RESEARCH

Modelling the Implications of Graduation for 16 Year Olds in Three Geographical Areas

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Graduation is conceptualised as a contribution to building a socially inclusive society by encouraging the significant proportion (9%) of young people not in work, education or training between the ages of 16 and 19 to stay in learning and reach their full potential. A previous study provided encouraging evidence of support for a new qualification which certificated both national qualifications and wider achievements, and would normally be available at 18 years. Graduation would be likely to include the following:

a)   Normally be available at 18;

b)   Certificate both national qualifications and wider achievements;

c)   Recognise at level 2, a national qualification component (including literacy, numeracy and IT) that should be equivalent to 5 GCSEs A*-C;

d)   Provide evidence of skills in meeting a personal challenge and in working with others for the 'wider achievements' components;

e)   Allow significant progress towards Graduation to be recognised as 'milestones towards' and recognised alongside, full Graduation.

Remit

The present study was undertaken by the Centre for Educational Development, Appraisal and Research and Institute for Employment Research, together with the Centre for Education and Industry from the University of Warwick during February – July 2001.

The objectives were to determine:

a)   young people's attainment at 16 and the programmes they are undertaking post 16;

b)   the aspects of the Graduation requirements their current programmes would fulfil;

c)   their further needs to meet Graduation requirements – including both the qualifications and wider activities/achievements dimensions of Graduation.

d)   the implications of Graduation for providers;

e)   providers' readiness for Graduation requirements, including the implications of providing for the wider range of learners that may be aiming for Graduation;

f)   providers' needs in meeting the requirements for Graduation.

The Study

Three case study areas were selected after considering six factors: demographic character, regional location, socio-economic character, local labour market context, cross-boundary flows, and institutional provision.

The research was based upon
- analysis of 16 year old cohort in each area
- Interviews with a representative sample of 16 year olds (n= 980: 476 male, 504 female)
- In-depth interviews with a range of young people at 16+ (n = 203: 89 male, 114 female), including 16 from ethnic minorities and some with a range of disabilities and/or special educational needs, in schools, colleges, work place training, and those outside these systems.
- In-depth interviews with 97 education and training providers at 67 sites, comprising schools (mainstream and special), colleges, employers delivering work-based training, and both private and FE college-linked training providers.

Findings

The study provides support for Graduation as a means of enhancing motivation and commitment to continuing education and training post-16. Both young people and providers offered positive views, but each also raised concerns. Some of these concerned clarity of detail, which would be overcome once Graduation was confirmed, and workload implications. While about two thirds should achieve Graduation relatively easily about 16%, including the 9% target group outside education, work and training, will have great difficulty in achieving Graduation.

The main implications for Graduation are as follows:

- There was substantial variation in the degree to which the young people's pathways could be described as 'plans' rather than as 'reactions', although the majority recognised an identifiable career pathway leading from their present programme.

- There was much criticism of key skills, which form an important element of Graduation.

- Those not in full-time education were much less likely to consider qualifications to have been useful, and may therefore be less inclined to value another award. There was also a close relationship between GCSE average scores and whether qualifications were regarded as being useful.

- A substantial proportion (17%) of the survey sample had not known what they wanted to do after completing Year 11 – with the 'medium' attainment group having the highest proportion in this category. This indicates that their decision-making was more dependent on the outcome of examinations, and may point to Graduation being potentially important for this group. Furthermore, 'medium'

achievers had the highest proportions who claimed that a recognition of other activities would have encouraged them to stay on.

- There was widespread engagement in a range of wider activities, with sporting activities dominating. Apart from the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and scouts/guides, the majority of activities did not lead to any recognised award.

- Participation in wider activities was closely related to social class and level of achievement, with those from higher social classes and higher achieving students being significantly more likely to have participated.

- Participation in wider activities was constrained by a lack of time, recognition, and interest in attaining an award.

- There was receptiveness to the idea of Graduation, with an overwhelming majority feeling that achievements other than formal academic qualifications should be recognised, and cautious support for the notions of Partial and Advanced Graduation. A Graduation ceremony would be welcomed.

- There was an asserted preparedness to do the extra work required – if it would be recognised by employers. Slightly higher proportions of those from lower social classes stated that they would be willing to do the extra work.

- Graduation is achievable for about two thirds of young people: 43 per cent of our sample would easily attain the award while a further 21 per cent could be expected to attain it with little extra work. Those with no A* - C grades (16%), however, would seem to have too much to do to achieve Graduation.

- The introduction of Graduation may have greatest effect on the behaviour of those with 'medium' attainment scores, as they appeared to be more likely to be prepared to do the extra work.

- Providers' views on their preparedness for Graduation varied with the nature of the young people with whom they worked. Schools were in the best position to meet the demands of Graduation. Their students typically had less to do to achieve Graduation, and there were strong traditions of engagement with wider activities which could support the process.

- Providers emphasised the difficulties involved in assessing achievements deriving from wider activities, and in the access, storage and validation of information. Again, schools were generally better placed than other providers.

- Providers noted resource implications for administering the scheme, particularly the accreditation of non-qualification based awards, and extra support needed for young people needing specific help to achieve Graduation.

- It was felt that the requirements of Graduation, and in particular the thresholds which had to be achieved, might inhibit attempts to facilitate greater 'inclusion', as the most disadvantaged young people at 16 plus are likely to have the greatest challenges to achieve Graduation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1   In July 1999, the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Education and Employment launched key proposals for building a socially inclusive society, contained in the Social Exclusion Unit's Report, *Bridging the Gap: New Opportunities for 16-18 Year Olds Not in Education, Employment or Training.* The report reviewed the position of the significant proportion (9%) of young people who are not involved in work, education or training between the ages of 16 and 19. It was suggested that a clear outcome called 'Graduation' would encourage all young people to stay in learning and reach their full potential.

1.2   'Graduation' was one of several ideas promoted in *'Bridging the Gap';* another major policy initiative was the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) to help engage the most disadvantaged groups. Nevertheless, 'Graduation', as it was called in that report, was seen as a potentially key development. It was conceptualised as a challenging but achievable goal, requiring as a minimum the Level 2 standard of achievement in formal qualifications (academic, vocational or occupational) and also involving the key skills of communication, use of numeracy and IT and a range of options for arts, sport and community activity. It was envisaged that Graduation would be achieved "by a high and increasing proportion of the cohort" (p11). Also, there would be mechanisms for people who do not obtain Graduation by 19 to obtain equivalent recognition subsequently. It was recognised that the total package proposed in the report, including significant resource increases, would need to be implemented progressively and would take time to achieve results.

1.3   Work on Graduation was taken further by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) who undertook a consultation exercise jointly with the University of Bristol – see *Rewarding Achievement – Proposals for a Graduation Certificate.* This consultation was designed to investigate:

- how people reacted to the concept, content and name of a Graduation certificate;
- what would help people take part;
- how people responded to possible models for the certificate;
- what might stop the certificate from being a success.

1.4   The results of the study were encouraging. Over half (55%) of the individuals, and 38% of organisations, who responded to the questionnaire surveys thought the certificate a viable idea, and fewer than 5% of all respondents thought the idea had no value. However, there was concern about the name 'Graduation certificate' and that the certificate would not improve social inclusion, but rather create further opportunities for failure, especially for our most disadvantaged young people. Nevertheless, supportive views were expressed about how positive outcomes could be promoted, and the incorporation of wider achievement was welcomed, provided they were realistic.

1.5   The present study was commissioned to take the work on further. Based on the consultation to date at the end of 2000, Graduation, if implemented would include the following:

- Normally be available at 18;

- Certificate both national qualifications and wider achievements;

- Recognise at level 2, a national qualification component (including literacy, numeracy and IT) that should be equivalent to 5 GCSEs A*-C;

- Provide evidence of skills in meeting a personal challenge and in working with others for the 'wider achievements' components;

- Allow significant progress towards Graduation to be recognised as 'milestones towards' and recognised alongside, full Graduation.

Remit

1.6   The aim of the present study was to provide data to model the future qualification framework. In particular, the objectives were to determine:

- young people's attainment at 16 and the programmes they are undertaking post 16;

- the aspects of the Graduation requirements their current programmes would fulfil;

- their further needs to meet Graduation requirements – including both the qualifications and wider activities/achievements dimensions of Graduation.

- the implications of Graduation for providers;

- providers' readiness for Graduation requirements, including the implications of providing for the wider range of learners that may be aiming for Graduation;

- providers' needs in meeting the requirements for Graduation.

The research was expected to take place between January and May 2001, but the calling of the General Election for May 3 required a retiming, with fieldwork consequently finishing in July.

2.   METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted comprised five main strands:

Selection of Case Study Areas

2.1   The three case study areas were chosen after considering the following factors:

- *the demographic character of the local area* – particularly with reference to ethnic composition.

- *Regional location* – to incorporate different regional contexts.

- *Socio-economic character* – encompassing a variety of socio-economic contexts, including more prosperous and less prosperous areas.

- *Local labour market context* –in terms of their industrial and occupational structures, and in terms of the extent of recent employment growth/decline, thus offering different employment opportunity profiles. 'Routes' taken by young people at age 16 years will be influenced by these profiles.

- *Cross-boundary flows* – the degree of movement across Careers Service boundaries to take up education, training and employment opportunities has implications for tracking young people, and for the range of destinations/opportunities they are able to access.

- *Institutional provision* – taking into account differences between local areas in the proportion of young people remaining in full-time education at age 16 years who remain in schools or move to sixth form colleges, FE college etc.

   Case study areas

2.2   Fieldwork was undertaken in three case study areas:
- *Reading* – an 'urban' area located in the Thames Valley in the South East region;
- *Warwick* district – a 'mixed' area from the West Midlands region, covering the towns of Leamington Spa, Warwick and Kenilworth;
- *East Riding* of Yorkshire – a 'rural' area in the Yorkshire & Humber region, encompassing the towns of Withernsea, Hornsea, Bridlington, Driffield, Pocklington, Market Weighton, Goole, Beverley and Cottingham, and the surrounding rural areas.

Analysis of 16 year old cohort

2.3   Within each of the three areas, analysis was conducted on the records of the 2000 cohort of those completing Year 11, incorporating consideration of factors such as gender, ethnicity, qualification attainment, educational background, special educational needs (SEN), post-school destination, secondary school attended.

Development of a profile of a representative sample of 16 year olds

2.4   From the sample generated by the Careers Service records, face-to-face interviews lasting approximately 30 minutes were conducted with a stratified sample of 16 year olds in each area. The fieldwork for the survey of 16 year olds was carried out by MORI, with Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) being used to conduct the interviews.

2.5   A total of 980 interviews were conducted with young people who completed year 11 in 2000. Reading was significantly underrepresented, with just 44 respondents from this area, while 460 interviews were conducted in Warwickshire and 476 in East Yorkshire.

2.6   There were almost similar proportions of males and females interviewed for the study: 49 per cent were male and 51 per cent were female. The majority (69 per cent) were 17 years of age at the time of the survey. 4 per cent of young people in the sample were from ethnic minorities.

In-depth interviews with a range of 16 year olds

2.7   The total sample comprised 203 young people (89 male, 114 female). The majority (60.6%) were 16+, with 2.5% aged 15+, 22.2% aged 17+, and a further 5.8% aged 18+ to 21+. Although our target sample were young people 16+, the providers who organised our meetings often produced mixed groups, particularly of 16-17 year olds.

2.8   The sample included 16 young people from ethnic minorities (1 Bangladeshi, 1 Indian, 5 Pakistanis, 7 Black Caribbean, 2 Black African), and 25 young people who may be considered to have special educational needs. These included young people with disabilities such as cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, severe visual impairment, severe hearing impairment, a severe skin disorder and severe behavioural difficulties. Two of these young people had terminal illnesses. In addition, interviewees also included homeless young people who had a variety of learning and socio-emotional difficulties, with some designating themselves as having dyslexia.

2.9   Most young people interviewed were attending courses of education or training. These included GCSE, AS and A level subjects together with vocational qualifications. The sample included young people attending Life Skills and Basic Skills and others who were not engaged with any education or training were also interviewed.

2.10   The aims of the interviews with young people and providers were to identify the potential of 16+ learners to respond to Graduation opportunities, the aspects of the Graduation requirement their current programmes would fulfil, and their needs in meeting Graduation requirements. Consequently, the young people were interviewed about their school and career, directions and choices; their future plans for learning and employment; their wider interests and activities; and their preparedness for Graduation. As the term 'Graduation'

was not familiar in the current context, it was discussed with interviewees as an Award, and its possible components explained.

Interviews with providers within the three case study areas

2.11   Interviews were held with education and training providers. Whenever possible these were conducted with staff in the same institutions attended by the young people, and attempts were made to interview both those with overall senior management responsibilities, and those who were engaged with day to day education/training and who usually knew well the young people interviewed.

2.12   Overall, 67 sites were visited comprising mainstream and special schools; centres in general FE colleges; centres in training providers linked to FE colleges; private training providers; and employers delivering work-based training.

2.13   Interviews were held with a total of 97 providers. Interviews in schools included heads of 6th form, assistant head teachers, subject specialists and teachers with responsibility for Record of Achievement. Within colleges and training centres interviews were held with training managers and tutors.

3.   CONTEXT

Socio-economic and labour market context

3.1   It is impossible to capture within any three case study areas the full range of local socio-economic and demographic circumstances across England. None of the three case study areas is amongst the most deprived in England: Reading displays an 'average' level of deprivation, while the East Riding and Warwick are less deprived than average. In all three areas, but particularly in Reading and the East Riding, there are marked intra-area contrasts in the experience of deprivation. Generally, economic activity rates and employment rates are similar to, or greater than, the England average. Reading and Warwick are characterised by lower unemployment rates than the England average, while in the East Riding the unemployment rate is higher than average, most notably in the Bridlington & Driffield area.

Attainment and destinations

3.2   Attainment levels in Warwickshire and the East Riding are slightly higher than the England average, while those in Reading are slightly lower than the England average, and the number of pupils gaining no GCSE/GNVQ passes is appreciably higher than the England average. However, these changes mask considerable variations at school and individual levels.

3.3   In Reading a lower proportion of young people than the England average move into full-time education on completing Year 11, while in Warwick and the East Riding the proportions are higher than average. In Reading a relatively high proportion of the Year 11 cohort move directly into employment. This is indicative of the relatively buoyant nature of the labour market in Reading, and the availability of job opportunities – both with and without training.

4. CHARACTERISTICS [1]

4.1   The ability of young people to respond to the opportunity of Graduation depends in part on their level of achievement and future learning, training and career plans. In The following seven sections we discuss the findings of the project. First we discuss the characteristics of the young people including their post-Year 11 destinations; choices and decision-making; and qualification attainment at Year 11. In addition we examine the young people's involvement in wider activities as these are also a core component of Graduation. We also examine aspirations and future intentions to explore the match between these and the requirements of Graduation. Finally, we report on attitudes to Graduation.

4.2   There were almost similar proportions of males and females interviewed for the study: 49 per cent were male and 51 per cent were female. Table 1 shows that the sample of respondents was skewed towards the higher social classes, 58 per cent of respondents were from social class groups ABC1, and 41 per cent were from social class groups C2DE. There were no significant differences in respondents' social class by gender.

Table 1: Distribution of sample by social class and gender			
	Total %	Male %	Female %
AB	28	26	30
C1	30	35	29
C2	22	23	22
DE	19	19	19
Total (n)	**972**	**473**	**499**

4.3   Overall, 27 per cent of the sample were not participating in some form of full-time education, with participation in full-time education being significantly higher among those in social classes AB and C1 than among those in social classes C2 and DE (Figure 1). This is broadly consistent with the national figures for that cohort, which show that 71.6 per cent of 16 year olds were in full-time education (DfES, 2001a).

4.4   The majority of school-leavers attended a state school in Year 11 (93 per cent). School-leavers in Warwickshire were the least likely to attend a state school (89 per cent compared to 97 per cent and 98 per cent respectively from East Yorkshire and Reading). While the majority of students attended a state school, social class background had a significant impact upon the type of school attended. School-leavers from the higher social classes were more likely to attend either an independent or private school (9 per cent) than were those from the lower social classes (3 per cent). Moreover, 85 per cent of school-leavers who attended an independent or private school were engaged in

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[1] In these sections, all numerical data are derived from the representative sample. Quotations and additional information are derived from the in-depth interviews with young people and providers of education and training.

full-time education, compared to 72 per cent of those who attended a state school.

Figure 1: Participation in Full-time Education by Social Class
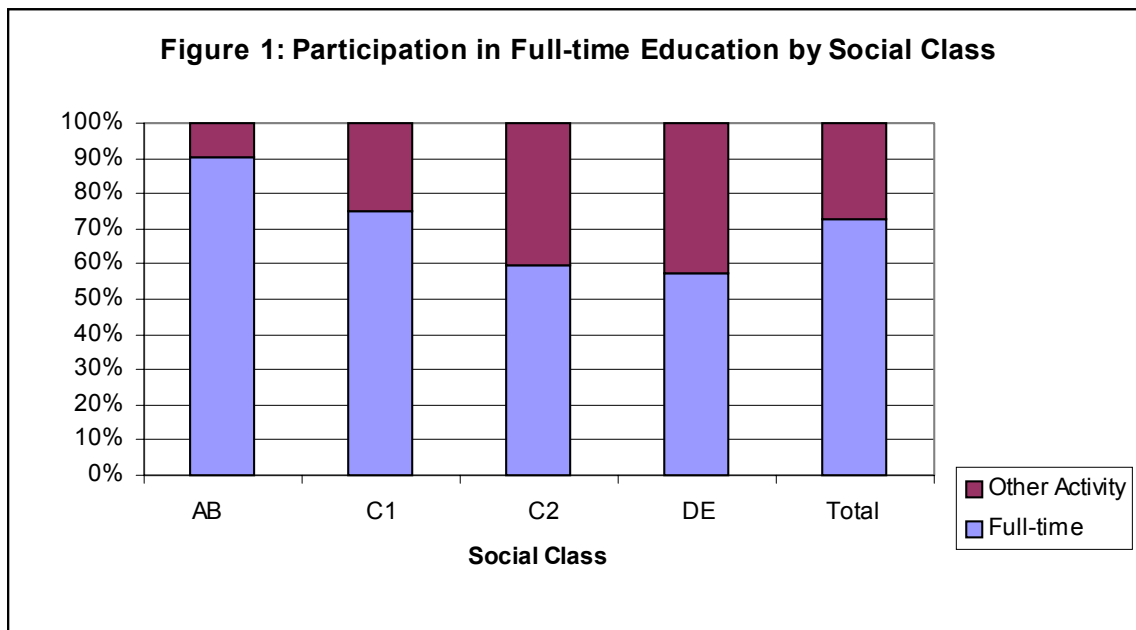
4.5 The overwhelming majority of respondents were residing in the parental home at the time of interview (98 per cent). Respondents from the lower social classes were slightly less likely to reside in the parental home compared to those from the higher social classes (96 per cent of respondents from social class group C2DE and 99 per cent of those from ABC1 respectively). The majority (82 per cent) of respondents did not make regular financial contribution to the household, although respondents from the lower social classes were significantly more likely to contribute financially than were those from the higher social classes.

4.6 However, making a financial contribution to the household was significantly related to whether or not the respondent was participating in full-time education, with those who were participating in full-time education and who were not working being the least likely to contribute. Ninety six per cent of this group did not contribute financially, compared to 84 per cent of those engaged in full-time education who were also working part-time to help towards their upkeep. In contrast, just 31 per cent of those who were working full-time or engaged in work based training did not contribute financially to the household.

4.7 The majority of respondents regularly attended school, although 6 per cent of respondents stated that they did not attend school for most of the time during Years 10 and 11. Females were more likely to say that they did not attend school for most of the time (7 per cent) compared to males (4 per cent). Moreover, almost a third of those who attended school most of the time admitted that they had played truant at least once during Years 10 and 11. School leavers from East Yorkshire (33 per cent) were slightly more likely to indicate they played truant during Years 10 and 11, compared to those from

Warwickshire (27 per cent). Eligibility for free school meals was more common amongst students from East Yorkshire (12 per cent) and Reading (14 per cent) compared to those from Warwickshire (9 per cent). However, a significantly higher proportion of those who were eligible in Warwickshire received free school meals (88 per cent) compared to those from East Yorkshire (59 per cent) or Reading (33 per cent).

4.8   Only 4 per cent of respondents indicated that they had a physical or mental impairment that had a substantial and long-term effect upon their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Additionally, 4 per cent of respondents stated that they regularly cared for a disabled, sick or elderly friend or relative, with similar proportions of male and female school-leavers indicating that this was the case.

Post-Year 11 Destinations

4.9   In terms of Post-Year 11 destinations, Figure 2 shows that, at the time of interview, the majority of respondents were engaged in full-time education (73 per cent). Interestingly, just 22 per cent of respondents were in full-time education and not working. Of those involved in full-time education the majority were also engaged in some form of part-time employment, this being the case for 74 per cent of females and 66 per cent of males.

Figure 2: Main Activity at Time of Interview by Gender
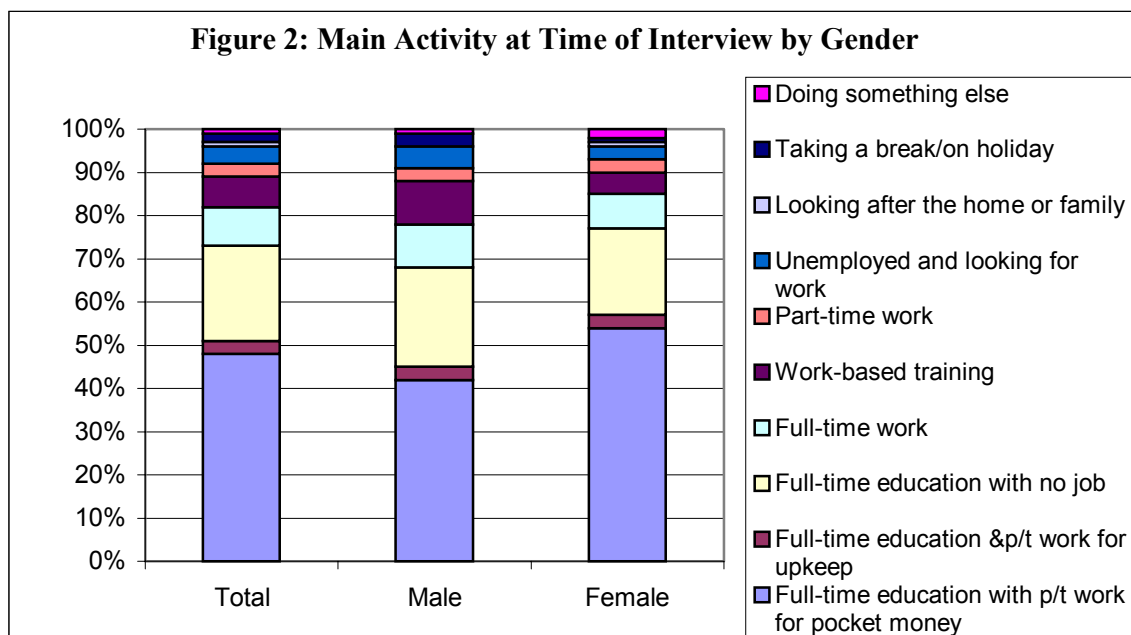
4.10   Only 9 per cent of respondents were in full-time work and 3 per cent were in part-time work, with a further 7 per cent in work-based training. While equal proportions of males and females were in part-time employment (not in full-time education), males were more likely than females to be in full-time employment or work-based training. Four per cent were unemployed. These characteristics illustrate the dominance of full-time education in post-compulsory education and the decline in the significance of the school to work route.

4.11   In the analysis, GCSE qualifications were computed together to produce an average grade score. The scores ranged from 8 for A* to 0 for an unclassified grade. Respondents achieved an average score of 4.9, with females out-performing males. Females achieved an average score of 5.1 compared to 4.9 for boys. Not surprisingly, there was a significant relationship between GCSE grades and social class, with respondents from the higher social classes achieving higher average scores, and the average declining as one moves down the social class scale. Respondents from social class AB achieved an average score of 5.7, compared to 4.1 for respondents from social class DE.

Figure 3: Current Activity by Average GCSE Grade
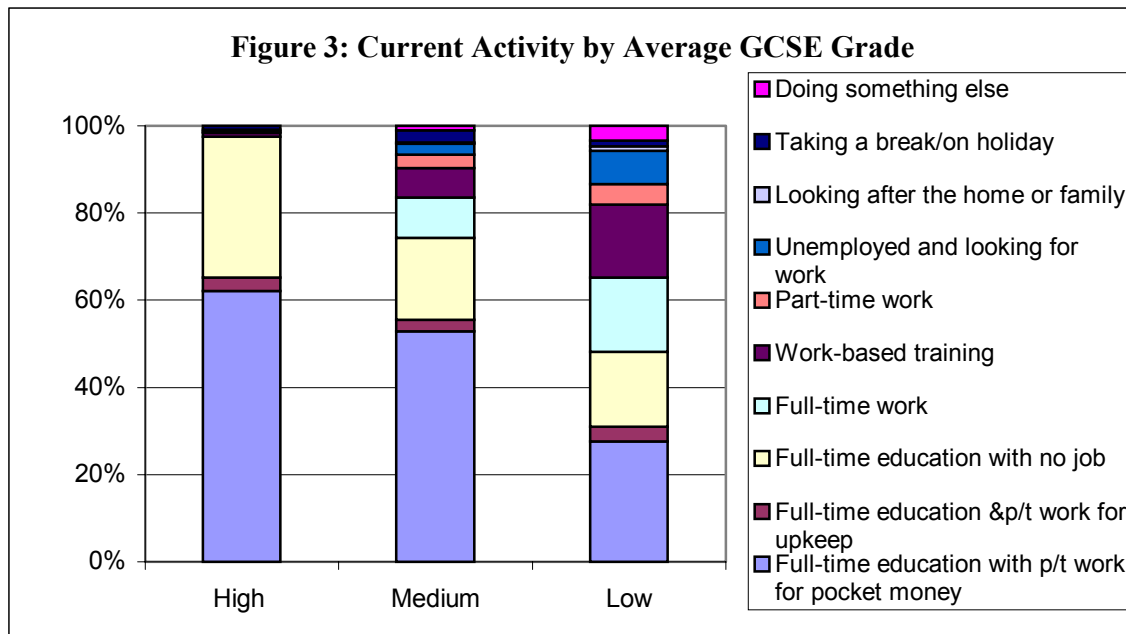
4.12   Those who achieved high GCSE grades were significantly more likely to be in full-time education (98 per cent) compared to those who achieved medium scores (74 per cent) or low scores (48 per cent). In contrast, 39 per cent of those who achieved low GCSE grades were in full-time or part-time employment or work based training, compared to just 1 per cent of those achieving high GCSE grades and 19 per cent achieving medium GCSE scores. There was also a significant relationship between GCSE attainment and risk of unemployment. Almost 8 per cent of those with low GCSE scores were unemployed, compared to 2 per cent of those with medium GCSE scores and no respondent with high GCSE scores was unemployed at the time of interview.

4.13   Of those who were in full-time education, the majority were enrolled in school (55 per cent) for their main studies, 15 per cent in a sixth form college and 28 per cent in a college of further education. There was no significant difference in the place of study by gender.

4.14   The most significant difference, in terms of the place of study, as Figure 4 shows, was in terms of social class, with the proportion of respondents enrolled in school declining as one moves down the social class scale.

Figure 4: Place of Study by Social Class
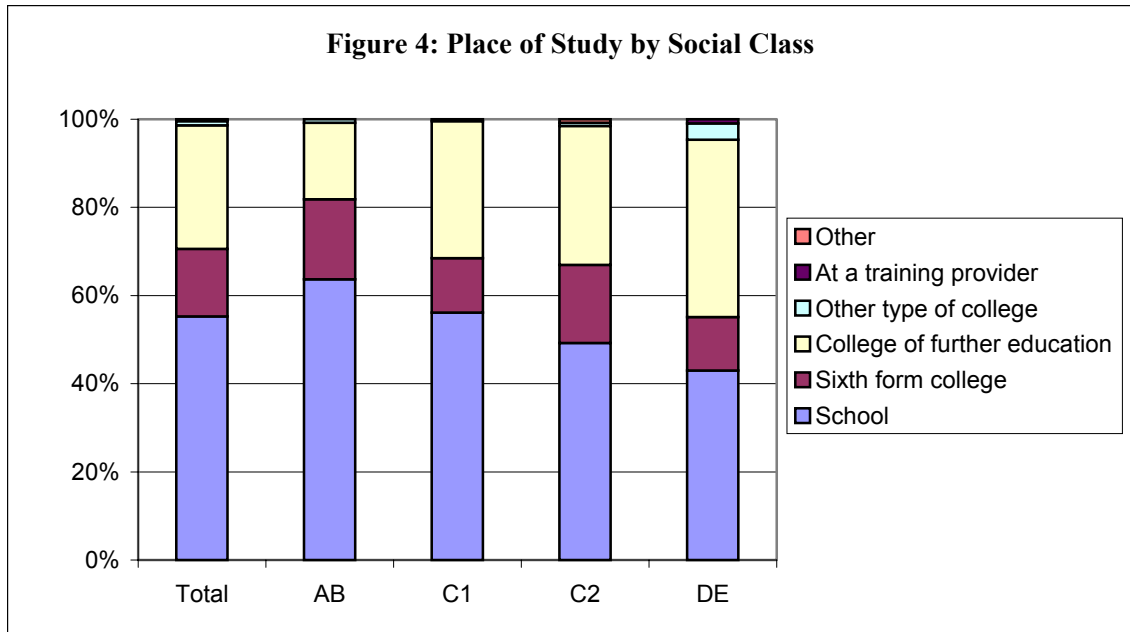
4.15   Nine per cent of all respondents were studying part-time for a qualification (including evening classes).

4.16   19 per cent of the sample were in employment (full-time or part-time) or work based training. The majority had started their employment in 2000 (56%), while 38 per cent had started working in 2001. All those currently in employment were employees, with the majority being employed in small firms. 23 per cent worked in firms employing more than 100 employees, while in contrast 66 per cent were working in organisations that employed fewer than 50 employees.

4.17   Those respondents who had entered employment were concentrated in the wholesale and retail sector and in hotels and restaurants. Of those who were employed at the time of interview, 27 per cent were undertaking a Modern Apprenticeship and 8 per cent were on National Traineeships. While 36 per cent of the males were Modern Apprentices, compared to 15 per cent of the females, only 4 per cent of the males were on National Traineeships, compared to 14 per cent of females. More importantly, however, almost two thirds (63 per cent) were not receiving formal training. This would appear to suggest a concentration in unskilled, low level employment, where qualifications have little relevance.

Part-time Study

4.18   Nine per cent of all respondents indicated that they were studying part-time for a qualification (including evening classes). It was also evident that those who were currently not in full-time education were more likely to be pursuing part-time studies, compared to those in full-time education. Consequently, respondents from the lower social classes were more likely to be pursuing part-time studies compared to respondents from the higher social classes. For instance, 7 per cent of respondents from social class group AB were pursuing

part-time studies, compared to 10 per cent from social class C1, 13 per cent from social class C2 and 8 per cent from social class DE.

4.19 The majority of respondents who were studying part-time courses were enrolled in colleges of further education/tertiary college (47 per cent). A training provider was highlighted by 18 per cent of respondents, while 10 per cent respectively were enrolled in either a sixth form college or at work. The courses it offered were the most important reason for attending that college/school. Males were more likely to mention that the college offered the part-time course that they were interested in studying or mention another reason. Females were more likely to mention the influence of friends, its reputation or that it was easy to get there. However, as the numbers are very small, caution should be exercised in interpreting the significance of these reasons.

Qualifications studied for since Year 11:

4.20 Respondents were asked to indicate what qualifications they were studying or had studied since Year 11 (Table 2). 11 per cent of the sample were not studying or had never studied for any qualification since Year 11. The majority (77 per cent) were studying or had studied for either A/S, vocational A/S exams, A levels or vocational A Levels. A further 11 per cent were studying or had studied either GCSE re-sits or another GCSE subject. This points to a low take-up of vocational qualifications and work related qualifications.

Table 2: Qualification currently being studied or have studied since Year 11,			
	Total %	**Male %**	**Female %**
GCSE re-sits	10	12	9
Other GCSE	1	1	1
A/S exams (GCE)	50	47	53
Vocational A/S exams	3	3	3
A Levels	21	19	22
GNVQ (intermediate/foundation GNVQ six unit) or Part One	10	12	9
GNVQ (Part One)	3	4	3
NVQ	13	12	13
BTEC	7	7	7
Vocational A Level	3	3	3
City and Guilds	4	6	2
Any other work related qualification	3	3	4
Any other qualification	5	4	6
Not studying for any qualification	11	12	10
Total (n)	**980**	**476**	**504**

4.21 The most significant difference in qualifications being studied relates to GCSE attainment scores. Not surprisingly, as Table 3 shows 24 per cent of those with low GCSE scores were currently not studying or had not studied since

Year 11, compared to just 1 per cent of those with high GCSE average score and 7 per cent with medium average scores.

Table 3: Qualification currently being studied or have studied since Year 11, per cent by GCSE average score,			
	High Scores %	**Medium Scores %**	**Low Scores %**
GCSE re-sits	0	15	12
Other GCSE	2	0	1
A/S exams (GCE)	89	54	2
Vocational A/S exams	4	3	0
A Levels	38	22	1
GNVQ (intermediate/foundation GNVQ six unit) or Part One	0	9	24
GNVQ (Part One)	1	4	5
NVQ	1	13	27
BTEC	2	9	10
Vocational A Level	1	5	0
City and Guilds	1	4	8
Any other work related qualification	1	4	3
Any other qualification	5	6	5
Not studying for any qualification	1	7	24
Total (n)	**238**	**505**	**210**

4.22   Those with high average GCSE scores were significantly more likely to be pursuing or had pursued academic studies since Year 11, compared to those with low average scores. For instance, 89 per cent of those achieving high GCSE average scores were pursuing or had pursued A/S exams and 38 per cent were pursuing or had pursued A levels. This compared to 54 per cent and 22 per cent respectively of those who had achieved medium GCSE average scores, and just 2 per cent and 1 per cent of those with low GCSE average scores. In contrast, those with low GCSE scores were more likely to be pursuing or had pursued vocational courses such as NVQs, GNVQs or BTEC. They were less likely to be studying GCSE re-sits or other GCSE subjects compared to those who had achieved medium GCSE scores.

4.23   Of those studying A/S exams, the majority (65 per cent) were studying four or more subjects, while of those undertaking A levels, the majority were studying 3 or more A levels (78 per cent). The majority of respondents studying GNVQs, NVQs, BTECs and City and Guilds were studying just one subject.

4.24   Table 4 shows that of those studying A/S exams, the majority (65 per cent) were studying four or more subjects. There was no gender difference in the number of subjects being studied.

Table 4: Number of A/S exams being studied			
	Total %	**Male %**	**Female %**
1	7	6	8
2	6	5	8
3	22	23	20
4	51	51	51
5	14	14	13
Total (n)	**510**	**230**	**280**

4.25   The most popular A/S subjects were English literature (31 percent), maths (27 per cent), biology (26 per cent) history (22 per cent), business studies (21 per cent) and geography (19 per cent). There were significant gender differences as revealed by Table 5, with males more likely than females to study maths, business studies, geography, chemistry and physics. In contrast, females were more likely to study English (language and literature), biology, art and design and French.

Table 5: Subjects being studied for A/S level, by gender			
	Total %	**Male %**	**Female %**
English Language	19	13	23
English Literature	31	21	39
Maths	27	38	18
French	8	5	10
Geography	19	23	16
History	22	24	20
Art and Design	15	9	20
Design and Technology	11	14	8
German	3	2	4
Business studies	21	23	19
Double award science	1	2	1
Biology	26	20	31
Chemistry	16	18	15
Physics	17	28	8
Others	82	83	81
Total (n)	**510**	**230**	**280**

4.26   Of those undertaking A levels, the majority were studying 3 or more A levels (78 per cent). Males were slightly more likely (24 per cent) to be studying fewer than 3 A Levels compared to females (19 per cent). Table 6 shows that, as with A/S level exams, the most popular A Level subjects were English literature (25 per cent), biology (25 per cent), business studies (21 per cent), maths (20 per cent). Males were again more likely than females to study maths, physics, and business studies, while females were more likely than males to study biology, English (language and literature) and art and design.

Table 6: Subjects being studied for A/S level, by gender			
	Total %	**Male %**	**Female %**
English Language	14	10	18
English Literature	25	18	30
Maths	20	29	12
French	7	3	11
Geography	13	18	10
History	19	21	17
Art and Design	14	7	19
Design and Technology	8	10	6
German	4	1	6
Business studies	21	25	17
Double award science	0	0	0
Biology	25	15	33
Chemistry	13	13	12
Physics	11	19	5
Others	73	71	73
Total (n)	**204**	**91**	**113**

4.27   Respondents were asked to indicate which, if any, key skills they were studying or expecting to study. As can be see from Table 7, the highest proportion (68 per cent) was studying or expecting to study information technology, followed by communication. Males were more likely (26 per cent) than females (21 per cent) to state that they were studying none of the key skills mentioned.

Table 7: Key skills respondents were studying or expecting to study			
	Total %	**Male %**	**Female %**
Communication	65	61	69
Application of numbers	61	57	64
IT	68	67	69
None of these	23	26	21
Total (n)	**980**	**476**	**504**

4.28   Table 8 highlights the significant difference in the likelihood of studying key skills dependent on whether the respondent was in full-time education. Respondents not in full-time education were significantly more likely not to be studying any of the key skills mentioned.

Table 8: Key skills respondents were studying or expecting to study			
	Total %	Full-time Education %	Not in Full-time education %
Communication	65	73	43
Application of numbers	61	69	39
IT	68	76	46
None of these	23	14	46
Total (n)	**980**	**711**	**269**

4.29 The young people interviewed for the qualitative study covered the complete range of ability and achievement and hence indicated the implications for Graduation. Those with the requisite GCSE passes were well on the way, but the minority who had not reached this level were at a substantial disadvantage. Over the period 16-18 years they had to achieve these as well as meet the other criteria.

4.30 This group is very heterogeneous, including those who might achieve satisfactory GCSEs at resits relatively easily, through to young people with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties. In addition, a sizeable minority of these low achievers are disaffected and have low motivation. There are others with major disabilities but high ability, with still others having highly disadvantaged home circumstances, perhaps being homeless and having not benefited from schooling. They are, however, united in being disadvantaged by a time span which is unrealistic or is seen as unrealistic. Furthermore, there are young people who will almost certainly never be able to achieve Graduation.

4.31 The majority of young people who had started a training programme had done so straight from school. Some had tried a different course or job but generally had decided within a short time that it was wrong for them. Those in 6th form (schools or colleges) had continued with their education from GCSE. However, young people on basic and life skills programmes had different experiences. Three quarters showed no clear direction with brief, unsuccessful employment experiences or limitations owing to non-employment reasons, e.g. one had been at home with his pregnant girlfriend.

4.32 Those attending college were generally positive about its atmosphere and how they were treated differently by staff, compared with their school experiences.

5. CHOICES AND DECISION-MAKING

Sources of information

5.1 Figure 5 reveals that 23 per cent of young people heard about their current job or training through a friend, 16 per cent heard through the Careers Service and 17 per cent heard through either a parent or other family member. It is evident that relatives and friends were more important to males than to females as sources of job information. For instance, 46 per cent of males had heard about their job through friends, parents or other family, compared to 28 per cent of females. Females were more likely to emphasise the importance of newspaper advertisements (10 per cent) and other sources (30 per cent). The Careers Service was mentioned more frequently by males than by females.
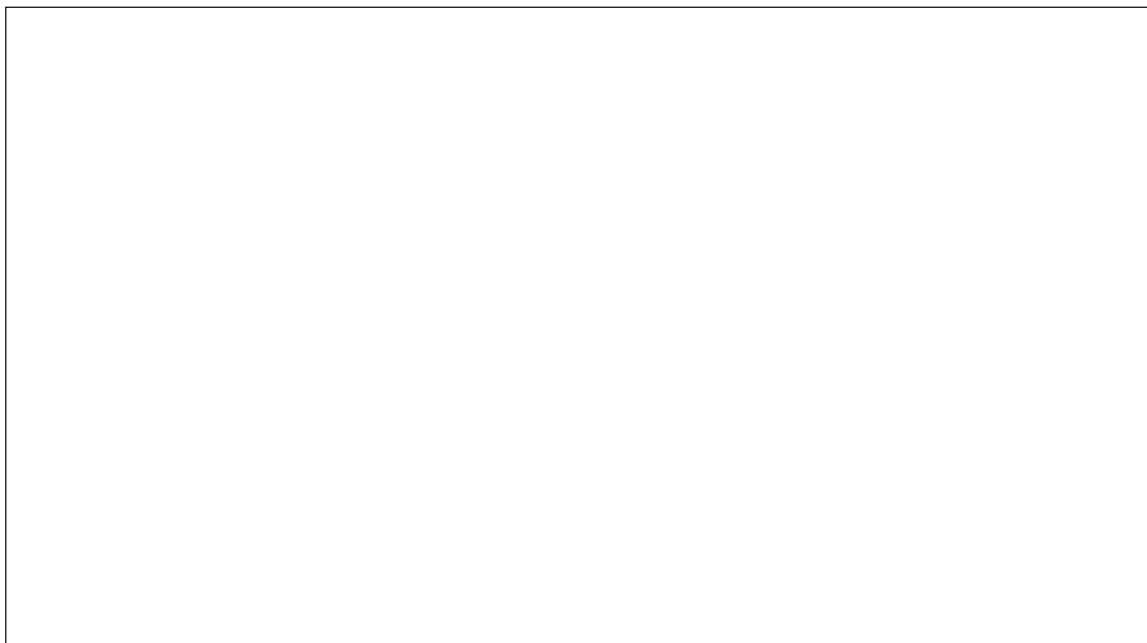
5.2 Respondents were asked how they found out about post-16 choices which were available at schools or colleges. The importance of school or college open days was mentioned by 52 per cent, while 49 per cent mentioned presentations by school/college representatives and 38 per cent mentioned careers conventions. Respondents from the lower social classes were less likely to mention careers conventions, presentations from potential schools/colleges and contacting the school/college themselves. This suggests that respondents from the higher social classes have greater access to post-16 choice, either through their school or the advantages accorded to them by their family's social class position.

5.3 The majority of respondents (80 per cent) felt that the sources of information they had accessed in helping them to decide on their post-16 choices were useful, with only four per cent considering them to be not at all useful. There was no significant difference between respondents from different social classes. Males were slightly more likely to indicate their sources of information were not useful (23 per cent) compared to females (17 per cent).

5.4   When asked whether they had known exactly what they had wanted to do after completing Year 11, 69 per cent had had firm intentions of staying on in education, while 12 per cent had been sure that they wanted to find a job. Those who had achieved high GCSE scores were significantly more likely to know that they wanted to continue within education than those who achieved medium or low GCSE scores.

'Well, I found them my best subjects and I wanted to go and do art and design'. (School student).

5.5   However, this still left a substantial proportion (17 per cent) who had been unsure about what they wanted to do. Moreover, 22 per cent of those with low GCSE scores were in this category, compared to 18 per cent of those with medium scores and 10 per cent of those with high scores.

Figure 6: Post-year 11 intentions by GCSE Average Score
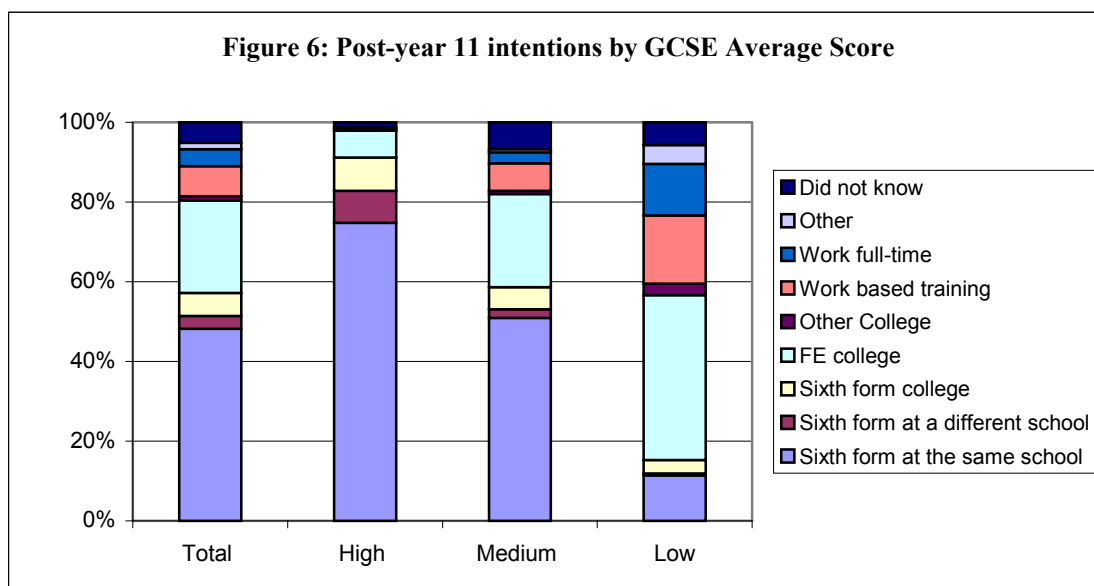
5.6   Post-Year 11 aspirations were strongly related to previous GCSE attainment, as shown in Figure 6. Thus, fewer than one per cent of respondents with high GCSE average scores intended either to start work based-training or work full-time, compared to 10 per cent of those with medium scores and 30 per cent of those with low GCSE average scores. Of those who were intending to pursue education, those respondents who had high GCSE average scores were more likely to mention school sixth forms, while those with low scores were more likely to intend to purse their educational courses within a college of further education. Importantly, only one per cent of those with high GCSE average scores did not know what they wanted to do after Year 11. This compares to 7 per cent and 6 per cent respectively of respondents with medium and low GSCE average scores.

5.7   The timing of the decision about their post-Year 11 destination indicated a significant relationship between when the decision was made and GCSE average scores. Almost half of all respondents had known before the start of Year 11 what they intended to do, but over 60 per cent of those who subsequently achieved high level GCSE scores had decided by that time. In contrast, 22 per cent of respondents with low GCSE scores, and 13 per cent of those with medium scores had decided after learning their exam results. The results suggest that a significant minority of young people are basing the decision about whether to stay on in education upon their educational attainment. It was also the case that those who were not in full-time education at the time of interview were much more likely to state that the making of the decision had been difficult. The proportion of this group who felt that they had made the wrong decision (33 per cent) was also much higher than that of those who had continued in education (6 per cent).

5.8   Respondents were asked if they knew what they wanted to do after age 16. Table 9 shows that the majority of respondents wanted to carry on studying (69 per cent) with just 12 per cent indicating they wanted to work. However, 17 percent did not know what they wanted to do. Unsurprisingly, males were less likely to indicate they wanted to carry on studying (62 per cent) compared to females (76 per cent).

Table 9: Proportion of respondents knowing what they wanted to do after age 16, by gender			
	Total %	Male %	Female %
More Study	69	62	76
Work	12	16	8
Other	2	3	1
Did not know	17	20	15
Total (n)	**980**	**476**	**504**

5.9   It is evident from Table 10 that those who achieved high GCSE scores were significantly more likely to indicate they knew that they wanted to carry on studying (90 per cent), compared to 72 per cent of those who achieved average GCSE scores and just 45 per cent of those who achieved low GCSE scores. In contrast, while 28 per cent of those who achieved low GCSE scores knew they wanted to work, just 8 per cent of those with medium scores and no respondent with high GCSE scores indicated that they knew they wanted to work. However, it is salient to compare the GCSE scores of those who did not know what they wanted to do. It is evident that those who achieved low GCSE scores were the most likely to indicate they did not know what they wanted to do (22 per cent) compared to those with medium (18 per cent) and high GSCE scores (10 per cent).

Table 10: Proportion of respondents knowing what they wanted to do after age 16 , by GCSE Average Score			
	High %	Medium %	Low %
More Study	90	72	45
Work	0	8	28
Other	0	1	5
Did not know	10	18	22
Total (n)	**238**	**505**	**210**

5.10 In terms of respondents' current activity and whether they had known what they wanted to do after the age of 16, Table 11 shows that those in full-time education were significantly more likely to have known that they wanted to continue studying (83 per cent), compared to 32 per cent of those not in full-time education. In contrast, 37 per cent of those not in full-time education knew they wanted to work, compared to just 2 per cent of those in full-time education.

Table 11: Proportion of respondents knowing what they wanted to do after age 16, by whether in full-time education			
	Total %	Full-time Education %	Not in Full-time Education %
More Study	69	83	32
Work	12	2	37
Other	2	1	6
Did not know	17	14	26
Total (n)	**980**	**711**	**269**

5.11 The qualitative interviews indicated that for young people on work-based training the opportunity to earn money ('paid as you learn') was an important consideration in their decision-making, for various reasons. In some cases it reflected the financial circumstances of the family, while other students made reference to the high costs of living in their area. The different atmosphere was also mentioned, whether because 'school holds you back' or because at college they felt 'treated more as an adult', as many stated.

5.12 Furthermore, those on vocational college courses had selected that route because they liked the practical work and wanted to learn job skills. Young people on these courses and work-based training were often clear about their vocational and career ambitions, and had wanted to start to work towards them straight away.

> 'Experience – I didn't want to do a course and then go into a job and not have a clue what I was doing' (engineering apprentice).

5.13 Those on academic courses had continued their education as they generally wanted to go to university, and had chosen subjects because of their GCSE performance and intention for a university course.

'Well, I found them my best subjects and I wanted to go and do art and design'. (School student, Year 13).

'Well I've always enjoyed Biology and PE and they sort of interlink. And psychology, I just read a description and it sounded really interesting. 'Cos I've always wanted to know why we do things. Psychology just sort of delved into that' (school student).

5.14 However, while many had a good idea of their preferred course at university, others were less sure, or the basis of their choice was less clearly grounded in such a plan.

'Art's one of my hobbies, and Product Design, and I also like French and I visit there quite often, so that's quite helpful. And I did well in my GCSEs with that. And Sociology: I just thought it's interesting to find out what happens in the world and why people do stuff – I just thought it would be an interesting one to do' (school student).

5.15 Other students were retaking GCSEs or were on courses suggested to them by the college because they did not get the grades for their intended course. This group tended still to be considering their options and was not necessarily settled in a specific career choice. The majority of students on Advanced Certificate of Vocational Education (ACVE) courses had chosen that option because they felt it gave them a good grounding in their subject whilst offering flexibility in outcomes and possible destinations.

5.16 Young people in one hostel had had very poor school experiences with the exception of one young woman who had achieved 9 GCSEs at grades A* - C. The majority had left school with very few, if any, qualification. However, all recognised the need to make up for lost time and to achieve further training and, above all, qualifications. Most were very committed to their chosen course of action. However, those interviewed at a drop in centre, who had also had poor school experiences, tended not to have clear plans.

5.17 This uncertainty was also apparent among those not seeking university. While many had traced a relatively straight path to their current activities, for others the link was unclear at best. Indeed, many of the young people had apparently never fully reflected upon the reason for their choices beyond some sense that it was always what they had wanted to do or that it had seemed a good idea at the time. For some this was an opportunity to build upon their favourite school subject, while for others it was an opportunity to start afresh and learn something completely different. This lack of reflection is clearly revealed in the responses of trainees who had changed from construction to training as chefs – when this was commented upon they laughed and agreed it was a funny change.

Influences on decision-making

5.18   Respondents were asked about sources of helpful advice in making decisions about their post-16 route. Table 12 highlights the significant impact of parental advice upon respondents' decisions, with 72 per cent mentioning the importance of parents. In terms of the potential impact of Graduation, it would appear to be important that parents, as key influences on students' decision-making, are made aware of its role.

5.19   The Careers Service was also a very important source of advice and was mentioned by 55 per cent of respondents.

> 'I went to the careers service and they said about work based training, so I went to numerous training centres to see what was best for me, so I came here' (business admin trainee)

5.20   The advice of a guidance teacher or other teachers was mentioned by 44 per cent and 41 per cent respectively. There was very little difference between males and females, but, as Table 12 indicates, there were significant differences in the responses of those in full-time education and those who were not.

Table 12: Sources of helpful advice on post-16 decisions			
	Total %	**Full-time education %**	**Not in full-time education %**
My friends	31	33	26
My parents	72	75	63
My brothers and sisters	19	21	15
A guidance teacher/tutor at school	44	50	28
Other teachers at school	42	46	32
Someone from the careers service	55	54	57
An employer	7	5	12
A training provider	3	1	9
Someone else	1	1	2
None of these	4	3	5
Total (n)	**980**	**711**	**269**

5.21   Those respondents not in full-time education were not surprisingly more likely to mention the importance of an employer and/or a training provider. They were also slightly more likely to mention the Careers Service, compared to those in full-time education. In contrast, respondents in full-time education were significantly more likely to mention the importance of both guidance teachers and other teachers in school. They were also more likely than those not in full-time education to mention the importance of parent upon their post-16 decisions. This table illustrates the way in which young people's access to information and advice is dependent upon their expected post-Year 11 route.

Table 13: Sources of the most helpful advice on post-16 decisions			
	Total %	Full-time education %	Not in full-time education%
My friends	5	4	5
My parents	30	29	32
My brothers and sisters	5	5	5
A guidance teacher/tutor at school	17	19	11
Other teachers at school	14	16	8
Someone from the careers service	25	23	30
An employer	2	1	5
A training provider	1	1	4
Someone else	0	0	1
None of these	1	2	1
Total (n)	**980**	**711**	**269**

5.22   Respondents were also asked to select who they felt gave the most helpful advice. As in Table 12, the importance of parental advice is highlighted, with the Careers Service also being significant. There was very little difference between males and females, although females were more likely to mention the Careers Service (30 per cent) compared to males (20 per cent). In contrast, males were more likely to mention parental advice (34 per cent) compared to females (26 per cent). The most significant difference was between those currently in full-time education and those not in full-time education.

5.23   Those not in full-time education were more likely to mention that they had received the most helpful advice from the Careers Service and, to a lesser extent, from an employer and/or a training provider. This is unsurprising, considering that it is likely that those respondents not intending to pursue full-time education would seek employment/training advice from the Careers Service. Both Table 12 and 13 illustrate the significance of the Careers Service in the lives of those young people not intending to pursue post-16 full-time education. Moreover, it is evident that careers advice provided within the formal school setting was of less importance to these young people.

Table 14: Post-Year 11 aspirations, by gender and current activity					
	Total %	Gender %		Main current activity%	
		Male	Female	FT education	Not FT education
Sixth form at same school	47	47	47	59	14
Sixth form at different school	3	1	5	4	0
Sixth form college	6	5	6	7	3
Course at FE college	23	20	26	24	19
Course at other college	1	1	1	1	2
Work-based training	8	11	5	1	26
Work full-time	5	8	3	0	19
Other	2	2	1	0	5
Did not know what to do	5	5	5	3	12
Total (n)	**980**	**476**	**504**	**711**	**269**

5.24 Table 14 highlights the significance of education when respondents were asked what they wanted to do after they completed Year 11. The majority aspired to continuing in post–16 education (80 per cent), while just 5 per cent aspired to starting work full-time and 8 per cent wanted to start work based training. Males were more likely to aspire to enter employment or work based training compared to females. Similarly those young people not in full-time education were more likely to aspire to entering employment or training than did those in full-time education. For instance, 26 per cent of those not in full-time education wanted to start work based training and 19 per cent wanted to start a job, compared to just one per cent and less than one per cent of those who are currently in full-time education. However, more importantly, 12 per cent of those not in full-time education did not know what they wanted to do after Year 11, compared to just 3 per cent of those in full-time education. This may suggest that careers advice and guidance is not being accessed, or is failing to impact upon, a significant proportion of the most vulnerable young people.

Reasons for not continuing in education

5.25 Of those who had not wanted to continue in education, almost half suggested that it was because they wanted to look for a job or a training place. Other important reasons were that they needed to earn more money, that they did not like their old school, that their exam results were not good and that they had found a job that they wanted to do. It is clear that reasons for not staying on in education can be separated into two groups;
i) negative experiences of school and poor exam results
ii) positive outcomes in the labour market.

5.26 Females were more likely than males to mention that they did not like their old school, while males were more likely to mention that they wanted to look for a job, could not find a part-time job to combine with study, that their exam results were not good enough and that they needed more money than they could have received by remaining in education.

5.27 From the respondents to the qualitative interviews, discussion of the reasons for their career developments to date indicated a difference between those on vocational and academic routes. For young people on work-based training the opportunity to earn money ('paid as you learn') was an important consideration, for various reasons. In some cases it reflected the financial circumstances of the family, while other students made reference to the high costs of living in their area. The different atmosphere was also mentioned, whether because 'school holds you back' or because at college they felt 'treated more as an adult', as many stated.

5.28 Furthermore, those on vocational college courses had selected that route because they liked the practical work and wanted to learn job skills.

> 'The main thing I will get out of my apprenticeship is experience, so that I can apply for another job in the future and say that I have worked for however many years' (modern apprentice – engineering).

Young people on these courses and work-based training were often clear about their vocational and career ambitions, and had wanted to start to work towards them straight away, and overwhelmingly rated their work placements highly in providing first hand experience.

> 'It's OK learning about it in a classroom but it's different in industry…… so that was quite good to actually have some hands on work and see what it's all about' (modern apprentice)

5.29   Other students were retaking GCSEs or were on courses suggested to them by the college because they did not get the grades for their intended course. This group tended to be still considering their options and were not necessarily settled in a specific career choice. The majority of students on Advanced Certificate of Vocational Education (ACVE) courses had chosen that option because they felt it gave them a good grounding in their subject whilst offering flexibility in outcomes and possible destinations. Many also referred to other skills such as

> 'Leadership skills, confidence and communication skills' (AVCE student)

Satisfaction with choices

5.30   The qualitative interviews indicated that there was a high level of satisfaction with choices, reported by interviewees across the sample. Satisfaction was linked to the nature of the course and career paths. Work-based trainees were happy to be working and earning, while those on academic courses were following a route which they could see would start them on their chosen career.

5.31   The young people with complex special needs attending special schools and colleges were also very content about their choices, reporting gratitude to their teachers for guidance and support, but also taking real pride in their achievements. However, these schools/colleges also had academically able students (e.g. 1 was taking 4 'A' levels, another 5 AS). These students were more critical about their courses, content or teaching quality, while the continuation of a school environment was also criticised.

> 'People get bored out of their wits, need a passport into a new environment'. (FE student).

5.32   Students on basic and life skills programmes varied in their comments. Some had left school or they did not see the relevance, and had been routed to the course by the Careers Service. Some felt pressured to attend. One commented that his benefits relied upon it.

5.33   The young people also reported their parents were supportive and satisfied, the general view being that the parents were happy as long as the young person was happy, as

'(parent) would be pleased with anything that I chose to do' (Level 2 child care).

'They know that I am not sure what I want to do but they are just glad that I am on the right track' (Engineering Modern Apprentice).

Some parents had been uncertain about modern apprenticeships ('take the safe option of college' - IT modern apprentice)

5.34   References to teachers' views were more varied. Some were unsure what their teachers would think as they had not returned to school since leaving, while some school staff were reported to have been disappointed in the young person's choice, or 'surprised at me asserting myself', (modern apprentice: business), preferring them to stay at school. Where the interviewees had stayed at school, teachers were reported to be satisfied with the choice. Hence, while almost all students who had stayed on at school reported teacher support, this was the case for only about two thirds of those on other paths.

Satisfaction with the school experience

5.35   There was a division in responses to the qualitative interviews between those following academic and vocational pathways. The former tended to be positive about their school experiences, reporting that they had got on well at school and could see the link between subjects chosen and their current studies. However, about a third noted that either approach or content changed substantially between the GCSE and AS syllabus in the same subject, or noted that they were now taking totally new subjects and so earlier work was less relevant.

5.36   Other students were generally less positive or reluctant, 'It was all right' being the most frequent reaction, and reporting on the whole that skills learned at school were not particularly relevant or valued. The exceptions were English and Maths for some young people. Some students on vocational programmes were more positive. A modern apprentice felt that he was starting to see the value of some specific skills learned in school.

'Stuff I never thought I would ever use like maths, trigonometry, that we use now for measuring'.

5.37   This link with maths and science, or computers was the most common, especially among construction and engineering trainees, along with literacy, particularly reported by office-based trainees. However, young people on courses such as child care were more generally negative and dismissive, some stating they had 'started again' after leaving school and that there were other aptitudes important in their present work which, in their view, had not been assessed at school.

5.38   Students on basic and life skills programmes were particularly negative about the benefits of school, some blaming teachers or did not see school as

important, although one commented that bullying had led to her non-attendance, which she now regretted. The young people attending drop in centres or living in hostels also mainly reported negative school experiences.

Comment

5.39   While there are some general themes arising from the qualitative interviews, e.g. parental satisfaction with their choices, there are differences between the young people on academic compared with vocational training, and some variation between work-based and college-based schemes. Furthermore, there are differences in the degree to which these variations are indicative of clearly thought through ideas of career progression. While rigidly developed plans might not be expected, or indeed sensible, at this age, there was evidence of substantial variation in the degree to which the young peoples' pathways could be described as 'plans' rather than as *reactions*. This has clear implications for the introduction of Graduation, with its attendant, albeit flexible, components which comprise a further element to be planned in (or not) to young people's career development.

6.   QUALIFICATION ATTAINMENT

6.1   During Year 11, almost all of the respondents had studied English language (97 per cent) and mathematics (98 per cent). A high proportion of respondents studied English literature (85 per cent), double science (79 per cent), design and technology (69 per cent) French (58 per cent) and religious education (57 per cent). Fewer than 20 per cent of respondents studied single science (5 per cent), biology (18 per cent), chemistry (17 per cent), physics (18 per cent), Drama (16 per cent), leisure and tourism (1 per cent), health and social care (2 per cent) and personal, social and health education (13 per cent). There were significant gender differences in subjects studied, particularly within the sciences. While females were more likely to study double science (84 per cent) compared to males (73 per cent), males were significantly more likely to study chemistry (22 per cent), physics (22 per cent), IT/computing (36 per cent) and biology (21 per cent), compared to their female counterparts (13 per cent, 14 per cent , 29 per cent and 14 per cent respectively). Females were more likely than males to have studied French, drama, history and art and design, while males were more likely to have studied geography, design and technology and business. The gender difference in subjects studied broadly reflects the situation in general (DfES, 2001b).

6.2   The majority of respondents achieved GCSE grades A*-C in their subjects. For instance, 77 per cent of respondents who studied English language, and 76 per cent who studied English literature achieved grades A*-C. High scores were observable for geography, history, mathematics, art and design, design and technology and science –double, drama and other subjects, where over 60 per cent achieved grades A-C. A small minority of respondents (43) had studied for GNVQs in Years 10 and 11. The majority had taken Unit tests (30), with 11 taking exams and two respondents did not take any exams/complete the course.

Usefulness of qualifications

6.3   Those respondents who sat at least one exam were asked how useful they thought the qualifications they gained were useful in getting the course/job they wanted. Table 15 shows that the majority thought their qualifications were useful (76 per cent), with just 21 per cent indicating they were not useful. Females were slightly more likely (77 per cent) compared to males (75 per cent) to indicate that the qualifications they gained were useful for the course/job they wanted. However, the most significant difference as we can see from Table 15 is that those who do not continue in full-time education are less likely to consider their qualifications useful in getting the course/job they wanted. Only 49 per cent of those not in full-time education thought the qualification they gained was useful compared to 85 per cent of those in full-time education.   This apparent lack of attachment to the value of qualifications, on the part of relatively low achievers, is significant for Graduation and its potential appeal to this group.

Table 15: How useful respondents found the qualification they gained in helping them get the course/job they wanted			
	Total %	Full-time Education %	Not in Full-time Education %
Very Useful	39	45	22
Fairly Useful	37	41	27
Not very Useful	14	10	25
Not at all Useful	7	3	20
Don't Know	1	1	2
Not Applicable	2	1	4
Total	**931**	**690**	**241**

6.4   Indeed, 20 per cent of those not in full-time education felt the qualifications they gained was not at all useful for getting the course/job they wanted. Table 16 illustrates the close relationship between respondents' GCSE average scores and whether they found the qualifications they gained useful in getting the course/job they wanted.

Table 16: How useful respondents found the qualification they gained in helping them get the course/job they wanted, by GCSE average grade scores ,			
	High Scores %	Medium Scores %	Low Scores %
Very Useful	60	41	9
Fairly Useful	32	41	35
Not very Useful	5	11	31
Not at all Useful	1	4	21
Don't Know	1	1	1
Not Applicable	1	1	3
Total	**235**	**494**	**194**

6.5 Nine per cent of those with low GCSE average scores felt their qualification was 'very useful', compared to 60 per cent of those with high average scores and 41 per cent of those with medium scores. In contrast 21 per cent of those with low GCSE average scores felt that their qualification was 'not useful' in helping them get the course/job they wanted, compared to 1 per cent and 4 per cent respectively of those achieving high and medium GCSE scores. This is not unsurprising as it is likely that those respondents with low scores choose courses or jobs where qualification attainment was not important, while qualification attainment was probably essential in helping those with high scores to get into post-compulsory educational courses such as A/AS-levels.

6.6 Many of our interviewees had already achieved the formal qualifications part of Graduation but there is also a substantial group of young people for whom Graduation would probably not be attainable by the age of 18. In the case of some young people with severe and complex special educational needs this may not be achievable at all. This comment from a Life Skills course student, said with deep sarcasm, indicates the size of the task for some young people.

'Yeah I'm going to be a nurse, aren't I, when I can't read or spell'.

Key skills

6.7 The academic interviewees were critical, on occasion forcibly so, about *key skills*. While some referred to the benefit of Key Skills encouraging team building and ability to work with others, the majority view may be summed up as a perceived attribute among universities that 'we value the contribution made by key skills but we will not include it in our tariff'.

6.8 However, about half of vocational interviewees who, having failed to gain a respectable grade in GCSE maths at school, regarded the relevant key skills as a welcome chance to gain an alternative qualification which would be acceptable for the requirements of their respective employers. This point of view was expressed even more consistently by about two thirds of training agency interviewees.

7. INVOLVEMENT IN WIDER ACTIVITIES

7.1 Graduation is proposed to include a range of means whereby achievement may be secured and demonstrated, as well as such achievements being in a number of domains. We therefore asked our respondents and interviewees about their wider interests and activities; whether their college promoted enrichment activities; whether they had a part-time job; and what learning they could see as valuable in other areas of their lives.

Activities during Years 10 and 11

7.2 It was evident from the survey that involvement in wider activities, either at school or outside, in Year 10 or Year 11 played a part in the lives of a large proportion of respondents, with 75 per cent stating that they had participated regularly in activities/interests/hobbies. Males (84 per cent) were significantly

more likely than females (67 per cent) to have participated in such activities. Those respondents in full-time education at the time of interview (79 per cent) were also more likely to have engaged in regular activities in Years 10 and 11 compared to those not in full-time education (67 per cent). Respondents with high GCSE scores were also more likely to have participated in regular activities than those with low or medium scores. Participation in activities was mediated by social class, as respondents from the higher social classes were more likely to have participated in activities during Years 10 and 11, than those from the lower social classes.

7.3 There were also significant differences in the types of activities engaged in by social class. Those from the lower social classes were more likely to engage in sporting activities, while those from the higher social classes were more likely to take up drama, music, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, scouts and voluntary and community work (Table 17).

Table 17: Types of activities respondents participated in during Year 10 and 11, by social class

				percentages
	AB	**C1**	**C2**	**DE**
Sports	71	71	77	79
Drama	15	17	11	7
Arts	6	5	7	7
Music	32	19	11	9
Duke of Edinburgh Award	10	7	2	1
Youth Club	5	7	5	9
IT/Computer Classes	2	1	4	3
Scots/Guides	4	6	3	1
Voluntary or community activity	7	6	4	3
Other	15	20	20	15
Total (n)	**225**	**229**	**164**	**116**

7.4 Most respondents had participated at least weekly in their chosen activities, although there had been considerable difference in the frequency of participation in some activities. Those engaging in sporting activities tended to participate more frequently than was true of other activities. The majority of respondents (71 per cent) had engaged in sporting activities more than once a week, with a further 23 per cent participating once a week. Those engaging in music and arts had also participated relatively frequently.

7.5 Most respondents had spent between one and five hours per week participating in their chosen activity, although those who took part in sport tended to spend longer. The majority of respondents indicated that the activities that they engaged in during Year 10 and 11 took place either in school or at a venue within 30 minutes travelling time from home.

7.6 With the exception of drama, IT and voluntary or community activity, the remaining activities involved various financial costs, with membership fees, buying and hiring equipment and travel costs being the most usual expenditures.

7.7   Apart from the Duke of Edinburgh award and scouts/guides, the majority of activities engaged in during Years 10 and 11 did not lead to any recognised award. Awards were gained by 25 per cent of those participating in sports, 17 per cent in drama, 2 per cent in youth clubs and 15 per cent in IT/computer classes/clubs. In contrast, 44 per cent of those pursuing music and 31 pursuing arts received a recognised award. More than half the respondents (57 per cent) had no awards, other than academic qualifications, before the age of 16. Those who were in education at the time of interview were more likely to have gained non-academic awards (47 per cent) than those not in full-time education (32 per cent).

7.8   Respondents from the higher social classes were significantly more likely to have gained non-academic awards before the age of 16. In terms of the type of achievement, 51 per cent had gained sports awards/certificates, 30 per cent had gained music awards/certificates and 12 per cent had gained Duke of Edinburgh awards. Male respondents were more likely than females to have achieved sports awards (65 per cent compared to 41 per cent). However, females were more likely to have achieved music awards (39 per cent) and arts awards (12 per cent) compared to males (19 per cent and 3 per cent respectively). It is also evident from Table 18 that those from the higher social classes were more likely to have achieved music awards and Duke of Edinburgh awards compared to the lower social classes. The lower social classes were more likely to have received sports awards.

Table 18: Non-academic achievements before age 16, by social class (percentages)				
	AB	C1	C2	DE
Sports awards	46	52	56	57
Music awards	40	33	17	18
Arts awards	7	10	5	8
Duke of Edinburgh awards	16	12	12	6
Other	16	16	26	27
Total (n)	275	292	215	187

7.9   The majority of respondents who had gained other non-academic achievements before age 16 felt that these should have been recognised in a certificate or award (72 per cent).

7.10   The main reason for not participating in any activities in Years 10 and 11, which was mentioned by 42 per cent of the sample, was that there was nothing that interested them available, while 25 per cent felt that they did not have enough time to pursue activities (Table 19). There was very little difference in the reasons for not participating in activities in Year 10 and 11 by gender. It may be significant that respondents who were in full-time education at the time of interview were more likely to cite a lack of time to pursue activities than was the case for those not in full-time education, who tended to suggest that they had lost interest in the activity.

Table 19: Reasons for not participating in any activities/hobbies/interests by whether currently in full-time education

	Total	In Full-Time Education	Not in Education
Not enough time	25	31	16
Not enough money	4	5	2
Lack of facilities	6	7	4
Too far away/lack of transport	2	2	2
Lost interest	14	11	20
Nothing that interested me available	42	42	42
Other	14	10	20
Don't know	9	8	10
Total (n)	**241**	**151**	**80**

7.11 The results suggest that pressure of studies may have been preventing some young people from participating in activities/hobbies in Years 10 and 11, while those who were not heavily involved in studying were less interested in activities which may have led to an award.

Participation in activities since Year 11

7.12 In terms of participation in activities at the time of interview, a majority of respondents (60 per cent) indicated that they participated in regular activities. However, there was a marked difference between males and females, with males (72 per cent) being more likely to take part in regular activities than females (48 per cent). Respondents from the lower social classes were again less likely to engage in regular activities than those from the higher social classes. For instance, 66 per cent of respondents from social class AB indicated they engaged in regular activities compared to 46 per cent of respondents from social class DE. It could be argued that one of the reasons for this difference is the fact that young people from the lower social classes are less likely to pursue post-16 education, and therefore will not have access to activities organised by and through the school. However, irrespective of whether or not they were in full-time education, respondents in the lower social classes were less likely to pursue regular activities compared to the higher social classes. For instance, of those currently in full time education 67 per cent of respondents from social class AB were engaged in regular activities, compared to just 45 per cent of those from social class DE. The percentages for those not in full-time education were 67 per cent and 48 per cent respectively.

7.13 Sporting activities were the most popular type of regular activity (73 per cent), followed by music (19 per cent) and other activities (17 per cent). In contrast, community and voluntary work were activities carried out by only a small minority of respondents. One of the main reasons underlying the low participation of females in activities is related to their low participation in sporting activities. Indeed, 60 per cent of females who undertake regular activities pursue sporting activities, compared to over 80 per cent of males. In contrast, females are more likely to pursue drama and arts

7.14 The majority of respondents did not receive any recognised award for their activity. Just 12 per cent pursuing sports, 24 per cent pursuing drama, 15 per cent pursuing Arts, and 16 per cent pursuing music indicated that their activity would lead to a recognised award.

7.15 Just under a third of respondents who were studying were involved in activities other than formal subjects as part of the curriculum. Equal proportions of males and females were involved in such activities (31 per cent and 32 per cent respectively). Those who were in full time education were more likely to be involved in such activities (36 per cent) than those not in full-time education (14 per cent). Not surprisingly therefore, respondents from the higher social classes were significantly more likely to be involved in such activities. Just 21 per cent of respondents from social class DE indicated they were involved in such activities, compared to 31 per cent from social class C1 and 41 per cent from social class AB.

7.16 A few young people were at a high level – one child care student represented England at synchronised swimming, and another reported:

> "All my spare time is taken with this. I train two nights a week and enter competitions every other weekend. I have to get funding for this. I learn a lot from athletics, travelling and physiotherapy work. The teamwork is important (Female, Afro-Caribbean hostel resident).

7.17 Sporting activities were again the most frequently mentioned (73 per cent), followed by music (19 per cent) and other activities (17 per cent), and the relationship between type of activity and social class was maintained, with respondents from the lower social classes being more likely to be involved in sports than those from the higher social classes. Sporting activities were also engaged in more frequently than other activities, with 66 per cent claiming that they participated in sport more than once a week.

7.18 As with Years 10/11, the majority of activities were organised by the respondents themselves, and tended to be within 30 minutes travel of their home. Importantly, the majority of activities did not lead to any recognised award.

7.19 Just under a third of respondents who were studying were involved in activities other than formal subjects as part of the curriculum. As Table 20 shows, sporting activities were again predominant.

Table 20: Types of activities respondents currently in education participate in as part of the curriculum (percentages)			
	Total	Male	Female
Sports	43	57	30
Drama	11	4	17
Arts	5	4	6
Music	9	10	8
Mentoring younger students	8	4	11
Helping teachers	5	4	6
Visiting hospitals	0	0	0
Helping old people	1	1	2
Community service	14	14	14
Voluntary work	17	15	19
Other	18	13	23
Total (n)	**284**	**135**	**149**

7.20   As far as the respondents to the qualitative interviews were concerned, the range of wider activities undertaken was substantial with a number of factors evident. School students often referred to school-related activities, e.g. school sports teams, choir, while college students often referred to activities related to their courses, e.g. horse riding, cooking and mending cars. Some activities were more specific to the location (martial arts in one area). Sport was very popular, particularly football among the young men, both academic and vocational interviewees. Although spectating was often mentioned, engagement was also common. In most cases sports were recreational (e.g. 'kick about' football, swimming rather than in organised teams, leagues).

7.21   This focus on unorganised, ad hoc activities was evident in other areas whether listening to music, (practically everyone) playing pool, or keeping fit, where the aim is relaxation rather than achievement.

> 'I like to just chill out when I come home from college, watch a bit of telly, listen to some music and cuddle up with my cat' (hairdressing trainee).

7.22   Involvement with the church was rare, and involvement with guides/scouts a minority interest. A small minority of interviewees had significant caring roles; e.g. one was a carer for her brother who had severe learning difficulties.

> 'It's why I am on this course (Pre-school care – SEN, Level 2) because I have had the experience of caring for someone. I love doing it, it is my choice.

7.23   There were some exceptional young people who were substantially engaged in wider activities – one helped on the WRVS, ran Guides and Brownies, did sport more than one night a week, and played two instruments (but refused to take grade exams 'on principle'), played in a steel band and did various charity

work. However, for the majority, these activities were limited and ad hoc e.g. 'clubbing'.

7.24 Given the ad hoc nature of most of these activities, it is not surprising that most young people were not engaged in wider activities which led to clear evidence of increasing achievement. However, activities undertaken by minorities included music grade examinations, and a number of awards: British Horse Association, swimming and lifesaving, First Aid At Work (FAW), ASDAN, and Duke of Edinburgh Award.

7.25 Modern Apprentices often have additional certificates available as part of their programme e.g. Basic Food Hygiene, which might be either compulsory or on offer, depending upon the training. These allowed progression, and its recording, but for most young people their activities neither had progression nor allowed easy and reliable recording. Interestingly, the young people attending special schools/colleges were generally engaged in various wider activities which did allow progression. All had Records of Achievement which included wider achievements in sport, music, sign language, for example, with evaluative commentary from themselves and teachers. The more intellectually able had wider interests in the performing arts, writing poetry and had achieved accreditation for some activities, e.g.

> 'I have a Baden Powell award (the highest in Guides) and I am a representative on the board of Whizzkids'
> 'I am on the power-lifting team' (Great Britain representative in Para Olympics)
> 'I am a student union office admin co-ordinator and I brought in a new system of admin'
> 'I started a newsletter for Neighbourhood Watch Countrywide and got a police commendation for my efforts'.

7.26 The young people living in a hostel tended to have an extensive range of wider activities, reported benefits from these and wanted them recorded. For example several were in competitive sport, one in a choir and another had taken part in the Princes' Trust scheme and is now involved with Raleigh International. Most of these would be able to demonstrate evidence including teamwork, problem solving, decision-making or other aspects of key skills. However, interviewees attending a drop-in centre were largely engaged only in ad hoc activities (e.g. 'clubbing') although one used his skills in electronics to help friends and neighbours.

7.27 Interviewees at school reported that enrichment activities were free, while college activities were reported often to have a cost attached, albeit that as registered students they may pay at a reduced rate. Some college students considered the enrichment activities were not promoted effectively to them. Many students (and in some cases all those interviewed at a particular college) had not considered undertaking any of these enrichment activities.

7.28 School students were more likely to report engagement with wider activities, e.g. after school clubs and teams, and often schools made it clear that

engagement was expected, even if it were voluntary. The college students also reported this, but appeared less likely to comply.

Part-time working

7.29   As stated above, a very high proportion of young people were engaging in part time work. This was not necessarily seen as a means to develop skills and experience, but as a source of money. Whether for financial need in a basic sense, as in the case of very disadvantaged young people living in hostels for the homeless, or because of the expectations and aspirations of young people, the need to earn money predominates over other wider interests.

7.30   Part time work included that which was directly relevant. For example, child care students often reported baby-sitting, while others reported serving tea at an old people's home, beauty treatments. Others had part time jobs including gamekeeping, beating, farm work, stables and hairdressing. Work not connected with the focus of education/training was also common: serving in fast food outlets, stacking shelves, retail.

7.31   Whether these jobs were thought to be valuable to other areas of their lives usually depended upon the relationship with the education/training. Many found it difficult to see any value, other than as a source of finance ('doing it for the money'). One young man with a part time job as an office cleaner observed that he had learned that one bottle of bleach was just as good as any other.

7.32   However, many interviewees did note valuable aspects of their part time job, including specific skills, such as self-confidence, customer care skills, reliability, communication skills, working as part of a team, or 'working alone and getting things absolutely right'.

> 'All looks good on the CV. They don't want you if you don't have experience' (Level 2 student).
> 'It's all back to the UCAS form….. anything really to show we are more than just a set of exam results' (Level 3 student).
> 'It proves you can do it – helps to have a successful record of being employed' (Level 3 college student).

7.33   Others identified specific skills including self-confidence, customer care skills, reliability, communication skills, working as part of a team, or 'working alone and getting things absolutely right'.

> 'Helped me look after myself and be independent (Modern apprentice: food).
> 'Learning to drive through work' (Modern apprentice: motor vehicle).

7.34   In terms of factors which inhibited participation, there was again frequent reference to *time* and the difficulties of combining their course/training/work with part time work and wider activities. For example, the majority of work-based trainees reported having very little free time – some apprentices stated

they worked 60 hour weeks on shifts (some, in catering for example, worked split shifts). Some take on additional work at weekends to build up experience and earn extra money to supplement their training wage. Young people on GNVQ courses tended to have part time jobs in their industries where they were training, many working up to 25 hours a week (average 12-18) in addition to a full college timetable. Students on academic courses also tended to have part time jobs in evenings and weekends, and reported little time for other activities apart from the ad hoc.

7.35 Some young people had given up activities because of time pressure linked to the longer working week and travelling to study/work – e.g. one had given up Youth Achievement Award and another Venture Scouts despite many awards for community service. Those on academic courses made particular reference to curtailing activities when examination pressure increased. Even where activities continued, they were often at a reduced level, or 'for fun' rather than to seek progression and higher awards.

Comment

7.36 Our qualitative interviews have revealed an interesting picture. Across the sample, individuals were engaged in a range of wider activities, some of which were linked to school or college enrichment initiatives, some involved teams and organised past-times but in general the activities tended to be ad hoc and unorganised. Most young people had part time jobs some directly linked to their education and training. While a number of young people found it difficult to see how these wider activities contributed value to other aspects of their lives, present or future, the majority did articulate such values.

7.37 These findings are encouraging with respect to Graduation as they indicate a broad range of wider activities, which could potentially be used. However, there are also some aspects of concern. *Time* was frequently mentioned as a key factor, either limiting involvement in wider activities to ad hoc recreational activities such as unorganised sports, listening to music and clubbing, or having led to a reduction in previous levels of activity. Secondly, only a minority of activities had clear progression or markers of achievement (e.g. certificates, Award schemes). Thirdly, some young people were choosing to continue with such activities but not the award/grade element.

7.38 These factors reduce the potential for the use of wider activities. Furthermore, although schools and colleges made available and organised enrichment activities, their take up appeared from interviewees' reports to be relatively limited, although this was less evident in schools.

7.39 The position of the young people with special education needs we interviewed is particularly interesting, and suggests indicators beyond this specific group. Despite their disabilities these young people, particularly those with higher academic ability, demonstrated a high level of engagement with a range of wider activities, and also showed a clear appreciation of their intrinsic and instrumental benefits.

8. ASPIRATIONS AND FUTURE INTENTIONS

8.1 Respondents were asked what they would like to be doing in three years from the time of interview. 44 per cent stated that they would like to be in higher education, 38 per cent in paid full-time work or work based training and 11 per cent would like to be in full-time education with a part-time job.

8.2 Differences were apparent in the aspirations of respondents according to their achievement at GCSE (Figure 7). Those with low GCSE grade scores were significantly less likely to want to be in higher education (11 per cent) or full-time education (10 per cent) compared to those with either medium grade scores (43 per cent and 13 per cent respectively) or high scores (79 per cent and 12 per cent respectively). In contrast, they were significantly more likely to want to be in employment (73 per cent) compared to those with medium scores (37 per cent) and high scores (7 per cent). The findings illustrate the significant effect educational attainment places upon the aspirations of young people.

Figure 7: What respondents would like to be doing in three years time by GCSE average grade score
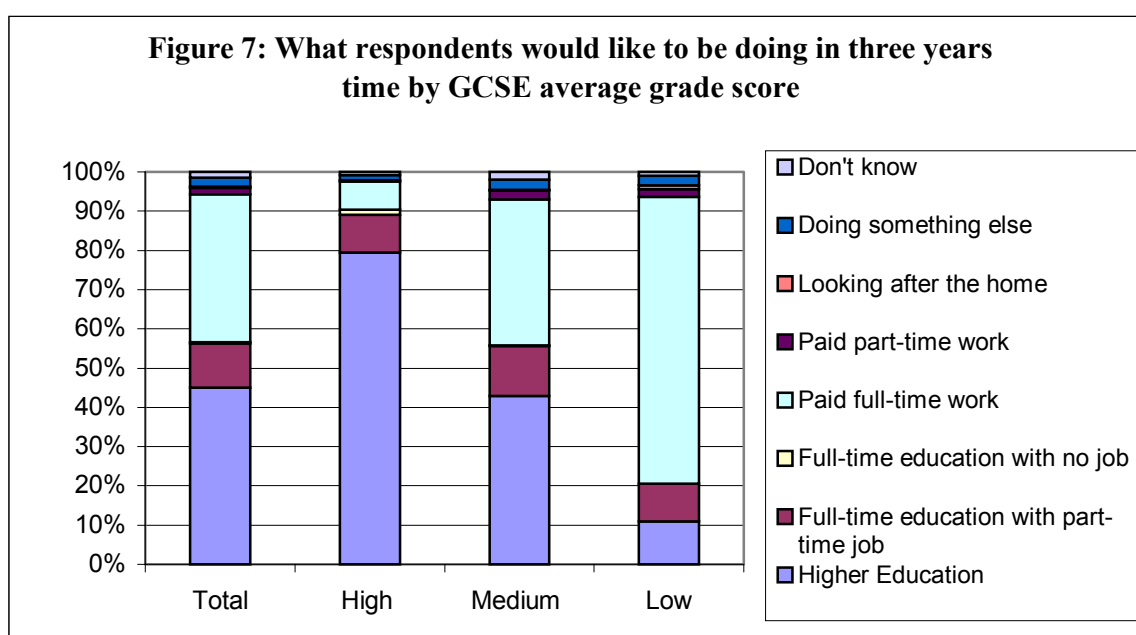
8.3 It was also evident that aspirations were significantly related to social class. For instance, while 63 per cent of the whole sample would like to be in higher education in three years time, the proportion falls to 47 per cent for respondents in social class C1, 33 per cent for respondents in social class C2 and 26 per cent of respondents in social class DE.

8.4 A quarter of those who thought it was unlikely that they would be able to do what they liked indicated that this was because they would not get the necessary grades or results to pursue their preferred option. A further 15 per cent mentioned that they would not be able to afford to continue with their studies, and 5 per cent mentioned that they would not be able to get on the course they wanted.

8.5   More able students in the special school had thought strategically about long term objectives, including intermediate activities such as editing a newsletter which would add to their portfolio to aid admission to a 'good' university, as demonstrated by these young people attending a college for students with physical disabilities:

> 'I want to do forensic psychology or developmental psychology, probably at X university.'

> 'I will choose between X university which has a modern programme and sandwich course, and Y which has more prestige but is traditional'.

Another young person was looking beyond the first degree to a future career,

> 'I want to get a 2.1 then doctorate and probably become a clinical psychologist. I think my experience of fixing web pages and student union officer will help'.

8.6   Young people on Life Skills courses had a similar range of views to those on vocational courses, but there was generally less certainty or awareness about the future. For example, one young person working as a cleaner had increased in confidence and wanted to study further to get a better job, but others had given up on chosen work (e.g. a garden centre) or training (a young person who expressed a wish to be a sports trainer).

8.7   Although there was variation, overall the interviewees from the qualitative strand of the study showed a recognition of a career pathway leading from their present programme to further work, training and qualifications. Some had general aims, e.g. to secure a better opportunity for a good job, while others had clear outcomes in mind.

9.   **ATTITUDES TO 'GRADUATION'**

9.1   The majority of respondents to the survey (60 per cent) indicated that they would be prepared to do the necessary work to obtain a new award which expected and recognised good qualification results, competence in use of English/Maths/IT, wider achievement in music/sport/art, with a slightly higher proportion of females (63 per cent) than males (57 per cent) saying this. Moreover, respondents who were in full-time education at the time of interview were significantly more likely to state that they would do the work (63 per cent), compared to those not in full-time education. Interestingly, those from the higher social classes were the least likely to indicate that they would do the necessary work, while respondents from social class C2 and DE were the most likely to claim that they would do so (see Table 21). Overall, this points to a highly positive response to the idea of a Graduation certificate.

Table 21: If government introduced a new award at GCSE or A Level (3), would respondents be prepared to do the work, by social class (percentages)					
	Total	AB	C1	C2	DE
Yes	60	54	61	64	63
No	28	31	27	27	25
Don't know	13	15	12	9	12
Total (n)	953	275	292	218	187

9.2 Significantly, those with medium scores were the most likely to be prepared to do the extra work for this new award. Importantly, therefore, the findings point to a possible influence of a Graduation award on the middle group - those who are likely to be on the margin of either leaving school at age 16 or continuing. The results suggest that the introduction of such an award could encourage a significant proportion of this group to remain in education.

9.3 The young people who took part in the in-depth interviews were generally receptive of the idea of Graduation and some would be prepared to do extra work to achieve it – it was the extent of extra work which was the concern. Also, the majority did not see the point in undertaking anything extra, further study or wider activities, unless it were valued by employers: 'what would be the point?' was frequently asked. Modern apprentices were less likely to be interested in anything which was not seen as vocationally relevant, but would generally have the formal qualifications to meet some of the criteria.

9.4 Also of concern were the Wider Achievements as these were not explicit. The young people were particularly cautious in supporting Graduation with respect to this domain as the extra demands were unclear. Few academic interviewees would be interested in doing something especially for a Graduation certificate.

> 'The course is hard enough anyway'.
> 'But only if it meant I didn't have to do much extra work'
> 'Would not start new activities for the sake of it'

9.5 Some would 'think about it' but given the difficulty in motivating young people for non-essential/compulsory elements of their programme, this rhetoric might not translate into real activity. Indeed, we often had the impression that interviewees were giving the 'right' reply, while their information, hesitancy and other comments suggested greater uncertainty and caution.

> 'Yes - I suppose so'.

9.6 There were also concerns about the evaluation of their work. While they could understand the formal qualifications elements they wondered how judgements would be made of the other activities, and who would decide what counted. While sports and music awards were seen as appropriate, there was a resistance to having part time work recorded for the purpose of evaluation, even though there was recognition of the learning experiences afforded.

9.7   The comments of the students in the special schools/colleges stressed their concern not to undertake more. These were already involved in a range of activities and felt working to capacity. The nature of a disability is also relevant:

> 'Cerebral palsy makes life difficult and I have been diagnosed with ME. I get muscle problems and tiredness: it's hard to differentiate between the two.'

9.8   The less able students found it difficult to discuss these issues outside their everyday lives as currently constructed.

9.9   Many of our interviewees had already achieved the formal qualifications part of Graduation, but there is also a substantial group of young people for whom Graduation would probably not be attainable by the age of 18. In the case of some young people with severe and complex special educational needs Graduation may not be achievable at all. This raises the question of the benefit and feasibility also of partial Graduation.

9.10   Also, some young people had been involved in many courses, schemes and initiatives, but were not always clear what benefit they had to show from them. The proposal that a Graduation Certificate might provide an opportunity to record such experiences was warmly received by young people in this position.

> 'Yeah, I've been on loads of courses, I've got loads of certificates. I'd have lots to put down'. (Male, Black Caribbean student).

However, many young people from disadvantaged circumstances were far from prepared for Graduation either with qualifications or wider achievements.

Record of Achievement

9.11   Particular mention was made of the Record of Achievement (RoA). Many interviewees questioned how the Graduation would differ from the RoA; others considered that the information would be put on a CV anyway and questioned the purpose of a certificate. Attitude to the RoA varied, with many arguing that it had not been found useful

> 'All that work and nobody asks for it.' (Student at college for students with physical disabilities).

However, some preferred Graduation.

> 'It's a good idea because it looks like an improvement on ROA. I would really like this. It is better than school records.

Partial Graduation

9.12   While the positive aspects of a partial Graduation were appreciated, a number of doubts were also expressed. Partial Graduation could help those perceived as less able – views expressed by both academic and vocational interviewees. However, some queried whether some young people might still never achieve any of the criteria, while some modern apprentices argued it could be de-motivating to those on their course if it were seen as irrelevant as a distraction and, worse, affected the achievement of their NVQ. The young people who were homeless preferred to work harder to achieve a full certificate than accept a lower level certificate.

Graduation Ceremony

9.13   There was a good deal of support, if somewhat cautious, for a ceremony to mark Graduation, including a presentation and party.

> 'A bit American, like Grease, but great fun'.
> 'Would be good to have it here. I'd like to graduate and wear the suit and all that'.

However, there were financial and organisation implications, and a significant minority of young people would be put off. Furthermore, if a minority did *not* graduate, would this be even more damaging than the present system? In addition there was the need to co-ordinate the timing of the ceremony with leaving an institution, which currently is often not simultaneous.

With many likening it to a Prom

> 'Best night ever, something you remember'.

Comment

9.14   Our interviewees were at varying stages of preparedness for Graduation. Some had the necessary GCSEs, other had some, while a small number had none. Similarly, involvement in wider experiences was broad with consequently varying degrees of preparedness on this dimension. However, this was further complicated by a lack of clarity about the nature of requirement. Finally Key Skills were seen as problematic. But there are several relevant factors here.
- The young people were generally cautious about the possibility of Graduation requiring extra work rather than being a means to give recognition of work already part of the programme.
- Graduation would only be worthwhile if it were valued by employers (and universities)
- There were doubts about the examination of wider achievements.
- Partial Graduation was welcomed in principle, but it would be a distraction, and may still not cover every young person.

Hence, determining preparedness for Graduation was seen as not a simple process, rather being affected by clarity of content and workload.

Perceptions of education and qualifications

9.15   All respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements concerning their education and qualifications. Respondents were more likely to disagree (46 per cent) than to agree (38 per cent) that young people do not get enough careers advice about what to do after Year 11. A majority agreed that you need to have qualifications in order to get a job worth having (74 per cent), that the qualifications you can get on government training schemes are just as valuable as those you can get at school (58 per cent) and that they need to have a part-time job while studying to have enough money to enjoy themselves (70 per cent). A large majority disagreed with the statement that they could not afford to continue studying after Year 11 (87 per cent), and that they would prefer to be undertaking training at their place of work than to be studying for exams at a college. 39 per cent agreed that they needed a part-time job in order to support themselves. Interestingly from the point of view of this study, the majority of respondents (85 per cent) agreed that employers and universities should recognise achievements beyond formal qualifications, and that they would be willing to do a bit more work to achieve a new national award that helped to recognise wider activities (67 per cent). Slightly more respondents (43 per cent) agreed than disagreed that starting work at 16 limits your career opportunities later in life, and 46 per cent agreed that in looking for a job they were more concerned with finding one with training rather than one that pays the best. The results suggest that young people recognise the value of qualifications, both academic and non-academic, and place more emphasis upon getting a job with good training prospects.

9.16   Respondents from the higher social classes were more likely to disagree that they needed to have a part-time job to support themselves while studying and that they would prefer to be undertaking training rather than studying for exams.

10.   PROVIDERS' PERCEPTIONS

10.1   The interviews with providers explored their preparedness to meet Graduation requirements, the implications of Graduation for themselves as providers and their needs in meeting its requirements. The interviews also addressed the availability and accessibility of information, which would be needed to provide evidence of achievement for Graduation, and their views on the collection and storage of these data.

Preparedness

10.2   The providers' views on their preparedness were influenced by the nature of the groups of young people with whom they worked. Schools generally had students who had achieved the necessary academic qualifications, or would soon do so. As was shown in the responses of the young people, schools also reported a satisfactory take up of enrichment activities, although there could

be a fall off at times of pressure, especially examination periods. The interviews with the young people suggested an increasingly more challenging task for those attending college and particularly work-based training, and this was confirmed by the interviews with the providers.

10.3 Opinion on the young peoples' preparedness, and likelihood of their being helped to achieve Graduation differed across providers. College and school staff generally reported that most should achieve, but more caution was experienced by providers working with modern apprentices, and by tutors/trainees on specific courses. Here, the proportion likely to be successful was considered probably to be half to three quarters, with particular concern about basic and life skills students.

> 'The very best we can hope for in the majority of cases is that they move forward into a level one.' (Life Skills co-ordinator)

There was particular concern about Key Skills:

> 'Nearly all will have problems achieving Key Skills targets' (Provider: Modern apprenticeship: Business).

> '75% could fail Key Skills Number'

Tutors were often critical of Key Skills:

> 'Key Skills are a nonsense. Their introduction is a cynical political move and it isn't working'.

10.4 The age criterion was also a matter of concern, and its relevance was questioned especially for young people with low achievement levels, and those with disabilities and special educational needs: having an age limit was likely to continue to impair their ability to attain Graduation. Indeed, this criterion could *disenfranchise* some students who needed more time. Also, Level 2 was seen as very problematic for many young people with severe and complex special educational needs, particularly those with severe learning difficulties. The headteacher of a special school commented.

> 'It stops short of inclusion if it automatically excludes – why is this group disregarded? It is as if their existence is not acknowledged. These kids were brought into education 30 years ago - we should have moved on'.

10.5 The concept of partial Graduation may be a response, but would need to go much further – Graduation below the current levels for each element, not just partial completion at the expected levels. Furthermore, those with intellectual potential but high disaffection would also need to be shown to achieve successes if Graduation was to be seen as useful and worthwhile. Hence these concerns covered basic and life skills students also.

Enrichment activities

10.6 Work based training providers tended not to offer enrichment activities unless needed for the training e.g. Basic Food Hygiene Certificate. Also, they argued that young people in employment and training have fewer opportunities to take part in additional activities or further study even if they wanted to. Modern Apprentices on day release were reported not to use the college for anything else.

10.7 Colleges argued that enrichment activities were successful mainly with those on higher level courses, e.g. A levels, as the practical slant provides an appropriate contrast to academic course content, while others on vocational courses focus on their particular programme.

> 'Students here come onto a course. We have given them the Key Skills etc and they end up voting with their feet….. They say 'Look, I've come here to study brickwork, carpentry and joinery. I haven't come to study computers. If I want to study computers I'll go on a computer course'. (College programme co-ordinator).

10.8 College sports options and student events were also reported to have low take up. Tutorial activities had a high absenteeism.

> 'Students often have tunnel vision and ignore valuable options'. (Key Skills tutor)

> 'You see we do offer a wide programme that I would think sounds very appealing. But you can't actually enforce it in quite the same way because it's not part of the core curriculum and they just can't see the point, I am afraid, most of them.' (College Tutor).

Consequently colleges were uncertain whether students would wish to take up wider activities required for Graduation.

10.9 Schools on the other hand, had enrichment activities that were reported to be popular; one school reported 60-70% of 6th form students do something 'even if it's just playing for the school football team'. Some used ASDAN to accredit work experiences, while others felt this required too great commitment. Enrichment was often compulsory; e.g. one school reported this 'comprising leisure, ethics and morality courses' with voluntary involvement in Community Sports, Leadership and Duke of Edinburgh Award.

10.10 The day and residential special schools/colleges provided extensive enrichment activities.

> 'extended curriculum, the 24 hour curriculum, and that included companion living skills, life skills, catering for themselves, shopping for themselves'

These students engaged in youth club and sporting activities as well as special clubs, e.g. signing (for hearing students also).

10.11 The activities undertaken were reported, in general, not to lead to awards. Colleges reported relatively low numbers enrolling on award bearing courses, about a third or fewer, with very few modern apprentices. College staff usually did not know for certain whether students were enrolled on award-bearing courses outside their main programme, but they generally reported this was uncommon, apart from Duke of Edinburgh and ASDAN programmes.

10.12 Hence the providers identified a number of difficulties in meeting the requirements of Graduation, which were a function of the young persons' development rather than their provision per se. In addition, and in interaction with these factors, providers also differed in their preparedness with respect to the provision they were currently making. With the exception of schools they would generally be unprepared for the demands for wider activities that could arise from Graduation.

Resources

10.13 Providers were mixed in their interest in providing for Graduation. Many agreed in principle but were concerned about workloads and need for provision. The providers considered two main types of extra provision would be necessary:
- To administer the scheme, in particular the accreditation of non-qualification based wider achievements, record keeping and awards.
- Extra support to some young people, especially those needing specific help to achieve Graduation.

In addition, school and college staff noted the need for changes in enrichment programmes. There was a general view that extra resources were vital.

'Has changed already in that we replaced our enrichment programme to pay for the Key Skills programme in the sense of staff time' (school).

'Fund it properly or it will not happen (school).

10.14 College staff argued that some extra staffing and tutorial support would need to be available for all mainstream students, but the main need would be for those on Life Skills courses and any young people with significant SEN, where provision is more expensive. Schools also had concerns:

'We would need to be able to offer things to students not following A-level route, but GNVQ Intermediate and Foundation level is expensive in terms of staff provision, as is the case with any course which involves basic skills and focuses on literacy and numeracy'. (school).

'A lot of our students want to stay on, but we don't have a programme that's appropriate, especially for those with D's and E's at GCSE (school)'.

10.15 The pressures of time were again raised, with providers frequently revealing that they did not know how the young people would cope as they already have so much to fit in, especially with Key Skills. Again, the time problem of trainees were stressed given the length of their working week, and the additional difficulty foreseen in trying to arrange for employers to release Modern Apprentices for more time.

> 'Some (employers) just say "I am sorry, we have no problem with you coming in 2 or 3 times a month and spending an hour with them but you know the rest of the time we pay them" (College tutor).'

10.16 Schools also expressed concerns and would need to think through how changes would be made.

> 'No idea. We're still reeling from AS levels' (Head of 6th form).

10.17 If Graduation were to be introduced then staff expected managers to respond and address the need for changes to enrichment. However, the providers generally focussed on a range of difficulties:

10.18 Timetables could be restructured to identify enrichment time, but 'with current time constraints the wider achievement would be marginalised and diminished in student eyes'. Reorganised timetables could lead to more logistical problems especially for part-time students.

10.19 Time was a problem for employees who were not given an allocation to produce portfolios. Programmes were seen as very full, especially with AS levels.

> 'Yes and they are supposed to do the same amount of homework as they spend in class. So at the moment on their AS that's 5 hours a week. So if they do a full programme and general studies and 5 hours a week at home per subject, they don't have an inch, and as you say they have a part time job, and you want them to be young people and enjoy life a bit' (college tutor).

10.20 This problem of time was compounded by the high proportion of young people undertaking part time work.

> 'There is masses of part time work. I would guess 98% of them have a part time job'. (head of 6th).

10.21 Several tutors had conducted studies that supported these estimates. This high proportion was common across courses, but was not generally the case for modern apprentices, who are, of course, in full-time work, or for students on Life Skills courses where much lower estimates (about 15%) were given, usually girls, and 'very mundane' jobs:

'It's difficult to find employers who will take the risk' (Lifeskills tutor).

10.22   There was argument that part time jobs generally could markedly improve job-skills, and could be used as an invaluable classroom resource to support relevance. Part time work could also enhance independence, personal skills, responsibility and communication skills. However, concern was expressed about assessment for inclusion in Graduation, and that part time work could lead to ignoring college/school work.

10.23   Part time work was also seen as important in proving finance, perceived as essential in some cases – many providers argued that for many it is a choice between this and not being in education. Some, however, made a different, but equally important point.

'With a materialistic society, students need money'.

Enhancing Inclusion

10.24   Most colleges already work with a wide client group including 14-19 year olds and felt that it would be a natural progression for them to become involved in delivering additional support for such an award. Consequently, they did not consider Graduation would be likely to encourage a new client group or more enrolments.

10.25   Concern was expressed about the *non*-inclusion of those young people who would not achieve Graduation by 18 years. Providers were unclear whether this would reduce their willingness to participate, needing a clearer idea of the wider achievements components. These young people might be on Basic Skills, Lifeskills, Foundation Modern Apprenticeships, or Foundation GNVQ; be designated as having special educational needs; or be weaker students retaking GCSEs.

'Some trainees will be unable to gain the GC. Many would have no wider achievements to record. Many are unmotivated.' (Tutor, Business).

10.26   Our providers argued in favour of inclusion, in principle. They urged that if Graduation were introduced it should be 'sold to everyone'. But the problem of young people who needed more time to achieve the criteria would need to be addressed.

'Be careful that the GC can take account of the "serial part-achievers" found in F.E!"' (College tutor)

Partial Graduation was not necessarily seen as an appropriate approach.

Ceremony

10.27 There was a good deal of support, if somewhat cautious, for a ceremony to mark Graduation, including a presentation and party. However, there were financial and organisation implications, and a significant minority of young people would be put off. Furthermore, providers opined that if a minority did *not* graduate, would this be even more damaging than the present system? In addition there was the need to co-ordinate the timing of the ceremony with leaving an institution, which currently is often not simultaneous.

10.28 Some schools have experience on which they can build. For example, information from one school noted that to achieve a high attendance for their ceremony they ran it with a disco, but that this created security problems. Hence, strategies to ensure successful ceremonies, particularly in areas of high social disadvantage, could lead to significant logistical problems.

Information access and storage

10.29 Providers also raised a number of practical concerns about information access, storage and retrieval. The monitoring and collection of evidence and the administration of the scheme would require dedicated resources, but they saw further difficulties resulting from the multiple origins of data, and also its differential reliability. Schools and colleges would have a good idea of much of the evidence, especially formal qualifications such as GCSE, but they questioned how this would be obtained from other sources. There needed to be a central location where all the necessary information was collated for each young person, but they were unclear what that should be. For those young people attending schools, this was seen as an obvious location, and schools considered they could fulfil this role, one with which they had long experience. Colleges had a similar but less certain view as their involvement with their students was more variable, and of shorter history and duration. Providers for young people in work-based training were concerned about their ability to administer such a scheme for their young people.

10.30 Providers raised further concerns about how the system would be moderated, assessed and recorded. The model of the Record of Achievement was obvious, but would that be developed or a new system introduced, and how would it fit in with the Connexions Smart Card and City and Guilds Profile of Achievement? The extra administration would require funding, but the more problematic aspects were concerned with assessment outside recognised award schemes. Who would issue certificates? The relationship between Graduation and other systems such as the Record of Achievement would need to be determined, and these would need to fit together to avoid duplication of administration and potential confusion.

10.31 The problems increase for those young people who move, and particularly those who acquire components in a less structured manner. The latter group will be over-represented by young people in disadvantaged circumstances. Hence there is the likelihood of an inverse relationship between the

complexity of the maintaining and record keeping system and the stability of the young people's circumstances.

Status of the award

10.32 Providers identified substantial implementation problems which required funding and a number of developments. They were prepared to countenance these for the perceived benefits of Graduation. However, a major concern was the esteem of the award. Unless employers and universities took it into account, its purpose and usefulness were questioned. Others questioned the value attributed to Graduation by employers and others.

> 'They said that Key Skills would be essential for UCAS, and look at the shambles with that' (college).

11.   IMPLICATIONS FOR 'GRADUATION'

11.1   As outlined in the Introduction, the outcome of the consultation process relating to Graduation was that it would "recognise at Level 2 a national qualification component (including literacy, numeracy and IT) that should be equivalent to 5 GCSEs A*- C", and that it should "provide evidence of skills in meeting a personal challenge and in working with others for the 'wider achievements' components". In order to gauge the extent to which the requirements of Graduation are achievable by significant proportions of the age cohort and, specifically, the degree to which attainment at age 16 was satisfying the requirements of Graduation, and what further needed to be achieved in the subsequent two years, the survey data were analysed to reveal the proportions of the sample with different achieving as follows:

- Those who achieved at least 5 A*-C including English, Maths and IT
- Those who achieved 1-4 grades at A*-C including English, Maths and IT
- Those who achieved at least 5 A*-C including up to two of English, Maths and IT
- Those who achieved less than 5 A*-C including up to two English, Maths and IT
- Those who achieved at least 5 A*-C including one or none of English, Maths and IT
- Those who achieved 1-4 A*-C including one or none of English, Maths and IT
- Those who did not achieve any grades at A*-C

11.2   The level of achievement within the sample was broadly comparable with the national figures emanating from the Youth Cohort Study (DfEE, 2001). Overall, 46 per cent of the respondents had achieved 5 A*-Cs GCSEs. This compares to a national figure for the same year cohort of 49 per cent. Again in line with Youth Cohort Study (YCS) figures, attainment by females (51.7 per cent, compared to 54 per cent in YCS statistics) was significantly higher than that for males (40.2 per cent, compared to national figures of 44 per cent).

Table 22: Distribution of sample by qualification attainment in Year 11			
GCSE Grades	Total %	Male %	Female %
Those who did not achieve any grades at A*-C	15.7	20.2	11.5
Those who achieved at least 5 A*-C including English, Maths and IT	5.8	7.4	4.4
Those who achieved 1-4 grades at A*-C including English, Maths and IT	3.0	4.4	1.6
Those who achieved at least 5 A*-C including up to two of English, Maths and IT	36.0	29.2	42.5
Those who achieved less than 5 A*-C including up to two English, Maths and IT	11.8	13.2	10.5
Those who achieved at least 5 A*-C including one or none of English, Maths and IT	4.2	3.6	4.8
Those who achieved 1-4 A*-C including one or none of English, Maths and IT	23.5	22.0	24.8
Total (n)	980	476	504

11.3   In order to adhere strictly to the Graduation criteria, the survey data were further disaggregated to identify those who, as well as having the requisite 5 A*-C grades, included Maths, English and IT within them (Table 22). The fact that only 5.8 per cent of the total sample had achieved this is attributable to the relatively small numbers in the sample who had taken IT as an examination subject. Interestingly, however, a higher proportion of males (7.4 per cent) than females (4.4 per cent) had obtained 5 A*-C grades, including Maths, English and IT. The overwhelming majority of those who had obtained 5 A*-C grades also had two of the stipulated subjects. This applied to 78.3 per cent of the sample (72.3 per cent of males, and 82.3 per cent of females).

11.4   Of the 391 respondents who had achieved 5 Grades A*-C, but had no more than two of English, Maths and IT, 82 per cent were in full-time education, with a further 2.3 per cent in work based training. Combined, this represents 37.6 per cent of the total sample. Of a further 276 respondents who had achieved fewer than 5 Grades A*-C, including up to two of English, Maths and IT, 72.8 per cent were in full-time education or work based training. This, in turn, accounts for 20.5 per cent of the total sample. It can be deduced from this that 43.4 per cent of the total sample would easily get the award, while a further 20.5 per cent could be expected to obtain the required qualifications with a little extra work. The 23.5 per cent who had achieved 1-4 Grades A*-C, with only one or none of English, Maths and IT would clearly need to improve their qualification attainment considerably, while those with no A*-C grades would seem to have too much to do to achieve Graduation, especially as only a third were in full-time education. Moreover, this group also had the lowest proportion (53.3 per cent) who were participating regularly in hobbies/interests/activities, and therefore would be less likely to achieve the wider achievements requirements.

11.5 Given the range of qualifications being studied for, and wider activities engaged in post-Year 11, it seems likely that a substantial majority of young people would be able to achieve the qualification. However, the extent to which many, and particularly those with high levels of attainment, would be prepared to make an extra effort to do so, would be dependent on their perception of the status, and external recognition attached to the qualification.

11.6 In addition to this indication of young people's readiness for achieving Graduation, a number of other key points emerged from the different strands of the research which have implications for Graduation. These can be summarised as follows:

- There was substantial variation in the degree to which the young people's pathways could be described as 'plans' rather than as 'reactions', although the majority recognised an identifiable career pathway leading from their present programme.

- There was much criticism of key skills, which form an important element of Graduation.

- Those not in full-time education were much less likely to consider qualifications to have been useful, and may therefore be less inclined to value another award. There was also a close relationship between GCSE average scores and whether qualifications were regarded as being useful.

- A substantial proportion (17%) of the survey sample had not known what they wanted to do after completing Year 11 – with the 'medium' attainment group having the highest proportion in this category. This indicates that their decision-making was more dependent on the outcome of examinations, and may point to Graduation being potentially important for this group. Furthermore, 'medium' achievers had the highest proportions who claimed that a recognition of other activities would have encouraged them to stay on.

- There was widespread engagement in a range of wider activities, with sporting activities dominating. Apart from the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and scouts/guides, the majority of activities did not lead to any recognised award.

- Participation in wider activities was closely related to social class and level of achievement, with those from higher social classes and higher achieving students being significantly more likely to have participated.

- Participation in wider activities was constrained by a lack of time, recognition, and interest in attaining an award.

- There was receptiveness to the idea of Graduation, with an overwhelming majority feeling that achievements other than formal academic qualifications should be recognised, and cautious support for the notions of

Partial and Advanced Graduation. A Graduation ceremony would be welcomed.

- There was an asserted preparedness to do the extra work required – if it would be recognised by employers. Slightly higher proportions of those from lower social classes stated that they would be willing to do the extra work.

- The introduction of Graduation may have greatest effect on the behaviour of those with 'medium' attainment scores, as they appeared to be more likely to be prepared to do the extra work.

- Providers emphasised the importance of the nature of wider experiences and the difficulties involved in assessing them.

- It was felt that the requirements of Graduation, and in particular the thresholds which had to be achieved, might inhibit attempts to facilitate greater 'inclusion'.

12. CONCLUSIONS/ ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

12.1 Our interviewees provide much that is supportive to the introduction of Graduation. The major concerns are clarity of detail, which would be overcome once Graduation was confirmed, and workload implications. The latter has two components. Firstly, our young people were unclear whether there would be a higher workload than now, or whether Graduation was a means of bringing together information – some likened it to a standardised CV. Secondly, there was concern that workloads had increased in any case as a result of the Curriculum 2000 changes, both because of the problems resulting from transition and the extra work per se. In any case it is clear that *workload* is a key issue. Whether on academic or vocational courses, or in work, our interviewees generally felt they had little time after their education/training and part time work. What time was available was to relax, not undertake more 'work'. The high level of part time work both reflected the financial need of these young people and was seen as a limiting factor for achievement of Graduation's components.

12.2 The benefits of Graduation were recognised by most of the interviewees, as a means of recognition and an aid to inclusion. However, the potential drawbacks were also noted – would not there be some who did not achieve Graduation, even if there were partial Graduation, steps towards the award? In that case the introduction of another award could add to a sense of exclusion. This is a serious point. Although affecting only a small minority, these young people will be over-represented among the group for whom Graduation was intended to be a positive development.

12.3 Our interviewees were at varying stages of preparedness for Graduation. Some had the necessary GCSEs, other had some, while a small number had none. Similarly, involvement in wider experiences was broad with

consequently varying degrees of preparedness on this dimension. However, this was further complicated by a lack of clarity about the nature of requirement. Finally Key Skills were seen as problematic. But there are several relevant factors here.

- The young people were generally cautious about the possibility of Graduation requiring extra work rather than being a means to give recognition of work already part of the programme.
- Graduation would only be worthwhile if it were valued by employers (and universities)
- There were doubts about the examination of wider achievements.
- Partial Graduation was welcomed in principle, but it would be a distraction, and may still not cover every young person.

Hence, determining preparedness for Graduation was seen as not a simple process, rather being affected by clarity of content and workload.

12.4   Those who had not wanted to continue in education were asked whether the opportunity to achieve recognition in activities, such as sport, art, music or voluntary work outside of formal learning would have encouraged them to continue to study. Over a quarter of these respondents indicated that the existence of such recognition would have encouraged them to continue to study. This points to a potential role for Graduation, especially among those who achieve medium or low GCSE scores.

12.5   Opinion on the young persons' preparedness, and likelihood of their being helped to achieve Graduation differed across providers. College and school staff generally reported that most should achieve, but more caution was experienced by providers working with modern apprentices, and by tutors/trainees on specific courses. Here, the proportion likely to be successful was considered probably to be half to three quarters, with particular concern about Life Skills students. There was particular concern about Key Skills.

12.6   The age criterion was also a matter of concern, and its relevance was questioned. Especially for young people with low achievement levels, and those with disabilities and special educational needs, having an age limit was likely to continue to impair their rate of progress. Indeed, this criterion could *disenfranchise* some students who needed more time. Also, Level 2 was seen as very problematic for many young people with severe and complex SEN, particularly those with severe learning difficulties.

12.7   Most colleges already work with a wide client group including 14-19 year olds and felt that it would be a natural progression for them to become involved in delivering additional support for such an award. Consequently, they did not consider Graduation would be likely to encourage a new client group or more enrolments.

12.8   Concern was expressed about the *non*-inclusion of those young people who would not achieve Graduation by 18 years. Providers were unclear whether this would reduce their willingness to participate, needing a clearer idea of the wider achievements components. These young people might be on Basic

Skills, Lifeskills, Foundation Modern Apprenticeships, or Foundation GNVQ; be designated as having special educational needs; or be less able students retaking GCSEs.

12.9 Our providers argued in favour of inclusion, in principle. They urged that if Graduation were introduced it should be 'sold to everyone'. But the problem of young people who needed more time to achieve the criteria would need to be addressed.

12.10 Providers also raised a number of practical concerns about Graduation. These included the monitoring and collection of evidence, and the administration of the scheme. Schools and colleges would have a good idea of much of the evidence, but how would this be obtained from other sources, and how would it be moderated, assessed and recorded? The model of the Record of Achievement was obvious, but would that be developed or a new system introduced, and how would it fit in with the Connexions Smart Card and City and Guilds Profile of Achievement? The extra administration would require funding, but the more problematic aspects were concerned with assessment outside recognised award schemes. Who would issue certificates?

12.11 The results suggest that pressure of studies may have been preventing some young people from participating in activities/hobbies in Years 10 and 11, while those who were not heavily involved in studying were less interested in activities which may have led to an award.

Finally, and a major concern, was the esteem of the award. Unless employers and universities took it into account, its purpose was questioned.

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13.   APPENDIX: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

CASE STUDY AREAS

13.1   Fieldwork was undertaken in three case study areas:
- *Reading* – an 'urban' area located in the Thames Valley in the South East region;
- *Warwick* district – a 'mixed' area from the West Midlands region, covering the towns of Leamington Spa, Warwick and Kenilworth; and
- the *East Riding* of Yorkshire – a 'rural' area in the Yorkshire & Humber region, encompassing the towns of Withernsea, Hornsea, Bridlington, Driffield, Pocklington, Market Weighton, Goole, Beverley and Cottingham, and the surrounding rural areas.

Socio-economic and labour market context

13.2   It is impossible to capture within any three case study areas the full range of local socio-economic and demographic circumstances across England. None of the three case study areas are amongst the most deprived in England: Reading displays an 'average' level of deprivation, while the East Riding and Warwick are less deprived than average. In all three areas, but particularly in Reading and the East Riding, there are marked intra-area contrasts in the experience of deprivation. Generally, economic activity rates and employment rates are similar to, or greater than, the England average. Reading and Warwick are characterised by lower unemployment rates than the England average, while in the East Riding the unemployment rate is higher than average, most notably in the Bridlington & Driffield area.

Attainment and destinations

13.3   Attainment levels in Warwickshire and the East Riding are slightly higher than the England average, while those in Reading are slightly lower than the England average, and the number of pupils gaining no GCSE/GNVQ passes is appreciably higher than the England average. However, these changes mask considerable variations at school and individual levels.

13.4   In Reading a lower proportion of young people than the England average move into full-time education on completing Year 11, while in Warwick and the East Riding the proportions are higher than average. In Reading a relatively high proportion of the Year 11 cohort move directly into employment. This is indicative of the relatively buoyant nature of the labour market in Reading, and the availability of job opportunities – both with and without training.

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

13.5   The sample of school leavers are predominantly residing in Warwickshire (47 per cent) and East Yorkshire (49 per cent). Just 4 per cent were from the Reading area. While there were slightly more females (57 per cent) in the Reading sample both Warwickshire and East Yorkshire had equal proportion of males and females (50 per cent in Warwickshire and 52 per cent of females in East Yorkshire). There were also no significant differences in the age of the sample. However, the sample was slightly younger in East Yorkshire; 71 per cent were 16 years of age, compared to 67 per cent in Warwickshire and 64 per cent in Reading. Equal proportions of students from the three areas were living in the parental home, made regular financial contributions to the household, looked after a disabled, sick or elderly friend or relative or had any physical or mental impairment. While almost all students indicated that English was their first language, Warwickshire had the highest proportion of students from ethnic minorities as Table 23 illustrates.

Table 23: Ethnic Background of Student by Region, Percent			
	Warwickshire	East Yorkshire	Reading
White	93	99	95
Indian	5	*	2
Black - Other	*	*	-
Black – Caribbean	*	*	-
Pakistani	*	-	-
Chinese	*	-	-
Bangladeshi	-	-	-
Black - African	-	-	-
Other	1	-	2
Refused	*	*	-
Total (N)	**460**	**476**	**44**
* less than 1 per cent			

13.6   The highest proportion of non-white school leavers in Warwickshire and Reading were Indian (5 per cent and 2 per cent respectively). While the social class background of school leavers in both Warwickshire and East Yorkshire were similar, school leavers from Reading were predominantly from the higher social classes as Table 24 shows. This is not surprising considering the small sample size.

Table 24: Social Class background by Region			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
AB	28	27	43
C1	31	29	30
C2	20	24	23
DE	20	20	5
Don't know	2	*	-
Total (N)	**460**	**476**	**44**

13.7   Students from Warwickshire were the most likely to have attended an independent or private school (11 per cent) compared to either East Yorkshire (3 per cent) or Reading (2 per cent) during Year 11. Both Warwickshire and East Yorkshire had almost equal proportions of school leavers who attended a mixed school (89 per cent and 90 per cent respectively). Just 64 per cent of school leavers in Reading attended a mixed school. However this is likely to be biased by the small number of schools in the Reading sample.

13.8   School leavers from East Yorkshire (33 per cent) were slightly more likely to indicate they played truant during Years 10 and 11, compared to those from Warwickshire (27 per cent). Eligibility for free school meals was more common amongst students from East Yorkshire (12 per cent) and Reading (14 per cent) compared to those from Warwickshire (9 per cent). However, a significantly higher proportion of those who were eligible in Warwickshire received free school meals (88 per cent) compared to those from East Yorkshire (59 per cent) or Reading (33 per cent).

13.9   Table 25 shows that students from Warwickshire were more likely compared to students in East Yorkshire to study Biology (25 per cent), Chemistry (24 per cent), Physics (25 per cent), Religious education (76 per cent) and Personal, Social and Health Education (20 per cent), while students from East Yorkshire were more likely to study French (60 per cent) business (25 per cent), double award science (88 per cent) and Drama (20 per cent).

Table 25: Subjects by Region, per cent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
English Lang	95	98	95
English Lit	79	89	93
Maths	98	99	98
French	53	60	75
Geography	42	45	61
History	46	46	59
Art&Design	31	30	36
Design&tech	67	71	66
German	37	37	39
Business	17	25	18
Science-Sng	7	3	14
Science-Dbl	71	88	61
Biology	25	10	32
Chemistry	24	10	32
Physics	25	10	32
IT/Computing	31	33	36
RE	76	41	43
Drama	13	20	11
Leisure&tour	*	2	_
Health&Soc	1	2	_
Soc Educ	20	7	14
PE	48	47	27
Other	20	27	41

13.10 A higher proportion of school leavers from Reading knew they wanted to do more study after age 16 (91 per cent) compared to either students from Warwickshire (70 per cent) and East Yorkshire (66 per cent). A higher proportion of school leavers from East Yorkshire (19 per cent) indicated they did not know what they wanted to do after age 16 compared to either Warwickshire (17 per cent) or Reading (5 per cent). Table 26 shows that school leavers from Warwickshire were the more likely to indicate they found the qualifications they gained were useful in getting the job/course they wanted (78 per cent) compared to school leavers from East Yorkshire (73 per cent)

Table 26: How useful do you think the qualifications you gained were in getting the course/job you wanted by Region, per cent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
Very useful	39	36	69
Fairly useful	40	37	17
Not very useful	12	17	2
Not at all useful	6	8	10
Don't know	2	1	-
Not applicable	2	2	2
Total (N)	**460**	**476**	**44**

13.11 Equal proportions of school leavers from Warwickshire (75 per cent) and East Yorkshire (76 per cent) indicated they participated regularly in activities/interests/hobbies either at school or outside school during Years 10 and 11. Reading had the highest proportion participating in activities/interests/hobbies (80 per cent). Table 27 shows that school leavers from all of the areas were equally likely to participate in sports. However, school leavers from both Warwickshire and Reading were more likely compared to those in East Yorkshire to pursue arts, music, Duke of Edinburgh award and participate in youth clubs.

Table 27: Regular Activities by Region, per cent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
Sports	74	74	71
Drama	12	13	11
Arts	7	5	6
Music	21	18	20
Duke of Edinburgh award	8	3	9
Youth club	8	4	9
IT/computer classes	3	3	3
Scouts/Guides	4	4	3
Voluntary or community activity	3	7	3
Other	14	20	26
Total	**344**	**360**	**35**

13.12 Focusing on those students who did not take part in any activity. Table 28 shows that school leavers from Warwickshire were the most likely to indicate there was nothing that interested them available (47 per cent) compared to either those from East Yorkshire (39 per cent) or Reading (33 per cent). Moreover, they were also more likely to indicate there was a lack of facilities (7 per cent), compared to those from East Yorkshire (4 per cent). This may suggest a regional imbalance in the types of activities available in the local area.

Table 28: Reasons for not taking part in any activity/hobbies/interests			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
Not enough time	22	25	67
Not enough money	3	-	56
Lack of facilities	7	4	11
Too far away/lack of transport	2	3	-
Lost interest	13	16	-
Nothing that interested me available	47	39	33
Other	12	16	-
Don't know	8	10	-
Total (N)	**460**	**476**	**44**

13.13 Almost equal proportions of school leavers from Warwickshire (45 per cent) and East Yorkshire (42 per cent) indicated that beside academic qualifications, they had other achievements before age 16 (34 per cent in the case of Reading). Table 29 shows that the majority of these achievements were sports awards/certificates. School leavers from East Yorkshire were more likely to mention other achievements (26 per cent) compared to either those from Warwickshire (13 per cent) or Reading (13 per cent).

Table 29: Non-academic achievements before age 16 by region, percent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
Sports awards/certificates	55	50	20
Music awards/certificates	30	29	53
Arts awards/certificates	9	7	-
Duke of Edinburgh award	11	14	13
Other	13	26	13
Total (N)	**460**	**476**	**44**

13.14 School leavers from East Yorkshire were slightly more likely (73 per cent) to indicate these achievements should have been recognised in a certificate or award, compared to those from Warwickshire (69 per cent). However, 87 per cent of those from Reading indicated these achievements should have been recognised in a certificate or award.

Careers Guidance

13.15 Equal proportions of school leavers from both Warwickshire (90 per cent) and East Yorkshire (93 per cent), while 84 per cent of those from Reading indicated they had classes or tutorial groups led by a teacher that covered careers topics.   Table 30 shows however that school leavers from East Yorkshire were the most likely to indicate they had six or more careers classes/tutorials (77 per cent) compared to either Warwickshire (70 per cent) or Reading (68 per cent).

Table 30: How many careers classes did you have in Year 11 by Region, percent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
One	9	11	8
Two	5	2	3
Three to five	14	9	22
Six or more	70	77	68
Can't remember	2	1	-
Total (N)	**460**	**476**	**44**

13.16 Table 31 shows that students from Reading were more likely to indicate they found out about post-16 choices available at schools or colleges though presentations by representatives of schools/colleges held at their school (54 per cent) compared to either East Yorkshire (45 per cent) or Reading (39 per cent). However, school leavers from East Yorkshire were more likely to mention careers conventions (40 per cent) and school or college open days (55 per cent) compared to school leavers from Warwickshire (34 per cent and 52 per cent respectively.

Table 31: During Year 11 did you find out about Post-16 choices available at schools or college though the following ways by Region, percent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
Careers conventions	34	40	61
School or college open days	52	55	30
Presentations by representatives of schools/colleges held at your school	54	45	39
By contacting schools/colleges yourself	23	23	30
Other	5	5	-
None of these	7	7	11
Total (N)	**460**	**476**	**44**

13.17 School leavers from Warwickshire were the most likely to consider they were useful in helping them to decide what to do after Year 11 (82 per cent) compared to either school leavers from East Yorkshire (78 per cent) or Reading (74 per cent). There was no significant difference in the proportions of school leavers from each of the regions who indicated they received helpful advice from family, friends or teachers. However school leavers from Warwickshire (60 per cent) were more likely to indicate they received helpful advice from the careers service compared to either school leavers from East Yorkshire (52 per cent) or Reading (34 per cent). Similarly, school leavers from Warwickshire were the most likely to indicate they received the most helpful advice from someone from the careers service (27 per cent) compared to either school leavers from East Yorkshire (24 per cent) or Reading (19 per cent).

13.18 School leavers from East Yorkshire were more likely to indicate they wanted to start work full-time after completing Year 11 (7 per cent) compared to those from Warwickshire (4 per cent) or Reading (5 per cent). School leavers from Warwickshire were more likely to suggest they wanted to pursue 6th form at the same school (48 per cent) compared to East Yorkshire (45 per cent). School leavers from Warwickshire were more likely to indicate they decided what they wanted to do after Year 11 before the start of Year 11 (50 per cent) compared to those from East Yorkshire (44 per cent). School leavers from East Yorkshire were more likely to indicate they made their decision after learning of exam results (15 per cent) or after the first term of Year 11 (21 per cent) compared to those from Warwickshire (10 per cent and 18 per cent respectively). A higher proportion of school leavers from Warwickshire suggested they intend to get a part-time job to combine with their full-time education (79 per cent) compared to either East Yorkshire (74 per cent) or Reading (64 per cent).

13.19 Table 32 shows that school leavers from Warwickshire were more likely to suggest they wanted to continue with education in order to gain qualifications (81 per cent) compared to those from East Yorkshire (74 per cent). In contrast, to improve chances of getting a good job was mentioned by a higher proportion of school leavers from East Yorkshire (53 per cent).

Table 32: Reasons for continuing in education after Year 11 by Region, percent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
To gain qualifications	81	74	95
To improve chances of getting a good job	49	53	33
Couldn't get a job	-	1	-
Friends were staying on	3	3	-
Parents wanted me to stay on	5	3	5
Other	17	29	24
Total (N)	**460**	**476**	**44**

13.20 A slightly higher proportion of school leavers who did not want to continue with education/training from East Yorkshire (28 per cent) suggested they would have remained in education if they had the opportunity to achieve recognition in activities such as sport, art or music, compared to school leavers from Warwickshire (24 per cent).

13.21 Table 33 shows that school leavers from Warwickshire were more confident that they had made the correct post-16 decision compared to those from East Yorkshire.

Table 33: Whether they think they have made the correct post Year 11 decision by region, percent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
Definitely made the right decision	64	58	64
Probably made the right decision	24	23	32
Probably made the wrong decision	8	9	2
Definitely made the wrong decision	3	8	2
Don't know	2	2	-
Total (N)	**460**	**476**	**44**

13.22 Similar percentages of school leavers from Warwickshire (58 per cent) and East Yorkshire (62 per cent) indicated they would be prepared to do the extra

work for a new GCSE level (2) or A level (3) which expected and recognised wider achievements. 55 per cent of the sample from Reading indicted they would do the extra work for this new qualification.

Post Year 11 Activities

13.23 Table 34 shows that there was very little difference in school leavers current activity by region. However, school leavers from Warwickshire were more likely to be in full-time education with a part-time job for pocket/spending money (52 per cent) compared to East Yorkshire school leavers (48 per cent). School leavers from East Yorkshire were more likely be in full-time education with no job or in work based training.

Table 34: Current Activity by region, percent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
Full-time education with part-time job for pocket/spending money	52	43	57
Full-time education with a part-time job for helping towards my up keep	3	3	-
Full-time education with no job	18	23	34
Full-time work	10	9	9
Work based training	6	9	-
Part-time work	3	3	-
Unemployed and looking for work	3	5	-
Looking after the family home	1	*	-
Taking a break/on holiday	3	1	-
Doing something else	1	2	-
Total	**460**	**476**	**44**

13.24 Table 35 shows that students indicating their main activity is full-time education were enrolled in school, compared to those from Warwickshire, the latter who were more likely to be enrolled in a sixth form college.

Table 35: Where are you enrolled for you main studies by region, percent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
School	49	61	68
Sixth-form school	20	11	10
College of further education	30	26	23
Other type of college	1	2	-
At a training provider	*	*	-
At work	-	-	-
Other	-	*	-
Total (N)	**340**	**331**	**40**

13.25 A higher proportion of students from East Yorkshire attended the same school as in Year 11 (99 per cent) compared to Warwickshire or Reading (93 per cent respectively). Students from Reading were more likely (72 per cent) than students from Warwickshire (59 per cent) to suggest the reason why they decided to go to this college/school was that it offered courses that they were interested in doing. In contrast students from Warwickshire were more likely to mention that their friends were going there (19 per cent), that it had a good reputation (34 per cent) and that it was easy to get there (33 per cent) compared to those from East Yorkshire (13 per cent, 25 per cent and 21 per cent respectively). There was no difference in the methods students from Warwickshire or East Yorkshire travelled to school. However, students from Warwickshire were slightly more likely to have someone drive them to school (25 per cent) compared to those in East Yorkshire (17 per cent). Those from East Yorkshire were slightly more likely to walk (35 per cent) compared to Warwickshire (30 per cent). Students from Reading were the most likely to take the bus (43 per cent) compared to either Warwickshire (32 per cent) or East Yorkshire (33 per cent).

13.26 There was no regional different in the proportion of the sample currently studying part-time for a qualification at school, college or elsewhere. Moreover, neither is there any significant regional difference in the types of qualifications studied or currently being studied for since the end of Year 11.

13.27 Students currently studying in Warwickshire were more likely (35 per cent) to be involved in other programmes/activities beside formal subjects as part of the curriculum compared to students in East Yorkshire (27 per cent). However 44 per cent of students from Reading indicated they were involved in such activities. Table 36 shows that students from Warwickshire were the most likely to be involved in sports activities and community service, while those from East Yorkshire were more likely to be involved in drama, music and voluntary work.

Table 36: Types of activities by region, percent			
	Warwickshire	East Yorkshire	Reading
Sport	48	38	28
Drama	10	15	-
Arts	5	6	6
Music	7	10	11
Mentoring younger students	8	8	6
Helping teachers	7	3	-
Visiting hospitals	-	-	-
Helping old people	2	1	-
Community service	15	9	39
Voluntary work	13	21	22
Other	18	17	28
Total (N)	**149**	**117**	**18**

Post-16 Employment

13.28   Just 18 per cent of school leavers from Warwickshire, 22 per cent from East
Yorkshire and 9 per cent of the sample from Reading were currently employed
or in work based training. Those who were currently in employment/work
based training were asked what job they were currently doing. Table 37
shows that there were some regional variations with school leavers from
Warwickshire more likely to be employed in skilled trades and retail and
customer service that school leavers from East Yorkshire. School leavers
from East Yorkshire were more likely to be employed in administrative and
secretarial jobs compared to those from Warwickshire. Just four school
leavers were employed in the Reading sample. All of the sample who were
currently employed indicated that they were employees

Table 37: Types of Job by region, percent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
Professional	-	1	-
Associate Prof	1	1	-
Administrative	8	14	-
Skilled trades	23	18	-
Personal services	7	7	-
Retail and customer	25	15	50
Process and Plant Oper	-	8	-
Elementary occs	25	26	50
Other	11	10	-
Total (N)	**84**	**104**	**4**

13.29   Those who were working in East Yorkshire as Table 38 shows were more
likely to be employed in large and small organisations, while school leavers in
Warwickshire were more likely to be employed in medium sized
organisations.

Table 38: Size of organisation by region, percent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
1-9	18	33	25
10-24	26	15	-
25-49	24	18	-
50-99	12	5	25
100 or more	19	26	50
Don't know	1	3	-
Total (N)	**84**	**104**	**4**

13.28   Table 39 shows that manufacturing was more important employed amongst
the East Yorkshire sample, while the service sector was important for the
Warwickshire sample particularly wholesale and retail trade and hotels and
restaurants.

Table 39: Sectoral employment by region, percent			
	Warwickshire	**East Yorkshire**	**Reading**
Agriculture, forestry	1	5	-
Fishing	-	1	-
Mining and quarrying	-	-	-
Manufacturing	4	15	-
Electricity, gas and water	2	3	-
Construction	8	8	25
Wholesale and retail trade	26	21	25
Hotels and restaurants	17	10	25
Transport, storage and communications	1	2	-
Financial intermediation	1	1	-
Real estate	1	2	-
Public admin	-	4	-
Education	2	1	-
Health and social work	4	5	-
Other community services	4	5	-
Private households	-	-	-
Other	-	-	25
Total (N)	**84**	**104**	**4**

13.29　School leavers from Warwickshire who were currently employed were less likely to be taking a Modern Apprenticeship or National traineeship (67 per cent) compared to those from East Yorkshire. 30 per cent of school leavers from East Yorkshire were taking Modern Apprenticeships and 11 per cent were taking National Traineeships, compared to 25 per cent and 6 per cent respectively from Warwickshire. However, of those who are currently employed and not taking either a modern apprenticeship or national traineeships, those from East Yorkshire were less likely to get any form of training (66 per cent) compared to Warwickshire (60 per cent). Table 40 shows that those who are currently in employment/work based training in Warwickshire were more likely to find out about their job from parents, while those from East Yorkshire were more likely to cite the Careers Service.

Table 40: How did you find out about this job/training by region, percent	Warwickshire	East Yorkshire	Reading
Job Centre	8	4	-
Careers Office	12	20	-
Newspaper advertisement	7	5	50
Parents	11	8	-
Another family member	4	11	25
Friend	21	22	-
Teacher	-	1	-
Another employer	4	2	-
Training provider	6	7	25
Other	27	21	-
Total (N)	**84**	**104**	**4**

Regular Activities

13.30 School leavers from both Warwickshire (59 per cent) and East Yorkshire (63 per cent) were equally likely to have hobbies/interests/activities. Just 30 per cent of the sample from Reading indicated they pursued regular activities. Similarly there were no difference in the type of hobbies pursued, with sporting activities being the most popular.

13.31 Table 41 shows that school leavers from Warwickshire were more likely to indicate they would like to be in higher education or full-time education in three years time compared to those from East Yorkshire. Those from East Yorkshire were more likely to indicate they would like to in paid employment. 70 per cent of the Reading sample indicated they would like to be in higher education.

Table 41: What you would like to be doing in 3 years time by region, percent	Warwickshire	East Yorkshire	Reading
Higher Education	49	37	70
Full-time Education with a part-time job	10	13	5
Full-time education with no job	*	1	-
Paid full-time work or training	34	44	16
Paid part-time work	2	2	-
Looking after home or family	*	*	2
Doing something else	2	3	5
Don't know	2	1	2
Total (N)	**149**	**117**	**18**