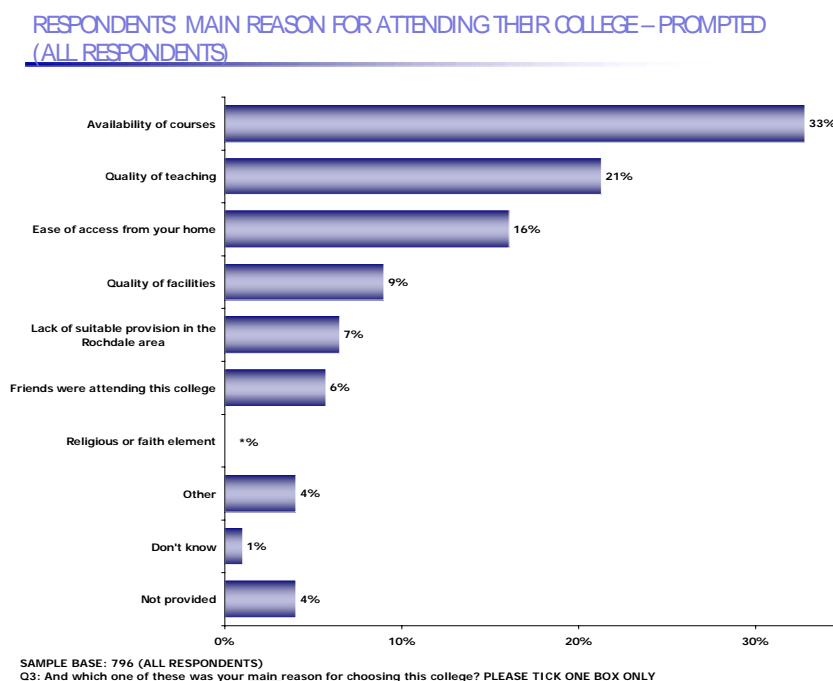
The quality of facilities is recognised more so at Bury College, Holy Cross College and Oldham Sixth Form College than other colleges, as a reason why learners go there.

Two fifths of students who attend Holy Cross College or Oldham Sixth Form College, and a quarter of those who attend Bury College, chose to do so because of the lack of suitable provision in the Rochdale area.

Like those attending Hopwood Hall, Rochdale learners who attend The Oldham College are most likely to do so because of the availability of courses and the ease of access, but compared with Bury College, Holy Cross and Oldham Sixth Form College, they are less likely to do so because of the quality of the teaching or facilities.

From the same list of reasons for choosing a college, respondents were then asked to give the main reason for choosing their college.

Figure 7



The most popular main reason for attending a particular college, as indicated by one third of all respondents (33%), is the 'Availability of courses'. While in second place, just over one fifth of all respondents (21%) say that the 'Quality of teaching' is the main thing that draws them to their college.

If we compare the main reasons given by those who attend each of the top five colleges, the same issues regarding Hopwood Hall College emerge i.e. that compared with colleges outside of Rochdale, Hopwood Hall College is chosen more for the availability of courses and the ease with which learners living in Rochdale can access it, and less so for the quality of its teaching or facilities.

Table 8

<b>MAIN REASON FOR ATTENDING COLLEGE – (Q2) (Base: ALL RESPONDENTS)</b>						
<b>(FIGURES IN BOLD ARE HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE AMONGST ALL RESPONDENTS)</b>						
	<b>ALL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE</b>	<b>BURY COLLEGE</b>	<b>HOLY CROSS COLLEGE</b>	<b>OLDHAM SIXTH FORM</b>	<b>THE OLDHAM COLLEGE</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Quality of teaching	21	10	18	<b>74</b>	<b>37</b>	21
Quality of facilities	9	5	<b>19</b>	6	14	10
Availability of courses	33	<b>44</b>	31	6	18	<b>46</b>
Lack of suitable provision in the Rochdale area	7	2	9	5	<b>14</b>	3
Religious or faith element	*	0	1	2	0	0
Ease of access from your home	16	<b>28</b>	1	2	5	14
Friends were attending this college	6	5	7	6	11	0
Other	4	4	4	0	1	3
Don't Know/Not provided	4	3	1	0	0	3
<b>SAMPLE BASES</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>151</b>

## Rating of Colleges Outside of Rochdale

The four main colleges based outside of Rochdale; Bury College, Holy Cross College, Oldham Sixth Form College and The Oldham College, were each rated by all respondents (whether they attended that college or not) on a number of different aspects.

For each aspect a college could be rated as excellent, good, average, quite poor or very poor. Using this rating scale mean scores have been calculated for each college on each aspect, where a higher score indicates a better perception amongst students living in Rochdale. The highest mean score for each attribute has been highlighted in bold.

Table 9

RATING OF COLLEGES OUTSIDE OF ROCHDALE – (Q7) (Base: ALL RESPONDENTS)				
(MEAN SCORES)				
	BURY COLLEGE	HOLY CROSS COLLEGE	OLDHAM SIXTH FORM	THE OLDHAM COLLEGE
Range of courses	<b>4.07</b>	3.85	4.03	3.69
Quality of teaching	3.85	<b>4.04</b>	4.01	3.46
Quality of Facilities	3.91	3.86	<b>3.99</b>	3.44
Ease of access from your home	3.17	3.07	<b>3.25</b>	3.16
Overall reputation	3.82	3.91	<b>3.96</b>	3.33
SAMPLE BASES: 796				

As the rating scale went from 5 for excellent to 1 for very poor, given that no score is below 3, we can say that each of the four colleges are perceived at least as average on all attributes.

However in terms of the range of courses, Bury College comes out top, closely followed by Oldham Sixth Form College.

Holy Cross College achieves the highest mean score for quality of teaching, with Oldham Sixth Form College again coming a close second.

For the quality of facilities, ease of access from home and overall reputation Oldham Sixth Form College achieves the best rating score, out of the four colleges.

Except for ease of access from home, The Oldham College has the lowest mean score for each attribute.

As Hopwood Hall College was not included as one of the colleges that learners could rate, we cannot accurately compare the perceptions of colleges outside of Rochdale with the main college in Rochdale. However, based on the responses given as to why learners chose to attend the

college they go to, we could guess that Hopwood Hall College would be rated similar to The Oldham College, i.e. generally not as favourably as Bury College, Holy Cross College and Oldham Sixth Form College.

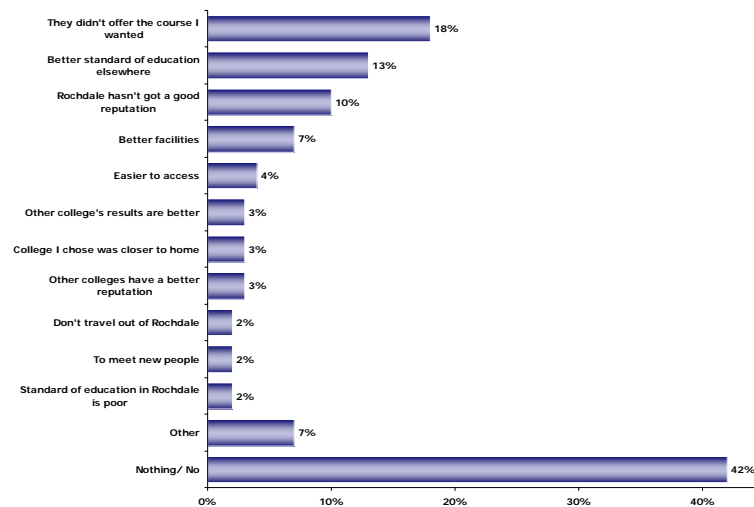
The responses to the question covered in the next section also confirm that there is the view amongst some, that colleges outside of Rochdale have a better reputation than the college in Rochdale.

### **Reasons why respondents travel out of the Rochdale Borough**

In the last question of the survey respondents were next informed that the survey was being undertaken to identify why Rochdale residents often travel to other towns for education. Learners were asked to indicate, in their own words i.e. unprompted, any specific reasons for travelling out of the Rochdale borough for their education. The following chart shows that while just over two fifths could not give any comments or reasons, a number of reasons are given for why students are choosing to study outside of Rochdale.

Figure 8

TOP 10 REASONS WHY RESPONDENTS TRAVEL OUT OF ROCHE DALE BOROUGH FOR THEIR EDUCATION – UNPROMPTED (ALL RESPONDENTS)



SAMPLE BASE: 796 (ALL RESPONDENTS)  
Q8: This survey is being undertaken to identify why Rochdale residents often travel to other towns for education. If there are any specific reasons why you travel out of Rochdale borough for your education, please could you state them here.

The most common reason for studying outside of Rochdale, given by nearly one in five respondents (18%), is that 'They [Rochdale colleges] didn't offer the course I wanted'.

The second most popular reason, according to 13% of respondents, for travelling out of the Rochdale Borough is that there is a 'Better standard of education elsewhere'. Whilst, one in ten respondents (10%) believe 'Rochdale hasn't got a good reputation'.

Other reasons include 'other colleges' results are better'; 'better facilities' (at other colleges); 'other colleges have a better reputation' and 'standard of education in Rochdale is poor'.

Learners that attend Holy Cross College and Oldham Sixth Form College are especially likely to have commented that 'Rochdale hasn't got a good reputation' (23% and 22% respectively, compared with the average of 10%) and that there is a 'better standard of education elsewhere' (27% amongst Holy Cross learners and 22% amongst learners at Oldham Sixth Form College, compared with 13% on average).