

# Young People not in Education, Employment or Training: Evidence from the Education Maintenance Allowance Pilots Database

Joanne Rennison, Sue Maguire, Sue Middleton  
and Karl Ashworth

Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has commissioned further analysis of young people who become NEET (not in education, employment or training) after leaving compulsory education. This report examines quantitative data collected as part of the evaluation of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), covering two cohorts of young people who completed compulsory education (Year 11) in summers 1999 and 2000. Random samples of young people from each cohort were interviewed in ten of the original EMA pilot areas and 11 control areas. The report comprises two parts:

- Part A uses data from the two cohorts of young people included in the first wave of interviews which were conducted face-to-face with young people and parents in 1999 for Cohort 1 and in 2000 for Cohort 2. The data include young people in both pilot and control areas, containing about 21,500 cases (unweighted) in total. Young people were interviewed in their first year following compulsory schooling and were either 16 year or 17 years of age at the time of interview. This part of the report explores attitudes and aspirations of parents of young people and of young people themselves. It also considers the level of support which parents gave to their children in their Year 11 decision making. The final section examines the extent to which young people and their parents were in agreement about aspirations and their attitudes to education, work and training.
- Part B exploits the longitudinal nature of the dataset by examining data from the two cohorts of young people in pilot and control areas who participated in all three survey interviews, which were conducted when the young person was approximately 16, 17 and 18 years of age. The sample size in Part B is approximately 11,700 (unweighted). This part of the report examines young people's destinations at age 16, 17 and 18. It then considers the composition of the NEET group at ages 17 and 18, specifically considering inflows to the group. In the final section, the focus is on outflows from the NEET group, exploring young people's destinations at age 17 and 18 by their socio-economic classification, Year 11 qualifications, gender and level of parental involvement in Year 11 decision making.

## **PART A**

### **SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DESTINATIONS**

Although young people in the NEET group are not a homogeneous group, the analysis agreed with earlier research (Payne 2000, Pearce and Hillman, 1998) that certain economic and social characteristics are more prevalent amongst young people who become NEET. Young people in the NEET group are more likely to come from workless households, have parents with no or low educational qualifications and/or live in the social housing sector. Other factors linked to behaviour and personal circumstances such as truancy or caring responsibilities were also found to be more common among young people in the NEET group. **(Introduction)**

### **POST-16 DESTINATION AND PARENTAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The majority (66.4 per cent) of parents of young people who entered the NEET group at the end of Year 11 had hoped that their son or daughter would continue in full-time education. Around one-fifth (20.2 per cent), had aspired that their son or daughter would enter work (with or without training) and 13.3 per cent stated no preference/other. **(Section A1.2)**

Attendance at a parents' evening in Year 11 and at an open day at another school or college appeared to be a strong influence on destination outcomes, in particular among young people who remained in education. In almost all cases, young people in the NEET group were least likely to have been supported by their parents through Year 11 decision-making activities. Parents of young people in the NEET group had not provided the same levels of support in helping young people decide upon Year 11 transitions, in comparison to young people in other destinations. However, that is not to say that young people in the NEET group had received no parental support at all. **(Section A1.3)**

Over two-fifths (46.1 per cent) of parents overall, did not feel that they knew enough about the current educational qualification system in order to give proper advice to their children. Parents of young people who were NEET were more likely than other parents to agree that

they did not ‘know enough about modern qualifications to give proper advice to their child’ (67.3 per cent). (Section A1.4)

### **Individual characteristics of young people**

Among young people who became NEET, almost one half (48.0 per cent) had intended to enter work, and two-fifths (41.5 per cent) stated that they had wanted to continue in full-time education. Only 10.5 per cent expressed other/no preference regarding their post-16 destination. (Section A2.2)

Poor educational achievement in Year 11 and disaffection with school in the form of exclusion and truancy in Years 10 and 11 were associated with entry to the NEET group and to a slightly lesser extent, entry into work without training. However, neither educational underachievement nor disaffection with school necessarily determined NEET group entry exclusively. (Section A2.2)

Although most young people in the NEET group did receive advice about their post-16 destination, they were comparatively less likely to have received advice from as wide a range of sources, particularly in relation to young people who continued in full-time education. Young people in the NEET group were less likely to have discussed post Year 11 options with parents and were least likely to have accessed other sources of advice at school, such as from career teachers and tutors, or from Careers Officers. (Section A2.3)

Over half (53.3 per cent) of young people in the NEET group thought that they had received insufficient advice at school about what to do after compulsory education, which was a greater proportion than among young people who had entered other destinations. (Section A2.4)

While reflecting on their Year 11 decision-making, young people in the NEET group were more likely to report that their decision had been difficult (39.5 per cent) compared to young people overall (27 per cent). They were also less certain that their decision had been right, with two-fifths (39.8 per cent) stating their decision had been wrong compared to 9.3 per cent of young people overall. **Section A2.3.5**



Many young people in the NEET group valued qualifications in relation to enhancing future earnings and career opportunities. However, young people were often driven by financial motives, with just under one-half (47.8 per cent) of the NEET group stating that they left school to earn more money and around one-fifth (19.9 per cent) thought they could not afford to continue in education. **Section A2.6**

### **Comparing the Aims and Attitudes of Young People and their Parents**

A young person was more likely to make a successful post Year-11 transition when parents and their children had been in agreement about what their destination should be. When parents and their children were in agreement, only 6.3 per cent of young people entered the NEET group. In comparison, the rate was over three times as high (19.9 per cent) where there was disagreement between young people and their parents about the post Year 11 route. **Section B3.2** Among parents and young people in the NEET group, there was a general feeling of concern about the adequacy of advice given to young people at school. **Section B3.3**

## **PART B**

### **DESTINATIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE**

Over the three years following the end of compulsory schooling, the proportion of young people participating in education decreased from around three-quarters (75.7 per cent) at age 16 to a proportion of just over two-fifths (42.3) at age 18. Conversely, over the same period of time, there was a corresponding increase in the proportions of young people entering work, with or without training. When young people were surveyed for the first time, at the age of 16 (the year following the end of compulsory schooling), nine per cent of young people were in work with training and 6.6 per cent in work with no training, whereas by the age of 18 (at the time of their third interview), 26.8 per cent of young people were in work with training and 16.7 per cent were in work with no training. 8.7 per cent of young people were NEET at both 16 and 17, although this proportion increased to 14.1 per cent of young people at age 18 (at the time of their third interview). (**Section B1**)

### **Inflows: Young People who entered the NEET Group at age 17 or 18**

Among young people who were NEET at age 17, just under half (48.8 per cent), had also been NEET at age 16. One-third (33.8 per cent), had been in full-time education the previous year, 6.7 per cent had come from work with training and 10.7 per cent from work with no training.

However, in examining the likelihood of becoming NEET from each of these alternative destinations, the chance of becoming NEET at age 17 was lowest among people who had been in full-time education one year earlier and was highest amongst young people who had been in work with no training; 3.8 per cent of young people who were in full-time education at age 16 had become NEET by the age of 17, compared to 14 per cent of those in work with no training at age 16. (Section B2.1)

Among young people who were NEET at age 18 just over one-third (34.8 per cent) of the group had been NEET at age 17. 38.8 per cent had been in full-time education, 12.5 per cent were in work with training and the remaining 14 per cent had come from work with no training. (Section B2.2)

Young people who were in full-time education at ages 16 and 17 were the less likely to become NEET at age 18 compared to those who had been in work or training for two years. (Section B2.2)

### **Outflows from the NEET group**

Of those young people NEET at age 16, one year later just over half (50.7 per cent) had made a transition into either education, work or training, and the remaining 49.3 per cent remained NEET the following year. The proportions of young people who had moved from the NEET group to the three alternative destinations was approximately equal, with 31 per cent of young people moving into full-time education, 34.4 per cent of young people moving into work with training and the remaining 34.6 per cent of young people entering work with no training. Section B3.1. Among young people who were NEET at age 17, 56.2 per cent remained NEET the following year. Of those who left the NEET group, 12.1 per cent had

entered full-time education, 49.1 per cent went into work with training and the remaining 38.7 per cent entered work with no training at age 18. Section B3.2.

Young people with poor educational attainment at Year 11 were more likely to remain NEET in comparison to those with higher levels of attainment. For example, among young people who were NEET at age 16, 64.9 per cent of young people with no qualifications remained NEET at age 17 compared to 29.2 per cent of young people with five or more A\*-C GCSE passes. Similarly, a larger proportion of young people from higher socio-economic backgrounds moved out of the NEET group compared to young people whose parents were from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Among young people who were NEET at age 16, almost three-fifths (57.2 per cent) of young people from workless backgrounds were still NEET at age 17 which compares to 37.2 per cent of young people from a professional or managerial background. Sections B3.1.1 and B3.2.1.

The length of time a young person spends NEET affects their likelihood of leaving and entering alternative destinations. 44.1 per cent of young people NEET at age 17 (but not NEET at age 16) remained NEET at age 18, compared to 68.2 per cent of young people who were NEET both at ages 16 and 17. Section B3.3.

## INTRODUCTION

This report is one of three that are being prepared for the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), exploiting data from the large scale surveys of young people that have formed part of the evaluation of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) Pilots<sup>1</sup>. Other reports contain findings relating to young people with special needs and teenage mothers (Perren and Middleton, 2004); and, young people from ethnic minority backgrounds (Rennison et al., 2004). Each of these reports is in two parts: the first part contains cross-sectional analysis on young people immediately following the end of compulsory education (when they were between 16 and 17 years old), their experiences and aspirations during Years 10 and 11, their Year 11 qualifications and their current activity. Part B of each report expands the analysis, exploiting the longitudinal nature of the EMA dataset, to explore the circumstances of these groups of young people over a period of over two years following the end of compulsory education; that is, until they are 18 or 19 years old.

Each of the four subgroups of young people are currently of major concern to policy makers and have in common a lack of empirical evidence about their circumstances and experiences, largely because of their relatively small numbers in the population of young people as a whole. The EMA evaluation has provided a unique opportunity to gather such evidence. The quantitative element of the evaluation has focused on two cohorts of young people who completed compulsory education (Year 11) in the summers of 1999 and 2000 (the first two cohorts of young people who were potentially eligible for EMA). Large random samples of young people (and their parents) from each cohort were interviewed in ten of the original EMA pilot areas and 11 control areas. The first interview took place between October and April of 'Year 12', that is, between approximately three and nine months following the end of compulsory education when the young people were between 16 and 17 years of age. In total, information about more than 20,000 young people is available for analysis when the two cohorts, pilot and control areas, are combined.

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<sup>1</sup> The evaluation is being undertaken by a consortium of research organisations, led by the Centre for Research in Social Policy, and including the Institute for Fiscal Studies, the National Centre for Careers Education and Counselling and the National Centre for Social Research.

Further details about the survey(s) and its methodology can be found in earlier reports from the consortium of organisations that is responsible for the EMA evaluation, a full list of which is appended to this report. However, it should be noted here that the pilot areas (and, hence, their controls) were not chosen randomly, rather they were selected as areas of relatively high deprivation and where young people were historically less likely to remain in education after the end of compulsory schooling. All except three of the pilot and control areas are urban; the one rural pilot area and its two controls are exceptions to the 'high deprivation', 'low post-16 participation' pattern of the urban pilots areas. Nevertheless, the sample of young people is biased towards those in deprived urban areas. Therefore, although data have been weighted to be representative of all young people in the pilot and control areas and to account for differential non-response, the populations under consideration are not necessarily representative of young people in the UK as a whole, but of a relatively deprived subgroup.

### **Focus and Context of the Report**

The focus of this report is on young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). Young people in the NEET group have been the focus of government concern for some time. Despite the increases which occurred in post-16 education participation rates until 1994 and the revamping of government supported training schemes with the introduction of Modern Apprenticeships, the number of young people who are not engaged in any form of education, employment and training (NEET) has remained stubbornly persistent. The policy needs of young people who were NEET became sharply focused, following the publication the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) report 'Bridging the Gap' (SEU, 1999).

The SEU report described a number of risk characteristics that are associated with a young person becoming NEET. Of particular interest to this study are links with a family history of little or no work, poverty and school experiences. The SEU report also identified a number of subgroups of young people that face particular sets of circumstances that predispose them to becoming NEET.

The SEU infers a number of processes underlying associations between NEET group status and a poor family work history. In particular, a lack of confidence in the education and training system to achieve economic success, which in turn leads to disengagement from

school among young people, and a paucity of knowledge related to the education and training system and entry into the world of work. Poverty is identified as a factor which leads to increased pressures on young people to earn money, thus sacrificing the future benefits of education and training for short-term gains from largely unskilled work.

Further below in this introduction, the data are analysed in relation to socio-demographic and personal characteristics and NEET group status. However, the data available to this study also allow a much more detailed investigation to be undertaken into the decision making processes and levels of support received by young people in making their transitions beyond post compulsory education, which is covered in Part A of the report.

## **Data**

The analysis in Part A of the report is of data from the first interviews undertaken with both cohorts of young people who were included in the main EMA quantitative evaluation; that is, those who finished compulsory education in the summer of 1999 and 2000 and were aged 16 or 17 years old at the time of their first interview. The data include young people in both pilot and control areas, and contain, in total about 21,500 cases (unweighted). The sample size in Part B is approximately 11,700 (unweighted) which is comprised of young people who took part in all three survey interviews when they were 16, 17 and 18 years of age. The data have been weighted to be representative of all young people in pilot and control areas and to account for differential attrition of the sample between survey waves. Unlike the other two reports in this series which have focused on young people who were eligible for EMA on income grounds, this report includes all young people. This is because young people who were NEET were, by definition, not in education at the time of interview and it was felt important to explore the circumstances of all young people in this group – not simply those who might have been eligible for EMA.

In Part A of the report, the first section focuses on the attitudes and aspirations of parents of young people in the NEET group. These data were collected from parents themselves so are more reliable than proxy data collected from the young person. Parents' aspirations for their children after completing Year 11 are explored, along with the level and type of support that they gave to the young person in helping to come to a decision about what to do after Year 11 (Sections A1.2 and A1.3). A multi-nomial logistic regression model has been constructed to

explore the relationships between parental behaviour and post-16 destinations. (The results of the model are given in Annex A). In addition, Section A1.4 examines the attitudes of parents towards education, training, qualifications and money. Section A2 focuses on the aspirations of young people after Year 11 and their reasons for their choices (Section A2.2). The role of Year 11 qualification achievement and school disaffection are investigated, as well as reflections on destinations outcomes and young people's attitudes towards education, training, qualifications and money. Section A3 allows a unique insight into the extent to which young people and their parents are in agreement about their aspirations and some of their attitudes to education, work and training.

Part B of the report is in three sections. The first section examines young people's destinations at the ages of 16, 17 and 18 (Section B1). The following section considers the make-up of the NEET group at ages 17 and 18, specifically examining inflows to this group considering from which destinations young people had moved into the NEET group at ages 17 and 18 (Sections B2.1 and B2.2). This section also explores the destinations of young people at both age 16 and 17 and their subsequent likelihood of entering the NEET group at age 18 (Section B2.3). The analysis is taken a step further to investigate the combined effect of Year 11 qualifications and prior destination on the risk of becoming NEET at 18 (Section B2.4). Within the third section, the focus is on the outflow of young people from the NEET group by considering the destinations at age 17 and 18 for young people NEET the previous year (Section B3.1 and B3.2). This section explores young people's destinations at age 17 and 18 by their socio-economic classification, Year 11 qualifications, gender and level of parental involvement in Year 11 decision making. It also considers the effect of the length of time a young person has spent NEET on the likelihood of them moving to a destination of education, work or training (Section B3.3).

Young people's post-Year 11 destinations were defined using responses to a question that asked a young person to describe their main activity at the time of the interview. These responses were categorised into one of four destinations: full-time education, work with a training component, work without a training component and not in education, employment or training (NEET). For the purposes of this analysis, part-time workers were classified as working (with or without training). No distinction has been made between NEET young people who described themselves as unemployed, waiting to take up work or as economically inactive (see Ashworth et al., 2001).

## The Size of the NEET Group at age 16

**Table 1** Destinations after Year 11

Column per cent			
Destination	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Combined cohorts
Full-time education	74.1	75.0	74.5
Work with training	8.9	8.5	8.7
Work with no training	7.4	7.0	7.2
NEET	9.7	9.6	9.6

Base: Cohort 1 (N=10,675) Cohort 2 (N=10,870) Combined cohorts (N=21,545).<sup>2</sup>

In total, around three-quarters of young people described themselves as being in full-time education (74.5 per cent) at the time of the first wave interview, that is at age 16. Almost 16 per cent of young people in the sample stated they were in work of some description with 8.7 per cent in employment with a training element and 7.2 per cent in work without any training. The proportion of young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) was just under ten per cent (9.6 per cent).

### Socio-demographic Characteristics and Young People's Destinations

The data collected at age 16 confirm that young people in the NEET group were more likely to come from workless backgrounds. For example, around one-quarter (25.1 per cent) of all young people were from workless households compared to over half of young people in the NEET group (56.4 per cent) (Table 2). Around one-quarter of all young people's parents were from a professional/technical occupational background (26.9 per cent). In contrast, only 7.5 per cent of the NEET group had parents with a professional or managerial background.

<sup>2</sup> Bases vary throughout the report because of item non-response.



**Table 2      Parent's Socio-economic Status**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Socio-economic group</b>					
Professional/Managerial	31.2	18.5	18.7	7.5	26.9
Skilled non-manual	26.5	27.2	18.7	12.1	24.6
Skilled manual	12.2	17.6	17.0	11.0	12.9
Semi/unskilled manual	9.5	12.4	14.6	13.1	10.5
No work/unclassified	20.6	24.3	31.0	56.4	25.1

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,545).

Previous research has reported that the educational attainment of parents of young people within the NEET group is typically low, a finding that is confirmed by the EMA data. Young people in the NEET group were far more likely to have parents with no qualifications (50.3 per cent) than young people in any of the other destinations (Table 3). Conversely, around one-sixth (15.4 per cent) of young people in the NEET group had parents with qualifications at Level 3 or higher compared to 42.9 per cent of young people overall.

**Table 3      Parent's Highest Educational Attainment**

<b>Parent's highest educational attainment</b>	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Level 3 or higher	49.4	28.9	26.5	15.4	42.9
Level 2	18.4	24.2	22.6	18.3	19.2
Level 1 / below	6.3	9.8	8.3	7.4	6.9
No qualifications	17.9	23.0	33.3	50.3	22.5
Other	7.9	14.0	9.3	8.6	8.6

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 20,404).

Note: Educational attainment was created as follows. Level 1 refers to a maximum attainment of the equivalent of D-G CGSE, CSE, Level 1 NVQ and Foundation GNVQ. Level 2 refers to a maximum attainment of the equivalent of D-G CGSE, GCE, Level 2 NVQ and Intermediate GNVQ. Level 3 refers to a minimum attainment of A/AS levels, Level 3 NVQ and Advanced GNVQ or any higher academic, vocational or professional qualifications.

The association between housing tenure and destinations of young people has also been well documented (e.g. Payne, 2000). Young people within the NEET group were more than twice as likely to live in social sector rented accommodation in comparison to other groups of young people. Over half (56.3 per cent) of the NEET group lived in social sector housing, compared with approximately one-quarter (24.3 per cent) of young people as a whole. Only one-third (33.5 per cent) of NEET young people were from owner occupied households compared to 69.7 per cent of young people overall.

**Table 4      Tenure**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Tenure</b>					
Own / Mortgage	76.4	64.7	54.8	33.5	69.7
Social rent	18.2	29.8	38.4	56.3	24.3
Private rent	4.5	4.8	6.0	9.5	5.1
Other	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,437).

A number of other factors which are closely linked to a young person's behaviour and personal circumstances have also been shown to be associated with increased chances of a young person entering the NEET group, such as patterns of school attendance and school exclusion rates. Both Payne (2000), and the SEU (1999), demonstrated a link between truancy, school exclusion and NEET group status. This trajectory is confirmed in the analysis of the EMA data. NEET young people self-reported much higher rates of persistent truancy during Years 10 and 11 (15.4 per cent) than young people in general (3.3 per cent) and, in particular, than young people who continued their education after Year 11 (1.2 per cent) (Table 5). Conversely, less than one-third (31.6 per cent) of young people in the NEET group had never truanted compared to 64.1 per cent of young people overall. However, it is

worth noting that levels of truancy were also high among young people who had entered work without training; only 36.6 per cent of this group said that they had never played truant.

**Table 5      Truancy in Years 10 and 11**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
I played truant for weeks at a time	1.2	4.1	8.1	15.4	3.3
I played truant for days at a time	1.1	3.5	6.2	7.5	2.3
I played truant for particular days	4.2	9.9	15.2	16.2	6.7
I played truant for the odd day / lesson	21.1	30.8	33.8	29.3	23.7
I never played truant	72.4	51.7	36.6	31.6	64.1

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,238).

Young people in the NEET group (29.2 per cent) were over three times more likely to have been excluded from school than young people overall (9.2 per cent) (Table 6). This level of school exclusion among NEET young people was notably greater than amongst young people who entered work and training (19.5 per cent), suggesting that exclusions are stronger predictors of NEET group entry than truancy.

**Table 6 Exclusions from School in Years 10 and 11**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Yes	5.1	14.0	19.5	29.2	9.2
No	94.9	86.0	80.5	70.8	90.8

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,251).

Special Educational Needs (SEN) have also been found to be associated with NEET group status (Coles et al., 2002; SEU, 1999). However, the data here do not show a clear-cut relationship between SEN and NEET group status. Almost a quarter (24 per cent ) of young people in the NEET group had Special Educational Needs, compared with 17.5 per cent of young people in work without training and 18.3 per cent in work with training (Table 7).

**Table 7 Special Educational Needs**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
No special needs	88.4	81.7	82.4	75.9	86.2
Yes, statemented	4.1	6.2	6.6	10.6	5.0
Yes, but not statemented	6.3	10.0	8.5	10.4	7.2
Yes, but don't know if statemented or not	1.2	2.1	2.4	3	1.6

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 20,083).

Young people with a disability have also been reported as having an increased risk of becoming NEET. Payne (2000), for example, showed that people with a disability or health problem were about twice as likely to become NEET. ‘Bridging the Gap’ (SEU, 1999) also identified the risk of non-participation in education, employment or training as being higher for young people with a disability. However, these EMA data do not provide strong support for this finding. In the NEET group, 20 per cent of young people reported a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity compared to the population figure of 16.6 per cent (Table 8)<sup>3</sup>.

**Table 8 Long-standing Illness, Disability or Infirmity**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Yes	16.6	14.1	14.8	20.0	16.6
No	83.4	85.9	85.2	80.0	83.4

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,253).

However, young people with a limiting disability do appear more likely to have NEET group status. Over half of the young people with a disability within the NEET group stated that that their disability limited their daily activity (51 per cent), compared to 37 per cent of all disabled young people (Table 9). There was little difference in the proportions of disabled people who reported a limiting disability between the three alternative destinations.

<sup>3</sup> For a more detailed analysis of young people with special needs and disabilities see Perren and Middleton (2004).

**Table 9      Disability Limits Daily Activities**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Yes	35.6	32.6	33.6	51.0	37.0
No	64.4	67.4	66.4	49.0	63.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people with a disability who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 3,442).

Young people who have responsibilities caring for family members have also been identified as at risk of becoming NEET (Coles et al., 2002). Again, the EMA data confirmed this finding. Twice as many young people in the NEET group had caring responsibilities (12.4 per cent) compared to young people overall (5.9 per cent) (Table 10).

**Table 10      Caring Responsibilities**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Yes	5.0	5.7	7.6	12.4	5.9
No	95.0	94.3	92.4	87.6	94.1

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,251).

## **PART A      YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16 YEARS NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING**

### **A1      POST-16 DESTINATIONS AND PARENTAL CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **A1.1    Introduction**

There is only limited research evidence that examines how parents' involvement in their children's education and decision-making is associated with young people's post-16 destinations. The research evidence that does exist mostly focuses on the influence of broad socio-demographic factors, such as social class, or special groups on post-16 choices (see Introduction to this report).

In a recent review of previous research on the factors that influence young people's choices beyond compulsory schooling, Payne (2002) reported that the limited evidence available suggests that parents typically have positive attitudes towards the world of education. However, the report also warns that these findings should be weighed against recent newspaper reports which highlighted problems with school discipline that have been largely attributed to parents' refusal to co-operate with schools' policies. It seems possible that successful transitions beyond compulsory schooling may be linked to some extent with low parental aspirations, a lack of parental involvement in a young person's schooling or post-16 decision making, or with a general antipathy among some parents towards education. This section explores the relationship between parental involvement in a young person's life and the impact that this may have on post-16 decision-making.

This section divides into three parts. The first examines parental aspirations for their children. The second focuses on parental involvement in Year 11 decision-making. The third part focuses on the attitudes of parents towards education, qualifications and training. The aim is to unpack how parental ambitions for their children, their involvement in Year 11 decision-making activities and their attitudes to education, work and training may influence a young person's post-16 destination; in particular, entry into the NEET group or into work without training. First, a comparison of the attitudes, aspirations of parents and their involvement in young people's decision-making is made in relation to the post-16 routes that young people can take; full-time education, work with training, government supported



training, work without training or entry into the NEET group. Second, a multi-nomial logistic regression model has been constructed in order to explore more formally the relationships between parental behaviour and post-16 destinations. The model is particularly useful in that it helps to assess the extent to which particular factors contribute uniquely to a young person's post-16 destination. The results of the model are given in detail in Annex A.

## **A1.2 Parents' Aspirations**

Parents were asked what, during Year 11, they had wanted their child to do after finishing Year 11. Parents were also asked about their partner's aims for the young person, where a partner existed. Responses to these questions were grouped into one of three categories: full-time education, work (with or without training)<sup>4</sup> and no preference/other. The no preference/other group included responses such as the parent wanting the young person 'to do what made them happy'. Where responses were obtained from two parents, the 'highest' aspiration was chosen which involved full-time education being ranked above work/training, and work/training being ranked above no preference.

Findings from this analysis endorsed the findings of previous research - most parents reported positive attitudes towards their son or daughter remaining in full-time education. Overall, 82.6 per cent of parents had wanted their child to enter full-time post-16 education, 8.4 per cent had hoped that their son or daughter would enter work/training after completing compulsory education and nine per cent expressed no preference (Table A1.1).

Interestingly, the majority (66.4 per cent) of parents of young people who had entered the NEET group at age 16 (at the end of Year 11), had hoped that their son or daughter would continue in full-time post-16 education. In fact, the parents of young people in the NEET group were more likely to have favoured their son or daughter entering post-16 education than parents whose children entered work with training (46.9 per cent) and work without training (63.4 per cent). These positive attitudes to post-16 learning were only exceeded by parents of those young people who had actually continued in full-time education (90.6 per cent). Among parents of young people in the NEET group whose aspirations for their

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<sup>4</sup> Separating work from work-based training would have resulted in sample sizes too small for robust detailed analysis.

children were for destinations other than entering post-16 full-time education, around one-fifth (20.2 per cent) hoped that their son or daughter would enter work-based training or work without training, and 13.3 per cent stated no preference/other.

A similar story of unfulfilled aspirations was also apparent among the parents of young people who entered work without training at age 16. Nearly two thirds (63.4 per cent) had wanted their child to enter full-time post-16 education, with only around one-fifth (22.4 per cent) focusing on the work or training route and the remaining 14.2 per cent had no preference. In contrast, 38.2 per cent of parents of young people in work based training had wanted their child to follow this route, while a further 46.9 per cent of parents in this group had hoped that their son or daughter would continue in full-time education and 14.9 per cent stated no preference. Among young people who had entered post-16 education, 90.6 per cent were acting in accordance with their parents' aspirations; with a further 7.3 per cent of parents saying that they had no preference and only 2.1 per cent of parents who had wanted their son or daughter to enter work/training.

**Table A1.1 Parents' Aspirations for the Young Person**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Parents' aspirations</b>					
Full-time education	90.6	46.9	63.4	66.4	82.6
Work-based training / work	2.1	38.2	22.4	20.2	8.4
Other / no preference	7.3	14.9	14.2	13.3	9.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. Unweighted N = 20,479.

The majority of parents of young people in the NEET group who had wanted their child to enter post-16 education at the end of Year 11 thought that their child had made the wrong decision (58.5 per cent) (Table A1.2). Among parents of NEET young people who had hoped that their children would enter work or training at the end of Year 11, 41.7 per cent

thought that their son or daughter had made the wrong decision. Only about one-third (36 per cent) of parents of young people in the NEET group who had no firm aspirations for their child thought that their child had made the wrong decision.

It appears that if the young person had entered work or training their parents were less likely to think that the young person had made the wrong decision, even if parents had wanted their child to remain in education. Of those parents who had aspirations for their child to enter post-16 education, 44 per cent thought that the young person had made the wrong decision if they had entered work without training, compared with only 23 per cent of parents whose children had entered work with training. Among parents who had hoped that their son or daughter would stay in full-time learning, 3.2 per cent thought that the decision to enter post-16 education was wrong. Typically, this was attributed to the young person choosing the wrong course or place of study (results not shown in the Table).

Where parents had aspirations for their son or daughter to enter work or training, or had no defined aspirations for their children, parents were less likely to think their child had made the wrong decision if the child was in education, training or work. However, parents of young people in training were less likely to think the decision was wrong compared to parents of children in work. Around one-fifth of parents who had hoped that their children would enter work or training but who had actually entered post-16 education thought that this had been the wrong decision. Their main concerns were that the young person had chosen the wrong place to study or the wrong course (results not shown in the Table).

**Table A1.2 Parents Views of Destinations: The Wrong Decision**

	<b>Cell per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Parents' aspiration</b>					
Full-time education	3.2	23.0	44.0	58.5	10.4
Work-based training / work	20.1	5.9	19.3	41.7	19.1
Other / no preference	4.3	7.0	13.8	36.0	9.9

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. Unweighted N = 20,017.

Note: Table combines, 'definitely' and 'probably' made the wrong decision into a single category compared with 'probably' or 'definitely' made the right decision.

### **A1.3 Parents' Involvement**

Parents appear to be important influences on their children's post-16 choices. However, as many parents of young people who had ended up in the NEET and work without training groups had aspired for their children to continue in full-time education, it seems sensible to explore possible influences other than parents' aspirations. One potential reason for this mismatch between parents' aspirations and the young person's destination is the degree of involvement by parents in their children's decision making, which is explored in this section.

#### **A1.3.1 General involvement**

Parents were asked in general how involved they had been in their child's decision-making about what to do after Year 11. Very few parents considered that they had little or no involvement. Only 3.6 per cent stated they had been not involved at all, 14.1 per cent that they had been involved a little, 37.7 per cent a fair amount and 44.6 per cent a great deal (Table A1.3).

However, a pattern emerged which showed that parents of young people in the NEET group were most likely to say they had not been involved (9.8 per cent), followed by parents of children in work with no training (7.3 per cent), parents of children in work with training (4.1 per cent) and parents of children in full-time education (2.5 per cent). Conversely, the

respective proportions of those who said they had been involved a great deal was 31.9 per cent for the NEET group, 35.7 per cent for those in work with no training, 44 per cent work with training and 47.1 per cent in full-time education. Nevertheless, although young people in the NEET group experienced less parental involvement in their Year 11 decision making, their parents had not been wholly uninvolved, with around seven in ten saying that they had been involved a fair amount or a great deal.

**Table A1.3 Parents' Involvement in their Children's Decisions about What to Do After Year 11**

	Column per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
<b>Overall level of involvement</b>					
Involved a great deal	47.1	44.0	35.7	31.9	44.6
Involved a fair amount	37.7	38.1	37.4	37.3	37.7
Involved a little	12.7	13.8	19.6	21.0	14.1
Not involved at all	2.5	4.1	7.3	9.8	3.6

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. Unweighted N = 20,461.

#### **A1.3.2 Involvement in education and careers activities**

Parents' involvement in young people's school careers during Year 11 and in activities relating to career choices was also explored.

Questions about **education-oriented activities** included in the questionnaire to parents were:

- Did you or (partner) attend a school parents' evening in Year 11?
- And, apart from any parent's evening have you (or partner) spoken to any of the young person's teachers about their choices after Year 11?
- And have you spoken to the young person about any meetings or conversations that he/she had with teachers at school about his/her choices after Year 11?

- Have you (or partner) attended an open day or evening at a different school or college from the one the young person attended in Year 11, in order to find out more about the school or college or possible courses he/she could do?
- And have you (or partner) found out about different schools and colleges by any other means, for example from talking to friends, reading local newspapers or looking at school or college promotional leaflets?

Questions about **careers-related activities** included in the questionnaire to parents were:

- Have you read any documents sent to the young person by the Career's Service in connection with his/her choices after Year 11?
- Have you talked to the young person about any interviews he/she has had with the local Career's Service?
- Have you (or partner) looked for information about full or part-time jobs that the young person might do after Year 11?
- Have you (or partner) helped the young person to complete a CV or application form for a job or a training place?
- And have you done this in connection with an application for a Modern Apprenticeship, National traineeship or other form of government supported training?
- Since the start of Year 11 have you (or partner) used any contacts you may have with employers to arrange for the young person to get a job or have an interview for a job?

### ***Involvement in education activities***

For education related activities, parents were most likely to have attended a parents' evening (84.4 per cent) and/or to have talked with their child about discussions the child had with teachers about post-Year 11 choices (82.7 per cent) (Table A1.4). Parents were less likely to have obtained information on courses in other schools or colleges (48.6 per cent), or to have talked directly to teachers about their child's post-16 choices (49.4 per cent). Parents were least likely to have attended a school/college open day (33.6 per cent).

Taking account of the young person's post-Year 11 destination showed that, in virtually all aspects, the parents of young people in the NEET group were least likely to have involved in education-oriented activities, followed by the parents of young people in work without training, young people in work with training and young people in full-time education.

The multi-nomial regression analysis showed that attendance at a parents' evening in Year 11 and at an open day at another school/college were particularly strong influences on a young person's destination (see Annex A). The more likely a parent was to have attended a parents' evening, the more likely the young person was to be in education, followed by work with training, then work with no training and least likely to be in the NEET group. Table A1.5 shows that 55.9 per cent of parents of young people in the NEET group had attended a parents' evening, whereas for parents of young people in post-16 education the corresponding figure was 89.8 per cent. Similarly, only 15.5 per cent of parents in the NEET group had attended an open day, whereas almost two and a half times as many parents of young people in education had done so (37.8 per cent). In fact, the regression analysis suggests that a parent who had attended both functions might have increased the chances of their child entering education, rather than being NEET, by a factor of more than seven compared to a parent who had attended neither a parents' evening or open day (Annex A). It is not clear to what extent these actions in and of themselves increase the chances of a young person entering post-16 education. However, the results do suggest that those parents who are motivated to speak to teachers and find out about post-16 educational opportunities, in turn, motivate their children to remain in full-time learning to a much greater extent.

Young people whose parents had discussed with them any meetings between the young person and their teacher(s) were more likely to enter full-time education than any other destination. Parents of young people in post-16 education were most likely to have had this discussion (86.1 per cent), followed by young people in training (79.2 per cent), young people in work with no training (74.2 per cent) and young people in the NEET group (64.8 per cent) (Table A1.4).

Having a parent who had spoken directly to teachers about their child's post Year 11 choices showed a complex association with a young person's Year 11 destination. Parents of young people in post-16 education were most likely to have spoken to teachers (51.1 per cent), followed by parents of young people in training (45.7 per cent), and parents of young people in the NEET group (43.6 per cent) who were slightly more likely to have spoken to teachers than parents of young people in work without training (43 per cent). However, the statistical model showed that having parents who spoke directly to teachers was associated with a higher chance of the young person being in the NEET group. For example, a young person in

the NEET group was 1.67 times more likely than a young person in work with no training to have a parent who had spoken directly to a teacher (Annex A).

One possible interpretation of this apparently strange finding is that parents of young people in the NEET group might have spoken more often to teachers about their child's behaviour, given the association between non-attendance, truancy and school exclusion and subsequent non-participation in education, training or work (Payne 2000; SEU, 1999; Section A2.2).

The final education-oriented activity investigated was parents' collection of information on the range of educational provision and learning centres available in the area. Not surprisingly, parents of young people in post-16 education were most likely to have obtained such information (52.8 per cent). However, given the comparatively large numbers of parents of young people in both the NEET and work no training groups who stated that they had aspirations for their children to enter post-16 education, the numbers of these parents who had obtained additional information were quite low (31.8 per cent and 37.3 per cent, respectively). The model suggests that parents with a child in post-16 education had been, once again, more motivated to explore a wider range of post-16 educational options.



**Table A1.4 Education-Oriented Support Activities Among Parents**

% Yes	Cell per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
Parents' evening attended	89.8	78.8	72.3	55.9	84.4
Open day attended	37.8	26.0	21.7	15.5	33.6
Spoken to teachers about choices for their son / daughter after Year 11	51.1	45.7	43.0	43.6	49.4
Spoken to their son / daughter about meetings with teachers about choices	86.1	79.2	74.2	64.8	82.7
Information obtained on other schools and courses by other means	52.8	40.1	37.3	31.8	48.6

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. Unweighted N varies from cell to cell according to levels of missing data.

### ***Involvement in careers activities***

With respect to careers-oriented activities, it was apparent that parents were most likely to have discussed Careers Service interviews with their child (76 per cent) and to have read Careers Service documents (68.6 per cent). Forty per cent (39.7 per cent) had looked for information on jobs, 35 per cent had helped the young person to complete a C.V. for a job, 17.8 per cent had used their contacts to help the young person find work and ten per cent had helped complete a C.V. for a government training place.

While the extent to which parents' followed-up young people's contacts with the Careers Service was generally high, parents of young people in the NEET group were least likely to have discussed with their child the level and type of support received from the Careers Service; 67.1 per cent had discussed interviews and 56.3 per cent had read documents. This was followed by 73.8 per cent and 65.4 per cent, respectively of parents of young people who entered work without training. However, support was most likely to have been given to young people who entered training; 82.7 per cent of parents of young people in this group

had discussed careers interviews with them and 75.9 per cent had read documents. Indeed, the multi-nomial regression model showed that the level of parental support in relation to Careers Service activities appeared to have no direct influence on a young person's post-Year 11 destination, with the exception of these young people who had entered training. (Annex A).

Young people in the NEET group were more likely than other young people to have had some assistance from their parents with job seeking after leaving Year 11 (56.3 per cent) (Table A1.5). This was, presumably, partly a result of their current NEET group status, but demonstrates that the majority of parents in the NEET group were actively trying to help their child find work.

Young people in the work with no training group were most likely to have used their parents' personal contacts to help them find work (29.4 per cent), followed by young people in the work with training group (26 per cent). Conversely, young people in post-16 education were least likely to have received help, which is unsurprising given the motivation from their parents for them to remain in full-time learning (15.2 per cent). The regression model confirmed these findings: parents who used their contacts to find work for their children were more likely to have a child in work without training than in the NEET group (Annex A).

Young people who entered training were most likely to have received help from their parents in writing a C.V. for a training position (45.9 per cent). They were over twice as likely to have received such support as young people in the NEET group (17.4 per cent) or in work with no training (19.2 per cent) (Table A1.6). Not surprisingly, the model showed that having received parents' help with a C.V. increased the chances of a young person being in training, rather than the NEET group, by a factor of 3.5 (Annex A). However, it also increased the chances of a young person entering the NEET group rather than post-16 education to the same extent. Young people in the NEET group were over four times more likely to have received help with a C.V. for training (17.4 per cent) than young people in post-16 education (3.9 per cent). This is presumably because young people who had entered post-16 education had no need for a C.V. to assist them in finding work.

Receiving help with a C.V. for a job was most common for young people in work with no training (28.4 per cent) and in training (26.4 per cent). Slightly fewer (22.5 per cent) young

people in the NEET group had received help with a C.V. However, the model showed that whilst receiving help with a C.V. for a job gave an advantage to young people in work with no training relative to young people in the NEET group (Annex A), young people who had entered work with training were the least likely group to have received help writing a C.V. for a job (Table A1.5).

**Table A1.5 Careers-Oriented Support Activities Among Parents**

% Yes	Cell per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
Careers service documents read	69.7	75.9	65.4	56.3	68.6
Careers service interviews discussed	76.6	82.7	73.8	67.1	76.0
Looked for information on jobs	35.1	51.8	51.4	56.3	39.7
Helped complete C.V. for a job	38.2	15.6	34.4	28.4	35.0
Helped complete a C. V. for a government training scheme	3.9	45.9	19.2	17.4	10.0
Used contacts to find young person a job	15.2	26.0	29.4	22.5	17.8

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. Unweighted N varies from cell to cell according to levels of missing data.

To summarise, it is apparent that parents of young people in the NEET group did not provide the same levels of support in helping young people decide upon their Year 11 destinations as the parents of young people in other destinations. However, that is not to say that young people in the NEET group received no parental support at all. Over half of young people in the NEET group had parents who had attended a parents' evening, which appears to be particularly strongly associated with entry into post-16 education. Nevertheless, in general, parents who took part in Year 11 school activities were more likely to have children in post-16 education and least likely to have children in the NEET group.

Conversely, parental involvement in careers activities supported by the Careers Service appeared to have little influence on improving the chances of a young person remaining in

full-time education. Although many parents, including those of young people in post-16 education, had read Careers Service documents and discussed Careers Service interviews, it was only parents of young people who had entered work with training where parental involvement in Careers Service activities had been higher. This might suggest that parents felt that Careers Service input had a clear role to play in helping their children move into work-based training.

#### **A1.4 Parents' Attitudes towards Education**

The potential importance of parents' attitudes towards education has been well documented in the literature. This section explores the association between parent's attitudes and young people's Year 11 decision-making.

Parents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement to eight<sup>5</sup> attitude statements. These broadly cover attitudes towards knowledge of education and qualifications; the importance parents attach to education and qualifications; and the importance they attach to financial resources and constraints<sup>6</sup>.

Two attitude statements explored parents' knowledge of education and qualifications, responses to which can then be compared with young people's Year 11 destinations. Parents of young people in the NEET group were more likely than other parents both to agree (53.5 per cent) and to agree strongly (13.8 per cent) that they did not 'know enough about modern qualifications to give proper advice to their child' (Table A1.6). Overall, seven in ten parents whose children were in the NEET group felt that their knowledge about modern qualifications was inadequate, and only 21.6 per cent agreed that they were able to provide informed advice to their child. Almost six out of ten parents of young people who entered work without training also considered that their knowledge of modern qualifications limited their ability to give proper advice, as did almost five in ten parents of young people who entered work with training, and only four in ten parents whose child entered full-time education.

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<sup>5</sup> One statement is not reported here because it repeats information reported above concerning parental aspirations for the young person to stay on in full-time education.

<sup>6</sup> It is important to recall that these attitude data were collected after the young person had finished Year 11, so may not reflect attitudes during Year 11. It may be that the young people's subsequent destinations have changed parental attitudes, rather than destinations following attitudes.

The regression model shows that parents who felt they were least knowledgeable about education and qualifications were most likely to have young people in the NEET group. As parental knowledge increased, the more likely a young person was to be, in ascending order, in work, training and full-time education (Annex A).

These results help to cast some light on why the parents of young people in the NEET group and, to a slightly lesser extent, parents of young people who entered work with no training may have provided the lower levels of educationally oriented support described above, despite their aspirations for their children to enter post-16 education. Either they did not have the knowledge to support their children's decision-making, or they did not have sufficient confidence in their knowledge to offer support, which may also be connected with their own lack of formal education qualifications. As was shown in the introduction, one-half of parents of young people in the NEET group did not have any educational qualifications, and 33.3 per cent of parents of young people in work with no training. This compares to only 17.9 per cent of parents of young people in post-16 education who had no qualifications.

**Table A1.6 'I don't know enough about modern qualifications to give my son/daughter proper advice about what to do'**

	Column per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
Agree strongly	6.3	6.3	8.3	13.8	7.2
Agree	36.0	41.0	47.9	53.5	38.9
Neither agree nor disagree	12.8	12.4	11.6	11.1	12.6
Disagree	36.5	36.2	29.0	19.1	34.3
Disagree strongly	8.3	4.1	3.2	2.5	7.1

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. Unweighted N = 20,430.

Parents of young people in the NEET group were also more likely to agree that young people 'do not get enough advice from school about the options open to young people after Year 11',

although the differences were smaller (Table A1.7). In total, almost two-thirds of parents of young people in the NEET group either agreed strongly or agreed with this statement, compared with less than three-fifths of parents whose children had entered work based training, or who had entered work without training and less than half of parents whose children were in full-time education. Again, these results suggest a belief among parents that young people lack support for their decision-making, which was felt in particular, by parents of young people in the NEET group and in work with no training. They believed their children had not received good advice from school and they did not feel that they were in a position to support their children themselves because of their own lack of understanding of post-16 options. In contrast, parents of young people in post-16 education were more likely to believe that their children had been well supported at school and felt sufficiently knowledgeable to supplement this advice. The results of the model confirmed that young people whose parents disagreed with this statement were more likely to be in post-16 education (Annex A).

**Table A1.7 ‘Young people don’t get enough advice about what to do after Year 11 at school’**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Agree strongly	11.9	15.9	14.9	17.6	13.0
Agree	36.5	40.6	42.5	46.7	38.2
Neither agree nor disagree	17.9	14.0	14.5	13.7	17.0
Disagree	32.0	28.2	26.7	20.8	30.3
Disagree strongly	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.6

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding ‘parent’ who provided relevant data. Unweighted N = 20,338.

There was general agreement among parents that qualifications are needed to secure a good job. Not surprisingly, this statement was supported most strongly by parents of young people who were in full-time education – about nine in ten agreed, about half of whom agreed strongly (Table A1.8). Although eight in ten parents of young people who were in NEET

group also agreed with this statement, they were less likely to agree strongly than parents of young people who were in post-16 education. More than seven in ten parents of young people in work, with and without training, also agreed that qualifications were required. The model confirmed that parents' agreement with this statement was associated most strongly with the young person entering post-16 education rather than the NEET group (Annex A).

**Table A1.8 'Nowadays you need to have qualifications in order to get a job worth having'**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Agree strongly	45.9	26.8	27.7	32.0	41.7
Agree	43.3	45.5	47.6	48.6	44.3
Neither agree nor disagree	4.6	9.4	8.3	6.0	5.4
Disagree	5.9	17.0	15.5	12.3	8.2
Disagree strongly	0.2	1.3	0.9	1.1	0.5

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. Unweighted N = 20,445.

There were clear distinctions among parents in terms of their attitudes towards leaving school at age 16 and the impact this would have on career opportunities in later life. Not surprisingly, one-fifth of parents of young people in full-time education agreed strongly that career opportunities would be adversely affected if young people left school at 16 years, and a further 41.2 per cent agreed (Table A1.9). However, over one-fifth of parents in this group also disagreed that early school leaving would have a negative impact on future career prospects. Young people of parents in the NEET group also tended to agree, 44.4 per cent, and 11.9 per cent agreed strongly, although nearly three in ten disagreed. Disagreement with this statement was, unsurprisingly, strongest among parents whose children had actually left school at 16 and entered work; among those whose children had entered work with training, 49.5 per cent disagreed, as did 37.2 per cent of parents of young people who had entered work without training.

Given this pattern of results, it was no surprise that the model showed that having parents who disagreed with this statement increased the chances of a young person entering the work with training group rather than the NEET group. A similar pattern also emerged (although to a lesser extent) among parents of young people who had entered work without training (Annex A).

**Table A1.9 ‘Leaving school at 16 limits young people’s career opportunities later in life’**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Agree strongly	20.1	4.9	8.8	11.9	17.2
Agree	41.2	25.1	31.9	44.4	39.4
Neither agree nor disagree	15.0	16.8	19.5	14.7	15.4
Disagree	22.4	49.5	37.2	27.7	26.3
Disagree strongly	1.3	3.8	2.6	1.3	1.6

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding ‘parent’ who provided relevant data. Unweighted N = 20,402.

Not surprisingly, given their attitudes towards leaving school at age 16, parents of young people who were in work with training were highly supportive of the value of qualifications obtained from government training schemes. Among this group of parents, 12.7 per cent agreed strongly and 63.5 per cent agreed that work-based qualifications were as good as academic qualifications (Table A1.10). Strong support for this statement also came from parents of young people in work without training and among parents of young people in the NEET group, with around two thirds agreeing or strongly agreeing. Parents of young people in full-time education were most resistant to this statement, although around one-half still supported this view.

Results from the model reflect the pattern of findings shown in Table A1.10. Where parents were in agreement with the statement that the qualifications that young people obtained on



government training schemes were as valuable as those obtained at school or college, the young person was more likely to be in training than in the NEET group. In contrast, if parents disagreed, young people were more likely to be in post-16 education than in the NEET group (Annex A).

**Table A1.10 The qualifications young people can get on government training schemes are just as valuable as those you can get at school or college**

	Column per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
Agree strongly	4.9	12.7	7.9	8.1	6.1
Agree	46.4	63.5	57.9	58.9	49.9
Neither agree nor disagree	27.2	12.3	20.7	17.8	24.6
Disagree	19.6	10.5	12.6	13.7	17.7
Disagree strongly	1.9	1.0	0.9	1.5	1.7

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. Unweighted N = 19,970.

Finally, two attitude statements focused on financial support. Perhaps not surprisingly, given that many young people in the NEET group came from both workless and low income households (see Introduction to the report), support for the statement that young people should at least have a part-time job as a means of support was highest among parents of young people in the NEET group. Overall, around three-fifths of these parents agreed: 42.6 per cent agreed and a further 18 per cent agreed strongly (Table A1.11). This was followed by parents of young people in work without training (approximately one-half in agreement); parents of young people with training (just over two-thirds in agreement); and only one fifth of parents of young people in full-time education agreed.

**Table A1.11 It is important for my son / daughter to have at least a part-time job so that he / she can make a contribution to paying the household expenses**

	Column per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
Agree strongly	4.2	7.8	12.1	18.0	6.4
Agree	16.1	28.2	35.8	42.6	21.1
Neither agree nor disagree	11.8	9.9	12.0	12.3	11.7
Disagree	51.8	45.5	34.1	23.6	47.4
Disagree strongly	16.0	8.6	6.0	3.6	13.5

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. Unweighted N = 20,441.

Finally, there was strong support amongst parents of young people in all destination groups that the government should provide more financial support for parents of children who continue in full-time education or training after Year 11. This was slightly more apparent among parents of young people in the NEET groups, where 40.4 per cent agreed strongly. Again, this finding may be associated with the fact that being in the NEET group was closely associated with lower socio-economic status among parents.

**Table A1.12 ‘The government should provide more financial support for parents of children who continue in education or training after Year 11’**

	Column per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
<b>The government should provide more financial support for parents of children who continue in education or training after year 11</b>					
Agree strongly	34.6	31.6	33.9	40.4	34.8
Agree	45.8	53.1	51.2	49.4	47.2
Neither agree nor disagree	12.0	8.8	9.4	7.2	11.1
Disagree	7.2	6.1	5.1	2.8	6.5
Disagree strongly	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.4

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding ‘parent’ who provided relevant data. Unweighted N = 20,409.

In summary, parents of young people in the NEET group expressed concerns about the adequacy of their knowledge of modern qualifications to support their children’s decision-making. This apparent lack of knowledge was compounded by their perception that young people were not receiving enough advice from schools. Parents in this group also tended to agree that qualifications were necessary, although not to the extent of parents of young people in post-16 education. NEET group parents were also in general agreement that leaving school at 16 limited career opportunities, but they also believed that qualifications from government training schemes were as valuable as academic qualifications. Over one-half believed that the young person should contribute to household expenses, at least from a part-time job. Overall, it seems that this group of parents had positive views about education and qualifications, but were limited by their own knowledge of the education system.

The majority of parents of young people in work without training were also concerned about their level of knowledge of educational qualifications to provide advice and were in agreement with the statement that young people did not get enough advice at school. However, they were less concerned about these issues than parents of young people in the

NEET group. There was general agreement among parents of young people in work with training that qualifications were necessary and that government-training qualifications were as good as academic qualifications. However, there was not a great deal of support for the view that leaving school at 16 limits later life opportunities. Nearly half agreed that young people should have at least a part-time job to contribute to household expenses.

The views of parents of young people in training were similar in general to those of parents of young people in work without training. Where they differed was that parents of young people in training were slightly less likely to be concerned about their knowledge of qualifications in order to advise young people about what to do after Year 11. They were also less likely to agree that young people should contribute to household expenses. In contrast, they were somewhat more likely to agree that government-training qualifications were as good as academic qualifications.

Parents of young people in post-16 education were much more likely to feel secure in their knowledge of educational qualifications and were more likely to believe that young people received enough advice at school. They were much more likely to believe that qualifications were necessary to gain a worthwhile job and disagreed that government training qualifications were as good as academic qualifications. There was also stronger agreement among this group of parents that leaving school at 16 limited later career opportunities and they were most likely to disagree that young people should contribute towards household expenses.

### **A1.5 Summary**

Overall, the findings in this chapter support the view that many parents feel positively about:

- the value of young people participating in post-16 education;
- the need for young people to obtain educational qualifications in order to find work; and
- wanting their children to continue in education after Year 11.

However, a minority of parents wanted their child to enter work and/or training after Year 11 and similar numbers either expressed no preference or wanted their child to do some other

activity. Young people who were NEET, or in work without training, typically had parents who had wanted them to enter post-16 education.

Clearly, parents' attitudes and support play a key role in young people's decision-making, in that parents who provided support to young people across a range of decision-making and careers related activities appeared to increase the chances of a young person entering post-16 education. However it is not clear from the analysis in this section, whether parents undertaking a particular support activity in and of itself plays a direct role in helping a young person to determine their post Year 11 destination, or whether it forms part of an overall package of support given to young people. For example, attending a parents' evening or open day, provides parents with information about the young person and the range of options open to young people, which might help parents to provide better advice to young people.

What is clear is that nearly half of parents did not feel that they knew enough about the current educational qualification system to enable them to give proper advice to their children. Parents of young people who were NEET or in work without training were more likely to fall into this category than parents of young people in post-16 education or training; which is hardly surprising since many parents of young people who were NEET or in work with no training themselves had no, or low qualifications. This lack of knowledge might help to explain the generally lower levels of parental involvement in support activities, which was more evident among parents of young people in the NEET group and in work without training. Their concerns appear to be compounded by a perceived inadequacy of information available at school to help and support young people. The aspirations of parents of young people in the NEET and work with no training group may also be lower because many were from low income backgrounds, were not in work and were much more likely to think that the young person should be contributing to household income.

## **A2 INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG PEOPLE**

### **A2.1 Introduction**

A number of studies have examined the personal characteristics of young people in relation to their routes taken after leaving compulsory education. Studies of the NEET group have tended to highlight complex interplay of circumstances that seems to be associated with NEET status (Macdonald, 1997; Payne 1998 and 2000, Pearce and Hillman; 1998). NEET group status is often associated with disaffection with schooling such as truancy and exclusion; young people who have caring responsibilities which restricts their choices and, possibly, constrains the time available for learning at school, and young people who have learning and/or behavioural problems. The educational experiences of young people is also heavily influenced, in turn, by the level of parental support they receive, their family background including the educational attainment of their parents, and their socio-economic status.

The aim of this chapter is to highlight some of the factors directly relating to the young person themselves that may help explain the process of entry into the NEET group. For some this may be the outcome of a long process of disaffection or restricted opportunity. For others it may be a sudden decision arising from frustrated alternative ambitions, such as poor exam results at the end of Year 11.

As a starting point, the self-reported aims of the young people about what they had wanted to do after Year 11 are considered in relation to what they were actually doing at the time of their first survey interview, which took place during the first three to nine months following their completion of Year 11. Their aims and actual destination are also explored in relation to a number of indicators that are strongly associated with educational disaffection. The second section explores young people's sources of advice, their levels of involvement with the careers service and their feelings about their Year 11 decision-making. The third section examines other factors that may have affected their post-16 decision. Finally, a range of circumstances that may affect a young person's decision not to continue in post-16 education are explored, together with an appraisal of young people's attitudes towards education, qualifications and training.

## **A2.2 Young People's Aspirations**

This section examines the aims and aspirations that young people had during Year 11 for what they wanted to do at the end of Year 11, and focuses on comparisons between the group of young people who became NEET after completing Year 11 and other young people.

Young people were asked what they had wanted to do after completing Year 11, while they were actually in Year 11. Following the procedure adopted in Section A1, responses to these questions have been grouped into one of three categories: full-time education, work (with or without training) and no preference/other.

Overall, the majority of young people (77.8 per cent) had aimed to continue in full-time education following Year 11 (Table A2.1). A fifth (18.1 per cent) of young people said they had intended to pursue work or training and only four per cent (4.1 per cent) of young people had expressed no preference (or an 'other' aim) about their post Year 11 intention.

Relatively few young people who became NEET following Year 11 appeared to have 'drifted' into this position; only 10.5 per cent had expressed no/other preference about their post Year 11 destination. One-half (48 per cent) of young people in the NEET group had intended to enter work, and two-fifths (41.5 per cent) said they had wanted to continue full-time education. In many ways, the intentions of the NEET group were similar to the intentions of those who entered work with no training. In fact, there were no statistically significant differences between young people in these two groups in terms of their post Year 11 intentions when they were still in Year 11. The majority of young people in training (71.5 per cent) had intended entering training, although one-fifth (21.9 per cent) of young people in training had hoped to continue in education. Over nine in ten (92.6 per cent) of those who continued in full-time education had intended to do so.

**Table A2.1 Young People's Aspirations**

	Column per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
<b>Young person aim</b>					
Full-time education	92.6	21.9	39.5	41.5	77.8
Work-based training / work	4.8	71.5	52.2	48.0	18.1
Other / no preference	2.6	6.6	8.3	10.5	4.1

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,269).

There was a clear relationship between Year 11 educational achievement and post Year 11 destinations. For example, among those young people who had intended to continue in education, but entered the NEET group, 27.7 per cent had not achieved any qualifications in Year 11 (Table A2.2). This is a far higher percentage of non-achievement than observed for young people intending to enter post-16 education who did not become NEET. This evidence suggests that at least some young people who had intended to continue their education ended up in the NEET group because they felt that their Year 11 achievement was inadequate, or that they could not find post-16 courses to meet their needs.

Under-achievement at the end of Year 11, however, was not the only reason for entering the NEET group; 12.8 per cent of young people in the NEET group who had intended to continue in education obtained five or more A\*-C GCSE grades. This was somewhat lower than the 24 per cent who had entered work or training and substantially lower than the 58.3 per cent who had actually continued in education. The reasons why a proportion of high achievers had changed their mind about continuing in education and had entered the NEET group are not clear, and merit further research.

There is further evidence that for many young people in the NEET group who had intended to enter education, their Year 11 achievement would not necessarily have prevented them from staying on. For example, 25.3 per cent of young people who had entered the NEET group but had hoped to continue in education had achieved between one and four A\*-C GCSE grades,



which is similar to the figure of 26.5 per cent of young people with equivalent grades who had intended to remain in education and had done so. It may be that young people in the NEET group had not achieved at a sufficiently high level to pursue the specific course in post-16 education to which they had aspired, and that they were unwilling or unaware of other options available within post-16 education. Reasons for not continuing in education are considered further below.

Failure to achieve any GCSEs at the end of Year 11 appears more strongly associated with becoming NEET amongst young people who had intended to enter work or training (40.9 per cent had obtained no Year 11 qualifications) and, in particular, among young people who had no clear intention about what they were going to do beyond compulsory schooling (59.9 per cent with no qualifications). However, amongst those who had aimed to enter work or training, 37.1 per cent had attained D-G grades, which compares favourably to the 36 per cent who actually entered work or training and the 36.8 per cent who continued in education. Again, it is possible that young people who had intended to enter work or training but were in the NEET group, had not achieved sufficiently well to achieve what they wanted but, if so, were certainly not necessarily excluded from taking a different education, work or training option.

**Table A2.2 Post Year 11 Destinations by Intention and Year 11 Achievement**

Column per cent					
Intention	Qualification Achievement	Full-time education	Destination		NEET
			Work/training	Work: no training	
<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>None</b>	2.8	4.9	7.4	27.7
	<b>D-G</b>	12.3	24.7	26.1	34.2
	<b>1-4 A*-C</b>	26.5	45.7	42.6	25.3
	<b>5+ A*-C</b>	58.3	24.7	23.9	12.8
<b>Work/Training</b>	<b>None</b>	7.8	9.4	21.9	40.9
	<b>D-G</b>	36.8	35.7	35.8	37.1
	<b>1-4 A*-C</b>	36.8	39.9	33.0	18.1
	<b>5+ A*-C</b>	18.7	15.0	9.3	3.9
<b>Other/no preference</b>	<b>None</b>	15.7	13.1	20.2	59.9
	<b>D-G</b>	21.0	31.1	29.5	14.7
	<b>1-4 A*-C</b>	36.5	41.0	33.3	18.4
	<b>5+ A*-C</b>	26.8	14.8	17.1	6.9

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,260).

Disaffection with school is another potential reason for not continuing in education and is associated with entering the NEET group. Using self-reported exclusions from school and truancy to measure disaffection, showed that disaffection was strongly associated with a negative attitude towards post-16 education (Table A2.3).

It is particularly apparent from the analysis of the data that permanent exclusion from school had been more prevalent among young people in the NEET group, whatever their aspirations, than among young people entering other destinations. Among young people in the NEET group, 5.3 per cent of those intending to continue in education, 12.2 per cent of those intending to enter work or training and 15.3 per cent among those with other, or no clear, intentions had experienced permanent exclusion from school. Among young people intending to enter full-time education but who became NEET, less than one-third (31.8 per cent) had neither truanted nor been excluded, although another third (35.4 per cent) had only truanted on odd occasions. However, one in ten (10.9 per cent) had truanted extensively but not been excluded and a further one in ten (9.2 per cent) had both truanted extensively and been excluded. 7.5 per cent had been temporarily excluded and had truanted extensively.

A number of other interesting findings emerge from Table A2.3. First, it is apparent that disaffection, in the form of truancy and exclusion from school, did appear to be associated with young people entering the NEET group and, to a slightly lesser extent, work without training. However, even in its more severe forms, disaffection did not necessarily result in entry to the NEET group. Undoubtedly, disaffection with school and post Year 11 intentions are inter-related. However, some young people who were disaffected with compulsory education did enter post-16 education, both among those who had intended to continue anyway and among those who had intended to do something else. However, among young people who had intended to continue in education, disaffection, particularly severe disaffection, was much less likely to have occurred than among those intending to do something else.

**Table A2.3 Aims, Destinations and Disaffection with School**

Column per cent					
Intention	Exclusion/truancy	Full-time education	Destination Work/ training	Work: no training	NEET
<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Neither</b>	72.1	48.8	35.4	31.8
	<b>Not excluded – odd truancy</b>	22.0	37.5	43.3	35.4
	<b>Not excluded – severe truancy</b>	1.5	3.9	8.1	10.9
	<b>Excluded – odd truancy</b>	0.9	1.5	5.6	7.5
	<b>Excluded – severe truancy</b>	3.3	6.4	6.3	9.2
	<b>Permanently excluded</b>	0.3	2.0	1.5	5.3
<b>Work/Training</b>	<b>Neither</b>	47.7	48.7	31.3	21.9
	<b>Not excluded – odd truancy</b>	34.9	31.0	34.3	29.4
	<b>Not excluded – severe truancy</b>	4.5	5.2	10.4	13.4
	<b>Excluded – odd truancy</b>	4.0	4.5	8.1	11.6
	<b>Excluded – severe truancy</b>	7.1	8.2	11.1	11.6
	<b>Permanently excluded</b>	1.7	2.5	4.7	12.2
<b>Other/no preference</b>	<b>Neither</b>	52.0	39.0	32.8	22.3
	<b>Not excluded – odd truancy</b>	28.4	42.3	35.2	26.5
	<b>Not excluded – severe truancy</b>	4.8	3.3	9.4	20.9
	<b>Excluded – odd truancy</b>	5.1	4.9	7.8	10.7
	<b>Excluded – severe truancy</b>	7.7	7.3	8.6	4.2
	<b>Permanently excluded</b>	1.9	3.3	6.3	15.3

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,231).

The findings from Tables A2.2 and A2.3 suggest that both a lack of educational achievement in Year 11 and disaffection with school in Years 10 and 11 were strongly associated with poorer destination outcomes, i.e. entry to the NEET group or entry into work without training. However, neither poor achievement nor disaffection necessarily determines entry into the NEET group.

The relationship between intentions and outcomes can also be examined from an analysis of the reasons young people gave for wanting to continue in education according to their actual

destination (Table A2.4). The most common reason given for wanting to continue in full-time education after Year 11 was either to improve or to obtain good qualifications (50.3 per cent). Young people who had actually continued in full-time education differed from young people who changed their minds and took alternative routes in a number of ways. First, those young people who remained in education, were more likely to have wanted to get a good, or well paid, job (38.1 per cent) compared to only 25 per cent of young people in the NEET group. Secondly, around one-quarter (26 per cent) of young people who continued in education were thinking about entering further or higher education compared with only 6.6 per cent of the NEET group who had given this as a reason for wanting to continue in education. In contrast, 31 per cent of the NEET group had ambitions to train in a particular occupation through continuing in full-time education compared to 15.9 per cent of young people who actually continued in education.

**Table A2.4 Reasons for Wanting to Continue in Full-time Education**

	<b>Cell per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
To get a good or well paid job	38.1	25.7	21.2	25.0	36.5
To train in a particular occupation	15.9	32.0	29.9	31.0	17.6
To get some/better qualifications	50.7	46.3	46.1	46.7	50.3
For the opportunity to enter further/higher education	26.0	3.8	7.5	6.6	23.8

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 who stated they wanted to continue in full-time education after Year 11 (N = 16,746). Only the most frequently cited reasons are included in the table.

Young people who had not continued in full-time education gave a variety of reasons for their decision. The most common reason given was their desire to look for a job or a training place (78.6 per cent) (Table A2.5).

However, two-fifths of young people in the NEET group said that their exam results had not been good enough (40 per cent) to enable them to continue in education, which suggests that they were unaware of the range of options open to them in post-16 education. In addition,

Table A2.2 showed that among young people in the NEET group who originally had intended to continue in education, 27.7 per cent achieved no Year 11 qualifications, 34.2 per cent D-G, 25.3 per cent between one and four A\*-C and 12.8 per cent five or more GCSE grades. Of these, respectively 40.6 per cent, 50 per cent, 35 per cent and 4.5 per cent cited poor examination results as a reason for not continuing (figures not shown in Table). Therefore, it appears that, for many of these NEET young people, Year 11 qualification achievement was not sufficient to enable them to take the courses they originally wanted and that, rather than stay on to improve their grades or to explore alternative choices within post-16 education, many young people in this group had decided to look for a job. It would be interesting to explore the reasons why some young people with poorer qualifications had decided to stay on in education, whilst others had decided to leave. However, this is beyond the scope of the present study.

Perceived inadequacy of examination results was not the only factor contributing to the decision not to stay on, in particular among young people in the NEET group. Reported problems in finding a school or college place were also apparent, with around three times as many young people in the NEET group (14.5 per cent) stating they could not get a place at another school or college compared to 6.3 per cent of young people in work and five per cent of young people in training. In fact, among young people in the NEET group this was a particular concern for young people with no qualifications (22.9 per cent), who were at least twice as likely to give this reason than those with some qualifications (figures not shown in Table). Overall, almost three in ten (29 per cent) young people who did not continue in full-time education stated that they could not find a course they wanted to do.

Disaffection with school was, again, an influential factor in not continuing in education. More than one-third of young people who had not continued gave a dislike of their old school as a reason for not doing so (34.8 per cent). This dislike was particularly prevalent among young people in the NEET group (39.1 per cent). Among NEET young people who had obtained no qualifications, the percentage giving this reason rose to 51.4 per cent (figure not shown in Table).

Financial concerns were another reason given for deciding against staying on in education. Nearly half (45.2 per cent) of young people who did not continue in education said that they needed to earn more money; this finding was particularly prevalent among young people who

had entered work (51.2 per cent). One fifth (20.4 per cent) of young people said they could not find a part-time job to combine with their studies and one-fifth said they could not afford to continue with education (18.3 per cent). These two reasons were more likely to be given by young people in the NEET group or young people in work, rather than young people in training. In addition, 9.4 per cent of young people in the NEET group said that their parents could not afford for them to stay on, as did 6.3 per cent of young people in work. This reinforces the earlier findings that parents of these young people tended to have financial concerns about their children staying on (Section A1.4). Finally, caring responsibilities had prevented one-tenth (9.8 per cent) of the NEET group from staying on, compared with only two per cent of young people who had entered work with training.

**Table A2.5 Reasons for not Continuing in Full-time Education**

% Yes	Cell per cent			
	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
Exam results weren't good enough	28.0	34.2	40.0	34.3
Didn't like my old school	30.1	34.7	39.1	34.8
Couldn't get a place at another school or college	5.0	6.3	14.5	9.0
It would have been too difficult to travel to school or college	4.6	6.9	10.8	7.6
Couldn't find any courses that I really wanted to do	26.6	31.6	29.4	29.0
Needed to earn more money that I could have done	42.5	51.2	43.4	45.2
Couldn't find a suitable part-time job to combine	14.4	22.0	24.7	20.4
Could not afford to remain in education	13.2	20.9	21.0	18.3
Wanted to look for a job or training place	89.6	75.6	70.8	78.6
Found a job or training place that I wanted to do more than studying	86.8	57.9	26.9	56.0
Some of my friends were not continuing	18.7	20.6	18.2	19.1
Parents did not want me to continue in education	3.3	3.3	4.9	3.9
Parents could not afford for me to remain in education	4.4	6.3	9.4	6.8
Couldn't fit in with family caring responsibilities	2.0	2.5	9.8	5.1

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 who did not continue in full-time education after Year 11 (N = 5,487). Only the most frequently cited reasons are included in the table.

Young people who stated that work or training had been their aim following Year 11 were asked for their reasons for wanting to enter this destination (Table A2.6). Approximately one-half (48 per cent) of young people in the NEET group had intended to enter work or training after leaving school, which was driven in many cases by a need to earn money (38.9 per cent). These findings are comparable to those found among young people who both intended to, and entered, work (45.2 per cent). Slightly fewer young people who entered training (30.2 per cent) or continued in education (32.8 per cent) were motivated by financial reasons.

The two other principle reasons why young people in the NEET group had wanted to enter work/training were to learn a particular trade (22.8 per cent) and because they didn't enjoy school (22.1 per cent).

Finally, young people in the NEET group (4.2 per cent) and young people in work (3.5 per cent) were only around one-third as likely to have wanted to combine study with their intended work as young people who entered training (11.5 per cent) or young people who had continued in education (10.7 per cent).

**Table A2.6 Reasons for Wanting to Enter Work/Training**

	Column per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
To learn a particular trade	29.4	36.0	18.8	22.8	27.8
Didn't enjoy school	23.3	29.3	31.8	22.1	26.8
To start a career	5.2	4.9	5.1	7.1	5.6
To combine work and study	10.7	11.5	3.5	4.2	7.8
Needed the money	32.8	30.2	45.2	38.9	36.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 who stated they wanted to enter work or training after Year 11 (N = 3,946). Only the most frequently cited reasons are included in the table.



## **A2.3 Young People's Decision Making**

The transition from compulsory education is likely to include some degree of uncertainty for many young people. Research evidence has highlighted the importance of the support that young people receive as a significant factor in their ability to make successful transitions (Roberts, 1995; Raffe et al., 1988; Ashton et al., 1990). This section explores the levels of support that young people received in Year 11 to help with their decision-making, and assesses the value they attached to the help and support that they received.

### **A2.3.1 General sources of support and advice**

Support, in the form of advice about what to do next after compulsory education, can come from a variety of sources including family, friends, teachers, careers services, employers and training providers etc. Young people were asked from whom they had received advice about what they should do after Year 11.

It is evident that almost all young people had acquired some advice from one source or another, with just 2.9 per cent stating they had not received advice from any source (Table A2.7). However, young people in the NEET group were more than three times as likely as young people as a whole to say they had obtained no advice at all (9.6 per cent). They were also least likely to have received advice from four or more sources (25.2 per cent), with young people in work (34.5 per cent) or training (33.6 per cent) only slightly more likely to have benefited from high levels of advice. In contrast, over two-fifths of those who had continued in full-time education had received advice from four or more sources (42.5 per cent).

**Table A2.7 Number of Sources of Advice for Deciding upon Post-Year 11 Destination**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
None	1.7	3.4	5.4	9.6	2.9
One	7.6	11.7	14.1	15.0	9.2
Two	18.8	23.6	21.1	24.5	19.9
Three	29.3	27.7	24.9	25.7	28.5
Four or more	42.5	33.6	34.5	25.2	39.5

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,273).

Young people most commonly cited their parents (81.9 per cent) as a source of advice (Table A2.8). However, perhaps reflecting the level of concern felt by parents about their ability to advise their children about qualifications and courses (Section A1.4), young people in the NEET group were least likely to report that they had received advice from their parents (69 per cent). This finding complements the evidence in Section A1, which showed that parents of young people in the NEET group had been less involved in a number of support activities than parents of other young people. Moreover, Table A2.8 shows that young people continuing in full-time education were most likely to report having received advice from their parents (84.2 per cent), followed by young people in training (80.4 per cent) and young people in work (77.7 per cent). This pattern of parental advice reported by young people also follows that for various types of parental involvement and support reported by parents in Section A1.

Young people in the NEET group were not only less likely to have discussed options with their own parents than other young people, but were also least likely to have accessed other sources of advice at school, such as careers teachers or tutors, or from the Careers Service. Young people in full-time education were the group most likely to have used informal sources of advice, such as parents and siblings, as well as advice from teachers and careers teachers at school. Specific job focused sources, such as employers or training providers, were most likely to have been used by young people who entered work with training.

However, this group of young people were, again, much more likely to have discussed their options with parents or careers advisors at school.

Overall, it appears that young people in the NEET group often did receive advice, from a variety of sources, about their post-16 destination. However, they were comparatively less likely to have received advice from as wide a range of sources, particularly by comparison with young people who continued in full-time education.

**Table A2.8 Sources of Advice about What to Do after Year 11**

	<b>Cell per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Friend(s)	43.7	32.1	38.9	36.7	41.7
Parents(s)	84.2	80.4	77.7	69.0	81.9
Brother(s) and sister(s)	25.5	18.8	23.9	19.7	24.2
A careers teacher or tutor at school	73.4	64.9	62.6	54.8	70.1
Other teachers at school	51.6	30.1	35.4	30.1	46.5
Someone from the Careers Service	43.7	48.7	44.0	39.2	43.7
An employer	3.8	8.8	7.2	3.6	4.5
A training provider	1.7	13.6	4.2	4.8	3.2
Careers advisor from other organisation	0.1	0.1	0	0	0.1
Other college prospectuses / teachers	0.3	0.1	0	0	0.2
Other relatives	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5
Someone else	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.7
None of these	1.7	3.4	5.4	9.6	2.9

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,273).

### **A2.3.2 Careers Services**

At the time the data were collected for this study, Careers Services were the agencies responsible for providing impartial information, advice and guidance (IAG) to young people (subsequently the Connexions Service).

Careers Services were available at the local level to provide advice to young people both before and after completing Year 11. Young people in the NEET group were least likely to have attended a group careers session in Year 11 (44.8 per cent) or to have had an individual interview with a careers adviser in Year 11 (73.1 per cent), (Table 2.9). In contrast, young people who went into training and young people in full-time education were most likely to have taken part in group and individual careers sessions (64.8 per cent and 88.6 per cent respectively for young people in training, and 64.8 per cent and 84.4 per cent respectively for young people in full-time education).

It is impossible to identify the extent to which a lack of input from Careers Services was directly responsible for young people becoming NEET or moving into work with no training. However, over one-fifth of young people in the NEET group did not recall being invited for an individual interview and, this is much greater than the level of non-invitations reported by young people in other destination groups. This relatively high proportion of young people who said they had not been invited for a careers interview, which normally took place in schools, may be associated with the much greater school absence and exclusion rate which was reported by young people who entered the NEET group. In other words, it seems that absence from school had led to a lack of contact with other support agencies such as Careers Services.

A lack of contact with Careers Services among young people in the NEET group might also help to explain why a number of young people in this group had wanted to remain in education but felt they could not. Access to impartial advice and support might have increased the level of understanding among some of these young people about the breadth of opportunities available in post-16 education for students both with and without high levels of achievement at Year 11. Access to guidance could have helped to alleviate the sense of failure expressed by some young people about their Year 11 achievement, and perhaps have challenged their belief that they could not stay on in education because they were unable to access a suitable course.

**Table A2.9 Young People's Contact with Careers Services at School**

	<b>Cell per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Attended group careers sessions	64.8	64.8	58.0	44.8	62.4
Attended individual careers sessions:	<b>Column per cent</b>				
Attended	84.4	88.6	83.8	73.1	83.6
Invited: did not attend	4.5	4.2	4.9	5.5	4.6
Not invited: did not attend	11.1	7.3	11.3	21.4	11.8

Base: Combined cohorts of young people (N = 21,225 (group sessions) and 21,220 (individual sessions)) who were interviewed at age 16.

Of those young people who had had contact with Careers Services, 21 per cent thought that the Services had played a major part in their decision making, rising to 30.4 per cent of those who had entered work with training (Table A2.10). However, around half (50.7 per cent) thought that Careers Services had played a minor role, slightly more among those entering full-time education (52.4 per cent). Almost three in ten (28.1 per cent) thought the Careers Services had played no part at all in their decision and the figure for those in the NEET and work with training, groups was only slightly higher at approximately one third in each case.

**Table A2.10 Importance of Careers Services in Decisions about What to Do after Year 11**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Major role	20.1	30.4	18.6	23.2	21.2
Minor role	52.4	44.7	48.6	44.6	50.7
No role	27.6	24.8	32.8	32.2	28.1

Base: Combined cohorts of young people interviewed at age 16 who experienced contact with the Careers Service during Year 11 (N = 20,314).

The majority of young people in the NEET group said that they had been in contact with the Careers Services since leaving Year 11, with 48.9 per cent having attended an interview and 23 per cent a telephone interview (Table A2.11). However, in view of their situation, the apparent extent of non-contact (43.5 per cent) is of some concern. Levels of contact were slightly lower for young people in work or training and, unsurprisingly, lowest among young people in full-time education. It is not known to what extent these post-Year 11 contacts with the Careers Services for young people in non-NEET destinations occurred before or after they had moved into their destination at the time of interview.

**Table A2.11 Contact with Careers Services after Year 11**

	Cell per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
Attended individual careers service interviews after Year 11	16.0	36.0	38.3	48.9	22.5
Spoken to careers service on telephone since end of Year 11	12.0	23.3	27.2	23.0	15.1
No contact with careers service after Year 11	75.0	53.2	49.3	43.5	68.2

Base: Combined cohorts of young people (N = 21,269 (individual sessions) and (21,271 telephone sessions)) who were interviewed at age 16.

### **A2.3.3 Personal and Social Education (PSE) and work experience**

Personal and Social Education (PSE) classes, which include careers education and opportunities for work experience, are expected to offer young people information about their post-16 options and an insight into the world of work that may help them in their decision-making process.

Over four-fifths (81.9 per cent) of young people reported attending PSE classes or receiving tutorial support that covered careers topics during Year 11 (Table A2.12). However, young people in the NEET group (64.4 per cent) were notably less likely to recall having attended these sessions. Young people who continued in full-time education were most likely to have

attended careers education lessons (84.9 per cent) followed by those in training (79.4 per cent) and in work (77.4 per cent).

The majority of young people were offered work experience during Years 10 and 11 (92.7 per cent) and, among young people who were offered work experience placements, take-up was high (95.7 per cent). However, young people in the NEET group were less likely to recall the offer of a placement (80.4 per cent), and less likely to have accepted an offer of a placement (87 per cent).

The majority of young people, irrespective of their post Year 11 destination, reported that they had found their work experience useful in helping them to decide what to do after Year 11. Overall, 33.8 per cent said they had found it very useful and a further 33.8 per cent had found it fairly useful, with people who entered training (44.3 per cent) being slightly more likely than others to have found it very helpful. Only 13.8 per cent had found work experience of no help at all and 18.6 per cent that their work experience placements had not been very helpful.

Although young people in the NEET group were less likely than young people in other destinations to have experienced work experience or PSE classes that included a careers education component, the majority of NEET young people had been included in these activities. The reason for lower levels of work experience and PSE classes is not clear. The higher truancy and exclusion levels among young people in the NEET group may have played a part but further analysis, not reported here, showed that this is not the whole story. Young people who eventually achieved no qualifications at the end of Year 11 (a group over-represented among those who became NEET) also tended to have had lower levels of PSE participation and work experience.

**Table A2.12 PSE and Work Experience in Years 10 and 11**

	<b>Cell per cent</b>				
<b>% Yes</b>	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
PSE groups / tutorials that covered careers topics in Year 11	84.9	79.4	77.4	64.4	81.9
Work experience offered in Years 10 or 11	94.2	94.0	91.8	80.4	92.7
If offered, was work experience undertaken	96.8	96.4	94.1	87.0	95.7
Was work experience helpful in making post Year 11 decision	<b>Column per cent</b>				
Very helpful	32.6	44.3	30.8	35.8	33.8
Fairly helpful	34.6	28.3	33.4	31.9	33.8
Not very helpful	19.3	14.3	17.1	18.0	18.6
Not at all helpful	13.4	13.1	18.7	14.3	13.8

Base: Combined cohorts of young people (N = 21,231 (PSE), 21,277 (work experience), 19,800 (offered work experience) and 18,939 (who actually had work experience)).

#### **A2.3.4 School and educational resources**

A potential factor that might underlie disaffection with school is the availability of resources such as books and teaching staff. Young people were asked about a range of resource issues that might have affected them during Years 10 and 11 at school (listed in Table A2.13).

Interestingly, young people in the NEET group were least likely to report having encountered resource constraints, and young people in full-time education were most likely to state that they had encountered problems. Over half (50.1 per cent) of young people in the NEET group said that they had encountered none of the resource constraints they were asked about, compared with 36.2 per cent of those who entered full-time education.

The most commonly reported problems were sharing books (37.1 per cent) and class sizes of over 30 pupils (28.3 per cent) but, again, young people in the NEET group were less likely to report these problems (25 per cent and 21.7 per cent respectively). Given the government's drive to encourage Information, Computing and Technology (ICT) in the National Curriculum, it is encouraging that only 16.6 per cent of all young people reported having too few computers, and among the NEET group this figure declined to 11.1 per cent.



**Table A2.13 Resource Problems Encountered at School**

	Cell per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
Missed classes because of teacher shortages	9.3	9.8	11.0	10.3	9.6
Had to share books in GCSE classes	39.2	32.9	36.1	25.0	37.1
Not enough equipment in science classes	12.4	14.2	13.1	11.0	12.5
School did not have enough computers	17.3	16.7	16.5	11.1	16.6
All or some of the classes had more than 30 pupils	29.6	27.0	26.3	21.7	28.3
The buildings at school badly needed repairing	15.3	16.6	14.8	14.4	15.3
None of these	36.2	40.1	42.2	50.1	38.3

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,271)).

### **A2.3.5 Reflections on post-Year 11 decisions and future intentions**

Young people were asked to reflect upon how difficult or easy it had been to make their decision about what to do after leaving Year 11 and whether they thought they had made the right or wrong decision.

The majority of young people had found it easy to make their decision, with around one-quarter of young people stating that it had been very easy to make their choice (26.1 per cent), and just over one-third saying it had been fairly easy (35.1 per cent) (Table A2.14). Conversely, only 7.6 per cent of young people had found it very difficult to make a decision about what to do at the end of Year 11 and approximately one-fifth (19.4 per cent) that it had been fairly difficult. Given the situation facing young people in the NEET group at the time of their first interview, it seems sensible to hypothesise that young people in this group would have found their decision more difficult to make – approximately four in ten had intended to continue in full-time education. Indeed, this appeared to be the case, since twice as many

(15.3 per cent) young people in the NEET group had found their decision very difficult and one-quarter had found it fairly difficult.

That slightly more young people in the NEET group had found their decision easy, rather than difficult, is perhaps surprising given the outcomes. However, for some it appears to have been an easy decision because they felt they had no choice – through caring responsibilities or because they were sick or disabled (see Ashworth et al., 2001).

**Table A2.14 Post-16 Decision-Making: An Easy Decision?**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Very easy	27.2	27.6	21.1	20.1	26.1
Fairly easy	37.3	32.8	28.4	24.9	35.1
Neither easy nor difficult	11.1	11.4	14.6	15.5	11.8
Fairly difficult	18.4	19.2	23.6	24.2	19.4
Very difficult	6.0	8.9	12.3	15.3	7.6

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,238)).

Poor Year 11 examination results<sup>7</sup> appear to be one factor why young people in the NEET group had found their decision difficult. Among young people in the NEET group, the more difficult a young person had found the decision making process, the more likely they were to report that they had not continued in full-time education because of poor Year 11 examination performance. For example, 28.3 per cent of young people in the NEET group who had found it very easy to make their decision reported poor Year 11 examination results compared to 49.7 per cent of NEET young people who had found the decision very difficult (Table A2.15). It was also apparent that this was most likely to occur among NEET young people who had originally intended to continue in full-time education (not shown in the

Table). It would appear, therefore, that some young people when faced with examination failure struggled to decide what they should do. However, it is also apparent that, for some, examination failure may have made their decision easier. For example, 38.4 per cent of the NEET group who had found their decision fairly easy also had poor exam results, which suggests that they had considered some options ruled out because of their examination performance.

Among young people in work and training, the relationship between ease of decision-making and exam performance was not as clear-cut. However, it was still the case that those young people who had found their decision very easy to make were less likely to report having failed their exams in comparison to those young people who had found their decision very difficult.

**Table A2.15 Poor Year 11 Examination Results and Ease of Post-16 Decision-Making**

	Cell per cent			
	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
Very easy	24.4	23.8	28.3	25.5
Fairly easy	27.9	34.3	38.4	33.3
Neither easy nor difficult	34.7	39.7	42.1	39.3
Fairly difficult	27.9	36.5	44.2	37.1
Very difficult	30.7	41.1	49.7	42.5

Base: Combined cohorts of young people interviewed at age 16 who did not enter full-time education (N = 5,451)). Note: Table reads, among young people in work with training who found their decision easy 24.4 per cent reported that they did not continue in education because of poor Year 11 examination results.

Overall, young people felt they had made the right decision, with nine out of ten (90.6 per cent) stating that their choice had been either definitely or probably right (Table A2.16). However, young people in the NEET group were less certain, with three-fifths (60.2 per cent)

<sup>7</sup> This response was given in relation to a question asking why the young person had not continued in education after Year 11 and was asked of all young people who had not continued, irrespective of their intention to continue or not.

stating that their decision had been right, and the remaining 39.8 per cent believing that it had been wrong (compared with only 9.3 per cent of all young people who thought their decision had been wrong). Young people in full-time education and those in training were most likely to believe that their decision had been the correct one; whereas young people in work without training were likely to be less sure of their decision, although not to the same extent as young people in the NEET group.

**Table A2.16 Post-16 Decision-Making: The Right Decision?**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Definitely right	68.2	69.2	38.3	27.6	62.4
Probably right	27.6	24.1	34.6	32.6	28.2
Probably wrong	3.0	4.4	18.2	22.3	6.0
Definitely wrong	1.2	2.4	8.9	17.5	3.3

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,053)).

Young people were asked what they would like to be doing one-year after their first survey interview and their responses were analysed according to both their current destination and their intended destination during Year 11 (Table A2.17). Among young people in the NEET group who had wanted to remain in education, 46 per cent said they would like to be in full-time education one year later. However, almost half of NEET young people who had wanted to stay on had now changed their minds and hoped to enter work with training (49.4 per cent). Among NEET young people who had originally aimed to enter work or training, 84.2 per cent still hoped to take this route in the future, with only 11.7 per cent aiming for full-time education.

Among young people in training, the vast majority appeared satisfied with their choice, insofar as they still wanted to be in training 12 months later. Among young people who had originally intended to enter work/training, 92.9 per cent wished to remain in this destination.

However, 16.2 per cent of young people who had originally intended to continue in full-time education but had entered training wanted to return to full-time education.

Among young people who had intended to continue in full-time education and had done so, around nine in ten (89.3 per cent) intended to remain there in the coming year, although 8.5 per cent wanted to move into work/training.

The destinations of the small group of young people who had originally given no, or other, preference at Year 11 were as follows. Among those young people who continued in full-time education, 68.3 per cent hoped to remain in full-time learning, with 21.1 per cent of the group looking to switch to work/training and 10.7 per cent having no preference. However, entering work or training as opposed to opting for full-time education was not the ambition for many young people who had stated no/other preference at the end of Year 11.

**Table A2.17 Ambitions for One Year Later**

Column per cent within category					
Aim in Year 11	Ambition - one year-on	Destination			
		Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET
<b>Full- Time Education</b>	Work/training	89.3	16.2	42.6	46.0
	Full-time education	8.5	80.4	51.6	49.4
	Other/no preference	2.3	3.4	5.8	4.6
<b>Work / training</b>	Full-time education	49.5	3.5	10.2	11.7
	Work/training	47.1	92.9	83.2	84.2
	Other/no preference	3.4	3.6	6.6	4.1
<b>Other / no preference</b>	Full-time education	68.3	7.4	21.3	21.6
	Work/training	21.1	78.5	66.4	61.5
	Other/no preference	10.7	14.0	12.3	16.8

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,199).

## **A2.4 Young People's Attitudes towards Education and Money**

It might be expected that young people's attitudes towards education, work and training would be associated with their post Year 11 destinations. In order to explore the association between attitudes and behaviour, young people were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement to each of seven attitude statements. These broadly reflect attitudes towards the provision of advice by their school, the importance of education and qualifications, attitudes towards vocational qualifications and issues relating to financial support whilst studying.

### **A2.4.1 Attitudes to education**

First, considering the link between a young person's assessment of the careers advice they had received at school and their eventual destination, there was a somewhat mixed picture, with under two-fifths (38.5 per cent) of respondents agreeing that they didn't have enough advice at school about what to do after Year 11, and 43.7 per cent disagreeing (Table A2.18).

Young people in the NEET group were more likely than other groups of young people to agree (39.7 per cent) and to agree strongly (13.6 per cent) that they had not received enough advice whilst at school about what to do after Year 11. This finding complements the results shown in Section A2.3, where young people in the NEET group were found to be the least likely to use the Careers Services as a source of advice and support before finishing compulsory education. It also supports the findings that young people in the NEET group, in general, had fewer sources of advice and had received information from teachers and careers officers less often than other groups of young people (Section A2.3). Young people in other destinations groups were less likely to state that they had not received enough advice about post-16 options at school. Young people in full-time education were the least likely (35.8 per cent) to feel that they had received insufficient levels of advice and support at school, followed by young people in work with training (37.9 per cent) and young people who entered work without training (46.8 per cent). These views expressed by young people are also consistent with those of their parents (Section A1.4).

**Table A2.18 ‘We don’t get enough advice about what to do after Year 11 at School’**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Agree strongly	6.8	9.3	10.8	13.6	8.0
Agree	29.0	28.6	36.0	39.7	30.5
Neither agree nor disagree	18.0	19.1	16.9	15.8	17.8
Disagree	41.3	38.4	33.6	28.5	39.3
Disagree strongly	4.8	4.7	2.7	2.4	4.4

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,229)).

Young people’s attitudes towards education and qualifications were explored through responses to the following three statements:

- ‘You need to have qualifications to get a job worth having’.
- ‘Leaving school at 16 limits your career opportunities in later life’.
- ‘The more qualifications you get the more you earn in the long term’.

The majority of young people agreed that you need qualifications in order to get a good job (Table A2.19), which also endorses the view of their parents (Section A1.4). Young people who continued in full-time education were most likely to endorse this statement, with 84.8 per cent of this group agreeing or agreeing strongly. Young people in the NEET group were the next group most likely to agree (72.3 per cent). It appears that NEET group members despite, or perhaps because of, not being in employment, education or training, have realised the importance of qualifications. Young people in training (57.5 per cent) and young people in work without training (59.4 per cent) were less likely to agree that qualifications were needed in order to get a worthwhile job. It is worth noting that young people in training were more than three times as likely to disagree strongly (4.3 per cent) with this statement than were young people as a whole (1.4 per cent).

**Table A2.19 ‘You need to have qualifications in order to get a job worth having’**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Agree strongly	40.1	17.9	20.1	25.3	35.3
Agree	44.7	39.6	39.3	47.0	44.1
Neither agree nor disagree	8.0	12.7	12.1	11.2	9.0
Disagree	6.4	25.4	25.6	14.8	10.2
Disagree strongly	0.8	4.3	2.9	1.7	1.4

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,242)).

A similar pattern of results emerged in relation to young people’s attitudes towards leaving school at 16 and whether this would have a negative effect on future career opportunities. Young people in full-time education were most likely to agree with this statement (63.7 per cent), (Table A2.20). This was followed by young people in the NEET group (46.2 per cent), although a substantial minority neither agreed nor disagreed (20 per cent) and just under a third (31.3 per cent) disagreed. Conversely, young people in work with training were the most likely to disagree with this statement (58.4 per cent). Again, the views of young people on this subject were generally in agreement with those of their parents (Section A1.4).

**Table A2.20 ‘Leaving School at 16 Limits your Career Opportunities Later in Life**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Agree strongly	19.8	3.2	5.2	8.3	16.2
Agree	43.9	20.2	30.0	37.9	40.3
Neither agree nor disagree	15.6	18.1	21.7	20.0	16.7
Disagree	18.8	50.0	38.7	31.3	24.1
Disagree strongly	1.9	8.4	4.4	2.5	2.7

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,201)).



Young people in full-time education and those in the NEET group were also most likely to agree that long term earnings potential is related to the number of qualifications achieved (71.8 per cent and 70.2 per cent, respectively) (Table A2.21). This is perhaps unsurprising for young people in full-time education as they are studying towards further qualifications, but perhaps more surprising among young people in the NEET group. Around two-thirds of young people in work with training (58.3 per cent) and in work without training (61.5 per cent) also agreed that higher qualification attainment leads to better career opportunities.

However, it should be recalled that young people's views were those expressed at the time of the interview and were not necessarily consistent with the views they had held while still in school. Therefore, it is possible that young people within the NEET group had come to place greater value on qualifications once they became NEET, perhaps recognising the difficulty of their situation.

**Table A2.21 'The more qualifications you get the more you earn in the long-term'**

	Column per cent				
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training	NEET	All
Agree strongly	26.6	18.6	21.7	21.9	25.1
Agree	45.2	39.7	39.8	48.3	44.6
Neither agree nor disagree	17.7	17.5	15.4	13.4	17.1
Disagree	10.2	22.2	20.4	14.3	12.3
Disagree strongly	0.4	1.9	2.7	2.0	0.9

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,235)).

Turning to young people's views about vocational qualifications, very few young people (13.3 per cent) disagreed with the statement that the qualifications gained on government training schemes are just as valuable as qualifications obtained at school or college (Table A2.22). Unsurprisingly, an analysis of this statement in relation to young people's destinations revealed that young people in work with training were the most likely to think that qualifications gained on government training schemes are just as valuable (74.2 per

cent). Young people in full-time education were the least likely to agree (45.6 per cent) but many young people in this group also tended to be undecided in their opinion (40.5 per cent). Three-fifths of young people in the NEET group and young people in work without training supported the statement that vocational qualifications are just as good as academic qualifications (59.2 per cent and 59.3 per cent respectively).

**Table A2.22 ‘The qualifications you can get on government training schemes are just as valuable as those you can get at school or college’**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Agree strongly	3.1	15.2	5.8	7.3	4.8
Agree	42.5	59.0	53.5	51.9	45.6
Neither agree nor disagree	40.5	18.0	28.3	26.6	36.3
Disagree	13.0	7.3	12.1	12.7	12.4
Disagree strongly	1.0	0.5	0.3	1.5	0.9

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 20,900)).

#### **A2.4.2 Education and money**

Young people who were not in full-time education were asked if, when looking for a job, they were more concerned to find ‘one with training, than one that pays the best’. Overall, around half (52.1 per cent) of young people stated that they were more concerned about obtaining a job that offered training (Table 2.23). Perhaps not surprisingly, young people in training were the most likely to agree with this statement (72.5 per cent), followed by young people in the NEET group (59.5 per cent) and young people in work with no training (52 per cent).

**Table A2.23 ‘In looking for a job, I am more concerned to find one with training than one that pays the best’**

	<b>Column per cent</b>			
	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Agree strongly	17.6	11.3	12.8	8.5
Agree	54.9	40.7	46.7	43.6
Neither agree nor disagree	15.0	22.7	18.7	27.4
Disagree	11.2	23.1	20.3	19.2
Disagree strongly	1.3	2.2	1.5	1.2

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were not in full-time education who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 4,941)).

Financial issues related to learning were explored further through two attitude statements. The first was only asked of young people not in full-time education and focused on whether finance had been a barrier to continuing in full-time education. The second asked whether earning money was more important to young people rather than continuing with education, and was asked of all young people in the sample.

Financial constraints were given as a reason for discontinuing education by around one-fifth (19 per cent) of young people who were not in education (Table A2.24). Young people in work without training and those in the NEET group were slightly more likely to give this reason than young people in training. It seems that for young people not in full-time education, financial constraints may not have been a primary reason for not staying on in full-time learning, although they may have played a part.

**Table A2.24 'I couldn't afford to continue studying after Year 11**

	<b>Column per cent</b>			
	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Agree strongly	2.4	5.1	5.0	4.4
Agree	13.9	14.8	14.9	14.6
Neither agree nor disagree	9.6	12.6	13.0	12.1
Disagree	61.0	54.4	57.8	57.5
Disagree strongly	13.1	13.2	9.3	11.4

Base: Combined cohorts of young people interviewed at age 16 who were not in full-time education (N = 4,442)).

Overall, just 15 per cent of young people believed that earning money was more important than staying on in education, but almost half (47.8 per cent) of young people in the NEET group endorsed the statement, and less than a third (31.8 per cent) disagreed with it (Table A2.25). In a similar vein to the parents of young people in the NEET group who placed value on their son or daughter being able to contribute to household expenses by means of a part-time job (Section A1.4), NEET young people also appeared to consider that earning their own money was important. The next group most supportive of this statement were young people in work without training (44.8 per cent), followed by young people in training (39.1 per cent). In contrast, only 5.1 per cent of young people in full-time education agreed with the statement that earning money was more important than staying on in education.

**Table A2.25 ‘Earning money is more important to me than staying on in education’**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Full-time education</b>	<b>Work with training</b>	<b>Work with no training</b>	<b>NEET</b>	<b>All</b>
Agree strongly	0.9	12.2	16.3	14.1	4.3
Agree	4.2	26.9	28.5	33.7	10.7
Neither agree nor disagree	13.2	22.8	23.8	20.4	15.5
Disagree	58.9	33.6	28.5	28.6	51.6
Disagree strongly	22.7	4.6	3.0	3.2	17.9

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 (N = 21,249)).

In summary, from responses to these attitude statements it appears that many young people in the NEET group understood the value of qualifications in terms of enhancing career opportunities and earnings. In essence, their beliefs were very similar to young people who had remained in full-time education. However, young people in the NEET group were more likely to value vocational qualifications than young people in full-time education. Despite a belief that educational qualifications were important and the fact that the majority disagreed with the statement that they could not afford to stay on, many NEET young people also felt that earning money was more important than staying on in education.

## **A2.5 Summary**

Substantial minorities of young people in both the NEET group and in work with no training had originally intended to enter full-time education but had taken alternative routes. It appears that poor examination results and disaffection with school both contributed to the routes taken. In particular, one quarter of the NEET group who had intended to enter full-time education reported achieving no qualifications and 40 per cent of the NEET group who had not stayed in education said their examination results had not been good enough to continue. However, the NEET group was by no means an homogenous group of young people who had all ‘failed’ at school. Although the overall achievement profile of young people in the NEET group was much worse than that of young people who had entered other

destinations, 25.3 per cent of young people in the NEET group had achieved between one and four GCSE A\*-C grades, or equivalent, and 12.8 per cent had achieved five or more GCSEs.

It is notable that nearly half of the young people in the NEET group and of those in work without training who had originally intended to continue in education stated that they had wanted to continue in order to improve their qualifications, but had then changed their minds. It may be the case that their results had not been good enough to do the courses they wanted and that they were either unaware of, or had rejected, the range of alternative options available to them within post-16 education.

The majority of young people in the NEET and work without training groups had originally intended to enter work or training. The achievement profiles of these groups of young people were lower than those of their counterparts who had originally intended to enter education, and those in the NEET group had achieved less highly than those in work. The more severe forms of disaffection, particularly higher rates of school exclusions, were more prevalent among young people in the NEET group. In addition, education attainment was lowest and rates of disaffection were highest among young people who originally had no clear intention about what to do after leaving compulsory education, particularly those who had ended up in the NEET group.

Young people both in the NEET group and in work without training were often disaffected with schooling; around four in ten of the NEET group gave dislike of their old school as a reason for not having continued their education. However, these young people were often driven by financial motives, with just under one-half of the NEET group saying they had left school to earn more money, and around one-fifth that they could not afford to continue in education.

Many young people in the NEET group believed that qualifications enhance future earnings and career opportunities. In fact, their attitudes towards education were more favourable than those of young people who entered work or training. However, young people expressed positive attitudes towards qualification achievement when they were interviewed after leaving compulsory education and these may not have existed while they were in full-time education. It is perhaps more likely that their experience of being NEET has influenced their attitudes to the value of education, rather than the reverse.

Around one-half of young people in the NEET group thought that they had received insufficient advice at school about what to do after compulsory education, which was a greater proportion than among young people who had entered other destinations. Examining the levels of support young people received from teachers and Careers Services, as well as their degree of participation in careers education within PSE and work experience activities, suggests that young people in the NEET group were less likely to have benefited. Moreover, young people in the NEET group were less likely to have received support from informal sources of advice such as friends and family. However, around 60 per cent of the NEET group reported contact with Careers Services after leaving school.

When reflecting upon their Year 11 decision-making and their likely future options, young people in the NEET group had mixed views. Although the majority of the young people in the NEET group thought that they had made the right choice, almost four in ten felt that they had not made the right decision. The majority of young people in the NEET group reported that they had found their decision about what to do after completing compulsory education easy. Difficulties with making a decision among young people in the NEET group were strongly associated with poor exam results. However, since around four in ten of NEET young people who had found their post Year 11 decision easy also reported having poor examination results, the association between Year 11 achievement and perceived ease of decision making was not straightforward. Finally, when young people were asked what they would like to be doing in a year's time, only a small number mentioned returning to full-time education. Whilst the aspiration to return to full-time learning was higher among young people who, in Year 11, had originally intended to stay on than amongst those in work with no training and the NEET group, it was still less than one-half (around 40 per cent).

## **A3     COMPARING THE ASPIRATIONS AND ATTITUDES OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR PARENTS**

### **A3.1   Introduction**

The previous two chapters have focused on exploring the aspirations of both young people and their parents in relation to post-Year 11 choices, as well as identifying the sources of advice and information that both had received and valued in terms of helping young people to make decisions. In this chapter, comparisons are drawn between the two sets of findings i.e. to what extent do similarities and differences exist between young people and their parents in relation to their thinking and understanding about post-Year 11 options and outcomes.

Two sections of the questionnaire asked the same, or similar, sets of questions of young people and their parents. One of these sections concerned aspirations for the young person after leaving Year 11, whilst the second focused on attitudes towards education and training.

### **A3.2   Aspirations after Leaving Year 11**

#### **A3.2.1   The congruence of young people's and parents' aspirations**

In Chapters A1 and A2, respectively, the aspirations of parents and young people were considered separately. Post Year 11 aspirations were grouped into three categories: continuing in full-time post-16 education, starting work and/or training<sup>8</sup> and other/no opinion. Agreement, in this chapter, is taken to mean that young people and their parents share the same aspirations within these three broad groups<sup>9</sup>.

It is evident from the data that young people were more likely to make a successful post-Year 11 transition when in agreement with their parents about what their destination should be. For example, where parents and their children were in agreement, only 6.3 per cent of young people entered the NEET group (Table A3.1). In comparison, the rate was over three times higher (19.9 per cent) where there was disagreement between young people and their parents.

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<sup>8</sup> As explained in Chapter A1, it would have been desirable to separate work and training but comparatively small sample sizes led to them being combined.

<sup>9</sup> The original responses allowed much finer distinctions to be made, e.g. continuing at the same school in the 6<sup>th</sup> form, changing to another 6<sup>th</sup> form school, entering college etc. However, the definition of agreement here did not take these fine distinctions into account.



Similarly, where agreement existed between the young person and their parents, 4.9 per cent of young people entered work, compared to 14.7 per cent where disagreement existed. Conversely, 83.3 per cent of young people continued in full-time education where parents and young people were in agreement compared to only 45.5 per cent when they disagreed. Where disagreement existed, young people were also more likely to enter training (19.9 per cent) than where parents and young people agreed (5.5 per cent).

While disagreement between parents and young people appears to be a risk factor, agreement does not guarantee a positive outcome. The NEET group was composed of 52.5 per cent of young people whose parents were in agreement with their child about their post-Year 11 destinations. Parental support, as measured by agreement with the child is, of course, only one factor influencing destinations.

**Table A3.1 Parent - Young Person Agreement on Aspirations and the Young Person's Destination**

	Row per cent			
	Destination			
	NEET	Work	Training	Full-time education
Agreement	6.3	4.9	5.5	83.3
Disagreement	19.9	14.7	19.9	45.5

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. (N = 20,206).

The young person's aspirations seem to have a larger influence on destination outcomes than those of their parents. For example, where a young person aspired to continue in full-time education after Year 11 and the parents agreed with this aspiration, 90.3 per cent of this group of young people actually stayed on (Table A3.2). However when parents disagreed with the young person's aim of staying on, although the percentage of young people actually staying on was lower, it was still comparatively high at 76.6 per cent. So it is apparent that, even where parents had other aspirations for their children, the young person's aim of staying on tended to override parental ambitions.

Only 4.5 per cent of young people who had parental support to continue in full-time education entered the NEET group compared to 9.2 per cent where parents disagreed with the young person's aim of staying on.

A relatively more complex interplay of findings emerged when the young person had aspired to enter work or training. Parental support appeared to play only a minor role, if any at all, in terms of influencing movements into the NEET group; 23.8 per cent were NEET when parents and their children were in agreement, as were 25.7 per cent when there was disagreement. However, where there was parental support for the young person entering work or training, 46 per cent entered training compared to 28.6 per cent when the aspirations of the parent and the young person conflicted. Yet conflict also increased the tendency for young people to continue in education, with 25.5 per cent staying on where disagreement existed, compared to 9.1 per cent where parents agreed with the young person's aspiration. A conflict of aspiration between parents and young people appears to have led to more young people moving from training to full-time education rather than reducing the proportions in work without training or the NEET group.

Finally, amongst young people who had no defined aspiration at the end of Year 11, or had an 'other' post-Year 11 aspiration, and where parents were also indifferent, the risk of entering the NEET group was 26.1 per cent, compared to 23 per cent when parents had alternative aspirations. Where parents had alternative aspirations, the number continuing in full-time education was 49.1 per cent compared to 43 per cent where the parents and young people both had no/other aspirations.

**Table A3.2 Parent - Young Person Agreement on Aspirations and the Young Person's Aspiration and Destination**

					Row per cent
Young person's aim	Agreement	NEET	Work	Destination Training	Full-time education
Full-time education	Yes	4.5	3.3	1.8	90.3
	No	9.2	6.3	8.0	76.6
Work/training	Yes	23.8	21.1	46.0	9.1
	No	25.7	20.3	28.6	25.5
Other/ no preference	Yes	26.1	18.4	12.6	43.0
	No	23.0	13.3	14.5	49.1

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. (N = 20,206).

### **A3.2.2 Aspirations, achievement and outcomes**

In Chapters A1 and A2, Year 11 achievement was seen to be an important influence on destinations, and it is also evident from the analysis that parental agreement with the aims of the young person can influence destinations. This section explores the role of Year 11 achievement on outcomes in relation to aspirations, separately for young people who intended to stay on in education and for young people who wanted to enter work and training. Sample size limitations precluded analysis of young people with no, or 'other', aspirations.

#### ***Intending to remain in education***

Where young people had originally intended to continue in education but had failed to achieve Year 11 qualifications, parental support appeared to increase participation in post-16 learning quite dramatically by 20.4 percentage points. Forty three per cent of young people who had intended to stay on but had achieved no Year 11 qualifications actually stayed on, even though their parents disagreed with their aspirations, but 63.4 per cent of young people whose parents had agreed with their aspirations continued in education (Table A3.3). It appears that having parents who support the young person's aspiration to enter post-16 education reduces the chances of the young person entering either of the three alternative destinations compared with young people whose parents to not support their aspirations. For

example, 28.6 per cent of Year 11 non-achievers entered the NEET group when their parents supported their aspiration to stay on, compared to 43 per cent when parents wanted them to do something other than stay on.

Among young people with low Year 11 qualifications (a maximum of one or more D-G GCSE/GNVQ grades), parental support appeared to increase the draw into post-16 education by 10.1 percentage points, from 68.4 per cent (parental disagreement) to 78.5 per cent (parental agreement). However, there was no discernible impact upon the NEET group: 12.4 per cent of young people who were in the NEET group had parents who had agreed with the young person's aim of continuing their education and 10.4 per cent of the NEET group had parents who had disagreed with their decision. The draw into full-time education appeared to come from young people who had intended to enter work and training destinations.

A similar pattern of results emerged among young people with moderate Year 11 achievement (between one and four A\*-C GCSE/GNVQ grades). Participation in full-time education was 10.4 percentage points higher when parents agreed (86.7 per cent) with the young person's decision to stay on compared to when parents disagreed (76.3 per cent) with the young person's aspiration to stay on. However, the draw into full-time education appeared principally to come from young people who had intended to enter training.

Among Year 11 high achievers (five or more A\*-C GCSE/GNVQ grades), the apparent increase in post-16 education participation was 8.2 percentage points, from 88.3 per cent (parents disagreed) to 96.5 per cent (parents agreed). Interestingly, about half the draw into full-time education, which can be linked to parental support for a young person's decision, appeared to come from young people in the NEET group. Only one per cent of high achieving young people whose parents agreed with their aspiration to enter post-16 education entered the NEET group compared to 4.8 per cent of comparable young people whose parents disagreed with their aspiration to stay on.

In summary, it appears that parental agreement with the young person's aim of continuing education is particularly effective in encouraging those with no or low achievement to continue, but also encourages even moderate and high achievers to remain in full-time learning. However, among low and moderate achievers parental agreement is more likely to influence young people into education who would otherwise have gone into work or training,

and had little impact on reducing the size of the NEET group. Among young people who had achieved nothing at Year 11 and those who were high achievers parental agreement appeared to encourage young people from the NEET group into post-16 education.

**Table A3.3 Young People Aspiring to Stay on after Year 11: Parent - Young Person Agreement on Aims, Year 11 Achievement and the Young Person's Destination**

Row per cent					
Year 11 GCSE/GNVQ achievement	Agreement	Destination			
		NEET	Work	Training	Full-time education
No qualifications	Yes	28.6	6.3	1.6	63.4
	No	43.0	7.0	7.0	43.0
D-G GCSE only	Yes	12.4	5.7	3.4	78.5
	No	10.4	12.0	9.2	68.4
1-4 A*-C	Yes	4.7	5.5	3.1	86.7
	No	5.7	6.9	11.2	76.3
5+ A*-C	Yes	1.0	1.6	0.9	96.5
	No	4.8	2.3	4.5	88.3

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. (N = 15,765).

Parents who disagreed with their children about entering work or training at the end of Year 11 did seem to influence their children to opt for post-16 education, in particular among moderate and high achievers. These groups of young people were nearly four times more likely to continue in education if their parents disagreed with their aspiration to enter work/training (see Table A3.4). However, in most cases the draw appears to come from training to education. In general, it appears that the size of the NEET group was not dramatically altered by the aspirations of young people to enter work or training and the willingness of their parents to endorse that decision. Only among moderate achievers did

parental agreement appear to reduce the size of the NEET group, to 11.2 per cent from 17 per cent (Table A3.4).

**Table A3.4 Young People Aspiring to Work or Training after Year 11: Parent – Young Person Agreement on Aims, Year 11 Achievement and the Young Person’s Destination**

		Row per cent			
Year 11 GCSE/GNVQ achievement	Agreement	Destination			
		NEET	Work	Training	Full-time education
No qualifications	Yes	48.7	24.0	22.1	5.2
	No	54.3	23.4	13.9	8.4
D-G GCSE only	Yes	25.6	19.0	43.8	11.5
	No	25.0	20.7	29.1	25.1
1-4 A*-C	Yes	11.2	22.0	58.8	8.0
	No	17.0	19.9	33.9	29.2
5+ A*-C	Yes	6.3	20.9	61.4	11.4
	No	10.6	15.9	33.1	40.3

Base: Combined cohorts of young people interviewed at age 16 who aspired to enter work or training with a responding ‘parent’ who provided relevant data. (N=3,644).

### **A3.3 Attitudes to Education, Training and Work**

This section explores the extent to which a consensus existed between the attitudes of young people and their parents towards advice and guidance, education, training and work. Four attitude statements were asked of both young people and their parents.

#### **A3.3.1 Quality of Year 11 advice**

The first statement asked young people and their parents whether they felt that the young person had received sufficient advice at school about what to do after Year 11. Both young people (53.1 per cent) in the NEET group and their parents (64.3 per cent) were most likely

to have felt that advice about what to do after Year 11 had been inadequate (Table A3.5). Moreover, regardless of the destination of the young person, parents were more likely to support the view that the advice given to their son or daughter at school had been inadequate.

In general, where young people agreed that the advice given to them at school had been inadequate, their parents also agreed. However, parents of young people in the NEET group were more likely than parents of other groups of young people to agree with their child (71.5 per cent). In contrast, parents of young people continuing in education were less likely to support their child's acceptance of this viewpoint (60.5 per cent).

Conversely, when young people in the NEET group refuted the view that advice about what to do after leaving school was inadequate, their parents often disagreed with their point of view (55.1 per cent). Only 31.6 per cent of NEET group parents supported the young person's view that advice at school was adequate. In contrast, parents of young people who continued in education were least likely to disagree with the young person's belief that advice at school was adequate (39.6 per cent) and most likely to agree with the young person's belief (41.9 per cent).

These results suggest that among parents and young people in the NEET group there was a general feeling of concern about the adequacy of advice given to young people at school. Even where young people felt that the advice given had been sufficient, their parents often disagreed. By contrast, among young people who continued in education, there was a much higher level of satisfaction with the level of advice and support given to young people at school. In addition, parents of young people who had remained in education were less likely to disagree with their son or daughter who thought the advice given at school had been adequate.

**Table A3.5 ‘The advice given about what to do after Year 11 is inadequate’: Parent - Young Person Responses**

		Row per cent			Column per cent
	Young person’s agreement	Parent’s agreement			All
		Strongly/ agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly/ disagree	
NEET	Strongly/agree	71.5	11.8	16.7	53.1
	Neither	58.3	21.2	20.5	15.9
	Strongly/disagree	55.1	13.3	31.6	31.0
	All	64.3	13.8	21.9	
Work: no training	Strongly/agree	68.5	12.5	19.0	47.0
	Neither	47.2	23.6	29.1	16.8
	Strongly/disagree	47.6	13.1	39.2	36.2
	All	57.4	14.6	28.0	
Work with training	Strongly/agree	68.1	13.1	18.7	37.8
	Neither	56.1	18.3	25.6	19.2
	Strongly/disagree	46.2	13.0	40.8	43.0
	All	56.4	14.1	29.5	
Full-time education	Strongly/agree	60.5	15.2	24.3	35.9
	Neither	46.7	21.8	31.4	18.0
	Strongly/disagree	39.6	18.5	41.9	46.1
	All	48.4	17.9	33.7	

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding ‘parent’ who provided relevant data. (N =20,040).

### **A3.3.2 The importance of qualifications**

The second attitude statement was ‘nowadays you need qualifications to get a good job’. In general, most parents and young people agreed with this view, although parents were more likely to agree with this statement than were their children (Table A3.6). Disagreement with this statement was more evident among those young people in work or training than among those in other destinations.

In general, where young people supported the view that qualifications were important in getting a good job, their parents were also in agreement; with around eight in ten parents



agreeing, rising to nine in ten of those parents of young people who continued in education. Where young people refuted the view that qualifications were important, around six in ten parents of young people in work/training and young people in the NEET group disagreed with this position and eight in ten of parents of young people who had continued in education.

**Table A3.6 ‘Nowadays you need qualifications to get a job worth having’: Parent - Young Person Responses**

		Row per cent	Column per cent		
	Young person's agreement	Parent's agreement			
		Strongly/ agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly/ disagree	All
NEET	Strongly/agree	85.2	5.0	9.8	72.2
	Neither	75.6	10.2	14.2	11.4
	Strongly/disagree	64.4	7.1	28.5	16.5
	All	80.7	6.0	13.4	
Work: no training	Strongly/agree	83.3	6.2	10.5	59.4
	Neither	67.9	15.8	16.3	12.1
	Strongly/disagree	62.0	9.5	28.5	28.4
	All	75.4	8.3	16.3	
Work with training	Strongly/agree	79.3	7.2	13.5	57.6
	Neither	66.1	13.1	20.8	12.7
	Strongly/disagree	61.5	12.0	26.5	29.7
	All	72.4	9.4	18.3	
Full-time education	Strongly/agree	90.7	4.1	5.2	84.7
	Neither	80.2	8.1	11.7	8.0
	Strongly/disagree	82.0	6.0	12.1	7.2
	All	89.2	4.6	6.2	

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding ‘parent’ who provided relevant data. (N =20,150).

### **A3.3.3 The value of government training qualifications**

When young people and their parents were asked if qualifications obtained on government training schemes (GTS) were as good as those obtained from schools and colleges, parents were more likely than their children to agree with this statement. However, young people who had continued in education and their parents were least likely to agree and substantial minorities of these young people and their parents neither agree nor disagreed. Not surprisingly, young people in training and their parents were most supportive of the viewpoint that GTS qualifications were of equivalent value to school and college qualifications.

In general, where young people agreed that GTS and school/college qualifications were equivalent, their parents also tended to agree (including the NEET group). However, where young people disagreed that qualifications were equally valuable their parents often agreed, with the exception of young people who had continued in education; 37.7 per cent of parents of young people who disagreed with the statement agreed with their children's position and 36.6 per cent of parents disagreed.

**Table A3.7 ‘Government training qualifications are just as valuable as those from school or college’: Parent - Young Person Responses**

		Row per cent		Column per cent	
	Young person’s agreement	Parent’s agreement			
		Strongly/ agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly/ disagree	All
NEET	Strongly/agree	70.7	15.6	13.7	58.9
	Neither	61.5	25.1	13.3	27.0
	Strongly/disagree	61.9	13.3	24.8	14.1
	All	67.0	17.8	15.2	
Work: no training	Strongly/agree	72.3	15.1	12.6	59.2
	Neither	56.3	30.5	13.2	28.3
	Strongly/disagree	56.3	25.7	18.0	12.5
	All	65.8	20.8	13.5	
Work with training	Strongly/agree	80.5	10.0	9.5	74.3
	Neither	64.9	18.9	16.2	18.1
	Strongly/disagree	61.9	16.5	21.6	7.6
	All	76.3	12.1	11.6	
Full-time education	Strongly/agree	59.7	23.4	16.9	45.7
	Neither	47.0	32.2	20.8	40.3
	Strongly/disagree	36.6	25.7	37.7	13.9
	All	51.3	27.3	21.4	

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding ‘parent’ who provided relevant data. (N =19,403).

#### **A3.3.4 Leaving school and career opportunities**

The final statement explored attitudes towards leaving school at 16 and the negative impact this would have on later career opportunities. Findings presented in Chapters A1 and A2 indicated that, in general, young people who had remained in education beyond 16 and their parents shared a negative view about early school leaving. Young people in the NEET group and their parents also tended towards this view, in contrast to parents and young people who had entered work or training. These findings are confirmed below (Table A3.8). However, young people in the NEET group (46 per cent) were found to be much less supportive of the viewpoint that early school leaving would have a negative impact on career development than

were young people who were in full-time education (63.7 per cent). Amongst both the NEET and full-time education groups, when young people were supportive of the statement, their parents also tended to agree that leaving school at 16 would limit career development (around two thirds). However, when young people refuted the statement nearly half of their parents disagreed with the young person's point of view.

Young people in training who denied that leaving school at 16 limited career opportunities tended to be supported by their parents (62 per cent), as were, to a lesser extent, young people in work (50.6 per cent). However, when young people in training thought that leaving school at 16 was detrimental to career development, a substantial minority of their parents (38.9 per cent) disagreed with them.

**Table A3.8 ‘Leaving school at 16 limits later carer opportunities’: Parent - Young Person Responses**

		Row per cent	Column per cent		
	Young person's agreement	Parent's agreement			
		Strongly/ agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly/ disagree	All
NEET	Strongly/agree	65.2	11.6	23.3	46.0
	Neither	50.8	20.1	29.2	20.0
	Strongly/disagree	48.0	15.8	36.2	34.0
	All	56.4	14.7	28.9	
Work: no training	Strongly/agree	54.3	18.6	27.1	35.3
	Neither	39.3	22.6	38.1	21.8
	Strongly/disagree	30.4	19.0	50.6	43.0
	All	40.8	19.6	39.6	
Work with training	Strongly/agree	47.1	14.0	38.9	23.5
	Neither	30.9	26.1	42.9	18.0
	Strongly/disagree	22.9	15.1	62.0	58.4
	All	30.0	16.8	53.1	
Full-time education	Strongly/agree	67.7	13.7	18.6	63.7
	Neither	53.7	19.0	27.3	15.5
	Strongly/disagree	47.2	15.9	36.9	20.8
	All	61.3	15.0	23.7	

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at age 16 with a responding ‘parent’ who provided relevant data. (N =20,080).

#### **A3.4 Summary**

Where young people and their parents had shared aspirations, young people had usually achieved their aspirations in terms of post-Year 11 activity. This was particularly the case among young people and parents who had opted for the post-16 education route, even when young people had achieved no, or low, Year 11 qualifications. Among young people who aspired to enter work or training at the end of Year 11, parental agreement also appeared influential in moving young people in this direction, particularly amongst those with better Year 11 qualifications. However, if parents disagreed with their children’s aspiration, parents

appeared relatively influential in persuading young people to enter full-time education rather than work or training.

Two attitude statements explored the views of young people and their parents towards career opportunities, one through the impact of leaving school at 16, the other through the need for good qualifications. In general young people and, in particular, their parents agreed that qualifications were needed to get a good job. However, both parents and young people in work or training were not generally as supportive. Where young people believed in the value of qualifications, their parents endorsed this view. However, where young people disagreed with the link between a good job and the need to obtain qualifications, parents often disagreed with their position, particularly where young people had continued their education. Both young people who were in post-16 education and their parents were more likely to believe that early school leaving would have a negative impact on career development.

## **A4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **A4.1 Overview**

The aim of this part of the report was to identify some of the factors that might be expected to influence young people's routes after leaving compulsory education, with a particular focus on the group of young people who become NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) after Year 11. From the perspective of the young person these may include truancy, exclusion from school, caring responsibilities, and special educational needs, ill health and disability. What is less clear from previous research, which this report has aimed to clarify, is how the inter-relationship between the aspirations and attitudes of young people and their parents and the level of support and advice given during Year 11 impacts upon post-11 destinations.

### **A4.2 Aspirations, Disaffection and Achievement**

It is clear from the analysis that entry into the NEET group does not arise solely from indifference on the part of either parents or young people about their future or from a misunderstanding about the value of education and/or qualifications. Within the NEET group, only around one in ten of both parents and young people appeared indifferent to the young person's next step after leaving school. Consequently, the vast majority of NEET young people had intended to enter education, work or training, which were aims typically endorsed by their parents. Around two-thirds of NEET group parents had wanted their child to continue their education, as originally had one-third of the young people themselves. If this was the case, why then did so many young people end up NEET?

Addressing this question is complex and the research discussed here offers only partial answers. However, first it is important to emphasise that young people in the NEET group were not an homogeneous group i.e. they came from a range of backgrounds and had a range of experiences. Further, whilst there were risk factors that seemed to predispose young people to becoming NEET, not all young people exposed to these risk factors had ended up in the NEET group.

Low achievement was common among young people in the NEET group, in particular among young people who had intended to enter work or training or had no aspirations. Additionally, four in ten of NEET young people said that their exam results had not been good enough for them to continue in education and the same proportion, around four in ten, said that they did not want to continue in education because they had not liked their old school. This finding could be directly related to the increased levels of exclusion from school and truancy during Year 11 which were observed among NEET young people; particularly among those who had intended to enter work or training. However, disaffection and low achievement were not necessarily barriers to continuing education. For example, almost three per cent of young people in full-time education had obtained no Year 11 qualifications. Young people remained in full-time education when their parents supported their aspiration, even if the young person had obtained no Year 11 qualifications.

#### **A4.3 Attitudes towards Education and Qualifications**

Many young people in the NEET group and their parents had positive attitudes towards education. Nearly all parents (around nine in ten) of young people in the NEET group recognised the value of qualifications in obtaining a decent job. This value was shared with around eight in ten young people. Nearly as many young people in the NEET group and their parents expressed this attitude as their counterparts in full-time education. Similarly, over one-half of young people and their parents in the NEET group recognised that leaving school at 16 could be detrimental to their future career opportunities. Around two-thirds of young people thought that more qualifications would lead to better long-term earnings. Not surprisingly, in all these cases young people (and their parents) who had continued in full-time education were most likely to have expressed favourable attitudes, but they were closely followed by young people (and parents) in the NEET group, as opposed to young people in work or training.

It is perhaps somewhat surprising, given their generally positive attitudes towards education and qualifications, that more young people in the NEET group wanted to enter work or training (48 per cent) than wanted to enter education (41.5 per cent). Indeed, it seems that a large minority of young people in the NEET group believed that earning money was more important than staying on in education. Nearly one-half of NEET young people who did not stay on said that a reason for not continuing education was their need to earn more money.



However, over one-half of NEET young people did say that, in looking for a job, training was more important than money, and a similar number agreed that vocational qualifications were as good as academic qualifications. There was a mixed picture with regard to their views about the levels of support needed to remain in education. While less than one-quarter of young people said they could not afford to stay on, the majority of parents in the NEET group (around 60 per cent) did think that their child should have at least a part-time job to contribute to household expenses.

Finally, over half of young people in the NEET group and their parents felt that the advice that the young person had received at school about what to do after Year 11 was inadequate. In addition, over two-thirds of parents of young people in the NEET group felt that they were not well placed to provide advice to their children. Perhaps this is not surprising, given that 50.3 per cent of parents of NEET group young people had no qualifications. However, 42.3 per cent of parents of young people who continued in education felt similarly unable to provide adequate support.

#### **A4.4 Advice and Support**

Young people in the NEET group were far less likely to report having received both formal and informal guidance about what to do after leaving school. Parents had provided a source of guidance and support for most young people, but young people in the NEET group were less likely to have received parental advice. While two-thirds of NEET young people had received parental advice, many parents had felt ill equipped to help. In addition, around one in ten young people in the NEET group reported receiving no advice at all when deciding what to do after leaving Year 11. NEET young people also received advice from a smaller number of sources. In particular, they reported lower levels of help from careers teachers at school and also, along with young people in work and training, from other teachers.

While the majority of young people in the NEET group had received formal guidance from Careers Services, primarily in the form of one-to-one interviews, they were also less likely than other groups of young people to have attended one-to-one sessions, both because of a failure to attend an interview and, more often, an apparent failure to be invited. Similarly, NEET young people were only two-thirds as likely to report having attended a group careers session in comparison with young people who had continued their education. However,

around six in ten young people in the NEET group had contact with the Careers Service after leaving school.

Figures on reported receipt of guidance seem to suggest that young people who entered the NEET group had received less guidance and support during year 11. This may be linked to higher truancy and exclusion rates among young people in the NEET group which may have resulted in these young people not being in school so that they could access the guidance that was available. However, this must sit alongside the fact that the majority of young people in the NEET group did receive formal guidance from Careers Services, although many young people in the NEET group stated that the advice they had received had little impact on their decision-making.

The role of parental support in young people's Year 11 decision-making was explored through parents' involvement in a number of activities, including attendance at parents' evenings and open days at other schools and colleges, and parents' involvement was strongly and positively associated with a young person continuing in education. Conversely, parents who did not participate in these activities were much more likely to have children who became NEET. It is possible that these activities enabled parents to be aware of the choices open to young people. Similarly, if parents were more involved in careers activities, this appeared to help the young person move into education, work or training rather than to enter the NEET group.

#### **A4.5 Young People's Reflections on their Destinations**

The majority of young people in the NEET group (around six in ten) thought that they had probably made the right decision at the end of Year 11. This view was often not supported by their parents. Most parents of NEET young people who had hoped that their son or daughter would continue in education thought they had made the wrong decision (around six in ten), as did four in ten parents who had wanted their child to enter work or training. Just under one-half of the NEET group of young people had found their decision easy. However, poor examination results made the decision easy for some young people who had hoped to continue in education, since they felt they were unable to do so. By contrast, other young people had found that poor examination results had made the decision not to stay on in education difficult, presumably because they had to review their aims. However, re-entering

education in the next academic year was an option considered by only a minority of young people in the NEET group.

#### **A4.6 Conclusions**

This study confirms previous research findings in that young people in the NEET group were more likely to have been excluded from school, have tranted, have special educational needs, a limiting disability and/or to have caring responsibilities. However, whilst many young people in the NEET group had such characteristics and experiences, by no means all of the NEET group did so.

Young people typically were in the NEET group by accident rather than design. Few reported that they had no intention of entering education, training or work at the end of Year 11. Their length of stay in the NEET group will be explored in Part B of this report which involves a longitudinal analysis of the data.

Routes into the NEET group and the reasons for being there appeared to vary between different groups of young people. It is clear that some young people had wanted to continue in education but had been unwilling, or had felt unable, to do so because of their Year 11 examination results. However, around half of young people in the NEET group had wanted to go into work or training. Earning money appeared to be a principle reason for wanting to enter the labour market, but many had also been disaffected with school. The reasons why this group of young people had not entered education, work or training after leaving school could be linked to their more limited access to guidance and support which might have assisted them in their transitions.

Parents were important influences on their children's destination outcomes in terms of providing advice and taking an active role in supporting the young person in their transition. However, not all parents perceived themselves as being able to give good advice to their children. Young people in the NEET group were more disadvantaged in terms of parental support and were also less likely to have been supported by teachers at school and by Careers Services. It is not clear to what extent this reflects an inability or unwillingness on the part of the young person to engage with formal sources of information, advice and guidance.

Overall, in its response to tackling the problem of NEET young people, it is clear that the government has identified many of the policy problems. For example, tackling low achievement, addressing disaffection with schooling through changing the National Curriculum, reshaping formal IAG provision through Connexions and the provision of Education Maintenance Allowances to address financial constraints to learning. However, the diversity of this group of young people needs to be recognised so that policies can be tailored to particular needs, rather than adopting a ‘one size fits all’ approach

## **PART B      YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16 TO 18 YEARS NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (NEET)**

The second part of this report explores how young people moved between education, training, employment and the NEET group between the ages of 16 and 18 years. Data are drawn from the first three interviews with all young people in the EMA sample, undertaken when they were 16, 17 and 18 years old, and combines information from both cohorts. It also includes data collected from parents themselves in the first year of interviews when the young person was 16. The focus of the second part is on changes to the NEET group population over a period of approximately two years following the end of compulsory schooling. Data have been weighted to be representative of all young people in the pilot and control areas and to take account of differential attrition rates from the sample between survey interviews.

Part B of the report is in three sections. In the first section young people's destinations are examined at the ages of 16, 17 and 18 (Section B1). Section B2 considers the make-up of the NEET group at ages 17 and 18, specifically examining inflows to this group by looking at the destinations from which young people had moved into the NEET group at ages 17 and 18 (Sections B2.1 and B2.2). The third section focuses on the outflow of young people from the NEET group by considering the destinations at age 17 and 18 for young people who had been NEET the previous year (Section B3.1 and B3.2). It also considers the destinations of young people at age 17 and 18 in relation to their socio-economic classification, Year 11 qualifications, gender and level of parental involvement in Year 11 decision making.

### **B1      DESTINATIONS AT AGE 16, 17 AND 18**

At age 16, immediately after the end of compulsory education, the proportion of young people in full-time education was around three-quarters (75.7 per cent). 15.6 per cent of young people stated that they were in work, with nine per cent in work with a training element and 6.6 per cent in work with no training. The proportion of young people who were not in education, employment or training whose destination can be classified as NEET, was 8.7 per cent (Table B1.1).

**Table B1.1 Destinations at age 16, 17 and 18**

<b>Destination</b>	<b>Column per cent</b>		
	<b>16 years</b>	<b>17 years</b>	<b>18 years</b>
Full-time education	75.7	66.1	42.3
Work with training	9.0	14.8	26.8
Work without training	6.6	10.3	16.7
NEET	8.7	8.7	14.1
Unweighted N	11,631.0	11,647.0	11,573.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who took part in interviews at age 16, 17 and 18. Pilot and attrition weights. Unweighted Ns vary because of item non-response.

At the age of 17, the proportion of young people in full-time education had decreased by 9.1 percentage points to around two-thirds (66.1 per cent). Conversely, the proportion in work had grown to around a quarter of all young people (25.1 per cent) with 14.8 per cent in work with training and 10.3 per cent in work with no training. The proportion of young people who were NEET had not changed at 8.7 per cent.

The proportion of young people in full-time education at age 18 was just over two-fifths (42.3 per cent), a decrease from the previous year of 23.8 percentage points. The proportion in work or training was higher at 43.5 per cent. This represents an increase of 12 percentage points from the previous year to 26.8 per cent for the proportion of young people in work with training, and an increase of 6.4 percentage points to 16.7 per cent in work with no training. The proportion of young people in the NEET group had also grown by 5.4 percentage points to 14.1 per cent.

With the significant decrease in the proportion of young people participating in full-time education and the increase in the size of the NEET group once young people had reached 18, it is likely that at least some of the increase in the NEET group was made up of young people who had been previously in full-time education. Findings from the EMA Year 3 quantitative

report<sup>10</sup> suggested that much of the increase in the size of the NEET group at age 18 could be made up of young people who had completed two years in full-time education but had completed their studies by the time of the third wave interview since the interviews with young people (at age 18) began relatively soon after young people had completed their courses. This may have given insufficient time for many young people to have made their transition from post-16 education<sup>11</sup>. Further light is thrown on this in the following sections through an exploration of the destinations from which young people entered the NEET group, and to which destinations they moved on leaving the NEET group.

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<sup>10</sup> Middleton et al., (2004)

<sup>11</sup> See Middleton et al., 2004 for further analysis of this issue.

## **B2 INFLOWS: YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ENTERED THE NEET GROUP AT AGE 17 OR 18**

This section considers young people who entered the NEET group at either age 17 or 18 years with the aim of highlighting the main routes into the NEET group among young people who did not enter the NEET group immediately following compulsory education. It explores, first, the proportion of the NEET group who were in each destination in the year before they entered the NEET group and then examines the chances of young person entering the NEET group from each of the three destinations. Different combinations of activity at age 16 and 17 and the likelihood of young people entering the NEET group at age 18 are also described. Finally, this section considers the combined effect of Year 11 qualifications and prior destination on NEET group entry at ages 17 and 18.

### **B2.1 Young People who entered the NEET Group at 17**

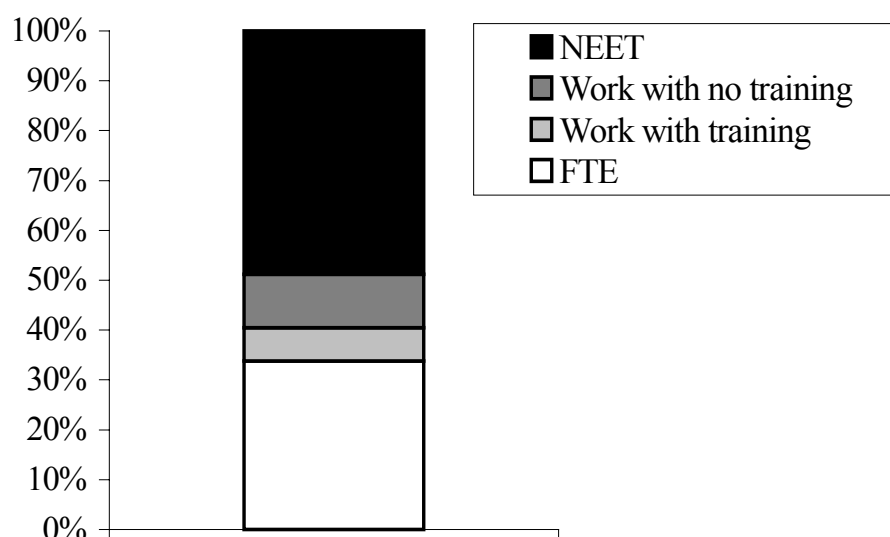
This section examines, first, the make-up of the NEET group at age 17 and 18. Young people entering the NEET group at 16 consisted exclusively of young people who had reached the end of compulsory schooling, but NEET group entrants at 17 must have initially made a transition into work, training or education at the end of compulsory schooling. It is important to consider from which of these initial destinations young people were more likely to become NEET. The analysis has looked at the data concerning new entrants to the NEET group in two ways. The proportions from each of the three possible destination groups making up the total of new entrants is considered first, followed by an analysis of the relative likelihood of becoming NEET from each of the destinations.

Just under half (48.8 per cent) of young people in the NEET group at age 17, had also been NEET at age 16. Just over a third (33.8 per cent) were from full-time education, 6.7 per cent from work with training and 10.7 per cent from work with no training (Figure 2.1). From this it follows that of the new entrants to the NEET group, two-thirds (66 per cent) had previously been in full-time education, 13.2 per cent had been in work with training and the *remaining* 20.8 per cent had been in work with no training at age 16. However, it should be borne in mind that the relative sizes of each of these three destination groups affect the above results for new group entrants, e.g. the majority of young people (75.7 per cent) continued in full-time education at age 16. Therefore, in order to gain a balanced view of the composition of



the NEET group, it is equally important to examine the likelihood of becoming NEET from each of these destinations e.g. what proportion of those in full-time education at 16 became NEET at 17.

**Figure B2.1 Prior Destinations at age 16 of young people in the NEET Group at age 17**



Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years and who were NEET at age 17. Pilot and attrition weights applied. Unweighted N = 706.

Table B2.1 shows the risk of entering the NEET group at age 17 among young people who were in either full-time education, work with training or work with no training at 16.

From Table B2.1, it is evident that the chance of becoming NEET was lowest among young people who had been in full-time education one year earlier. Despite this initial destination accounting for two-thirds (66 per cent) of new entrants to the NEET group, only 3.8 per cent of young people who were in full-time education at age 16 had become NEET by the age of 17. This compares favourably to those who entered from work with training, where the likelihood of becoming NEET was almost twice as large, at 6.3 per cent. However, young people who had been in work with no training at age 16 had by far the greatest likelihood of entering the NEET group, with 14 per cent becoming NEET by age 17. This group were more than three times as likely to become NEET at 17 as those who had entered full-time education at 16, and more than twice as likely as young people who had initially entered work with training after compulsory education.

These findings are in agreement with earlier evidence from the EMA evaluation which found that a common characteristic of work with no training was the volatile nature of this type of employment. Recent research by Middleton et al., (2004), found that cases of seasonal, temporary or casual work were more common amongst young people who had entered employment with no training, thus indicating a strong relationship between precarious employment and low level/low skill jobs.

**Table B2.1 Destination at 17 for young people in education, work or training at 16**

Column per cent			
Destination at 17	Destination at 16		
	FTE	Work with training	Work with no training
Full-time education	84.1	5.5	11.2
Work with training	6.7	78.4	16.8
Work with no training	5.4	9.8	58.1
NEET	3.8	6.3	14.0
Unweighted N	9435.0	927.0	627.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who were in full-time education, work with training or work with no training at 16. Pilot and attrition weights applied.

#### **B2.1.1 Destination at age 18 of young people in full-time education at age 16 who became NEET at age 17**

Analysis of the EMA data set provides some understanding of the longer-term outcomes for the group of young people who initially entered full-time education at the end of Year 11 but who subsequently became NEET. In this section, the subsequent destinations of this group of young people at age 18 have been examined in more detail (Table B2.2). The proportion of young people who re-entered full-time education at 18 was one in ten (10.8 per cent), which suggests that once young people have left full-time education and become NEET, the chances of them re-entering education are small. Although over two-fifths of this group of young people entered alternative destinations at age 18 (29 per cent entered work with training and 13.6 per cent entered work with no training), the largest proportion remained in the NEET

group, with 46.6 per cent of young people who had left full-time education and become NEET at 17, remaining in this group by the age of 18.

**Table B2.2 Destination at age 18 of Young People in Full Time Education at 16 and NEET at 17**

	Column per cent
<b>Destination</b>	
<b>Full-time education</b>	10.8
Work with training	29.0
Work with no training	13.6
NEET	46.6

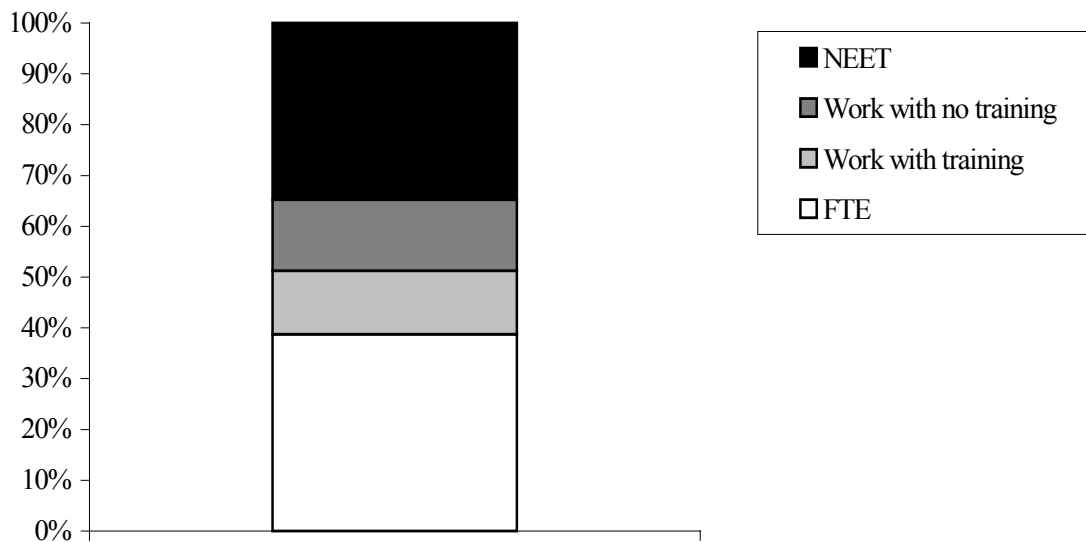
Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who were in full-time education at age 16 and became NEET at age 17. Unweighted N = 299. Pilot and attrition weights applied.

## **B2.2 Young People who entered the NEET Group at age 18**

As with the data for NEET group new entrants at age 17, the analysis has been carried out in two ways, looking at both the origins of the NEET group new entrants and the likelihood of becoming NEET from each of the three destination groups (full-time education, work with training, work with no training). The overall size of the NEET group had increased at age 18 to 14.1 per cent.

Considering the make-up of young people in the NEET group at 18, just over one-third (34.8 per cent) of young people in the NEET group had remained NEET from the previous year. 38.8 per cent had entered the NEET group from full-time education, 12.5 per cent were from work with training and 14 per cent from work with no training (Figure 2.2). Therefore, it follows that the composition of new entrants to the NEET group was: 59.4 per cent from full-time education, 19.2 per cent from work with training and 21.4 per cent from work with no training.

**Figure B2.2 Prior Destinations at age 17 of young people in the NEET Group at age 18**



Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years and who were NEET at age 18. Pilot and attrition weights applied. Unweighted N = 1265.

The likelihood of becoming NEET after being in full-time education, work or training followed the same pattern observed at age 17. Young people from full-time education had the lowest chance of becoming NEET with 8.2 per cent of those in full-time education at 17 becoming NEET at 18. This was followed by young people from work with training from which 11.8 per cent became NEET. However, young people who had been in work with no training, once again, had the highest risk of becoming NEET, with almost a fifth (18.8 per cent) of young people in this destination at 17 entering the NEET group at 18.

Although the full-time education route posed the lowest risk of entry into the NEET group and those young people who had taken the work with no training route had the highest risk, the difference between these was not as great as that observed a year earlier. The chance of becoming NEET at 18 from work with no training was over twice that of young people in full-time education. By way of comparison, the figures for young people at age 17 showed that those in work with no training at 16 were almost four times more likely to become NEET at 17 compared with their counterparts in full-time education. Therefore, although the proportion of young people becoming NEET had increased for all destinations, it had increased most of all among young people who had previously been in full-time education.

However, as discussed earlier, some of this increase in entry to NEET from full-time education between ages 17 and 18, may be due to young people having finished two years in full-time education and taking time to decide upon their next destination.

**Table B2.3 Destination at 18 for young people in education, work or training at 17**

Column per cent			
Destination at 18	Destination at 17		
	FTE	Work with training	Work with no training
Full-time education	61.9	3.8	4.4
Work with training	17.5	74.3	22.9
Work with no training	12.4	10.1	53.9
NEET	8.2	11.8	18.8
Unweighted N	8212.0	1538.0	1065.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who were in full-time education, work with training or work with no training at 17. Pilot and attrition weights applied.

In summary, of those in the NEET group at age 17, 48.8 per cent had also been NEET at 16. Among young people who were NEET at 18, 34.8 per cent had been NEET at age 17. Of young people who were new entrants to the NEET group at ages 17 and 18, around two-thirds 18 (66 per cent and 59.4 per cent respectively) were from full-time education. The proportion from work with training varied from 13 per cent at age 17 to 19 per cent at age 18. The proportion from work with no training was fairly consistent, accounting for around a fifth of new entrants (at approximately 20 per cent at both ages). However, although the proportion of new entrants was greatest from full-time education, it should be borne in mind that young people in this destination group had the lowest risk of becoming NEET, whereas young people in work with no training had the greatest risk. Just 3.8 per cent of young people in full-time education at 16 became NEET at 17 compared with 14 per cent of young people in work with no training. Furthermore, 8.2 per cent of young people in full-time education at 17 became NEET at 18 compared with 18.8 per cent of young people in work with no training.

### **B2.3 Trajectories into the NEET Group**

This section examines the various destination groups (full-time education, work with training and work with no training) at ages 16 and 17, and the likelihood of subsequent NEET group entry at age 18 (Table B2.4).

It should be noted that this analysis does not take account of movements within destinations. That is to say that, for young people who stayed in the same destination throughout the study, it should not be presumed that each young person stayed on the same course within full-time education, or in the same training place within work with training, or the same job within work with no training.

Overall, it appears that remaining in full-time education for two years provided the best protection against entering the NEET group. 7.4 per cent of young people who were in education for two years became NEET at 18, the lowest proportion out of all combinations of activities at 16 and 17. It is apparent that discontinuing education after a year and movement into either work with or without training increased the likelihood of NEET group entry in comparison to remaining in education. At 18, 9.9 per cent of young people who had moved into work with training at 17 following a year in full-time education entered the NEET group, as did 13.4 per cent of young people who moved into work with no training from full-time education.

Focusing on young people in work with training, the percentage of young people who became NEET after two years in work with training was two percentage points higher (9.4 per cent) than among young people who had spent two years in full-time education (7.4 per cent). However, the chance of becoming NEET increased among young people who moved into alternative destinations following one year spent in work with training. 10.7 per cent of young people who had moved into full-time education at age 17 from work with training became NEET and over a fifth (22.5 per cent) became NEET after moving into work with no training. This latter movement into work with no training, more than doubled the chances of young people becoming NEET (22.5 per cent) at 18, when compared to young people who had spent two years in work with training (9.5 per cent).

The proportion of young people who became NEET after two years in work with no training was almost a fifth (18 per cent). The risk of becoming NEET from work with no training was reduced either by movement at 17 into work with training (14.3 per cent) or full-time education (9.6 per cent). It is apparent that the likelihood of young people entering the NEET group from employment is very different depending on whether a young person has been in work with or without training. Young people who were in work with no training for two years were twice as likely (18 per cent) to become NEET in comparison with young people who were in work with training (9.5 per cent).

From the above analysis, it can be seen that continuity of destination has a positive impact on reducing the subsequent likelihood of NEET group entry for both young people in full-time education and work with training. Within both these groups, movement to any alternative destination leads to an increase in the proportion of young people that become NEET at 18. However, the situation is reversed among young people in work with no training, where movement into either full-time education or work with training has a beneficial effect with a reduced risk of becoming NEET.

**Table B2.4 Destination at age 18 of Young People according to Trajectories at 16 and 17**

						Row per cent
Destination at 16	Destination at 17	FTE	Destination at 18			Unweighted N
			Work with training	Work no training	NEET	
FTE	FTE	62.5	17.6	12.4	7.4	7984.0
	Work with training	6.8	72.7	10.6	9.9	563.0
	Work with no training	8.3	28.7	49.6	13.4	485.0
Work with training	Full-time education	41.1	23.2	25.0	10.7	49.0
	Work with training	2.0	79.6	8.9	9.5	736.0
	Work with no training	3.9	24.5	49.0	22.5	84.0
Work with no training	Full-time education	54.2	18.1	18.1	9.6	73.0
	Work with training	2.4	69.0	14.3	14.3	106.0
	Work with no training	1.4	17.5	63.1	18.0	357.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been in full-time education, work with training or work with no training at 16 and 17. Pilot and attrition weights applied.



The destinations at age 18 of three main groups will be examined further in order to explore entry into the NEET group in more detail, young people who had spent:

- two years in full-time education;
- two years in work with training; and
- two years in work with no training (Table 2.5).

Just under two thirds (62.5 per cent) of young people in full-time education at both age 16 and 17 years remained in education at 18 years; 17.6 per cent of the group had moved into work with training by the age of 18; 12.4 per cent into work with no training; and the remaining 7.4 per cent had entered the NEET group.

A larger proportion (79.6 per cent) of young people in work with training remained within the same destination at age 18, compared to those young people who had remained in full-time education. However, this is not wholly surprising, since most young people spend two years in post-16 education, after which time they are required to make a decision about their subsequent destination. Among young people who spent two years in work with training, 8.9 per cent moved into work with no training and two per cent went into full-time education. In comparison to young people who had spent two years in full-time education, a slightly higher proportion of those in work with training (9.5 per cent) became NEET at 18.

The proportion of young people in work with no training at age 16 and 17 who remained in the same destination at 18 was just under two-thirds (63.1 per cent). At 18, 17.5 per cent of young people previously in work with no training for two years, moved into work with training and just 1.4 per cent of this group entered full-time education. Almost one fifth (18 per cent) of young people in this group became NEET at age 18.

In summary, the evidence shows that young people who spent two years in full-time education were the least likely to become NEET (7.4 per cent). Conversely, young people who had been in work with no training for two years were the most likely to enter the NEET group (18 per cent). 9.5 per cent of young people entered the NEET group after two years in work with training which is slightly higher than the proportion from full-time education (7.4 per cent). However, the work with training route was found to offer the most stable trajectory, with 79.6 per cent of young people remaining within this group after two years.

From the analysis, it also appears that very few young people re-entered full-time education after two years in work, (two per cent of young people from work with training and 1.4 per cent from work with no training). This indicates that once young people have left full-time education at 16 and entered into work, either with or without training, the chances of them re-entering is very small (Table B2.5).

**Table B2.5 Destination at age 18 of Selected Groups of Young People following Different Trajectories at 16 and 17**

	Column per cent		
	Trajectories at Ages 16 and 17		
	Full time education for 2 years	Work with training for 2 years	Work with no training for 2 years
<b>Destination at Age 18</b>			
Full-time education	62.5	2.0	1.4
Work with training	17.6	79.6	17.5
Work with no training	12.4	8.9	63.1
NEET	<b>7.4</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>18.0</b>
Unweighted N	7984.0	737.0	357.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been in full-time education at 16 and 17, work with training at 16 and 17 or work with no training at 16 and 17. Cohorts 1 and 2. Pilot and attrition weights applied.

## **B2.4 Year 11 Qualification Achievement and NEET Group entry**

This section explores the effect of previous educational achievement on NEET group entry, by considering the impact of Year 11 qualifications on subsequent destinations.

The proportion of young people who entered the NEET group at age 18 after two years in full-time education was 7.4 per cent (Table B2.6). The likelihood of entering the NEET group after two years in full-time education was lowest among young people who were high

Year 11 achievers. 5.3 per cent of young people with five or more A\*-C GCSE passes became NEET at 18, compared to 9.4 per cent among young people who had obtained 1-4 GCSE passes, 14.3 per cent among young people with D-G passes and 14.8 per cent among young people who had obtained no qualifications at the end of Year 11.

For young people in work with training, a similar pattern was evident. Just two per cent of young people who had obtained five or more A\*-C GCSE passes at the end of Year 11 became NEET after two years in work with training, compared to 6.4 per cent with 1-4 GCSEs and 18.2 per cent of young people who achieved D-G GCSEs.

Overall, 18 per cent of young people who were in work with no training for two years became NEET at Wave 3. In relation to their Year 11 qualification achievement the proportion of highest achievers (with five or more A\*-C GCSE passes) entering the NEET group was only 9.3 per cent. A similar proportion of young people, with 1-4 GCSE grade passes entered the NEET group (10.3 per cent). However, the proportion of young people who entered the NEET group after two years in work with no training and lower qualification attainment of D-G GCSE grade passes was almost a quarter (24 per cent) and more than a third (36 per cent) for young people with no qualifications, although this sample size is small and should be treated with caution.

Considering the combined effect of Year 11 qualifications and destination at 16 and 17, it is clear that the likelihood of becoming NEET was lowest for high achievers across all destinations (full time education, work with training and work with no training) and highest for those young people with low or no qualifications. In particular, the vulnerable situation of young people in work with no training, who are already most likely to become NEET, is further accentuated if they have fared poorly at school.

**Table B2.6 Proportion of Young People in NEET Group at 18 by Different Trajectories and Year 11 Qualification**

Cell per cent				
	No Qualifications	Per cent NEET		
		Level 1 D-G GCSEs	Level 2 1-4 GCSEs	Level 2 5+A*-C GCSEs
Destination				
Full time education at W1 & W2	14.8	14.3	9.4	5.3
Unweighted N	114.0	654.0	1878.0	5337.0
Work with training at W1 & W2	6.1	18.2	6.4	2.0
Unweighted N	32.0	206.0	329.0	169.0
Work with no training W1 & W2	36.0	24.0	10.3	9.3
Unweighted N	38.0	116.0	138.0	65.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been in full-time education at 16 and 17, work with training at 16 and 17 or work with no training at 16 and 17. Pilot and attrition weights applied.

### **B3      OUTFLOWS FROM THE NEET GROUP**

In this section, the focus is on the outflow of young people from the NEET group. The analysis has examined young people who were not engaged in any form of education, employment or training at one interview and considered their destination at the following year's interview. It also considers factors which may contribute to outflow patterns from the NEET group, such as young people's Year 11 attainment, socio-economic status, gender and the level of parental involvement in Year 11 decision-making.

#### **B3.1    Destinations at age 17 for Young People NEET at age 16**

Of those young people who were NEET at age 16, one year later just over half (50.7 per cent) had made a transition into either education or work, with or without training, and the remaining 49.3 per cent were still NEET (Table B3.1).

**Table B3.1    Destinations at age 17 for Young People NEET at age 16**

	Column per cent
<b>Destination</b>	
Full-time education	15.7
Work with training	17.4
Work with no training	17.6
NEET	49.3

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 16. Pilot and attrition weights applied. Unweighted N = 592.

For young people who had moved out of the NEET group, the proportion who entered the three alternative destinations was approximately equal, with 31 per cent moving into full-time education, 34.4 per cent entering work with training and 34.6 per cent going into work with no training (Table B3.2).

**Table B3.2 Destination at age 17 of Young People who moved out of the NEET Group**

	Column per cent
<b>Destination</b>	
Full-time education	31.0
<b>Work with training</b>	34.4
Work with no training	34.6

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 16 and had entered education or work with or without training at age 17. Pilot and attrition weights applied. Unweighted N = 336.

### **B3.1.1 Destinations at age 17 of young people NEET at age 16 by Year 11 qualifications, socio-economic group and gender**

The next section examines the group of young people who were NEET at age 16 and considers their destination one year later, at 17, in relation to their Year 11 qualifications, socio-economic group (SEG) and gender in order to establish whether there is an association between these factors and the likelihood of moving out of the NEET group.

Examination of the destinations at 17 of young people who were NEET at 16 in relation to their Year 11 qualifications, suggests that there is a link between attainment levels and the likelihood of movement out of the NEET group. Although a proportion of young people from all attainment levels remained NEET, it is evident that young people who achieved no or few GCSE passes, were more likely to remain NEET than their counterparts with higher levels of attainment. Specifically, 64.9 per cent of young people with no qualifications remained NEET, compared to 29.2 per cent of young people with five or more A\*- C GCSE passes, which is a statistically significant result. Looking at the proportion of young people (with intermediate attainment levels) who remained NEET, the trend is consistent, with around half (48.8 per cent) of young people with GCSE D-G passes remaining NEET and 36.1 per cent of young people with 1-4 GCSE passes (Table B3.3). This supports research findings by Payne (2000) which found a strong association between poor GCSE results and the time young people spend in the NEET group.

In terms of the subsequent destination of those leaving the NEET group, young people were more likely to re-enter full-time education if they had achieved higher level Year 11 qualifications; 34.8 per cent of young people NEET at age 16, with five or more A\* - C GCSE passes re-entered full-time education at 17, compared to just under a fifth (18.9 per cent) of young people with 1-4 GCSE passes, 11 per cent with D-G passes and 13 per cent of young people with no Year 11 qualifications.

This indicates that Year 11 qualification attainment has a lasting effect. Findings from Part A of this report demonstrated that there was a clear relationship between Year 11 educational achievement and post Year 11 destinations. Under-achievement at the end of Year 11 was associated with NEET group status. Furthermore, the evidence from these findings demonstrate that for young people who became NEET at age 16, the likelihood of moving out of this group at age 17 and into education or work at was greater for young people who had higher levels of Year 11 achievement at the end of Year 11.

**Table B3.3 Destinations at age 17 of Young People NEET at age 16 by Year 11 Qualifications**

	Column per cent			
	No Qualifications	Level 1 D-G GCSEs	Level 2 1-4 GCSEs	Level 2 5+A*-C GCSEs
FTE	13.1	11.0	18.9	34.8
Work with training	10.9	18.2	24.7	20.2
<b>Work with no training</b>	11.2	22.0	20.3	15.7
NEET	64.9	48.8	36.1	29.2
Unweighted N	138.0	208.0	161.0	84.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 16. Pilot and attrition weights applied.

In relation to gender differences and the propensity to remain in, or move out of, the NEET group, just over half (52.8 per cent) of the young women who had been NEET at 16 remained NEET at 17, compared to 46 per cent of young men (Table B3.4). Therefore it appears that

young women were slightly more likely to remain NEET compared to their male counterparts although the difference is not statistically significant.

The proportion of males and females who moved out of the NEET group at 17 and into full-time education was roughly equal, 15.9 per cent of men and 15.6 per cent of women. However, young men were more likely to enter work with training than young women (21.3 per cent compared with 13.2 per cent) and young women were slightly more likely to enter work with no training than were their male counterparts (18.4 per cent compared with 16.8 per cent).

From these results, it might be expected that the achievement profile of young women was lower than that of men, but this was found not to be the case. Indeed, women who were NEET at age 16 appeared to have a slightly higher Year 11 achievement than that of men. However, further analysis revealed that the incidence of young people who described themselves as looking after the home or family was higher among young women than young men and this may be a contributory factor in explaining why the incidence of young women remaining NEET is slightly higher than men.

**Table B3.4 Destinations at age 17 of Young People NEET at age 16 by Gender**

	Column per cent	
	Male	Female
FTE	15.9	15.6
Work with training	21.3	13.2
Work with no training	16.8	18.4
NEET	46.0	52.8
Unweighted N	328.0	264.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 16. Pilot and attrition weights applied.

Analysis of the relationship between young people's socio-economic status and their destination at 17, among young people who were NEET at 16 showed that, although a



number of young people from all socio-economic backgrounds remained NEET, a larger proportion of young people from higher socio-economic backgrounds moved out of the NEET group compared to young people whose parents were from lower socio-economic backgrounds (Table B3.5). Almost three-fifths (57.2 per cent), of young people from workless background were still NEET at 17. This figure compares to 44.9 per cent of young people from a semi and unskilled manual background, 41 per cent from skilled manual, 31.3 per cent from non-manual and 37.2 per cent of young people from a professional or managerial background.

The first part of this report, found that young people in the NEET group at age 16 were more likely to come from workless backgrounds and were much less likely to have parents with a professional or managerial background. Therefore, lower socio-economic background is strongly associated with NEET group status for young people at 16 and decreased chances of subsequent outward movement.

**Table B3.5 Destinations at age 17 of Young People NEET at age 16 by Socio-economic Status**

	Column per cent				
	Prof / Mgt	Non-manual	Skilled manual	Semi & unskilled manual	No work
FTE	19.2	14.8	17.9	13.6	15.6
Work with training	24.4	25.2	20.5	19.5	13.8
Work with no training	19.2	28.7	20.5	22.0	13.4
NEET	37.2	31.3	41.0	44.9	57.2
Unweighted N	76.0	107.0	99.0	94.0	216.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 16. Pilot and attrition weights applied.

### **B3.1.2 Movement from the NEET group at 17 and parental involvement in Year 11 decision-making**

The earlier part of this report (Part A) found an association between the level of parental support given in helping young people decide upon their post Year 11 destination and actual destination. Although many young people who became NEET at age 16 did receive parental support with their decision-making, they typically experienced less support than young people who had entered alternative destinations.

This section explores the role parental support may play in affecting the length of time that young people spend in the NEET group, in other words asking whether young people whose parents provide support have a higher likelihood of moving out of the NEET group than those whose parents do not. In particular, the analysis explored whether there is an association between the level of parental support given to young people during Year 11 decision-making and destinations at age 17 among those young people who were NEET at age 16.

Parents were asked which of the following categories described, in general, how involved they had been in their child's decision-making process about what to do after Year 11: involved a great deal, involved a fair amount, involved a little, or not involved at all. Of those NEET at 16, young people whose parents were not involved in their Year 11 decision-making process were most likely to remain NEET at 17 (60.5 per cent). The second highest category was young people whose parents who were involved a little (54.9 per cent remained NEET), followed by those whose parents were involved a fair amount (52.2 per cent) and, finally, those whose parents had been involved a great deal (38.1 per cent). Furthermore, movement out of the NEET group at age 17 and into full-time education was most commonly associated with young people who had received the most support from parents during their Year 11 decision making process. A quarter (25.1 per cent) of young people NEET at 16 whose parents were involved a great deal had moved into full-time education by the age of 17, compared with 4.9 per cent of young people whose parents were not involved at all.

This suggests that, at least in the short term, parental support in Year 11 decision-making has a lasting effect on their child's destination. For young people in the NEET group at 16, it appears that the higher the level of support the young person received in their Year 11 decision-making process at Year 11, the more likely the young person was to leave the NEET group.

**Table B3.6 Destinations at age 17 of Young People NEET at age 16 and Parental Involvement in Year 11 Decision Making**

	Column per cent			
	Overall level of involvement			
	Involved a great deal	Involved a fair amount	Involved a little	Not involved at all
FTE	25.1	13.5	9.1	4.9
Work with training	22.4	17.4	16.6	7.4
Work with no training	14.5	16.9	19.4	27.2
NEET	38.1	52.2	54.9	60.5
Unweighted N	196.0	216.0	114.0	44.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 16 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. Pilot and attrition weights applied.

### **B3.1.3 Destinations at age 18 of young people who moved out of the NEET group at 17**

Earlier findings have indicated that around half (50.7 per cent) of young people who were NEET at 16 had moved into education or work, with or without training, at 17. This section examines the stability of those transitions by exploring the position of young people one year later. As stated earlier, for young people who stayed in the same destination over the two successive years (over two interviews within the survey), it cannot be presumed that young people stayed on the same course within full-time education, or in the same training place within work with training, or the same job within work with no training. That is to say, the analysis does not take account of movements within destinations but provides an indication of whether the young person remained in the same type of destination (education, work with training, work with no training).

Table B3.7 shows the destinations at age 18 of young people who were NEET at 16 and had subsequently moved into education, work or training at 17. Of those who had moved out of NEET status at age 17, around a third (31 per cent) had moved into full-time education at 17. However, a similar proportion (40.1 per cent) had re-entered the NEET group. At age 18, just over two-fifths (43.4 per cent) of this group were still in full-time education and those young people with higher levels of Year 11 attainment were more likely to have remained in full-time education.

The percentage of young people who had left NEET status by the age of 17 and made the transition into work with training was 34.4 per cent. The largest proportion of this group, almost three-fifths (58.1 per cent) remained in work with training at age 18, but over a quarter (27.5 per cent) had moved back into the NEET group.

The remaining 34.6 per cent of young people who were NEET at 16 and had moved out by the age of 17, had moved into work with no training. By 18, 45.3 per cent of this group were still in work with no training and just over a third (34.1 per cent) had re-entered the NEET group.

Therefore, it appears that movement into work with training was the most stable destination, since the proportion of young people who left the NEET group at age 17 and entered work with training and remained there by the age of 18 was the largest. This finding, that the destination of work with training, offers the most stability may be somewhat surprising considering the published figures on drop-out rates from Modern Apprenticeships (Adult Learning Inspectorate 2003). The likelihood of re-entry to the NEET group at age 18 was greatest among young people who had entered full-time education at 17.

**Table B3.7 Stability of Transition out of the NEET Group**

	Column per cent		
	Destination at age 17		
	Full-time education	Work with training	Work with no training
Destination at age 18			
Full-time education	43.4	3.0	1.8
Work with training	14.5	58.1	18.8
Work with no training	2.0	11.4	45.3
NEET	40.1	27.5	34.1

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 16 and had moved out of the NEET group at age 17. Pilot and attrition weights applied. Unweighted N=331.

### **B3.2 Destinations at age 18 of Young People NEET at age 17**

This section explores the destinations at 18 of young people who had been NEET at 17. Over two-fifths (43.8 per cent) of young people had moved out of the NEET group into education, employment or training at 18. The remaining 56.2 per cent of the group stayed in the NEET group (Table B3.8). This is a slightly smaller proportion of young people moving out of the NEET group compared with outflows at age 17.

**Table B3.8 Destination at age 18 of Young People NEET at age 17**

	<b>Column per cent</b>
<b>Destination</b>	
Full-time education	5.3
Work with training	21.6
Work with no training	17.0
NEET	56.2

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 17. Pilot and attrition weights applied. Unweighted N=709

Among young people who had moved out of the NEET group between the ages of 17 and 18, almost half moved into work with training (49.1 per cent). This is a larger proportion of young people compared with figures at age 17, when 34.4 per cent of young people had moved from the NEET group into this destination. 38.7 per cent of young people had moved into work with no training, compared to 34.6 per cent at the previous year. The remaining 12.1 per cent of young people had re-entered full-time education, a far smaller proportion than at age 17 (31 per cent). This suggests that the longer young people are out of education, the more difficult it becomes to re-engage them in any form of learning.

**Table B3.9 Destinations at age 18 of Young People who moved out of the NEET Group**

	<b>Column per cent</b>
<b>Destination</b>	
Full-time education	12.1
Work with training	49.1
Work with no training	38.7

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 17 and moved out of the NEET group by age 18. Pilot and attrition weights applied. Unweighted N=359.

**B3.2.1 Destinations at age 18 of young people NEET at age 17 and Year 11 qualifications, socio-economic group and gender**

Exploring the destinations of young people at 18, who were NEET at 17 by their Year 11 qualification shows a similar, but more pronounced, trend to that observed among 17 year olds. More than three-quarters (76 per cent) of young people with no qualifications remained NEET, compared with over half (53.3 per cent) of young people with GCSE D-G passes, 45.3 per cent with 1-4 GCSEs and 29.2 per cent of young people with five or more A\* - C GCSE passes (Table B3.11). The findings at age 18 endorse those found among 17 year olds, in that it appears that movement into full-time education for young people who were previously NEET was greatest among highest achievers; 9.7 per cent of young people with five or more A-C GCSE grades who were NEET at 17 had moved into full-time education at 18 compared to 1.8 per cent of young people with no qualifications.

**Table B3.11 Destinations at age 18 of Young People NEET at age 17 by Year 11 Qualifications**

	Column per cent			
	No Qualifications	Level 1 D-G GCSEs	Level 2 1-4 GCSEs	Level 2 5+A*-C GCSEs
FTE	1.8	4.8	8.8	9.7
Work with training	13.1	20.5	27.3	43.1
Work with no training	9.2	21.5	18.5	18.1
NEET	76.0	53.3	45.4	29.2
Unweighted N	143.0	267.0	217.0	81.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 17. Pilot and attrition weights applied.

Among young people who were NEET at age 16, young men were slightly more likely than young women to have moved out of the NEET group by 17 (Table B3.4). The same trend is evident once again among young people who were NEET at 17 (Table B3.12). Young women were significantly more likely to have remained NEET than young men; just over half of young men (51.3 per cent) remained NEET compared with 61.3 per cent of young women. Despite their increased likelihood of remaining NEET, the Year 11 qualifications of young women were, again, better than those of their male counterparts.

**Table B3.12 Destinations at age 18 of Young People NEET at age 17 by Gender**

	<b>Column per cent</b>	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
FTE	6.2	4.4
Work with training	22.5	20.6
Work with no training	20.0	13.8
NEET	51.3	61.3
Unweighted N	373.0	336.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 17. Pilot and attrition weights applied.

Turning to consider the influence of SEG on movement out of the NEET group among young people who were NEET at 17, similar trends were observed as in the previous year. Young people with a family background of no work were the most likely to have remained NEET (62.5 per cent) compared to their counterparts from other socio-economic groups, especially those from professional or managerial backgrounds (38 per cent) (Table B3.13).

**Table B3.13 Destinations at age 18 of Young People NEET at age 17 by Socio-economic Status**

	<b>Column per cent</b>				
	<b>Prof / Mgt</b>	<b>Non-manual</b>	<b>Skilled manual</b>	<b>Semi &amp; unskilled manual</b>	<b>No work</b>
FTE	6.3	7.8	4.6	3.6	5.2
Work with training	36.7	22.7	23.9	23.0	18.3
Work with no training	19.0	18.8	20.2	23.0	14.0
NEET	38.0	50.8	51.4	50.4	62.5
Unweighted N	89.0	130.0	113.0	130.0	247.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 17. Pilot and attrition weights applied.



### **B3.2.2 Movement from the NEET group at 18 and parental involvement in Year 11 decision-making**

The effect of parental involvement in the Year 11 decision-making process was considered in relation to destinations at age 18 among young people who were NEET at 17 (Table B3.14). Young people whose parents reported that they had been involved a great deal were the least likely to remain NEET (51.9 per cent), compared with young people whose parents said they had been involved a fair amount (57.2 per cent remained NEET), involved a little (58.5 per cent) and those who said they had not been involved at all (58.1 per cent). The proportion of young people remaining NEET at age 18 was higher than at age 17 across the majority of parental involvement categories. However, there still appears to be a pattern in relation to the level of involvement and likelihood of leaving the NEET group (although it is not statistically significant) and, again, reinforces the importance of parental involvement in destination outcomes highlighted in Part A of the report.

**Table B3.14 Destinations at age 18 of Young People NEET at age 17 and Parental Involvement in Year 11 Decision Making**

	Column per cent			
	Overall level of involvement			
	Involved a great deal	Involved a fair amount	Involved a little	Not involved at all
FTE	5.8	6.4	3.5	1.2
Work with training	29.2	19.6	19.3	9.3
Work with no training	13.1	16.9	18.7	31.4
NEET	51.9	57.2	58.5	58.1
Unweighted N	258.0	258.0	120.0	52.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years who had been NEET at age 17 with a responding 'parent' who provided relevant data. Pilot and attrition weights applied. Unweighted N=688.

### **B3.3 Destination at age 18 of Young People NEET at age 16 AND 17 compared to those only NEET at age 17**

The impact of the length of time a young person spends NEET on their ability to move out of the NEET group is considered in this section. More than two-thirds (68.2 per cent) of young people who had been NEET at 16 and 17 remained NEET at 18, compared with 44.1 per cent of young people who were only NEET at 17 (and in a different destination at age 16, either full-time education, work with training or work with no training). This suggests that the likelihood of remaining within the NEET group had increased for young people who had been in the NEET group for more than one year.

**Table B3.15 Destination at age 18 of Young People NEET at age 17 by length of time NEET**

	<b>Column per cent</b>	
	<b>NEET only at age 17</b>	<b>NEET at age 16 AND 17</b>
<b>Destination</b>		
Full-time education	7.3	2.7
Work with training	29.5	14.3
Work with no training	19.1	14.7
NEET	44.1	68.2
Unweighted N	440.0	250.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years.

Among young people who had moved out of the NEET group by the time of their interview at 18 (into education, work or training), the percentage of young people who had entered full-time education was smaller for the subset who were NEET at both 16 and 17 (8.6 per cent) than young people in the NEET group only at 17 (13.1 per cent). Movement into work with training was also less likely for young people NEET across both years (45 per cent) compared to young people who were NEET at 17 (52.7 per cent). However, a larger proportion of young people who were NEET at 16 and 17 moved into work with no training (46.4 per cent compared with 34.2 per cent) (Table B3.16).

**Table B3.16 Destination at Age 18 of Young People who left the NEET Group**

	<b>Column per cent</b>	
	<b>NEET only at age 17</b>	<b>NEET at age 16 AND 17</b>
<b>Destination</b>		
Full-time education	13.1	8.6
Work with training	52.7	45.0
Work with no training	34.2	46.4
Unweighted N	257.0	93.0

Base: Combined cohorts of young people who were interviewed at ages 16, 17 and 18 years.

This again reinforces the earlier findings in this section that the length of time for which a young person is NEET affects the likelihood of them moving out the NEET group. For those young people who were NEET at 16 and 17 but did move out of the NEET group by 18, movement into full-time education or work with training was less common than among young people who were NEET for shorter periods of time. Conversely, movement into work with no training was more likely. Thus, the greater the length of time a young person spent in the NEET group, the greater the likelihood of their remaining NEET and, if the young person did move out, the destinations of work, and especially work with no training were most likely.

## **B4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

Part A of the report identified factors that may influence a young person's destination after finishing compulsory education, and in particular examined the circumstances of young people who became NEET. Part B of this report explored the circumstances of young people over a longer period of time in order to examine young people's movements in and out of the NEET group between the ages of 16 and 18, and the characteristics of those young people who remained NEET compared to those who entered or left the group. This part of the report used data from three waves of interviews undertaken when young people were 16, 17 and 18 years of age.

From looking at the destinations of young people at ages 16, 17 and 18, it was evident that there was a decrease in the percentage of young people in full-time education over successive years, whereas the trend for those in work or training was reversed. Although the proportion of young people who were NEET remained consistent between the ages of 16 and 17, there was a pronounced increase in the size of this group at age 18.

The composition of the NEET group changes over time. Young people who became NEET at 16 were school leavers and the group consisted entirely of young people who had reached the end of compulsory schooling. However, those young people who entered the NEET group at age 17 or 18 entered education, training or work at 16 and dropped out. The analysis of the data showed that the majority of new entrants had previously been in full-time education since the majority of young people had stayed on in education at 16, although young people who had been in work with no training had the greatest likelihood of becoming NEET. A similar pattern was found among young people who entered the NEET group at age 18.

The potential of becoming NEET varied enormously between different groups of young people. Young people who had been in work with no training for two years had the greatest chance of entering the NEET group at age 18, followed by those in work with training. Young people in full-time education at age 16 and 17 were least likely to become NEET at 18. Furthermore, the combined effect of poor Year 11 qualifications and the route followed beyond compulsory education compounded the chances of a young person becoming NEET.

Young people with low or no Year 11 qualifications who were in work with no training at age 17 and 18 had the greatest likelihood of becoming NEET at age 18.

Among young people who were NEET at age 16, around half within this group remained NEET the following year. For those young people who entered education, work or training, the split was fairly even. However, when the transitions were examined in relation to the young person's Year 11 qualifications, it became evident that young people with higher qualifications or from a higher socio-economic group had an increased chance of leaving the NEET group. There was also a link between parental involvement in a young person's Year 11 decision-making and the subsequent likelihood of a young person leaving the NEET group. This pattern continues among young people at age 18 who were NEET at age 17. It appears that those factors associated with the increased likelihood of a young person becoming NEET group entry at age 16 are very similar to those identified with young people remaining in the NEET group. That is, young people with low year 11 qualifications and were from lower socio-economic background had an increased likelihood of entering and remaining NEET.

Furthermore, the analysis shows that remaining NEET for prolonged periods of time had a negative effect upon future trajectories. Young people who were NEET both at age 16 and 17 were more likely to remain NEET at 18 compared to young people who became NEET at age 17. In addition, where young people did move out of the NEET group after two years, the chances of moving into work with no training were greatly increased compared to young people who had spent shorter periods of time in the NEET group. This is coupled with the fact that inflows to the NEET group were also most likely to come from the work with no training group, (Section B2 – Inflows to the NEET group).

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**ANNEX A**

**RESULTS OF MULTI-NOMIAL LOGIT MODEL**

## ANNEX A RESULTS OF MULTI-NOMIAL LOGIT MODEL

	Coefficient	Standard Error	ODDS
<b>Contrast Group: Work with no training</b>			
Constant	-1.462*	.359	0.232
<b><i>Parental attitudes:</i></b>			
Young people don't get enough advice about what to do after Year 11	0.171*	.051	1.186
Nowadays you need qualifications to get a job worth having	0.047	.055	1.048
Qualifications from GTS are as valuable as those from school/college	-0.035	.062	0.966
Leaving school at 16 limits career opportunities in later life	0.245*	.054	1.278
Wanted young person to continue in education	-0.030	.069	0.970
Don't know enough about qualification to give proper advice	0.129*	.055	1.138
Important for young person to have a part-time job to contribute to household expenses	0.092	.047	1.096
Government should provide more financial support for parents of children continuing in education	0.020	.071	1.020
<b><i>Parent's aims:</i></b>			
Work/training	0.112	.160	1.119
No preference/other	0.153	.174	1.165
<b><i>Parent's overall involvement in decision making process:</i></b>			
Involved a fair amount	-0.201	.126	0.818
Involved only a little	0.098	.155	1.103
Not involved at all	-0.030	.217	0.970



<b><i>Parent's education support activities:</i></b>			
Attended parents' evening	0.542*	.121	1.719
Spoke to teachers	-0.511*	.115	0.600
Discussed young person's meetings with teachers	0.265*	.132	1.303
Attended college open days	0.261	.144	1.298
Collected information on other local colleges/courses	0.010	.119	1.010
<b><i>Parent's careers support activities:</i></b>			
Read Careers Service documents	0.055	.125	1.057
Has not discussed documents from Careers Service	0.129	.150	1.138
Young person not met anyone from Careers Service	0.105	.262	1.111
Looked for information on jobs for young person	-0.599*	.118	0.549
Helped prepare a CV for work	-0.204	.155	0.815
Helped prepare a CV for GTS	-0.392*	.128	0.676
Used contacts to arrange for job interview	0.364*	.125	1.439
<b>Contrast Group: Work with training</b>			
Constant	-2.956*	.377	0.052
<b><i>Parental attitudes:</i></b>			
Young people don't get enough advice about what to do after Year 11	0.103*	.051	1.108
Nowadays you need qualifications to get a job worth having	0.024	.055	1.024
Qualifications from GTS are as valuable as those from school/college	-0.286*	.066	0.751
Leaving school at 16 limits career opportunities in later life	0.355*	.055	1.426
Wanted young person to continue in education	0.204*	.068	1.226

Don't know enough about qualification to give proper advice	0.168*	.055	1.183
Important for young person to have a part-time job to contribute to household expenses	0.359*	.048	1.432
Government should provide more financial support for parents of children continuing in education	-0.034	.071	0.967
<b><i>Parent's aims:</i></b>			
Work/training	0.516*	.156	1.675
No preference/other	0.206	.176	1.229
<b><i>Parent's overall involvement in decision making process:</i></b>			
Involved a fair amount	-0.077	.124	0.926
Involved only a little	-0.032	.164	0.969
Not involved at all	-0.207	.244	0.813
<b><i>Parent's education support activities:</i></b>			
Attended parents' evening	0.665*	.126	1.944
Spoke to teachers	-0.287*	.115	0.751
Discussed young person's meetings with teachers	0.333*	.138	1.395
Attended college open days	0.494*	.140	1.639
Collected information on other local colleges/courses	-0.095	.120	0.909
<b><i>Parent's careers support –activities:</i></b>			
Read Careers Service documents	0.341*	.133	1.406
Has not discussed documents from Careers Service	-0.035	.162	0.966
Young person not met anyone from Careers Service	-0.550	.329	0.577
Looked for information on jobs for young person	-0.785*	.120	0.456
Helped prepare a CV for work	1.270*	.155	3.561
Helped prepare a CV for GTS	0.285*	.144	1.330

Used contacts to arrange for job interview	0.102	.129	1.107
<b>Contrast Group: Full-time education</b>			
Constant	0.478	.282	1.613
<b><i>Parental attitudes:</i></b>			
Young people don't get enough advice about what to do after Year 11	0.187*	.041	1.206
Nowadays you need qualifications to get a job worth having	-0.276*	.047	0.759
Qualifications from GTS are as valuable as those from school/college	0.192*	.049	1.212
Leaving school at 16 limits career opportunities in later life	0.088*	.043	1.092
Wanted young person to continue in education	-0.433*	.059	0.649
Don't know enough about qualification to give proper advice	0.296*	.044	1.344
Important for young person to have a part-time job to contribute to household expenses	0.509*	.038	1.664
Government should provide more financial support for parents of children continuing in education	0.034	.057	1.035
<b><i>Parent's aims:</i></b>			
Work/training	-1.186*	.148	0.305
No preference/other	-0.302*	.146	0.739
<b><i>Parent's overall involvement in decision making process:</i></b>			
Involved a fair amount	-0.105	.099	0.900
Involved only a little	-0.139	.126	0.870
Not involved at all	-0.793*	.189	0.452
<b><i>Parent's education support activities:</i></b>			

Attended parents' evening	1.223*	.098	3.397
Spoke to teachers	-0.380*	.091	0.684
Discussed young person's meetings with teachers	0.594*	.107	1.811
Attended college open days	0.744*	.113	2.104
Collected information on other local colleges/courses	0.198*	.093	1.219
<b><i>Parent's careers support activities:</i></b>			
Read Careers Service documents	0.116	.099	1.123
Has not discussed documents from Careers Service	0.176	.121	1.192
Young person not met anyone from Careers Service	-0.042	.215	0.959
Looked for information on jobs for young person	-0.797*	.094	0.451
Helped prepare a CV for work	-1.553*	.137	0.212
Helped prepare a CV for GTS	-0.098	.101	0.907
Used contacts to arrange for job interview	-0.295*	.105	0.745

Note: \* indicates significant at  $P < 0.05$ .

Reference group: all parental attitudes are continuous and the coefficient reflects the impact of a unit change (rating between 1 (strongly agree) and 5 (strongly disagree)) on the log-odds of being in the contrast group rather than the NEET group. The reference groups for the non-binary variables are: parent wanted young person to continue in full-time education, parent has discussed documents young person has received from the Careers Service and parent was involved a great deal in young person's decision making process. All binary variables use the 'not done' as the reference group.

## **ANNEX B**

# **PUBLISHED REPORTS OF THE EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE PILOTS EVALUATION**

## **ANNEX B    PUBLISHED REPORTS OF THE EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE PILOTS EVALUATION**

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