

Evaluation of Education Maintenance Allowance Pilots: Leeds and London First Year Evidence

Claire Heaver, Malcolm Maguire, Sue Middleton, Sue Maguire,
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Centre for Research in Social Policy
Loughborough University

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chapter 1 Introduction

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is being piloted in 56 Local Education Authority (LEA) areas, and the core evaluation is taking place in 15 of these areas. It is designed to encourage participation, retention and achievement in post-16 full-time education, particularly among young people from lower income families. EMA provides a weekly allowance of up to £40 per week, paid either to young people or their parents, termly bonuses for retention and bonuses for successfully meeting learning goals. The level of EMA payable depends on a parental income assessment and on the particular variant of EMA that is being tested in each LEA.

It was not possible to extend the main evaluation of EMA, which is being undertaken in ten pilot areas, to Leeds or the four Inner London Boroughs because of different eligibility criteria that were operating in these areas. Therefore, a smaller-scale statistical evaluation in Leeds and Inner London was undertaken which could begin to identify trends in participation and retention rates. The methodology involved:

- secondary analysis of Local Education Authority (LEA) databases;
- secondary analysis of Careers Service databases; and
- case studies of selected education providers in Leeds and Inner London.

This report refers to findings from the first year of the EMA pilot in Leeds and London, which was September 1999 to August 2000. It should be noted that the specific eligibility criteria for the first year in Leeds and London no longer apply. From September 2000, EMA was not restricted to those who attend selected schools in Year 11 in Leeds and those living in specified wards within the four London boroughs, as was the case for the first year.

Given the partial coverage of EMA in 1999 in both Leeds and Inner London, and the limited take-up of EMA provision in Inner London, the statistical evidence presented about the impact of EMA on post-16 participation rates cannot be considered to be conclusive. In addition, comparisons of participation rates in EMA areas with those in the previous year

cannot also be seen as providing conclusive evidence of an EMA effect. Other factors might have intervened which cannot be measured by the analysis.

Chapter 2 Local Education Authority Databases

Applications for EMA were much higher among young people in Leeds than in Inner London. Only small differences emerged in the numbers of young men and young women applicants. In both Leeds and the three London Boroughs from which information was available, almost two-thirds were studying vocational courses and one-third academic courses. However, the proportions studying each type of course varied among the London Boroughs.

Choice of educational institution, not surprisingly, mirrored to a large extent the pattern of post-16 provision in each area. In Leeds 51 per cent of students opted to remain in schools, compared with the London Boroughs where only 35 per cent were in schools and most students moved to Further Education Colleges. Students in Inner London were much less likely than students in Leeds to attend school or college within the LEA boundary.

Most EMA applicants received the maximum weekly amount of EMA, 91 per cent in Inner London and 63 per cent in Leeds. These differences are most likely the result of differences in the maximum income eligibility criteria (£20,000 in Inner London and £30,000 in Leeds).

EMA recipients in Leeds were more likely to have received termly retention bonuses than those in Inner London. This may reflect problems with the reporting of attendance within Inner London, as suggested by staff from the LEAs and from schools and colleges. It may also be that students in Inner London see bonuses as less of an incentive to attend school or college regularly.

There was little difference between Leeds and Inner London in the proportion of EMA recipients who had their award permanently withdrawn. EMA had been withdrawn from around one in ten students in both areas. Leeds LEA provided information on the reasons why EMA awards had been withdrawn and this showed that around two-thirds of withdrawals were because of consistently broken Learning Agreements. The remaining third had left school or college of their own accord.

Around one in ten EMA applicants in both Leeds and Inner London had been refused an award. The differences in eligibility criteria between the two areas were reflected in the reasons why LEAs had refused to award EMA. More students in Inner London were refused on the grounds of living in an EMA-ineligible ward than students in Leeds were refused for attending an EMA-ineligible school.

The average time to process applications was around three months. The minimum processing time was ten days whilst the maximum was over seven months.

EMA recipients on vocational and shorter courses were more likely to be receiving the maximum EMA award. Fewer young women than young men received the maximum amount of EMA. Students not receiving the maximum EMA award were more likely to have received two bonuses than were students on maximum awards.

Chapter 3 Destinations of Young People in Inner London

Using Careers Service data to compare the destinations of EMA-eligible young people in Inner London between 1998 and 1999, shows an overall gain of 9 per cent in the proportions of young people who remained in full-time education. There was a substantial gain in the proportions that chose academic courses in 1999, although vocational courses remained more popular. The overall gain in participation was mainly the result of more young people choosing to remain in schools, rather than move to Sixth Form or Further Education Colleges.

There was a decrease in the proportions of young people entering work without training or becoming unemployed in 1999, whilst the proportions entering work with training or Government Supported Training remained largely unchanged.

More young women stayed on in education than young men in both 1998 and 1999 but the gap had narrowed in 1999. There were gains in the proportions of both young men and women choosing academic courses between 1998 and 1999, but the gain was greater amongst young women. The biggest change in the choice of education provider was that 11 percentage points more young people stayed in School Sixth Forms. This pattern was similar for young men and women.

Chinese and Asian young people were more likely to be in education than other ethnic groups but, in 1999, the biggest gains were in the proportions of Black and White young people remaining in education. There was a gain in the proportions of young people choosing academic courses amongst all ethnic groups in 1999. The proportions choosing to remain in school increased among young people from all ethnic groups in 1999 with the largest increase amongst White young people.

Fewer young people from all ethnic groups entered employment or became unemployed in 1999 than in 1998, except amongst Chinese young people where the figures remained the same.

Amongst young men, the biggest gain in participation in full-time education between 1998 and 1999 was amongst those from ethnic origins classified as 'other' or 'unknown' and White and Black young men. White and Black young women in both cohorts were more likely to be in education than young men from these ethnic groups.

There were gains in the proportions of young people from all boroughs choosing to remain in School Sixth Forms but the largest gain was found amongst young people living in Lambeth. With the exception of Lambeth, there was a gain in the proportion of young people attending Further Education Colleges. There was a decrease in the numbers of young people from all boroughs entering Sixth Form Colleges.

Destinations of young people living in EMA-eligible wards were then compared with the cohort of young people as a whole. This showed that the gain in participation in full-time education amongst EMA-eligible young people was greater than for young people from the whole cohort, suggesting a possible EMA effect. Slightly fewer young people from the whole cohort chose school as a place to study in 1999 with more opting for Further Education or Sixth Form Colleges. As shown above, the opposite was true for EMA-eligible young people (see further below).

Chapter 4 Destinations of Young People in Leeds

There was a 4 percentage points gain in the proportions of young people from EMA-eligible schools who had decided to remain in full-time education between 1998 and 1999. As in Inner London, much of the gain was the result of larger numbers remaining in School Sixth Forms rather than moving to Further Education or Sixth Form Colleges. Proportions entering Government Supported Training, unemployment, or work with training also fell. There was a slight gain in the numbers of young people who chose employment without training.

There was a slight decrease in the proportion of young people choosing academic courses in 1999.

Young women were more likely than young men to be in full-time education in both 1998 and 1999 but the gap narrowed in 1999. Schools were more popular amongst young women than young men in 1999 while Further Education Colleges were more popular amongst young men than young women. More young women and fewer young men were on academic courses in 1999 than in 1998.

The same proportions of young men and women were in work in 1999 as in 1998. However, fewer young men and women were unemployed and, while slightly more young women had entered Government Supported Training, there was a decrease in the proportions of young men who had chosen this route.

Chinese and Asian young people were more likely to be in full-time education in both 1998 and 1999. In 1999, there was a gain in the proportions of young people from all ethnic groups who stayed on in full-time education, apart from young people from ethnic groups categorised as Black and 'other/not known'. Overall, much of the gain in participation was accounted for by the gain in the numbers of White and Asian young people who decided to stay on in education.

There was a gain in the proportions of White young people choosing school as a place to study in 1999 while the proportions of Black and Asian young people choosing this type of provider had decreased. The proportions of each ethnic group who had chosen Further

Education College remained largely unchanged apart from a gain of Chinese young people choosing Further Education College.

Apart from White young people, there was a rise in the numbers of young people from all ethnic groups who had chosen academic courses in 1999. On the whole, there was a fall in the number of White and Asian young people who entered work, government-supported training, became unemployed or entered 'other/unknown' destinations in 1999.

Young people from EMA-eligible schools were less likely to be in full-time education in both 1998 and 1999 than were young people from the whole cohort in Leeds. EMA-eligible young people were also more likely to be unemployed or have entered employment or training than young people from the whole cohort.

Chapter 5 Attendance and Retention Patterns in Leeds and Inner London

Interviews with staff in schools and colleges revealed a clear contrast between Leeds and Inner London in the extent to which respondents felt they were informed, consulted or involved in the implementation of EMA. Respondents in Leeds were regularly briefed and representatives from all the education providers in Leeds that took part in the evaluation had been invited to participate in the LEA's implementation group. A difficulty for schools and colleges in Inner London was that their EMA students came from up to four different LEAs and no co-ordinated implementation group was in place. Consequently, contact between the LEAs and schools and colleges was described as 'sporadic'. The lack of a single implementation group in Inner London also hindered the setting up of the software required to administer the system.

Respondents in schools in Inner London broadly welcomed EMA, but there were mixed feelings about how it was received by students. Some respondents said that students considered the EMA award to be worth claiming, others felt that students could not be bothered to fill in forms for what they saw as not much financial reward.

Respondents in Leeds had mixed views about the appropriateness of EMA. Although some were very positive about EMA, others were unhappy about the fact that only students in selected schools were eligible.

The late announcement of the eligibility criteria in Leeds and Inner London was seen as having created major problems in the implementation of EMA. However, it was felt that difficulties would be less severe for the second cohort, as there would be time to amend and improve mechanisms and procedures.

Respondents in both Leeds and Inner London felt that there had been insufficient time to make the scheme known to eligible young people before they made their Year 11 decisions. There was also concern about ‘misinformation’ in the publicity material that appeared to encourage students to stay on at school rather than opt for Sixth Form or Further Education College. However, respondents in both Leeds and Inner London felt that such problems had been rectified for the second cohort.

Respondents in both Leeds and Inner London were critical of the application forms, mainly because of complexity and length. The issue of requiring information about absent parents was seen as one of the ‘*biggest obstacles*’ to the successful completion of the application form.

The design and implementation of Learning Agreements had created difficulties for some institutions. Some education providers developed the Learning Agreement around a contract system that they already had in place, others had to start from scratch. There was some concern about whether students and their parents understood properly the implications of what they were signing.

The process of attendance monitoring was seen as having created difficulties, especially because of the additional workload generated. Collecting attendance information from colleges with multiple sites and many courses was seen as particularly problematic. In Inner London, attendance monitoring was particularly difficult because of the need to provide weekly information for up to four different LEAs, each with its own requirements. Some staff felt that education providers should be given extra funding to cover the extra administrative costs. Concern was expressed that attendance monitoring could have an adverse effect on the student/teacher relationship and some respondents felt that there should be more flexibility in the system. However, others felt that attendance monitoring meant that students were clearer about what was expected of them.

A variety of interpretations of authorised absence and 100 per cent attendance were in operation. The variations in approach and interpretation in Inner London were sometimes in response to differences in the criteria required by the four LEAs. Concern was raised about the possibility of resentment from EMA students because of the apparently more stringent set of rules governing absences.

Appeals procedures were in place in schools and colleges in Leeds and Inner London but they had not been needed.

There were mixed reactions about whether or not EMA had positively impacted on attendance and retention within schools and colleges. Responses in Leeds broadly suggested that a beneficial impact could be detected whereas in Inner London respondents were less sure about the effect of EMA, particularly because of the low take-up in this area and the fact that students could earn more from relatively well-paid part-time jobs.

Anger and resentment had been expressed by non-eligible students and their parents regarding the eligibility criteria because they felt it unfair that they could not get financial support when other young people could. In some institutions the resentment was offset by the provision of hardship and access funds. Also, some students were reported to have felt embarrassed that they were eligible for EMA, likening it to free school meals.

In relation to the impact of EMA on combining part-time work with full-time education, some respondents in Leeds felt that students had reduced their hours because of EMA, whilst others felt students would always want more money and not reduce their hours. Respondents in Inner London felt that EMA would not affect part-time working hours.

In both Leeds and Inner London, the timing of the interviews meant that it was difficult to detect any effect of bonus payments. Some college staff in Leeds had been more inclined to stop bonuses than they were to suspend weekly EMA payments believing that this acted as a greater deterrent.

During the course of the interviews respondents were asked which measures they thought might help improved the operation of EMA. Suggestions included:

- Any problems relating to payments should be directed to the LEA.
- Schools and colleges need better information from LEAs about how much each student is being paid and whether they have been paid.
- Greater flexibility to be introduced to the criteria for determining who should be suspended/withdrawn in order that schools and colleges could use their discretion.
- Definitive regulations regarding 'authorised absence' need to be established nationally, rather than locally.
- Extra funding should be made available to help with the administrative burden of operating EMA.
- Bonus payments should be made for half-term, since some college staff felt it was unfair that students are not paid during half-term.
- It may be better to have bigger weekly payments, rather than the bonuses.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The piloting of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) in 15 Local Education Authority (LEA) areas began in September 1999. EMA provides young people with some financial support to encourage them to remain in post-16 learning. The purpose of EMA is to encourage post-16 participation, retention and achievement amongst young people who otherwise could not afford to remain in education. Under the initiative, financial support, in the form of a weekly allowance, may be available to 16-19 year olds who undertake appropriate full-time courses at school or college. The full allowance is payable if the total parental taxable income does not exceed £13,000. For those with a total parental income of between £13,000 and £30,000 (£20,000 for the London pilot), a progressively tapered EMA, down to a minimum weekly allowance of £5, is payable. In addition to the weekly allowance, termly bonuses for retention and bonuses for successfully meeting learning goals are also paid.

In addition to enhancing rates of participation in full-time education post-Year 11, two of the major policy objectives of EMA are:

- to improve attendance among those enrolled on post-16 provision; and
- to alleviate the risk of student drop out which can result from financial pressure and/or the attraction of earning more money through employment.

In ten of the areas originally chosen for the piloting of EMA, an intrinsic element of the evaluation process was the analysis of data derived from quantitative interviews with samples of EMA-eligible young people. These interviews were conducted between November 1999 and April 2000 and are the subject of a recent research report (Ashworth et al., 2001).

However, in Leeds and London, a debate over the precise nature of the eligibility criteria made this more difficult, as a decision was not forthcoming in sufficient time to enable the sample to be identified and the interviews to take place. In the event, it was decided that, in Leeds, eligibility would be dependent on the 11-16 school attended, with only a proportion of the schools being designated as conferring entitlement on their pupils. Thus, 32 schools, each of which had 20 per cent or more of their pupils eligible for free school meals, were chosen. This included nine special schools who each had low numbers of eligible young people.

By contrast, the eligibility in the four London boroughs was determined by the electoral ward of the borough in which the young person lived, with only about half of the wards being designated. Again, an attempt was made to focus on those most disadvantaged, by choosing wards characterised by high levels of social deprivation. For example, in Greenwich, five of the twelve designated wards overlap with an Education Action Zone (EAZ), while another is an Excellence in Cities (EiC) area. Lambeth selected eight wards on the basis of two variables that make up the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions' (DTLR) index of deprivation: low educational participation; and low earning households. Lewisham had nine wards with entitlement to EMA provision, four of which were in the south of the Borough and overlapped with the Education Action Zone and/or were the subject of a Single Regeneration Budget bid. All nine of the wards chosen in Southwark had high levels of deprivation and were also the subject of other initiatives.

It should be noted that some changes have taken place since fieldwork was completed. For the second year of the pilot in Leeds and Inner London, EMA was not restricted to those who attend selected schools in Year 11 (Leeds) and those living in specified wards (the four London boroughs). In other words, since September 2000, EMA is available to all young people in these areas who are eligible on income grounds. Also, changes have been made to the design of application forms, including the introduction of a common form for all participating Authorities.

It was not possible to undertake large-scale interviewing of EMA-eligible young people on a timescale comparable with the main evaluation. However, this offered an opportunity to focus on the extent to which EMA was impacting on attendance and retention. This was agreed in discussions between members of the consortium undertaking the evaluation and representatives of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) EMA team. There had been indications from the main EMA evaluation that improvements in the rates of attendance and retention could be detected among students in receipt of an EMA award. These indications were notably from representatives of schools and colleges who attended the round table discussions with EMA implementation groups in the pilot areas. At the time of these discussions, however, the evidence was largely impressionistic. The methodology proposed offered the prospect of confirming or refuting those indications.

1.2 Methodology

Accordingly, a methodology was developed comprising three main elements:

- secondary analysis of LEA databases;
- secondary analysis of Careers Service databases; and
- case studies of selected education providers in Leeds and London.

Of particular interest from the Careers Service databases was information about post-Year 11 destinations, intentions and outcomes of Year 11 students. These data are commonly collected under the standard categories of:

- School Sixth Form;
- Sixth Form College;
- Further Education College;
- jobs with training;
- jobs without training;
- work based training as a trainee;
- work based training with employed status;
- unemployment;
- unavailable (e.g. sick, pregnant); and
- unknown.

These destination data for successive EMA cohorts could be compared to those from earlier years to generate trend data within both Leeds and London. Additionally, comparisons can be made with other EMA pilot and control areas, in order to disentangle an ‘EMA effect’ from other potential factors.

However, given the partial coverage of EMA in 1999 in both Leeds and Inner London, and the limited take-up of EMA provision in Inner London, the statistical evidence presented about the impact of EMA on post-16 participation rates cannot be considered to be conclusive. In addition, comparisons of participation rates in EMA areas with those in the previous year cannot also be seen as providing conclusive evidence of an EMA effect. Other factors might have intervened which cannot be measured by this analysis. The purpose of the evaluation in Leeds and Inner London was to provide a smaller-scale statistical evaluation in

order to identify initial trends in participation and retention rates that can be followed up in future years.

1.3 Structure of Report

Chapter 2 of this report describes evidence from analysis of the EMA databases held by the five Local Education Authorities in Leeds and London. Chapters 3 and 4 present the results of analysis of Careers Services Databases in Inner London and Leeds respectively. Their focus is on the destinations of young people following compulsory education. The perceptions, attitudes towards and experiences of EMA among education providers in Leeds and London are examined in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 presents some conclusions from the analysis.

2 LEA DATABASES

Box 2.1 Summary

- Applications were higher in Leeds than in Inner London.
- Vocational courses were more popular in both Leeds and Inner London than were academic courses.
- Schools were more popular in Leeds and Further Education Colleges more popular in Inner London.
- The majority of applicants in both Leeds and Inner London received the maximum weekly EMA award.
- Students in Leeds were more likely to have received a termly retention bonus than were students in Inner London.
- Students in Inner London were most likely to be refused because of living in an EMA-ineligible ward while students in Leeds were most likely to be refused on grounds of age.
- The average time to process applications was around three months.
- Students on vocational and shorter courses were more likely to be receiving the maximum weekly award.
- Students on lower weekly awards were more likely to have received two bonuses than were students on maximum awards.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores data provided by the five LEAs involved in the piloting of EMA in Leeds and Inner London. The chapter is in two sections. The first examines differences between the LEAs in terms of the numbers of young people who have applied for EMA, the courses chosen, the amount of EMA awarded and the payment of retention bonuses. The second section considers the sample as a whole so as to investigate differences in the level of EMA awarded and the type of courses chosen by EMA recipients.

2.2 Data Collection

Data were collected from each of the five LEAs in mid-July 2000 about all applications for awards of EMA in the academic year September 1999 to summer 2000. This covers the first cohort of young people potentially eligible for EMA, that is those who completed Year 11 in summer 1999.

There were a number of challenges in compiling the data for analysis. First, initial visits revealed that each LEA differed in the information held on EMA and in how data were stored. While some LEAs had electronic records of all information that could be provided to CRSP in this form, in others at least some information consisted of paper records. These paper records were photocopied and sent to CRSP, where they were manually entered into SPSS.

Secondly, information about EMA payments, bonuses, and refusals of awards was often held separately from data on applicants' personal details such as date of birth, institution attended and courses being studied. Accessing and merging these data was problematic because not all the software packages used within and across authorities were compatible. This meant that some LEAs had to spend considerable time and effort assembling the information requested and, once the data arrived in CRSP, extensive cleaning and processing was required to format the information. However, all the LEAs were in the process of updating and installing software and systems and this should make data collection and analysis more straightforward in subsequent years.

2.3 Number of Applications

In total, there had been 2,367 applications for EMA in Leeds and London by mid-July 2000. As shown in Table 2.1, over half (54 per cent) of all these applications had been made by young people and their parents in Leeds. The number of applications varied among the four London authorities. While both Greenwich and Lewisham had more than 330 applications, in Southwark and Lambeth only around 200 young people had applied.

Table 2.1 Number of Applications by LEA

LEA	Number of Applications	Percentage of Total Sample
Leeds	1289	54
London	1078	46
<i>Greenwich</i>	350	15
<i>Southwark</i>	190	8
<i>Lambeth</i>	203	9
<i>Lewisham</i>	335	14
Total	2367	100

2.3.1 Sex of applicants

Slightly more young women than young men had applied for EMA in both Leeds (52 per cent women/48 per cent men) and London (51 per cent women/49 per cent men) but this may simply be a reflection of the generally higher rate of participation of young women in post-compulsory full-time education. However, these figures need to be treated with some caution since information about the sex of 4 per cent of applicants was missing.

There were small differences between the London LEAs. In Southwark and Lewisham more than half of applications for EMA came from young men (54 per cent in each borough) while in Greenwich and Lambeth more young women applied for an award (56 per cent in each borough).

2.3.2 Course type

Information about courses chosen was available for three-quarters of the young people who had received EMA. This information was not available for applicants who had been unsuccessful or for those whose applications were still pending. In addition, Lewisham was unable to provide details about course information for EMA recipients.

For the purposes of this report, three types of courses have been identified:

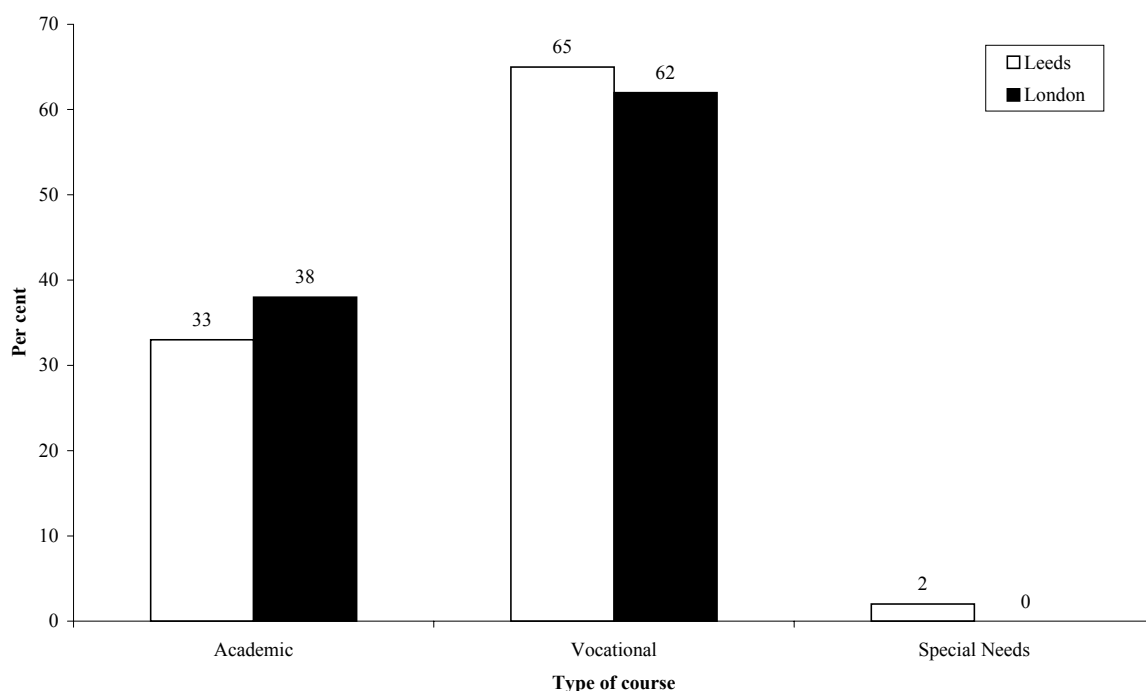
- Vocational: this includes courses which lead to GNVQs, NVQs, BTEC, HND, as well as other work-related qualifications;
- Academic: this includes A levels, AS exams and GCSEs; and

- Special Needs: Leeds was the only LEA to distinguish special needs courses from other courses as nine special schools were included in the 32 feeder schools which were used as the basis for eligibility.

In both Leeds and London, more EMA applicants had opted for vocational than academic courses and this difference was highly significant (Figure 2.1). In Leeds almost two-thirds (65 per cent) of students were taking vocational courses compared to one third (33 per cent) who were undertaking academic courses. The remaining 2 per cent of students in Leeds were undertaking special needs courses.

Although the choice of course for students in London was similar to Leeds, slightly fewer students in London were doing vocational courses (62 per cent) and more were doing academic courses (38 per cent).

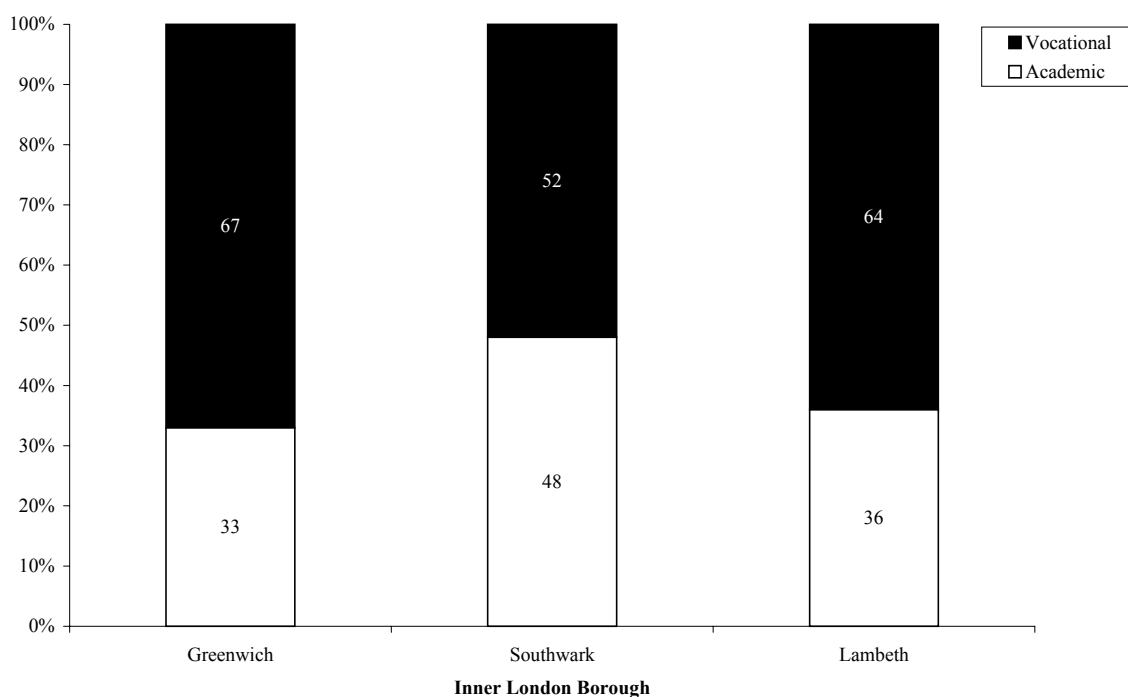
Figure 2.1 Type of Course in Leeds and London



However, the courses chosen by students in Inner London differed significantly across the three boroughs that supplied this information (data on type of course was not available for Lewisham). As shown in Figure 2.2, approximately a third of students in Greenwich (33 per cent) and Lambeth (36 per cent) were completing academic courses with the remaining two-

thirds undertaking vocational courses (67 per cent and 64 per cent, respectively). In Southwark more students were studying academic courses than in the other authorities, almost half (48 per cent) were taking academic courses while the rest were studying vocational courses (52 per cent). The available data do not provide an explanation of this finding. For instance, because there was an over-representation of young men in Southwark (section 2.3.1) it might be thought that the finding is related to gender. However, it had been found that young men were more likely to be undertaking vocational courses than they were academic courses (section 2.4.1). Nor is the finding related to the type of education provider since the majority (66 per cent) of students in Southwark went to Further Education Colleges (section 2.3.4) where vocational courses would be more common than in schools.

Figure 2.2 Type of Course in London



2.3.3 Length of course

Leeds and Lambeth provided information on the length of courses being taken by 1,400 EMA students. Students in Lambeth were more likely to have embarked on longer courses than those in Leeds; 89 per cent of students in Lambeth were completing two year courses compared to only just over one half (55 per cent) of those in Leeds. In Lambeth fewer students, approximately one in ten (11 per cent), were undertaking a course which lasted for

one year compared with more than two-fifths in Leeds (43 per cent). These differences were significant.

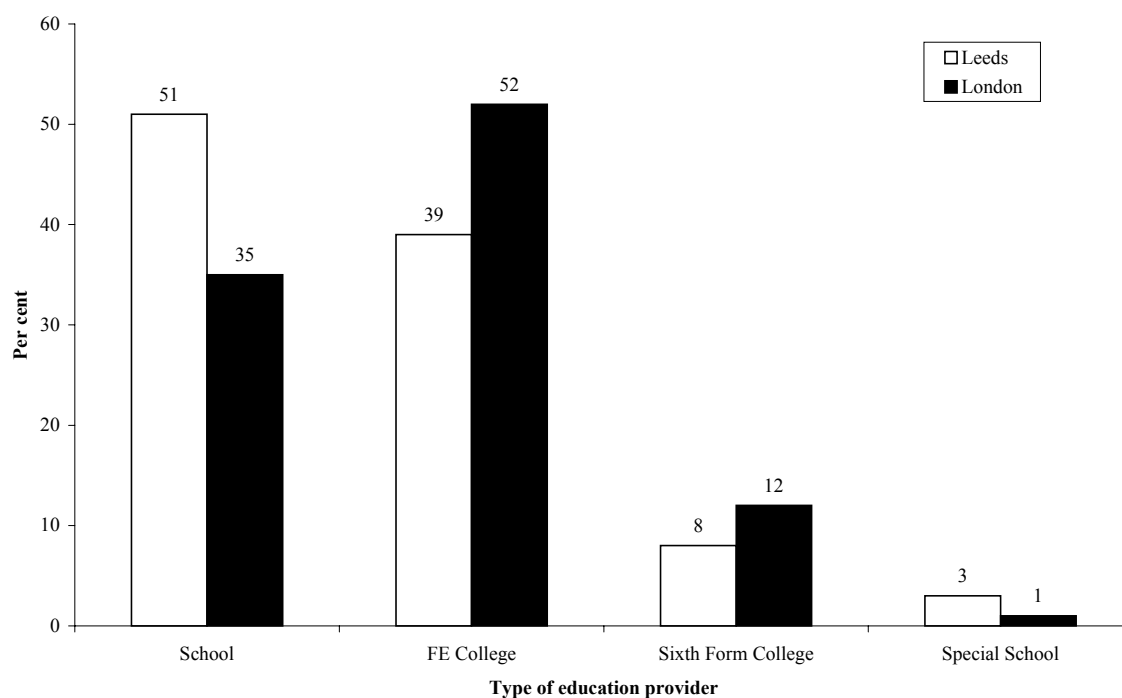
In Leeds 2 per cent of young people were taking three-year courses while in Lambeth there were no students on courses of a similar duration. The explanation for this difference is likely to be that in Leeds, students from nine special needs schools were eligible for an EMA award. Young people with special needs may be entitled to up to three years funding, rather than the maximum of two years that is available for other young people. All but one of the students undertaking three-year courses were on special needs courses.

2.3.4 Type of education provider

This section explores the type of institution attended by EMA recipients in Leeds and London. Post-16 students can potentially choose to continue their education in schools, Further Education Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges and special schools. Data were available on the institution chosen for 93 per cent of applicants.

Post-16 provision differs widely among the five areas. For example, Leeds has 44 schools with Sixth Forms compared to Greenwich's twelve, Southwark's six, Lambeth's five, and Lewisham's thirteen. There were eight Further Education or Sixth Form Colleges in Leeds, one in Greenwich, one in Southwark, two in Lambeth and two in Lewisham. These differences in provision, particularly for schools with sixth forms, are inevitably reflected in the pattern of institutions being attended by EMA recipients (Figure 2.3). Whilst approximately half the students (51 per cent) in Leeds continued their education in schools only about a third of those in London were in schools (35 per cent). In London more than half the students (52 per cent) attended Further Education Colleges while less than two-fifths (39 per cent) of EMA recipients in Leeds had moved into Further Education Colleges. These differences were statistically significant. The fact that students in London were more likely to have chosen college might also be because they have easier access to colleges in terms of proximity and transport.

Figure 2.3 Type of Education Provider in Leeds and London¹

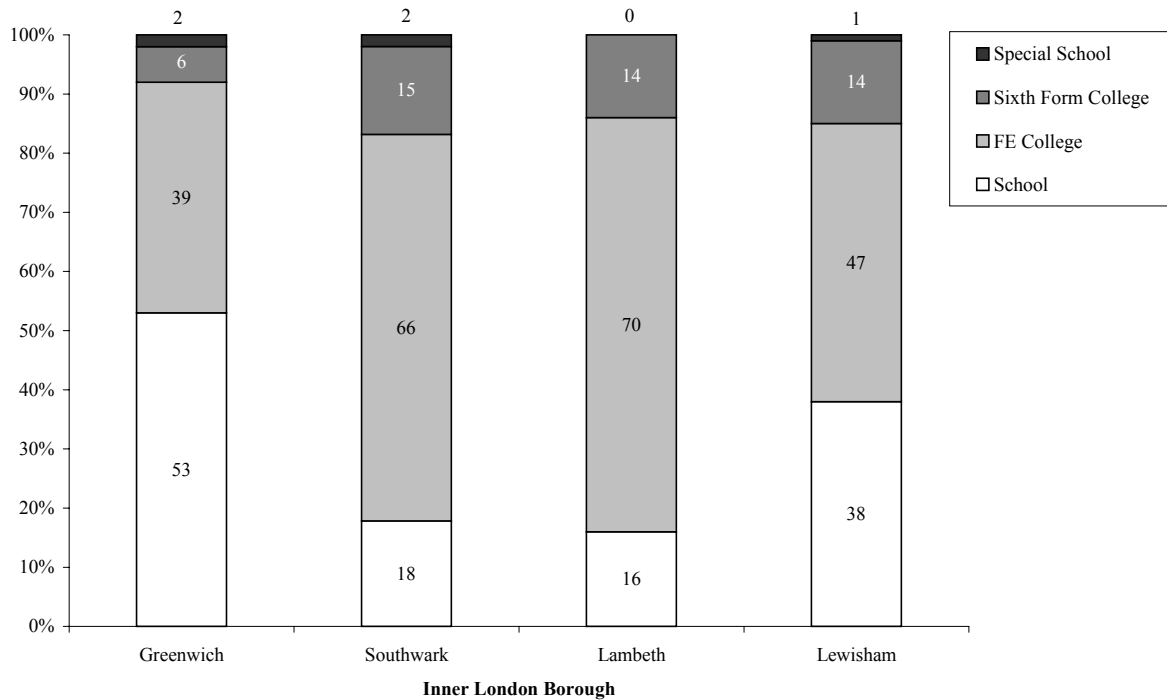


Students in London were also more likely to attend Sixth Form Colleges, 12 per cent compared to 8 per cent in Leeds.

Across the Inner London boroughs there were significant differences in the type of educational institution chosen by students. In Southwark and Lambeth, more than two-thirds of students attended FE Colleges (66 and 70 per cent respectively), less than one in five opted to go to schools, and fewer than a fifth chose Sixth Form Colleges (Figure 2.4). Although FE Colleges were still the most popular choice in Lewisham, less than half of students chose to attend this type of institution (47 per cent). Instead, more than a third of students (38 per cent) remained in schools and 14 per cent opted to go to a Sixth Form College. Greenwich is the only borough in which more than half the students (53 per cent) chose to remain in schools while more than a third attended FE Colleges (39 per cent). Only 6 per cent of EMA recipients in Greenwich went to a Sixth Form College.

¹ Type of education provider is derived from the name of the school using the DfES database.

Figure 2.4 Type of Education Provider in London



2.3.5 Location of institution

Not surprisingly, students in receipt of EMA in Leeds were twice as likely to go to a school or college within the LEA area in comparison to students in Inner London. Almost all (99 per cent) students in Leeds went to schools or colleges within the LEA boundary compared with just under half (49 per cent) in London. However, there were differences between the Inner London LEAs in the proportion of students attending institutions within the boundaries of their own education authority. In Greenwich and Lewisham two-thirds of students continued their education at an institution within their borough (66 and 68 per cent respectively). In Southwark and Lambeth this pattern was reversed as approximately three-quarters of students crossed their Local Education Authority boundary to attend a school or college in another borough (75 and 80 per cent respectively). Data from the interviews with education providers suggests that students in Greenwich and Lewisham are more likely to remain within their borough because travelling to other authorities is expensive and time-consuming. In addition, both these boroughs have schools and colleges that offer a range of courses and are considered to be highly regarded by students. Indeed, Lewisham College has a large number of students from neighbouring LEAs.

2.3.6 Weekly awards

Information about the amount of weekly EMA awards received by students in Leeds and London was provided for 2070 (87 per cent) applicants (Table 2.2). In London, 91 per cent of students received the maximum award of £30 per week compared with around two-thirds in Leeds (63 per cent). These differences are statistically significant.

There were also significant differences between the areas in the number of students who received amounts of EMA between the minimum and the maximum. In Leeds 15 per cent (n=177) of students received awards of between £10 and £20 per week and a further 17 per cent had an award of between £20 to £29 per week. In London, because 91 per cent of students received the maximum award, very few had other levels of awards. Indeed two Inner London LEAs, Greenwich and Lambeth, had made no awards of less than £10 per week.

The statistically significant differences in the amounts of EMA awarded to students can be partly explained by different rules on income eligibility operating in Leeds and London. In Leeds, parents can have gross income of up to £30,000 before the young person loses their entitlement to EMA, whereas in London the income threshold is £20,000. These income rules have two effects on the level of EMA awarded. First, while the lower income threshold in London reduces the number of potential EMA applicants, it also means that more of those who apply are entitled to higher amounts. Secondly, the higher income threshold in Leeds appears to widen the distribution of the levels of award so that more students receive weekly amounts of between £10 and £20 and between £20 and £29.

Table 2.2 Amount of Weekly Award in Leeds and London

	Amount of EMA Awarded								Row per cent
	£5.00-£10		£10.01-£20		£20.01-£29.99		£30		Base
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	
Leeds	57	5	177	15	194	17	733	63	1161
Lambeth	0	0	4	2	7	4	188	95	199
Lewisham	6	2	14	5	17	6	263	88	300
Greenwich	1	*	10	4	7	3	258	93	278
Southwark	4	3	5	4	8	6	115	87	132

* Less than 0.5 per cent

2.3.7 Number of bonuses

Information about the number of end-of-term retention bonuses received by students was obtained for 88 per cent of applicants. Since data were collected from each LEA in the middle of July (before the end of the Summer term), EMA recipients at that time could theoretically have been eligible for two termly retention bonuses – one at Christmas and the second at Easter.

There were significant differences between students in Leeds and London in the number of retention bonuses young people had received (Table 2.3). Over half (55 per cent,) of students in Leeds had received two bonuses compared with less than a third (29 per cent) in London, but the difference was less marked for receipt of one retention bonus. Leeds LEA had paid one bonus to 30 per cent of EMA recipients and the Inner London LEAs had paid only slightly fewer (27 per cent). The Inner London LEAs had almost three times as many students who had received no retention bonus as Leeds LEA.

Table 2.3 Number of Bonuses in Leeds and London

	Column percentages (and numbers)	
Number of Bonuses	Leeds	Inner London
0	16	43
1	30	27
2	55	29
Total	100 (1170)	100 (910)

There was also a significant difference in the number of bonuses awarded to students in each London LEA (Figure 2.5). Lambeth had paid fewest bonuses to students while Greenwich had paid two bonuses to more than half of its students. In Southwark and Lambeth fewer than one in ten students had received two bonuses. Southwark had the highest percentage of students who had received one bonus, more than two-thirds had received one payment.

Although the data on bonuses was collected at the same time from each of the LEAs, there are at least three possible explanations for the differences in bonuses paid. First, the number

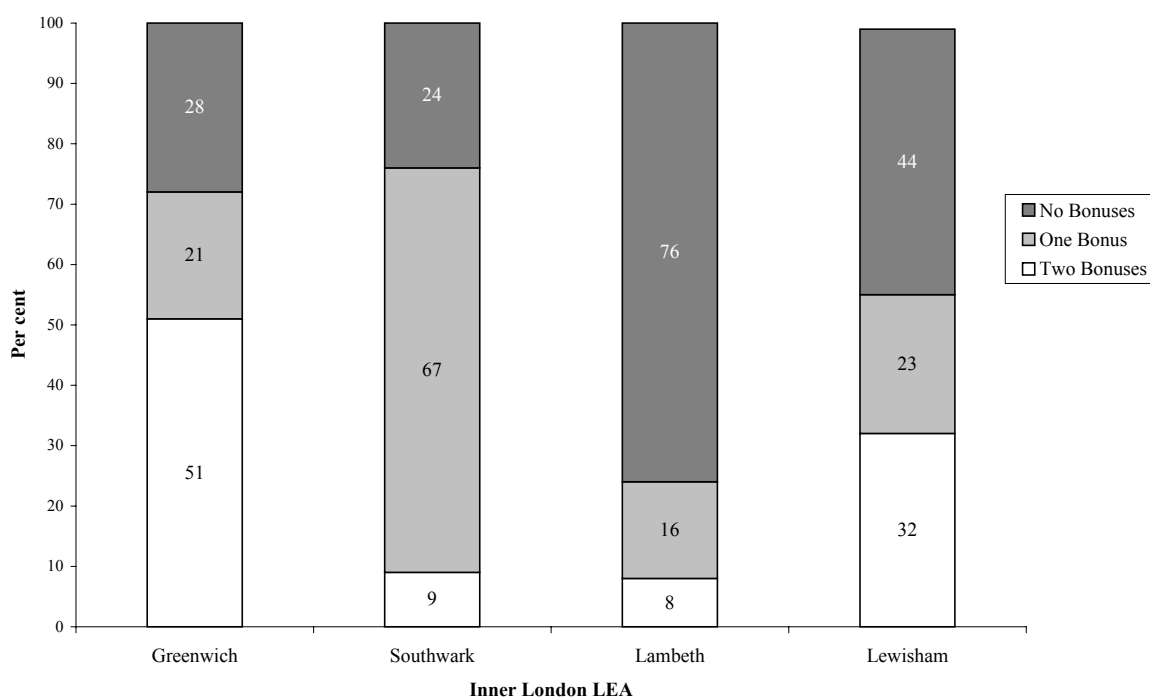
of bonuses that a young person could have received would have depended on the date of their application for EMA; those who did not apply until later might only have been eligible for the Easter 2000 bonus². DfES guidance advises LEAs that both weekly payments and bonuses can only be backdated for the term in which the EMA application was received. Secondly, in discussions with staff in the Inner London boroughs, it became clear that the LEAs were experiencing particular difficulties in obtaining information about attendance from some schools and colleges. Without this information the LEAs were unable to process bonus payments. Many of the staff within schools and colleges in Inner London explained that they had small numbers of students receiving EMA and suggested that the amount of paperwork required for relatively few students was disproportionate. As a result, completing the forms and records was 'low on the list of priorities' given the limited resources of many of the institutions. These administrative difficulties may have resulted in fewer students in London receiving termly retention bonus payments.

However, bonuses can also be withheld for poor attendance, and this is the third explanation for the low number of bonus payments in some LEAs. Analysis of data from Lambeth revealed that a third of students were deemed to be 'poor attenders' compared with 6 per cent in Southwark³. Some staff within schools and colleges suggested that a retention bonus of £50 for students was not a big incentive for students living in London, where the cost of living was higher and it was relatively easier to find well paid part-time work.

² The data did not include the date of application so it is not possible to determine the number of bonuses for which young people would have been eligible.

³ Only Lambeth and Southwark provided information on attendance of students.

Figure 2.5 Number of Bonuses in Inner London



2.3.8 EMA withdrawal rates

Four of the five LEAs provided information about students from whom they had permanently withdrawn EMA⁴. Reliable information about suspended payments was not provided by the LEAs and, therefore, was not used in the analysis.

A total of 243 young people in Leeds and Inner London had their award permanently withdrawn. There was little difference between Leeds and Inner London, with 12 per cent of students in Leeds and 8 per cent of students in Inner London having EMA withdrawn. This difference is not statistically significant. Within the Inner London LEAs, fewer than one in ten students in Greenwich and in Lewisham (both 8 per cent) had EMA withdrawn while this rose to 15 per cent in Lambeth. It is not surprising that Lambeth had withdrawn more awards than other Inner London LEAs given the higher proportion of students it reported as ‘poor attenders’ and the low number of young people who had received one or more bonuses (see Section 2.3.7).

⁴ Southwark did not provide information on the numbers of students from whom it had withdrawn EMA.

Leeds LEA provided information on the reasons why EMA awards had been withdrawn. Of the 156 students in Leeds who had EMA withdrawn, almost two-thirds (64 per cent) had broken their Learning Agreement. The remaining 36 per cent had chosen to leave school or college of their own accord.

2.3.9 Unsuccessful applications for an EMA award

The information provided by four LEAs shows that there had been a total of 218 unsuccessful applications for EMA awards⁵. There was very little difference between Leeds and Inner London in the proportions of students who had been unsuccessful in claiming EMA, in Leeds 10 per cent of students were unsuccessful compared with 8 per cent in Inner London.

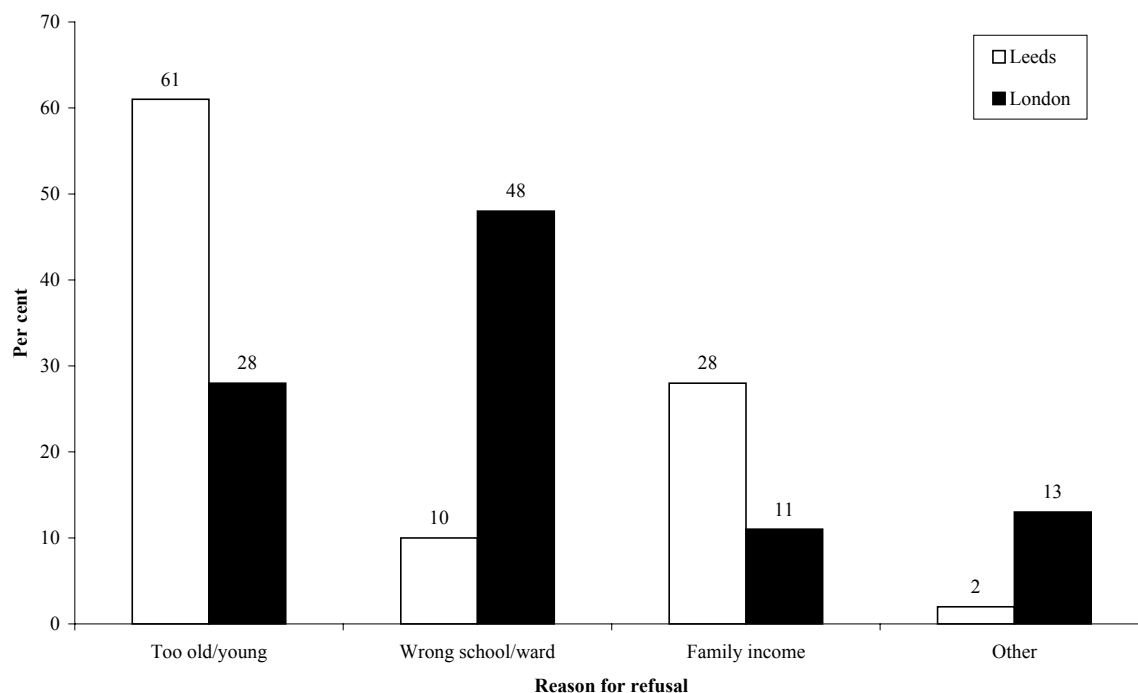
Based on information provided by three of the Inner London LEAs, it appears that Southwark refused EMA to a greater percentage of applicants than Greenwich or Lewisham. Southwark refused 17 per cent of applicants while Lewisham refused 10 per cent and Greenwich 7 per cent. However, the numbers involved are too small to allow any firm conclusions to be drawn.

2.3.10 Reasons for refusing EMA awards

The four LEAs who provided information about unsuccessful applications also gave the reasons why students had been refused and, again, significant differences emerged between Leeds and Inner London (Figure 2.6).

⁵ Lambeth were not able to provide information about students who had been unsuccessful in claiming EMA awards. However, subsequent discussions with staff revealed that 18 applicants had been refused an award. As other information was not known about these cases at the time of data collection these cases have not been included in this analysis.

Figure 2.6 Reasons for Refusal in Leeds and Inner London



In Leeds the main reason for refusing an award was because the young person was either too old or too young to qualify for EMA. This accounted for 61 per cent of refusals, with a further 28 per cent not qualifying because family income was too high. One in ten EMA applicants were turned down because they had not attended one of the 32 feeder schools.

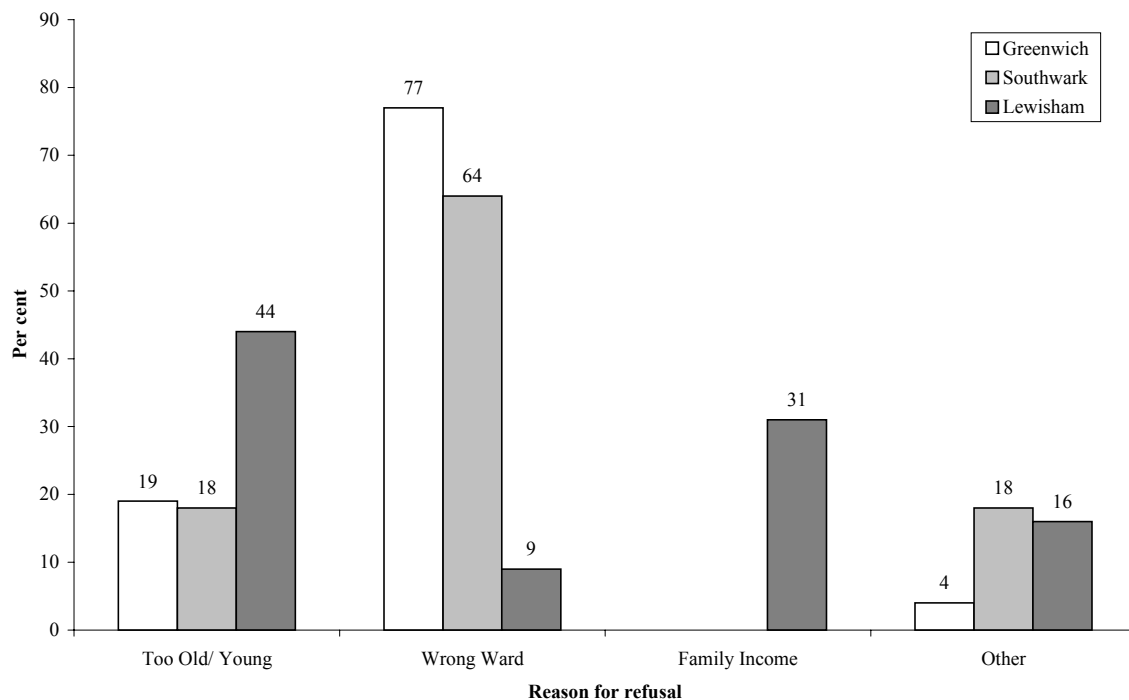
In Inner London, as mentioned above, eligibility for EMA depended upon residency in certain electoral wards and almost half (48 per cent) of all unsuccessful applications in London were because the young person lived in the wrong ward. Many young people were apparently unaware of their electoral ward and, therefore, of whether they qualified for EMA. Less than a third of young people in Inner London who applied for EMA fell outside the age range for EMA and slightly more than one in ten (11 per cent) were refused EMA because their family income was too high. The differences between Leeds and Inner London in the proportions of applicants who were refused because their family income was too high is surprising given that in Inner London there is a lower qualifying income than in Leeds; £20,000 as opposed to £30,000. The explanation probably lies in the generally lower incomes of households in eligible boroughs in London than among households of young people attending the 32 feeder schools in Leeds. However, it should be noted that the numbers of young people in both areas who were refused for this reason were very small.

More students in Inner London were refused for ‘other reasons’ than in Leeds, although once again the numbers were very small. ‘Other reasons’ included not undertaking a full-time course and submitting an application for EMA to the wrong LEA.

Examining the reasons given by the three Inner London LEAs for refusing awards highlights some differences between the authorities. In Greenwich and Southwark the main reason for refusing awards was because of residency in ineligible electoral wards (Figure 2.7). In Greenwich this reason accounted for more than three-quarters (77 per cent) of refusals and in Southwark almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of refusals were made for this reason. In contrast, in Lewisham, residency qualifications accounted for only 9 per cent of all refusals.

The main reason for refusing an award in Lewisham was directly related to applicants failure to meet the age criteria for EMA. This accounted for more than two-fifths (44 per cent) of refusals. In addition, in Lewisham almost a third of applicants were refused EMA because their family income was too high (31 per cent) whereas in Greenwich and Southwark no applicants were refused EMA on this basis.

Figure 2.7 Reasons for Refusal in Inner London



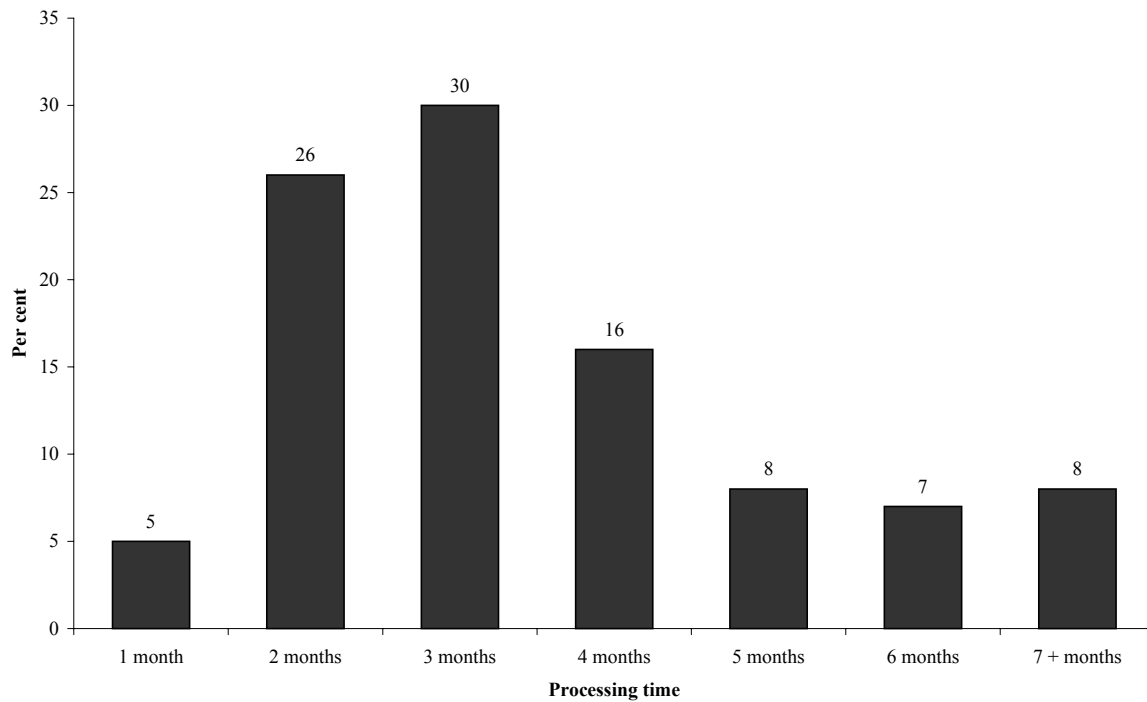
2.3.11 EMA applications pending

Greenwich and Southwark provided data on EMA applications that were pending because the LEA was waiting for further information from the applicants. A total of 70 applications fell into this category and there was little difference between the two boroughs. Fifteen per cent of applications in Southwark were awaiting further information as opposed to 12 per cent in Greenwich. Details about the type of missing information were not provided.

2.3.12 Processing time

One LEA provided information that allowed processing time to be calculated (Figure 2.8). Almost two-thirds (61 per cent) of applications had been processed within 3 months. The minimum processing time was 10 days and the maximum was 234 days (over seven months). The average time taken to process claims for EMA was 83 days (almost three months). Given that only one LEA provided information about processing times, it is not possible to make any real conclusions from these findings. Findings from interviews with implementation groups, which included LEA representatives, from the evaluated 15 pilot areas in 1999 suggested that backlogs of applications to be processed was experienced in most LEAs (Maguire et al., 2001). This was due to a combination of a short lead-in time before EMA became operational, problems with the application form, and the need to develop administrative systems quickly.

Figure 2.8 Amount of Processing Time



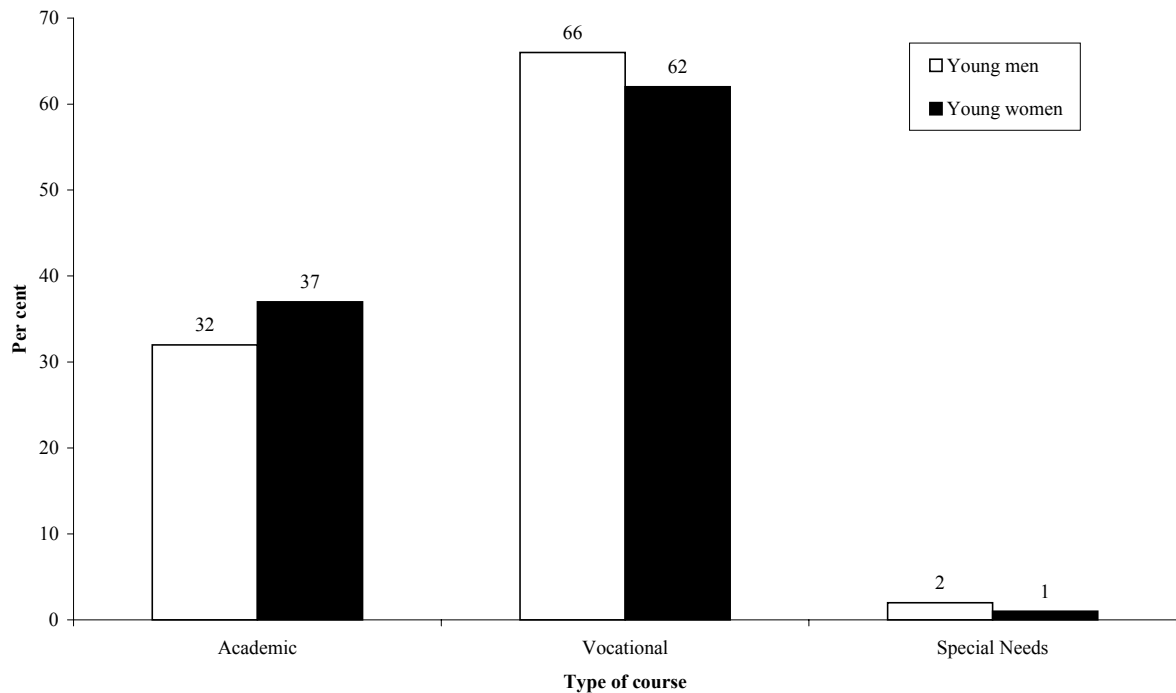
2.4 General Differences

This section combines the LEA data from Leeds and Inner London to explore the characteristics of EMA students in relation to the type of post-16 provision undertaken and the amount of EMA weekly amount received. Course type is examined by sex and by the number of bonuses received, and the level of weekly award is analysed by sex, number of bonuses, types of course and EMA withdrawal rates. Since the amount of EMA awarded is related to family income, some links can be made between family income and the type and level of post-16 provision chosen by young people.

2.4.1 Differences between the types of courses chosen by young men and women

Almost two-fifths of young women opted for an academic course; 37 per cent of young women chose this type of course compared with 32 per cent of young men (Figure 2.9). Roughly two-thirds of young men and women were doing vocational courses (66 and 62 per cent respectively).

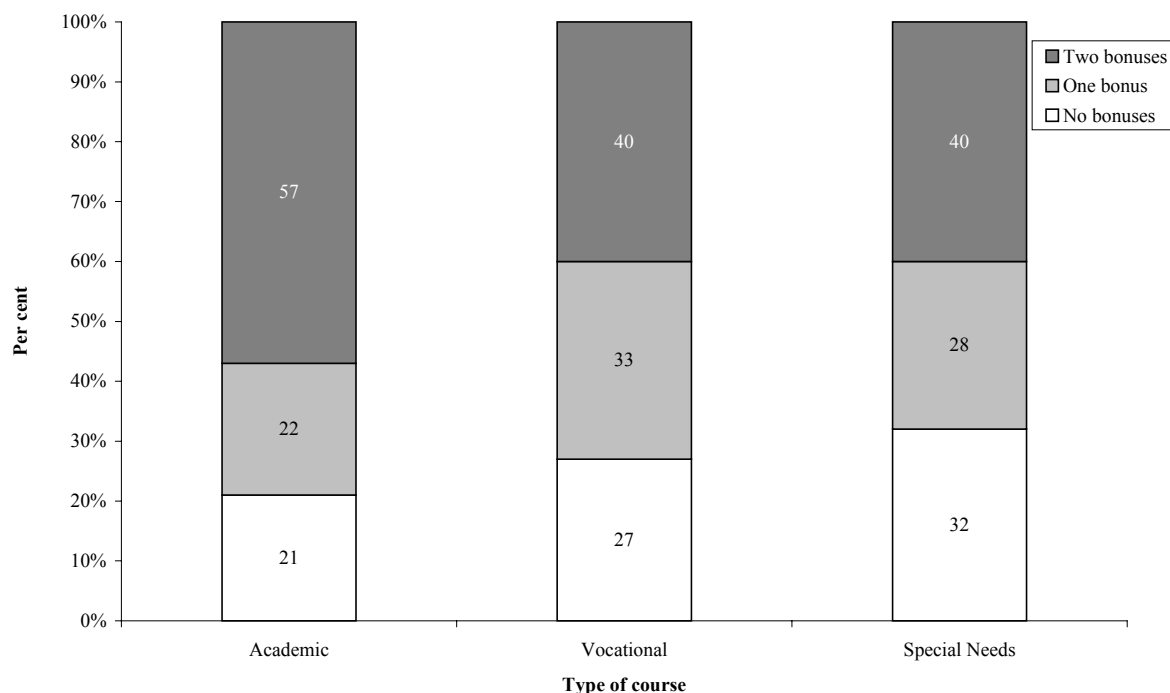
Figure 2.9 Type of Course by Sex



2.4.2 Type of course and number of bonuses

Less than half (46 per cent) of EMA recipients had received two bonuses and a quarter (25 per cent) had not received a bonus at the time the data was collected. The number of bonuses students had received was found to be highly significantly associated with the type of course they were studying, with those undertaking academic courses more likely to have received two bonuses than young people on vocational courses (Figure 2.10). More than half (57 per cent) of young people on academic courses had received two bonuses compared to two-fifths (40 per cent) on vocational courses. Similarly, fewer young people on academic courses had *not* received a bonus (21 per cent) compared to young people on vocational courses (27 per cent).

Figure 2.10 Type of Course by Number of Bonuses



Seventeen percentage points fewer students studying vocational courses were paid two bonuses than those on academic courses. Differences in attendance do not appear to explain this, since data on poor attendance provided by Southwark and Lambeth suggests very little difference in poor attendance patterns between those on academic (4 per cent) and vocational (5 per cent) courses. However, there were differences between students on different types of courses in terms of those who had EMA permanently withdrawn. Less than one in ten (8 per cent) of academic students had their EMA award withdrawn compared to 14 per cent of those on vocational courses. It seems that this may provide at least part of the explanation of why fewer students on vocational courses had received bonus payments, since students who had EMA withdrawn would not receive an end of term retention bonus.

The reasons why young people on vocational courses were more likely to get their EMA withdrawn and get fewer bonuses must await later waves of data from the main EMA evaluation. However, analysis of weekly award and type of course (section 2.4.3) suggests that young people from lower income families who are entitled to the maximum EMA weekly allowance are more likely to be undertaking shorter and vocational courses. A further possible explanation may be related to gender. Findings reported in section 2.4.1 suggest that young men were more likely than were young women to undertake vocational courses.

Furthermore, young men (39 per cent) were almost 10 percentage points less likely than were young women (48 per cent) to have received two bonuses.

2.4.3 Weekly award

This section explores the characteristics of students receiving varying amounts of weekly award. Since the number of students who were receiving less than the maximum EMA allowance of £30 per week was very small, the analysis divides EMA recipients into two categories: those who received the maximum and those who received less than the maximum.

Weekly award and sex

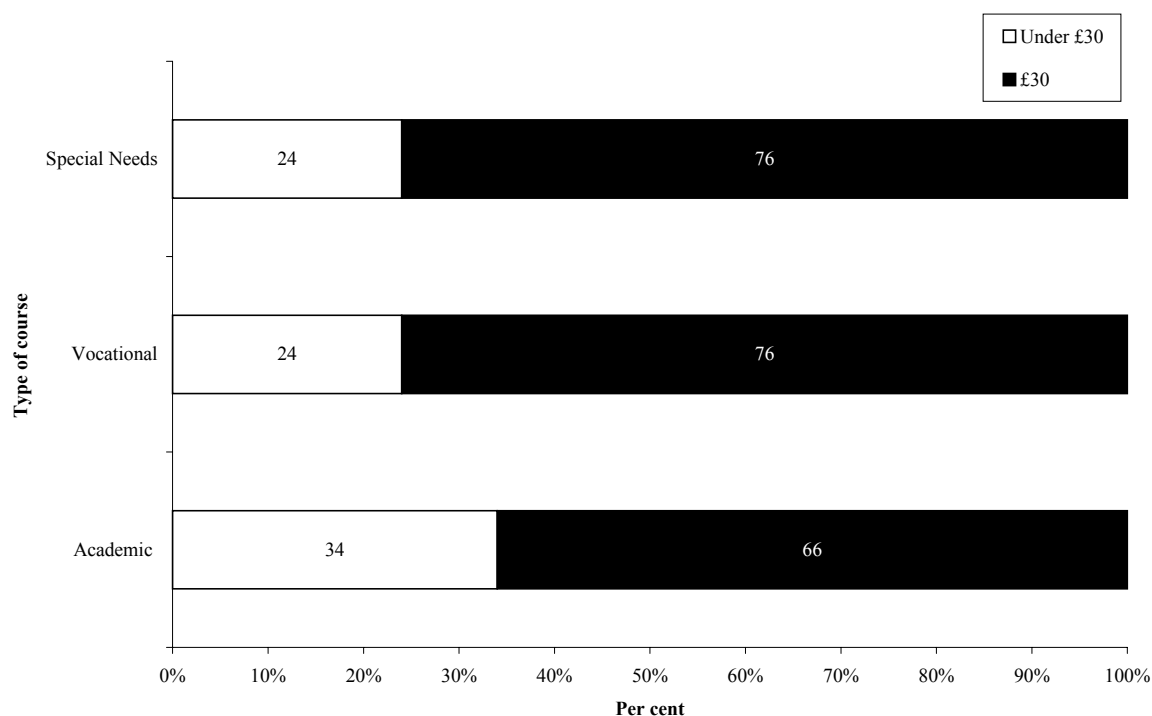
Young men and women were equally likely to receive the maximum amount of EMA. Seventy-seven per cent of young men received £30 a week, as did 74 per cent of young women.

Weekly award and course

Young people undertaking vocational courses were significantly more likely to receive the maximum amount of EMA. Over three-quarters of young people on vocational courses were awarded £30 a week compared to two-thirds of young people undertaking academic courses (Figure 2.11). This suggests that young people from lower income families were more likely to undertake vocational training rather than academic courses.

There was also a highly significant relationship between weekly award and duration of course, although information on length of course is based on data from only two authorities, Leeds and Lambeth. Almost three-quarters (74 per cent) of students on one year courses were receiving the maximum EMA award compared to 64 per cent of young people on two year courses. These findings suggest that young people from lower income families who are entitled to the maximum EMA weekly allowance are more likely to be pursuing shorter courses (one year) which are vocational in nature.

Figure 2.11 Weekly Award by Type of Course

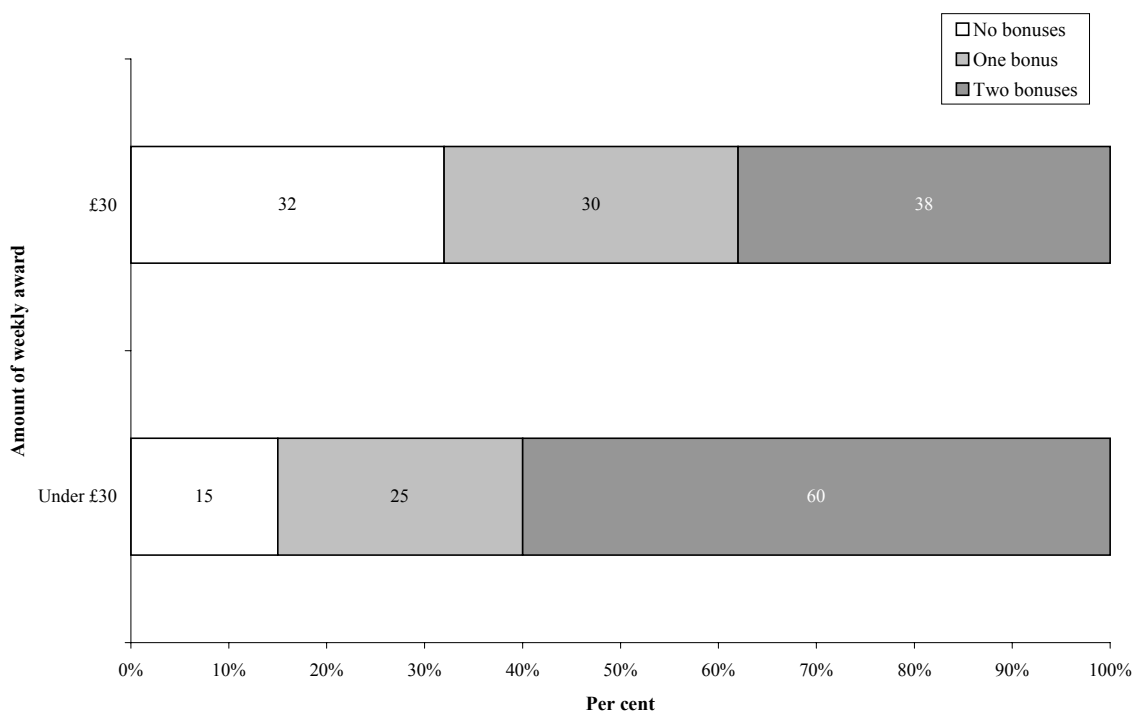


Weekly award and number of bonuses

For young people in receipt of the maximum EMA, the number of bonuses received was relatively evenly distributed. Approximately a third of students had received no bonus, a third had received one, and almost two-fifths (38 per cent) had been paid two bonuses. However, the pattern of bonus receipt was significantly different among young people who received less than £30 per week. Sixty per cent of young people had received two bonuses and only 15 per cent had not received any bonus payment (Figure 2.12). Therefore, young people who received less than £30 each week were 22 percentage points more likely than young people getting the maximum amount of EMA to have received two bonuses. This seems to suggest that the level of EMA received on a weekly basis does not adversely affect student attendance or performance (the main criteria for receiving termly bonuses). However, the causal relationship is likely to be more complex, involving other characteristics of those on maximum and less than maximum EMA. For example, it can only be surmised that students from higher income families may have higher attainment levels at Year 11 and are, therefore, more motivated in Further Education. Indeed, findings from the main quantitative evaluation reveal differences in attainment levels between young people who were eligible for EMA and those who were not eligible (Ashworth et al., 2001). There was a

large difference between the proportions of EMA-eligible and ineligible young people achieving 5 or more passes at the higher A*-C grades at GCSE.

Figure 2.12 Weekly Award by Number of Bonuses



Weekly award and numbers withdrawn

The level of EMA received by students on a weekly basis was unrelated to differences in the proportions of students who had their payments withdrawn. Just over one in ten (12 per cent) students receiving the maximum award had their EMA withdrawn which is roughly the same proportion of young people who received less than £30 per week (11 per cent).

Weekly award and reasons for withdrawals

As stated earlier, only Leeds LEA provided reasons why EMA had been permanently withdrawn. There was no statistically significant relationship between the level of weekly award and why payments had been withdrawn. Of those students who had their EMA withdrawn, just over six out of ten (61 per cent) who received the maximum award had consistently broken their Learning Agreement and the proportion of students who received less than £30 per week and had their EMA withdrawn for the same reason was similar at 65 per cent. Almost two-fifths (39 per cent) of young people receiving the maximum amount had left education as had 35 per cent who had been awarded less than £30 per week.

However, these figures need to be treated with caution since the numbers of students are small.

2.5 Conclusions

Given differences in the eligibility criteria for EMA in Leeds and the four Inner London boroughs, it is not surprising that differences emerged from the analysis of the five LEA's EMA databases:

- there were fewer applications in London;
- EMA recipients in Inner London were more likely to have received the maximum award in comparison to EMA recipients in Leeds;
- EMA recipients in Leeds were more likely to have received one or more bonuses in comparison to EMA recipients in Inner London; and
- among those whose application for EMA was turned down, students in Inner London were most likely to have been refused because they lived in EMA-ineligible electoral wards, whereas those in Leeds were most likely to have been refused because they were outside the age limit for EMA.

However, there was unanticipated variation between the Inner London LEAs, both in the information provided and in the way EMA is being administered and implemented:

- Students in Lambeth and Southwark were more likely to have chosen Further Education Colleges outside of the LEA boundary than students in Lewisham or Greenwich;
- in Lewisham and Greenwich students were more likely to have opted for schools inside the LEA boundary;
- EMA recipients in Lambeth were far less likely to have received a termly bonus payment than in the three other London LEAs, whilst students in Greenwich were more likely to have received two bonuses;
- A higher proportion of recipients had their EMA permanently withdrawn in Lambeth than in Greenwich or Lewisham; and
- EMA applicants in Southwark were more likely to have been refused EMA than in Greenwich or Lewisham.

3 DESTINATIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN INNER LONDON

Box 3.1 Summary

- There was a 9 percentage points gain in the proportion of young people in Inner London remaining in post-16 full-time education between 1998 and 1999.
- Vocational courses were more popular but there was a substantial increase in the numbers of students choosing academic courses.
- The biggest gain in participation was in the number of students choosing school rather than Further Education or Sixth Form Colleges.
- There was a decrease in the proportions of young people entering work with or without training or becoming unemployed.
- More young women than young men were in full-time education but the gap had narrowed in 1999.
- Chinese and Asian young people were more likely to be in education than other ethnic groups but the biggest gains were in the proportions of Black and White young people remaining in education.
- More young people from all the Inner London boroughs chose schools in 1999 than they had in 1998.
- The gain in participation rates amongst EMA-eligible young people was greater than for young people from the whole cohort.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the post-Year 11 destinations of young people in the four Inner London boroughs. This information is collected by the Careers Service mainly by telephone follow-up and letter, in the autumn following the young person's completion of Year 11. The data have been derived from the South Bank Careers Service database and include young people who may have been eligible for EMA because they lived in wards included in the EMA pilot. Two cohorts of young people have been included in the analysis: those who completed Year 11 in summer 1998 and those who finished compulsory education in summer 1999. This second group of young people was the first cohort eligible for EMA on its introduction in September 1999. However, throughout this chapter young people in both cohorts in the

eligible electoral wards are referred to as 'EMA-eligible' for convenience, although actual eligibility would, of course, only apply to those young people in the 1998/99 cohort with household incomes of less than £20,000 per annum. Also, throughout the chapter, the year 1998 will refer to the 1997/98 cohort and the year 1999 will refer to the 1998/99 cohort.

Availability of destination data for the 1998 cohort allows comparisons to be made of the destinations of young people before and after the introduction of EMA. However, any differences observed in this analysis cannot be conclusively identified as the effect of EMA, since other unobserved changes may have taken place between the two academic years that might also have affected young people's choice of destination. Examples of this might be changes in the labour market or in the range of courses on offer to young people by education providers. However, some limited comparisons have been made between the destinations of EMA-eligible young people in each cohort and the destinations of the cohort of young people as a whole. If changes observed in the behaviour of EMA-eligible young people are not observed in the behaviour of all young people it would be safer to conclude, although not conclusive, that EMA is having an effect.

The Careers Service data include information on sex and ethnicity and much of the analysis focuses on these characteristics. The data also record particular personal circumstances or problems, such as homelessness or pregnancy, and this chapter ends with a brief description of the prevalence of these problems among EMA-eligible young people.

3.2 Collecting the Data

Data was provided by South Bank Careers Service who hold information for young people in the Inner London boroughs of Greenwich, Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham. Information held by the Careers Service does not identify the electoral ward in which the young person lives. Therefore, it was necessary to match the address of the young person held in the Careers Service database to electoral ward information obtained from each of the Local Authorities. The electoral registration department for each borough was contacted and some Local Authorities were able to provide this information electronically. For those authorities that were unable to do so, the data were entered manually.

Since EMA will be extended to everyone in the four Inner London boroughs in the second year, and not just those in specified electoral wards, the Careers Service should be able to easily identify potentially EMA-eligible young people. This should make future data collection a lot easier.

3.3 Year 11 Destinations in Inner London

The Careers Service database held information on 7737 young people in Inner London who lived in EMA-eligible electoral wards in the 1998 and 1999 cohorts and destination information was available for 95 per cent of them. Of those young people for whom destination information was available, 3593 were in Year 11 in 1998 and 3770 in 1999. The destinations of these young people were categorised as follows:

- **full-time education**⁶: includes staying at school, enrolling at a Sixth Form College or at a Further Education College;
- **employment**: includes employment with training, employment without training, and Modern Apprenticeships;
- **government supported training**: includes National Traineeships/Youth Training (employed and trainee status), and other training;
- **unemployment**: covers those registered with the Careers Service as unemployed and seeking employment; and
- **other**: includes being unavailable for work, leaving the area and unknown destinations.

From the 1998 cohort, 62 per cent of young people had remained in full-time education and this increased to 71 per cent for the 1999 cohort (Table 3.1). This gain, of 9 percentage points, is higher than statistical estimates of the effect of EMA in the remaining nine urban pilot areas obtained using econometric modelling techniques which revealed gains in participation rates of around 4 percentage points (Ashworth et al., 2001).

There were significant changes in the education providers chosen by young people between 1998 and 1999. Schools experienced the biggest gain in post-16 participation rates. One quarter of EMA-eligible young people from the 1998 cohort (25 per cent) opted to stay on at school. From the 1999 cohort, over one third (37 per cent) stayed on at school. The

⁶ For EMA purposes, full-time education has been defined as at least 12 guided learning hours per week.

proportions attending Further Education Colleges remained approximately the same over the two cohorts, enrolling one third of all eligible young people who remained in post-compulsory education. However, Sixth Form Colleges experienced a significant decrease in their numbers; 4 per cent of young people from the 1998 cohort opted to attend Sixth Form College while, in 1999, only 0.1 per cent did so. Evidence from the qualitative interviews with representatives from schools and colleges in London suggested that a substantial number of young people were under the impression that EMA was only awarded to young people if they remained at the school they had attended in Year 11.

The proportions of young people going into employment with a training element or entering Government Supported Training did not change significantly between the two cohorts. However, the proportions choosing employment that did not offer training decreased from 7 per cent in 1998 to 5 per cent in 1999. There was also a 3 percentage points decrease in the numbers of young people who were unemployed, from 10 per cent in 1998 to 7 per cent in 1999.

The data show, therefore, that there were fewer young people unemployed or in employment without training and more in full-time education. This suggests that EMA may be encouraging those who would otherwise have been unemployed or in jobs without training to remain in education.

Table 3.1 Year 11 Destinations of EMA-eligible Young People in 1998 and 1999

Year 11 Destination	Column per cent		
	1998	1999	Percentage Points Change
Stayed at school	25	37	+ 12
Further Education College	33	34	+ 1
Sixth Form College	4	*	- 4
Employment with training	6	6	/
Employment without training	7	5	- 2
Government Supported training	3	3	/
Modern Apprenticeship	1	1	/
Unemployed	10	7	- 3
Other unavailable	1	1	/
Moved from area	4	4	/
Not Known	5	4	- 1
Base	3593	3770	

* Less than 0.5 per cent.

3.3.1 Type of course

In both year groups more young people opted for vocational and for ‘other/unknown’ courses than for academic courses (Figure 3.1)⁷. However, in 1998, approximately half (54 per cent) of all young people remaining in education chose a vocational course but this fell to just over a third (38 per cent) in 1999. The biggest difference between 1998 and 1999 is in the numbers of young people choosing academic courses⁸. In 1999 this had risen to 28 per cent, an increase of 19 percentage points.

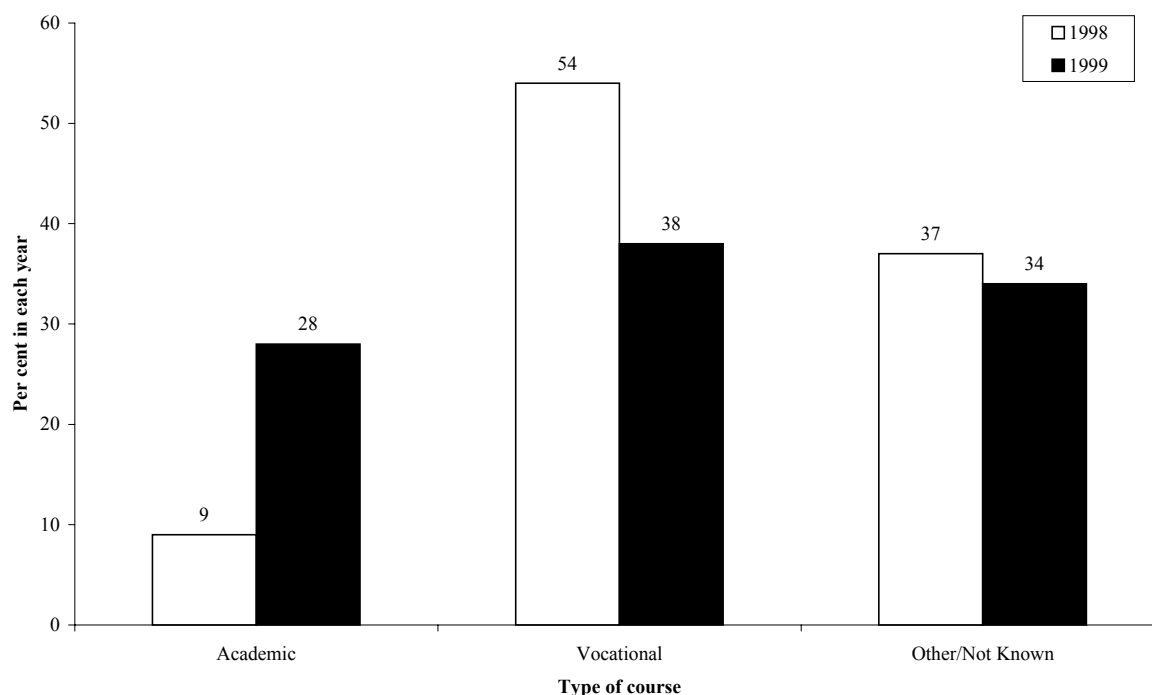
This upward trend in young people undertaking academic courses in the EMA pilot boroughs is opposite to the trend observed in data from the evaluation in the other EMA pilot areas, and needs to be confirmed by data from subsequent years before robust conclusions can be drawn. However, one possible explanation for the increase in academic courses may be the increase in the number of young people who stayed on in schools where vocational courses are often less widely available.

⁷ Vocational courses include NVQs, GNVQs, and all other vocational courses.

⁸ Academic courses include GCSE re-sits, AS and A level courses.

There was a small decrease in the number of students undertaking courses classified as ‘other/not known’ between 1998 and 1999. The data did not specify the description of ‘other’ courses.

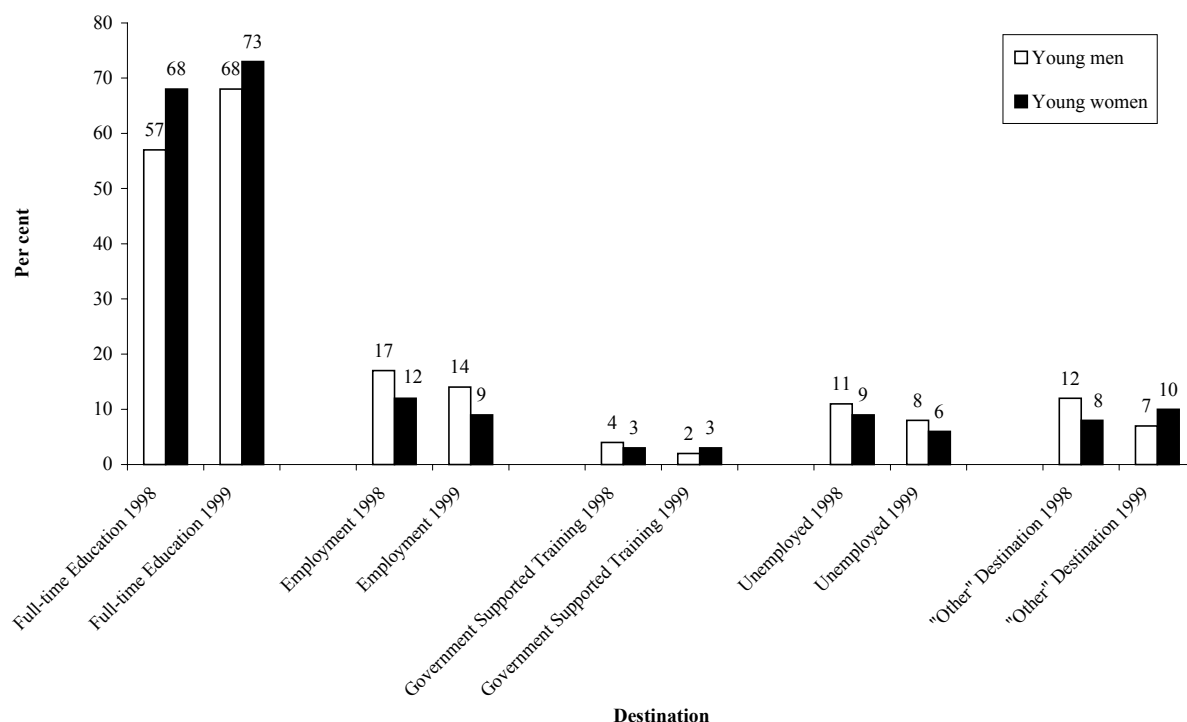
Figure 3.1 Intended Type of Course for Year 11 EMA-eligible Young People in Inner London for 1998 and 1999



3.4 Destinations of EMA-eligible Young Men and Women in 1998 and 1999

In both years more young women than young men remained in full-time education (Figure 3.2): in 1998, 68 per cent of young women participated in full-time education compared with 57 per cent of young men. In 1999, the proportions of both young men and women choosing to stay in full-time education increased to almost three-quarters of young women (73 per cent) and two-thirds of young men (68 per cent). The gap between young men and women in full-time education was 11 percentage points in 1998 but in 1999 this had narrowed to 5 percentage points. This again seems to support evidence from the main EMA evaluation, which also found that the introduction of EMA appeared to have a more positive impact on young men to encourage greater participation in post-compulsory education.

Figure 3.2 Destinations for Young Men and Women in 1998 and 1999



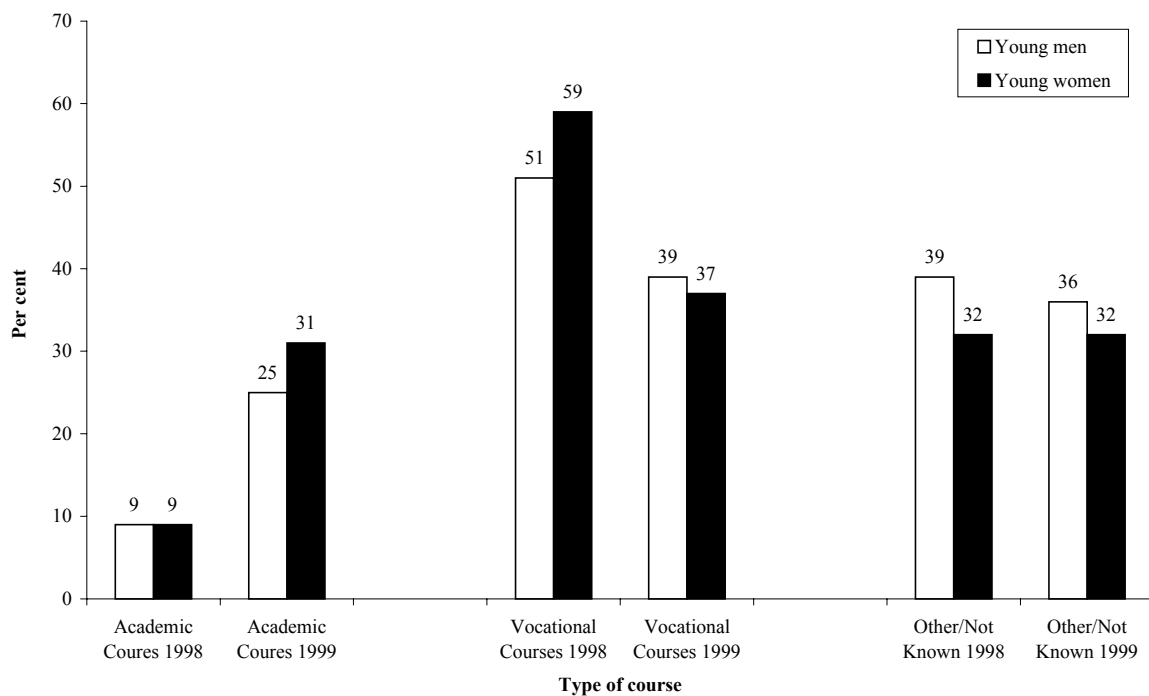
Further analysis showed that changes in the choice of education provider described above were similar for both young men and young women, with the exception of those choosing Sixth Form Colleges. The decrease in the proportion of young women opting for Sixth Form Colleges, 6 percentage points, was twice the decrease for young men, at 3 percentage points.

In both cohorts young men were more likely than young women to enter employment or to become unemployed at the end of Year 11. In 1998 and 1999, 17 and 14 per cent of young men found work, whereas for the same years, 12 and 9 per cent of young women moved into employment. The figures for young people who were unemployed fell for both young men and women between 1998 and 1999. In 1998, 11 per cent of young men were looking for work and this fell to 8 per cent in 1999. The proportion of unemployed young women fell from 9 per cent in 1998 to 6 per cent in 1999. While the proportion of young women in Government Supported Training remained the same between 1998 and 1999, the number of young men in training had decreased by 2 percentage points. Although a smaller percentage of young men entered employment in 1999 than 1998, slightly more of them found a job that offered training.

3.4.1 Type of course by sex

In 1998 and 1999 both young men and young women were more likely to have chosen vocational than academic courses (Figure 3.3). However, the pattern changed between the two years. Whilst the proportions of both sexes taking vocational courses dropped, the decrease was much larger for young women (22 percentage points) than for young men (12 percentage points). For academic courses, whereas in 1998 less than one in ten young men and young women opted for academic courses, by 1999 there had been a 22 percentage points increase in the number of young women choosing academic courses. The increase among young men was smaller, at 16 percentage points.

Figure 3.3 Type of Course Chosen by Young Men and Women in 1998 and 1999



3.5 Destinations of Ethnic Groups in Inner London

Data were available about the ethnic origin of 84 per cent of the young people in the sample in Inner London (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Young People and Ethnicity in 1998 and 1999

Column percentages (and numbers)		
Ethnic Group	Percentage of Young People in EMA-eligible Wards 1998	Percentage of Young People in EMA-eligible Wards 1999
White	45 (1411)	45 (1501)
Black	30 (933)	32 (1061)
Chinese	2 (69)	2 (64)
Asian	6 (175)	6 (189)
Other/Not Known	17 (544)	16 (554)
Total (Base)	100 (3132)	100 (3369)

Of young people living in EMA-eligible wards in the four London boroughs in both 1998 and 1999, over two-fifths were White and almost a third were Black. These were the two main ethnic groupings, with Asian and Chinese young people making up just 6 and 2 per cent of the sample respectively. The small numbers of Chinese and Asian students in the sample suggests that data relating to these young people should be treated with caution in what follows.

In both 1998 and 1999 Chinese young people were most likely to stay on in full-time education and White young people were least likely (Table 3.3). In 1998, 90 per cent of Chinese young people remained in education whereas only just over half (51 per cent) of White young people did so. In addition, in 1998 over four-fifths (83 per cent) of Asian young people and almost three-quarters (72 per cent) of Black young people stayed in education.

Table 3.3 Destinations of EMA-eligible Young People by Ethnicity in 1998 and 1999

		Column percentages (and numbers)				
Destination		White	Black	Chinese	Asian	Other/Not Known
Full-time education	1998	51 (697)	72 (652)	90 (61)	83 (143)	62 (330)
	1999	58 (854)	80 (809)	91 (57)	85 (159)	71 (379)
Employment	1998	23 (314)	9 (77)	2 (1)	8 (13)	13 (66)
	1999	20 (292)	6 (62)	2 (1)	5 (9)	9 (46)
Training	1998	4 (53)	3 (24)	3 (2)	1 (1)	3 (17)
	1999	4 (60)	2 (18)	3 (2)	3 (5)	2 (9)
Unemployed	1998	13 (172)	8 (72)	4 (3)	4 (6)	11 (59)
	1999	9 (132)	7 (68)	2 (1)	3 (6)	8 (43)
Other	1998	9 (122)	9 (78)	2 (1)	5 (9)	11 (57)
	1999	9 (128)	6 (60)	3 (2)	4 (8)	10 (54)
Total (Base)	1998	100 (1358)	100 (903)	100 (68)	100 (172)	100 (529)
	1999	100 (1466)	100 (1017)	100 (63)	100 (187)	100 (531)

There was a gain in the proportions of young people remaining in post-16 education in 1999 for all ethnic groups. The biggest gains were found amongst young people whose ethnic origin was classified as ‘other’ or ‘unknown’ (9 percentage points), Black (8 percentage points) and White (7 percentage points). However, White young people were still less likely to be in full-time education than other ethnic groups. This could be related to gender and to attitudinal differences towards learning. Previous research findings have demonstrated that White males exhibit lower levels of attachment to learning than do males from other ethnic groups (Pearce et al., 1998).

Along with the gains in participation in full-time education amongst all ethnic groups, there was a corresponding decrease in the number of young people moving to other destinations. In 1999, fewer young people from all ethnic groups entered employment or were unemployed, with the exception of Chinese young people in employment, where the proportions remained the same at 2 per cent. The pattern for young people entering Government Supported Training remained largely unchanged between 1998 and 1999. The exception was amongst Asian school-leavers where there was a slight increase in the percentage entering Government Supported Training. However, the numbers are too small for these findings to be conclusive.

3.5.1 Destinations of young men and women from different ethnic backgrounds

Table 3.4 shows the 1998 and 1999 destinations of young men and women from different ethnic backgrounds. The biggest gain in post-16 participation in education was in the percentages of young men from ethnic origins classified as ‘other’ or ‘unknown’ (14 percentage points), White (11 percentage points) and Black (11 percentage points) deciding to stay on in education. There were smaller gains in the numbers of young men who were Asian (4 percentage points) and Chinese (1 percentage point) who remained in education but, as shown above, very large proportions of these young people were already staying on in 1998.

Across all ethnic groups, fewer young men went into employment or became unemployed in 1999 than they did in 1998. Exceptions to this were the percentages of Chinese young men (3 per cent in both years) who found work; and Black young men who became unemployed, (9 per cent in both years).

The picture for young women was somewhat different. There was a gain in the proportion of White and Black young women remaining in full-time education, but by smaller amounts than for White and Black young men. Between 1998 and 1999 there was a 4 percentage point gain in the proportion of White and Black young women who remained in post-compulsory education. However, although these gains are of a smaller scale than for young men, White and Black young women in both cohorts were still more likely to remain in full-time education than young men from these ethnic groups. It does appear, though, that the narrowing of the gap between young men and women observed in earlier sections of this chapter is occurring for both White and Black young people.

Table 3.4 Destinations for Young Men and Women in Ethnic Groups for 1998 and 1999

		Column percentages (and numbers)									
Destination		White		Black		Chinese		Asian		Other	
		Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Full-time Education	1998	44 (294)	58 (399)	66 (283)	78 (367)	90 (28)	92 (33)	80 (72)	87 (71)	59 (150)	65 (179)
	1999	55 (412)	62 (441)	77 (378)	82 (428)	91 (29)	90 (28)	84 (83)	86 (76)	73 (172)	70 (207)
Employment	1998	28 (183)	19 (131)	10 (41)	8 (36)	3 (1)	0 (0)	9 (8)	6 (5)	13 (33)	12 (33)
	1999	25 (188)	15 (104)	7 (34)	5 (28)	3 (1)	0 (0)	6 (6)	3 (3)	9 (22)	8 (24)
Training	1998	4 (24)	4 (29)	4 (17)	2 (7)	3 (1)	3 (1)	1 (1)	0 (0)	2 (4)	5 (13)
	1999	3 (22)	5 (38)	2 (10)	2 (8)	6 (2)	0 (0)	4 (4)	1 (1)	1 (3)	2 (6)
Unemployed	1998	14 (94)	11 (78)	9 (39)	7 (33)	3 (1)	3 (1)	6 (5)	1 (1)	13 (34)	9 (25)
	1999	10 (74)	8 (58)	9 (43)	5 (25)	0 (0)	3 (1)	2 (2)	5 (4)	9 (22)	7 (21)
Other	1998	10 (69)	8 (52)	12 (51)	6 (26)	0 (0)	3 (1)	4 (4)	6 (5)	13 (33)	9 (24)
	1999	8 (59)	10 (69)	5 (25)	7 (35)	0 (0)	7 (2)	4 (4)	5 (4)	7 (16)	13 (38)
Total (Base)	1998	100 (664)	100 (689)	100 (431)	100 (469)	100 (31)	100 (36)	100 (90)	100 (82)	100 (254)	100 (274)
	1999	100 (755)	100 (710)	100 (490)	100 (524)	100 (32)	100 (31)	100 (99)	100 (88)	100 (235)	100 (296)

A smaller percentage of young women across all ethnic groups entered employment or became unemployed in 1999 than in 1998. Exceptions were Chinese young women entering employment or becoming unemployed, for whom proportions remained unchanged, and the slight increase in Asian young women who were unemployed although, again, the numbers are very small.

3.5.2 Type of course by ethnicity

Information about the type of courses chosen by young people remaining in full-time education and their ethnic background was available for 4141 young people in the sample. In 1998, regardless of ethnic background, more young people opted for vocational courses (Table 3.5). The picture changed in 1999 in that although vocational courses were still the most popular choice amongst White and Black young people, the proportions of Chinese and Asian young people starting academic courses had exceeded the numbers undertaking vocational courses. Over a third (37 per cent) of Chinese young people were on academic courses in 1999 compared to 32 per cent who were on vocational courses. Two-fifths of Asian young people chose academic courses as opposed to 38 per cent who were on vocational courses.

There was a substantial increase in young people opting for academic courses across all ethnic groupings in 1999. The biggest increase was for Asian young people, with an additional third (32 percentage points) of young people choosing academic courses. Again, this may be linked to the gain in participation rates in schools with Sixth Forms where vocational provision may be limited.

Table 3.5 Type of Course by Ethnicity in 1998 and 1999

		Column percentages (and numbers)					
Type of Course		White	Black	Chinese	Asian	Other/Not Known	Whole Sample of EMA-eligible Young People in Full-time Education
Academic	1998	10 (69)	11 (69)	8 (5)	8 (12)	10 (32)	9 (200)
	1999	31 (264)	28 (228)	37 (21)	40 (64)	30 (115)	28 (746)
Vocational	1998	54 (374)	59 (385)	54 (33)	64 (92)	58 (192)	54 (1218)
	1999	45 (384)	41 (334)	32 (18)	38 (61)	36 (138)	38 (1007)
Other	1998	36 (254)	30 (198)	38 (23)	27 (39)	32 (106)	37 (824)
	1999	24 (206)	31 (247)	32 (18)	21 (34)	33 (126)	34 (905)
Total (Base)	1998	100 (697)	100 (652)	100 (61)	100 (143)	100 (330)	100 (2242)
	1999	100 (854)	100 (809)	100 (57)	100 (159)	100 (379)	100 (2658)

3.5.3 Type of education provider and ethnicity

The proportions of young people staying on at school increased for all ethnic groups in 1999 (Table 3.6). The biggest increase was amongst White young people who chose to stay in school; from 46 per cent in 1998 to almost three-fifths (59 per cent) in 1999 and among young people whose ethnic group was unknown (increasing by 15 percentage points).

Further Education Colleges were more popular amongst Black and Chinese young people in both 1998 and 1999. However, whereas for most ethnic groups smaller proportions were choosing this type of education provider in 1999, there was an increase of 3 percentage points among Chinese young people opting to move to a Further Education College. The proportions of young people entering Sixth Form College decreased between 1998 and 1999 for each ethnic background. The biggest decrease was among people whose ethnic origin

was ‘other’ or ‘unknown where there was a 17 percentage point drop in the proportions choosing Sixth Form College.

Table 3.6 Type of Education Provider by Ethnicity in 1998 and 1999

		Column percentages (and numbers)					
Ethnic Group		White	Black	Chinese	Asian	Other/Not Known	Whole Sample of EMA-eligible Young People in Full-time Education
School	1998	46 (319)	28 (179)	38 (23)	46 (65)	33 (108)	41 (912)
	1999	59 (500)	38 (306)	39 (22)	58 (92)	48 (181)	52 (1388)
FE College	1998	49 (340)	68 (443)	57 (35)	51 (73)	51 (167)	52 (1171)
	1999	42 (354)	62 (500)	60 (34)	42 (67)	52 (198)	48 (1265)
Sixth Form College	1998	6 (38)	5 (30)	5 (3)	4 (5)	17 (55)	7 (159)
	1999	0 (0)	* (3)	2 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	* (5)
Total (Base)	1998	100 (697)	100 (652)	100 (61)	100 (143)	100 (330)	100 (2242)
	1999	100 (854)	100 (809)	100 (57)	100 (159)	100 (379)	100 (2658)

* Means less than 0.5 per cent, but not zero.

3.6 Destinations of Young People in Inner London Boroughs in 1998 and 1999

This section compares the destinations of young people living in EMA-eligible wards in each London borough and any changes that occurred between 1998 and 1999. The EMA-eligible population of young people was largest in Greenwich in both 1998 and 1999 (just under one third of all EMA-eligible young people in the Inner London boroughs lived in Greenwich) (Table 3.7). The remaining young people were fairly evenly divided among the other three boroughs.

Table 3.7 Young People Living in EMA-eligible Wards of each Inner London Borough in 1998 and 1999

Column percentages (and numbers)		
Borough	Percentage of EMA-eligible Students in 1998	Percentage of EMA-eligible Students in 1999
Greenwich	30 (1150)	31 (1212)
Southwark	23 (885)	24 (935)
Lambeth	22 (842)	21 (835)
Lewisham	24 (917)	24 (945)
Total (Base)	100 (3794)	100 (3927)

In 1998 around two-thirds of young people in Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham remained in full-time education (Table 3.8). In Greenwich, the proportion was lower at 56 per cent. Differences between the boroughs in the proportions of young people entering training or becoming unemployed were small in 1998. However, young people living in Greenwich (20 per cent) and Southwark (15 per cent) were more likely to have entered employment than those living in Lambeth or Lewisham (9 per cent).

In 1999 larger percentages of young people stayed on in full-time education, regardless of where they lived. The biggest gain was in Lambeth where the percentage of young people remaining in education rose from 69 per cent in 1998 to 78 per cent in 1999. Although more young people in Greenwich still moved into employment after Year 11 in 1999 than in any other borough, the percentage decreased from 20 per cent to 17 per cent. The differences between the boroughs in terms of the proportions of students entering full-time education and employment could be related to ethnicity. Previous reports have shown that Greenwich has lower proportions of non-White young people in comparison to the other three Inner London boroughs (Focus Central London, 1999; SOLOTEC, 2000). It was also reported in section 3.5 that White young people were less likely to be in full-time education than were young people from other ethnic groups and that this could be related to attitudinal differences towards learning (Pearce et al., 1998). These findings taken together may explain why young

people in Greenwich were found to be less likely to be in full-time education than were young people from other boroughs. There were only small differences among the boroughs in the proportions entering training or becoming unemployed in 1999.

The destinations of young people living in the four boroughs are shown in more detail in the Annex.

Table 3.8 Destinations of Young People in Inner London Boroughs in 1998 and 1999

Column percentages (and numbers)

Borough		Greenwich	Southwark	Lambeth	Lewisham
Full-time Education	1998	56 (599)	63 (550)	69 (524)	64 (569)
	1999	64 (743)	71 (647)	78 (611)	72 (657)
Employment	1998	20 (216)	15 (133)	9 (72)	9 (81)
	1999	17 (192)	11 (99)	6 (45)	10 (90)
Training	1998	3 (34)	4 (37)	4 (29)	3 (22)
	1999	3 (39)	3 (26)	2 (12)	2 (19)
Unemployed	1998	10 (103)	9 (82)	9 (67)	11 (100)
	1999	8 (88)	6 (57)	7 (57)	8 (69)
Other	1998	11 (117)	8 (73)	9 (72)	13 (113)
	1999	9 (102)	9 (83)	7 (55)	9 (79)
Total (Base)	1998	100 (1069)	100 (875)	100 (764)	100 (885)
	1999	100 (1164)	100 (912)	100 (780)	100 (914)

3.6.1 Type of course chosen in each London borough

In 1998, the majority of young people in EMA-eligible wards who remained in education had chosen vocational or 'other/unknown' types of courses in each of the four boroughs (Table 3.9).

However, in 1999 there were significant increases in each borough in the proportion of young people opting for academic courses. The biggest increase was in Southwark, where the proportions doing academic courses almost quadrupled (from 9 to 35 per cent) so that students on academic courses exceeded the number of young people on vocational courses in 1999. Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham saw large decreases in young people studying vocational courses, with the proportions almost halved. Greenwich was the only borough that witnessed an increase (4 percentage points) in young people choosing vocational courses.

Table 3.9 Type of Course Chosen by Young People in Inner London Boroughs in 1998 and 1999

		Column percentages (and numbers)			
Borough		Greenwich	Southwark	Lambeth	Lewisham
Academic	1998	11 (68)	9 (50)	6 (32)	9 (50)
	1999	30 (222)	35 (228)	17 (101)	30 (195)
Vocational	1998	52 (309)	63 (344)	43 (225)	60 (340)
	1999	56 (413)	34 (218)	24 (145)	35 (231)
Other	1998	37 (222)	28 (156)	51 (267)	32 (179)
	1999	15 (108)	31 (201)	60 (365)	35 (231)
Total (Base)	1998	100 (599)	100 (550)	100 (524)	100 (569)
	1999	100 (743)	100 (647)	100 (611)	100 (657)

3.6.2 Type of education provider chosen in each London borough

Table 3.10 shows the percentage change in the types of education provider chosen by young people between 1998 and 1999 in each London borough. In 1999 there were large increases in the proportions of young people choosing to remain at school in each London borough with the largest being in Lambeth (20 percentage points). At least some of these increases were at the expense of Sixth Form Colleges, which were chosen by smaller percentages of young people in each Borough, but particularly Lewisham. All the boroughs, except Lambeth, also saw an increase in the proportions of young people going to Further Education Colleges so that only part of the increase in young people staying on in schools can be accounted for by losses from other institutions. The remaining increase reflects the generally larger proportions of young people staying on.

Table 3.10 Percentage Point Change in Education Provider Chosen by Young People in London Boroughs Between 1998 and 1999

Borough	School	FE College	Sixth Form College
Greenwich	+10	+1	-2
Southwark	+7	+4	-3
Lambeth	+20	-8	-2
Lewisham	+12	+5	-10

3.7 Year 11 Destinations of EMA-eligible Young People and All Young People in 1998 and 1999

Careers Service data allow the Year 11 destinations of young people living in EMA-eligible wards to be compared with those of the whole cohort of young people, i.e. students from all wards, in the four London Boroughs for both 1998 and 1999 (Table 3.11). This analysis provides some indication of whether changes observed among EMA-eligible young people described above are simply mirroring those for all young people, or whether the changes are only, or particularly marked, among the EMA-eligible group. If this is so, it may be that EMA is at least partly responsible.

Data for the whole cohort are from the South Bank Careers Destination Reports for 1998 and 1999 and, in order for comparisons to be made, destinations have been reclassified as follows:

- school;
- Further Education College or Sixth Form College;
- work-based training, includes employment with training and Government Supported Training (including Modern Apprenticeships);
- employment (without training);
- unemployed and other unavailable;
- moved from area; and
- not known.

Table 3.11 Comparisons of Year 11 Destinations between EMA-eligible Students and All Students in Cohort in 1999

Year 11 Destination	Column percentages (and numbers)			
	Students from EMA-eligible Wards		All Students in the 4 Inner London Boroughs	
	1998	1999	1998	1999
School	25 (912)	37 (1388)	34 (2687)	33 (2701)
Further Education/Sixth Form College	37 (1330)	34 (1270)	34 (2723)	39 (3205)
Work-based Training	10 (364)	9 (349)	4 (298)	4 (336)
Employment	7 (260)	5 (173)	7 (554)	7 (585)
Unemployed and Other Unavailable	11 (403)	8 (314)	10 (777)	7 (595)
Moved from Area	4 (153)	4 (142)	4 (298)	5 (373)
Not Known	5 (171)	4 (134)	8 (613)	5 (411)
Total (Base)	100 (3593)	100 (3770)	100 (7950)	100 (8206)

There was a 4 percentage point increase in post-16 education participation rates among all young people in the four London boroughs between 1998 and 1999. This is much lower than the 9 percentage point gain seen among EMA-eligible young people, suggesting a possible EMA effect. Among all young people school was chosen by a slightly smaller percentage of young people in 1999 than in 1998, but there was a 5 percentage point increase in those opting for Further Education or Sixth Form Colleges. The opposite was so for EMA-eligible young people: far more eligibles chose to remain in school post-16 in 1999 than 1998 (12 percentage points), and 3 percentage points fewer opted for Further Education or Sixth Form Colleges. This seems to confirm findings from the interviews with education providers reported in Chapter 5, that many EMA students believed that EMA was only available to students who stayed on at their Year 11 school.

There were only small differences between all young people and EMA-eligibles in other destinations in both 1998 and 1999. Young people as a whole were less likely to have moved into work-based training than EMA-eligibles in both years. These proportions did not change for the whole cohort and decreased by only 1 percentage point for EMA-eligibles. The employment route was chosen by the same proportion of all young people in both years, but declined by 2 percentage points for EMA-eligible young people. Unemployment declined by 3 percentage points for both groups.

3.8 Particular Personal Circumstances

Table 3.12 shows the number of young people living in EMA eligible wards in 1998 and 1999 with particular circumstances and problems. Overall, the number of young people in this group increased slightly between 1998 and 1999.

Table 3.12 Number of Young People with Special Circumstances in 1998 and 1999

Circumstance	Per cent of sample (numbers)	
	1998	1999
Pregnant/Children	1.3 (50)	0.9 (34)
English is second language	0.7 (25)	1.1 (43)
Homeless	0.7 (27)	0.7 (26)
Living away from home	2.6 (97)	2.3 (90)
Literacy/Numeracy problems	0.5 (19)	0.8 (31)
Young offender	0.5 (18)	0.8 (33)
Other	0.3 (10)	0.4 (16)
Total	6.5 (246)	7.0 (273)
Base	3794	3927

3.9 Conclusions

A larger percentage of young people living in EMA-eligible wards of the four London boroughs remained in post-16 full-time education in 1999 than 1998. This difference, of 9 percentage points, is higher than statistical estimates of the effect of EMA in urban areas found from econometric modelling in the main evaluation. The gain is also larger than for all young people in the four boroughs whose participation increased by only 4 percentage points. At least part of the larger gain in participation among EMA-eligibles is likely to be attributable to EMA. Gains in staying on rates were observed among EMA-eligible young people in each of the four London boroughs.

Young women were more likely to remain in education in both 1998 and 1999. However, again in line with findings from the statistical evaluation, gains in participation have been more marked among young men than young women so that the gap between the two groups has narrowed.

Chinese and Asian young people were more likely than young people from other ethnic backgrounds to remain in full-time education in both 1998 and 1999. The biggest gains in participation were in the proportions of White and Black young people, particularly young men, choosing to remain in education.

Along with the gains in young people staying on in education, there was a corresponding fall in the numbers of EMA-eligible young people choosing other destinations. On the whole, employment, particularly if it did not include a training element, had become less popular amongst young men and women, young people from all ethnic backgrounds and young people from all Inner London boroughs. Unemployment was less prevalent amongst all groups of young people, the only small increase being for Asian young women.

Probably as a result of a perception that EMA was only available to young people who stayed on in their year 11 school, schools with Sixth Forms benefited most from the gain in participation rates among EMA-eligible young people, particularly White young people. Again, this is counter to the trend for young people in the two cohorts as a whole, among whom a slightly smaller proportion chose school Sixth Forms in 1999 than in 1998.

The belief that EMA is only available to those who remain at school might also be responsible for the large shift towards academic courses and away from vocational courses among EMA-eligible young people, particularly young women, since schools tend to offer fewer vocational courses. These changes were observed in each borough but were particularly pronounced in Southwark, where the increase was such that the proportions on academic courses exceeded the numbers on vocational courses.

4 DESTINATIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN LEEDS

Box 4.1 Summary

- There was a 4 percentage points gain in the participation in full-time education amongst EMA-eligible young people in Leeds between 1998 and 1999.
- Much of the gain in participation rates was in the numbers of young people remaining in schools rather than Further Education or Sixth Form Colleges.
- There was a decrease in the number of young people entering Government Supported Training, unemployment or work with training but a slight increase in the numbers entering work without training.
- There was a slight decrease in the numbers of young people choosing academic courses.
- More young women than young men were in full-time education but the gap had narrowed in 1999.
- Chinese and Asian young people were more likely to be in education than other ethnic groups, but there was a gain in participation rates amongst all ethnic groups in 1999, except young people from ethnic groups categorised as Black and ‘other/unknown’.
- The biggest gains in participation rates were found amongst White and Asian young people.
- Young people from EMA-eligible schools were less likely to be in full-time education in both 1998 and 1999 than were young people from the whole cohort.

4.1 Introduction

Eligibility for EMA in Leeds was determined by a young person’s attendance during the school year 1998/1999 at one of 32 feeder schools within the Local Education Authority, of which nine were special schools. Each feeder school had 20 percent or more of its pupils eligible for ‘free school meals’⁹. In order to qualify for an award a young person’s parental income had to be £30,000 or less.

⁹ Free school meals is often used as a proxy measure for social deprivation.

4.1.1 Destinations data

The Careers Service in Leeds provided paper-based records of the post-16 destinations of Leeds' school leavers at the end of the school years 1997/1998 and 1998/1999. The records were not specific to particular individuals but described the post-16 destinations of pupils from each secondary school by sex and ethnic origin. These records were entered into an SPSS file for the purposes of analysis.

This chapter focuses on the destinations of the young people moving on from the 32 feeder schools – referred to in the report as 'EMA-eligible schools.' Destinations of young people from the 1997/98 and 1998/99 cohorts are compared in order to highlight changes that might be the result of the introduction of EMA.

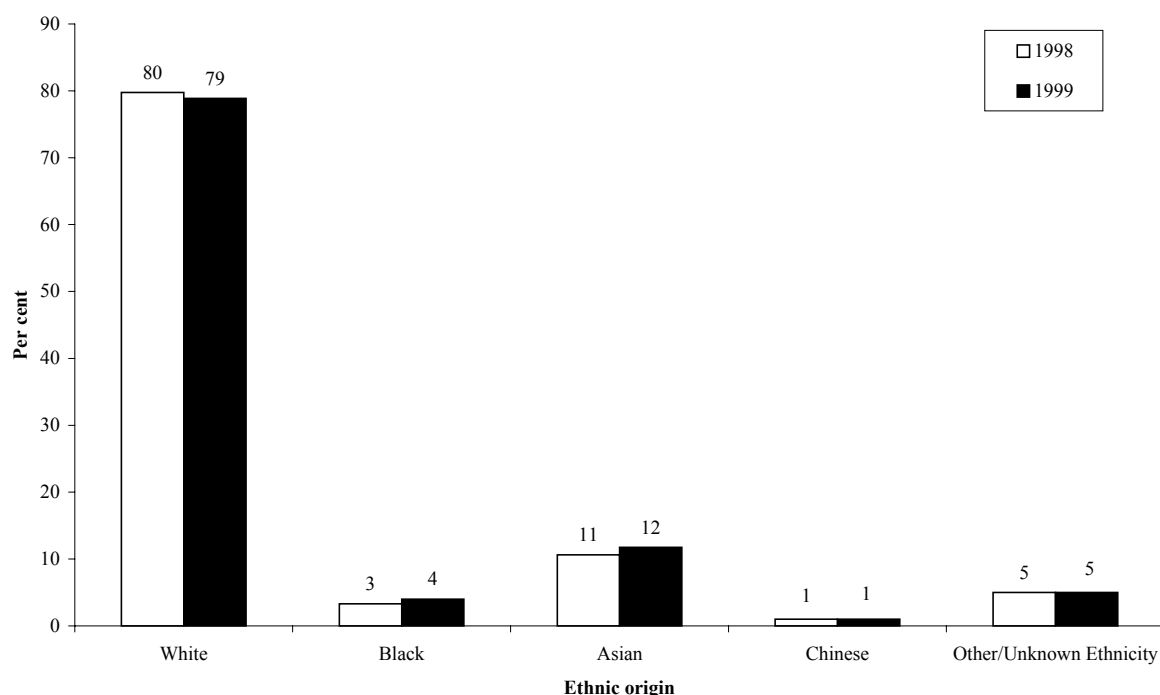
The unit of analysis in the data was the school, and not the individual pupil. Therefore, whilst the data could be easily analysed to provide descriptions of the relative popularity of post-16 destinations for particular groups of pupils, it would have been very difficult and time consuming to make the data suitable to allow inferences about the significance of any differences. In other words, the data as entered are not susceptible to statistical testing.

4.2 Post-16 Destinations of Young People from EMA-Eligible Schools

4.2.1 Sample profile

In 1998, there were 3,646 Year 11 pupils in the 32 EMA-eligible schools, rising to 3,740 in 1999. For both years, the sample contained roughly equal proportions of young men and women.

Figure 4.1 Ethnic Origin of Young People in 1998 and 1999



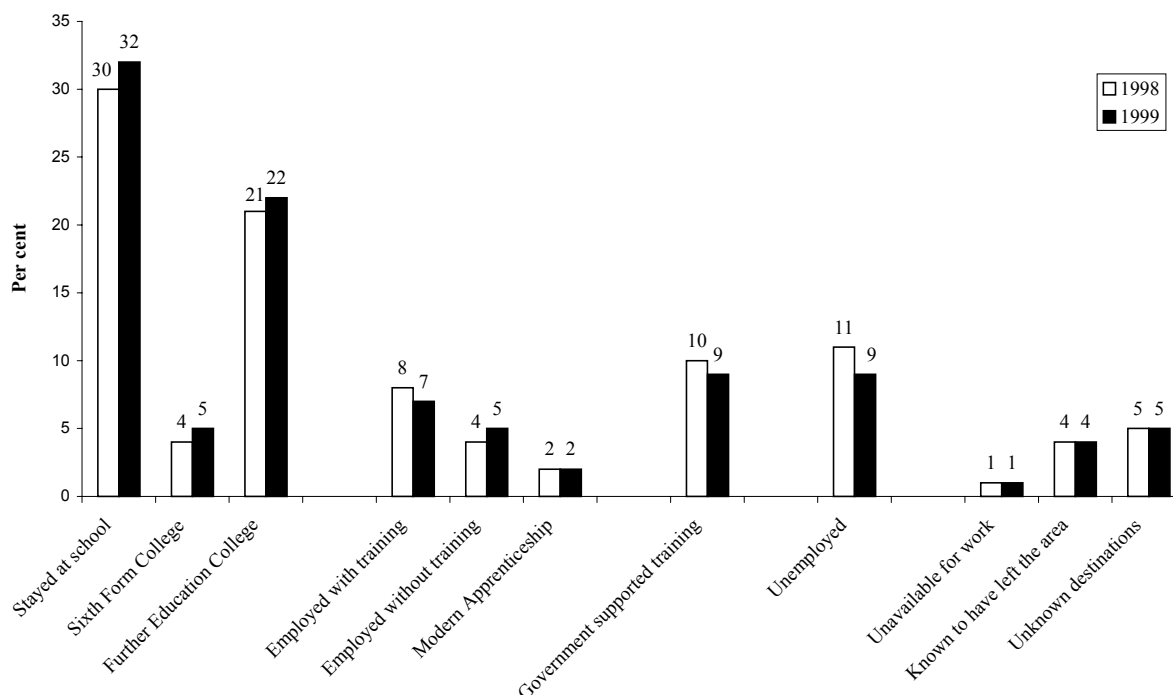
Young people with Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origins - classified here as Asian - made up the largest minority ethnic group in both cohorts, accounting for approximately one in ten pupils (Figure 4.1). Young Black people – which covers those of African, Caribbean and other geo-historical origins – made up a much smaller proportion (3 to 4 per cent) of the sample, as did pupils of Chinese origin (1 per cent). Around 8 in 10 pupils were White, and 1 in 20 were from some other or unknown ethnic origin. There were only small changes in the proportions of young people of different ethnic origins between 1998 and 1999.

4.2.2 Destinations

In the analysis of the Leeds data post-16 destinations were categorised as follows:

- full-time education: includes staying at school, enrolling at Sixth Form College or at Further Education College;
- employment: includes employment with training and employment without training;
- Government Supported Training: includes National Traineeships/Youth Training (trainee and employed status), Modern Apprenticeships, and other training;
- unemployment; covers those registered with the Careers Service as unemployed and seeking employment; and
- other: includes being unavailable for work, leaving the area and unknown destinations.

Figure 4.2 Destinations of Young People in 1998 and 1999



In 1998 slightly more than half (55 per cent) of Year 11 pupils from EMA-eligible schools remained in full-time education and in 1999 this rose to 59 per cent (Figure 4.2). This is similar to the statistical estimate of the effect of EMA in urban areas produced by econometric modelling in the main EMA evaluation (3.8 per cent). There was a gain in the proportion of young people entering full-time education in school, FE Colleges and Sixth Form Colleges, but the proportion of young people staying on at school grew at a slightly faster rate, rising from 30 per cent in 1998 to 32 per cent in 1999.

Gains in participation in education were accompanied by small decreases in the proportion of pupils entering Government Supported Training (from 10 per cent to 9 per cent) and in those becoming unemployed (from 11 to 9 per cent). While the overall proportion of young people who found work in both years remained constant at 14 per cent, there were small changes in the proportions of those entering work, with or without training, between 1998 and 1999. In 1999, 7 per cent of young people found work that provided training, a decrease of 1 percentage point from 1998 and the percentage of young people entering employment without training increased from 4 to 5 per cent. The proportion of young people choosing Modern Apprenticeships remained the same in both years (2 per cent).

Type of course

In 1998, 35 per cent of the 2,003 young people from EMA-eligible schools entering full-time education enrolled for academic courses (A levels (including AS exams) and GCSE re-sits), 51 per cent took up places on vocational courses (GNVQ and NVQ), while the remaining 14 per cent enrolled for 'other' types of course. Other courses include RSA text processing awards, nursery nursing, craft certificate courses and basic skills courses. In 1999, there was a drop of 2 percentage points in the proportion of young people enrolling for academic courses (down to 33 per cent). This decrease masks a slight increase (of approximately 0.5 of a percentage point) in the proportion of young people re-sitting GCSEs. The proportion of young people enrolling for A level courses fell from 33 per cent to 31 per cent.

However, the data revealed significant and surprising changes in the numbers choosing vocational courses, which decreased from 51 per cent in 1998 to 8 per cent in 1999, and in the proportion of young people enrolling for 'other' courses which increased from 14 per cent to 59 per cent. Discussions with Leeds Careers Service confirmed that there were problems with this part of the 1999 data because of how information had been interpreted and coded¹⁰. It is likely that inappropriate use of the 'other' category provides most of the explanation for these large decreases in vocational courses and increases in the 'other' category. In light of this, in subsequent sections on courses chosen data are only presented for EMA-eligible young people studying academic courses.

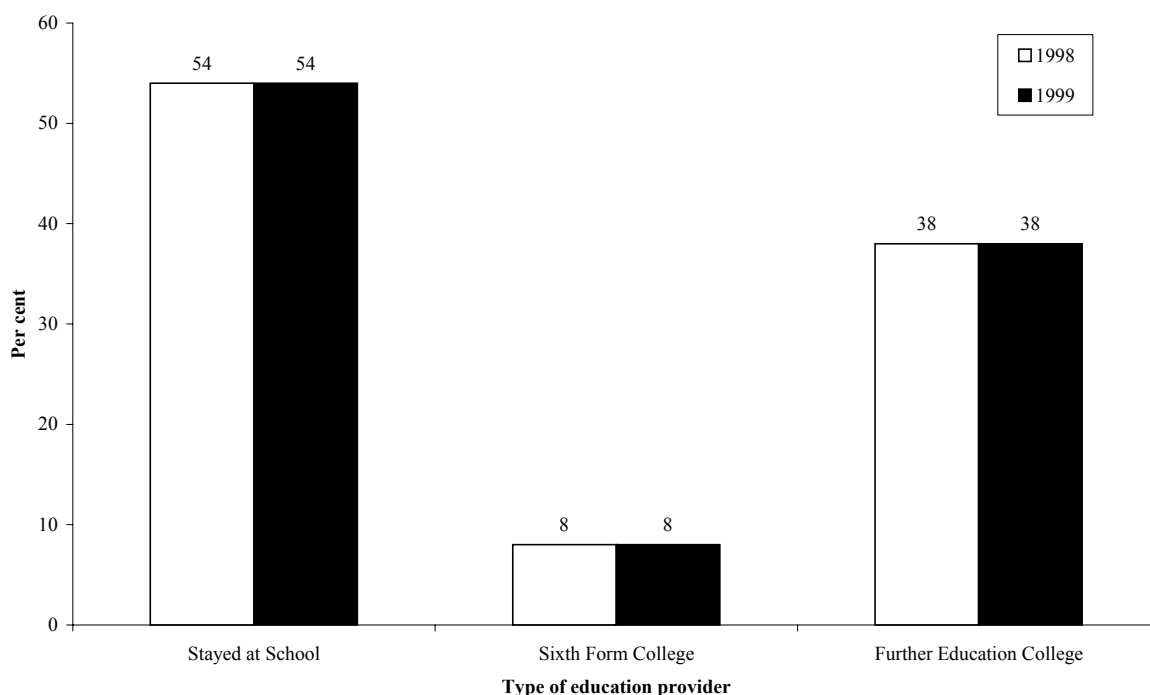
Type of education provider

Of the young people who stayed in full-time education in 1998 and 1999, the proportions attending the three types of institution were unchanged (Figure 4.3). In both years, schools with Sixth Forms were the main providers of post-16 education for young people, with more than half (54 per cent) choosing this option. More than a third of young people moved to a Further Education College (38 per cent) and only 8 per cent went to a Sixth Form College. Nearly all the young people who went into School Sixth Forms remained at their Year 11 school (95 per cent).

¹⁰ The Careers Service has put in place measures to ensure that such difficulties do not occur in subsequent years.

It is interesting to compare these findings with those described in the previous chapter for the four London boroughs, where much of the growth in participation occurred in schools with Sixth Forms. In Leeds gains in participation were evenly shared among the three institutions.

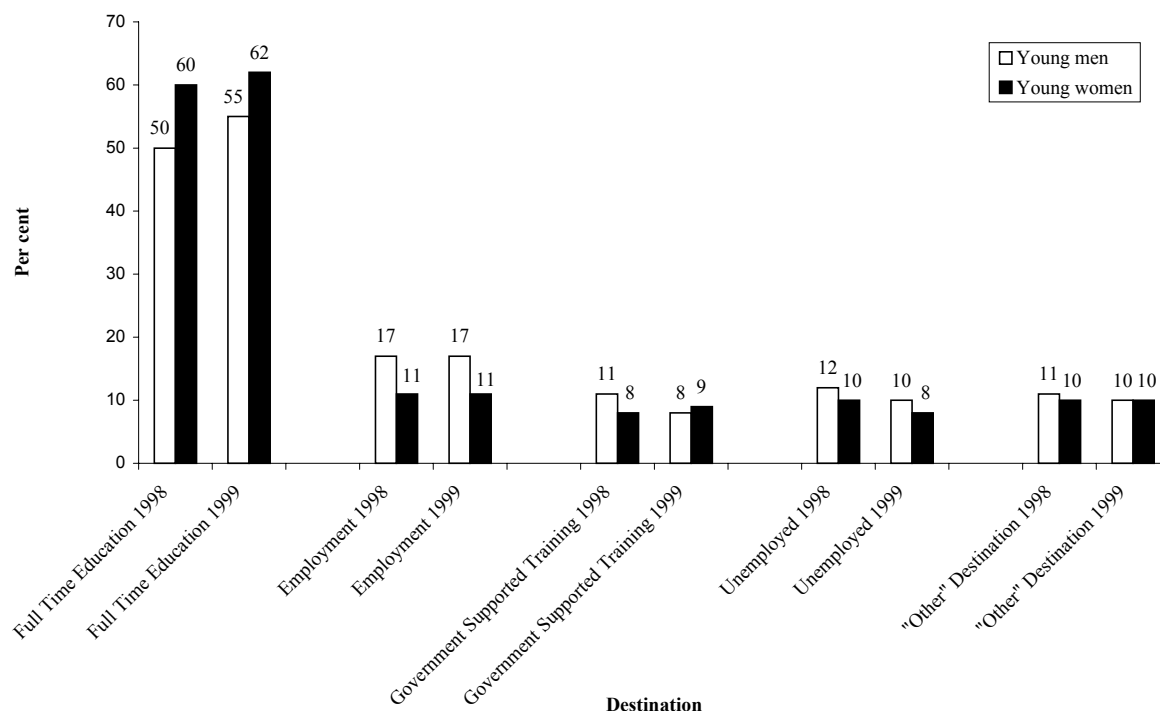
Figure 4.3 Educational Institutions Attended by Young People who remained in Full-time Education in 1998 and 1999



4.3 Post-16 Destinations of Young Men and Young Women from EMA-Eligible Schools

In both 1998 and 1999 post-compulsory full-time education was the most popular destination for both young men and women (Figure 4.4). In 1998 60 per cent of young women from EMA-eligible schools continued in full-time education compared to 50 per cent of young men. In 1999 this gap between young men and women had decreased to 7 percentage points. Although there was a gain in the proportion of young women in education to 62 per cent, there was a bigger gain in the proportion of young men remaining in education so that by 1999, 55 per cent of young men chose this option. This confirms evidence from London in the previous chapter, and from the main statistical evaluation of EMA in the other pilot areas, that EMA seems to be having a greater effect on young men than young women.

Figure 4.4 Post-16 Destinations of Young Men and Young Women in 1998 and 1999



The proportion of young men and women going into work remained unchanged between 1998 and 1999. In both years more young men (17 per cent) than young women (11 per cent) found work. Fewer young men and young women were unemployed in 1999 than in 1998, a fall of 2 percentage points for each sex. While there was an increase of 1 percentage point in the proportion of young women choosing Government Supported Training, the proportion of young men on such schemes fell by 3 percentage points to 8 per cent in 1999.

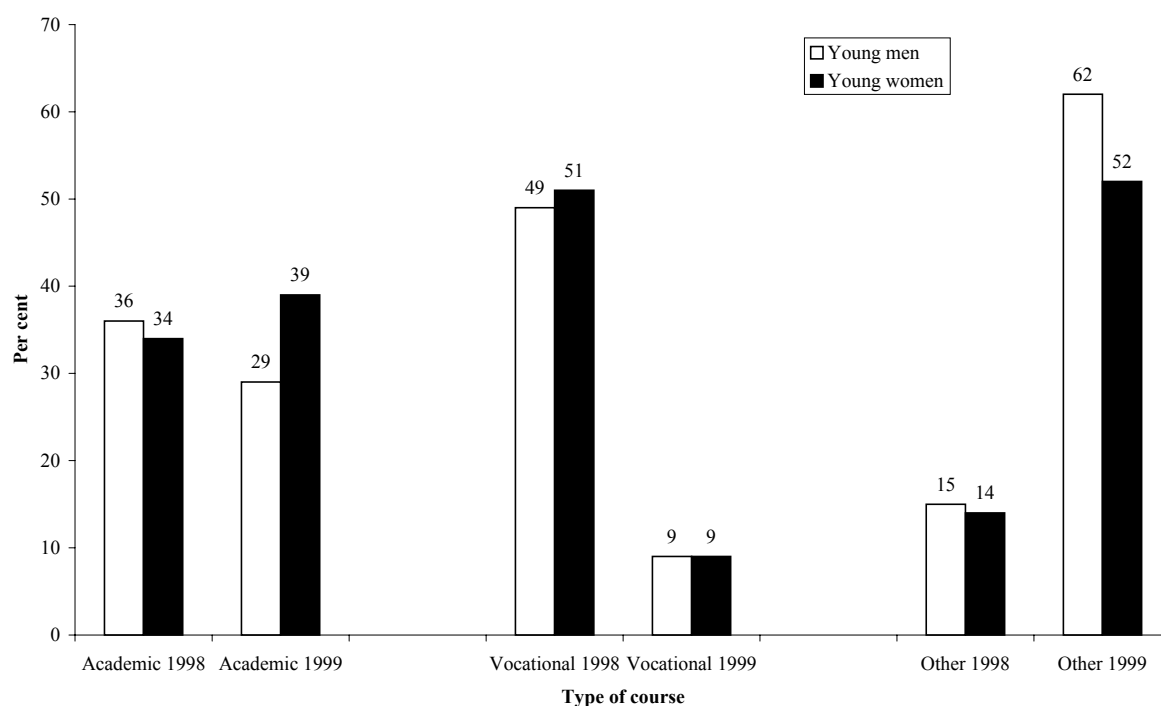
It seems, therefore, that gains in participation in education may have been drawn from those who might otherwise have been unemployed (young men and young women) and from government supported training (young men).

4.3.1 Academic courses chosen by sex

Amongst young women who remained in full-time education, the proportion enrolling for academic courses increased between 1998 and 1999 from 34 per cent to 39 per cent (Figure 4.5). This increase held for both GCSE (from 2 per cent to 6 per cent) and A level enrolments (from 32 per cent to 33 per cent). Amongst young men the proportion enrolling for GCSE re-sits increased over the two years from 1 per cent to 3 per cent. The drop in academic course enrolments amongst young men in Figure 4.5 is thus explained by a large

decrease in the proportion choosing A levels (from 35 per cent in 1998 to 26 per cent in 1999).

Figure 4.5 Type of Course Chosen by Young Men and Women in 1998 and 1999



4.3.2 Type of education provider by sex

In 1998 equal proportions of young men and women who remained in full-time education attended each of the three types of educational institution. However, in 1999 the choice of educational institution for young men and women began to diverge. In 1999 the proportion of young women attending schools increased by 3 percentage points to 57 per cent, while the proportion of young men studying at schools fell from 54 to 51 per cent. This pattern was reversed for attendance at Further Education Colleges. The proportion of young men from EMA-eligible schools attending colleges rose from 38 to 41 per cent while the proportion of young women studying at colleges fell by 3 percentage points to 35 per cent.

4.4 Post-16 Destinations of Young People of Different Ethnic Origins from EMA-Eligible Schools

The overall gain in participation in post-16 education seems to have been mainly accounted for by gains in the proportions of White (from 52 per cent to 56 per cent) and Asian (from 79

per cent to 82 per cent) young people staying on (Table 4.1). These gains were accompanied by decreases in the proportions of both ethnic groups opting for Government Supported Training and 'other' destinations; a decrease, for White pupils, in the proportion becoming unemployed; and, for Asian pupils, a decrease in the proportion entering employment. There was an apparently large gain in the proportion of Chinese pupils entering full-time education, but with fewer than 20 Chinese young people in the 1999 sample this figure should be treated with caution. In fact, the actual number of Chinese pupils entering full-time education was lower than in the 1998 figures.

Table 4.1 Destinations of Ethnic Groups in 1998 and 1999

		Column percentages (and numbers)				
Ethnic Origin		White	Black	Asian	Chinese	Other/Not Known
Full-time Education	1998	52 (1507)	63 (76)	79 (304)	74 (23)	47 (93)
	1999	56 (1640)	61 (91)	82 (360)	89 (17)	45 (81)
Employment	1998	16 (454)	7 (8)	4 (15)	3 (1)	10 (19)
	1999	16 (483)	12 (18)	2 (9)	0 (0)	8 (15)
Government Supported Training	1998	11 (315)	13 (15)	6 (22)	3 (1)	3 (6)
	1999	10 (283)	8 (12)	5 (22)	0 (0)	3 (6)
Unemployed	1998	12 (351)	12 (14)	4 (14)	10 (3)	11 (21)
	1999	10 (282)	8 (12)	4 (17)	5 (1)	9 (17)
Other	1998	10 (281)	6 (7)	8 (32)	10 (3)	31 (61)
	1999	9 (262)	11 (17)	7 (31)	5 (1)	35 (63)
Total (Base)	1998	100 (2908)	100 (120)	100 (387)	100 (31)	100 (200)
	1999	100 (2950)	100 (150)	100 (439)	100 (19)	100 (182)

The changes in Table 4.1 which give most cause for concern are the decreases in the proportions of young Black people and young people of other/unknown ethnicity participating in full-time education. This is given added significance because these changes were accompanied by increases in the proportion of these young people falling into the ‘other destinations’ category.

Asian and Chinese pupils were most likely to choose full-time education as their post-16 destination, with average participation rates over the two years of around 80 per cent. The group least likely to participate are those of other/unknown ethnic background – fewer than half of these young people choose full-time education. Slightly more than half of young White people, who form the majority ethnic group, chose full-time education as their post-16 destination.

4.4.1 Academic courses chosen by ethnicity

Between 1998 and 1999 the proportions of young people choosing academic courses increased for each ethnic group with the exception of those of White ethnic origin (Table 4.2). The drop in academic course enrolments amongst young White people extended to both GCSEs (from 2 per cent to 1 per cent) and A levels (from 36 per cent to 33 per cent). In fact, only amongst young Chinese people was there an increase in the proportion choosing A level courses, rising from 26 per cent in 1998 to 59 per cent in 1999 (overall numbers are small).

Table 4.2 Percentage of Young People of Different Ethnic Origins who Chose Academic Courses in 1998 and 1999

		Cell percentages (and numbers)				
		White	Black	Asian	Chinese	Other/Not Known
Academic courses	1998	38 (568)	25 (19)	28 (84)	30 (7)	30 (28)
	1999	34 (560)	29 (26)	29 (105)	59 (10)	35 (28)

The increase in academic enrolments for all other ethnic groups is due to greater proportions choosing to undertake GCSE re-sits. Amongst young Black people this figure rose from 1

per cent to 9 per cent; amongst Asian students there was a smaller increase from 2 to 3 per cent. Further, 9 per cent of students of ‘other/unknown’ ethnic origin were taking GCSE re-sit courses in 1999 compared with none of this group in 1998. In 1999, the proportion of young Chinese people re-sitting GCSEs dropped from 4 per cent to 0.

4.4.2 Type of education provider by ethnicity

Of all the ethnic groups, young Asians were most likely to have chosen to remain in school post-16 (Table 4.3). In 1998, 66 per cent of young people of Asian ethnic origin who remained in full-time education stayed on at school. At the other end of the scale, only 35 per cent of young Chinese people who remained in full-time education chose to do so at school.

Table 4.3 Educational Institutions Attended by Young People of Different Ethnic Origins who Remained in Full-time Education in 1998 and 1999

		Column percentages (and numbers)				
Ethnic Origin		White	Black	Asian	Chinese	Other/Not Known
School	1998	53 (800)	38 (29)	66 (202)	35 (8)	45 (42)
	1999	55 (899)	33 (30)	58 (210)	35 (6)	51 (41)
Sixth Form College	1998	9 (132)	12 (9)	2 (7)	35 (8)	5 (5)
	1999	7 (120)	15 (14)	8 (28)	24 (4)	6 (5)
Further Education College	1998	38 (575)	50 (38)	31 (95)	30 (7)	49 (46)
	1999	38 (621)	52 (47)	34 (122)	41 (7)	43 (35)
Total (Base)	1998	100 (1507)	100 (76)	100 (304)	100 (23)	100 (93)
	1999	100 (1640)	100 (91)	100 (360)	100 (17)	100 (81)

Changes occurred within each ethnic group in the proportions choosing school, Sixth Form College and Further Education College between 1998 and 1999. The proportion choosing school increased amongst young White people (from 53 per cent to 55 per cent) and amongst

those young people of other/unknown ethnic origin (from 45 per cent to 51 per cent). Amongst young Black people the proportion choosing to stay on at school dropped from 38 per cent in 1998 to 33 per cent in 1999. There was also a decrease in the number of young Asian people who chose to stay on at school, from 66 per cent to 58 per cent. The proportion of young Chinese people who chose to stay on at school remained unchanged.

In both 1998 and 1999, the Further Education sector was most popular amongst young Black people. The proportions of each ethnic group choosing a Further Education College were fairly stable over time except amongst young Chinese people where there was an increase of 11 percentage points, and amongst young people of other/unknown ethnic origin where only 43 per cent chose an Further Education College in 1999 compared to 49 per cent in 1998.

In terms of actual numbers, the largest ethnic group at each type of educational institution is young White people.

4.5 Year 11 Destinations of EMA-eligible Young People and All Young People in 1998 and 1999

This chapter has described a gain of 4 percentage points in the proportion of young people from EMA-eligible schools who chose to remain in education between 1998 and 1999. These findings can be compared with those for all young people in the two cohorts to explore whether changes for EMA-eligible young people were simply mirroring a general trend or whether there might, indeed, have been an EMA effect (Table 4.4).

The first thing to note is that, unlike in the London boroughs, school leavers from EMA-eligible schools in Leeds were less likely to remain in education than young people as a whole in both 1998 and 1999. In both years, EMA-eligible young people in Leeds were much more likely to have been unemployed and slightly more likely to have entered employment or training.

There was a gain in participation in education between 1998 and 1999 by only 1 percentage point more among school leavers from EMA-eligible schools (4 percentage points) than among all school leavers in Leeds (3 percentage points). Unemployment also fell by a

smaller proportion among EMA-eligible young people (3 percentage points) than among young people as a whole (5 percentage points).

Table 4.4 Destinations of Leeds' School Leavers in 1998 and 1999

		Column percentages (and numbers)	
		All School Leavers in Leeds	School Leavers from EMA-eligible Schools
Full-time Education	1998	64 (5141)	55 (2003)
	1999	67 (5414)	59 (2189)
Employment/ Government Supported Training	1998	21 (1668)	24 (856)
	1999	22 (1741)	23 (848)
Unemployed/Other	1998	16 (1263)	22 (787)
	1999	11 (890)	19 (703)
Total (Base)	1998	100 (8072)	100 (3646)
	1999	100 (8045)	100 (3740)

It seems, therefore, that the impact of EMA in Leeds has been at best, slight in its first year of operation. It will be interesting to see whether progress has been made when data for the second eligible cohort from school year 1999/2000 become available.

4.6 Conclusions

Between 1998 and 1999, there was an overall gain of 4 percentage points in the proportion of young people from EMA-eligible schools who chose to continue with their education on a full-time basis. However, there was a gain in participation among all school leavers by 3 percentage points so that it is difficult to conclude an EMA effect at this stage. It should be noted that this gain is slightly lower than statistical estimates of the effect of EMA in the

remaining nine urban pilot areas obtained using econometric modelling techniques which revealed gains in participation rates of around 4 percentage points (Ashworth et al., 2001).

Nevertheless, gains in participation amongst EMA-eligible young people occurred for both young women and, as in London, particularly young men. As a result, although the majority of those pursuing full-time post-16 education continued to be young women, the gap narrowed. On a more negative note, gains in participation rates did not occur for all ethnic groups. There was, in fact, a **fall** in the proportion of young Black people and those of other or unknown ethnic origin choosing to stay-on in education between 1998 and 1999.

In terms of choice of courses, there was a small overall decrease in the proportions of young people enrolling for academic courses. This is largely attributable to a drop in the proportion studying for A levels since there was a very small increase in the proportion of young people re-sitting their GCSEs. This increase held for both young women and young men, and Black and Asian young people.

Unlike in Inner London, the proportions of EMA-eligible young people attending each education provider remained fairly constant between 1998 and 1999 with school-based Sixth Forms the choice of more than half of EMA-eligible young people. However, in 1999 the proportion of young women choosing to stay-on at school rose by 3 percentage points while the proportion of young men studying at school fell by the same rate.

5 EVALUATION OF ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION PATTERNS IN LEEDS AND LONDON

Box 5.1 Summary

- Respondents in Leeds were regularly briefed and representatives from all education providers took part in the implementation group but the lack of a co-ordinated. Implementation group in London resulted in ‘sporadic’ contact between LEAs and schools and colleges.
- Some respondents in London felt that students could not be bothered to fill in forms for what they saw as little financial reward.
- Some respondents in Leeds were very positive about EMA but others were unhappy about the fact that only students in selected schools were eligible.
- The late announcement of the eligibility criteria was seen to have hindered the implementation of EMA.
- Respondents felt there had been insufficient time to advertise EMA and some concern was raised over ‘misinformation’ in some publicity material.
- Respondents were critical of the application forms, particularly of the requirement for information about absent parents.
- Attendance monitoring was seen as having created difficulties and some concern was raised about the effect of monitoring on the student/teacher relationship.
- A variety of interpretations of authorised absence and 100 per cent attendance were in operation.
- On the whole, respondents in Leeds were more positive about an EMA effect on attendance and retention than respondents in Inner London.
- Some respondents in Leeds felt that part-time working hours had been reduced while respondents in Inner London felt that EMA would not affect part-time working hours.
- Some college staff in Leeds preferred to stop bonuses than to suspend weekly EMA payments believing this acted as a greater deterrent.

5.1 Introduction

The experiences and perceptions of representatives of schools and colleges attended by EMA recipients are important in assessing the extent to which EMA has affected attendance and retention patterns in post-16 full-time education. Therefore, this element of the evaluation undertook case studies in selected schools and colleges in Leeds and Inner London. For Leeds, three education providers were chosen:

- a large college of Further Education;
- a Sixth Form College; and
- a secondary school with a Sixth Form.

In London a college of Further Education and a school from each of the four LEA areas, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark, were chosen. The case studies involved face-to-face interviews with key informers, including Heads/Principals, admissions staff, tutors and those responsible for administering attendance monitoring¹¹.

This chapter of the report describes the results of analysis of these interviews. In considering these findings, certain contextual factors need to be taken into account. First, whilst partial eligibility for EMA was implemented in each of the two areas (Leeds and Inner London), the criteria for eligibility differed, being based on attendance at particular schools in the case of Leeds, and on residence in particular wards of the participating boroughs in the case of London. It follows that the impact on, and involvement of, schools and colleges may differ between Leeds and London.

Secondly, as earlier chapters have shown, there was considerable difference in take-up of EMA between the two localities. Thus, while the timing of the announcement of EMA was felt to have created difficulties in both areas in generating awareness among potential recipients, take-up was significantly higher in Leeds. As a result there were marked differences between the educational institutions included in the case studies in the two areas, in terms of the proportion of the intake of post-Year 11 students who were in receipt of an EMA award. This is important when attempting to assess the impact of EMA on attendance

¹¹ It had also been intended that attendance records and drop-out rates would be analysed over the period of the EMA pilot. However, education providers were unable to supply this information.

and retention. Where only a small minority of students were in receipt of EMA, as was the case among the Inner London schools and colleges, it is more difficult to draw meaningful conclusions.

Thirdly, and allied to the previous point, this part of the evaluation of EMA will be repeated at annual intervals, so that any perceptible shifts in attitudes and behaviour can be identified and recorded.

5.2 Involvement in the Introduction of EMA

There was a clear contrast between Leeds and London in the extent to which respondents from schools and colleges, as representatives of their institutions, felt that they were informed, consulted or involved in the implementation phase of EMA. Respondents in Leeds described being briefed regularly about progress towards implementation. They commented on the timing of the decision about the eligibility criteria for the Leeds pilot, and the difficulties this had caused, in that they were unable to provide advice to Year 11 students about possible options incorporating an EMA entitlement until late in the Summer term. They were, however, satisfied that if it was not possible to implement EMA fully in Leeds, then selection on the basis of school attended was the most acceptable method. Not surprisingly, there had been uncertainty about the appropriate administrative mechanisms and the resources required to support the effective implementation of EMA, especially in the relatively short time available, although this did not appear to have been an insurmountable obstacle.

Importantly, representatives from all three education providers had been invited to take part in the LEA's central implementation group and its working groups. The Head of the School Sixth Form was the representative of all the Sixth Form Schools; the Head of a Further Education College had attended a briefing in London, as a result of which he set up a working group which represented the FE sector which he chaired; and staff from a Sixth Form College were invited to attend the working group meetings. All staff regularly attended the working group meetings, which are held every few months and provide a forum for receiving information and discussing issues emanating from the introduction of EMA.

'It was quite imposed upon us the first time, but now ... it's run a year and you can take stock of just what resources you need to deal with it.'

(Administrator, Sixth Form College, Leeds)

The picture presented by respondents in London contrasted somewhat to that in Leeds. However, lack of understanding of and information about EMA by the person charged with its co-ordination and administration within the school and college, could be attributed to the fact that they were not originally nominated to undertake this role.

'It's a bit difficult because I wasn't involved initially in the college - it was the Head of MIS (Management Information Systems) and the Head of Student Services who attended the original meetings. I came into it about two months down the line, when some students had already been accepted onto the system, but there were no systems in place to gather the information required. I took over in late October.'

(Administrator, College, London)

Another difficulty for schools and colleges in Inner London was that their intake of students with EMA awards was not restricted to one LEA area so that, in the absence of a co-ordinated implementation group, they had to liaise with up to four different authorities. Each authority had attempted to hold awareness-raising meetings in the run-up to the introduction of EMA.

'Our LEA did hold some meetings with schools and colleges, before they set up the system during the summer break. They were also very helpful in setting up a database.'

(Head of Student Services, College, London)

As in Leeds, it was felt strongly that insufficient time had been available to generate widespread awareness about EMA among the 1998/99 Year 11 cohort.

A fundamental difference between Leeds and London, according to our respondents, was in the ongoing involvement of school and college representatives in groups which had a remit to oversee and implement EMA. In London, following the initial meetings to provide information about EMA, contact between the LEA and the schools and colleges was described as 'sporadic', and focused mainly on the software required to administer the system, especially in relation to attendance monitoring. This was undoubtedly largely because there was not a single implementation group covering all four boroughs. One college representative had written to the four LEAs suggesting the setting up of regular meetings, but had failed to receive a response. There was no evidence of the schools and colleges being encouraged to have an input into designing the delivery mechanisms:

'There have been meetings, but I think it's probably been just to tell us things, rather than ask our opinions.'

(Student Services, College, London)

5.3 Perceptions of Appropriateness of EMA

Despite the lower than anticipated level of take-up in London, the introduction of EMA was broadly welcomed by school and college representatives in London, although often with caveats about the detail of the initiative, such as the maximum allowable level of income:

'Yes, I think it's a good thing, although I am not happy with the £20,000 parental income threshold, especially if they've got other children.'

(Student Services, College, London)

'I think it's a good idea, parents think it's a good idea (the ones I've spoken to), and the kids think it's a good idea.'

(Head of Student Services, College, London)

'The professional view is that, theoretically, it's a good scheme, as it is very much concerned with the lifelong learning and widening participation agenda. But the comments from the students are that it won't last, because the criteria are too stringent - especially the requirement for 95 per cent attendance, over time.'

(Student Services, College, London)

'It is great from the students' viewpoint, and once the workings were in motion, we were able to point out the advantages of EMA to tutors. They were horrified at first, but most are now very happy to provide you with, for example, attendance information, because they realise they'll get something from the student.'

(Administrator, School, London)

One respondent from a school in Inner London had used EMA as a promotional tool to encourage students to stay on post-16, although she also reported some negative feelings towards EMA by young people who were not in receipt of an award. It was said that most students considered the weekly amount received by those in receipt of EMA to be 'quite a bit of money' and, as such, could ultimately lead to a gain in staying-on rates. However, it was also stated that a significant proportion of parents of potential EMA recipients did not want their children to stay on.

In contrast to this perception of EMA being welcomed by students, a respondent from another school in Inner London was of the opinion that the young people did not seem to care about EMA. Similar comments were made by a respondent from a large Further Education College.

'We haven't got many students (on EMA) - some find the systems onerous and can't be bothered to claim, even those who are eligible and have been accepted onto the system, and are still at college, yet not claiming the money. Only about five or six (out

of twenty) are claiming on a regular basis. One young lady, who failed to turn up for a meeting to help her complete the form, said “Oh, it’s only £30 a week and it’s a bit long-winded, and I’ve got to attend every day, and it’s just such a pain”. The inference was that because they had to do something apart from just turning up at college, they couldn’t be bothered.’

(Student Services, College, London)

This is an interesting observation, the gist of which was shared by others, and will need re-visiting in the second round of case study visits. Indeed, the low level of take-up may be construed as providing evidence of this lack of attachment to EMA. It will be of interest to see whether the anticipated increase in take-up in the second year of operation materialises. Certainly, even those respondents who claimed that potential recipients did not seem to care about EMA were hopeful that there would be a significant increase in the numbers applying for EMA from the next cohort. This would require improved information and publicity, targeted at teachers/lecturers, as well as at the students, coupled with a better administrative system.

There was also a mixed response in Leeds about the appropriateness of EMA. Many were very positive about its introduction. They spoke of ‘a huge gap’ in funding for under-18 year olds and felt that EMA was more in line with awards paid to higher education students. However, some said that the positive feelings diminished when they found out that only students in selected schools would be eligible. Other staff were concerned that students who were ineligible because of parental income might not receive any extra allowance from their ‘wealthier’ parents and so would have to work more hours in part-time jobs.

5.4 Implementation

Unsurprisingly, similar issues were raised about the implementation of EMA to those mentioned in other pilot areas (Maguire, Maguire and Vincent 2001). However time constraints, which were even greater in Leeds and Inner London because of the timing of the announcement about eligibility criteria, were regularly mentioned as having presented a major obstacle to the smooth introduction of EMA. Again, though, it was often suggested that the difficulties encountered would be less severe for the second cohort, as there would be time to amend and improve mechanisms and procedures.

5.4.1 Publicity

In Leeds, it was widely believed that publicity about EMA emanating from the LEA came out too late to affect the students' decision about whether to continue in full-time education.

Publicity had been received around the end of May, by which time students had already left to study for exams. One school distributed leaflets and application forms with exam papers and at GCSE results day, as well as at the induction and interviews for new students. For the 2000 cohort, leaflets and forms had been given out in Year 11 assembly.

The Further Education College had designed its own publicity in the absence of receiving any from the LEA and these leaflets were shared with other colleges.

There was also concern about a degree of 'misinformation' in some of the publicity material, which some students and parents had taken to mean that EMA was only available to those staying on in school, and not for those attending other post-16 provision. Similar concerns were voiced by a respondent in Inner London:

'I think the advertising was a bit biased towards the schools – "if you stay on at school, you'll be getting paid for it."

(Student Services, College, London)

However, in both Leeds and Inner London it was felt that these deficiencies in the publicity material had been rectified for the 1999/2000 Year 11s. The Further Education College in Leeds sent the publicity to all Year 11s who had applied to their courses from the 32 feeder schools included in the pilot. There was some confusion because the college leaflet was a different colour to the one the LEA sent to schools. As a consequence, the LEA had started receiving two or three applications from the same individuals and the LEA software had not been able to pick up on this. The Further Education College felt that many students for which EMA had been designed were missed because they were not taking exams and had not been in school since Easter and, therefore, missed the publicity. For the 1999/2000 cohort the college had sent a letter and leaflet to students who had been accepted on one of their courses and had also promoted EMA at Open Evenings. They had also been given application forms to pass to the 1998/99 cohort, who had not been originally eligible because they had not gone to one of the feeder schools. The Sixth Form College had included a flyer with their enrolment packs to new students and also put them in tutorial folders.

Respondents in Inner London were critical of the paucity of publicity material about EMA, whilst acknowledging that it was difficult to attach blame given the short lead-in time.

'There wasn't any publicity last year, so we will see whether the fact that leaflets are going out to all Year 11 students earlier this year will make a difference to recruitment.'

(Student Services, College, London)

At the time of the interviews some were still having difficulties in providing promotional material even for the second EMA cohort.

'Our prospectus went out a bit late and I did put information in there, but now I need the posters up, and to be visual around the place. I can see that it could have a real effect if it is promoted properly. I actually think that was the fault of the institutions.'

(Administrator, College, London)

There had also been some confusion generated among potential applicants for EMA in Inner London by a lack of clarity in some of the publicity material. It was not made clear that students could not apply for both an EMA and another award available from the access funds of LEAs. As a result, there were reports of several students applying for both.

5.4.2 Application process

Respondents from both Leeds and Inner London were critical of the application forms, largely because of complexity and length. For example, the welfare team at the Further Education College in Leeds had helped students fill out the forms and staff felt that these were not very 'customer-friendly'.

'If you're actually aiming at widening participation then you could do with making the application form considerably simpler, for instance than the higher education application form, and it isn't simpler.'

(Welfare Officer, Further Education College, Leeds)

The LEA was exempted from blame, as it was acknowledged that there had been some problems with processing application forms at the beginning. It was concluded that, in the face of these difficulties, the LEA had done a good job. Respondents from the Further Education College in Leeds also mentioned problems with the LEA software, which had led to some students becoming fed up of waiting for a decision about their EMA and ultimately not returning to full-time education.

A typical response from a college representative in London was:

'The application form is a nightmare, to be honest, and I think there are people who have been put off from applying because of the application form. I know we've got a lot of parents who can't read or write properly (the kids are not much better), and they look at this form and say that they have to do enough form filling, for the social etc, and they don't want to fill in another form, especially with all the personal and financial stuff which is required.'

(Student Services, College, London)

Even the revised form provided by DfES has not been greeted with great enthusiasm - an administrative member of staff felt that the questions about parental income 'just go on forever'. Difficulties with the application form had led to delayed payments, and in some schools and colleges staff were attempting to speed up the process by making representations to the LEA on behalf of students who were waiting to hear whether they had been awarded an EMA.

The issue of requiring information about absent parents was raised by many respondents and was seen as one of the 'biggest obstacles' to the successful completion of the application forms. They felt that people with absent parents were being 'unfairly disadvantaged' and were frustrated that those in need were not necessarily receiving an EMA award. There was concern that it would have an unsettling effect on families, in that the past would have to be 'raked up'.

Since these interviews were conducted changes have been made to the design of application forms, including the introduction of a common form for all participating Authorities.

Some college staff said that a local helpline was not very helpful in dealing with students' queries. It was reported that students had been referred to the college by the helpline staff when they should have dealt with the students themselves.

5.4.3 Learning Agreements

The design and implementation of the Learning Agreement had also created difficulties for some institutions. However, in Leeds the Head of the School Sixth Form had been involved in designing a Learning Agreement that was used widely in the Leeds area. Some institutions already had a contract system in place whereby the student agreed to abide by rules concerning attendance, punctuality, and completion of coursework. The Learning Agreement

was developed around this. The Further Education College already had most of the Learning Agreement guidelines on their enrolment forms, so they produced a supplementary one which 'filled in the gaps'. There was a feeling that there should be a contract for all students, not just those on EMA.

Some staff felt that it was helpful that parents are required to sign because it made them aware of their obligations.

'... we've felt in the past that because it's a college and although we work very closely with parents, there are a number of students whose parents will say "well it's up to you now" ... and they just relinquish responsibility. But it's certainly brought home to parents that they're still their responsibility and they've still got to sign it.'

(Course Director, Sixth Form College, Leeds)

Other staff felt it was unfair that Learning Agreements had to be signed by a parent, because there are young people who live on their own and are on Income Support who have to get Learning Agreements signed by the Benefits Agency.

Among the schools and colleges in London, a number of approaches to the Learning Agreement had been taken. For those where Learning Agreements had been in operation for a considerable time existing agreements, such as that provided by the FEFC, were amended. In one college it had been decided that, in addition to this agreement, students in receipt of EMA would also be required to complete a standard agreement produced by Lewisham LEA, which they felt to be most appropriate for EMA. Another college had amended a version of the Learning Agreement offered by a different LEA, as they considered the original to be couched in language which was more appropriate for students in school, rather than those at college. At a third college where, again, a standard LEA Learning Agreement had been used, the whole process of getting the agreement signed by the student, college staff and parents was regarded as being unduly long-winded.

One issue raised by several respondents was the need for specific grades of achievement to be included in the Learning Agreement. It was felt that, at the very start of a course, tutors were not really in a position to make a valid assessment of what should constitute a student's target grade.

The extent to which students and their parents actually understood what they were signing up to on the Learning Agreement was also a point of contention.

'The course tutors have sat down with each of the kids and explained everything about the Learning Agreements to them. So we know that they've sat down with the kids and gone through it, but whether or not they've understood it is a different matter. Each course tutor has made a point of spending 20 minutes with the student just to explain each of the rules and what it means. We've not actually done any explanation to the parents - we've let the parents read it for themselves, and then come back if they've got any queries. We are well aware that the students should know what the Learning Agreement means, and the implications of not getting their money. This is particularly important because we've got so many students who don't understand English properly, or for whom English is not their first language, and there is another group whose literacy and numeracy skills are very limited.'

(Student Services, College, London)

Schools tended to be less familiar with Learning Agreements (*'I didn't know it existed until after Christmas'*). However, as well as reiterating the point about the stipulation of specific grades being questionable, schools also raised the issue of problems arising from students changing courses, thereby requiring a new Learning Agreement. It was also suggested that the agreement had not necessarily been fully enforced.

'It has only been the attendance element of the Learning Agreement which has been implemented - not the conditions about coursework and deadlines.'

(Head of Sixth Form, School, London)

Again, respondents from schools in Inner London questioned whether the students and their parents actually understood the implications of what they were signing.

5.4.4 Attendance monitoring

As was found in the evaluation of the first year of EMA more generally (Maguire, Maguire and Vincent, 2001), the process of attendance monitoring was regarded as having created difficulties, especially in terms of the additional workload generated. In Leeds, all the institutions had adapted systems that were already in place. For example, the Head of the School Sixth Form and his team were responsible for monitoring attendance. They had adapted their previous system, so that teachers had to fill in a slip at the end of each lesson in Years 12 and 13 to say who was not complying with their agreement in terms of lateness, non-attendance, or non-completion of work. Both the school and Further Education College had a yellow card warning system, whereby students were given warnings if they failed to

attend, were late or did not produce work. Their EMA was withdrawn if the 'offence' was repeated.

Warning letters were sent out and it was said that there could be 'grief' from parents when the letters were received, although once the reasons were explained parents accepted the situation. There were parents, though, who took the view that students were 'grown-ups now' and that it was hard to tell them what to do. The school had a policy of broadening its access to include students going on to lower level vocational courses. These students had been causing the biggest problems in terms of not completing their work on time, so another system had been set up to give these young people deadlines for completing work.

At the Further Education College, an administrative officer collected information from all teachers about attendance and lateness. This could be problematic because the college has many sites, with lots of courses. He reported only non-attendance to the LEA, rather than all the attendance figures. The course director at the Sixth Form College and his assistant collected all attendance information. All three institutions appear to have adjusted the system in a way that worked for them.

A major problem for schools and colleges in the Inner London pilot has been the need to provide attendance information on a weekly basis for up to four different LEAs, each with its own requirements. For example, while some boroughs were content to receive information only on those who had failed to attend, others required the complete attendance list. As was the case in Leeds, there were problems for institutions with split sites, which made it difficult to collect information from all tutors. At the time of the interviews, the introduction of an electronically based uniform system of attendance monitoring was eagerly awaited. This was being developed by Lewisham LEA for institutions with EMA recipients in all four boroughs. Certainly those colleges operating a manual system, which required many different registers to be collated in order to submit their returns by the deadline, were hopeful that the new system would obviate the need for devoting even more resources to this task.

'This year hasn't been too bad, because there have been so few students. Next year, when there will be a lot more students, it could be a real problem if we still have to do different returns for different boroughs. But apparently, it will be just one return, on the same software, so that should be easier.'

(Student Awards, College, London)

However, a cautionary tale in relation to reliance on an electronic system came from a respondent in an Inner London school, who had inadvertently ‘pressed the wrong button’ on one occasion causing payments to be withheld from EMA students.

Although the task of monitoring attendance and compliance with Learning Agreements has generally been found to be time-consuming, it has worked well as long as staff remain ‘on top of it’. For some institutions getting information to the LEA about bonus payments was difficult, because the LEA had sent them the reporting sheets the day before the term ended. In a London college efforts had been made to ensure that the burden placed on course tutors was kept to a minimum.

‘Tutors only have to mark them in the register and sign the student’s claim form, which takes all of twenty seconds as far as the tutors are concerned. I check each claim against the standard signature at the back before I send it to the borough. So it’s not a very difficult system and it’s not time-consuming for the tutors. The only one it’s time-consuming for is me, chasing everything. It has increased my workload tremendously.’

(Student Services, College, London)

Some college staff felt that they should be given extra funding to cover the extra administrative costs. The possibility of increased administrative pressures emanating from greater numbers of EMA-eligible students in 2000/2001 was causing concern in both Leeds, where EMA was to be open to students from all schools, and London where there was an expectation of a significantly larger cohort of EMA students.

There were concerns among some school and college staff that their involvement in the monitoring of attendance, with the financial penalties that could result for students, would have an adverse effect on the student/teacher relationship. One programme director in Leeds said that it had been difficult to get the message across to staff that they should be reporting non-compliance.

‘... because obviously they’re people who build strong working relationships with the students, they understand all the problems that they have at home and often they are suckers for a hard luck story ... [although] there are lots of genuine cases of hardship amongst the students which sometimes exclude them from being able to attend ...’.

(Course Director, Leeds)

One course tutor felt that there should be more flexibility in the system. Her policy was not to report people who had been late or failed to attend because she preferred to let them come

back of their own accord. Otherwise, this could be interpreted as breaking a trust with her students and which she might have then lost if she appeared to be too hard on them. She was concerned that EMA students would feel singled out if they were made to phone in, when other students who were not on EMA did not have to. Other staff also felt there should be more flexibility and that many students have problems for which they should not be penalised.

Another member of staff was concerned that regulations governing EMA have been built on an assumption that all students come from 'middle class' homes and do not take into account those who have problems. It was suggested that regulations should be more attuned to how households operate in reality.

'I think they really do have to start thinking about the way households operate for those with very low incomes, ... how different it's going to be for their assumed middle class caring parent, you know, someone to help with the forms, someone to sign, you know, it just isn't like that for so many, and they've still not got to grips with that.'

(Welfare Officer, Further Education College, Leeds)

However, the view that the imposition of attendance monitoring could affect the student/teacher relationship was not universally held. Some staff felt that policing of attendance would not affect the relationship between student and teacher, as students knew what was expected of them and that the rules were clear.

'It's like anything else, if you treat people with a bit of dignity and a bit of reasonableness then they're usually alright with you, it's how you go about it really, how you manage the system, not the system itself so much.'

(Course Tutor, School Sixth Form, Leeds)

5.4.5 Authorised absences

It was evident that a variety of interpretations of what constituted an authorised absence were in operation and, indeed, what was allowable under the definition of 100 per cent attendance.

'It was mid-October before we were told what an authorised absence was, and even then there were slight differences between the boroughs, so now we've got our own definition of what's authorised and what's not, which we operate across the board. We've said that everybody has to bring in a letter from a parent if they've been sick, and if they've been sick for more than four days we insist on a doctor's certificate. A hospital appointment we will allow with an appointment card, but a dentist's appointment is not authorised, because that could be made outside of college hours.'

(Student Services, College, London)

At a school in Leeds the student or their parent was required to phone in on the day that they were absent. As well as the requirements for EMA, the school had strengthened its authorised absence procedure following an OFSTED¹² inspection. They also required a follow-up letter from the parent. Some staff felt that it could be problematic for some students or their parents to phone in because parents were working or had not got a phone. The possibility of resentment from EMA students because of an apparently more stringent set of regulations governing absences, backed up by financial penalties for non-compliance, was also raised.

Another problem identified with authorised absences was that it would be hard to keep track of everyone. Some staff would have liked to see students having to use an electronic swipe card to make things easier.

Among the Inner London schools and colleges, variations in approach and interpretation were readily apparent, sometimes in response to differences in the criteria required by the four LEAs. In one college which operated within its own standard college definition for ‘authorised absence’, one of the boroughs was allowing part payments relating to levels of attendance, rather than insisting on students achieving the full 100 per cent in order to receive payment.

While some institutions found the criteria for attaining 100 per cent attendance to be somewhat harsh, others were quite content to impose the regulations as laid down.

‘The form states that each week they have to sign to confirm that they’ve had 100 per cent attendance and everybody accepted that. Monitoring this is a bit tricky. One young lady said “Oh God, I’ve got to fill out each form and then I’ve got to come for 100 per cent of the time each week?” So I said “Yes, if you want to be paid”, and she said “I just don’t believe it - if I don’t feel like getting up one morning, I still have to come in?” Another infrequent attender has only managed to be paid for one week since September, but that is quite an achievement, getting him to attend for 100 per cent of the time that week, and getting all his work in on time. Most of the others have been attending well.’

(Administrator, College, London)

‘The biggest problem is the 100 per cent attendance. People feel that if they’ve only had one afternoon off, they should get a proportion of the payment. I think kids should be in school or college for 100 per cent of the time, but the feedback from parents and kids is that if it’s only an afternoon, why shouldn’t I get a proportion. Some of the

¹² OFSTED is the Office for Standards in Education whose purpose is to improve the standards of achievement and quality of education in schools through regular inspection, public reporting and informed advice.

tutors have found it a useful tool to ensure people come in on time, instead of sleeping in.'

(Student Services, College, London)

An interesting example of where flexibility was exerted by a college was the case of a student who was regularly missing on a Wednesday afternoon, thereby losing his entitlement to his EMA payment. When it was realised that these absences were due to the fact that he was an England international ice hockey player and that he missed college in order to attend training sessions, arrangements were made for him to attend a comparable class at another time.

5.4.6 Appeals procedures

It had been anticipated that carefully designed appeals procedures would be required to deal with complaints from students and their parents. In the event, while these had been established there was little evidence of them being called on. In Leeds all three education providers had appeals procedures in place but had not had to use them. One college had received one complaint from a parent, but when the parent was brought into the school the issue was sorted out. The parent then realised why the student had had their EMA withdrawn and accepted it. One respondent said that a student was unlikely to make an issue out of a withdrawal, because they would not want the reasons brought to the attention of their parents.

Similarly, in Inner London some educational institutions had received complaints regarding non-payment, usually involving a dispute over whether the student had actually attended, or had an acceptable reason for not doing so, but the measures taken by the EMA administrators had enabled these to be resolved. An interesting comment from a college representative concerning complaints was that they usually arose because the student or their parent did not really understand the criteria that had to be satisfied, especially those regarding 100 per cent attendance. This lends weight to the suggestion that, when completing the Learning Agreement, many students and parents do not study it thoroughly, or understand it sufficiently.

5.5 Effect of EMA

A key element of the introduction of EMA is the extent to which their provision impacts positively on rates of attendance and retention within schools and colleges. Responses to questions about this were mixed, with those in Leeds broadly suggesting that a beneficial

impact could be detected, while those in Inner London were less sure. In both areas, however, the view was that it was too early to make definitive statements about this. In Inner London in particular, low take-up in the first year meant that the educational institutions had only a small proportion of their intake in receipt of EMA. For the majority of those visited, this was between ten and twenty students. Even in the college where there were 179 students receiving EMA, this still constituted a small minority and was nothing like the one thousand anticipated from the second year of EMA. Moreover, those 179 students were ranged across over 50 courses so that it was extremely difficult to detect an EMA impact on attendance or retention.

In Leeds, all three education providers felt that it was a little early to see if EMA was having an affect on participation and retention rates. Some staff at the school felt that EMA would not be enough of an incentive for students to continue in full-time education, as there were other influences which would make a difference:

'I think ... that it would be absolutely brilliant if just giving a bit of money to some poorer kids made them stay at school, but we all know it's not that straightforward, having access to a little bit more money is just only a very small aspect. You've got peer pressure, you've got expectation, you've got all that kind of thing to go against, and the money might sweeten it a little bit, but it's a very small drop in the ocean compared with all those other issues that we know ... affect education and children.'

(Course Tutor, School Sixth Form, Leeds)

However, all three education providers felt that retention had been better in the 1999/2000 school year than previously. School Sixth Form staff had noticed that they had larger numbers on intermediate courses applying to go on to the advanced course next year, and wondered if it might be that these students know they can get EMA for two years.

Some college staff felt that the impact of EMA had been clear. They had noticed that young people were more likely to be staying on who without EMA would have had to get a job. A course tutor felt that many of her EMA students would not still be on the course if EMA was not available. Some usually drop out, but none of her EMA students had.

'We have parents evenings and we speak to people, and most are one-parent families and they actually inform us that if it wasn't for the £30 they wouldn't have been allowed to stay on in education, they would have had to get a job. So for me it's been a plus.'

(Course Tutor, Leeds)

The same tutor expected all her students to complete the course and obtain the qualification but she was concerned that the EMA may stop before some of them had completed their courses if they were longer than two years.

'I was hoping that it would be extended, so that they'd do a year with me, and two years on the advanced course, it would be for three years. That's what I personally would like to see. Then at least they would come out with a decent qualification at the end. And if they stop their money I don't know what will happen.'

(Course Tutor, Leeds)

Staff at one of the colleges felt that students had been more likely to stay on their courses and that they were keen to receive the bonuses. One course tutor expressed interest in how EMA would affect exam results, as *'that's where I would want to see the icing on the cake.'*

As suggested earlier, the responses from Inner London were even more equivocal. For example, an administrator from one school stated that there was a perceptible impact on attendance, while her counterpart from another school felt that drop-out rates had not been affected and that *'those you'd expect to have poor attendance still have it'*. Punctuality also was said not to have been affected. Echoing some of these sentiments, a respondent from a third school asserted that, while it might have had a slight effect in deterring drop-out and improving attendance, the students could earn sufficient amounts from part-time jobs because of the proximity of central London, so that they would not really miss the EMA payment.

In the colleges there was some support for the suggestion that EMA had improved attendance and retention, especially among those undertaking lower level courses.

'Probably four out of fourteen have withdrawn, and my perception is that it has aided retention.'

(Student Awards, College, London)

'It has had an impact on the foundation level courses, where the kids are not used to attending classes regularly - most of them have missed a lot of school for one reason or another. They haven't got the discipline for attending regularly and coming in on time, and getting back from breaks on time, which is why most of them are on the Level 1 courses, but it has made a difference to those courses, and the tutors have found it useful. But for those on Level 2 and Level 3 courses, it has not made a difference.'

(Student Services, College, London)

Again, the difficulties of setting up EMA in London with a relatively short lead-in time meant that payments had been delayed and made retrospectively, in some cases not until December. In such circumstances, the link between full and regular attendance and the receipt of payment had been less direct than it would be when the system was running more smoothly.

'If they only get, let's say £300 in December, the fact that they've missed three weeks somewhere along the line doesn't really bother them, but if they were actually getting payments on a weekly basis and they suddenly miss one, then they notice it, so we are looking with interest at this term to see if it does make a difference, now that payments are being made regularly.'

(Student Services, College, London)

5.5.1 Impact on non-eligible students

In both areas, anger and resentment had been expressed by some parents whose children were not eligible for EMA because of the criteria, as well as some bitterness by non-eligible students. Some of this resentment could be offset in both areas by the provision of alternative funds, such as hardship and access funds that were available. Also, in some cases the EMA students were reported to have felt singled out and embarrassed that they were able to get it – like free school meals.

5.5.2 Part-time working

One of the possible consequences of EMA was that it might reduce students' financial dependence on part-time working, thereby assisting their studies. Differences emerged between Leeds and Inner London in the extent to which this was perceived to be happening, with those in London being more doubtful about there being any significant change in the amount of part-time working which was undertaken.

In Leeds respondents were well aware of the number of students doing part-time jobs and about the effect that this could have on lateness and attendance. Staff at the school felt that EMA was unlikely to affect the number of hours a student worked in a part-time job, because 'they can never have enough money'. They also thought that students who have wealthier parents do not necessarily get more money from their parents and, as they are not eligible for EMA, they have to work more hours.

In both colleges respondents felt that part-time working would be reduced because of EMA, with one member of staff claiming to have seen evidence of this:

'... a number of students have not had to get a part-time job to the same degree, I mean some of our students in the past would be working five nights a week in order to keep themselves here. Now they'll still get a part-time job, let's say for example a weekend, or a Saturday, but they've been able to concentrate on their academic studies. And that's been really positive.'

(Course Director, Sixth Form College, Leeds)

The perception in Inner London was that 'most of the kids have got jobs, and EMA doesn't affect that', although a respondent from a large college felt that it tended to be those young people from the most disadvantaged backgrounds who were less likely to have a part-time job. For these young people, the £30 a week would make a considerable difference to the family income, while those who had part-time jobs would regard the EMA as an additional source of income rather than as a replacement.

5.5.3 Bonuses

In both Leeds and London, the timing of the interviews meant that it was difficult to discern any significant impact from the payment of bonuses. Some staff at one of the colleges in Leeds expressed the view that they were more inclined to stop a bonus payment than they were to suspend a weekly EMA payment. One thought that this was a better way of deterring non-attenders:

'I don't think it actually necessarily follows that because you didn't stop their payment that you can't stop their bonus, in fact ... that's probably a better way than rather than stopping their weekly payments, saying we'll stop and you'll not get your bonus at the end of the year. That's a better deterrent if you ask me.'

(Administrative Officer, Leeds)

Other staff had noticed that more young people had received the Summer bonus than the Winter and Spring ones, because young people had come to realise that their bonuses were being stopped and had started to make sure they attended. It was felt that students were now very conscious of their attendance requirements for bonuses and were keen to make sure they got them.

5.6 Recommendations for Improvement

In both Leeds and Inner London respondents made suggestions about changes which could be made to the operation of EMA which would enhance its impact. The following recommendations were made:

- to avoid problems of backlogs, there should be a cut-off point during the academic year for when students can be registered for EMA;
- any problems relating to payments should be directed to the LEA rather than the school or college (some schools were finding that queries regarding EMA were being directed towards them rather than the LEA);
- there needs to be better liaison between the LEA, schools and colleges, parents and students;
- schools and colleges need better information from LEAs about how much each student is being paid and whether they have been paid;
- greater flexibility should be introduced to the criteria for determining who should be suspended/withdrawn from the scheme in order that schools and colleges could use their discretion;
- definitive regulations regarding ‘authorised absence’ need to be established nationally, rather than locally;
- extra funding should be made available to help with the administrative burden of operating EMA;
- a better local helpline is needed;
- there should be a stipulation that both morning and afternoon attendances are recorded for each day;
- weekly payments should be made for half-term - some college staff felt it was unfair that students are not paid during half-term. Some students come into college during half-term but they do not have help with travel costs;
- it may be better to have bigger weekly payments, rather than the bonuses; and
- a leaflet on EMA is required for non-English speakers.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Implementation of EMA

The introduction of EMA as a tool to provide financial support to young people from low-income families to remain in education was warmly welcomed in Leeds and Inner London. However, the timing of the announcement of the piloting of EMA, which was confined to a selected number of schools in Leeds and to a small number of electoral wards within the four Inner London boroughs, was perceived by both education providers and the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to have affected the implementation of the scheme. Discussions with representatives of schools and colleges within the areas highlighted a belief that EMA had been ‘rushed in; and that the provision had been ‘imposed’ upon them. Respondents spoke of having been given an insufficient amount of time to make available the additional resources that were needed to cope with the extra administrative burden. Such feelings were echoed in discussions with representatives from the LEAs.

Publicity for EMA was also reported to have been adversely affected by the timing of its announcement in Leeds and Inner London. It was argued that most young people had made their post -Year 11 choices before EMA was announced and therefore the introduction of EMA had little scope to impact on young peoples’ decision-making. In addition, since there was only partial coverage of EMA within each LEA, publicity had to be restricted to avoid ineligible young people within the LEA boundary receiving potentially misleading information. Restricted eligibility for EMA in Leeds and Inner London had led to some confusion among young people and parents about entitlement to the scheme. In Inner London, the most common reason for unsuccessful applications for EMA was because young people lived in an EMA-ineligible ward.

Restrictions in publicity and marketing were also said to explain why inaccurate information had existed among some of the EMA-eligible population. Some EMA students in London believed that EMA was available to them only if they continued at their existing school. This was borne out by evidence that the proportion of young people opting to remain in School Sixth Forms in London had increased significantly from the previous year.

However, there were fewer EMA applications in Inner London in comparison to Leeds, despite the four Inner London boroughs having a larger cohort of eligible young people.

Concerns were raised about the EMA application process. These included:

- problems experienced by young people and parents in the completion of application forms that were perceived to be over-complicated. This deterred some potential young people from submitting applications for EMA;
- delays in the processing of EMA application forms had the knock-on effect of postponing notifications of the outcomes of applications and the authorisation of subsequent payments to young people; and
- the need to obtain financial information from absent parents which caused distress and anxiety to young people, parents and to LEA staff who were forced to deal with difficult cases.

6.2 Operation of EMA

Discussions with staff in schools and colleges revealed concerns about the increased administrative burden which had emanated from the monitoring and reporting of attendance for EMA students. While schools and colleges had existing monitoring systems in place, providing weekly attendance records to the LEA on EMA students imposed an additional burden. This was particularly the case in colleges where EMA students were often attending courses across a number of different college sites. Some education providers coped with the problem by providing a non-attendance record of students to the LEA, as opposed to submitting to the LEA a full weekly attendance record for each EMA student.

LEA representatives also cited difficulties in obtaining full weekly attendance records from some education providers. The problem was particularly acute among education providers who had a small number of EMA students and among the schools and colleges outside the LEA boundary who appeared to perceive attendance reporting as less important.

Students who had broken their Learning Agreements for lateness, failure to attend or failure to deliver coursework on time, were in some schools and colleges, subject to the immediate withdrawal of their EMA weekly allowance. With other education providers students were

issued with verbal or written warnings in the first instance. Some teaching staff preferred to stop the termly bonus payment rather than the weekly payments when students breached their Learning Agreement, believing that suspending a bonus payment acted as a greater deterrent.

With plans from September 2000 to extend EMA to all eligible young people living in Leeds and Inner London, staff within schools and colleges expressed concern about the inevitable increase in the administrative burden that they believed would result.

6.3 Effects of EMA

Analysis of the Careers Service data for EMA-eligible young people has shown that there was a gain in the number of young people choosing to remain in full-time education in 1999 in both Leeds and Inner London. In 1999, in Inner London, almost three-quarters of 16 year olds were in post-16 education, a rise between 1998 and 1999 of 9 percentage points.

However as a result of the timing and partial implementation of EMA in both Leeds and Inner London, it is uncertain whether gains in the levels of participation in post-compulsory education can be partly or fully attributable to the introduction of EMA. The data provided by the Careers Services on the destinations of young people in EMA-eligible wards in Inner London and eligible feeder schools in Leeds showed that young women were more likely than young men to be in post-16 education. However, as a result of the significant gains in the numbers of young men remaining in education in 1999, the gap between the sexes had narrowed. While in Inner London, Chinese and Asian young people were more likely than other ethnic groups to be in post-16 education, the data highlighted that the biggest gains in participation rates were in the numbers of White and Black young people opting to remain in education. In 1999 in Leeds, the largest gain in the numbers of young people staying on in education was for Chinese young people (although the overall number of young people in this minority ethnic group was low) and, over the same period, there was a decrease in the numbers of Black young people choosing to stay-on.

Data from the careers services on EMA-eligible schools in Leeds and EMA-eligible wards in Inner London demonstrated that in 1999, the rise in the numbers of young people choosing to remain in education was accompanied by a decrease in the number of young people moving into employment, training and unemployment. In Inner London, the proportion of school

leavers entering employment (particularly employment without training) had fallen. There was also an overall decrease in the number of school leavers who became unemployed, although there was a slight increase in the unemployment rate among Asian women. Slightly more young men and Asian young men and women moved into government-supported training.

Staff interviewed in schools and colleges in Leeds and Inner London reported some improvement in retention rates among students since the introduction of EMA. The receipt of the EMA weekly allowance had enabled some students who were struggling financially to remain in education to continue with their studies. However, concern was expressed about students' eligibility for EMA for a two year period when some students intended to remain in post-16 education for three years, which would result in three-year students facing financial hardship or, possibly, dropping out of their final year.

The differences in the patterns of termly bonus payments made by LEAs may suggest differences between areas in relation to student attendance. Staff within schools and colleges in Inner London suggested that the payment of bonuses was not acting as a financial incentive to some students to improve attendance because of their ability to secure well paid part-time jobs. The fact that fewer bonus payments were made in Inner London suggests that there may have been higher levels of absenteeism amongst students. However other explanations are possible, including the possibility that applications may have been made later in Inner London so that fewer bonuses would have been payable.

6.3.1 Effects on course and type of education provider

Findings from the interviews with teaching staff in schools and colleges and from the data from the LEAs suggest that EMA students were more likely to be pursuing vocational courses. However, in Inner London between 1998 and 1999, there was a substantial increase in the numbers of EMA-eligible students choosing academic courses, while in Leeds there was a small decrease. The reason for the increase in Inner London is likely to be the result of the increased proportions of young people staying in schools, where vocational courses tend to be less widely available.

The LEA data from Leeds and Inner London showed that there was a strong association between length of course and the amount of EMA received. Students who were completing

shorter, vocational courses were more likely to be receiving the maximum EMA weekly allowance. However, students on vocational courses were less likely to have received more than one bonus payment.

6.3.2 Amount of EMA received

Findings from the qualitative interviews with staff from schools and colleges in Leeds and Inner London and from the analysis of the data received from the LEAs indicated that there was lower than expected take-up of EMA at the higher income levels. The complexity of application forms appeared to have deterred some young people from submitting applications for EMA when they expected to receive no more than five pounds each week. In addition, some young people failed to appreciate their additional entitlement to full bonus payments.

The data from the LEAs showed that the majority of EMA students in Leeds and Inner London were receiving the maximum weekly EMA award. In addition, in Greenwich and Lambeth there were no students who received less than £10 per week. EMA recipients in Inner London were more likely to be receiving the maximum award in comparison to EMA students in Leeds. This may be attributable to differences in income-eligibility between the two areas. In Leeds, eligibility for EMA is linked to a maximum parental earnings threshold of £30,000 per annum, whereas in Inner London the corresponding figure is £20,000 per annum.

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ANNEX

Table A.1 Destinations for Greenwich for 1998 and 1999

Destination	Column percentages		
	1998	1999	Percentage Points Change
Stayed at School	31	41	+ 10
FE College	22	23	+ 1
Sixth Form	2	0	- 2
Employment with Training	9	10	+ 1
Employment without Training	10	5	- 5
Government Supported Training	3	3	0
Modern Apprenticeship	1	1	0
Unemployed	10	8	- 2
Other Unavailable	2	2	0
Moved from Area	5	5	0
Not Known	4	2	- 2
Total	100	100	N/A

Table A.2 Destinations for Southwark for 1998 and 1999

Destination	Column percentages		
	1998	1999	Percentage Points Change
Stayed at School	18	25	+ 7
FE College	42	46	+ 4
Sixth Form	3	0	- 3
Employment with Training	6	7	+ 1
Employment without Training	9	4	- 5
Government Supported Training	4	3	- 1
Modern Apprenticeship	1	*	- 1
Unemployed	9	6	- 3
Other Unavailable	2	1	- 1
Moved from Area	3	3	0
Not Known	3	5	+ 2
Total	100	100	N/A

* Means less than 0.5 per cent, but not zero.

Table A.3 Destinations for Lambeth for 1998 and 1999

Column percentages			
Destination	1998	1999	Percentage Points Change
Stayed at School	26	46	+ 20
FE College	41	33	- 8
Sixth Form	2	0	- 2
Employment with Training	4	2	- 2
Employment without Training	5	4	- 1
Government Supported Training	4	2	- 2
Modern Apprenticeship	*	1	+ 1
Unemployed	9	7	- 2
Other Unavailable	1	1	0
Moved from Area	5	4	- 1
Not Known	4	3	- 1
Total	100	100	N/A

* Means less than 0.5 per cent, but not zero.

Table A.4 Destinations for Lewisham for 1998 and 1999

Column percentages			
Destination	1998	1999	Percentage Points Change
Stayed at School	25	37	+12
FE College	29	34	+5
Sixth Form	11	1	- 10
Employment with Training	4	4	0
Employment without Training	5	5	0
Government Supported Training	3	2	- 1
Modern Apprenticeship	1	*	- 1
Unemployed	11	8	- 3
Other Unavailable	1	1	0
Moved from Area	4	3	- 1
Not Known	8	5	- 3
Total	100	100	N/A

* Means less than 0.5 per cent, but not zero.