



SOCIAL RESEARCH NUMBER:
33/2016

PUBLICATION DATE:
16/03/2016

Evaluation of Essential Skills in the Workplace 2010-2015

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Views expressed in this report are those of the researchers and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government.

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Table of Contents

Glossary of Acronyms.....	2
Executive Summary.....	4
1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO ESIW.....	11
2 METHOD	16
3 LITERATURE REVIEW	22
4 ESIW PERFORMANCE AGAINST PROGRAMME OUTPUTS.....	35
5 PROVIDER PERFORMANCE, SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES	53
6 IMPACT ON EMPLOYERS	73
7 IMPACT ON LEARNERS	90
8 UNION ACTIVITY IN RELATION TO ESSENTIAL SKILLS.....	101
9 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	107

Annexes:

Annex A: Evaluation Framework

Annex B: All Research Tools

Annex C: Propensity Score Matching Paper

Annex D: Learner Survey Respondent Demographics

Annex E: Employer Survey Respondent Demographics

Annex F: Ethical Considerations

Annex G: Final ESF Claim Form Report

Glossary of Acronyms

ACL: Adult and Community Learning

AON: Application of Number

CIE: Counterfactual Impact Evaluation

CVO: Community and Voluntary Organisation

DfES: Department for Education and Skills

EPA: Employer Pledge Award

ESF: European Social Funding

ESiW: Essential skills in the Workplace

ESOL: English for Speakers of Other Languages

ESW: Essential skills Wales (Qualification)

ESWT: Essential skills Wales Team

EU European Union

FE Further Education

GMB: a general trade union in the UK

ICT: Information, Communication and Technology

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

LFS: Labour Force Survey

MaB: Menter a Busnes

MIS: Management Information System

OCN: Open College Network

PSM: Propensity Score Matching

PTPs: Private Training Providers

RSPs: Regional Skills Partnership

TNA: Training Needs Analysis

UCATT: Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians

ULR: Union Learning Representative

Unison: Public sector workers union

Usdaw: Retail sector union

WEFO: Wales European Funding Office

WESAT: Wales Essential Skills Assessment Tool

WEST: Wales Essential Skills Toolkit

WBL: Work Based Learning (provider)

WTUC: Wales Trades Union Congress

WULF: Wales Union Learning Fund

YCL: York Consulting

Executive Summary

Introduction and Method

1. Essential Skills in the Workplace (ESiW) was a Welsh Government programme that offered training in essential skills. Essential skills includes reading, writing, communication, numeracy and computer skills. The programme offered learners the opportunity to study Essential Skills Wales (ESW) qualificationsⁱ and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). It was funded through the European Social Funding (ESF) from April 2010 to April 2015.
2. This report presents the findings from an evaluation conducted from April 2013 to September 2015, but covering the entire ESF period. The evaluation adopted a mixed method approach which included: a survey of 300 employers; analysis of 1,284 ESiW learners' data generated from the ESF Leavers Surveyⁱⁱ; 20 employer case studies (including interviews with learners, line managers and employers); a counterfactual impact study using data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), interviews with 20 providers and an e-survey of 17 subcontracted providers; interviews with Wales TUC and five unions, and analysis of ESiW programme dataⁱⁱⁱ. We also conducted a focussed literature review on other countries' approaches to improving essential skills.

Overall Conclusions

3. The programme has performed well and was highly valued by all key stakeholders (providers, employers, and learners). The programme was well managed and key learner engagement and attainment targets were achieved for less money than was originally allocated. Awareness of essential skills needs is now much stronger among employers and the workforce, and demand for training is likely to continue.

ⁱ Essential skills Wales qualifications are Communication; Application of Number; Information Communication and Technology (ICT). ICT is being revised in to a Digital Literacy qualification and is available from September 2015.

ⁱⁱ This survey was conducted by the Welsh Government in 2014 on all learners who received learning through ESF funded projects. The full dataset can be viewed here. <http://wefo.gov.wales/publications/guidance-and-publications/Publications14-20/monitoringevaluation/programmevaluations/esfleaverssurvey2013/?skip=1&lang=en>

ⁱⁱⁱ Final Claim Data was not available at the time of analysis. Data quality assurance procedures and auditing has led to minor revisions to performance and financial figures. The Final Claim Form Report is provided in Annex G.

A positive impact on businesses was observed by employers in terms of improved staff morale, confidence at work, skills developed and productivity.

4. One of the benchmarks of success was to report on the impact of the ESiW programme on raising the levels of essential skills in the employed workforce in Wales. Data gathered by the Welsh Government on previously held qualifications, showed that three fifths of learners already held qualifications at Level 2 or above and, therefore did not increase their skills *level* on this programme. However, the Adult Skills survey, 2010, found that some individuals with a high level of qualifications, when tested, were found to have low/lower essential skills. The basic skills target was for level 1 literacy and numeracy skills.

Key Findings

5. The programme’s overall performance was measured through a set of key targets which were designed to both motivate providers and monitor progress in the engagement of learners and employers, and in the attainment of qualifications. Programme performance is shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: ESiW Performance Against Key Programme Targets

	Target	Actual
Participants Engaged	24,847*	21,589 (87 %)
Employers Engaged	5,002*	5,046 (101 %)
Participants Gaining qualifications	11,659**	13,947 (119 %)
Number of Qualifications Gained	18,022**	24,410 (135 %)

Source: WEFO 2007-15 European Funding Claim Reports. See Section 4 for more detail on targets.

* This target was amended in 2015.

**This target was set in 2012.

6. The balance of participants gaining qualifications and employers engaged on the programme mirrored targets for Convergence (two thirds) and Competitiveness (one third)^{iv}. The target as set out in the Welsh Government Strategy, Words Talk

^{iv} Strategically, Wales is divided in to two European Union investment areas determined by a region’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head. The West Wales and the Valleys receives Convergence funds from the European Structural

Number Count (2005)¹ was for 80 per cent of adults to have at least Level 1 literacy skills and 55 per cent to have at least Level 1 numeracy skills (by 2010). By 2010, 88 per cent of those surveyed were assessed at Level 1 or above for literacy and 50 per cent for numeracy. Three fifths, 60 per cent, of the ESiW learners already had qualifications at Level 2 or above, when they started the programme (there were no targets set for learners' prior qualifications). However, qualifications are only one measure of a person's skills and many learners increased their range of skills across the literacy, numeracy and computer skills areas.

7. ICT had the highest level of uptake from learners (42 per cent), followed by AON (30 per cent), Communication (27 per cent) and ESOL (1 per cent). Delivery of ESOL over the whole programme was not a priority.
8. During the early phase of the programme (2010) there were a number of difficulties in engaging employers, and Menter a Busnes were contracted to identify employers who had a need for essential skills support. This contract was terminated in 2014 due to low numbers of employers being identified. Some providers were more successful at engaging employers than others and private training providers (PTPs) actually delivered the bulk of learner engagements (71 per cent of all learners were engaged through PTPs) and 79 per cent of all qualifications achieved were delivered through PTPs.
9. Going forward, essential skills provision will be commissioned via a regional delivery model and the Welsh Government will no longer deliver a national essential skills programme for employed people. The regional programmes are currently in development and, in the absence of the finer detail of how they will work, there was a general concern among some providers regarding issues relating to working with employers across geographical boundaries and the ability to maintain current relationships with employers where delivery is Pan-Wales.

Fund money, the highest level of funding due to having a GDP just below 75 per cent of European GDP average. East Wales receives Competitiveness and Employment funding which is the second highest level of funding available.

10. Qualification attainment rates^v differed considerably across providers with some providers achieving an 80 per cent conversion rate and a number achieving below the mean of 65 per cent. Where volumes of learner engagement were high among some providers, this resulted in many hundreds of learners (in two cases, thousands of learners, not achieving their qualification(s).
11. All providers stated they could deliver through the medium of Welsh if needed, but that demand was low. However, one lead contract holder stated that there was a need to increase their providers' capacity to deliver through the medium of Welsh as they could not always respond to demand. There was some evidence of this through the employer survey with a small number of employers (n=18) stating that they would have preferred to have received learning through the medium of Welsh but that it was not offered.
12. Some providers were involved in piloting the Wales Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST)^{vi}. This was a standardised, on-line tool being rolled out to all Welsh Government providers. WEST was launched on 1st October 2014 along with a programme of scheduled updates and releases. Although there was support for the tool, there were a number of challenges and delays in its development and rollout, mainly related to the revision of ESW qualifications.

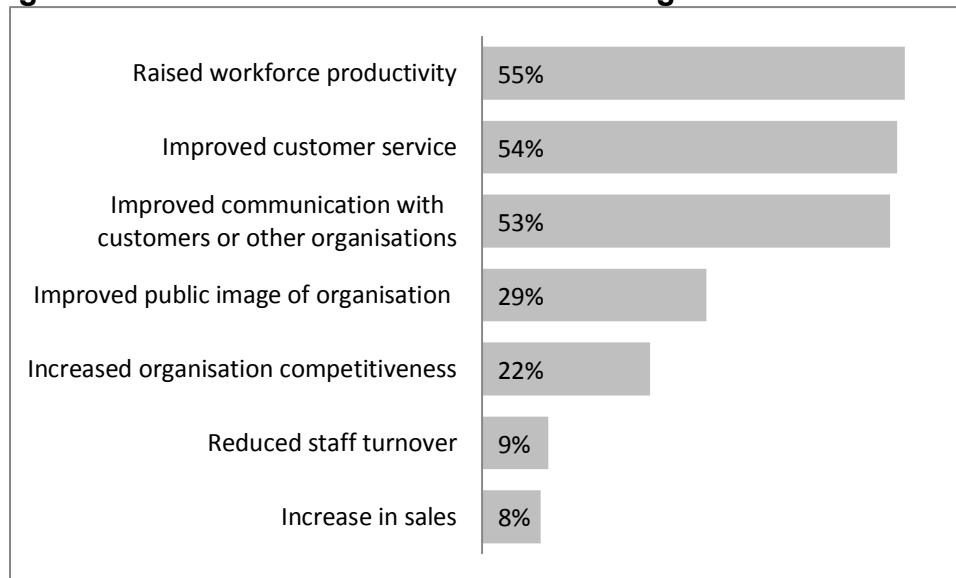
^v The number of qualifications achieved per qualification start.

^{vi} This was previously named the Wales Essential Skills Assessment Tool (WESAT). It was renamed Wales Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST) in 2014.

Impact on Employers

- Employers recognised the benefits of the essential skills training that had taken place in their business (Figure 1).

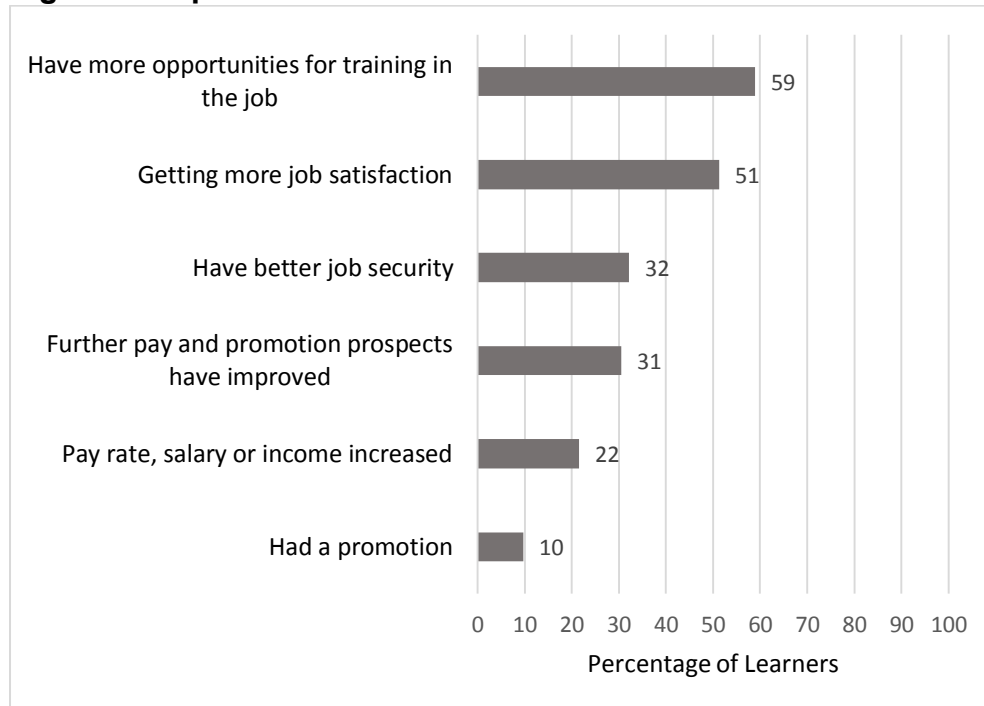
Figure 1: Benefits of Essential Skills Training



Source: essential skills in the Workplace (ESiW) Evaluation, Employer Survey. Base: All (300) Employers were asked 'Have you observed any the following impacts to organisational performance as a result of your involvement with the ESiW programme?'

- Four fifths of employers considered the attainment of essential skills qualifications as valuable to their business.
- This was further substantiated in the case study visits where learners stated they had improved their ability to work more independently. The majority of learners were more confident in their abilities, and importantly were more enthusiastic about learning. The skill that most learners stated they had developed were in ICT, followed by communication skills and problem solving skills. Learners reported they were able to use their improved skills in administrative tasks as well as more specialist tasks relating to occupations such as manufacturing and teaching. Figure 2 shows that over half of all learners surveyed reported that they were getting more job satisfaction at work since attending the course and three fifths of learners reported having more opportunities for training on the job.

Figure 2: Impact on Current Job



Source: 2013 Welsh ESF Leavers Survey. Base: 1,054 Sample Learners. Learners were asked 'Have any of the following happened at work since completing the course?' Closed Question, options listed given choice of Yes, No, Don't Know.

16. When considering issues of equality, it is clear that the ESiW programme, by design, offered opportunities to learners who, due to their low levels of essential skills were at risk of unequal opportunities at work. By delivering learning in the workplace, providers were able to work with each learner and to tailor support to learners' needs to ensure they gained maximum benefit from the free training.
17. Wales Trade Union Congress (WTUC) developed strong support structures/networks for Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) to provide information and advice about essential skills which helped engage learners.

Cross Cutting Themes

18. The Welsh Government has monitored participation of learner groups in order to reflect the extent to which ESiW has effectively engaged learners who, for a range of reasons, may be less likely to engage in learning. Data shows that providers were successful at engaging BME learners (5 per cent were BME learners) and female learners represented 65 per cent of the learner population. This was an over representation of female learners with regards the original target of 45 per cent.

Only 15 per cent of older learners (aged over 55) were engaged against the original target of 35 per cent. Conversion rates were slightly lower than the mean (65 per cent) for learners aged between 15-24 years (61 per cent), and for learners older than 65 (59 per cent).

Recommendations

Recommendation One: *Review the performance of providers with regards conversion rates to understand why rates differed quite considerably from provider to provider.*

Recommendation Two: *Review the status of learners' prior qualifications and consider including a target for training providers to engage learners with no qualifications.*

Recommendation Three: *If a regional delivery model is adopted, consider the feasibility for providers to operate Pan-Wales to ensure continuity of provider/employer relationships.*

Recommendation Four: *Review the low level of provision for ESOL to ensure that learners who have a language need can be supported appropriately.*

Recommendation Five: *Understanding whether delivery through the medium of Welsh met demand, was difficult. The Welsh Government should monitor the demand for, and review the provision of learning through the medium of Welsh in any future delivery of essential skills.*

Recommendation Six: *Future programme design should determine the key aspects of the programme which could effect change in outcomes around equalities and sustainability, and integrate these aspects throughout the delivery to well-defined outcomes and targets. How this can be evidenced should also be considered.*

1 Introduction and Background to ESiW

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings from the independent Evaluation of the Essential Skills in the Workplace (ESiW) programme for the period 2010-2015 conducted by York Consulting.
- 1.2 Welsh Ministers committed to improving the essential skills of adults in Wales and this was achieved through a number of programmes including one aimed at encouraging employer engagement to support learning in the workplace. Essential skills refers to the skills deemed critical for adults in the workplace and for further learning and personal development. A new set of Essential Skills Wales (ESW) qualifications was launched in September 2015 following a review of qualifications. ESW qualifications included: Communication, Application of Number and Digital Literacy. These replaced the previous qualifications: literacy, numeracy and Information, Communication and Technology (ICT). The programme also offered English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).
- 1.3 In 2005, the Welsh Assembly's strategy to improve basic literacy and numeracy in Wales² set in train a range of interventions aimed, primarily, at building the capacity of the education and training system to equip children, young people and adults with the literacy and numeracy skills needed.
- 1.4 The Skills and Employment Strategy, Skills That Work for Wales (Welsh Government 2008)³, whilst acknowledging improvements in levels of unemployment in 2007, reiterated the weaknesses in the workforce regarding the essential skills deficits when compared to other regions in the UK. Skills That Work for Wales (Welsh Government 2008) set out the Government's commitment to delivering free essential skills provision to learners up to and including Level 1.

- 1.5 Evidence from the 2010 National Survey of Adult Skills⁴ showed an improvement in literacy levels, suggesting that basic skills interventions delivered over the last seven or more years have enjoyed some success. The Survey showed a decrease in the proportion of adults whose literacy levels were at or below Entry Level from 25 per cent in 2004 to 12 per cent in 2010. However, there was little change in numeracy levels: 51 per cent of adults were assessed to have Entry Level numeracy skills or below, similar to the 53 per cent in 2004.
- 1.6 The ESiW programme was launched in December 2011 and was part-funded through the European Social Fund and monitored by the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO). The programme ended in December 2014.
- 1.7 The ESiW programme was originally designed to engage employers in the longer term development of skills within their workforce through the delivery of the Employer Pledge Award (EPA). The EPA was to be awarded after an employer underwent a training needs analysis (TNA) and skills assessment carried out by learning providers and committed to delivering learning in the workplace. However, this created a bottle neck as employers wanted the essential skills training but were not committing to the TNA and skills assessment. Engagement of employers and learners in the early phase of the programme (2010-2011) was slow and the requirement of employers to undergo a TNA was removed (at the point BSiW evolved to become ESiW).
- 1.8 The ESiW programme's key objectives were
- To increase and enhance provision of essential skills support including: Communication (reading, writing and communication), Application of Number (AON), Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) up to and including qualifications at Level 2
 - To increase employer engagement in the delivery of essential skills support by raising awareness of the need for a skilled workforce and to gain employers' commitment to supporting essential skills training for their workforce
 - To increase the delivery of essential skills Wales (ESW) qualifications at Entry Levels 1-3, Level 1 and Level 2

- To increase training for essential skills tutors/mentors delivering essential skills support in the workplace.

1.9 In 2013, funding for the previously available tutor training programme was withdrawn, due to low levels of take-up and the programme not developing capacity within the workplace for the support of essential skills learning.

1.10 Key features of the ESiW programme included

- Learning, free of charge across all areas of essential skills: Learners could only study an ICT qualification where they had no additional literacy or numeracy needs or where these skills needs are being supported alongside the ICT qualification.
- Learners could also undertake more than one qualification concurrently. For example, a learner could access training in each of the four areas where need was evidenced through an Initial Assessment (IA). Learners could also participate in qualifications at two different levels concurrently. A learner could start a Level 1 Application of Number before completing an Entry Level in the same qualification area.
- Providers could deliver taster packages to encourage learners to participate in learning. Learners could undertake a maximum of two Developing essential skills Units, Open College Network (OCN) or equivalent credits, providing these could be used as evidence towards the full ESW qualification. Upon completion of the Developing essential skills Units or equivalent, learners would be encouraged to progress onto a relevant ESW qualification at the appropriate level.
- Providers could work on a one to one basis with learners or a small group of learners depending on their own management of resources.
- The Employer Pledge Award (EPA) was designed to embed long term commitment from employers to addressing essential skills needs in the workplace. The EPA was designed to run alongside any training being delivered by providers. Employers can receive support through the EPA to address essential skills needs in their workforce. Advice, support and training was available and offered by the Welsh Government as part of a wider

workforce development programme that included skills needs assessment, advice and training (Apprenticeship, other Work Based Learning and leadership and management) provision. The EPA, therefore, was designed to be part of an assessment and training strategy, relevant to the entire workforce and to encourage progression in skills development.

- Learning was delivered throughout Wales by the network of providers including: private training providers (PTPs), Further Education (FE) colleges and Adult and Community Learning (ACL) providers.
- Menter a Busnes was contracted in 2012 to improve employer engagement and uptake of ESW qualifications.

Providers Delivering Essential Skills Qualifications

1.11 The Welsh Government commissioned 13 providers as either independent providers (delivering against their own ESiW profiles) or as a lead provider of a consortium delivering against profiles divided across a number of local providers. The idea of consortia was to extend the capacity and flexibility in provision while at the same time reducing demands on the Welsh Government regarding the administration of individual provider performance. It was envisaged that an approach based on a consortium of providers would also encourage networking and sharing of effective practice among providers.

1.12 The Welsh Government agreed performance profiles with providers. Performance against profile was managed through an ESiW provider manager in the Welsh Government. Providers were paid for outputs and outcomes against the following:

- Employer Engagement
- Qualification unit achievement ESW Start Payment
- ESW Achievement Payment
- ESOL Start Payment
- ESOL Achievement Payment
- Employer Pledge Award.
- Tutor training

1.13 Some providers were involved in piloting the Wales Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST). This was a standardised, on-line tool to be used by all Welsh Government providers when assessing essential skills needs and aimed to support a consistent, coherent and reliable approach to the assessment and delivery of essential skills in Wales. WEST was launched on 1st October 2014 along with a programme of scheduled updates and releases. Five ESiW lead providers were involved in piloting the original version of WEST. The review of this pilot exercise forms part of the final ESiW evaluation.

Acknowledgements

1.14 York Consulting would like to thank all those who have participated in this research for contributing their views including learners, employers, providers, tutors/trainers, unions and stakeholders.

Report Structure

1.15 The remainder of this report is structured as follows

- **Section Two:** method used for the evaluation
- **Section Three:** findings from the Literature Review
- **Section Four:** performance of the ESiW programme against key targets
- **Section Five:** provider performance, successes and challenges
- **Section Six:** impact on employers
- **Section Seven:** impact on learners
- **Section Eight:** union activity in relation to essential skills
- **Section Nine:** conclusions and recommendations.

2 Method

Evaluation Aims

2.1 Aims of the evaluation, as specified by the Welsh Government, were to assess the effectiveness of the ESiW programme (and all its component parts) in raising the essential skills levels of the workforce in Wales. Key objectives were to

- Measure the effectiveness of the programme's performance in achieving its targets
- Review the overall management and implementation of the programme highlighting areas of good practice and areas for further development
- Review implementation and delivery of WESAT^{vii} pilot
- Assess the impact and effectiveness of ESiW at raising levels of essential skills in the employed workforce in Wales through increased and enhanced essential skills support within the workplace
- Assess the value for money of the programme
- Identify the key strengths of the programme and any constraints/issues that may have impeded its effectiveness
- Consider the findings of the evaluation within the context of the wider evidence base and identify recommendations for future policy development
- Consider how essential skills delivery could be migrated to the proposed future regional delivery model and identify the strengths and weaknesses of such an approach
- Satisfy the evaluative requirements of the Wales European Funding Office (WEFO)
- Investigate how effectively ESiW has contributed to raising the essential skills of the population of Wales. This includes measuring the progress made towards reducing the gap between current adult essential skills levels and the

^{vii} This was renamed in 2014 and became the Wales Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST)

targeted skill levels as set out in the National Basic Skills Strategy 'Words Talk, Numbers Count'.

- 2.2 Findings from this report will be used by Department for Education and Skills (DfES) senior management and policy makers to inform future decisions regarding the scope and funding of essential skills projects and the shaping of future essential skill policy for Wales.

Evaluation Methodology

Methodological approach

- 2.3 **An Evaluation Framework (Annex A)** was agreed with the Welsh Government Steering Group in March 2014. This evaluation draws upon the interim findings¹⁷ in order to cover the whole programme. The interim evaluation covered BSiW and ESiW^{viii}. All research tools (consultation guides, surveys and impact study) are included in **Annex B**.

Method

- 2.4 A mixed method approach was used to generate qualitative and quantitative evidence for the evaluation.
- **A telephone survey of 300 employers:** this was designed to evidence the extent of need prior to receiving essential skills learning and their views on the training received. This was conducted in two waves of 150 employers each to include employers throughout the programme. This was designed to evidence impact of the funded learning on their workforce; views of the Employer Pledge Award (EPA) and the quality of the training received by employers.

^{viii} The interim evaluation involved the following: telephone survey of employers (107); telephone survey of learners (212); analysis of ESiW programme data; stakeholder interviews; consultations with 20 providers; literature review; consultations with ten unions; case studies of learning delivered in nine workplaces; provider case studies of four providers delivering ESiW; and, consultation with Menter a Busnes.

- **Analysis of ESiW programme data^{ix}**: the Welsh Government collected and collated performance data from providers. This showed their progress against key ESiW targets. This information was reported at three monthly intervals to Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) and was shared with the evaluators. This data provided information on the number of participants engaged, number of employers engaged and the number of qualifications attained and could be used to assess performance to date and value for money.
- **Analysis of the ESF Leavers Survey**: the 2013 European Social Fund (ESF) Leavers Survey was the last in a series of five annual telephone surveys that aimed to help assess the effectiveness of labour market interventions delivered under the ESF Convergence and Competitiveness Programmes. ESiW learners were included in the survey and a total of 1,284 ESiW learner responses were generated. The sample represented 41 per cent from Competitiveness areas and 59 per cent from Convergence areas.
- **An online survey of sub-contracted providers**: this elicited 17 responses out of a possible 25^x.

Employer Survey

2.5 The response rates achieved for the Employer Survey are shown in **Table 2.1** indicating the sample outcome with response rates. The effective response rate for the employer survey was 40.6 per cent.

^{ix} Final Claim Data was not available at the time of analysis. Data quality assurance procedures and auditing has led to minor revisions to performance and financial figures. The Final Claim Form Report is provided in Annex G.

^x One survey respondent completed the survey in Welsh.

Table 2.1: Response Rates for employer survey

Sample Outcome	Employers
Sample Contacted	818
Successful interviews	300
Wrong numbers	150
Refusals	94
Refusals due to no knowledge of the programme	171
Response rate as a per cent of valid sample	37

2.6 The sample achieved was of 300 employers and was broadly representative of the population of employers engaged in the programme. Key features of the sample frame include

- Competitiveness and Convergence split: the sample achieved a split of 35 per cent (n=104) Competitiveness and 65 per cent Convergence (n=196).
- For employer size, the sample achieved was broadly representative of the population. For employers in the size bracket 0 to < 9, the sample achieved was thirty seven percent (n=112); for employers between 10 and 49 the sample was 27 per cent (n=80), and for employers with more than 50 employees, the sample achieved was 36 per cent (n=108).

2.7 This provides the following confidence a 95 per cent confidence level:

- 50 per cent proportion responding, sample error = +/- 5.5 per cent
- 40 per cent/60 per cent proportion responding, sample error = +/- 5.4 per cent
- 30 per cent/70 per cent proportion responding, sample error = +/-5.0 per cent
- 20 per cent/80 per cent proportion responding, sample error = +/-4.4 per cent
- 10 per cent/90 per cent proportion responding, sample error = +/- 3.3 per cent.

2.8 This means that the actual responses presented in the employer survey could be higher or lower than the given per cent by the stated sample error.

2.9 **Qualitative data** was generated from

- **Four stakeholder interviews:** including members from the Welsh Government with particular interest in the strategy, The National Training Federation for Wales, and Wales TUC

- **Interviews with nine lead providers:** this focussed on issues such as engaging employers, delivering learning, engagement with the Employer Pledge. Five of these providers had some involvement in piloting the WEST.. Consultations were conducted over the telephone
- **Interviews with five unions and the Welsh TUC:** interviews with union Welsh Union Learning Fund (WULF) project leads were carried out, which focussed on the effective practice and key challenges when engaging employers and learners in essential skills learning in the workplace
- **Case studies of learning delivered in 20 workplaces:** to capture the engagement process, awareness of skills deficits and the benefits of essential skills learning in the workplace. Case studies included union led learning as well as non-unionised workplaces. Interviews were carried out with learners, a representative from the employer (workforce development manager, human resource manager, training manager, chief executives) and union learning representatives (where unionised).

Provider sampling

2.10 The Welsh Government forwarded the list of lead providers and all were interviewed.

Workplace case studies

2.11 Twenty workplace case studies were undertaken. Employers were identified through a mix of provider, union and employer survey information. Case studies were selected using the following criteria

- Learning had been delivered
- Reflecting a mix of sectors
- Achieving representation from Convergence and Competitiveness areas
- Including employers visited in the previous round of research activity.

2.12 The sampling achieved includes

- Three care homes (two Convergence and one Competitiveness)
- One supermarket (Convergence)
- One utility company (All Wales)
- One forklift truck services (Convergence)
- One health board (Competitiveness)
- Three voluntary agencies (Convergence)
- Farmers Union (All Wales)
- One Food and Drink (Convergence)
- Two schools (Convergence)
- Two Public Sector (Competitiveness)

2.13 Repeat interviews were held with four organisations (Care Home, Utilities, Health Board and Supermarket).

Measuring the Impact on Learners

2.14 The impact on learners in relation to their progression in employment was explored using an adaptation of the Counterfactual Impact Evaluation approach undertaken by the Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data & Methods (WISERD) at Cardiff University. This involved a Propensity Score Matching (PSM) analysis between individuals from the ESF Leavers Survey and the Labour Force Survey. This aimed to explore progression through observing change in three measures (supervisory responsibility, wage and occupation).

2.15 These measures were incorporated into the ESF Leavers Survey to enable a comparison of learners in the ESF survey with people in the LFS. The purpose of the counterfactual analysis was to answer the question '*What would have happened in the absence of the ESiW programme?*' The full paper is available in Annex C and the key findings are included in the learner section.

2.16 Assessing the impact on the adult population in Wales was not possible due to not knowing the current levels of adults with Level 1 qualifications. The National Skills Survey undertaken in 2010, has not been updated.

3 Literature Review

Introduction

3.1 The purpose of the literature review was to provide context to the approach undertaken by the Welsh Government to improving adult essential skills. The literature review, therefore, looked at other countries' policies and strategies and included a search for evidence of programme implementation. It started by putting into context, basic skills deficits as recognised across other developed countries (Europe, North America and Australia).

Basic Skill Deficits

3.2 Although masking cross country differences, one study showed that 'on average, across the 17 participating European Union (EU) countries, 19.9 per cent and 23.6 per cent of adults had a low level of achievement in literacy and numeracy respectively.' (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015, p.19)⁵

3.3 Across the EU, Italy and Spain appeared to have the highest proportion of adults with low level skills in literacy and numeracy. Poor literacy affected around 28 per cent of adults and poor numeracy around 30 per cent. At the other end of the spectrum was Finland, whose adult population suffered least from poor literacy and numeracy skills in comparison to other participating EU countries. Here, 10.6 per cent of adults had low level literacy, and 12.8 per cent of adults had low level numeracy. (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015, p.20)

3.4 In Australia, approximately 40 per cent of employed adults were found to have poor or very poor literacy and numeracy skills (2006 ALLS Survey) and employer perceptions of poor skills were high: '75 per cent of consulted employers in Australia reported that their businesses were affected by low literacy and numeracy levels among employees.' (Windisch, 2015, p.93.)⁶

3.5 It is also apparent that across countries, as within Wales and the UK, the low skilled population was highly likely to be employed, and therefore, an increasing number of upskilling initiatives are aimed at the working population, '75 per cent of Canadians with low basic skills are employed.' (Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.40)⁷

Defining Basic Skills

- 3.6 Provision for adults with a low level of basic skills was described using various terms across countries and despite the efforts to establish a shared European terminology, it was commonly repeated, both in older and more recent research literature, that there was no internationally agreed definition of basic skills or any of the related terms (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015, p.150). In some cases, similar terms had different meaning or may also overlap to some extent. Expressions used include: essential skills, basic skills, key skills, basic competencies, literacies and adult basic education.
- 3.7 Wales moved from the term Basic Skills to essential skills in September 2010 and reference to literacy as the basic skills changed to Communication to encompass a broader range of skills including, reading, writing and communication and presentation of information. Similarly reference to numeracy changed to the Application of Number to refer to a greater level of use of numbers in everyday life.
- 3.8 The choice of terminology could reflect wider policy perspectives, such as in Australia where terminology was chosen specifically to mitigate the negative connotations that some feel were associated with using the phrase 'literacy'. 'A new way of talking about literacy was required to make it more appealing to learners, employers, industry and the communities generally. This led to the development of a national strategy focusing on 'core skills', rather than literacy.' (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009)⁸
- 3.9 As well as variations in description, countries differed in their interpretation of certain skills e.g. defining 'numeracy, and what constitutes a low skill proficiency. A number of assessment tools were established to measure proficiency, these also varied in their interpretation of low skill levels, for example
- International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALL) (2003-2007): Level 3 in literacy was considered the minimum basic literacy skill.

- English Skills for Life strategy skill scale: the threshold of basic skills in numeracy and literacy Level 1, which was equivalent to one GCSE at grade D-G or Level 1 on the national vocational qualification framework.
- Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies Survey (PIACC), adults scoring at Level 2 or above were considered possessing basic literacy and numeracy skills. (Windisch, 2015, p.21)

3.10 Adult basic skills policy and provision is a complex and varied field, with no straightforward cause or solution. Whilst information exists on programmes and policies, this varied in level of detail, format and availability in the English language. As a result, this review outlined features of programmes, reviews that were based on the views of policy-makers, and identified key messages relevant for Wales. However, it could not consistently compare the degree to which the programmes were being used across countries. As outlined by Windisch (2015), *‘there is little information about what kinds of workplace programmes workers with basic skills needs are participating in and what is working best’* (p.94).

Adult Basic Skills Strategic Approaches

3.11 Countries have developed different strategies and policies to tackle basic skill deficits. Both in Wales and in England, policy is driven centrally, and is supported by considerable government funding to help ensure skills deficits are addressed. In England, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has responsibility for all basic skills issues. In Wales, the Department for Education and Skills is responsible for education and skills in Wales but is building on regional structures to develop a the longer term infrastructure required to support a model of regional skills delivery as well as encouraging greater engagement from employers to upskill their workforce. A greater devolution of skills strategy is being supported by a Skills Gateway to support a standardised assessment of skills and more effective brokerage (Welsh Government, Skills Implementation Plan, 2014, p.14)⁹

- 3.12 An analysis of policy documents highlighted that virtually all European countries reported that their recent policy documents indicated support for adults with low basic skills or low level qualifications in accessing opportunities for skills development or further qualifications. The documents varied in purpose, explicit reference to basic skills (or equivalent) and intended audience. Policy might be found in strategy documents dedicated to education and training, including literacy and basic skills strategies, lifelong learning strategies, strategies on adult education or other steering documents referring to different areas of education and training' (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015 p.30).
- 3.13 A European Commission analysis of policy documents issued between 2009 and 2014 identified that 'a few countries produced documents dedicated to literacy and basic skills.' These included two strategies referring expressly to adult literacy and basic skills' (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015 p.30). Examples of such strategies included the Australian National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults (2012), which was a 10 year framework bringing a national focus to improving education and employment outcomes for working age Australians with low levels of 'foundation skills' (Department of Industry, 2012).¹⁰
- 3.14 The literature also identified a number of countries where authors had not been able to identify policy literature addressing adult basic skills including, Poland, Japan (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015 p.30) and Romania (Valtin et al, 2015).
- 3.15 In some cases, although policy existed, it was felt that the actual delivery was heavily biased toward the highly skilled, such as The National Institute for Lifelong Education (NILE) in Korea. However, a strong policy outline did not necessarily reflect strong provision of basic skills. This was apparent in Norway where, despite adult education being a statutory right, evidence suggested clear policy articulation was not effectively translated into delivery (Carpentieri et al, 2015).

3.16 In other cases, despite the absence of a clear systematic policy, it was felt delivery was strong. For example, Canada's devolved approach provided a complex and incoherent picture in the absence of any systematic policy approach. The Canadian Literacy and essential skills (LES) budget was directed and evaluated at provincial level. Projects and programmes were funded in hundreds of different ways. However, despite the complexities, Canada was one of the few countries to have produced an evaluation of its approach to the delivery of adult basic skills in which the results upheld its existing reputation as a strong deliverer. (Gyarmati D, 2014)¹¹.

Engagement Strategies

3.17 Actual levels of participation were difficult to evidence and figures were not widely available, especially where countries had complicated policies that were delivered by many different bodies.

3.18 Countries employed a range of strategies to engage employed adults in basic skills training. 'Among the campaigns targeting specific skills, in 2013, Luxembourg conducted a national campaign focusing on several basic skills. The campaign included the distribution of postcards, the introduction of a free number to call to get advice and information about courses on offer and the launch of a website providing information through text, pictures and audio messages' (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015 p.103).

Delivery Methods Adopted

3.19 Within the context of policies on adult basic skills, countries developed a range of specific initiatives, strategies and programmes aimed at achieving the strategic objectives. Delivery of provision varied in its degree of centralisation, methods of communication between delivery bodies and location.

3.20 Provision in Canada was delivered through hundreds of different delivery bodies where 'some were organised from a community participation perspective, some from a social justice perspective and some from a labour force development perspective'

- 3.21 In the Netherlands, about 10-15 per cent of adult education programmes were provided by 43 regional education centres, and the rest by private companies (Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.41).
- 3.22 In France, 'employers' and employees' organisations took responsibility for organising literacy training in each economic sector' (Windisch, 2015, p.85).
- 3.23 Basic skills was delivered in a range of settings including training centres, education institutions, community settings and the workplace. Literature suggested that adult basic skills were increasingly offered in the workplace and that 'the distinction between adult basic education and work-related adult education has become blurred' (Windisch, 2015, p.22).
- 3.24 Training offered in the workplace took many forms. VUC Southern Jutland in Denmark, which was part of a counselling network that co-ordinates basic education according to the need and location of employers, established basic education classes at the workplace in close cooperation with companies mainly targeting the unskilled workforce. The department owned two mobile classrooms in expandable lorries. Each classroom was made for 18 people and fully equipped for teaching. The classes were part of the working day, and the employees came directly from their work (Windisch, 2015, p.85).
- 3.25 As with content and standards, the duration of basic skills programmes varied across countries. 'In some countries (e.g. Germany, Austria and the Netherlands), providers have a lot of autonomy in designing the courses, including determining their duration. In other countries, there are standards referring to the course duration' (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015 p.54).
- 3.26 The literature did not reveal extensive use of technology based basic skills delivery. 'While all countries could point to examples of blended learning – where online learning is combined with face-to-face teaching in adult basic skills classrooms – there were no apparent examples of major policy initiatives.' (Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.48)

3.27 An evaluation of workplace training in Canada identified workplace delivery as a key component in meeting basic skills provision objectives and that ‘employers benefited from ongoing support for workplace training. This included efforts to build internal training capacity through “Train-the-Trainer” workshops where supervisors were instructed in the delivery’ (Gyarmati D, 2014, p.146).

Union Involvement

3.28 Literature highlights the role of unions in the delivery of workplace basic skills. In the United Kingdom, ‘...around 15-20 per cent of what unions do was about learning, with an increasing focus on workers who would otherwise never stop moving in and out of low-paid jobs’ (Windisch 2014 p.93).

3.29 Evaluations of this approach alone were limited. Yasukawa et al.’s (2012)¹² reviewed evidence from literature and two small case studies and argued for a larger role of unions to support basic skills learning in the workplace identifying that this allowed more accurate identification of skills gaps and better shaping of learning to meet learner and employer needs. Windisch (2015) highlighted that experience in Canada showed that workplace education and training is successful when the union was an equal partner with management in decision-making and union involvement was highly visible to learners’ (p.93).

Qualification Based Strategies

3.30 Literature highlighted that often basic skills programmes had a non-formal character. The Norwegian Basic Competence in Working Life programme, which was deemed to have had a successful adult basic skills system, based assessment ‘not on the basis of skills gains or qualifications gained for participants, but with regard to other metrics, such as participation, satisfaction, and impact on factors such as confidence and everyday practices’ (Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.43). This non-formal approach was echoed across a number of countries including Germany, France, Austria and Slovenia.

3.31 However, some countries had a formal recognition system for the delivery of adult basic skills. 'This was the case in the United Kingdom, where Functional Skills (England) and essential skills (Wales and Northern Ireland) were accredited at three different levels within the 9-level National Qualifications Framework. Denmark and the Netherlands also recognised their basic skills programmes in their qualification structures and placed them at the first level of their respective qualifications frameworks (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015 p.53).

Success and Challenges

3.32 The success of programmes and policies was difficult to assess. As highlighted by Carpentieri et.al. In their review of high performing countries, *'available evaluation evidence was very limited and there was more coverage of policy than of programmes in the literature, with the consequence that the lessons that can be drawn about specific programmes are often very high level.'* (Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.71) Caution must be taken in identifying positive features of programmes and the context of the programme and the country had to be considered.

3.33 Some examples of programmes that evidenced levels of success include

- **Norway: Basic Competencies of Work Life programme.** The literature highlighted this programme as 'a good example of training in basic skills that was responsive to adults needs' and successful at reaching those who were previously not motivated to learn. Using feedback from employers and employees, key success features identified included: collaboration between employers and providers to tailor content, situating learning in the particular practices of the workplace (e.g. reading reports, or health and safety forms) and government covering 100 per cent of the costs(Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.72).
- **Canada: The UPSKILL project.** This evaluation provided a 'test' of the effectiveness of workplace basic skills training 'by measuring its impacts on workers and firms and estimating the return on investment for all those engaged' (Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.9). The Randomised Control Trial at the firm level found good evidence of return on investment in the presence of

government subsidies on essential skills training within the workplace. Benefits were accrued by employees and firms. 'Firms experienced gains in revenue, cost savings from increased productivity, and reductions in hiring costs that amounted to about \$4,600 per participant...Earnings gains from increased job retention were significantly larger than the modest investment of personal time that participants devoted to complement the on-site training outside of working hours' (Gyarmati D et al, 2014, p.3). '

- 3.34 A common theme in the literature was the role of skilled delivery staff in the success of programmes. It is felt in some cases, there has been a general move toward professionalisation. 'For instance, Austria's National Institute for Adult Education introduced a three-semester diploma programme for adult basic education in February 2014..., [and] in Germany, the first two-year Master of Arts in pedagogics of adult basic education was implemented in 2009/2010' (Windisch, 2015, p.64).
- 3.35 Literature stated that England was considered to be moving in the right direction with regard to teacher training in adult basic skills deliver and that 'provision in England was often cited as a model to follow, with particular praise for its approach to teacher training and for the coherence of our research in this area' (Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.74).
- 3.36 Where provision was not delivered by specifically trained staff there was some evidence that this was to the detriment of the programmes impact. In Canada, much of the provision was delivered by volunteers, and 'the Movement for Canadian Literacy had long encouraged the professionalisation of the sector but with little success.' In the Dutch system, 'Compulsory teacher quality was perceived as a weakness...training programmes were perceived to be of a low quality, and trainees were themselves often lacking in literacy and numeracy skills, particularly at the primary school level' (Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.74,88).

- 3.37 Literature highlighted that project-based approaches to training, such as those delivered in the Canadian system, resulted in short-term provision as a result of difficulties in obtaining refunding. By requiring ongoing refunding, it was felt that this 'traditionally made it easier to fund new projects than to continue funding currently existing ones...this meant that Canadian programmes tended to devote a high percentage of staff resources to fundraising, writing grant proposals, and fulfilling auditing requirements, to the detriment of teaching and learning' (Carpentieri et al, 2015).
- 3.38 Although the nature of the supply of training was an important influencer in the success of programmes, literature also highlighted the challenge in creating the demand for basic skills training from employers. The Canadian system was identified as an example of this barrier where the basic skills offer was in competition with other kinds of workplace training, and employers were expected to drive the applications for workplace funding. Without employers fully understanding the system the impact of the policy was felt to be limited to date (Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.38).
- 3.39 Windisch (2015) identified that there was evidence to suggest that, without organisational support at top and line management level, provision was at risk of being unsustainable past the initial stages of any initiatives. Wolf and Evans (2011) found that 'in just over two years, 14 per cent of the 53 workplace learning sites previously supported by government funding under the Skills for Life initiative had closed. In over half, there was no manager in post who had any knowledge about the courses which had taken place' (p.92).
- 3.40 Others identified that the demand from employers and employees was not the primary constraint in the delivery of basic skills, but rather 'the amount of release time that employers made available, given their current demands, was an important barrier to training' (Gyarmati D et al, 2014, p.6). The evaluation of the Canadian basic skills project identified that, 'higher than expected occupancy and/or unplanned staff absences were a primary and ongoing constraint on training hours. Very few employers were able to provide near the maximum of 40 hours' (p.146).

Funding

3.41 Literature highlighted that as the trend toward offering more workplace provision continued, employers were increasingly encouraged to play a role by matching funding. Co-funding schemes were commonly offered to employers to provide education and training opportunities to their employees.

3.42 National co-funding schemes often offered preferential treatment to certain targeted groups, including the low skilled. However, few schemes are specifically targeted at the low skilled (Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.40). Where targeted schemes exist, 'most of these targeted co-funding instruments take the form of grants and vouchers to cover training costs; exemption from social security contributions; or income subsidies, in the case of training leave' (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015 p.129).

3.43 Examples of co-funding schemes included

- **The 'Canada Job Grant**, matches employer investment in basic skills training with funding from central government...funding goes straight to employers'(Carpentieri et al, 2015, p.40). However, this funding style risked a lack of understanding by employers about how to use the grant. It was felt by some that this had been one of the main drivers behind a perceived lack of impact of this match grant.
- **Austria's 'Training support for workers' scheme**, '...co-funded training in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) [and] payed the costs of tuition fees and daily rates for external trainers. Women with low to medium level qualifications formed one of the target groups of this funding scheme' (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015 p.126).
- **Italy's national 'urgent interventions to support employment'** scheme, 'offers training vouchers to companies when employees with at most primary education are enrolled in education and training courses...The voucher covered 80 per cent of the training costs while the remaining 20 per cent must be paid by the employer' (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015 p.127).

- **Australia WELL Training projects**, ‘funded jointly by the Australian Government and the employer. WELL Program funding was regarded as ‘seed’ funding which was designed to support employers to cultivate a culture of language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) training in their workplaces’ (Australian Government, 2013, p.10)¹³.

3.44 National funding played a prominent role in workplace basic skills training.

However with regard to work project-based initiatives, literature highlighted that European funding played a key role. Projects funded in this way included the Lithuanian 'Small Companies Human Resources Development' programme aimed at those with below primary or secondary education to improve ‘the qualifications, knowledge and skills of employees in small companies to improve their ability to adapt to the needs of the company and to labour market changes (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015 p.128).

Summary

3.45 This review outlined the diversity in approaches to improving adult essential skills. It revealed how country’s approaches in terms of policy, delivery, and funding levels differed. In the absence of evaluations of the effectiveness of programmes, cross country comparisons were limited to descriptive analysis based on available policy and programme documents, and any lessons drawn were generally at a high level.

- 3.46 Despite the differences in adult essential skills provision, a number of countries highlighted were following a trend towards offering more workplace provision, and the majority of countries were finding provision was taken up by those that were easier to reach, not necessarily those who needed it most. Co-funding schemes were commonly offered to employers to provide education and training opportunities to their employees. However, few schemes were specifically targeting the low skilled. Little robust evidence existed on the benefits of co-funding in workplace schemes. However, the Canadian Randomised Control Trial identified good evidence of return on investment in the presence of government subsidies on essential skills training within the workplace.
- 3.47 Literature highlighted that often essential skills programmes had a non-formal character, and little cross country evaluation material existed to understand any benefits accrued in using a formal recognition system (such as ESW qualifications) as in Wales and other UK regions.
- 3.48 This focussed literature search identified a number of key successes. Key components in the success of programmes included: the role of skilled delivery staff, clear communication of programmes and funding routes to employers and organisational support at the top and at line management level in supporting programmes beyond their funded period and releasing employees for training.

4 ESIW PERFORMANCE AGAINST PROGRAMME OUTPUTS

Introduction

- 4.1 The approach to performance analysis started with a review of the ESiW programme and its evolution from the original Basic Skills in the Workplace Business Plan (December 2010) and the revised targets (March 2012) when the programme was amended to form essential skills in the Workplace (**Table 4.1**). Most of the targets were increased, although total participants were revised downwards. A number of secondary targets also existed, which are referenced in the later analysis (covering gender, age, disability and qualifications).
- 4.2 The change in targets between 2012 and 2015 resulted from a review of programme performance. The main changes in the targets were:
- An increase in total participants (due to an increase in the target for the Competitiveness area).
 - A decrease in participants expected to achieve a qualification.
 - An increase in employers involved, as it was realised that smaller numbers of learners were generated from each employer.
- 4.3 The data used as part of this analysis is from the July 2015 Claim Reports submitted to WEFO. Not all of the targets are reported on in the claim reports.

Table 4.1: Targets for the ESiW Programme

Indicators	Dec 2010	2012	2012	2012	2015*
	Total	Total	Convergence	Competitiveness	Total
Forecast Project Cost	£17,500,000	£21,679,242	£15,982,866	£6,504,178	30,892,143
Total Participants	29,643	17,938†	11,128†	6,810†	24,847
Participants (excluding tutors)	27,991	16,286	9,987	5,299	
Total Participants Gaining Qualifications	-	11,659†	7,233†	4,426†	
Total Number of Achieved Qualifications	14,822	18,022**	11,926**	6,096**	
Employers Engaged	1,031	4,500†	2,800†	1,700†	5,002
Equality and Diversity Strategies	511	882**	619**	263**	
Tutors Trained	1,652	1,652**	1,141**	511**	
Employer Pledge	1,031	-	-	-	
Participants Gaining Part Qualifications	-	1,823*	-	-	

Sources:

Welsh Government (2012) Essential Skills in the Workplace Business Plan;

Welsh Government (2013) Evaluation of the delivery and quality assurance of post-16 basic skills provision in Wales - Interim Report

Welsh Government (2015) Evaluation Data (Excluding Fix Training)

Notes:

*= Extrapolated based on original contract values and volumes; data not available for all items

**= copied from previous targets

†= The targets in 2014 were adjusted due to a small increase in funding to reflect more realistic figure when considering delivery to date.

4.4 Gross cumulative expenditure on the programme to July 2015 was just under £23.2 million representing 75 per cent of the approved contract value (see **Table 4.2**).

Table 4.2: Expenditure to Date (£)

	July 2015	Total approved contract value	Percentage of approved contract value
Overall Programme	23,188,548	30,892,143	75

Source: Welsh Government EDMS

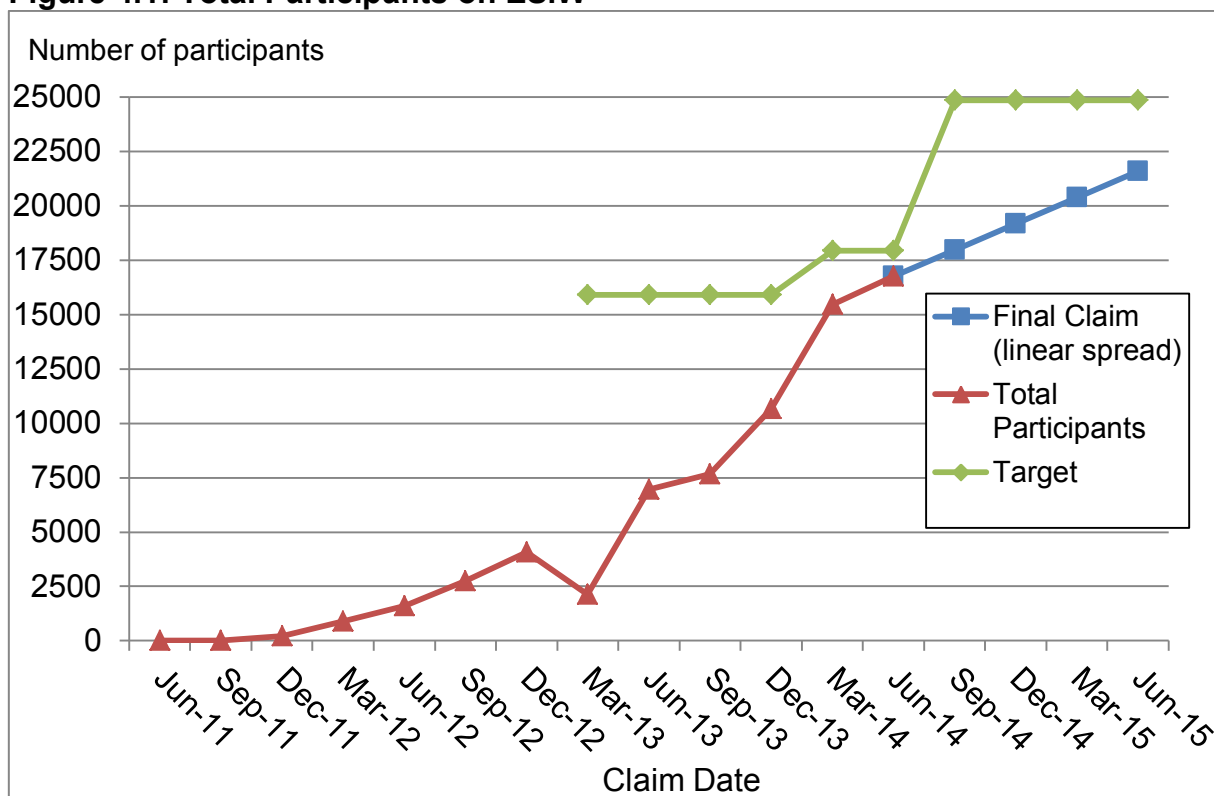
High Level Performance Data

All Learners Participating

4.5 Total participants engaged on the programme (21,589) represented 87 per cent of the overall target (24,847). This represented a greater proportion of the target compared with expenditure, indicating value for money. The balance of participants was 37 per cent in the Competitiveness areas compared with 63 per cent in Convergence areas.

4.6 Performance towards the key target of participants on the programme (**Figure 4.1**) started off slowly in the first three quarters of programme delivery from April 2011 to December 2011, but picked up in the last three quarters to December 2012, reaching 4,088 participants. The increased performance in the last few quarters of the programme was maintained enabling the target to be exceeded by the end of the programme.

Figure 4.1: Total Participants on ESiW



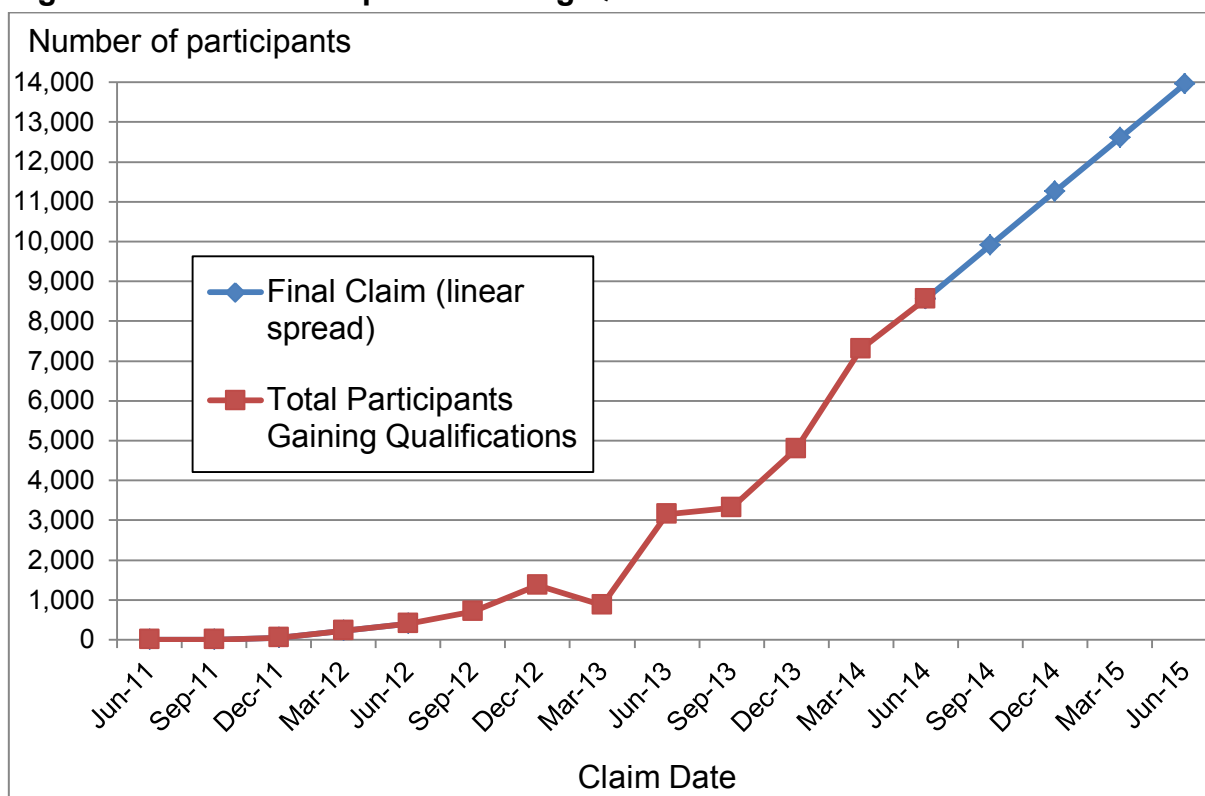
Source: WEFO 2007-15 European Funding Claim Reports.

Note 1: data includes tutors. Note 2: data for March return was contained within June return; therefore, March data has been estimated on a linear basis. Note 3: There was only a claim for Competitiveness areas in March 2013. The Convergence claim for June 2013 was for six months instead. Note 4: These are the quarterly claim period end dates and do not correspond with the dates that claims were actually sent.

Participants Gaining Qualifications

4.7 Overall, the programme was aiming to achieve a conversion rate of 65 per cent of participants achieving at least one qualification. The number of participants who achieved a qualification was 13,947 (**Figure 4.2**). These figures demonstrated that the final conversion rate was 65 per cent - exactly on target.

Figure 4.2: Total Participants Gaining Qualifications



Source: WEFO 2007-15 European Funding Claim Reports.

Note 1. Data includes tutors. Note 2. Data for March return was contained within June return; therefore, March data has been estimated on a linear basis. Note 3. There was only a claim for Competitiveness areas in March 2013. The Convergence claim for June 2013 was for six months instead.

- 4.8 The conversion rate was slightly higher in Convergence areas (65 per cent) compared with Competitiveness areas (63 per cent).

Employers Involved

- 4.9 The final number of employers participating in the programme was 5,046, which exceeded the overall target (5,002). The split by Convergence areas and areas Competitiveness was 3,177 (63 per cent) to 1,869 employers (37 per cent).

4.10 The ratio of learners to employers was 4.2 learners per employer (identical for Competitive and Convergence areas), which was just over the planned activity of 3.8 learners per employer. This ratio was higher than at the interim reporting stage: overall programme ration of 3.8 (Convergence 3.6 and Competitiveness 4.0). This indicated that, especially in Convergence areas, more employees per employer participated.

Detailed Level Performance Data

4.11 The criteria analysed below were all monitored through the funding claim reports. They also include cross-cutting themes.

Location of Employers

4.12 The highest levels of engagement of employers were in Cardiff (12 per cent, 587 employers), Powys (9 per cent, 431 employers), Gwynedd (8 per cent, 402 employers) and Carmarthen (7 per cent, 386 employers). This profile was very similar to that which existed at the interim reporting stage.

4.13 The areas with the lowest numbers of employers engaged were: Merthyr Tydfil (one per cent of all employers engaged on the programme, a total of 71 employers), Blaenau Gwent (two per cent, 86 employers), Flintshire (two per cent, 108 employers) and Torfaen (two per cent, 120 employers). Again, this was similar to the interim reporting stage. While some areas had more and larger employers - meaning the absolute numbers of employers present in the area did not need to be so high - other areas struggled due to lower numbers of employers and a reluctance to engage with the programme. There was a correlation between low numbers of learners and employers on the programme, particularly in Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr Tydfil. These were two of the most deprived areas of Wales, which highlighted the challenges for the programme to deliver in these areas.

Participant Location

4.14 There were no targets for the location of learners. However, it was important that providers balanced levels of effort to all areas relative to their population to ensure equality of opportunity regardless of locality referred to in **Table 4.3**: learner participation per local authority.

Table 4.3: ESiW Learners by Local Authority Compared with Those in Employment

Local Authority	Number of learners	Percentage of ESiW learners	Percentage of working population	Percentage point difference
Blaenau Gwent	553	2.6	2.1	0.5
Bridgend	857	4.0	4.5	-0.5
Caerphilly	1,693	7.8	5.7	2.1
Carmarthen	1,033	4.8	5.8	-1.0
Ceredigion	373	1.7	2.3	-0.6
Conwy	1,461	6.8	3.5	3.3
Denbighshire	661	3.1	3.1	0
Gwynedd	1,466	6.8	3.9	2.9
Isle of Anglesey	685	3.2	2.1	1.1
Merthyr Tydfil	367	1.7	1.8	-0.1
Neath Port Talbot	651	3.0	4.4	-1.4
Pembrokeshire	540	2.5	3.7	-1.2
Rhondda Cynon Taff	1,323	6.1	7.6	-1.5
Swansea	1,464	6.8	7.5	-0.7
Torfaen	443	2.1	2.9	-0.8
Cardiff (RCE)	2,760	12.8	12.8	0
Flintshire (RCE)	466	2.2	5.1	-2.9
Monmouthshire (RCE)	416	1.9	3	-1.1
Newport (RCE)	1,183	5.5	4.7	0.8
Powys (RCE)	1,473	6.8	4.5	2.3
Vale of Glamorgan (RCE)	640	3.0	4.2	-1.2
Wrexham (RCE)	1,081	5.0	4.8	0.2
TOTAL	16,759	100.0	100.0	0

Note 1: WEFO data (columns 1 and 2);

Note 2: Those in employment from Annual Population Survey / Local Labour Force Survey summary of economic activity, Aged 16 to 64, Year ending 30 Jun 2014. This included people who were either in employment or ILO unemployed. This included employees, self-employed, people on government supported training and employment programmes, and unpaid family workers.

Note 3: Negative changes highlighted in red.

Note 4: RCE=Regional Competitiveness and Employment

- 4.15 Comparing the percentage split between WEFO performance data and employment in the labour market, it was clear that some areas had fewer learners than might be expected, for example, Flintshire and Rhondda Cynon Taff. Other areas had more learners than might be expected, for example, Conwy and Gwynedd.
- 4.16 The highest levels of participation were in Cardiff (12.8 per cent, 2,760 learners) and Caerphilly (7.8 per cent, 1,693 learners). This was perhaps, not surprising given the size of working population in Cardiff and surrounding areas. However, much lower levels of participation existed in Merthyr Tydfil (1.7 per cent, 367 learners), Ceredigion (1.7 per cent, 373 learners - although this reflects the lower levels of working population in these areas), Monmouthshire (1.9 per cent, 416 learners), Flintshire (2.2 per cent, 466 learners), Blaenau Gwent (2.6 per cent, 553 learners) and Pembrokeshire (2.5 per cent, 540 learners).
- 4.17 This learner distribution might not be so surprising when we consider the spread of population with below level 2 and no qualifications. Two fifths of those in Wales with below level 2 and no qualifications live in Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea and Caerphilly (Source: StatsWales Highest qualification levels of working age adults by regions of Wales and qualification 2014 and ONS Population estimates by single year of age and sex for local authorities in the UK, mid-2014).
- 4.18 The achievement of qualifications by participant location followed a very similar pattern.

Qualifications Achieved

- 4.19 A total of 24,410 qualifications were achieved (**Table 4.4**). 2,211 were tutor qualifications. The proportion of learner qualifications achieved in the Competitiveness areas (38 per cent) was higher than the 34 per cent split that was planned for.

Table 4.4: Total Learner Qualifications Achieved Through ESiW by Qualification Level

Qualification Achieved	Jun 2014		Jul 2015	
	Number of Qualifications	Percentage of Qualifications	Number of Qualifications	Percentage of Qualifications
Entry Level 1	460	2	549	2
Entry Level 2	1,253	7	1,577	6
Entry Level 3	2,894	15	3,602	15
Level 1	8,310	44	10,118	41
Level 2+	5,832	31	8,564	35
Total	18,796	100	24,410	100

Source: Welsh Government Programme qualifications spreadsheet

4.20 In terms of level of qualification, the highest proportion of qualifications achieved (41 per cent) were at Level 1 followed by 31 per cent at Level 2. Less than a quarter of qualifications (23 per cent) were achieved at below Level 1, compared with 35 per cent in December 2012¹⁷.

4.21 In terms of qualifications achieved across the essential skills areas (**Table 4.5**), the most common was ICT (42 per cent), followed by Application of Number (30 per cent) and Communication (27 per cent). Only one per cent of qualifications were in ESOL. The balance between ICT and the other two main training areas Application of Number and Communication changed significantly since December 2012¹⁷ when only 25 per cent were ICT. There was little difference between Competitiveness and Convergence areas.

Table 4.5: Qualifications Achieved by Course Title

Qualification Achieved	Jun 2014		Jul 2015	
	Number of Qualifications	Percentage of Qualifications	Number of Qualifications	Percentage of Qualifications
ESOL	151	1	135	1
ICT	7,861	42	10,312	42
Application of Number	5,457	29	7,294	30
Communication	5,327	28	6,669	27
Total	18,796	100	24,410	100

Source: Welsh Government Programme Monitoring Data

4.22 Over three-fifths of learners achieved more than one qualification (61 per cent) (**Table 4.6**), compared with a third of learners (33 per cent) in December 2012¹⁷. This was evidence of learner progression. In some exceptional cases, learners gained a high number of qualifications between 7 and 12 qualifications.

Table 4.6: Number of Qualifications Achieved per Learner

Qualifications per learner	Number of learners	Percentage of learners
1	4,275	39
2	2,963	27
3	2,158	20
4	732	7
5	379	3
6	238	2
7-12	191	2
Total	10,936	100

Source: Welsh Government Programme Monitoring Data

Cross Cutting Themes

4.23 In order to monitor the extent to which ESiW addressed issues of equality with regards access to essential skills training, the Welsh Government monitored participation across a number of learner groups. These included:

- migrant learners
- learners from black and minority ethnic groups
- female learners
- learners prior qualifications
- age of learners
- employment status of learners
- learners with a disability

4.24 The following paragraphs detail performance against each of the learner groups.

Learners from Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

4.25 Around 5 per cent (1,162) of learners were from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups. This was above the proportion of people from BME groups in Wales (2.1 per cent¹⁴) and suggests that providers were successful at reaching BME communities. There was double the proportion of BME learners in Competitiveness areas (8 per cent) compared with Convergence areas (4 per cent).

Learners that were Migrants

4.26 Under one in ten learners were migrants (7.8 per cent, 1,677 learners). Most were EU migrants (6.3 per cent, 1,363 learners) with a few non-EU migrants (1.5 per cent, 314 learners). The proportion of migrants (EU and non-EU) in Competitiveness areas was higher (11 per cent) than in Convergence areas (6 per cent).

4.27 A slightly *higher* proportion of those achieving qualifications were European Union (EU) migrants (5.7 per cent, 798 learners) than non-EU migrants (1.3 per cent, 180 learners). Again, the proportion of those achieving qualifications who were migrants (EU and non-EU) was higher in Competitiveness areas (11 per cent) than in Convergence areas (5 per cent). There were no targets for learners who were migrants.

4.28 There were examples of providers engaging with workers who were migrants and for whom English was not their first language. (A workplace case study is included in Section 6). However, support in general for learners for whom English was not their first language (ESOL learners), was limited and only one per cent of qualifications gained were for ESOL.

Female Learners

4.29 The programme was targeted to recruit 45 percent female learners.

Performance data shows an over performance on this target, with two-thirds of learners being female (64 per cent, 13,738 learners). This also rose from 61 per cent in December 2012¹⁷ to 63 per cent in July 2015. The percentage was almost the same across Competitiveness and Convergence areas. This was mirrored in the attainment figures, with 65 per cent of those achieving qualifications being female.

4.30 Therefore, a much lower than expected level of engagement of male learners was achieved. This may be the result of a higher level of need among female learners: data from the National Survey of Adult Skills in Wales 2010, showed that more female learners had a need for essential skills support at Level 1 and 2 in literacy and numeracy but was markedly different in numeracy: 60 per cent of females had Entry Level or below skills in numeracy, compared to 40 per cent of males; 13 per cent of females had a Level 2 qualification in numeracy compared with 29 per cent of males; in literacy, 56 per cent of females had a Level 2 qualification, compared with 60 per cent males.

Prior Qualifications of Learners

4.31 One of the ways of measuring the impact of ESiW on the skills levels of adults was to gather data that showed participant's highest previously held qualification. This helped to monitor the engagement of participants with the most need, although there were no targets for learners' prior qualifications.

4.32 Data shows that, as the programme progressed, there was a general increase in the engagement of participants with higher previous qualifications. Around one sixth of learners (16 per cent, 3,408 learners) had no previous qualifications when they started the programme, a drop of six percentage points from 22 per cent in December 2012¹⁷ (Table 4.7). This suggests that either providers were not identifying learners who had very low or no qualifications or that those learners with higher level qualifications were more likely to engage in the programme.

Table 4.7: Learners' Previous Qualifications

Prior Qualifications	Dec 2012	Jul 2015	Percentage of	Percentage of all
	Percentage of all learners	Percentage of all learners	all learners Convergence	learners Competitiveness
None	22	16	15	17
Below NQF Level 2	22	24	23	25
At NQF Level 2	18	20	20	20
At NQF Level 3	17	18	19	17
At NQF Level 4-6	16	17	17	16
At NQF Level 7-8	3	5	5	5

Source: WEFO 2007-15 European Funding Claim Reports

Bases: All learners December 2012 (4,124); All learners Jul 2015 (21,589); Convergence learners Jul 2015 (13,571); Competitiveness learners Jul 2015 (8,018).

4.33 The target as set out in the Welsh Government Strategy Words Talk, Number Count (2005)¹⁵ was for 80 per cent of adults to have at least Level 1 literacy skills and 55 per cent to have at least Level 1 numeracy skills (by 2010). By 2010, 88 per cent of those surveyed were assessed at Level 1 or above for literacy and 50 per cent for numeracy. However, there has not been any further all Wales data since 2010 to evidence progress over the past five years. Three fifths, 60 per cent, of the ESiW learners already had qualifications at Level 2 or above (**Table 4.7**), when they started the programme (there were no targets set for learners' prior qualifications). It is, therefore, important that the programme ensures that learners with deficits in literacy and numeracy at Level 1 are recruited to ensure that the overall performance of the programme contributes to the vision of improving literacy and numeracy skills in adults.

4.34 However, the programme provided a unique opportunity for learners to have their current skills assessed and for appropriate learning to be put in place to meet any gaps in skills. Therefore, learners who already held a Level 2 qualification were not prevented from studying on ESiW. Many learners, and in particular older learners had skills needs relating to ICT as well as literacy and numeracy. ESiW has provided a mechanism to attract those learners back in to learning by identifying courses tailored to their needs.

Age of Learners

4.35 The programme was targeted to attract 35 per cent of learners who were older than 55. This was to encourage a focus on older learners who may have skills needs but were less likely to participate in learning (Niace 2012, p.6)¹⁶. The proportion of older learners (over 55) engaged was just 15 per cent (3,201); most learners were actually aged between 25 and 54 (72 per cent, 15,596 learners).

Learners with a Disability

4.36 Around 3 per cent of those receiving a qualification were learners with a disability, compared with a target of 40% for participants with a work limiting health conditions or disability. The level of conversion rate was the same for those learners with a disability as for those without (65 per cent conversion rate).

Employment Status of Learners

4.37 Most learners were employed when they started the programme (98 per cent, 21,073) - an increase in 4 percentage points from 94 per cent in December 2012¹⁷, with 2 per cent (426) self-employed.

4.38 Up to December 2012¹⁷, all self-employed learners came from Convergence areas; however, at the end of the programme 101 of the self-employed learners came from Competitiveness areas. Similar to December 2012¹⁷, almost all those achieving qualifications were employed (99 per cent, 13,818), with 61 self-employed and 47 unemployed (prospective essential skills tutors who underwent tutor training could be unemployed). In 2013, self-employed participants were no longer eligible to participate in the programme; hence, this figure was relatively low.

Active Monitoring of Targets

- 4.39 There is no evidence that the above categories of learners were actively monitored by the Welsh Government in partnership with providers and that this has impacted on engagement strategies by providers. For example, there is no evidence that the over representation of female learners led to any engagement strategy to prioritise male learners through the targeting of certain sectors. Nor is it clear whether this would be a legitimate process, as the targeting of certain learners could lead to limiting engagement of other learners to fulfil targets.
- 4.40 ESIW did not claim any performance against the target to help 1,034 employers to adopt or improve equality and diversity strategies or monitoring systems. Welsh Government officials report that a number of supported employers provided written confirmation they had taken action to adopt or improve equality and diversity strategies or monitoring systems because of their involvement with ESIW, but they did not ask for any detail on this. For this reason, it was decided that the programme should not claim any performance against target in their submission to the WEFO.
- 4.41 What is clear when considering issues of equality, it that the ESIW programme, by design, offered opportunities to learners who, due to their low levels of essential skills were at risk of unequal opportunities at work. By delivering learning in the workplace, providers were able to work with each learner and to tailor support to learners' needs to ensure they gained maximum benefit from the free training.

Cost Effectiveness of the ESIW Programme

- 4.42 Based on 2014 targets and funding levels, outlined in **Table 4.8**, the unit cost per participant was targeted to be £1,209, slightly lower than that calculated using December 2012¹⁷ data (£1,364). The cost per participant gaining a qualification (£1,860) was slightly higher than the cost per participant, because not all participants were expected to achieve a qualification. This was a little higher than that calculated using December 2012¹⁷ data (£1,705).

Table 4.8: Targeted Unit Costs, Based on 2014 Programme Targets

	Convergence	Competitiveness	Total
Participants	11,128	6,810	17,938
Participants gaining qualifications	7,233	4,426	11,659
Total qualifications	11,926	6,096	18,022
Expenditure	£15,176,415	£6,504,178	21,680,593
Cost per participant	£1,364	£955	£1,209
Cost per participant gaining a qualification	£2,098	£1,470	£1,860
Cost per qualification	£1,273	£1,067	£1,203

Source: Business Plan V4; current target information was not consistently available so previous (2014) targets have been used for consistency

4.43 The unit cost per qualification was slightly lower (£1,203), as some participants were expected to achieve more than one qualification (same as calculated using December 2012 data).

4.44 The unit costs, based on programme targets, were consistently higher for Convergence areas than for Competitiveness areas.

4.45 The unit costs to July 2015, presented in **Table 4.9**, showed the unit cost per participant (£1,074) was lower than the value estimated from target information (£1,209).

Table 4.9: Achieved Unit Costs, Based on Overall Performance

	Total
Participants	21,589
Participants gaining qualifications	13,947
Total qualifications	24,410
Expenditure	£23,188,548
Cost per participant	£1,074
Cost per participant gaining a qualification	£1,662
Cost per qualification	£950

Source: based on data from ESF Claims Returns and Qualifications from Welsh Government spreadsheet

4.46 Cost per participant gaining a qualification (£1,662) was lower than that based on target data because of the increased numbers of participants gaining qualifications recorded.

4.47 The unit cost per qualification (£950) was below the planned figure because of the high number of qualifications achieved compared to expectations (£1,203).

Summary

4.48 Gross cumulative expenditure on the programme to July 2015 was just under £23.2 million representing 75 per cent of the approved contract value.

4.49 Total participants engaged to date (21,589) represented 87 per cent of the overall target (24,847). This represented a greater proportion of the target compared with expenditure, indicating value for money.

4.50 The number of participants who achieved a qualification was 13,947 giving a final conversion rate was 65 per cent - exactly in line with the target.

4.51 The final number of employers participating in the programme was 5,046, which exceeded the overall target (5,002).

4.52 There was a slight imbalance across the geography of Wales, with some areas having a higher or lower share of participants than might have been expected.

- 4.53 Nearly two-thirds of learners were female (64 per cent, 13,738 learners). This far exceeded the target of 45 per cent from the Business Plan. Therefore, a much lower than expected level of engagement of male learners was achieved than anticipated. Providers were successful at engaging BME learners (5 per cent were BME learners) compared with the wider population. 3 per cent of those receiving a qualification were learners with a disability compared with a target of 40 per cent and 15 per cent of older learners (aged over 55) were engaged against the original target of 35 per cent.
- 4.54 There was a general increase in learners with higher previous qualifications as the programme progressed. This suggested that either providers were not identifying learners who had very low or no qualifications or that those learners with higher level qualifications were more likely to engage in the programme offer.
- 4.55 A total of 24,410 qualifications were achieved. In terms of level of qualification, the highest proportion of qualifications achieved (41 per cent) were at Level 1, followed by 31 per cent at Level 2. Less than a quarter of qualifications (23 per cent) were achieved at below Level 1.
- 4.56 In terms of qualifications achieved across the essential skills areas the most common was ICT (42 per cent), followed by Application of Number (30 per cent) and Communication (27 per cent). Only one per cent of qualifications were in ESOL. The balance between ICT and the other two main training areas Application of Number and Communication changed significantly since December 2012 when only 25 per cent were ICT.
- 4.57 Over three-fifths of learners achieved more than one qualification, which is evidence of learner progression.
- 4.58 The unit cost per participant (£1,074) was lower than the value estimated from target information (1,209). Cost per participant gaining a qualification (£1,662) was lower than that based on target data, because the increased numbers of participants gaining qualifications were recorded. The unit cost per qualification (£950) was below the planned figure (£1,203) because of the high number of qualifications achieved compared to expectations.

5 PROVIDER PERFORMANCE, SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Introduction

5.1 This section provides a review of provider performance using evidence from data provided by the Welsh Government on achievements against their contract and from interviews and surveys with lead and sub-contracted providers. Evidence was triangulated with feedback from employers on the quality and value of the training for their learners.

Performance of Providers

5.2 The Welsh Government provided data on key performance targets including

- Target and actual participants supported
- Target and actual employers assisted
- Contract value and spend
- Number of qualification starts
- Number of qualifications completed.

5.3 This shows that eight providers under-performed against their participant support targets and four over performed.

5.4 Three providers spent less of their contractual value but achieved a higher number of participants supported than their original target. This would indicate a greater level of efficiency in their operations than was originally predicted.

5.5 However, the overall number of participants supported across all providers was down on the original target, with 87 per cent achievement, showing an under performance of 14 per cent across the whole programme. PTPs have had a larger share of the contract value and performance targets engaging 71 per cent of the overall number of learners and 79 per cent of the overall number of qualifications that were achieved.

- 5.6 In the previous ESiW Interim Report (2014)¹⁷, it was stated that PTPs were more effective at engaging employers and learners due to their commercial set-up and flexibility within the organisation to move resource to where it was needed. An example of this flexibility was seen in one PTP who achieved an employer engagement of 304 per cent (when measured against their target); and a learner engagement of 131 per cent.
- 5.7 When considering performance against the target for employer engagement, the mean was 149 per cent. Therefore, providers had to engage more employers than originally forecast in order to generate participants. In particular, two providers engaged significantly more employers than was originally planned, with one provider engaging over 400 per cent of the original employer target, yet only exceeding the number of participants engaged by just six per cent. This suggests that some providers had to work more intensively with employers than originally anticipated to achieve their learner targets.
- 5.8 Conversion rates (calculated by the number of qualifications attained as a percentage of the number of qualification starts) varied considerably across providers. The mean conversion rate was 65 per cent. Three providers achieved a conversion rate of over 80 per cent, with one of these providers achieving over 2,500 qualifications. A further two providers achieved a conversion rate of over 70 per cent. Four providers performed below the mean and one provider only converted 57 per cent of qualification starts. Overall, there were 13,065 qualifications that were started and not completed. When looking at the performance of two PTPs, nine thousand qualifications were started and not completed. This is evidence to suggest the Welsh Government should consider provider conversion rates in more detail to ensure that learners are being entered for the correct level of qualification and/or are being effectively supported during their learning.

Key Factors Influencing Performance

- 5.9 Consultations with providers and the online survey detailed some of the success and challenges in programme delivery. These included

- Engaging employers
- Working in a consortium
- Increasing the tutor capacity
- Meeting the needs of employers
- Delivering through the Medium of Welsh.

Engaging Employers

- 5.10 Although the target for employers was exceeded across the whole programme, five lead providers underperformed against their employer engagement target which led to an underperformance on their participant target. One provider underperformed on their employer engagement target (44 percent achieved), but over performed on participant engagement (131 per cent).
- 5.11 Some providers reported that they struggled to make the programme commercially viable, this was reported more by FE colleges than PTPs.
- 5.12 A few providers stated there were a lack of employer contacts which resulted in difficulties in engaging employers. Menter a Busnes (MaB) were contracted in 2012 to help stimulate demand for essential skills training. Total referrals to September 2014 were 227 and the target was for 1003 successful referrals. Some providers were critical of the performance of MaB on this particular programme, stating that very few referrals came through, and not all were eligible. After careful review of the performance against targets, the Welsh Government made the decision to terminate the contract in June 2014.
- 5.13 Results from the online survey of sub-contracted providers showed that nine indicated they would like union support to help engage employers. (permission was asked to forward their contact details on to the WTUC and this has been done).
- 5.14 In the earlier phase of the programme, a number of college mergers were taking place which caused a change in management of the ESiW contracts and delayed progress.

5.15 In some cases, the slow progress in certain consortia was the result of a lack of experience or understanding of what was required by the contract lead and partners to achieve targets. There was no evidence of a clear strategy or plan to market or improve employer engagement.

5.16 Some consortia suffered from tensions early on in the delivery which were left unresolved for a long period of time and possibly hindered progress. Eleven sub contracted providers responding to the online survey reported they struggled to engage employers. Some stated there was a lack of interest from employers and the lack of a proper advertising campaign and poor knowledge of the programme offer, were barriers.

'Engaging with employers and building effective working relationships took a long period of time and much staff resource, which the project did not financially compensate thoroughly enough for.' (Provider)

5.17 However, sub-contracted providers reported increased success with engagement of employers in the ESiW programme as the programme progressed. Fifteen providers responding to the online survey stated one of the key benefits had been the extent of engagement with local business. After difficulties in the first half the programme delivery and challenges with college mergers, providers re-negotiated targets and focussed their efforts to market and promote the programme more actively.

'We have engaged with nearly 60 employers from Bridgend to Pembroke Dock to Aberystwyth, working with large and established companies, as well as SMEs that needed our support and training in order to expand.'
(Sub-contracted provider)

'We have spent months of work fully engaging employers, including work with human resource departments of large companies and public sector employers to help integrate ESiW with their strategic training and development policies.' (Sub-contracted provider)

'We've had fantastic success in engaging employers – initially through our own employer networks and have developed very strong links with Trades Unions.' (Sub-contracted provider)

- 5.18 Providers agreed that awareness of the programme had increased and that businesses were actively contacting them having heard about the offer through networks.
- 5.19 Employer case studies and interviews with providers evidenced that providers engaged with the full range of business sizes and sectors. Providers stated they had extended their engagement with new business across a wide range of sectors including the health and education sectors, social care, manufacturing, retail, public sector, food and manufacturing.
- 5.20 Provision was delivered in the workplace which was one of the major assets of the programme. As a result businesses reported developing good relations with their local providers and some providers continued to deliver further essential skills learning after the initial episode as well as other forms of work based learning such as apprenticeships and national vocational qualifications.
- 5.21 FE colleges reported improved engagement with the ESiW programme and more of a jointed up approach between essential skills teams and work-based learning departments.
- 5.22 Providers worked differently to achieve their targets. Some providers had a higher learner to employer ratio than others. For example one FE college had a learner to employer ratio of over eight learners to one employer, one PTP had a learner ratio of 10 learners to one employer, another PTP achieved a learner ratio of three learners to one employer.
- 5.23 The model of learner support also varied with some providers delivering considerable one-to-one essential skills learner support, and others preferring to deliver in small groups.

Delivering in a Consortium

5.24 Lead providers and sub-contracted providers were, on the whole, positive of the value of working in a consortium.

5.25 Both lead and sub-contracted providers stated that working in partnership helped ensure they could deliver to a range of business needs. From the online survey, 12 of the sub-contracted providers who worked in partnership to deliver ESiW contracts, said there were benefits of working in a consortium (five stated there were no benefits). The benefits reported by providers included

- Sharing effective practice in engaging employers (7)
- Providing a better more responsive service to local employers (7)
- Sharing effective practice in delivering ESW qualifications (7).

'We were able to discuss the use of appropriate resources and ways that we could deliver within certain business which helped ensure the learning was relevant' (Lead Provider Manager).

'It has opened doors to new sectors and enabled us to access new sectors'. (Sub-contracted provider)

5.26 Often providers worked with sub-contracted providers to enable them to deliver more specialist/contextualised provision to meet particular sector needs.

'They [sub-contracted provider] work in particular sectors and can bring a set of different skills as well as contexts which adds to our training portfolio.' (FE provider)

5.27 Some sub-contracted providers reported the sharing of information and updates on programme delivery helped them to manage the delivery of their contract more efficiently.

5.28 Some challenges in delivering in a consortium were reported by both lead and sub-contracted providers. The challenges were described as

- Other consortium members underperforming which affected the overall success of contract delivery
- Delays in payments being made to sub-contracted providers due to inaccurate paperwork being submitted by other consortium members
- Trying to agree on geographical area boundaries and prior relationships with employers was sometimes challenging
- Sometimes poor communication regarding information on the needs of employers engaged, which led to confusion amongst employers and looked unprofessional for the college
- Too many providers in the same location, agreements made as to who delivered to particular employers were sometimes difficult.

5.29 Despite challenges nine sub-contracted providers continued to work in partnership with lead providers as a result of delivering on ESiW.

5.30 Delivery of ESOL has not been a strong feature of the programme with only one per cent (135) of qualifications achieved being for ESOL. Although the need for this support has been highlighted in previous Welsh Government documents¹⁸ providers have not taken the opportunity to deliver ESOL through ESiW. A number of providers stated that it was difficult to bring the cost of provision in line with the funding allocated to it by the Welsh Government. ESOL learning support has been provided by just two FE providers operating mainly in the north and east of Wales, and there was no activity in the south of Wales.

Developing Capacity

5.31 Many providers took on additional tutors in order to deliver to contracted outputs. This was particularly mentioned by PTPs who had substantial contracts and expanded their provision in order to meet targets. Nine out of seventeen sub-contracted providers stated they had recruited more tutors.

'We employed an additional thirty tutors to operate across Wales as well as moved resources from our sales team to operate on ESiW specifically.' (PTP)

5.32 A few providers stated that they were not able to respond to the demand in certain areas due to not having enough delivery staff. Challenges in recruiting tutors was reported by four sub-contracted providers, but most providers did not say this had been a challenge. Two providers stated that getting tutors with the ability to deliver through the medium of Welsh was a challenge and that identifying and training Welsh speaking tutors was a priority. When asked about the availability of tutor training courses, this was not a concern of providers, most having the facility to train 'in-house'; only one provider stated that the lack of government funding for tutor training was a cause for concern. However, there were concerns regarding the break in ESiW funding and the impact this had on tutors and provider capacity more generally.

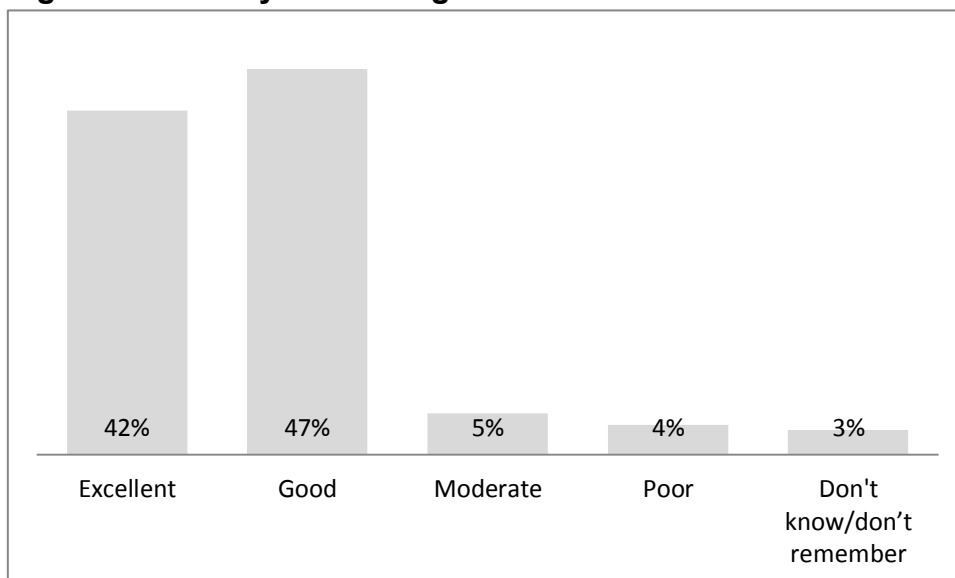
Meeting the Needs of Employers

5.33 Results from the Employer Survey^{xi} showed that the majority of employers were happy with the quality of the training delivered. Nearly 90 per cent of employers described the training received as either good or excellent and four per cent stated it was poor.

5.34 As **Figure 5.1** illustrates, the majority of employers were satisfied with the training their staff received.

^{xi} The Employer Survey elicited response from 300 employers across Wales.

Figure 5.1 Quality of Training Received



Source: Essential Skills in the Workplace (ESIW) Evaluation, Employer Survey. Base: All (300) Employers were asked 'How would you rate the quality of the training your staff received?'

5.35 Many of the case studies showed good relations being developed between providers and employers and a good level of contextualisation and flexibility in meeting employer needs when delivering learning in the workplace.

'The trainer was trying to link the learning to something that the participants could relate to, this worked effectively.' (Employer)

'The training was very well tailored for the different levels of the employees and was very well presented. The training wasn't too daunting and the employees all made good progress.' (Employer)

5.36 Most employers had their needs for flexible provision met, although there were still a few comments regarding problems with learners working outside normal office hours.

5.37 The majority of survey comments from employers showed that most considered the training could not have been improved; 87 per cent (n=262) of employers stated the learning delivered was relevant to their workplace and work responsibilities.

Figure 5.2: Employers' Satisfaction With The Training

'It couldn't be improved, they offered me everything that they could and they worked around me and my business.'

'I can't think of any improvements - everything fitted in well.'

'No improvements - It was a very flexible system and if there were any problems they would always work around them.'

'The arrangements were great - we are a busy company, and the gentleman delivering the training was flexible and if he turned up when we were busy he would come back later or wait around until we were ready with no problems at all.'

'The flexibility of the training provider was the best part - if the gentleman delivering the training knew we were busy he'd come back or wait around.'

Source: ESiW Employer Survey 2014-15. Employers were asked 'How if at all could training be improved and these were the 'other' replies.

5.38 The 12 per cent who said that the programme did not meet their expectations were asked to provide a comment. A small number of employers (n=18) commented that the course was too basic or did not meet their needs.

5.39 There were also a few comments regarding provider performance: that the training was badly organised (n=6), that the trainer seemed rushed or underprepared (n=15), that the timing of the training did not always meet the needs of learner and that communication was sometimes poor (n=5).

5.40 These numbers were too low to generalise from in terms of the population of ESiW employers, but the comments below add some detail regarding the particular problems experienced by employers.

Figure 5.3: Employers' Dissatisfaction with the Training

'I think it would have been a lot better to have a couple of training sessions a week instead of just once a week to make the process quicker.'

'I think we should have been able to have a little more input into the training so that it was more related to the work we do. If we had more time we could have agreed on the content.'

'The training wasn't offered to me when the shop was closed so maybe it's an idea to have the training available out of hours.'

'Unfortunately the tutor changed half way through the project and the second person didn't always turn up on time or at all, an improvement would be to keep the same tutors and to ensure they are always punctual.'

"We finished the course a year ago, and we didn't hear anything back from the training providers, and we haven't received any certificates. We are very disappointed with how we were treated at the end."

"First of all we had an initial assessment with [name of provider], and then we didn't hear anything after that, so we chased them up to find out what was happening and they said they would do another assessment. They came again to do another tick box exercise assessment and then we didn't hear anything after the assessment again. There was no communication involved and no one got back to us, it was very disappointing."

Source: ESiW Employer Survey 2014-15. Employers were asked 'How if at all could training be improved? This was an open question.

5.41 Some of the comments reveal poor performance from providers, particularly around the lack of communication with employers, the negative impact of a change in tutors, and learners feeling they have been let down.

5.42 A small number of case study employers (n=3) suggested that the learning could be more specific to learner's job roles. One employer suggested that there needed to be a much closer link between the delivery of essential skills learning and the wider training programme within the business (Health Board). That because the training provider was more interested in achieving their targets, there was less of a focus on developing a longer term work force development strategy that included essential skills.

5.43 Despite some of the obvious challenges, 53 per cent (n=161) of employers said they would definitely use the same training provider again, and a further 34 per cent (n=102) said they would probably use them again.

5.44 Evidence from the case studies showed the importance of provider and employer relations when delivering learning in the workplace.

Figure 5.4: A PTP and Dŵr Cymru

The longstanding relationship developed between the PTP and Dŵr Cymru (Welsh Water) secured the commitment of on-going provision of essential skills learning in the workplace beyond the life of the funded programme. The PTP had been providing essential skills learning support for Dŵr Cymru since 2012 and developed a strong and trusted relationship with the employer and the union, GMB.

By September 2014, the PTP had invested in a small network of 14 'strategically placed local tutors' to work on ESiW within Dwr Cymru '*because Dwr Cymru needs tutors there at a time to suit the business*' (PTP). The PTP worked around the shift patterns of the workforce and achieved the TUC quality award^{xii} for the delivery of the essential skills programme.

Dŵr Cymru achieved the EPA in 2013 and therefore, was committed to the on-going delivery of essential skills training for its staff, having recognised the positive impact of the training for its workforce and its business. The benefits cited by the

^{xii} For more information on the quality award, see Section 6.

employer included

- Increased productivity, for example filling out data more quickly and moving on to more jobs as a result
- Improved customer service and administrative processes due to improved communication and literacy skills
- Improved ICT skills including the completion of forms online and the use of email to transfer data requests
- Improved numeracy skills allowing staff working out in the field to better understand the maths behind hydraulics related calculations needed in their work
- Improved job retention at the company call centre as a result of staff feeling invested in.

The PTP was continuing to provide essential skills training which was being funded through the Welsh Union Learning Fund (WULF). However, the funding available reduced and the PTP re-arranged the delivery model, providing less one-to-one learning to improve cost efficiency, this decision was made for the learners who were part-way through their courses when the ESiW funding came to an end. The PTP were very keen to maintain working relationships with Dŵr Cymru, hoping to continue until the follow-on programme was in place. The working relationship that developed between the PTP, GMB and Dŵr Cymru should help continue provision until the new programme is launched.

Source: YCL Case Study Report

Delivering Through the Medium of Welsh

5.45 From the employer survey, 56 per cent (n=168) of employers stated they were made aware that the training could have been delivered through the medium of Welsh, and 6 per cent of employers (n=18) actually received some of their training in Welsh.

- 5.46 However, of those that were not aware they could have received training through the medium of Welsh, (44 per cent; n=132), 14 per cent (n=18) said they would have preferred to have received training through the medium of Welsh. Most of those business were located in the Convergence areas and from Gwynedd in particular.
- 5.47 Drawing a clear conclusion regarding the ability of providers to meet demand for training through the medium of Welsh is not straight forward. When providers were asked about delivering in Welsh, all but one (lead) provider reported they were able to respond to demand and/or there was limited demand.
- 5.48 Many reported that most learners did not want to learn through the medium of Welsh because they wanted to develop their English skills. One provider who has targets to deliver through the medium of Welsh for a WBL contract, stated it is a challenge to get Welsh speaking learners to actually learn in Welsh and that they have, as a result, developed a strategy for increasing demand for learning through Welsh. Another lead contract holder stated that the Welsh Government should be focussing on increasing demand for learning through Welsh. **Figure 5.5** provides the feedback from providers on delivering through the medium of Welsh.

Figure 5.5: The Demand for Training Through the Medium of Welsh

‘There are two aspects to our delivery: one is delivering all learning through the medium of Welsh and the other is bilingual delivery (facilitation in Welsh but completion of qualification in English). We do lots of bilingual delivery, around 100 learners.’ (Sub-Contracted Provider)

‘We have resources [capacity] to deliver in Welsh but there is a lack of demand, especially in North East Wales.’ (Sub-Contracted Provider)

‘We had resources [capacity] to deliver but there was no demand’.(Lead Provider)

‘We were asked to deliver some programmes to an area in north Wales which we didn’t have the capacity to do. We were asked to deliver to a number of childcare settings who were delivering their childcare through the medium of Welsh. We

struggled to find capacity within the sub-contractors to deliver that. Most of our providers indicated that they have the capacity to deliver through the medium of Welsh or bilingually, but when asked to do it, it was a different position. The option [for learners] should be there. This is a bigger piece of work to try and build capacity within the provider network.' (Lead Contractor)

'The main thing that the Welsh Government needs to do, is stimulate the demand. There are sectors where there is demand. If a hundred employers asked for provision in the medium of Welsh we would struggle. We have to try and build capacity within the supply chain whilst at the same time stimulating a demand.' (Lead contract holder)

Source: Provider Consultations and Sub-Contracted Provider Survey

5.49 One provider also made the comment that there was limited learning resources available to deliver qualifications in Welsh and that this needed to be considered.

5.50 With regards developing Welsh language skills, many providers agreed that there should be an option offered to providers within the ESiW programme of developing Welsh language skills as an essential skill.

5.51 'Many employers need this, this is the language of their business. We should be able to upskill learners in the use of the Welsh language, both spoken and written' (Provider)

Future Demand

5.52 All providers gave accounts of having developed strong relations with employers which they felt were under threat due to the hiatus in funding.

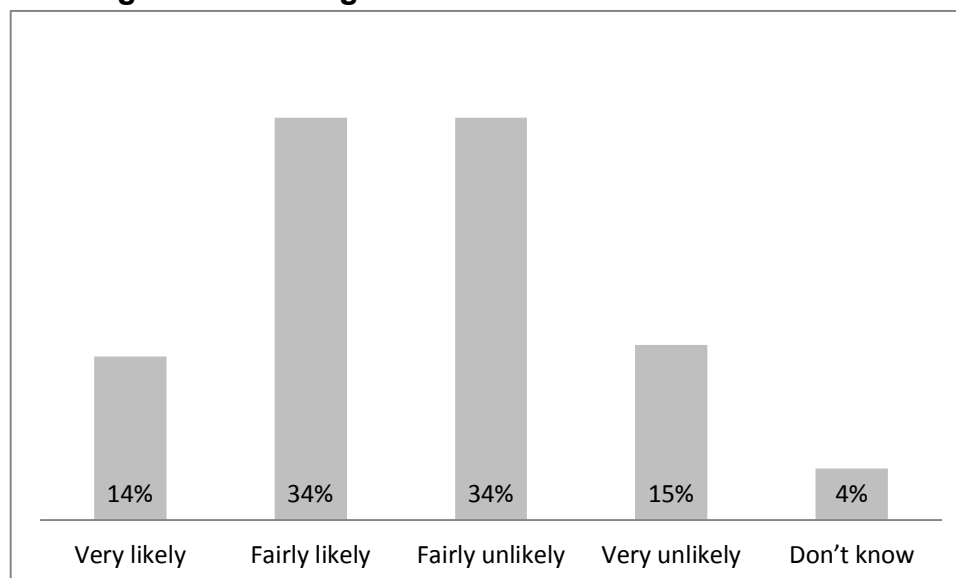
'It took a long time to engage employers initially, but then by the end of the contract we had built up a good relationship with employers and unions and had to turn people away as the Welsh Government closed the programme.' (Provider)

‘Being unable to sign-up any individuals since September 2014 (as all had to be finished by Dec 14), has resulted in a major gap in provision, and a severe loss of momentum for the project.’ (Provider)

‘Organisations have been continually asking when the next round is going to start. There is lots of pent-up demand including some employers that were engaged late in Phase 2 with expectations that they will be able to put staff through ESiW – now held in limbo.’ (Provider)

5.53 Data generated as part of the employer survey suggested that employers intended to continue to receive training in essential skills (**Figure 5.6**). When asked how likely their organisation was to provide further essential skills training in the coming 12 months, 47 per cent (n=142) said it was likely or very likely that they would continue to provide essential skills training.

Figure 5.6 How Likely is the Organisation to Provide Further Essential Skills Training in the Coming 12 Months?



Source: essential skills in the Workplace (ESIW) Evaluation, Employer Survey. Base: All (142) respondents were asked ‘What will be the nature of this further essential skills training?’

5.54 Of these 142 employers, 40 per cent stated they would not engage in essential skills training without further funding.

Regionalisation of Delivery

- 5.55 There seemed to be some concern among providers regarding the move to a regional commissioning structure for the future delivery of essential skills training.
- 5.56 According to some providers working Pan-Wales, different Regional Skills Partnerships were at different stages of development and had a range of strategies and delivery priorities with regards sectors.
- 5.57 There was a concern expressed by one provider as to whether the RSPs would have sufficient resources to deliver and co-ordinate the next ESiW programme.
- 5.58 Providers that had worked with large employers were concerned they would have to contract with four RSPs. This could potentially be problematic if they did not win a contract and the employer was required to work with more than one provider
- 5.59 There was also uncertainty regarding different priorities of RSPs and whether this would result in an uneven focus on certain sectors across Wales.
- 5.60 The Issue of Competitiveness and Convergence funding zones came up by one provider who was unsure whether this would cause problems of eligibility for large employers operating across areas.

Use of WEST

- 5.61 The evaluation specification required a review of the WEST pilot.

- 5.62 In 2013 the Welsh Government invited organisations to submit a tender to develop and implement an on-line screening, initial assessment and diagnostic assessment tool. The tool was designed to assess and progress post-16 learners in their essential skills including English/Welsh literacy, numeracy, ICT and ESOL. These were later amended to communication, application of number, digital literacy and ESOL following a review of qualifications. The assessment tool is being rolled out to all Welsh Government contracted providers delivering learning to individuals undertaking learning programmes of five hours or more per week.
- 5.63 The contract for the development and implementation of the tool was awarded to Tribal. A pilot exercise was undertaken and the WEST was launched in October 2014 along with a programme of scheduled monthly updates and releases.
- 5.64 There have been a number of challenges and delays in completing the development and rollout of the tool. The main cause of the delay was related to the revision of ESW qualifications. Following the review, a new set of standards was developed and these had to be mapped to the WEST. The standard for the Digital Literacy ESW qualification has only recently been approved which has resulted in further delays in completing development of the tool.
- 5.65 Other challenges related to the identification of the need for additional functions that were not included in the original specification.
- 5.66 Research carried out by Tribal evidenced that providers thought the tool gave a more balanced picture of learners' skills in comparison with other tools. Learners could see where their strengths and weaknesses were and it was a more in-depth assessment.
- 5.67 Learners were asked to complete a survey on their views of using the assessment tool to which 335 responded. Tutors also completed a survey and 35 responded. Learners reported that the experience of being assessed was positive, and screens were easy to navigate.

5.68 There were some concerns from providers about the use of WEST in terms of potentially increasing the number of hours of assessment required before engaging the learner on to the programme.

5.69 There were also concerns regarding the cost of purchasing a licence to assess skills and the fact that assessments are to be done online so requiring ICT equipment.

“For providers with plenty of funding this is not a problem, but for smaller providers that don’t have a lot of money, this is going to be difficult for us to resource.” (ACL Provider Manager)

Summary

5.70 PTPs performed strongly when considering the distribution of learner starts and qualifications achieved across all providers.

5.71 Conversion rates in terms of learners achieving qualifications varied across providers quite considerably. There is no single explanation for the variability in conversion rates.

5.72 Lead providers reported increased confidence with delivering ESiW as the programme progressed and most stated they had developed good relationships with employers which should continue if future funding was available.

5.73 The quality of the provision was reported to be very good by most employers. Employers reported high levels of satisfaction, and agreed that providers had been flexible and contextualised provision effectively to make learning relevant.

5.74 A minority of employers (just over one in ten) stated that the provision did not meet their expectations for reasons of inflexibility, poor communication, provision being too easy and no follow-up after the initial assessment.

5.75 There is evidence that a small number of employers would have liked to have received training through the medium of Welsh. Concluding on whether provision can meet demand was somewhat difficult. Most providers stated they could respond to the demand for learning through the medium of Welsh. One (significant) lead contractor stated their consortium could not always respond to the demand.

6 Impact on Employers

Introduction

- 6.1 This section describes the outcomes and impact of ESiW as recognised by employers across Wales.
- 6.2 Responses were generated from 300 employers, the sample included 104 responses from the Competitiveness areas and 196 responses from the Convergence areas.

Essential skills Issues and Previous Training

- 6.3 **Table 6.1** details the skills areas that employers considered needed improving in their workforce. The most frequently reported essential skills need was ICT with over three fifths (62 per cent) of employers citing this as a skills need.

Table 6.1: Areas of Poor Essential Skills

	Total		Competitiveness		Convergence	
	Count	Percentage of Total Employers	Count	Percentage of Sample Employers	Count	Percentage of Sample Employers
ICT	186	62	68	65	118	60
Literacy	144	48	52	50	92	47
Numeracy	131	44	52	50	79	40
Communication	85	28	37	36	48	24
ESOL	12	4	5	5	7	4

Source: Essential skills in the Workplace (ESiW) Evaluation, Employer Survey.
Base: All (558), Competitiveness = 214, Convergence = 175. Employers were asked 'Which areas of poor essential skills posed issue(s) for your organisation?' Closed question, multiple response.

- 6.4 Case studies carried out with employers also evidenced the impact of low level essential skills. Examples of staff in the care sector had difficulty in keeping up to date with the legislative changes and an increase demand for record keeping and paper work in general that was recognised by one manager interviewed.

'Being able to keep good records of and for our residents is vital, it means that information is passed on between members of staff and medical staff too.' (Employer)

- 6.5 There were examples of employers who had recruited staff from other countries that did not have the necessary language skills who needed ESOL and Communication essential skills support.
- 6.6 In addition, many employers spoke about deficits in customer service skills, in front of house/reception areas of work and the quality of administration tasks.

'I was aware of some aspects of our service that could be improved as well as some administrative tasks that were not as good as they could be.'

(Employer)

- 6.7 Employers were asked about the impact they considered low level essential skills had on their organisations. The most frequently cited impact was the impact on staff productivity (32 per cent; 97) and the communications with customers and other organisations (18 per cent; 55).
- 6.8 However, many employers did not recognise or admit in interview, the negative impact that low level essential skills had on the business and considered the training was more for the benefit of individuals rather than for the business. This is illustrated in the quote below and in **Table 6.2**.

'I think it's very important that people have the opportunity to develop their skills and because the training is free, it means that I can support that.'

(Employer)

Table 6.2: Impact of Low Level Essential Skills

	Total	Percentage of all Employers	Competitiveness		Convergence	
			Count	Percentage of Sample Employers	Count	Percentage of Sample Employers
It had no impact upon the business	142	47	53	51	89	45
It affected staff productivity	97	33	34	33	63	32
It affected communication with customers or other organisations	55	18	16	16	39	20
It affected our customer service	39	13	8	8	31	16
It affected staff motivation	20	7	4	4	16	8
It affected our workforce relations	10	3	4	4	6	3
It affected business sales	6	2	0	0	6	3
It affected our public image	6	2	1	1	5	3
It affected staff turnover/retention	5	2	1	1	4	2

Source: Essential Skills in the Workplace (ESiW) Evaluation, Employer Survey.

Base: All (300) Employers were asked 'In what way did low level essential skills in the workforce impact upon the organisation?'

6.9 Just less than one half of all employers stated they did not recognise an impact on the business of low level essential skills. However, a third stated it had an impact on staff productivity and slightly more employers in the Convergence area noticed an impact on communication with customers and on customer service more generally.

6.10 To gauge the additionality of ESiW, employers were asked about involvement in essential skills training previous to ESiW and what attracted them to the provision. Three quarters of employers had not been involved in any essential skills training prior to ESiW. Of those that had not previously been involved, 61 per cent (n=128) stated that they had not recognised a need.

6.11 The fact that training was tailored to the needs of employers was important with over half of employers engaged in the programme giving this as a reason for their engagement on the programme. That training was free at the point of delivery and tailored to employers needs attracted employers to ESiW.

Table 6.3: Appeal of ESiW Training

	Total of Employers	Percentage of Employers	Competitiveness		Convergence	
			Count	Percentage of Sample Employers	Count	Percentage of Sample Employers
Free training	201	67	72	70	129	66
Tailored training to meet business needs	153	52	59	57	97	49
Provision of training at the business premises	112	37	42	41	70	36
Assistance to identify training needs	73	24	19	18	54	28
No specific advantage	10	3	1	1	9	5
Don't know	3	1	1	1	2	1

Source: Essential skills in the Workplace (ESiW) Evaluation, Employer Survey.

Base: All (300) Employers were asked 'What was it about the ESiW programme that appealed to your organisation?' The question was a multiple response question which accounts for percentage responses of above 100 per cent.

Perceived Value of Essential Skills Qualifications

6.12 Four fifths of employers (n=240) considered the attainment of essential skills qualifications as valuable to their business. Employers gave comments regarding why they considered the qualifications valuable to their organisation.

Figure 6.1 The Value of Essential Skills to the Organisations

'We are now more computer literate and can store/manage/organise more files to do with the business on the computer.'

'The staff are a lot more confident in their roles; those staff that were nervous with using computers are now logging on and getting on with it, knowing what they are doing confidently. Staff that had to deal with calculations also have a greater confidence in what they're doing and I have found staff are now willing to take on more work as they are more able and confident.'

'Our organisation is office based and the staff can start lagging behind and don't keep up after a while, and they can become unaware of what they can and can't do as things are rapidly changing and updating. The ICT Essential Skills has brought them up-to-speed and up-to-date.'

'It was more of a bonding session for the employees, almost a team building exercise as we were all learning together.'

'I now realise how much of the essential skills we had forgotten. It helped work-wise because everything is computerised here so we don't need to think or calculate anything in our heads. We use programs that are all set up to do it for us (the computers/programs do the maths so we don't have to). It's also valuable to the employees on a personal level.'

Source: Employer Survey. Base 300. Learners were asked: 'In what way have these essential skills qualifications been valuable to your organisation?'

6.13 One of the employer case studies revealed the importance some employers placed on providing their workers with opportunities to learn.

Figure 6.2: The Benefits of Learning for the Workforce

A charity supporting people suffering from drug and alcohol addiction was engaged in ESiW through a local provider.

The charity offered a range of services including the Drop in Centre, a Diversionary Activity Programme (e.g. outdoor pursuits, health and fitness) a family support centre and education and prevention programmes for young people. The centre was supported by eight paid staff and volunteers, who themselves, were recovering from addiction and, therefore, could provide empathy and understanding to clients.

The chief executive had a strong belief that individuals have the capacity to change and improve their situation and this extended to ensuring that all staff and volunteers have an opportunity to develop themselves. The centre had an extensive training budget, to train staff members in their work of supporting individuals with drug and alcohol addiction.

Engaging with the essential skills programme was part of this vision, with all employers and volunteers being given the opportunity to develop their skills set within the charity. Staff were encouraged to participate in the essential skills programme. As well as benefiting each individual, the chief executive also agreed that improved ICT skills and communication skills would improve the service the charity offers. Part of the offer to clients was that they could improve their IT skills while attending the centre. Therefore, it was important that staff had up-to-date ICT and Communication Skills to impart this knowledge on to others.

The training provider undertook business training needs analysis, which helped the charity to identify training needs. All members of staff were given the opportunity to learn and did so on a voluntary basis. All staff members within the centre participated.

'Everyone was really keen to take part if I'm honest. They understood the importance of having these key skills and to be able to transfer these skills to other service users if necessary. Having it free of charge was also great.' (Chief Executive)

All staff completed qualifications in ICT, Communications and AON. They were all given time off to learn, as the chief executive believed it was essential to encourage them to participate. As a result of the essential skills training, the chief executive reported

- Increased confidence with being able to offer support to service users
- Better kept records on service users
- Staff being more efficient in completing day to day tasks
- More motivation.

Learners stated they felt they had improved their confidence and their use of computers to advertise events in the centre. Some members of staff moved on to do further learning at Level 4 in Substance Misuse as a result of their learning. The chief executive was more confident the charity was able to provide a higher level of learning support to the service users.

The learning was delivered through the local FE college and, as a result of ESiW, the organisation continued to receive further learning from the college to receive training around Care in the Community.

Source: YCL Case Study Report

6.14 The position adopted by the chief executive regarding the value of learning for individuals working within the organisation was the driver to engagement in ESiW.

Take-up of the Employer Pledge Award

- 6.15 Ten per cent (31/300) of employers reported that they had secured the EPA. However, this figure was greater than the number claimed for by providers. Some employers may be referring back to the Employer Pledge, launched as part of the Basic Skills National Strategy (2007^{xiii}).
- 6.16 These 10 per cent (31/300) were subsequently asked why they had applied for the Employer Pledge and 76 per cent (n=25) said it was because they wanted to demonstrate their commitment to training the workforce. 24 per cent (n=8) said it was to access support in identifying and addressing essential skills needs, and 21 per cent (n=7) said it was to help ensure that essential skills training was embedded in their training strategy. Employers stated that they considered the EPA important and **Figure 6.3** shows their comments.

Figure 6.3: Benefits of the Employer Pledge Award

'It shows staff that we are committed to training them and also committed to make sure we have a positive, confident workforce.'

'It demonstrates a commitment to our employees.'

'As a manager, it was not personally done to further the business as such, but it was done so that staff improved their own skills for their own personal benefit and their own careers.'

'I'm a big believer in training staff wherever possible, it shows a commitment to training my employees.'

Source: YCL Employer Survey

- 6.17 One provider actively promoted the EPA and linked it in with a high profile award ceremony and included the unions in its promotion/celebration.

^{xiii} The Basic Skills Agency (2007) The Basic Employer Pledge

6.18 The majority of employers who did not apply for the EPA (91 per cent) stated that they were not aware of it or had not considered it. This statistic revealed a lack of engagement and promotion of the EPA among providers, a fact that was substantiated in most interviews with providers.

“We haven’t found this to be popular, and employers question why they have to go through the process and why, by delivering essential skills, this isn’t enough of a demonstration of commitment.” (Provider)

“This was the hardest sell of all...it was an extra burden for employers and there was little incentive for us.” (Provider)

“We tried to promote it to a care home, but it required considerable time and effort which made it not viable.” (Provider)

6.19 Programme data showed a low level of engagement with the EPA and, as a result, the future viability of the EPA - as something that employers should aspire to achieve, is questionable.

Training or Trainers/Tutors

6.20 Employers were asked about the Train the Trainer initiative that was delivered in the earlier programme (BSiW March 2011 to February 2013). According to employers, 29 per cent (n=88) said that their organisation was offered training to up-skill employees to support essential skills learning ‘in house,’ and 53 (17 per cent) said they took up the offer. In addition, a considerable number of employers, who were not offered the training, would have accepted it (27 per cent n=53) revealing an opportunity was missed to develop capacity.

6.21 This evaluation did not evidence any providers delivering training to staff in the workplace to help support essential skills learning. Indeed, they did struggle to recall the tutor training initiative and performance data did not indicate high levels of engagement.

Employers' Views of the Benefits of ESiW on the Skills of the Workforce

6.22 Case study evidence generated as part of the evaluation evidenced a range of organisational benefits as a result of learners undertaking learning in essential skills.

6.23 It should be noted that the extent of essential skills learning activity varied quite considerably from small employers training one or two staff members, to larger public and private sector employers training between one to two hundred staff members over the course of the programme. Therefore, perceptions of impact on the business or organisation varied considerably.

6.24 For the smaller businesses, employers often reported about particular tasks that had improved as a result of essential skills learning such as administrative tasks, communication with customers or clients. Larger employers were more likely to recognised improved morale or team work as well as forms of business efficiency.

6.25 Although perceptions of skills were largely the same across the geographical regions, **Table 6.6** shows a higher proportion of employers in the Convergence areas felt that there had been an improvement in workforce communication skills. (This may be directly related to a greater recognition of need as shown in **Table 6.2**)

Table 6.4: Skills Improved as a Result of ESiW by Area

	Total of Employers	Percentage of Employers	Competitiveness		Convergence	
			Count	Percentage of Sample Employers	Count	Percentage of Sample Employers
Improvement in workforce numeracy skills	158	53	53	51	105	54
Improvement in workforce literacy skills	141	47	48	47	93	47
Improvement in workforce communication skills	175	58	52	50	123	63
Improvement in workforce ICT skills	185	62	63	61	122	62

Source: Essential skills in the Workplace (ESiW) Evaluation, Employer Survey. Base: All (300) Employers were asked 'As a result of your involvement with the ESiW programme has your organisation experienced an ...?' Table shows responses who said "yes" by Area

6.26 The impact of improved ICT skills was a feature of delivery in schools with a number of providers working with schools to support their teaching assistants. According to a number of providers, schools were interested in up-skilling teaching assistants in the range of essential skills areas.

‘Once we delivered in one school, and saw how successful it was and how much it had made a difference, we started working with the local authority and have now gone in to many schools in the area.’ (FE Provider)

6.27 One of the case studies evidenced the benefits of a school’s engagement on the ESiW programme.

Figure 6.4: Training Delivered to Teacher Assistants

Menter a Busnes contacted the school and identified a need for ICT support for classroom assistants and referred the need on to the local FE college. The local FE college contacted this small primary school to discuss the range of skills needs.

The head teacher stated that the ICT skills needs among some of her staff were a significant issue for the school when considering the role that teaching assistants needed to play in the classroom supporting learners with computers. When the college spoke about the ability to improve ICT skills among teaching assistants, she agreed that it was an area that she thought would benefit some staff.

‘We wanted to help the staff be more efficient in their work and to be able to help and support teachers by reducing the burden on them and increasing the skills set across the school. This is also a part of increasing morale in the school.’ (Head teacher)

According the head teacher, the school had previous relations with the college and felt confident that the college would provide a good quality of training which was important. The college carried out an initial assessment and identified a skills need in ICT only among seven out of the eight teaching staff including teachers and teachers assistants. As a result, they all agreed to undertake a Level 2 in ICT. Training was delivered on site, after school and through a mixture of English and Welsh teaching. The learning was tailored around the types of exercises that primary school children were required to develop such as creative writing and

searching the internet for project work and developing skills in maths. The teaching assistants also needed to use it for carrying out some administrative duties for the teacher. All teaching assistants worked together to discuss their learning needs and decide how to incorporate the learning in to their role. The head teacher recognised the impact of the learning in the school.

'The teaching assistants are now more confident to use the computers in a classroom environment and with assisting the teachers.' (Head teacher)

The head teacher reported improved morale among teaching assistants, a greater confidence in them undertaking their role and to take on responsibilities in the classroom helping the learners. This was corroborated by a teaching assistant.

'I'm able to do things that I wouldn't have been able to do in the past, like help children to use the computer and show them what do to rather than the other way round. I don't have to ask the teacher what to do anymore either. I can do things for her now and save her time.' (Learner)

However, without further funding the head teacher stated she was unlikely to engage in further essential skills training due to her limited school budget.

Source: YCL Case Study

6.28 When asked about impact on the organisation, over a half of employers stated that the workforce had improved communication and literacy skills, and just under a half cited improved numeracy skills. This also concurred with the number of learners undertaking ESW qualifications in Communication and Numeracy. In terms of the impact on organisations of essential skills learning, employers cited raised workforce productivity (55 per cent), improved customer service (54 per cent), and improved communications with customers and other organisations (53 per cent). On the whole, businesses in the Convergence area observed a greater impact on their organisational performance.

Table 6.5: Observed Impacts to Organisational Performance by Area

	Total of Employers	Percentage of Employers	Competitiveness		Convergence	
			Count	Percentage of Sample Employers	Count	Percentage of Sample Employers
Raised workforce productivity	166	55	60	58	106	54
Improved communication with customers or other organisations	160	53	53	51	107	55
Improved customer service	163	54	49	48	114	58
Improved public image of organisation	88	29	24	23	64	33
Increased organisation competitiveness	66	22	16	16	50	26
Increase in sales	23	76	5	5	18	9
Reduced staff turnover	26	9	3	3	23	12

Source: Essential skills in the Workplace (ESiW) Evaluation, Employer Survey. Base: All (300) Employers were asked 'Have you observed any the following impacts to organisational performance as a result of your involvement with the ESiW programme?' Table shows responses who said "yes" by Area

6.29 Of the softer skills and benefits of essential skills training (Table 6.8), employers cited workers' improved confidence and enthusiasm to work (77 per cent; n=232), their ability to undertake jobs better (74 per cent; n=222) and improved morale (71 per cent; n=214).

Table 6.6: Observed Impacts amongst those Recently Engaged in Learning

	Competitive		Convergence	
	Count	Percentage of Sample Employers	Count	Percentage of Sample Employers
Greater confidence and enthusiasm to work	81	79	151	77
Able to undertake jobs better	71	69	151	77
Improved morale	75	73	139	71
More willing to take part in company training activities	65	63	125	64
Willingness to take on responsibility	56	54	104	53
Improved compliance with health and safety practices	17	17	56	29
Reduced absenteeism/sickness	5	5	21	11

Source: Essential skills in the Workplace (ESIW) Evaluation, Employer Survey.

Base: All (300) Employers were asked 'As a result of your involvement with the ESIW programme have you observed any of the following impacts amongst those recently engaged in learning?' x Area

6.30 Many employers spoke of improved morale and confidence in their workforce as being a key benefit from the programme. Some employers were re-interviewed as part of the study to identify longer term impacts of the training. None of these organisations had undergone any essential skills training since the last visit. The main reason for this was employers not wanting to pay for further training. However, the skills developed were still recognised as being valuable.

Figure 6.5: Employer Case Study – Care Home, North Wales

This residential care home employed 56 staff and received essential skills training from a sub-contracted provider that specialised in supporting staff in the care sector. The manager in the care home recognised a skills need amongst the workforce after attending a care sector conference. In particular, she realised that some of the problems arising at work were related to staff's low level essential skills. Staff were required to work out the correct dosage of medicines and calculate weight conversions for lifting machines and needed to improve their numeracy skills to undertake the tasks effectively and efficiently. In addition, staff also needed to improve their literacy skills when writing patient care cards.

'I realised that poor skills were actually affecting our business and our services but hadn't made the connection with this and any immediate "learning" needs.'

(Manager)

After contacting the college herself, upon returning from the conference, she was

put in touch with a small provider who assessed staff. Around half of the staff, mostly part-time staff, participated in a range of ESiW training across all qualification areas. Due to the extent of the identified need, the business identified a room, which was converted in to a learning room with two computers.

The business did request training in Welsh Language skills but were told this was not possible through the ESiW programme. (There was no evidence of follow up regarding how the business could receive training in the Welsh Language).

Since receiving the training from the college, the employer went on to achieve the EPA after being introduced to it by the provider. The manager also achieved the Level 2 Practitioner Learner Support qualification through the tutor training fund and was supporting staff with their essential skills learning.

“Essential skills is now part of the training plans of all my staff” (Care Home Manager)

They have embedded delivery in to their statutory care qualification and ICT training. They have also reviewed all policies to recognise essential skills issues and changed the presentation/language around the completion of forms and charts in the workplace to make sure the language is easy to understand and accessible to people with varying levels of essential Skills.

The care home substantially changed their internal training strategy, and the culture of the workplace in relation to and recognition of essential skills needs. Consequently, staff stated they had more confidence to consider further training, and were helping and teaching other staff.

Since ESIW stopped recruiting learners, the company had not delivered any training, despite previously saying they would consider purchasing the provision if the funding stopped. This frustrated some learners who wished to continue with further essential skills learning. One of the learners progressed on to further learning, undertaking a Level 4 qualification funded by the organisation..

Source: YCL Case Study

6.31 Other organisations visited also demonstrated the value of the training in particular work areas. A meat processing company was struggling with communication within the company, primarily due to the number of different languages being spoken in the business.

Figure 6.6: Employer Case Study - ESOL Provision

This meat processing factory employed 140 workers, mainly seasonal staff and staff coming from abroad who had English as their second language. Although the company stated that the problem presented by staff not having English as their first language was a small issue, there was an on-going need to up-skill staff's language skills due to the seasonal nature of employment within the organisation. There was also a concern regarding staff's ability to adhere to regulations.

'Our health and safety practices were potentially being compromised as some of our staff could not read our health and safety notices.' (Manager)

Twelve learners had progressed through the programme and the employer had achieved the EPA to demonstrate its commitment to essential skills. The organisation was only focussing on delivering ESOL as this was considered to be the most efficient way of dealing with the skills deficits.

'We were aware that being able to offer language classes to our workers would mean that the workforce would be better skilled to cope with day to day tasks at the abattoir.' (Manager)

According to the manager, the learning resulted in fewer mistakes being made because of an increase in understanding and removal of language barriers; an increase in confidence levels amongst staff with undertaking daily tasks and better communication.

'It's improved safety and communication with others and other organisations...staff also appear happier because they can communicate with each other.' (Manager)

According to the manager, there had been a drop in staff turnover as a result of the training being delivered through ESiW.

Since the programme finished, the organisation had not accessed any further ESOL training, and over the course of the coming year, this was likely to have an impact on the level of understanding and communication across the business.

Source: YCL case study

6.32 In the recent case study interviews with employers post programme delivery, there had been no continuation of standalone essential skills learning (providers were continuing to deliver essential skills as part of Apprenticeships to 17-25 year olds). The survey data confirmed that majority of employers (84 per cent; n=253) had not provided any further essential skills training to their employees over the last year.

6.33 However, according to the survey, there was continuation of provision among 43 employers (14 per cent). Eighteen of those (6 per cent) stated that the organisation had funded the training themselves.

Summary

6.34 Three fifths of employers recognised a need for ICT skills, just less than one half recognised a need for literacy skills and just over two fifths, for numeracy skills. The need for ESOL skills needs were recognised by very few employers.

6.35 Prior to engaging in ESiW, nearly one half of employers surveyed did not understand how low essential skills were impacting on their business. Many employers were keen to provide essential skills training in the business in order to give learners an opportunity to develop but were not driven by business benefits.

6.36 Employers were motivated to engage in ESiW because the training was free and tailored to meet their needs. There were many examples of workplace learning being contextualised to the needs of learner roles and this was valued by employers.

6.37 Since training, over half of the employers recognised an increase in skills among their workforce in ICT, Communications and Literacy skills and just fewer than half in numeracy skills. Over one half also recognised the impact on their business with regards improved productivity, customer service and communication with customers. Four fifths of employers considered the attainment of essential skills qualifications as valuable to their business.

6.38 There was a recognition that learners were more confident in their ability to carry out their roles at work, there was improved morale and a willingness to take on more responsibility.

7 Impact on Learners

Introduction

7.1 This section draws evidence from the ESF Leavers Survey which included responses from ESiW learners. In total, 1,284 learners who had undergone ESiW training were interviewed. Annex D details the sample demographics and also includes evidence from learners interviewed as part of the workplace case studies

Skills and Qualifications Before Course

7.2 Confidence levels before the course began were high for reading, writing and communicating with colleagues. Confidence was slightly lower for dealing with numbers although over three quarters (77 per cent) were either confident or very confident. There were no significant differences in levels of confidence in the areas identified in **Table 7.1**, before starting ESiW, between competitiveness and convergence learners.

Table 7.1: Confidence Levels before Starting ESiW

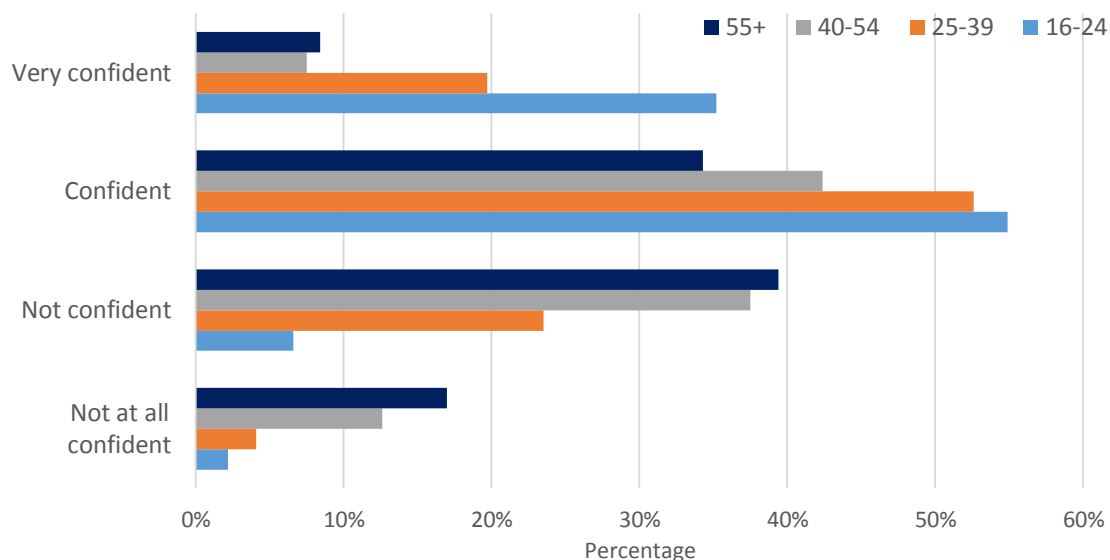
Count (Percentage)	Confidence Level				
	Not at all confident	Not confident	Confident	Very confident	Don't know
Skill					
Reading	12 (1)	76 (6)	626 (49)	569 (44)	1 (0)
Writing	25 (2)	137 (11)	628 (49)	491 (38)	3 (0)
Dealing with numbers	45 (4)	242 (19)	667 (52)	326 (25)	4 (0)
Communicating with customers or colleagues	10 (1)	77 (6)	649 (51)	542 (42)	6 (1)
Working with computers/ICT	139 (11)	410 (32)	565 (44)	166 (13)	4 (0)

Source: 2013 Welsh ESF Leavers Survey. Base: All (1284) Sample Learners

Learners were asked, 'before doing the ESiW training how confident would you say you were in each of the following' Closed question. Single response for each skill.

7.3 Levels of confidence were lower for working with computers/ICT. Those with low confidence were largely in the higher age groups as shown in **Figure 7.1**

Figure 7.1: Previous Confidence with Working with Computers/ICT by Age Group



Source: 2013 Welsh ESF Leavers Survey

Base: All (1275) Sample Learners

Learners were asked, 'before doing the ESiW training how confident would you say you were in each of the following Working with computers/ICT' Closed question. Single response.

7.4 Over one third (37 per cent) of learners reported having formal responsibility for supervising the work of others before the course began (**Table 7.2**). A greater percentage of learners from the higher age groups reported having this responsibility compared to the 16-24 age group.

Table 7.2: Supervisory Responsibility Before the Course

Course	Total		Convergence		Competitiveness	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Yes	467	37	272	36	195	37
No	808	63	482	64	326	62
Don't Know	3	0	2	0	1	0
Total	1,278	100	756	100	522	100

Source: 2013 Welsh ESF Leavers Survey. Bases: 1278 Sample Learners, Convergence (756), Competitive (522). Learners were asked 'In the last job you had prior to taking the course, did you have formal responsibility for supervising the work of other employees?' Closed question, Single Response.

Benefits of the Course

7.5 Learners surveyed reported a number of benefits gained as a result of taking the training (Table 7.3). The most frequent benefit cited by 85 per cent of learners was being ‘more confident about your abilities’. Second to that was ‘feeling better about yourself generally’ where 79 percent of learners felt this was a benefit. There was evidence of a broader number of ‘spin-offs’ from the essential skills learning with regards other personal benefits. Learners agreed with statements including ‘feeling better about yourself generally’ (77 per cent), ‘being clearer about opportunities open to you’, and ‘being more enthusiastic about learning’ (71 per cent) and ‘Feeling you have improved employment or career prospects’ (70 per cent). The least frequent benefit was ‘taken up new interests or hobbies’ with only 113 (9 per cent) of learners agreeing this was a benefit.

Table 7.3: Benefits of the Course

Benefit	Total		Convergence		Competitiveness	
	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners
More enthusiastic about learning	918	71	543	71	375	72
Taking part in more voluntary or community activities	400	32	222	30	178	34
Clearer about what you want to do in your life	866	67	493	65	373	71
More confident about your abilities	1,086	85	633	83	453	86
Clearer about the range of opportunities open to you	995	77	576	76	419	80
Feeling better about yourself generally	1,019	79	607	79	418	80
Thinking about setting up your own business or working self – employed	138	12	80	12	58	12
Feeling you have improved employment or career prospects	875	68	506	67	369	70
Feeling more healthy	664	52	384	51	280	53
Made new friends	488	38	288	38	200	38
Taken up new interests or hobbies	113	9	60	8	53	10

Source: 2013 Welsh ESF Leavers Survey. Base: All (1284) Sample Learners, Convergence (760), Competitiveness (524). Learners were asked ‘Thinking about the course, do you feel you benefited in any of the following ways by going on the course? Are you now....’ Closed Question, Options read out, and multiple response.

7.6 Learners also stated that they gained a range of skills as a result of the course (Table 7.4). Learners in Competitiveness areas were more likely to feel they gained English language skills as a result of the course with 46 per cent in Convergence compared to 51 per cent in Competitiveness.

Table 7.4: Skills Gained as a Result of the Course

Skills	Total		Convergence		Competitiveness	
	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners
Job-specific skills related to a specific occupation	729	57	420	55	309	59
Problem solving skills	784	61	465	61	319	61
Team working skills	733	57	447	59	286	55
Organisational skills	783	61	471	62	312	60
Literacy skills	759	59	443	58	316	60
Numeracy skills	749	58	446	59	303	58
IT skills	926	72	548	72	378	72
Communication skills	867	68	513	68	354	68
Leadership and/or strategic management skills	391	30	229	30	162	31
English language skills	615	48	350	46	265	51
Other	10	1	5	1	5	1

Source: 2013 Welsh ESF Leavers Survey. Base: All (1284) Sample Learners, Convergence (760), Competitiveness (524). Learners were asked 'Which if any of the following skills do you feel you have gained or improved from undertaking the course?' Closed Question, options listed given choice of Yes, No, Don't Know.

7.7 One of the learners interviewed worked in a caravan park and revealed how she felt her skills had improved as a result of her essential skills training.

Figure 7.2: Administrative Learner Undertaking Three ESW Qualifications

This learner had been working for a Caravan Park for the past four years. She was 23 years old and when she left school she only had a few GCSEs and not in English and Maths. Her learning experience in school had not filled her with the confidence she needed to progress in learning when she left.

'I was never very confident about my abilities and left school without achieving very much.' (Learner)

The learner was assessed for her essential skills and required up-skilling in AON Level 1, Communication Level 2 and ICT Entry Level. Her role was front of house

reception and administration responsibilities (answering the phone, responding to mail, taking bookings.) She was encouraged by her supervisor to undertake the training who stated that *'she lacked confidence in her letter writing and computer skills'*. (Employer)

The learner stated she was quite nervous to begin with as the tutoring was one-to-one and she knew that she had skills needs. However, early on she said she was put at ease by the tutor and developed a good relationship with her.

'She reassured me that we would go at my pace, that there wouldn't be anything I wouldn't be able to understand and that there was no test at the end. This made me feel a lot better.' (Learner)

The learning was made relevant to the work she did. The AON qualification was based around payment calculations for customers in the park, looking at mean, mode and median. For the Communication qualification she did a project looking at the history of the site and how it had developed which she also gave a presentation on. The ICT skills helped her to use different packages and helped her to develop advertising posters for the site. She also used it to make lists to monitor payments by customers. She was successful in all her ESW Qualifications and this has made a big difference to her confidence.

'I never thought I'd be able to do it, because at school I failed nearly everything. I got these qualifications and that's motivated me to go and do another qualification and now I'm taking an NVQ Level 2 in Customer Services.' (Learner)

Her supervisor stated that she had noticed a difference in the quality of her written work and her confidence generally on the phone and with using a computer.

'The notes she takes from meetings are more accurate and I have more confidence in her ability to deal with customer requests on reception.' (Employer)

Source: YCL Case Study

7.8 Overall, the levels of confidence with reading, writing, dealing with numbers, communicating with customers or colleagues and working with computers/ICT increased from reported levels before starting the course (Table 7.5). The biggest change (an increase of 29 percentage points from 57 per cent to 86 per cent) was in confidence levels with ICT pre and post training (see Table 7.1 for pre-training levels of confidence).

Table 7.5: Confidence Levels After ESiW

Count (Percentage)	Confidence Level				
	Not at all confident	Not confident	Confident	Very confident	Don't know
Skill					
Reading	8 (1)	19 (2)	569 (44)	681 (53)	7 (1)
Writing	8 (1)	51 (4)	606 (47)	614 (47)	5(0)
Dealing with numbers	11 (1)	79 (6)	705 (55)	479 (37)	10 (1)
Communicating with customers or colleagues	3 (0)	14 (1)	569 (44)	691 (54)	7 (1)
Working with computers/ICT	33 (3)	144 (11)	794 (62)	304 (24)	9 (1)

Source: 2013 Welsh ESF Leavers Survey. Base: All (1284) Sample Learners. Learners were asked 'How confident would you say you are now in each of the following....'. Single Response to each skill.

7.9 Levels of confidence in ICT increased greatly for those aged 55+ with those reporting that they were confident or very confident increasing by 35 percentage points from 43 per cent to 78 per cent. Similarly the 25-39 (21 percentage point increase) and 40-54 (34 percentage point increase) age groups saw a substantial increase in the percentage of learners reporting greater confidence. There was only a five percentage point increase for the 16-24 age group.

7.10 All learners interviewed stated they had applied their learning in the workplace. There were accounts of learners working on production lines in manufacturing being able to work more independently because their language skills had improved; teaching assistants working more effectively in the classroom due to their improved use of ICT support; care workers reported having improved literacy skills which helped them write more accurate care reports.

7.11 Two learners (Figure 7.3) interviewed gave accounts of the benefits of the learning.

Figure 7.3: The Benefits for essential skills Learners

Isaac worked for the Health Board as a cook for two years. He moved to the UK, spoke limited English and was not educated beyond lower secondary level. His assessment brought up needs in literacy, numeracy and ICT. He progressed from Level 1 to Level 2 Communications and was hoping to take Level 1 ICT and AON.

“I am able to read to my kids, and understand information from their school. I am able to communicate with people at work better and understand ordering. I am more confident at work, in my job and as a member of the community.”

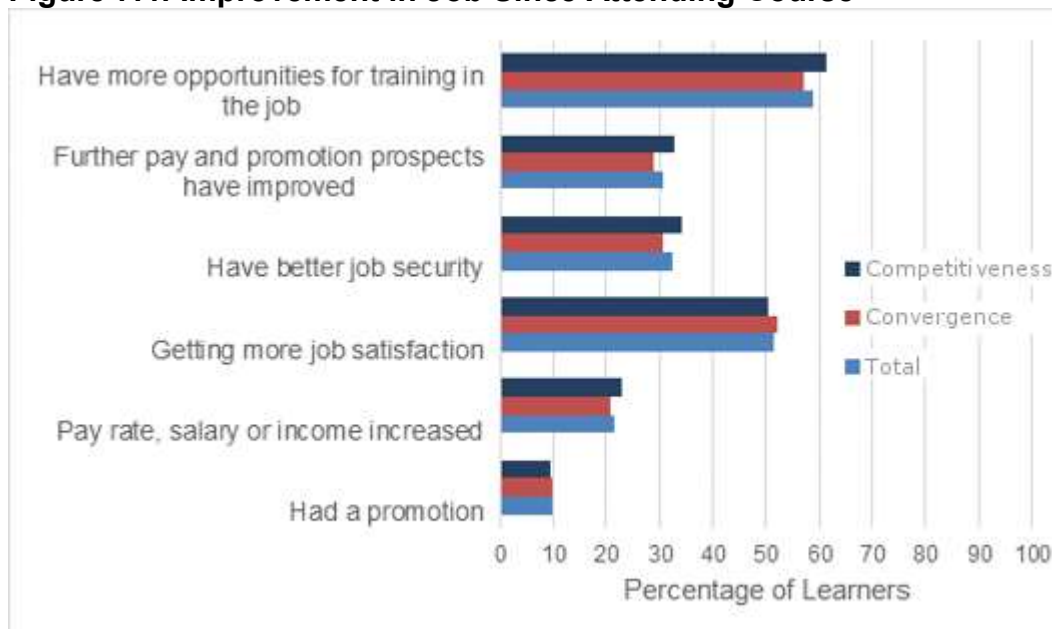
Jane had worked for the Health Board for 20 years in various roles, but wanted a career change to an office job. She was aware of some skills issues that had prevented her from progressing in work and had been looking for an ICT qualification. She completed Level 1 and Level 2 ICT and has applied much of her learning to work. At the time of interview, she was taking Level 1 AON and Communication.

“I’ve learned loads, way more than I expected. I now produce menus, do some admin and templates for stock orders for the department. I am more confident at work and home.”

Source: Learner Interviews

7.12 Three quarters of learners (964) felt that they had been able to apply what they learnt on the course to their work. Over half of learners (51 per cent) reported that they were getting more job satisfaction at work since attending the course (Figure 7.4) and 59 per cent of learners reported having more opportunities for training in the job.

Figure 7.4: Improvement in Job Since Attending Course



Source: 2013 Welsh ESF Leavers Survey. Base: 1054 Sample Learners. Learners were asked 'Have any of the following happened at work since completing the course?' Closed Question, options listed given choice of Yes, No, Don't Know.

7.13 When asked if the improvements they had seen were directly as a result of the course, over two thirds (65 per cent) of learners felt that the course had helped and 9 per cent felt the benefit was directly as a result of the course.

7.14 A number of learners (n=168) had changed jobs/job roles since undertaking essential skills training. These learners were asked to what extent they considered the essential skills learning helped them get their current job. **Table 7.6** shows that 34 per cent considered it helped and 8 per cent considered it was vital. This was slightly higher for learners in the Convergence areas.

Table 7.6: Extent to which essential skills Training Helped Learners Get Their Job

	Total		Convergence		Competitiveness	
	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners
It was vital	13	8	6	6	7	11
Did it help	56	34	33	32	23	38
It was not a factor in getting the job	94	58	63	62	31	51
Total	163	100	102	100	61	100

Source: 2013 Welsh ESF Leavers Survey. Base: Total =163 (all who working as an employee excluding those working in same job as before), Convergence = 102, Competitiveness = 61.

Respondents were asked, 'To what extent do you think the course helped you get your current job?' Closed Question. Single Response.

7.15 For those who reported working with a different employer to when they started the course, overall there was improvement in a range of aspects of the job (**Table 7.7**). The most frequently reported change was in 'getting more job satisfaction' with 79 per cent of learners reporting this closely followed by 'better pay and promotion prospects' (78 per cent).

Table 7.7: Compared with Job Before the Course

Feature	Convergence		Competitiveness		Total	
	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners	Number of learners (count)	Percentage of learners
New job is at a higher level	42	56	26	52	68	54
Pay rate, salary or income has increased	52	69	31	62	83	66
Getting more job satisfaction	61	81	38	76	99	79
Have better job security	51	68	37	74	88	70
Have better pay and promotion prospects	97	78	58	77	39	78
Have more opportunities for training	54	72	39	78	93	74

Source: 2013 Welsh ESF Leavers Survey. Base: 125, Convergence (75), Competitiveness (50) Sample Learners. Learners were asked 'You mentioned you are working for a different employer than when you started the course. Compared with the job you had just before starting the course is your new job....' Closed Question, options listed given choice of Yes, No, Don't Know.

7.16 Almost half (49 per cent) of learners felt the course had contributed to the changes highlighted in Table 7.7, with 5 (4 per cent) reporting the changes were directly because of the course and 54 (45 per cent) feeling that the course helped.

7.17 For the 163 learners who reported working with a different employer to when they started the course, 12 (7 per cent) felt the course was vital in them getting their new job and 56 (33 per cent) felt 'it did help'.

Evidence of Impact Using the Propensity Score Matching

7.18 The purpose of the counterfactual analysis was to try to answer the question '*What would have happened in the absence of the ESiW programme?*' By comparing learners who undertook the ESiW programme with a profile of individuals with similar personal and employment characteristics from the LFS, it was possible to provide some assessment of the labour market outcomes for similar individuals, over a similar time period, who did not undertake the ESiW programme. We looked at three different control groups: an LFS sample from the United Kingdom (UK); an LFS sample from the UK minus London and the South East (SE); and an LFS sample from Wales.

7.19 Three outcomes which were measurable in both the LFS and through the European Social Fund (ESF) Leavers' Survey were used: pay increases; changes in occupation; and changes in supervisory responsibility. Although these were not the aims of the ESiW programme per se, they were considered to be reliable indicators of the impact of increased essential skills.

Key Findings

7.20 At a descriptive level, ESiW learners experienced greater occupational progression than comparable workers in the LFS (in Wales, in the UK minus London and the SE, and in the UK as a whole).

7.21 However, ESiW learners fared worse in terms of seeing increases in their supervisory responsibility. They also received, on average, lower levels of pay increase than UK LFS respondents, but similar levels to Welsh LFS respondents. However, caution should be exercised in comparing the ESiW and LFS pay measures, as the raw responses to the questions on pay were markedly different.

7.22 The PSM analysis revealed little or no significant effects of the ESiW treatment group compared to all three LFS control groups. Marginally significant effects were found for occupational increases and pay for the ESiW compared to the LFS Wales sample, when the PSM analysis is conducted. There were three possible explanations. One was that there is no significant difference between the outcomes for the treatment and control groups. Secondly, it may be that the time period considered to look at change was too short to capture any effects. Thirdly, it may be that measures of change were imperfect. (See Annex C for detailed findings).

Summary

7.23 This section evidenced a high level of impact on learners from participation in ESiW, including increased skills levels, increased confidence in abilities, an improved understanding about career opportunities. Learners also reported ESiW having a direct impact on their work, where they were able to directly apply what they had learnt and improve their job satisfaction.

7.24 The benefits of ESiW identified by participants were closely aligned to learner motivations for completing the course. The majority of sampled learners identified a desire to develop a broader range of skills, or more specialist skills and/or knowledge, and to improve or widen their career options. As a result of ESiW, over half of participants identified gaining skills such as job-specific skills, problem solving skills, IT skills and communication skills and identified they had improved employment or career prospects.

7.25 Where learners identified impacts on pay, promotions or job satisfaction in their current or new role, it was identified by almost half that these changes were a direct result of, or helped by the ESiW course.

8 Union Activity in Relation to Essential Skills

Introduction

- 8.1 This section evidences the continued engagement of unions in the essential skill agenda and recent activities with regards extending awareness and engagement in the ESiW programme. However, it is important to recognise that unions have not received ESF funding.
- 8.2 Evidence was generated from interviews with the WTUC, unions, employers and providers.
- 8.3 Unions engaging employers in essential skills learners were identified through consultations with the TUC and, therefore, represented those unions that were more actively engaging in the essential skills agenda.

The Union Role in Supporting Essential Skills

- 8.4 The key role played by the unions in embedding essential skills at the workplace focused on the identification of essential skills learning needs by workplace representatives (mainly union learning reps, ULRs). ULRs and unions worked closely with two specialists in the WTUC to engage employers.
- 8.5 Each specialist covered separate geographic areas. Initially these project workers focused on raising awareness, using data on essential skills needs nationally to set the context and then explain the support available for employees in the workplace. The WTUC specialists also engaged with employers to understand the essential skills requirement in more detail to work this up into a specification and make a recommendation of the providers best placed to meet that need: usually offering one or two providers from the list of ESiW contracted organisations from which the employer would then select.

- 8.6 The WTUC essential skills specialists have, subsequently, worked closely with employers, selected providers, workplace reps and union learning officers to ensure that courses were delivered according to specification. Crucially, the WTUC and union teams encouraged providers to contextualise their learning programmes to reflect the reality of learners' work situations. This included more flexible delivery to accommodate those working on shift patterns or/and to ensure that delivery minimised disruption to the employer's operational priorities. The value of working closely with ULRs was increasingly recognised by providers who saw the value of linking to the union at the workplace level, as one respondent noted:

'The ULRs are an absolute diamond in the workplace. They are on the shop-floor and know the little things that make organisations tick that you need to know to get things moving.' (Providers)

Sustaining essential skills Learning Post-ESIW

- 8.7 The operating context for the union support for essential skills evidently changed with the cessation of ESIW funding in December 2014. In the light of this change in the funding environment, the WTUC teams and union learning officers worked to find alternative ways of supporting the essential skills needs already identified.
- 8.8 There was less emphasis placed on raising awareness and identifying new opportunities and more on meeting the expectations of employers and skills of learners already engaged. Alternative ways to sustain learning in the absence of the direct ESIW funding were identified. Firstly, essential skills courses supported by unions pooling resources from WULF projects. WULF project leads also negotiated with employers to fund jointly the continuation of essential skills learning, using WULF monies to lever a matched employer contribution.
- 8.9 Secondly, WTUC officers worked with providers to access the provider's own resources, including for example the development of WEA Agored Cymru units as taster sessions or to offer programmes at a competitive commercial rate to employers.

8.10 However, the latter was not a successful route to sustaining the continuation of learning as many employers reported that training budgets remained squeezed. One solution reported by one WTUC officer was the negotiation of a service level agreement between a provider and two employers to enable the provider to continue to employ an experienced essential skills tutor over an agreed period.

8.11 This had the advantage of retaining specialist skills and expertise, particularly of an essential skills tutor capable of delivering contextualised learning at the workplace. Finally, the WTUC and union teams were able to signpost employers, ULRs and learners to alternative essential skills provision, which might include online or self-help resources. This latter option was felt to be less than ideal as the strategy for ESIW focuses on the delivery of a high quality learning options. Yet, respondents from the union network stress the importance of maintaining some momentum in the provision of learning opportunities, especially for those previously identified as returners to learning, reluctant or hesitant learners where initial engagement activity by ULRs raised confidence and expectations.

Commentary on the ESIW Strategy and Delivery Model

8.12 Feedback on the operation of the ESIW model was positive, with union officers reflecting that the programme had built on the learning from previous basic skills strategy programmes, and in the words of one union officer, 'got it just about right. I would not really change how it has run this time.'

8.13 The delivery of essential skills programmes through the union route has some wider and, in some cases unexpected impact, with a degree of spill-over from workplace to community level essential skills learning.

Figure 8.1: UCATT Community Level Spill-over Effects

The development of essential skills and IT learning with employees of a social housing organisation has had some unexpected outcomes at the community level. The project involved the provision of courses for wardens in sheltered housing, a group that often work complex shift patterns and are highly distributed in a range of workplaces. The union project was able to provide learning resources and courses

for this group of workers often excluded from mainstream adult programmes. The knock-on effect was that the wardens cascaded their learning to residents, many of whom were elderly and by the nature of their housing needs, less able to access learning and other community level services, including shopping outside of their home. In cascading their IT learning to elderly residents, employees were able to help residents build their capacity and confidence in using on-line shopping services. One example given was of an elderly resident purchasing a TV online and remarking *'it feels great not having to ask and rely on everyone else to do this kind of thing for me, I am over the moon.'*

Source: YCL Interviews

8.14 The impact of the recession was noted above in terms of training budgets being affected and employers displaying limited signs of willingness to pay directly in full for essential skills learning. The impact on the demand for learning was less clear, with some unions reporting that the demand for essential skills learning slowed somewhat in the height of the recessionary period, given the constraints and uncertainty faced in many workplaces. However, in other cases, the reverse was true where the possibility of redundancy (outside of a formal redundancy situation) led to an increased demand for learning amongst those groups of employees who became aware of the importance of up-skilling or accrediting their skills levels.

Developing and Strengthening Links with Providers

8.15 The WTUC has held a number of meetings for providers to attend and learn about developing opportunities to link up with unions in the workplace. Many providers attended these sessions, and in consultations with providers, they confirmed the benefits of joint working with unions.

'We've worked with unions for a long time now, and it most certainly helps us to get in to businesses as well as helping promote the opportunities.' (PTP provider)

8.16 The WTUC established a Quality Award that is awarded to providers for particular causes endorsed by unions. In 2007, the Wales TUC Cymru Quality Award was adapted and amended from the Unionlearn model. Part of this process involved consultation with Estyn as, initially, the award was aimed at FE colleges who, at that time, were providing a substantial part of adult education.

8.17 The Quality Award is a continuous improvement process and is awarded to education providers whose programmes and courses meet the WTUC Cymru good practice criteria. The Quality Award helps direct Union Learning Reps (ULRs) to providers that are considered to be working successfully and flexibly with trade unions. The Quality Award is awarded to providers who demonstrate that union learners are considered in the design, development and delivery of courses and programmes.

8.18 Three providers received the Quality Award for delivering essential skills learning in the workplace (one ACL provider, one private training provider and one FE college).

8.19 There were many other learning providers with whom unions have developed strong and effective working relationships. Examples of the initial engagement through unions contacting providers was evidenced in supermarkets working with Cardiff and Vale.

8.20 Concerns were expressed by the Wales TUC of the proposed regionalisation of delivery.

'Currently, many unions work across Wales and deal with one provider. It's going to make things much more difficult if they have to deal with more than one learning provider across the different regions.' (WTUC Cymru)

8.21 The concept of the programme being led by FE colleges did not raise any particular concerns for the TUC as there were examples of where very good working relationships with FE colleges developed, particularly with Cardiff and Vale College and Bridgend.

Challenges

- 8.22 The initial challenges faced in implementing the essential skill strategy with employers remained in terms of a lack of understanding about the issue of essential skills needs amongst the workforce. This was reported by the unions to have diminished with demand for support coming directly from some employers rather than through a programme of awareness raising. However, a lack of recognition of essential skills as a business issue continued in many cases.
- 8.23 The unions also reported that provider's understanding of the role and value of working with unions and ULRs increased in many cases, especially with those providers with whom unions worked directly and regularly. However, direct engagement only took place with a sub-set of providers and a lack of understanding remained within the wider group of providers. There was recognition that the focus and networks of some providers would mean they had limited involvement in unionised workplaces; there continued to be scope to build awareness and understanding of the business and operational benefits to providers working with WTUC and union learning teams.

Summary

- 8.24 Unions supported by the WTUC continued to promote essential skills learning through the ESiW programme.
- 8.25 There was evidence of regular and well attended meetings being held with unions, businesses and providers across Wales during 2013 and 2014.
- 8.26 Many providers from WBL, FE and ACL attended raising awareness events organised and facilitated by the WTUC. This helped ensure that links were forged and maintained with unions.
- 8.27 The Quality Award was awarded to learning providers who delivered essential skills successfully and flexibly to union members.
- 8.28 Redundancy threats and restructuring in workplaces thwarted engagement in essential skills in some businesses.

9 Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

- 9.1 This section provides conclusions and recommendations based on the evidence provided in this report.

Literature Review

- 9.2 Similar to Wales, the literature reviewed evidenced that a number of countries were following a trend towards offering more workplace provision.
- 9.3 Co-funding schemes were commonly offered to employers to help engagement and to provide education and training opportunities to their employees. However, few schemes were specifically targeting the low skilled and the majority of countries where funding provision was taken up by those that were easier to reach, not necessarily those who needed it most.
- 9.4 The limited evaluation data identified a number of key successes. Key components in the success of programmes included: the role of skilled delivery staff, clear communication of programmes and funding routes to employers, organisational support at the top and at line management level in supporting programmes beyond their funded period and releasing employees for training.

Programme Performance

- 9.5 Gross cumulative expenditure on the programme to July 2015 was just under £23.2 million representing 75 per cent of the approved contract value of just under £31 million.
- 9.6 Total participants engaged on the programme (21,589) represented 87 per cent of the overall target (24,847). This represented a greater proportion of the target compared with expenditure, indicating value for money. The balance of participants was 37 per cent in the Competitiveness areas compared with 63 per cent in the Convergence areas.

- 9.7 The qualification conversion target rate for participants was also achieved. The number of participants who achieved a qualification was 13,947 giving a conversion rate of 65 per cent. The conversion rate is slightly higher in Convergence areas (65 per cent) compared with Competitiveness areas (63 per cent).
- 9.8 Conversion rates achieved by providers differed quite significantly. Some providers achieved a higher than average conversion rate and some providers achieved a lower than average conversion rate. Six providers performed considerably above the mean, and three providers delivered a conversion rate in the high eighties. Four providers performed below the mean and one was considerably lower than the mean, suggesting they were either not recruiting the right learners or/and struggling to retain learners on the programme.
- 9.9 The final number of employers participating in the programme was 5,046, which exceeded the overall target (5,002). The split by Competitiveness areas and Convergence areas was 3,177 (63 per cent) to 1,869 employers (37 per cent).
- 9.10 The ratio of learners to employers was 4.2, higher than the planned activity. This indicated increasing efficiency with regards programme delivery. This was also evidenced through some provider's performance that showed an underspend on contract value, but an over delivery in participants engaged.
- 9.11 The unit cost per participant (£1,074) was lower than the value estimated from target information, as less overall funding was drawn down in Convergence areas.
- 9.12 Two fifths of learners (4,275) achieved one qualification. Just over one quarter (2,963) achieved two qualifications and one fifth (2,153) achieved three qualifications. Learners who have done three qualifications were likely to have done training in each of the essential skills areas. Learners that have done more than three qualifications (14 per cent) have progressed through at least one level of learning.

9.13 Just under a quarter of qualifications (23 per cent) were taken at Entry Level (1, 2 and 3), 41 per cent at Level 1 and 35 per cent at Level 2.

9.14 ICT had the highest level of uptake from learners (42 per cent), followed by AON (30 per cent), Communication (27 per cent) and ESOL (1 per cent). Delivery of ESOL over the whole programme has not been a priority.

Provider Performance

9.15 A review of performance against agreed targets in the contract, showed that from the 12 lead providers reviewed at the final stage of the programme, eight providers under-performed against their participant support targets and four over performed.

9.16 PTPs delivered the bulk of learner engagements with 71 per cent of learners supported and 79 per cent of the qualifications achieved.

9.17 FE colleges reported improved engagement with the ESiW programme and more of a jointed up approach between essential skills teams and work-based learning departments.

9.18 Providers worked differently to achieve their targets. Some providers had a higher learner to employer ratio than others. For example one FE college had a learner to employer ratio of over eight learners to one employer, one PTP had a learner ratio of 10 learners to one employer, another PTP achieved a learner ratio of three learners to one employer.

9.19 The model of learner support also varied with some providers delivering considerable one-to-one essential skills learner support, and others preferring to deliver in small groups.

9.20 Providers considered the programme to be a great success. They had developed and in some cases sustained good links with employers, delivering further learning.

- 9.21 A number of providers reported difficulties with engaging employers in the earlier phase of the programme, but as colleges merged and contracts were renegotiated, engagement of employers improved. A small number of providers stated they would like assistance in engaging with unions.
- 9.22 On the whole, working in a consortium has been a positive experience and providers believed they were able to offer a greater level of expertise and a more flexible response to employers. A few providers reported problems with administrative processes that resulted in payment delays.
- 9.23 Many providers recruited more tutors to fulfil contracts and reported that since the end of the programme, many tutors were allocated in to different work areas or made redundant.
- 9.24 Most employers reported that the quality of the training was very high and that they would use the same provider again to deliver further training. Training was contextualised and made relevant to businesses and learner roles.
- 9.25 However, there were a few comments regarding poor communication from providers, learning being delivered that was too easy, and providers not following through with learning after carrying out assessments.

Regionalisation of Delivery

- 9.26 Going forward, essential skills provision will be commissioned via a regional delivery model and the Welsh Government will no longer deliver a national essential skills programme for employed people. The regional programmes are currently in development and, in the absence of the finer detail of how they will work, there was a general concern among some providers regarding issues relating to working with employers across geographical boundaries and the ability to maintain current relationships with employers where delivery is Pan-Wales.

Delivering Through the Medium of Welsh

- 9.27 Understanding whether delivery is meeting demand was not straight forward. Providers stated they could deliver in Welsh if needed, but that demand was low.
- 9.28 However, one lead contract holder (who subcontracted many providers) stated that there was a need to increase their providers' capacity to deliver in Welsh as they could not always respond to the demand.
- 9.29 A small number of employers stated that they would have preferred to have received learning through the medium of Welsh.

Development of the WEST

- 9.30 There were a number of challenges and delays in the development and roll-out of the tool. The main cause of the delay was related to the revision of ESW qualifications. ESW qualifications have been revised and a new set of standards have been developed which had to be mapped on to the WEST. The standard for the Digital Literacy ESW qualification only recently been approved which has resulted in further delay.

Impact on Employers

- 9.31 The results of the telephone survey conducted with 300 employers showed that employers recognised they had skills needs across a range of essential skills and around a half could articulate how this affected their business. One third stated that it affected staff productivity. There is still some way to go before employers fully understand the negative impact of low level essential skills on their business.
- 9.32 Additionality of the ESiW programme was clearly evidenced in that three quarters of employers had not been involved in essential skills training prior to ESiW and many had not recognised essential skills needs before engagement.

- 9.33 Employers reported the benefits of the essential skills training, particularly around business benefits, staff's increased motivation, improved morale and willingness to take on more responsibilities.
- 9.34 More employers recognised improved ICT skills in the workplace, probably as a result of more learners undertaking ICT ESW qualifications. Half of the employers recognised improved literacy and communication skills and just less than one half recognised improved numeracy skills.
- 9.35 Over half of the employers surveyed stated they had seen an increase in productivity in the business and increased customer service. This was substantiated in the case study visits where learners stated they had improved their ability to work more independently as a result of the skills they had developed. Over three quarters cited improved confidence and enthusiasm to work.

Impact on Learners

- 9.36 Learners were motivated to undertake the course in order to develop a broader set of skills and knowledge but also for personal interest. To update existing skills was not a motivating factor suggesting that the learning had not been used to refresh existing skills or knowledge.
- 9.37 Before undertaking the learning, confidence levels were slightly lower for numeracy and lower for ICT skills. As a result of the training, the majority of learners were more confident in their abilities, and importantly, were more enthusiastic about learning. The skill that most learners stated they had developed was in ICT, followed by communication skills and problem solving skills. As a result, learners' confidence in these skills had improved. Confidence in those aged over 55+ had increased considerably.
- 9.38 Learners reported they were able to use their improved skills in administrative tasks and as well as more specialist tasks relating to occupations such as manufacturing and teaching.

9.39 Over half of learners reported that they were getting more job satisfaction at work since attending the course, including improved employment or career prospects, and three fifths of learners reported having more opportunities for training in the job.

9.40 Over one in ten learners responding to the survey had changed jobs or job roles since undertaking the learning and one half stated that the learning had helped them get the new job/job role.

Results of Propensity Score Matching

9.41 Although not the aim of ESiW per se, the study included measuring the impact of improved essential skills on learners', pay, occupation and supervisory skills. To evidence the impact of essential skills learning on learners, a comparator group of learners were identified in the LFS matching on key learner characteristics (gender, age and employment) and using 'no qualification' as a proxy for essential skill learners. When considering the impact on learners' wages, changes in occupation and supervisory responsibility, the PSM analysis revealed little or no significant effects of the ESiW treatment group compared to all three LFS control groups. Marginally significant effects on some specifications were found for occupational increases and pay for the ESiW compared to the LFS Wales sample, when the PSM analysis was conducted. There were three possible explanations for this. One was that there was no significant difference between the outcomes for the treatment and control groups. Secondly, it may be that the time period considered to look at change was too short to capture any effects. Thirdly, it may be that measures of change were imperfect.

The Wales TUC and Union Engagement with essentials Skills in the Workplace

9.42 The role of unions was an important facilitator for the programme's engagement with some employers. Unions helped to generate trust with learners who might not have chosen to participate and created opportunities for providers to develop relationships with employers that might not have otherwise arisen.

- 9.43 WTUC developed strong support structures for URLs to provide information and advice about essential skills. Network meetings held around Wales provided URLs with the opportunity to meet other ULRs and to make links with providers.
- 9.44 Relationship with providers were continuing to develop and some relationships were strong.
- 9.45 WTUC launched a Quality Award as a way of recognising the quality and suitability of programmes of learning delivered to union members and a small number of providers had been awarded the Quality Award for their provision of essential skills training.

Cross Cutting Themes

- 9.46 The Welsh Government monitored participation of learner groups in order to reflect the extent to which ESiW effectively engaged learners who, for a range of reasons, are less likely to engage in learning. Data showed that providers were successful at engaging BME learners (5 per cent were BME learners) and female learners represented 65 per cent of the learner population. This was an over representation of female learners with regards the original target of 45 per cent. Only 15 per cent of older learners (aged over 55) were engaged against the original target of 35 per cent. Conversion rates were slightly lower than the mean (65 per cent) for learners aged between 15-24 (61 per cent), and for learners older than 65 (59 per cent).
- 9.47 Providers tailored learning to meet specific learning needs of participants and worked closely with unions to ensure that those learners who were less likely to come forward to participate, were encouraged to do so. ESiW by design, is providing vital learning support to those who are at risk of unequal opportunities in the workplace due to their low level of skills.
- 9.48 Evidence on how the programme had supported employers to improve outcomes around equalities and sustainability was limited.

Concluding Remarks

9.49 ESiW performed strongly and was highly valued by all key stakeholders (providers, employers, unions and learners). The programme was well managed and key learner engagement and attainment targets were achieved for less money than was originally allocated. Awareness of essential skills needs is now much stronger among employers and the workforce and demand for training is likely to continue.

Recommendations

Recommendation One: *Review the performance of providers with regards conversion rates to understand why rates differed quite considerably from provider to provider.*

Recommendation Two: *Review the status of learners' prior qualifications and consider including a target for training providers to engage learners with no qualifications.*

Recommendation Three: *If a regional delivery model is adopted, consider the feasibility for providers to operate Pan-Wales to ensure continuity of provider/employer relationships.*

Recommendation Four: *Review the low level of provision for ESOL to ensure that learners who have a language need can be supported through ESiW.*

Recommendation Five: *Understanding whether delivery through the medium of Welsh met demand was difficult. The Welsh Government should monitor the demand for, and review the provision of, learning through the medium of Welsh in any future delivery of essential skills.*

Recommendation Six: *Future programme design should determine the key aspects of the programme which could effect a change in outcomes around equalities and sustainability, and integrate these aspects throughout the delivery to well-defined outcomes and targets. How this can be evidenced should also be considered.*

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ANNEX A: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Objective 1: To measure the effectiveness of the programme's performance in achieving its targets																											
<p><i>Relevant targets included in the Business Plan (August 2012) will be reviewed. We will assess the following for Competitive and Convergence:</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="188 375 1261 1358"> <tr><td>Number of employed participants on ESiW (not incl TTP)</td></tr> <tr><td>Number of participants on TTP</td></tr> <tr><td>Number of employers</td></tr> <tr><td>Number of employers adopting Equality & Diversity</td></tr> <tr><td></td></tr> <tr><td>No. of older participants</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of participants with work limiting health condition</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of female participants who work full time</td></tr> <tr><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Number of participants accessing qualifications</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of participants accessing qualifications - Entry levels 1-3</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of participants gaining qualifications - Entry levels 1-3</td></tr> <tr><td>No. participants accessing qualifications - level 1</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of participants gaining qualifications - level 1</td></tr> <tr><td>No. participants accessing qualifications - level 2</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of participants gaining qualifications - level 2</td></tr> <tr><td>No. participants accessing qualifications - level 3</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of participants gaining qualifications - level 3</td></tr> <tr><td>No. participants accessing qualifications - level 4 or above</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of participants gaining qualifications - level 4 or above</td></tr> <tr><td>Number of basic skills qualifications to be gained</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of qualifications to be gained - at Entry Level</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of qualifications to be gained - at level 1</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of qualifications to be gained - at level 2</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of qualifications to be gained - at level 3</td></tr> <tr><td>No. of qualifications to be gained - at level 4 and above</td></tr> </table>	Number of employed participants on ESiW (not incl TTP)	Number of participants on TTP	Number of employers	Number of employers adopting Equality & Diversity		No. of older participants	No. of participants with work limiting health condition	No. of female participants who work full time		Number of participants accessing qualifications	No. of participants accessing qualifications - Entry levels 1-3	No. of participants gaining qualifications - Entry levels 1-3	No. participants accessing qualifications - level 1	No. of participants gaining qualifications - level 1	No. participants accessing qualifications - level 2	No. of participants gaining qualifications - level 2	No. participants accessing qualifications - level 3	No. of participants gaining qualifications - level 3	No. participants accessing qualifications - level 4 or above	No. of participants gaining qualifications - level 4 or above	Number of basic skills qualifications to be gained	No. of qualifications to be gained - at Entry Level	No. of qualifications to be gained - at level 1	No. of qualifications to be gained - at level 2	No. of qualifications to be gained - at level 3	No. of qualifications to be gained - at level 4 and above	<p>MI from Welsh Government</p>
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<p>Objective 2: Review the overall management and implementation of the programme highlighting areas of good practice and areas for further development</p>	
<p>WULF We will interview unions to understand how WULF funding has enabled engagement of employers in ESiW programme offer. This will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unions most active and engaged in ESiW; - Engagement of employers in union led learning and how this has led to participation in ESiW. - Key challenges faced and how the unions have overcome these. <p>We will seek project managers' views on the implementation of best practice in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complementing Union led learning with essential skills learning; - Use of union infrastructures to promote engagement (ULRs, union/workplace learning centres, WTUC Learning Services) - Continuation of engagement in essential skills through WULF funded projects <p>From these interviews, case studies will be arranged with employers through the union contacts.</p> <p>EPA To what extent has MaB promoted the engagement of EPA? Has engagement in the EPA encouraged employers to consider wider workforce/business development strategies that ensure essential skills deficits will be addressed in the longer term? Has the employer signed up to the EPA? If not, why not?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are they aware of the EPA/has a provider promoted the EPA? <p>What is the future commitment of providers to engage employers in the EPA and how can this be improved?</p> <p>Provider Engagement How well have individual providers performed against profiles? Why have some providers performed better than others? What have been the key challenges in delivering to profile? What are the key lessons around contracting and on-going management of the MaB contract that will help improve employer engagement in the longer term – post ESiW? What have been the key challenges in delivering to profile?</p>	<p>Consultations with unions, provider contract managers and providers</p> <p>Consultation with MaB and WG</p> <p>Employer case studies</p> <p>Employer survey</p>

<p>Marketing of ESiW</p> <p>What are providers' views of awareness of the ESiW offer among employers? How did employers find out about the training? What role has MaB played in promoting awareness of ESiW What lessons regarding marketing of essential skills can be learned from this programme?</p>	<p>Employer Survey and employer case studies Provider interviews</p>
<p>Objective 3: Review implementation and delivery of the WESAT pilot</p> <p>What are the findings from Tribal consultation and roll-out and how has Tribal adapted the tool to meet providers needs? What are the provider experiences of using WESAT as a tool for determining essential skills needs? How does it compare with the previous tool they were using? (Final Stage Evaluation) Are there any unforeseen implications on providers (time, expertise) that are impacting on its use? (Final Evaluation Stage) Are there any concerns regarding its use that the Welsh Government need to be aware of? (Final Evaluation Stage)</p>	<p>Interview with Tribal Project Lead</p> <p>Consultations with Providers Survey of Providers</p>
<p>Objective 4: Assess the impact and effectiveness of ESiW at raising levels of essential skills in the employed workforce in Wales through increased and enhanced essential skills support within the workplace</p> <p>Impact on Learners</p> <p>What is the impact on learners?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On their skills and confidence - On engagement in further learning <p>Are learners more productive in the workplace as a result of the learning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In what capacity? (In their current role; in looking to progress in the workplace?) <p>How have previous barriers to learning been removed for learners?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What barriers still remain? (Personal confidence, time, aspirations?) <p>What attracted learners into learning? What were their experiences of the learning, positive and negative? What type of learning appeals to learners? Online, independent, group learning? How have providers used media, apps or online resources to make the learning fun for learners? Will/have learners continued in their learning as a result of ESiW? What is the economic benefit of engagement in ESiW for learners?</p>	<p>Learner survey</p> <p>Case studies of learners</p> <p>Employer Case Studies</p> <p>Employer Survey</p> <p>Counterfactual LFS data with ESF leavers survey</p>

<p>Impact on Employers</p> <p>Why did employers engage in ESiW?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - was it demand led – i.e. they contacted a provider, - union led, - did the provider contact them initially? <p>Can employers articulate the benefits of delivering essential skills training to their workforce?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are these and what evidence do they have? (improved morale, performance, team work etc) <p>What are the longer term benefits of employers signing up to the pledge?</p> <p>Are employers likely to continue to deliver essentials skills training to their workforce post ESiW?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If not, why not, what would encourage them to continue? - Why have employers not considered taking up TTP to become self-sufficient? - What would have to change for them to sign their staff up to TTP? <p>Did employers and/or employees require (and receive) learning to be delivered through the medium of Welsh?</p> <p>Are there any good examples of businesses being supported to develop the Welsh language skills of their workforce which could be used as a case study?</p> <p>Impact on Providers</p> <p>How have providers benefited from their involvement in ESiW?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has there been any benefit of the lead provider model for both lead provider and members of consortium? Are there any examples where the sharing of practice can be illustrated? <p>Have providers improved their capacity and expertise to deliver essential skills training?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have they benefited from the tutor training programme earlier in the programme, if not why not and will they have further need for essential skills. 	<p>Provider Consultations Provider Survey</p>
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<p>Objective 5: Assess the value for money of the programme</p>	
<p>What is the unit cost of a learner qualification of the programme? What is the unit cost for a learner? What is the unit cost per employer? What is the value of essential skills to the employer?</p> <p>How effectively and efficiently has the programme been delivered? - How has programme management impacted on the economic performance of the programme?</p> <p>Can the economic performance of the programme (unit cost etc) be compared with other programme unit costs?</p> <p>What lessons can be learned about provider performance that would make future delivery of similar programmes more cost effective and improve performance?</p> <p>What is the legacy of ESiW in terms of the likely on-going impact of ESiW on workplace learning over the longer term?</p>	<p>MI data</p> <p>Employer Survey</p> <p>Consultations with Contract Managers</p> <p>Unit cost data from other similar programmes</p> <p>Consultations with Strategic Lead for WG</p>
<p>Objective 6: Identify the key strengths of the programme and any constraints/issues that may have impeded its effectiveness</p>	<p>Analysis of all qualitative and quantitative data to seek inference on</p>
<p>What is the likely impact of ESiW on workplace learning over the longer term? What may negatively impact this? To what extent has the programme dovetailed with wider workforce/business development strategies that ensure essential skills deficits will be addressed in the longer term? How has the management of the programme by the Welsh Government impacted performance? What have been the affects (positive and negative) of contracting through a consortia of providers on overall performance of the programme? Are there any risks that the Welsh Government need to consider in future contracting of providers?</p>	<p>Employer case studies Consultations with providers Consultations with provider managers</p>

<p>Objective 7: Consider the findings of the evaluation within the context of the wider evidence base and identify recommendations for future policy development</p>	
<p>What are the similarities and differences of this programme to other programmes nationally or internationally? Is there any evidence to suggest that this programme has performed better than other programmes and what are the reasons? Are there particular features of other programmes that could be incorporated into ESiW?</p>	<p>Literature research evidencing similar adult learning provision in the UK and internationally.</p>
<p>Objective 8: Consider how essential skills delivery could be migrated to the proposed future regional consortia delivery model and identify the strengths and weaknesses of such an approach</p>	
<p>How is the success of ESiW with regards take-up and delivery of essential skills qualifications influencing decisions on an all Wales essential skills strategy? What are the potential risks and benefits with moving to a regional consortia delivery?</p>	<p>Interview with Welsh Government Interview with providers</p>
<p>Objective 9: Satisfy the evaluative requirements of the Wales European Funding Office (WEFO).</p>	
<p>Equalities: In terms of ensuring equal opportunities and providing the population of Wales equal access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have providers offered or delivered any learning through the medium of Welsh Language? - How aware are providers that there is an ESW qualification in the Welsh Language? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do providers offer ESW qualifications through the medium of Welsh? - To what extent do tutors consider they have the skill/knowledge and expertise to deliver in Welsh? Do they wish to learn/require training to deliver in Welsh? - Have employers developed equality and diversities policies as a result of ESiW? - Has the programme engaged a representative sample from the Welsh Population of disabled, black and minority ethnic learners as well as women? <p>Environmental Sustainability Has the Employer Pledge encouraged employers to consider the business impact on the environment? How do providers demonstrate a commitment to environmental sustainability?</p>	<p>MI WG programme data Consultations with employers and providers Employer Survey Provider Survey</p>

<p>Objective 10: Investigate how effectively ESiW has contributed to raising the essential skills of the population of Wales.</p>	
<p>To what extent has the ESiW programme changed the levels of qualifications held by adults across all areas of Wales?</p> <p>Are there particular areas where there are low levels of engagement in the programme? If so, why and what are the strategic implications for future contracting and delivery of essential skills?</p> <p>Are there particular considerations regarding improving language skills in Welsh that the Welsh Government need to consider in terms of developing the skills of all adults?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the policy implications in terms of delivery through the medium of Welsh for the Welsh Government going forward if a national essential skills programme continues? 	<p>APS data/Statistical First Release October 2014 for Year 2013 and other comparable data</p> <p>Interviews with Employers and Learners regarding demand for skills in Welsh.</p>

Annex B

E-Survey of Providers Sub-Contracted to Deliver Essential Skills Qualifications Through the Essential Skills in the Workplace Programme.

Introduction

On behalf of Welsh Government York Consulting is carrying out a final round of consultations with providers who were sub-contracted to deliver Essential Skills Wales Qualifications under the Essential Skills in the Workplace Programme. In order to ensure that the evaluation draws evidence from a wide range of providers, we are seeking your views regarding the benefits and challenges of delivering essential skills learning in the workplace and future demand for similar provision.

The survey should take around 10 to 15 minutes to complete. All of your responses will be treated confidentially and your responses will be anonymised.

If you require any further information regarding the purpose of the survey, please contact [Louise Starks at louise.starks@yorkconsulting.co.uk / 0113 2223545 or Faye Gracey (faye.gracey@wales.gsi.gov.uk / 029 2082 5459]

1. Did your provider deliver any Welsh Government funded essential skills qualifications in the workplace (ESiW) that was free to employers? (We are referring to the delivery of Essential Skills Wales Qualifications, even if a qualification may not have been achieved)
 - a. Yes (GO to Q2)
 - b. No (Go to Q20)
 - i. What were the reasons you have not delivered any essential skills?
 1. We could not engage any employers
 2. We had insufficient capacity
 3. We were never sub-contracted to deliver any essential skills in the workplace
 4. Other, please specify
2. What were the key benefits for you as a provider with regards your involvement in the ESiW programme? (tick all that apply)
 - a. We engaged more with local businesses
 - b. We extended the capacity of the essential skills team by recruiting more staff
 - c. We developed our expertise through working in sectors that we had not previously worked in
 - d. We extended our knowledge on how to contextualise learning for different learning needs (for example making learning relevant for learners in the hospitality sector or health sector)
 - e. Other, please

3. Did your provider recruit more tutors over the course of the contract?
 - a. Yes
 - i. Were there any challenges in recruiting tutors?
 1. Yes
 - a. In what areas? Communication, Application of Number, Information, Communication and Technology (ICT), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)?
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know
4. Did working in partnership with another provider bring any additional benefits to your provider or to individual tutors?
 - a. Yes (Go to Q5)
 - b. No (Go to Q6)
 - c. Don't Know.
5. What benefits did working in partnership bring to the business or tutors?
 - a. Sharing effective practice in engaging employers
 - b. Providing a better / more responsive service to the local business community
 - c. Sharing effective practice in delivering Essential Skills Wales Qualifications
 - d. Other (please comment)
6. Did working in a partnership bring any specific challenges?
 - a. Yes (Go to Q7)
 - b. No (Go to Q8)
7. What challenges did it bring and how did you overcome these?
 - a. Please describe.....
8. Has your provider continued to work in partnership with other provider(s) as a result of delivering ESiW?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not yet, but we hope to do so in the future
 - d. Don't know
9. What were the key challenges your provider faced in delivering ESiW?
 - a. Engaging employers
 - b. Identifying learners
 - c. Responding to the demand for learning
 - d. Not having enough delivery activity
 - e. Delivering within the timescales
 - f. Other (please comment)

10. Did your provider contract holder have to re-negotiate your targets to a lower target?
- Yes (Go to Q12)
 - No (GO to Q13)
 - Don't Know (Q13)
11. What was the reason contracts targets were re-negotiated?
- They were over ambitious originally
 - Lack of staff / time to engage employers
 - Lack of employer contacts
 - Other (please say why or express any views you have regarding this re-negotiation)
12. Did you develop any relationships with unions over the course of delivering Essential Skills in the Workplace?
- Yes
 - Which ones?
 - No
 - Don't Know
13. Would you like any assistance with developing links with unions to help you engage with employers?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
14. Did your provider deliver any learning through the medium of Welsh?
- Yes
 - No (go to Q17)
 - Don't know
15. Were there any particular challenges in delivering through the Medium of Welsh?
- Yes
 - What were these? (open question)
 - No
16. Is there anything the Welsh Government could do to assist in extending delivery through the medium of Welsh?
- Please comment
17. Has your provider gone on to deliver any further training with the same employers as a result of their engagement in ESiW?
- Yes
 - No

18. In your opinions, are employers likely to want to continue to receive Essential Skills training in the workplace?
- a. Yes
 - i. In what areas: Communication, Application of Number, ICT, ESOL?
 - b. No
 - c. Don't Know
19. Did your provider have any involvement in delivering the Employer Pledge Award? (The Employer Pledge Award is given to employers who commit to a training plan that includes identifying essential skills needs of their workforce and offering essential skills training to all who need it.)
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - i. Why did you not engage with delivering the Employer Pledge Award?
 1. We do not know anything about it
 2. The payment does not cover our costs
 3. It is too difficult to promote to employers
 4. We were not contracted to deliver any Employer Pledge Awards
 5. Other (please comment)
20. In your view, what aspects worked well and which did not, which elements would you like to see continue? Please Comment)
21. In your opinion, how likely are employers to engage in Essential Skills Wales Qualification if there is no further funding for this?
- a. Not at all likely
 - b. Somewhat likely
 - c. Very likely
 - d. Don't Know
22. Are you still promoting Essential Skills training to employers?
- a. Yes
 - b. No, not currently
23. Will your provider continue to deliver Essential Skills Wales qualifications in the workplace without Welsh Government funding?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
24. Do you have any other comments you wish to make?

Thank you for your time. Your responses will feed into the analysis for the Essential Skills in the Workplace final evaluation report. This will be published in autumn 2015. It will be available on the Welsh Government website: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research>

Essential Skills in the Workplace

Learner Interviews

Aims of the interview with learners

The aim of learner interviews is to establish the impact of the Essential Skills learning on the learner, their experience of the learning and whether they will/have continue(d) to develop skills and continue(d) learning as a result of their engagement with ESiW.

At the start of the interview, we will explain that all interviews are voluntary and that if at any time they wish to terminate the interview they may. We will ask each participant to sign a consent form and read out what it says and confirm they understand. This provides a confidentiality statement that states we will not share any of their responses with any one external to ourselves that could reveal their identity and gives assurance of anonymity in any case study write up or quotes. It also provides our contact details should they wish to contact us following the interview.

We would like to record the interviews for accuracy, and will ask permission of each interviewee. If they do not wish to be recorded or being recorded affects the interview we will not continue to record.

Ask for any questions they have before beginning.

A) Background

1. Introduction and general background about the person(s) and their role(s)?
 - a) Which part of the organisation do you work in?
 - b) Do you work full/part time, shifts, sub-contractor?
 - c) How long have you worked in the company/their role?

2. How did you become aware of the learning on offer?
 - a) From a colleague
 - b) From their supervisor
 - c) From the workforce development manager/ HR / Personnel
 - d) Trade union representative or ULR
 - e) From a taster session run by the provider?
 - f) Already participated in learning previously and found out through the provider
 - g) Internet search
 - h) Other

3. How did the employer or provider introduce the learning to you? Was it clear that this was an opportunity for you to volunteer to improve your essential skills?

4. Did you feel you got enough information about what it was about and what you were required to do?

5. Why did you decide to become involved in learning?
 - a) What were your expectations?
 - b) What did you want to achieve?

6. How would you describe your learning background?
 - a) Length of time since last did any skills training?
 - b) Experience at school?
 - c) Highest qualifications they have?

B) Learning Activity

7. How did you find out what you wanted or needed to focus on, were you given some form of assessment?
 - a. How did you feel about going through the assessment process?
 - b. Did you get any feedback on what the results were and therefore what learning you could focus on to improve your skills (reading, writing, numbers, ICT)?
 - c. Were you happy with the assessment and the information you received as a result?
 - i. How could it have been improved?

8. What area of learning did you sign up to as part of the learning offer? (Literacy, Numeracy, ICT, ESOL)

9. Have you undertaken/completed any qualifications through this learning?

10. What level of qualification have you studied?
 - a. Did they do bite-sized learning called 'units' or the whole certificate?
 - b. Explore the experience (benefits and challenges)
 - c. Length of time taken
 - d. Any difficulties in achieving the qualification
 - e. Did they get the support they needed whilst training?
[If did ICT]
 - f. Which other qualification did you do alongside ICT?
 - i. How did this work? Was it a good experience?
11. Did you develop a learning portfolio or discuss a learning plan with your tutor?
 - b. Did this help in structuring your learning?
12. Were you given the opportunity to make decisions about what you learned and at what pace?
 - c. If not, would you have decided to do different training/at a different pace, if you would have had the choice?
13. Did you receive any teaching in Welsh?
 - d. Did you ask for any teaching in Welsh?
 - e. Were you offered any teaching in Welsh?
 - f. (If 'No') did you experience any disadvantages because it was not your preferred language?

C) Benefits

14. What did you expect to get out of the learning you were involved in?
 - g. Improve skills? [reading, writing, communications, IT, numbers]
 - h. Improve confidence levels?
 - i. To help with children's homework?
 - j. Become better in my job, take on more responsibilities?
15. Did your learning experience match your expectations? If not why not?
16. Do you feel this learning has improved your skills and knowledge?
 - a. If yes, in what area of your work do you feel you have benefited from the improved skills and knowledge? For example:
 - i. Communicating/presenting
 - ii. Using workplace databases/emailing, using spread sheets
 - iii. Using formulas, or calculating measurements etc
 - b. If no, why not? (Was it just about achieving the qualification or does the learner feel they have improved their skills and knowledge?)

17. How do you feel you have benefited from the learning? Examples may include:

- k. can do things better at work (examples)
- l. understand instructions/calculations better...
- m. get on with people better
- n. more confident
- o. promotional prospects – applied for promotion?
- p. job security
- q. financial benefits - have they had any salary increase?
- r. other (helping children with their homework)

D) Support/Barriers

18. What if any were the barriers to you undertaking learning?

- a. Child care
- b. Scheduling of the learning
- c. Location of the learning
- d. The language in which it was delivered
- e. Personal barriers, such as confidence
- f. Lack of knowledge or information about the opportunities
- g. Lack of awareness about the need to improve your reading or maths

19. What support/encouragement did you get from your employer to undertake this learning?

- a. Unpaid/paid time off, how this helped
- b. Appropriate advice/guidance to undertaking a qualification?
- c. Support/encouragement throughout the qualification?

20. Have you raised this with your employer and/or provider? And if so, could it be addressed?

21. Has this learning experience i.e. being given in the workplace, helped to take away those barriers or confirmed them?

E) Future learning Opportunities

22. Do you feel that there are opportunities in the workplace for you to do some more learning if you wish?

23. Have you had any more information from the providers about further learning opportunities?

24. If not in the workplace, do you think you will continue to do any more learning outside of the workplace?

Repeat interviews with learners

1. When we last spoke which was over a year ago, you were studying xx is that correct?
2. Have you completed the qualification?
 - a. If YES:
 - i. Have you undertaken any further learning since then?
 - ii. What was this learning in – higher level of ES or something different?
 - iii. Are you still undertaking your training now? When do you expect to complete your qualification?
 - b. If NO, what were the reasons for you not completing the qualification?
 - i. Will this be a barrier to you undertaking further learning or do you think you may take up the offer again?
 1. What would encourage you to take up the offer again?
3. Did you ask for teaching to be delivered in Welsh?
4. Would you have liked teaching to be delivered in Welsh?
5. Did you receive any teaching in Welsh?
 - i. (If asked/would have liked, but didn't receive): why did you not receive any teaching in Welsh?
 1. Did you experience any disadvantages because it was not your preferred language?
 - ii. If Yes – did this make a difference to your learning experience?
 1. If Yes - In what way?
6. Since completing this or both qualifications (adapt as necessary), in what ways do you feel you have benefited from the learning?
 - a. At work in your role and responsibilities?
 - b. Working with others – acting on instructions, contributing to discussions etc
 - c. More confident generally in skills and knowledge?
 - d. At home, able to help the children with homework?
 - e. Other areas?
7. Have you changed job roles or applied for promotion since you completed your training?
8. Have you had a salary increase since you completed your training?

Explore future learning intentions as in E.

Any additional comments they would like to make?

Essential Skills in the Workplace

Workplace Case Study

Aims of the Employer Case Study

The aims of the employer case studies are to evidence the impact of the essential skills and any further learning delivered in the workplace, taking in to consideration union engagement where relevant.

One of the key benefits of the ESiW programme is in developing a long term commitment to delivering training in the workplace. These case studies will seek to determine the sustainability of training as a result of ESiW.

Note for consultant:

Some of the case study visits are repeat visits and some are new visits; you need to adapt the questions detailed below accordingly.

We need to gather a range of information that shows the starting point from a training perspective so that the ESiW training can be put into perspective.

The purpose of the workplace case studies are to understand:

- a) Employer Background**
- b) Training History**
- c) Employer Pledge**
- d) Delivering Essential Skills Learning**
- e) Work with Unions**
- f) Impact of Learning**
- g) Impact on the Environment**

The people to be interviewed will depend on the size of the organisation and whether public or private sector. If a small private business, the interview should include the manager/director etc of the business. If part of a larger public sector organisation, we need to speak with the person who has been involved in setting up the partnership with the provider and understands the learning delivered. This may possibly be the Workforce Development Manager or Head of Department. We will also need to speak with someone who can provide anecdotal responses to the impact of the learning.

A) Background

7. What sector does the company align with?
8. How many employees are there in the business or at this site?
9. How long has the company been in existence?
10. Is the company unionised (if so, which union(s))?

B) Training History

11. Are they aware of any training needs and/or skills gaps in the organisation with regards Essential Skills needs among the workforce? (i.e. literacy, numeracy, ICT, ESOL needs)
 - a) How much of an issue was/is the deficit in Essential Skills for the business?
12. Have they any understanding as to how this impacts on the business, for example
 - i. Productivity
 - ii. Team work
 - iii. Quality of output
 - iv. Customer service
 - v. Other
13. Has the employer been involved in carrying out a training needs analysis with the provider which has identified any skills gaps and training needs? When did this take place and by whom?
14. Does the workplace have a recognised training plan which sets out goals in terms of staff training relating to Essential Skills or is the Essential Skills training a new intervention in the workplace?
15. Does the workplace require any training to be delivered in Welsh?
 - a) Has the workplace ever received any training in Welsh?

C) Employer Pledge Award

1. Is the employer aware of the Employer Pledge Award?
 - a. How did they become aware of it?
 - i. Had the provider introduced it?
2. Did the employer receive it or is working towards the Employer Pledge Award?
 - a. If no, why not?
 - Did they feel it was too resource intensive?
 - Did they feel they cannot commit to the requirements?
3. What impacts do/did they envisage?
 - a. Did this happen or not?
 - b. What impact do they think having the EPA has on the company's actions in terms of a broader strategy to meet needs in ES?
4. Is there a commitment to longer term support in Essential Skills for learners
 - a. If yes, how do they plan to arrange and deliver training?

Di) Delivering Essential Skills Learning in the Workplace (New Workplaces)

1. Why did the employer decide to engage in delivering Essential Skills within the workplace? Prompt if necessary:
 - a. Provider led
 - b. Recognition of the impact of low Essential Skill levels on their business
 - c. Employer demand led through a recognised need
 - d. An understanding of the business benefits resulting from addressing low skill levels amongst the workforce?
 - e. Identification and delivery arranged by third party
 - f. No direct cost
 - g. Social responsibility
 - h. others
2. Has the company developed further /new links with the provider as a result of engaging with the ESiW?
3. How is Essential Skills learning delivered in the workplace? Prompt if necessary...
 - a. One to one?
 - b. Group learning?
 - c. Mixture of both?
4. Does the business offer time off to train? /negotiated with the unions?
5. Did the business require and request any training through the medium of Welsh?
6. If yes, has the business received any training through the medium of Welsh?
 - a. If Yes: how successful was this training? Did it meet the learners' needs?

- b. How important was it to have had the choice of receiving learning in Welsh?
7. Is there a Learning Centre in the workplace that supports ES learning? What does it consist of?
- d. How/why was this developed? Was it developed in partnership with the union(s)?
8. What learning has taken place through the ESiW funding?
- e. Which subject areas of learning?
 - f. Have qualifications been achieved?
9. Approximately how many learners have gone through the ESiW programme since the start?
- a. What areas of the business or roles have learners been drawn from?
 - i. Does it include part time/full time?
 - ii. Is it attracting all ages or learners?
 - iii. Both males and females?
 - iv. Has it included learners who wish to be taught in Welsh?
 - b. How were these identified as being in need of essential skills training?
 - c. Did the employer experience any challenges in engaging and encouraging staff to participate in this training?
10. How does the Essential Skills learning contribute to the overall learning/skills development strategy of their workforce?
11. What is their experience of the learning delivered by the provider with regards?
- a. Organising the learning?
 - b. Quality of learning delivered?
 - c. Relevancy of learning delivered?
12. Do you feel that this Essential Skills activity is sustainable?
- If No, why do you think this is the case?
- If Yes,
- a. Would you consider undertaking further essential skills training for your workforce?
 - b. If yes, would you be prepared to make a financial contribution towards the cost of that training?
 - c. If yes, what would you consider to be a reasonable contribution?

Dii) Delivering Essential Skills in the Workplace (Repeat Visit)

1. Since our last visit in March/April 2013, what essential skills learning has taken place?
 - a. Has any further learning taken place as a result of ESiW?
2. Are new essential skills learners continuing to be identified or existing learners doing more qualifications, or both?
3. How many learners in total have completed Essential Skills qualifications since the start?
4. Are you facing any challenges in expanding the learning to new learners? And if so, what are they, and how do address those challenges?
5. Did you request any learning to be delivered in Welsh to the provider?
 - a. If YES: were they able to deliver the learning in Welsh?
 - i. If YES: What was your experience of this? i.e. Did you get any feedback from the learners regarding the quality of the teaching in Welsh?
 - ii. Were there any specific challenges in delivering the Essential Skills in Welsh that you think would be helpful to report?
 - iii. Did you see an impact as a result of people being taught in Welsh?
 - iv. If NO: what reasons did the provider give for not being able to deliver in Welsh?
6. Are you working with the same provider to deliver the learning or have you changed providers?
 - a. If changed, what were the reasons for changing?
7. Who is continuing to drive the Essential Skills delivery in your workplace?
 - a. Is it union led
 - b. The CE/HR manager
 - c. Learner demand etc

E) (If relevant) Working with Unions to Deliver Training Opportunities in the Workplace

1. How many unions are represented in the workplace?
2. Does the workplace have any Union Learning Representatives (ULRs)? How many ULRs have been trained in the workplace?
3. What role has the ULR or union had in helping develop a learning strategy or helping deliver learning in the workplace?
4. Has a partnership developed between the local provider, union and ULR?

5. To what extent do you feel the unions/ULRs have contributed to the learning agenda in the workplace?
6. Has the workplace developed a Learning Agreement which provides ULRs and employees with reasonable time off to undertake learning activities? How was this Learning Agreement developed? (Is it a national or local agreement?) What is the substance of the Learning Agreement?
7. Do you feel this benefits the learning or training in the workplace. Has the fact that the workplace got a Learning Agreement, stimulated additional learning?
8. Has the workplace benefitted from any WULF funding?
 - a. What activity, resources or facilities have been provided through WULF that has supported the essential skills provision? For example:
 - i. Computers
 - ii. Learning centre
 - iii. Engaging the provider
 - iv. ULRs engaging learners
 - v. Establishing a learning committee
 - vi. Agreeing a learning agreement
9. If the organisation had not accessed ESiW funded training, would you have delivered the ES training anyway?
 - a. What is this conclusion based on, what evidence is there for this?
 - b. What on-going commitment to training is there?

F) Impact of Learning

1. What workforce development initiatives does the company engage with and has this changed as a result of BSiW/ESiW?
2. Has the employer seen any benefits as a result of this learning?
 - a. In what areas?
 - i. Motivation of staff
 - ii. Productivity
 - iii. Team work
 - iv. Time keeping
 - v. Sickness
 - vi. Quality of product
 - vii. Customer service
 - viii. Fewer errors
 - ix. Reduced waste
 - x. Fewer accidents
 - xi. Other....

3. Which staffing roles have benefited from the learning?
 - a. Has this had a benefit on their performance in particular roles/functions?
4. Have staff been motivated to take on further learning?
 - a. If yes, in what areas?
5. Have there been any negative aspects to the learning that have been a challenge to overcome?
 - a. Cost in terms of releasing staff
 - b. Learner expectations not met
 - c. Loss of confidence if learners were unsuccessful

G) Impact on the Environment

1. Has being involved in the ESiW programme encouraged the business to consider its impact on the environment?
 - a. If so, in what way?
 - b. Have you had any particular support from the WG to support you in reducing the business impact on the environment?
 - i. If No, would you have liked any?
 - ii. If Yes, what type of support or advice have you had and how has it made an impact on the business?

H) General Comments

1. Does the employer have any other comments or recommendations for the Welsh Government on the ESiW programme?

Final Consultation Round with Providers

- 1. What were the key successes for you as a provider with regards your involvement in the ESiW programme (Prompts)**
 - a. Engaging more with local businesses?
 - b. Extending the capacity of the essential skills team (did they recruit more staff due to the contract?)
 - c. Did they work in sectors that they had not previously worked in? If yes, did this help extend their knowledge on how to contextualise learning for different learning needs? Have they got any examples of how they contextualised their learning?

- 2. Reflecting on the value of the consortium**
 - a. Did they work in a consortium?
 - b. Did it provide any provider business benefits? Yes/No. What benefits did it bring to the business?
 - i. Sharing of effective practice?
 - ii. Providing a better service to the local business community
 - c. Did they share any practices such as engaging businesses or delivering Essential Skills or was it more of a team working to deliver targets but working separately?
 - d. Has the provider continued to work in the consortium for other delivery? Is this a partnership that will last beyond Essential Skills?

- 3. What were the key challenges they faced in delivering Essential Skills in the Workplace?**
 - a. Did they have to re-negotiate their targets? If so, why? Were they over ambitious in the original proposal or did they face unanticipated challenges in trying to engage employers? What were these challenges?
 - i. Lack of staff / time to engage?
 - ii. Lack of contacts?
 - b. What were the key lessons the provider learned in terms of meeting their targets or engaging providers? [For example, did they review their engagement strategy to generate leads from work based learning? (more relevant to FE colleges) or did they use cold calling and did this work well?

- 4. Did the provider deliver any learning through the medium of Welsh? Yes/No**
 - a. Are there any particular challenges in delivering in Welsh? What are these?
 - b. Is there anything the Welsh Government could do to assist in extending delivery through the medium of Welsh?

5. **Have any of the links developed with employers as a result of ESiW been maintained?**
 - a. Have employers come back for any more training?
 - b. If Yes, what for, and if No, why not?
 - c. There is some uncertainty regarding the funding of essential skills currently. How has this impacted on the provider's relationship with employers?

6. **Do they feel that employers are more aware of potential essential skills deficits and the need to support their workforce in developing their skills as a result of ESiW?**

7. **Did the provider have any involvement in delivering the Employer Pledge?** If yes, how did they progress this (which businesses and how many?). If No, why not?
 - a. Is it financially viable for providers to engage/award employers with the EP
 - b. Do they see any merit in the EP?
 - c. Do they think the Welsh Government should do more to promote the EP or is it the provider's job to do this?

8. **Future need for another ESiW?**
 - a. What is their opinion of the need for further funding for ES delivery in the workplace?
 - i. Would employers engage in ES delivery without it being free in their opinion?

Any other comments?

Sub-Contracted Provider Consultation Guide

Scheduled June 2015

Introduction

The purpose of the mid-term consultation is to establish the views of providers in relation to the following:

- i) Delivering essential skills in consortia
 - ii) Contract management and performance against profiles
 - iii) Effective practice and key challenges to date in identification and engagement of employers
 - iv) Meeting employer and learner needs
 - v) Engagement in WESAT
 - vi) Capacity of providers
 - vii) Working with unions
-

- Provider Name
 - Provider Type (FE, PTP, ACL)
 - LA
-

i) Delivering in a Consortia

- a) How did the provider agree profiles with the lead provider?
- b) What areas of learning is the provider focussing on? (i.e. are they specialising in ESOL or ICT etc)
- c) Is this a new consortia or have they worked in partnership previous to ESiW?
- d) What do they perceive to be the benefits of consortia arrangements?
 - Any areas of good practice in delivery within the consortia that enable providers to stimulate demand and deliver learning?
- e) What are the challenges of delivering in a consortia?

ii) Contract Management and Performance Against Profiles

- a) How well is the contract progressing against profiles?
 - Participants registered
 - Qualification completed
- b) What factors have affected progress to date?
- c) What challenges are the providers facing in meeting their profiles and how are they addressing those challenges?
- d) Has the provider over performed?

- Is this a cause for concern among providers?
- Are there learners on a waiting list for learning?
- e) How confident are providers that the profiles will be achieved by the end of the programme?
- f) Are there any lessons that could be learned about managing the contract, either within the consortia or as a provider?

iii) Effective Practice and Key Challenges in Identification and Engagement of Employers

- a) Do providers have a strategy that targets certain sectors, business sizes, geographical areas or learners cohorts?
- b) Are there particular challenges in identifying and engaging employers in the provider's area?
 - Geographic location / isolation?
 - Suitable training accommodation?
 - Sector?
 - Business size?
- c) How have providers worked to overcome these?
- d) Are employers sufficiently aware of essential skills to understand the potential benefits of training?
- e) Has the marketing of essential skills been sufficient?
- f) How many leads have been forwarded to providers from MaB?
 - Have most leads resulted in participation of learners?

iv) Meeting Employer and Learner Needs

- a) How has the provider assessed employer needs?
- b) Has the provider been asked to assess the Welsh language needs of employers?
 - If so, how have they done this? What assessments have been used?
- c) Has the provider offered learning through the medium of Welsh?
- d) Have they delivered learning through the medium of Welsh?
 - If not, why not, particularly in areas where Welsh is the dominant language?
 - Does it cause any particular challenges to providers? (Tutor expertise, content of delivery, group work)
- e) Have they delivered any element of the ESW Welsh Language qualification?
- f) Are providers aware of this qualification?
- g) Has the provider worked to deliver essential skills as part of a wider workforce development strategy?
 - If not, why not (provider experience, or confidence in working in business development)
 - If they have, what other forms of training have been delivered to employers as part of the support?
- h) Has the use of the Employer Pledge Award (EPA) assisted in the delivery of more comprehensive support to employers?
 - Have providers engaged employers in the use of the EPA?
 - If not why not?
 - Does the providers feel there is scope to engage with the EPA in the future?
- i) What learning have providers delivered?

- What areas (Communication, ICT, AON, ESOL)
- At what level (Pre-entry, Level 1, Level 2)
- j) Have they delivered qualifications concurrently in different subject areas?
- k) How long, on average have qualifications taken to deliver?
- l) How have they delivered the learning?
 - In groups?
 - One to one?
- m) Has the provider delivered learning that has been contextualised to the workplaces of learners?
 - What are the challenges in undertaking this across a range of sectors? (time, expertise and understanding, developing course content)
- n) Has the provider fulfilled their profiles relating to black and ethnic minority learners or learners with disabilities?
 - If not, what have been the challenges in achieving this?

v) Engagement in WESAT

- a) Was the provider involved in the WESAT trials?

Ask only if using the tool currently or has been involved in the trial:

- If so, how do they feel the tool has been developed/adapted for use in Wales?
- Is it a tool that they are confident in using to assess learner needs?
- How does it compare with the previous tool they were using?
- Are there any unforeseen implications on providers (time, expertise) that are impacting on its use?
- Are there any concerns regarding its use that the Welsh Government need to be aware of?

vi) Provider Capacity

- a) Has the capacity of the providers increased as a result of the ESiW programme?
- Either through recruitment of additional staff
 - Or/and by increasing skills levels of tutors?
 - How many of their tutors underwent the free training available?
 - At what level?
- b) Does the provider have the capacity to continue to deliver essential skills beyond ESiW?
- Does it perceive it will have spare capacity due to a drop predicted drop in demand of essential skills training?
 - Will this impact on teaching staff?
 - Does the provider have the capacity to delivery learning through the medium of Welsh?
 - Has this been sufficient to meet any demand for learning in Welsh?

vii) Work with Unions

- a) Has the provider worked with unions to identify employers and access learners?
- Which unions and workplaces?

- b) What are the advantages of working with unionised workplaces as opposed to non-unionised workplaces?
- Working with ULRs?
 - Utilising Learning Centres?
 - Learners getting time of to learn?
 - Sustainable relationships with workplaces?
- c) Are there any challenges in working with unions and if so, how have you managed to overcome these?
- d) Are there particular examples of where WULF funded activity has dovetailed with ESiW funding that have increased engagement of employers/uptake of learning (i.e. funding for engagement of learners through WULF)

viii) Any general comments they wish to make....

Annex C

A counterfactual evaluation of the ESiW programme using the Labour Force Survey

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July 2015

1. Introduction

In this report, we conduct a counterfactual analysis of the effects of Essential Skills in Wales (ESiW) programme, using the five-quarter Labour Force Survey (LFS). **The purpose of the counterfactual analysis is to try and answer the question ‘What would have happened in the absence of the ESiW programme?’** By comparing learners who undertook the ESiW programme with control groups of individuals with similar personal and employment characteristics from the LFS, it is possible to provide some assessment of the labour market outcomes for similar individuals, over a similar time period, who did not undertake the ESiW programme. We look at three different control groups: an LFS sample from the United Kingdom (UK); an LFS sample from the UK minus London and the South East (SE); and an LFS sample from Wales.

In this analysis, we focus on three outcomes in particular, which are measurable in both the LFS and through the European Social Fund (ESF) Leavers’ Survey: pay increases; changes in occupation; and changes in supervisory responsibility. We look at change at a descriptive level, and then using a Propensity Score Matching technique (PSM).

At a descriptive level, we find that ESiW learners have seen greater occupational progression than comparable workers in the LFS (in Wales, in the UK minus London and the SE, and in the UK as a whole). However, ESiW learners have fared worse in terms of seeing increases in their supervisory responsibility. They have also seen, on average, lower levels of pay increase than UK LFS respondents, but similar levels to Welsh LFS respondents. However, caution should be exercised in comparing the ESiW and LFS pay measures, as the raw responses to the questions on pay look markedly different.

The PSM analysis reveals little or no significant effects of the ESiW treatment group compared to all three LFS control groups. Marginally significant effects on some

specifications are found for occupational increases and pay for the ESiW compared to the LFS Wales sample, when the PSM analysis is conducted. There are three possible explanations. One is that there is no significant difference between the outcomes for the treatment and control groups. Secondly, it may be that the time period considered to look at change is too short to capture any effects. Thirdly, it may be that measures of change are imperfect.

The remainder of this document is structured as follows. We begin with an overview and discussion of PSM techniques. Then we provide some background on the LFS before moving on to look at specific matching questions in the LFS and ESF Leavers' Survey. We then conduct analysis at a descriptive level, before undertaking the PSM analysis. We finish with a discussion of the findings and conclusion.

2. Propensity Score Matching: the possibilities and the limitations

There is a vast literature on the use of counterfactuals to understand the effects of labour market interventions on outcomes. Bryson et al (2002) note that to try and measure the effects of a 'treatment' on participants, Propensity Score Matching is often used. This section draws on their useful summary of PSM approaches. The aim of any counterfactual analysis is to identify a 'control' group, with as similar characteristics as possible to the treatment group, except that this control group has not experienced the treatment. In our case, the 'treatment' is the ESiW intervention, thus with a counterfactual analysis, we would be looking to identify a control group which is similar in other ways to the ESiW sample.

As Bryson et al (2002) note, since the propensity to participate in a programme is unknown, the first task in matching is to estimate such a propensity. This is typically done through logit/probit techniques with the dependent variable being participation in the programme, and the independent variables are the factors thought to influence participation, which we consider in more detail in section 4 below. Once this has been done, the most straightforward approach to PSM is the nearest-neighbour method (see Bryson et al, 2002). Each treated individual in turn is taken and matched with a non-treated individual with the closest propensity score. The resulting set of non-treatment individuals constitutes the comparison group (Bryson et al, 2002). It may be that a single non-treatment individual provides the closest match for a number of treatment individuals. In this case, the non-treatment individual may feature in the comparison group more than once. The end result is that the comparison group is of the same size as the treatment group, although the comparison group may feature fewer individuals.

This is a key advantage of the nearest neighbour method, as it is less data hungry than some other PSM techniques. Should a certain type of individual be common in the treatment group but relatively uncommon in the comparator group, observations can be used more than once – the nearest neighbour can be the same response in the comparator group on multiple occasions (Bryson et al, 2002).

Bryson et al (2002) note a number of key challenges to using PSM methods, which they argue should inform the decision about whether PSM is appropriate or not. Indeed, their argument is that PSM is often *not* appropriate for conducting labour market evaluations. First, they note that PSM should not be used where it is difficult to obtain information known to affect participation and outcomes, either because they are unobservable, or because the data are not available to capture it. Secondly, 'common support' may be a problem, in other words, participants may differ markedly from non-participants. However, problematically, the extent of the common support problem may not be known in advance: it may only become apparent once data have been collected and analysed. Finally, small sample sizes may present problems for PSM, limiting the ability to match effectively on the criteria that one wants to ensure you are controlling for (Bryson et al, 2002).

These challenges should be borne carefully in mind for the remainder of this document, and thus alongside the PSM, we also conduct a descriptive-level comparison of outcomes between the ESiW sample and LFS samples.

3. The Labour Force Survey

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a large nationally representative dataset, collecting data from 60,000 households (150,000 individuals) each quarter. It contains a large amount of data on personal and employment characteristics, including demographic data, information on qualifications and skills and pay. For the purposes of the PSM analysis, the LFS offers the potential to identify respondents who are in employment and who share similar characteristics (e.g. gender, qualifications, and employment status) to the ESiW participants. It is also possible to identify a sample of respondents who live in Wales, or in regions with similar characteristics to Wales.

The LFS is also an appropriate dataset because it is possible to identify a number of outcome measures, through which progression can be assessed. Another strength of the survey is that there is a longitudinal dimension to the LFS, with individuals remaining in the survey for five consecutive quarters. Five quarter longitudinal LFSs allow us to look at progression over a year, by looking at the position of respondents who enter the survey in wave 1, and measure their progression over the next 4 quarters. 1/5 of the LFS respondents each quarter will be in wave 1. Sample attrition

is high, since any case in which data is missing from any wave is dropped from the dataset. In practice, once numbers are restricted to those of working age, and other criteria of interest, this can result in a dataset of between 3-4000 respondents.

This number of respondents provides a large enough size dataset to conduct PSM, against an ESiW dataset of around 1250 respondents. However, it is possible to stack consecutive longitudinal LFS datasets on top of one another. This serves two purposes:

- First, it provides an obvious boost in sample size. If five 5 quarter LFS datasets are stacked, the number of respondents with full data on the variables of interest might rise to up to 15,000. This is particularly helpful for providing the numbers necessary for more fine grained analysis of the LFS, such as respondents from Wales only.
- Secondly, by stacking consecutive longitudinal datasets, we can span more effectively the period in which the ESiW participants are undertaking their training. Specifically, it is possible to stack LFS over 2012 and 2013 (even though individual LFS respondents are only in the dataset for one year).

The following LFS datasets are used for the analysis that follows:

- January 2012-March 2013
- April 2012-June 2013
- July 2012-September 2013
- October 2012-December 2013
- January 2013-March 2014.

The 5-quarter longitudinal LFS were each released to the UK Data Archive around 4 months after the end of data collection. They were downloaded and stacked together for this part of the analysis in January 2015.

4. Identifying matching questions in the Labour Force Survey and the ESF Leavers' survey

As Bryson et al (2002) note, the success of any PSM technique is dependent upon being able to identify respondents with as similar characteristics as possible in the 'counterfactual' dataset, in order to be confident that you can control for as many factors as possible that might affect the outcomes of interest. Against this, however, the 'data-hungry' nature of PSM must be taken into account: the addition of each variable means that more respondents are needed to find a meaningful match against multiple criteria. In this section we look at potential variables to use: to filter

respondents (e.g. we might only want to focus on respondents from Wales, or we might want to exclude respondents who are not in work); and to use as matching variables for the PSM analysis (e.g. gender, employment status, qualification level).

In terms of geographical identifiers, region of usual residence (URES MC variable in LFS) provides a means through which comparable workers to those in the ESiW programme could be identified in the LFS. It is important to note that there are a relatively small number of Welsh respondents in the stacked LFS dataset (typically, in each LFS 5 per cent of responses from Wales, meaning in a stacked dataset of 15000, there may be 750 or so respondents from Wales. Thus, it may be possible to conduct some analysis on the Welsh sample, but it would also be useful, for PSM analysis to be able to construct a larger sample. Alongside an LFS Wales sample, we decided to also look at the UK working population as a whole, and also a sample of the UK working population excluding London and the South East. Gross Value Added (GVA) per head in London and the South East is much higher than all other regions, as the Table 1 taken from Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2013) reveals.

Table 1: Gross Value Added per region, 2013

NUTS ¹ region	GVA per head	Share of UK total GVA (%)
United Kingdom ⁴	21,295	100.0
North East	16,091	3.0
North West	18,438	9.4
Yorkshire & The Humber	17,556	6.7
East Midlands	17,448	5.8
West Midlands	17,429	7.1
East of England	19,658	8.4
London	37,232	22.4
South East	23,221	14.6
South West	19,023	7.3
England	21,937	84.8
Wales	15,401	3.4
Scotland	20,013	7.7
Northern Ireland	16,127	2.1

Source: ONS (2013) Statistical Bulletin December 2013, available at:

http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_345191.pdf

¹ Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics

In the ESF Leavers' survey, sections B and F of the Leavers' survey provide data on personal and employment characteristics which can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme, and which can be matched against similar variables in the LFS, to help develop a 'counterfactual'.

Section F contains questions on personal characteristics and demographic data, which can be matched with similar questions in the LFS. Personal characteristics most commonly used in counterfactuals for evaluating labour market programmes are:

- Gender
- Age
- Ethnicity

Other personal characteristics could also be used include disability, number of people in household, and dependent children. However, in the interests of parsimony, and given the strains on data of including each additional variable, we focus just on the three identified above, gender, age and ethnicity.

Section F of the ESF Leavers' Survey contains information on employment/labour market variables. Commonly used variables in counterfactual analyses of labour market interventions are:

- Employment status,
- Tenure
- Highest level of prior qualification.

In section F of the ESF Leavers' Survey, a question is asked to respondents on their employment status. Workers who are self-employed might experience different outcomes to employed workers, so it is important to control for this in any counterfactual analysis. In the ESF, the question allows for the identification of workers who are employed or self-employed. Similar questions are available in the LFS, operationalised in the variables Employment Status in Main Job (NSTATR), and Basic Economic Activity (INECAC). These variables will be used in two ways. First, they will be used to exclude/filter out from our control groups those workers in the LFS who are government training schemes or unemployed (so that remaining respondents are either employed, or self-employed at the time of their first interview in the LFS). Secondly, employment status will be used as a key variable to match against in the PSM analysis.

Tenure is another variable that might affect outcomes of labour market interventions. Respondents in the ESF Leavers' Survey are also asked about their length of tenure with their current employer, and in the LFS, a similar variable, Length of Time Continually Employed (EMPLLEN) identifies (in categories) the tenure length.

It is also very likely that prior qualification levels will affect the outcomes of any labour market intervention, thus we also look to control for this in our counterfactual analysis. Respondents in the ESiW sample are asked questions about their highest previous qualification, prior to starting their course. This allows for the identification of qualifications at various NQF levels. The LFS also asks questions to respondents about their highest prior qualification. LEQUL111 provides data at a similar level of granularity, and is our preferred measure.

Turning to our outcome measures, labour market evaluation studies focus on a wide range of outcome measures. Most commonly used are measures of pay change and skill change (see Bryson et al, 2002). Other potential measures include:

- Occupational change
- Employment status (temporary versus permanent)
- Change in supervisory responsibility
- Subjective indicators such as increases in satisfaction, motivation and commitment.

Our choices are informed by two factors. First, what information are available in the LFS and can we ensure consistency with the questions asked in the ESF Leavers' Survey? Secondly, what are meaningful indicators of change following an essential skills programme, and what is it possible or feasible to be able to expect to measure after 12 months of taking such a programme? On the first factor, there are no subjective, attitudinal questions on satisfaction, commitment or motivation in the LFS, so these, whilst potentially useful, are not considered in the counterfactual analysis. Such questions, asked in the ESF Leavers' Survey, may of course, be important indicators of outcomes in a stand-alone evaluation of the ESiW programme using the ESF Survey. On the second factor, changes in temporary/employment status was not felt to be a good measure of change, as numbers in temporary jobs in the LFS were relatively small (5 per cent of the workforce), and thus change between temporary/permanent over a year was likely to be small. Furthermore, it was difficult to interpret clearly whether move from a permanent to temporary job or vice versa was a positive or negative outcome.

We have used three measures in our analysis, capturing pay, occupation/skill, and responsibility at work, all of which were felt, from our prior reading of the literature on labour market evaluations to be important outcome measures.

Changes in pay

The most commonly used outcome measure in labour market evaluation studies is pay. In the ESiW survey, respondents indicate their hourly, weekly, or monthly pay both at the start and the end of the training. From this, it is possible to identify change in hourly, weekly, monthly or annual pay. In turn, from this, it is possible to calculate a percentage increase in pay for each person who completed this part of the survey. As we shall see in the descriptive analysis below, there is a significant amount of missing data on pay in the ESiW dataset.

In the LFS, hourly pay is a derived variable. It is generated from reported gross earnings and hours of work. There is extensive debate about the merits of HOURPAY in the LFS since it depends upon self-reported measures of income. Studies have found some errors in HOURPAY, particularly in the measurement of low pay. For example, studies have found that there is no spike in the distribution of HOURPAY at the NMW, a spike that you would expect (see Riley 2013 for a review) and it also overstates the number of individuals paid particularly low wages (ibid, 2013). Wage data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings would provide an alternative way of accessing wage data, but unfortunately, this dataset has much fewer questions on the labour market variables of interest to us. Furthermore, despite the limitations, HOURPAY has been used in a wide range of labour market evaluation studies (Bryson et al, 2002). To ensure a similar variable to the ESiW pay change variable that we derive, we calculate a percentage hourly pay change variable in the LFS, from wave 1 to 5, for each respondent.

Occupational change

The second indicator of progression will be occupational change. In the ESiW survey, it is possible to identify occupations at the start and end of training, to a minor occupational level. Similarly, in the LFS, it is possible to use variables on major occupational and minor occupational grouping to identify occupations for each respondent in wave 1 and 5. We group occupations into 4 levels of skill, following the widely used convention, developed in a Skills Task Force Research Paper (Skills Task Force, 1999). This identifies Level 4 (broadly managerial and senior professional workers); Level 3 (associate professionals and skilled trades); Level 2 (broadly administrative, sales and personal service workers); and Level 1 (elementary occupations). From this, it is possible to identify change in occupational level for respondents in both the ESiW and the LFS.

Supervisory responsibility

The final measure of progression is supervisory responsibility, which might be used to identify whether workers have progressed into team leader, line manager, or

supervisory positions. A question on whether workers have any responsibility for supervising others in their main job is asked in both the ESF Leavers' Survey (before and after the training) and the LFS (in waves 1-5).

Table 2: Summary of variables used to match between ESiW and LFS

	<u>ESF Leavers Survey</u>	<u>LFS</u>
<u>Filter Variables</u>		
In employment (employment or self-employment) before course	B1	INECAC01
Region of residence (All UK; All UK minus London/SE; Wales only)		URES MC1
Over 16		
<u>Matching Variables</u>		
Highest qualification (select below NQF Level 2 or no qualifications)	B5	LEQUL11
Employed or self-employed	B1	NSTAT1
Tenure		EMPL EN
Ethnicity		ETHUKEUL
Gender		SEX
Age		AGE
<u>Outcome Variables</u>		
Gross Pay, before	X(ii)	hourpay1, grosswk1
Gross Pay, after	C13	hourpay5, grosswk5
Occupational Grouping, before	B7b	sc10mmj1, sc10mmn1
Occupational Grouping, after	C7	sc10mmj1, sc10mmn5
Responsible for supervising, before	X(i)	supvis1
Responsible for supervising, after	Y(i)	supvis5

5. Descriptive analysis from the ESiW and LFS

First, we filter respondents out of each LFS 5-quarter dataset, so that the sample comprises respondents aged 16 or over, who are in employment or self-employment. Each dataset is then stacked together, to provide one full dataset covering January 2012 – March 2014. In the descriptive analysis that follows, and for the PSM analysis, we conduct comparisons between the ESiW and each of the following LFS datasets: UK as a whole; UK minus London and the South East; and Wales only. The numbers from each dataset are listed in table 3 below.

Table 3: LFS 5 quarter datasets

Dataset	Number of respondents (LFS)		
	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only
N	14378	10121	657

In the ESiW sample, there were 1238 respondents. Descriptive statistics for the relevant variables from the ESiW survey are included alongside the LFS for comparison.

Table 4: Gender (%)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
Male	50.9	50.4	50.1	36.3
Female	49.1	49.6	49.9	63.7
N	14378	10121	657	1238

The gender distribution of the ESiW sample is heavily skewed towards women, with 63.7 per cent of learners being women. This is markedly different from all three of the LFS samples, which have roughly equal numbers of men and women.

Table 5: Ethnicity (%)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
White British	88.8	92.5	96.3	90.8
Irish	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.5
Other white	3.5	2.2	1.5	3
Other	7	4.9	1.9	5.7
N	11251	8528	657	1238

The ESiW sample is broadly similar to the UK LFS sample in terms of ethnicity. Other respondents form a lower proportion of responses in the UK minus London, and Wales samples of the LFS.

Table 6: Region (%)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
North East	4.9	7		
Yorkshire and Humber	8.9	12.5		
East Midlands	8	11.3		
East Anglia	5	7.1		
London	8.8	-		
SE	21	-		
SW	10.1	14.4		
West Midlands	8.6	12		
NW	9.4	13.3		
Wales	4.6	6.5	100	100
Scotland	13.3	12.3		
Ireland	2.4	3.3		
N	14378	10121	657	1238

The regional distributions of the UK LFS sample and UK minus London and the SE sample can be found in table 6. As noted earlier, in UK LFS, around 5 per cent of the respondents are from Wales.

Table 7: Employment Status (%)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
Employee	85.1	85.9	84.6	89.7
Self-employed	14.9	14.1	15.4	10.3
N	14378	10121	657	1238

In terms of employment status, the ESiW has somewhat lower proportions of respondents in self-employment, compared to the LFS samples. It may be that outcomes are likely to be different for employed and self-employed workers, and we look to control for this in our PSM evaluation.

Table 8: Tenure

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
Less than a year	11	10.6	11.4	12
1-<5 years	26.6	26.2	24.5	28.3
5-<10 years	20.3	20.2	15	22.6
10+ years	42	43	45.1	36.8
N	14378	10079	656	1238

Tenure levels are broadly similar for the different samples, although the LFS respondents tend to have a greater proportion of respondents with tenure of 10 years or more.

Table 9: Highest prior qualification (NQF) (%)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
None	6.2	6.7	6.3	11.4
Below Level 2	11.1	11.3	10.6	25.1
At Level 2	15.4	16	18.5	21.1
Level 3	15.3	15.7	15.9	20.8
Level 4+	41.8	39.7	39	14.2
Other	10.2	10.6	9.8	7.4
	14351	10099	654	1238

The ESiW sample has a higher proportion of respondents with no qualifications, and has a significantly higher proportion of respondents with qualifications of Level 2 or below (57 per cent in ESiW sample, compared to 33 per cent of the UK LFS sample, and 35.5 of the Wales sample). This highlights the importance of matching in the PSM analysis using qualification level, to control for these differences.

Outcome variables

Table 10: Occupation before and after course (for LFS respondents: occupation in wave 1 and wave 5)

Before (%)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
Level 1	16.1	16.3	15.2	8.3
Level 2	46.7	47.9	48.1	51.5
Level 3	28.0	27.5	28.5	27.9
Level 4	9.2	8.4	8.2	12.2
N	11278	9962	491	1238

After (%)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
Level 1	16.0	16.3	16.2	8.4
Level 2	45.8	46.5	45.8	49.1
Level 3	28.4	28.3	26.8	29.7
Level 4	9.9	8.9	11.3	12.9
N	11278	9962	491	1238

Occupation increase (%)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
YES	6.1	6.1	5.7	6.9
NO	93.9	93.9	94.3	93.1
N	11278	9962	491	1238

Standard occupational categories were recoded, using ONS guidance to Level 4 (broadly managerial and senior professional workers); Level 3 (associate professionals and skilled trades); Level 2 (broadly administrative, sales and personal service workers); and Level 1 (elementary occupations). The variables on occupational level before and after taking the course (ESiW respondents) and in wave 1 and wave 5 (LFS) show that a slightly higher proportion of ESiW respondents have seen an increase in their occupational level, using our 4 level measures. Compared to the Wales sample from the LFS, for example, where 5.7 per cent of respondents saw an increase in occupational level over the year, 6.9 per cent of respondents in the ESiW have seen an increase from the start to the end of the course. This suggests that the ESiW training may have led to a greater degree of occupational increase than comparable workers in the wider (Wales, UK minus London and SE, and UK) population.

Table 11: Supervisory responsibility before and after course (for LFS samples: wave 1 and wave 5).

Supervisory responsibility before (%)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
YES	26.5	24.3	24.3	36.5
NO	73.5	75.7	75.7	63.3
N	11818	8344	524	1235

Supervisory responsibility after (%)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
YES	28.3	27	27	37.5
NO	71.7	73	73	62.5
N	11818	8344	524	1235

Supervisory increase (%)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
YES	7.2	7.2	7.4	6.5
NO	92.8	92.8	92.6	93.5
N	11818	8344	524	1235

The analysis of supervisory responsibility increase show that, compared to the LFS samples, ESiW respondents are slightly less likely to have seen an increase in their supervisory responsibilities. A higher proportion of ESiW respondents have supervisory responsibilities both before and after their course, than comparable LFS respondents, but a lower proportion see any increase in their responsibility over the year. By this measure, then, outcomes of ESiW respondents are worse than for the wider working (Wales, UK minus London and SE, and UK) populations.

Pay

Table 12: Percentage pay increase from start to finish of course (for LFS respondents: from wave 1-wave 5) (percentage of respondents)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
Decrease	37.9	38.4	36.6	6.8
Same	7.6	7.4	8.5	60.6
Increase of less than 5%	14.4	14.6	11.1	4.6
Increase of 5- <10%	9.8	8.1	10.3	6.3
Increase of 10- <20%	11.8	19.8	11.4	8.2
Increase of more than 20%	18.5	19.7	22.2	13.5
N	8266	5873	377	739

Our third outcome measure is pay. Table 12 shows that the distribution of responses for the ESiW and LFS samples look quite different. By far the most common observation in the ESiW data is 'no change', with respondents reporting exactly the same wages and hours at the start of the course and at the end of the course. In the LFS, by contrast, a relatively small proportion of respondents report the same wage. A relatively smaller number of ESiW respondents have seen an increase in their wage, compared to LFS respondents. The widely varying distributions, and the much higher likelihood of ESiW respondents reporting no change to their wages means that a high degree of caution needs to be exercised when seeking to compare the ESiW and LFS responses on pay. Considerable variation in responses between LFS and ESF Leavers respondents suggests that the questions wording as well as timing resulted in significantly different responses making comparisons very difficult.

Table 13: Average pay increase from start to finish of course (for LFS respondents: from Wave 1-5)

	UK	UK minus London and SE	Wales only	ESiW sample
Average increase	11.1	9.95	8.6	8.5
N	8266	5873	377	739

Table 13 shows average pay increases for the LFS and ESiW responses. This shows that the average pay increase for ESiW respondents is similar to that observed for the UK LFS Wales sample, but less than that observed for the wider LFS working populations. All responses here are unadjusted for inflation, so show a raw average pay increase over a year period.

5. Propensity Score Matching (PSM)

As noted in section 2 above, the aim with any counterfactual analysis is to identify a control group, with as similar characteristics as possible to the treatment group, except that they have not experienced the treatment. In this case, the ‘treatment’ is the ESiW intervention, thus with the counterfactual analysis, we are looking to identify a control group which is similar in other ways to the ESiW sample. Propensity Score Matching is one approach to conducting a counterfactual.

We use the nearest-neighbour method to conduct the PSM analysis (see Bryson et al, 2002). Each treated individual in turn is taken and matched with a non-treated individual with the closest propensity score. The resulting set of non-treatment individuals constitutes the comparison group. It may be that a single non-treatment individual provides the closest match for a number of treatment individuals. In this case, the non-treatment individual will feature in the comparison group more than once. The end result is that the comparison group is of the same size as the treatment group, although the comparison group may feature fewer individuals.

We conduct three specifications in turn, firstly a ‘basic’ specification, matching ESiW participants with LFS participants on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity and tenure. For the second specification, we add highest prior qualification as a matching criteria. Finally, we add employment status (specifically whether the respondent is an employee or self-employed).

Initial specification: matching on age; gender; tenure (4 categories) and ethnicity.

Outcome 1: Occupation increase (YES/NO)

	UK LFS	UK LFS excluding London and SE	LFS Wales only
Coefficient	0.01	0.01	0.01
SE	0.01	0.01	0.02
N	11424	8122	651

This analysis shows a very small positive co-efficient for being on the ESiW programme, compared to each of the three control groups, however in none of these cases is the effect significant at conventional levels.

Outcome 2: Increase in supervisory responsibility (YES/NO)

	UK LFS	UK LFS excluding London and SE	LFS Wales only
Coefficient	-0.01	-0.01	0.01
SE	0.01	0.01	0.02
N	12020	8561	685

Here, the PSM analysis finds a small negative co-efficient for the ESiW group, compared to the UK LFS and UK LFS minus London and the SE sample, and a small positive co-efficient, however, none are significant.

Outcome 3: Percentage pay change

	UK LFS	UK LFS excluding London and SE	LFS Wales only
Coefficient	-0.02	0.01	0.02*
SE	0.02	0.02	0.02
N	8471	6080	551

*significant at 0.1 level

The PSM analysis points to a small positive effect of the ESiW programme, compared to the LFS Wales only sample (significant at the 10 per cent level), but no significant effect compared to the larger LFS control groups. This suggests there may be positive impact on pay, although as noted above, the distribution of pay variables in the ESiW and the LFS look markedly different, and the number of respondents in the Wales LFS is very small for a PSM analysis.

Specification 2: Matching on age; gender; tenure (4 categories) and ethnicity PLUS qualification level (NQF Level 2 or below=1; otherwise=0)

Outcome 1: Occupation increase, YES/NO

	UK LFS	UK LFS excluding London and SE	LFS Wales only
Coefficient	0.01	0.01	0.03*
SE	0.01	0.01	0.02
N	11424	8122	651

*significant at 10 per cent level

When we add in qualification level as a matching criteria, we find a small positive, significant effect for the ESiW programme, compared to the Wales LFS sample, although no significant effect compared to the larger LFS samples. This effect, when adding in qualification as a control variable may reflect the fact that a higher proportion of ESiW respondents have relatively low levels of qualifications, which are important to control for in the PSM analysis.

Outcome 2: Increase in supervisory responsibility

	UK LFS	UK LFS excluding London and SE	LFS Wales only
Coefficient	-0.01	-0.01	0.03
SE	0.01	0.01	0.02
N	12020	8561	685

There is no significant difference in effects for the ESiW sample, compared to the LFS samples, even when including the additional qualification variable as a match.

Outcome 3: Percentage pay change

	UK LFS	UK LFS excluding London and SE	LFS Wales only
Coefficient	-0.02	-0.02	0.01
SE	0.04	0.05	0.05
N	8471	6080	551

When we add qualification level as a matching criteria, we find that the significance of the effect for the ESiW sample compared to the LFS Wales only sample drops out. There are no significant findings for any of the three control groups.

Specification 3: Matching on age; gender; tenure (4 categories) and ethnicity, qualification level (NQF Level 2 or below=1; otherwise=0) PLUS employment status: (employed/self-employed)

Outcome 1: Occupation increase, YES/NO

	UK LFS	UK LFS excluding London and SE	LFS Wales only
Coefficient	0.01	0.03	0.02
SE	0.01	0.01	0.01
N	11432	12029	655

Outcome 2: Increase in supervisory responsibility

	UK LFS	UK LFS excluding London and SE	LFS Wales only
Coefficient	-0.01	-0.01	0.02
SE	0.01	0.01	0.01
N	12029	8570	664

Outcome 3: Percentage pay change

	UK LFS	UK LFS excluding London and SE	LFS Wales only
Coefficient	-0.02	-0.02	0.01
SE	0.04	0.05	0.05
N	8470	6078	549

When we add in employment status, we find little or no change in the coefficients compared to specification 2 above, and none of the effects are significant.

6. Conclusions

In this document, we have sought to compare outcomes for ESiW respondents and samples of LFS respondents, to address the question of what would have happened in the absence of the ESiW intervention. At a descriptive level, it would seem that there are some positive differences in outcomes between the ESiW sample and the LFS samples, particularly in terms of occupational change. However, ESiW respondents seem to fare worse in terms of changes in supervisory responsibility and pay, at a descriptive level.

The PSM analysis reveals little or no consistent significant effects of the ESiW treatment group compared to the LFS control groups. For the most basic specification (controlling for gender, age, tenure and ethnicity) we find marginally significant positive effects for occupational increases and pay for the ESiW compared to the LFS Wales sample. However, these effects are no longer significant when fuller specifications (matching additionally on highest qualification and employment status) are used.

There are three possible explanations for the limited effects observed. One is that there is no significant difference between the outcomes for the treatment and control groups. Secondly, it may be that the time period considered to look at change is too short to capture long-term effects. LFS respondents can only be captured over 1 year, and questions in the ESiW also only pick up responses and change between the start and end of courses. Thirdly, it may be that measures of change are imperfect. It is against this dimension which Bryson et al (2002) caution against the use of PSM. In our analysis we have been able to control for a wide range of factors that might affect outcomes. The pay variable is perhaps the most problematic variable for conducting the PSM analysis, since it seems that the distribution of responses looks quite different between the LFS and ESiW, even though extreme care was taken to ensure that the ESiW and LFS measures are as comparable as possible. This means that caution should be exercised in interpreting the effects from the PSM analysis using pay.

References

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Appendix 1: Match between questions in the ESF Leavers' Survey (section B) and the LFS

As noted Sections B of the Leavers' Survey can be matched fairly closely to questions in the LFS:

B1 Which one of the following best describes your MAIN situation or activity in the week before starting the course...

Comparable variable in 5q LFS: INECAC 05

Were you not looking for work for any of the following reasons?

Comparable variable in 5q LFS: INECAC05

B3) Were you under formal notice of redundancy at the time you began your course?

Comparable variable in 5q LFS: REDUND

B4) Since leaving compulsory education at age 16 which of the following best describes what you had been doing up to the point when you began your ESF funded course. Had you been...

Comparable variable in 5q LFS: NONE – possible to compile proxy variables through STATR and EMPMON

B5) Before you started the <COURSE> course or project, what was the highest qualification that you had obtained?

Comparable variable in 5Q LFS: LEQUL11

B6) Thinking about before you started the course or project, which, if any, of the following things made it difficult for you to find work...

Comparable variable in 5q LFS: none

B6A) Which of these reasons was the most important?

Comparable variable in 5q LFS: none.

What was your job title and what were your main duties or responsibilities in the last job you held prior to ESF?

Comparable variable in 5q LFS: various SOC10 questions

B12) Was this job...permanent or temporary

Comparable variable in 5q LFS: JOBTYP and JBTP10

B13) How many hours a week, on average, were you usually working immediately before you started the course – excluding meal breaks but including any paid overtime?

Comparable variable in 5q LFS: USUHR or ACTHR

B13a) How long had you been [B1=1: working for your employer] [(IF B1=2: continuously self-employed)] prior to beginning your ESF course?

Comparable variable in 5q LFS: EMPLEN

B14) Why did you leave the job?

Comparable variable in 5q LFS: CONPRR

Annex D

Learner Sample Demographics

1.1 The total sample consisted of 1284 respondents.

Sample Demographics

1.2 The sample varied across the age groups. The 40-54 age category had 40 per cent (509) of the respondents whereas the lowest age category of 16-24 had seven per cent (91) of respondents.

Table 1.1: Age

Age	Number of respondent (count)	Percentage of respondents
16-24	91	7.1
25-39	340	26.7
40-54	509	39.9
55+	335	26.3
Total	1275	100

Source: Essential Skills in the Workplace (ESIW) Evaluation, Learner Survey.

Note: 9 respondents did not answer

Base: All (1284) Learners were asked 'What is your age?'

1.3 Almost two thirds (64 per cent) of survey respondents were female.

Table 1.2: Gender

Gender	Number of respondent (count)	Percentage of respondents
Male	466	36.3
Female	818	63.7
Total	1284	100

Source: Essential Skills in the Workplace (ESIW) Evaluation, Learner Survey.

Base: All (1284) Learners were asked 'What is your gender?'

1.4 Over 90 per cent (1165) respondents identified themselves as British. Three per cent (39) as any other white background and one per cent as any other black background. Other reported ethnicities were each reported by less than one per cent of respondents.

1.5 Almost one fifth (18 per cent) of respondents reported having a long term illness, health problems or disability, and 8 per cent reported that their illness or disability affects the amount or type of work that they can do.

1.6 The majority of the sample (86 per cent) reported English as their first language. Just under one third of respondents reported being able to speak Welsh and just under a third reported being able to read Welsh.

Table 1.3: Welsh Language

Welsh Language	Yes	No	Don't Know
English is first language	1108 (86.3)	176 (13.7)	-
Can speak Welsh	419 (32.6)	863 (67.2)	2 (0.2)
Can read Welsh	398 (31.0)	882 (68.7)	4 (0.3)
Can understand Welsh	138 (17.2)	665 (82.7)	1 (0.1)
Can write Welsh	338 (26.3)	945 (73.6)	1 (0.1)

Source: Essential Skills in the Workplace (ESIW) Evaluation, Learner Survey.

Base: All (1284) Learners were asked various questions about their use of the English and Welsh language

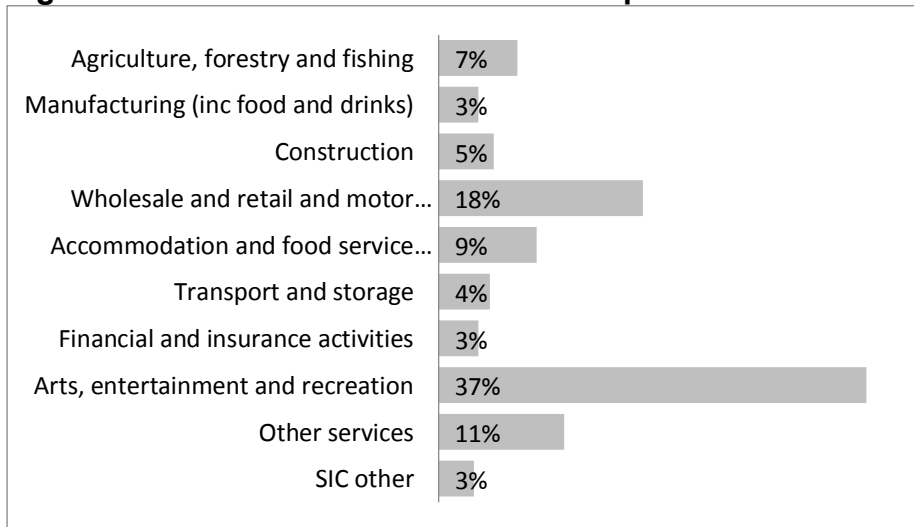
Annex E

Employer Sample Demographics

Background to the businesses

- 1.1 A telephone survey was conducted with employers who were engaged in ESiW. This elicited 300 responses which provides a good base from which to make generalisations regarding the views and experiences of the ESiW employer population.
- 1.2 The regional representation in the sample is 35 per cent from the Competitive areas and 65 per cent from the Convergence areas, from across all 22 Local Authorities;
- 1.3 Employers represented a range of sectors. Figure xx details the breakdown by SIC Code;

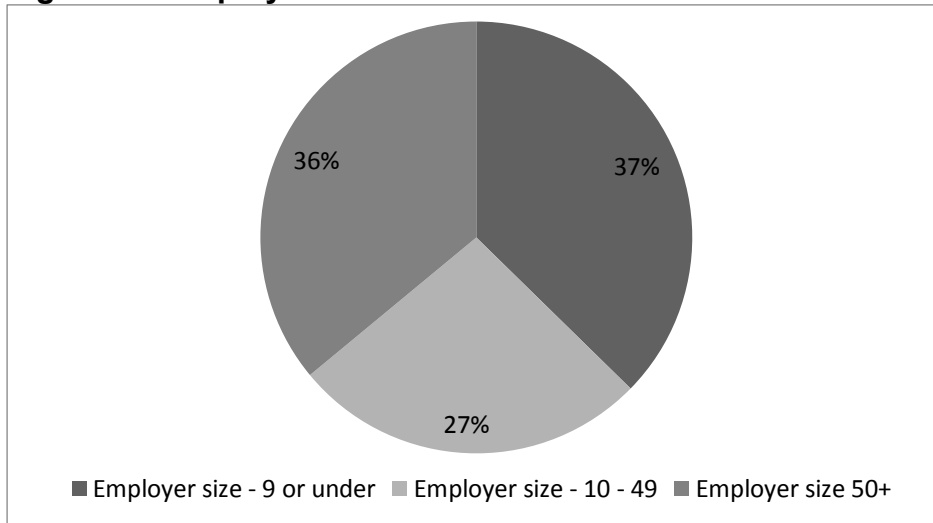
Figure xx Breakdown of SIC code of Respondent Businesses



Source: Essential Skills in the Workplace (ESIW) Evaluation, Employer Survey.
Base: All (300) Employers were asked 'What is your line of business?'

- 1.4 There was a fairly even split across employer size with thirty seven per cent (111) of *businesses* with nine or fewer employees, 27 per cent (80) with between 10 and 49 employees and 36 per cent (108) with more than 50 employees.

Figure x.x Employer Size of Business



Source: Essential Skills in the Workplace (ESIW) Evaluation, Employer Survey.
Base: All (300) Employers were asked 'How many people does the organisation employ at the site where you work?' Responses were single responses.

1.5 Twenty per cent (60) of employers came from a business with a recognised trade union. *The* most frequently cited union was Unison (72 per cent; 43) followed by GMB (27 per cent; 16/60) and NUT (22 per cent; 13/60)

Annex F

Ethical Considerations

Minimising Employer Burden

- 1.1 The potential to over burden employers and learners was considered in the approach to measuring the impact on learners. The use of the ESF Leavers Survey was considered and was the adopted method in order to prevent over burdening learners in research.
- 1.2 Repeat interviews with employers were arranged on a voluntary basis only.
- 1.3 Identifying employers for the case study was based on seeking permission from the employers themselves in the survey or through dialogue with providers and/or unions.

Bilingually Approach

- 1.4 All interviews were offered in Welsh or English.

Providing Informed Consent and Permission to Participate In the Research

- 1.5 The nature of the research was explained to all research participants so that they were able to make an informed decision about their participation. All research participants were made aware that their involvement in the research was voluntary. They were also advised that they could withdraw their consent at any time.
- 1.6 Sensitivity was used with more vulnerable adults such as providing information beforehand and ensuring that those facilitating the identification of interviews were fully informed and able to fully brief the learners.

Welsh European Funding Office 2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report



Case ID	80263
Case Name	Essential Skills in the Workplace
Sponsor Name	WAG DCELLS Lifelong Learning and Skills

Claim Period	2015/9
Last Validated	03/11/2015
Currency	GBP

Basic Details

Claim Due Date	18/11/2015
Audit Due Date	09/12/2015
Claim Number	1024893
Claim Type	Financial
Last Paid Claim Date	2014/6
Retrospective/Preliminary Start Date	
Approved Expenditure Start Date	01/04/2010
Actual Expenditure Start Date	01/10/2010
Financial Completion Date	30/09/2015
Project Completion Date	30/09/2015
Programme	Convergence ESF
Priority	3
Theme	1
Payment Type	Arrears
Retention Rate	10.00%
Rate / Need	Need
Project Forecast Discussed With WEFO	No
Progress Report Supplied	No
Transaction List Submitted	

Gross Expenditure Approved	15,982,867.00
Eligible Expenditure Approved	15,982,867.00
Eligible Expenditure Capital	
Eligible Expenditure Revenue	15,982,867.00
Ineligible Expenditure	0.00
Grant Approved	9,909,378.00
Capital Grant Approved	0.00
Revenue Grant Approved	9,909,378.00
Grant Paid To Date	6,331,789.34
Intervention Rate	62.000003 %
Intervention Rate - Capital (%)	
Intervention Rate - Revenue (%)	62.000003 %
Claim Submitted By	Emma Baxter
Date Claim Submitted	03/11/2015
Lead Payment Officer	Huw Morgan
Sponsor Claims Contact	Emma Baxter
Audit due	Yes
Audit Details Provided	No

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Expenditure

Expenditure Type	Category	Sub Category	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Cumulative Expenditure to Date			Variance From DP (%)	Expenditure This Period		
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)		Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)
Actual	Accommodation	Room Hire	Revenue	OFF	816.91	0.00	816.91	0	0	0	0
	Total Accommodation		Revenue	15	816.91	0.00	816.91	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Actual	Administration	Consumables	Revenue	OFF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0
Actual	Administration	Mobile Phones	Revenue	OFF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0
	Total Administration		Revenue	15	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Actual	Human Resources	Training	Revenue	OFF	16,418,591.74	1,416,849.42	15,001,742.32	-1	6,940,991.06	1,413,020.85	5,527,970.21
	Total Human Resources		Revenue	15	16,418,591.74	1,416,849.42	15,001,742.32	-1	6,940,991.06	1,413,020.85	5,527,970.21
Actual	ICT	Computer Maintenance	Revenue	OFF	9,598.51	0.00	9,598.51	0	0	0	0
Actual	ICT	Support	Revenue	OFF	33,487.52	0.00	33,487.52	-11	5,997.57	0	5,997.57
	Total ICT		Revenue	15	43,086.03	0.00	43,086.03	-8	5,997.57	0.00	5,997.57
Actual	Legal & Professional	Accountancy & Audit	Revenue	OFF	13,947.28	0.00	13,947.28	-13	2,940.84	0	2,940.84
Actual	Legal & Professional	Evaluation Development & Monitoring	Revenue	OFF	103,603.71	5,626.57	97,977.14	-17	63,874.19	5,626.57	58,247.62
	Total Legal & Professional		Revenue	15	117,550.99	5,626.57	111,924.42	-16	66,815.03	5,626.57	61,188.46
Actual	Marketing & Promotion	Advertising & Promotion	Revenue	OFF	19,728.95	0.00	19,728.95	0	0	0	0
	Total Marketing & Promotion		Revenue	15	19,728.95	0.00	19,728.95	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Actual	Staff	Managers	Revenue	OFF	264,092.46	0.00	264,092.46	-4	325.23	0	325.23
Actual	Staff	Marketing & Communication	Revenue	OFF	3,591.19	0.00	3,591.19	0	0	0	0

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Expenditure

Expenditure Type	Category	Sub Category	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Cumulative Expenditure to Date			Variance From DP (%)	Expenditure This Period			
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)		Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)	
Actual	Staff	Participant Wages	Revenue	OFF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	
Actual	Staff	Project Managers	Revenue	OFF	163,050.45	0.00	163,050.45	20	44,506.73	0	44,506.73	
Actual	Staff	Support Workers	Revenue	OFF	348,247.67	0.00	348,247.67	35	134,144.74	0	134,144.74	
Total Staff			Revenue	15	778,981.77	0.00	778,981.77	16	178,976.70	0.00	178,976.70	
Actual	Travel & Transport	Travel & Transport	Revenue	OFF	26,586.60	0.00	26,586.60	0	0	0	0	
Total Travel & Transport			Revenue	15	26,586.6	0.00	26,586.6	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total Actual						17,405,342.99	1,422,475.99	15,982,867.00		7,192,780.36	1,418,647.42	5,774,132.94
Total In Kind						0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Capital						0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Revenue						17,405,342.99	1,422,475.99	15,982,867.00		7,192,780.36	1,418,647.42	5,774,132.94
Total						17,405,342.99	1,422,475.99	15,982,867.00		7,192,780.36	1,418,647.42	5,774,132.94

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Total Forecast Project Cost

Expenditure Type	Category	Sub Category	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Total Forecast Project Cost			Variance From DP (%)
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)	
Actual	Accommodation	Room Hire	Revenue	OFF	816.91	0.00	816.91	0
	Total Accommodation		Revenue	15	816.91	0.00	816.91	0.11
Actual	Administration	Consumables	Revenue	OFF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
Actual	Administration	Mobile Phones	Revenue	OFF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
	Total Administration		Revenue	15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
Actual	Human Resources	Training	Revenue	OFF	16,418,591.74	1,416,849.42	15,001,742.32	-1
	Total Human Resources		Revenue	15	16,418,591.74	1,416,849.42	15,001,742.32	-0.54
Actual	ICT	Computer Maintenance	Revenue	OFF	9,598.51	0.00	9,598.51	0
Actual	ICT	Support	Revenue	OFF	33,487.52	0.00	33,487.52	-11
	Total ICT		Revenue	15	43,086.03	0.00	43,086.03	-8.5
Actual	Legal & Professional	Accountancy & Audit	Revenue	OFF	13,947.28	0.00	13,947.28	-13
Actual	Legal & Professional	Evaluation Development & Monitoring	Revenue	OFF	103,603.71	5,626.57	97,977.14	-17
	Total Legal & Professional		Revenue	15	117,550.99	5,626.57	111,924.42	-16.31
Actual	Marketing & Promotion	Advertising & Promotion	Revenue	OFF	19,728.95	0.00	19,728.95	0
	Total Marketing & Promotion		Revenue	15	19,728.95	0.00	19,728.95	0
Actual	Staff	Managers	Revenue	OFF	264,092.46	0.00	264,092.46	-4
Actual	Staff	Marketing & Communication	Revenue	OFF	3,591.19	0.00	3,591.19	0

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Total Forecast Project Cost

Expenditure Type	Category	Sub Category	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Total Forecast Project Cost			Variance From DP (%)
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)	
Actual	Staff	Participant Wages	Revenue	OFF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
Actual	Staff	Project Managers	Revenue	OFF	163,050.45	0.00	163,050.45	20
Actual	Staff	Support Workers	Revenue	OFF	348,247.67	0.00	348,247.67	35
Total Staff			Revenue	15	778,981.77	0.00	778,981.77	15.91
Actual	Travel & Transport	Travel & Transport	Revenue	OFF	26,586.60	0.00	26,586.60	0
Total Travel & Transport			Revenue	15	26,586.60	0.00	26,586.60	0
Total Actual					17,405,342.99	1,422,475.99	15,982,867.00	
Total In Kind					0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total Capital					0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total Revenue					17,405,342.99	1,422,475.99	15,982,867.00	
Total					17,405,342.99	1,422,475.99	15,982,867.00	

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Income

Income Type	Category	Organisation	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Cumulative Income To Date			Variance from DP (%)	Income This Period		
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)		Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)
Actual	Private	Various Private Match Funders	Revenue	15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Private			Revenue	15	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
Actual	Public	WAG DCELLS Lifelong Learning and Skills	Revenue	15	7,495,964.99	1,422,475.99	6,073,489.00	0	3,615,191.70	1,418,647.42	2,196,544.28
Total Public			Revenue	15	7,495,964.99	1,422,475.99	6,073,489	0	3,615,191.7	1,418,647.42	2,196,544.28
Total Actual					7,495,964.99	1,422,475.99	6,073,489.00		3,615,191.70	1,418,647.42	2,196,544.28
Total In Kind					0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Capital					0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Revenue					7,495,964.99	1,422,475.99	6,073,489.00		3,615,191.70	1,418,647.42	2,196,544.28
Total					7,495,964.99	1,422,475.99	6,073,489.00		3,615,191.70	1,418,647.42	2,196,544.28

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Total Forecast Income

Income Type	Category	Organisation	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Total Forecast Project Income			Variance from DP(%)
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)	
Actual	Private	Various Private Match Funders	Revenue	15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
		Total Private	Revenue	15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
Actual	Public	WAG DCELLS Lifelong Learning and Skills	Revenue	15	7,495,964.99	1,422,475.99	6,073,489.00	0
		Total Public	Revenue	15	7,495,964.99	1,422,475.99	6,073,489.00	0
		Total Actual			7,495,964.99	1,422,475.99	6,073,489.00	
		Total In Kind			0.00	0.00	0.00	
		Total Capital			0.00	0.00	0.00	
		Total Revenue			7,495,964.99	1,422,475.99	6,073,489.00	
		Total			7,495,964.99	1,422,475.99	6,073,489.00	

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Indicators

Indicator Code	Indicator	Indicator Type	Category	Criteria	Cumulative Achievement To Date	Variance To Date (%)	Projected Final Achievement	Total Variance from DP (%)
2100	Participants	Output			13,189	19	13,189	19
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Blaenau Gwent	541	0	541	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Bridgend	814	0	814	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Caerphilly	1,682	0	1,682	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Carmarthen	965	0	965	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Ceredigion	323	0	323	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Conwy	1,443	0	1,443	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Denbighshire	654	0	654	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Gwynedd	1,416	0	1,416	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Isle of Anglesey	630	0	630	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Merthyr Tydfil	362	0	362	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Neath Port Talbot	650	0	650	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Outside of Wales	0	0	0	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Pembrokeshire	495	0	495	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Rhondda Cynon Taff	1,307	0	1,307	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Swansea	1,464	0	1,464	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Torfaen	443	0	443	0
2100	Participants	Output	Migrant	No	12,417	0	12,417	0
2100	Participants	Output	Migrant	Yes - EU	605	0	605	0
2100	Participants	Output	Migrant	Yes - non-EU	167	0	167	0
2100	Participants	Output	Gender	Female	8,349	0	8,349	0
2100	Participants	Output	Gender	Male	4,840	0	4,840	0
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	At NQF level 2	2,717	0	2,717	0
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	At NQF level 3	2,547	0	2,547	0
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	At NQF level 4-6	2,261	0	2,261	0
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	At NQF level 7-8	659	0	659	0

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Indicators

Indicator Code	Indicator	Indicator Type	Category	Criteria	Cumulative Achievement To Date	Variance To Date (%)	Projected Final Achievement	Total Variance from DP (%)
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	Below NQF level 2	3,064	0	3,064	0
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	None	1,941	0	1,941	0
2100	Participants	Output	Employment status	Employed (excluding self employed)	13,114	0	13,114	0
2100	Participants	Output	Employment status	Self-employed	75	0	75	0
2100	Participants	Output	Disabled	No	12,823	0	12,823	0
2100	Participants	Output	Disabled	Yes	366	0	366	0
2100	Participants	Output	Black and Minority Ethnic group	No	12,660	0	12,660	0
2100	Participants	Output	Black and Minority Ethnic group	Yes	529	0	529	0
2100	Participants	Output	Age	15-24	1,727	0	1,727	0
2100	Participants	Output	Age	25-54	9,524	0	9,524	0
2100	Participants	Output	Age	55-64	1,719	0	1,719	0
2100	Participants	Output	Age	65+	219	0	219	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result			8,779	21	8,779	21
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Blaenau Gwent	359	0	359	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Bridgend	486	0	486	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Caerphilly	1,058	0	1,058	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Carmarthen	623	0	623	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Ceredigion	211	0	211	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Conwy	1,090	0	1,090	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Denbighshire	400	0	400	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Gwynedd	991	0	991	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Isle of Anglesey	380	0	380	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Merthyr Tydfil	197	0	197	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Neath Port Talbot	462	0	462	0

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Indicators

Indicator Code	Indicator	Indicator Type	Category	Criteria	Cumulative Achievement To Date	Variance To Date (%)	Projected Final Achievement	Total Variance from DP (%)
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Outside of Wales	0	0	0	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Pembrokeshire	304	0	304	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Rhondda Cynon Taff	856	0	856	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Swansea	1,051	0	1,051	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Torfaen	311	0	311	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Qualification gained	At NQF level 2	4,400	0	4,400	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Qualification gained	At NQF level 3	311	0	311	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Qualification gained	At NQF level 4-6	109	0	109	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Qualification gained	At NQF level 7-8	11	0	11	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Qualification gained	Below NQF level 2	3,948	0	3,948	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Migrant	No	8,341	0	8,341	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Migrant	Yes - EU	337	0	337	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Migrant	Yes - non-EU	101	0	101	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Gender	Female	5,633	0	5,633	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Gender	Male	3,146	0	3,146	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Employment status	Economically inactive (excluding those in full time education or training)	17	0	17	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Employment status	Employed (excluding self employed)	8,696	0	8,696	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Employment status	In full time education	0	0	0	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Employment status	Long-term unemployed (over one year)	3	0	3	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Employment status	Self-employed	38	0	38	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Employment status	Unemployed (up to one year)	25	0	25	0

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Indicators

Indicator Code	Indicator	Indicator Type	Category	Criteria	Cumulative Achievement To Date	Variance To Date (%)	Projected Final Achievement	Total Variance from DP (%)
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Disabled	No	8,545	0	8,545	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Disabled	Yes	234	0	234	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Black and Minority Ethnic group	No	8,439	0	8,439	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Black and Minority Ethnic group	Yes	340	0	340	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Age	15-24	1,061	0	1,061	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Age	25-54	6,373	0	6,373	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Age	55-64	1,191	0	1,191	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Age	65+	154	0	154	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output			2,906	4	2,906	4
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Blaenau Gwent	85	0	85	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Bridgend	153	0	153	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Caerphilly	164	0	164	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Carmarthen	305	0	305	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Ceredigion	151	0	151	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Conwy	260	0	260	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Denbighshire	196	0	196	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Gwynedd	354	0	354	0

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Indicators

Indicator Code	Indicator	Indicator Type	Category	Criteria	Cumulative Achievement To Date	Variance To Date (%)	Projected Final Achievement	Total Variance from DP (%)
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Isle of Anglesey	168	0	168	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Merthyr Tydfil	70	0	70	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Neath Port Talbot	134	0	134	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Outside of Wales	0	0	0	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Pembrokeshire	189	0	189	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Rhondda Cynon Taff	243	0	243	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Swansea	313	0	313	0
2120	Employers assisted or financially supported	Output	Unitary Authority	Torfaen	121	0	121	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result			0	-100	0	-100
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Blaenau Gwent	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Bridgend	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Caerphilly	0	0	0	0

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Indicators

Indicator Code	Indicator	Indicator Type	Category	Criteria	Cumulative Achievement To Date	Variance To Date (%)	Projected Final Achievement	Total Variance from DP (%)
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Carmarthen	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Ceredigion	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Conwy	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Denbighshire	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Gwynedd	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Isle of Anglesey	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Merthyr Tydfil	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Neath Port Talbot	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Outside of Wales	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Pembrokeshire	0	0	0	0

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Indicators

Indicator Code	Indicator	Indicator Type	Category	Criteria	Cumulative Achievement To Date	Variance To Date (%)	Projected Final Achievement	Total Variance from DP (%)
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Rhondda Cynon Taff	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Swansea	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Torfaen	0	0	0	0

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Payment Summary

Approved Values	Capital	Revenue	Total
Approved Intervention Rate (%)		62.000003	62.000003
Total Approved Grant		9,909,378.00	9,909,378.00
Grant Approved This Period	0.00	9,909,378.00	9,909,378.00
Eligible Expenditure Approved		15,982,867.00	15,982,867.00
Eligible Income Approved		6,073,489.00	6,073,489.00

Calculation Summary	Submitted		
	Capital	Revenue	Total
			Total Paid to Date
Cumulative Eligible Expenditure To Date		15,982,867.00	15,982,867.00
Cumulative Eligible Income To Date		6,073,489.00	6,073,489.00
Grant Entitlement To Date (A)		9,909,378	9,909,378
Paid To Date (B)		6,331,789.34	6,331,789.34
Grant Due - This Period (C = A - B)		3,577,588.66	3,577,588.66
Advance - Next Claim Period (D)			
Grant Due - Including Advance (C + D)			
Grant Entitlement After Retention		2,586,650.86	2,586,650.86
Adjusted Amount To Pay			
Amount To Pay			

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Messages	Submitted
Capping Reason - Capital	
Capping Reason - Revenue	
Next Period Capping Reason - Capital	
Next Period Capping Reason - Revenue	
Retention Reason	Your Grant Entitlement has hit retention. Your Grant Payment may be reduced

Welsh European Funding Office 2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Validation Failures

Type	Message	Submitter Comment
Expenditure	[Legal & Professional] [Revenue] Eligible expenditure to date: tolerance breached - explanation required	Evaluation costs were not as anticipated - overall costs came in under budget.
Expenditure	[Legal & Professional] [Revenue] Total forecast eligible project costs: indicates underspend - explanation required	Evaluation costs were not as anticipated - overall costs came in under budget.
Expenditure	[Staff] [Revenue] Eligible expenditure to date: tolerance breached - explanation required	Increase in staffing numbers due to volume of work, which was not anticipated or forecast previously.
Expenditure	[Staff] [Revenue] Total forecast eligible project costs: tolerance exceeded - explanation required	Increase in staffing numbers due to volume of work, which was not anticipated or forecast previously
Indicator	[2100] [Age] [65+] Achievement to date is less than last period - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported
Indicator	[2100] [Employment status] [Self-employed] Achievement to date is less than last period - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported
Indicator	[2101] [Employment status] [Unemployed (up to one year)] Achievement to date is less than last period - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported
Indicator	[2120] [Unitary Authority] [Carmarthen] Achievement to date is less than last period - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported
Indicator	[2120] [Unitary Authority] [Ceredigion] Achievement to date is less than last period - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported
Indicator	[2120] [Unitary Authority] [Gwynedd] Achievement to date is less than last period - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported
Indicator	[2120] [Unitary Authority] [Isle of Anglesey] Achievement to date is less than last period - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported
Indicator	[2120] [Unitary Authority] [Pembrokeshire] Achievement to date is less than last period - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported

Welsh European Funding Office 2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Validation Failures

Type	Message	Submitter Comment
Indicator	[2121] Achievement to date - tolerance breached - explanation required	The monitoring team have been working on the CCT targets and have had discussions with the CCT team in WEFO it is looking unlikely that we will be able to report anything on these figures and if any are reported it will be on the final claim. This has also been raised as part of the evaluation
Indicator	[2121] Projected final achievement is less than approved target - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported



Sponsors preferred language is English

Welsh European Funding Office 2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report



Case ID	80341
Case Name	Essential Skills in the Workplace RCE
Sponsor Name	WAG DCELLS Lifelong Learning and Skills

Claim Period	2015/9
Last Validated	03/11/2015
Currency	GBP

Basic Details

Claim Due Date	26/11/2015
Audit Due Date	17/12/2015
Claim Number	1025978
Claim Type	Financial
Last Paid Claim Date	2014/6
Retrospective/Preliminary Start Date	01/04/2010
Approved Expenditure Start Date	01/11/2010
Actual Expenditure Start Date	01/10/2010
Financial Completion Date	30/09/2015
Project Completion Date	30/09/2015
Programme	Competitiveness ESF
Priority	2
Theme	0
Payment Type	Arrears
Retention Rate	10.00%
Rate / Need	Need
Project Forecast Discussed With WEFO	No
Progress Report Supplied	No
Transaction List Submitted	

Gross Expenditure Approved	8,379,178.00
Eligible Expenditure Approved	8,379,178.00
Eligible Expenditure Capital	
Eligible Expenditure Revenue	8,379,178.00
Ineligible Expenditure	0.00
Grant Approved	3,351,670.00
Capital Grant Approved	0.00
Revenue Grant Approved	3,351,670.00
Grant Paid To Date	2,340,287.68
Intervention Rate	39.999986 %
Intervention Rate - Capital (%)	
Intervention Rate - Revenue (%)	39.999986 %
Claim Submitted By	Emma Baxter
Date Claim Submitted	03/11/2015
Lead Payment Officer	Huw Morgan
Sponsor Claims Contact	Emma Baxter
Audit due	Yes
Audit Details Provided	No

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Expenditure

Expenditure Type	Category	Sub Category	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Cumulative Expenditure to Date			Variance From DP (%)	Expenditure This Period		
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)		Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)
Actual	Accommodation	Room Hire	Revenue	OFF	536.28	0.00	536.28	0	0	0	0
	Total Accommodation		Revenue	15	536.28	0.00	536.28	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Actual	Administration	Mobile Phones	Revenue	OFF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0
	Total Administration		Revenue	15	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Actual	Human Resources	Training	Revenue	OFF	10,291,225.00	2,512,469.19	7,778,755.81	-1	4,308,809.06	2,512,469.19	1,796,339.87
	Total Human Resources		Revenue	15	10,291,225	2,512,469.19	7,778,755.81	-1	4,308,809.06	2,512,469.19	1,796,339.87
Actual	ICT	Computer Maintenance	Revenue	OFF	4,399.26	0.00	4,399.26	0	0	0	0
Actual	ICT	Support	Revenue	OFF	19,608.71	0.00	19,608.71	-10	4,398.54	0	4,398.54
	Total ICT		Revenue	15	24,007.97	0.00	24,007.97	-8	4,398.54	0.00	4,398.54
Actual	Legal & Professional	Accountancy & Audit	Revenue	OFF	9,747.12	0.00	9,747.12	-11	2,156.76	0	2,156.76
Actual	Legal & Professional	Evaluation Development & Monitoring	Revenue	OFF	74,704.29	4,518.43	70,185.86	-12	47,236.31	4,518.43	42,717.88
	Total Legal & Professional		Revenue	15	84,451.41	4,518.43	79,932.98	-12	49,393.07	4,518.43	44,874.64
Actual	Marketing & Promotion	Advertising & Promotion	Revenue	OFF	11,411.20	0.00	11,411.20	0	0	0	0
	Total Marketing & Promotion		Revenue	15	11,411.2	0.00	11,411.2	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Actual	Staff	Managers	Revenue	OFF	139,682.56	0.00	139,682.56	-5	238.54	0	238.54
Actual	Staff	Marketing & Communication	Revenue	OFF	1,865.25	0.00	1,865.25	0	0	0	0
Actual	Staff	Participant Wages	Revenue	OFF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	0

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Expenditure

Expenditure Type	Category	Sub Category	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Cumulative Expenditure to Date			Variance From DP (%)	Expenditure This Period		
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)		Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)
Actual	Staff	Project Managers	Revenue	OFF	100,872.77	0.00	100,872.77	24	30,825.7	0	30,825.7
Actual	Staff	Support Workers	Revenue	OFF	228,684.17	0.00	228,684.17	29	88,785.59	0	88,785.59
Total Staff			Revenue	15	471,104.75	0.00	471,104.75	16	119,849.83	0.00	119,849.83
Actual	Travel & Transport	Travel & Transport	Revenue	OFF	13,429.01	0.00	13,429.01	0	0	0	0
Total Travel & Transport			Revenue	15	13,429.01	0.00	13,429.01	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Actual							10,896,165.62		2,516,987.62		8,379,178.00
Total In Kind							0.00		0.00		0.00
Total Capital							0.00		0.00		0.00
Total Revenue							10,896,165.62		2,516,987.62		8,379,178.00
Total							10,896,165.62		2,516,987.62		8,379,178.00

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Total Forecast Project Cost

Expenditure Type	Category	Sub Category	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Total Forecast Project Cost			Variance From DP (%)
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)	
Actual	Accommodation	Room Hire	Revenue	OFF	536.28	0.00	536.28	0
	Total Accommodation		Revenue	15	536.28	0.00	536.28	0.05
Actual	Administration	Mobile Phones	Revenue	OFF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
	Total Administration		Revenue	15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
Actual	Human Resources	Training	Revenue	OFF	10,291,225.00	2,512,469.19	7,778,755.81	-1
	Total Human Resources		Revenue	15	10,291,225.00	2,512,469.19	7,778,755.81	-0.65
Actual	ICT	Computer Maintenance	Revenue	OFF	4,399.26	0.00	4,399.26	0
Actual	ICT	Support	Revenue	OFF	19,608.71	0.00	19,608.71	-10
	Total ICT		Revenue	15	24,007.97	0.00	24,007.97	-8.05
Actual	Legal & Professional	Accountancy & Audit	Revenue	OFF	9,747.12	0.00	9,747.12	-11
Actual	Legal & Professional	Evaluation Development & Monitoring	Revenue	OFF	74,704.29	4,518.43	70,185.86	-12
	Total Legal & Professional		Revenue	15	84,451.41	4,518.43	79,932.98	-11.57
Actual	Marketing & Promotion	Advertising & Promotion	Revenue	OFF	11,411.20	0.00	11,411.20	0
	Total Marketing & Promotion		Revenue	15	11,411.20	0.00	11,411.20	0
Actual	Staff	Managers	Revenue	OFF	139,682.56	0.00	139,682.56	-5
Actual	Staff	Marketing & Communication	Revenue	OFF	1,865.25	0.00	1,865.25	0
Actual	Staff	Participant Wages	Revenue	OFF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Total Forecast Project Cost

Expenditure Type	Category	Sub Category	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Total Forecast Project Cost			Variance From DP (%)
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)	
Actual	Staff	Project Managers	Revenue	OFF	100,872.77	0.00	100,872.77	24
Actual	Staff	Support Workers	Revenue	OFF	228,684.17	0.00	228,684.17	29
Total Staff			Revenue	15	471,104.75	0.00	471,104.75	15.63
Actual	Travel & Transport	Travel & Transport	Revenue	OFF	13,429.01	0.00	13,429.01	0
Total Travel & Transport			Revenue	15	13,429.01	0.00	13,429.01	0
Total Actual					10,896,165.62	2,516,987.62	8,379,178.00	
Total In Kind					0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total Capital					0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total Revenue					10,896,165.62	2,516,987.62	8,379,178.00	
Total					10,896,165.62	2,516,987.62	8,379,178.00	

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Income

Income Type	Category	Organisation	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Cumulative Income To Date			Variance from DP (%)	Income This Period		
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)		Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)
Actual	Private	Various Private Match Funders	Revenue	15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Private			Revenue	15	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
Actual	Public	WAG DCELLS Lifelong Learning and Skills	Revenue	15	6,593,413.47	2,516,987.62	4,076,425.85	-19	2,745,184.21	2,516,987.62	228,196.59
Total Public			Revenue	15	6,593,413.47	2,516,987.62	4,076,425.85	-19	2,745,184.21	2,516,987.62	228,196.59
Total Actual					6,593,413.47	2,516,987.62	4,076,425.85		2,745,184.21	2,516,987.62	228,196.59
Total In Kind					0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Capital					0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Revenue					6,593,413.47	2,516,987.62	4,076,425.85		2,745,184.21	2,516,987.62	228,196.59
Total					6,593,413.47	2,516,987.62	4,076,425.85		2,745,184.21	2,516,987.62	228,196.59

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Total Forecast Income

Income Type	Category	Organisation	Capital / Revenue	Tolerance (%)	Total Forecast Project Income			Variance from DP(%)
					Gross (GBP)	Ineligible (GBP)	Eligible (GBP)	
Actual	Private	Various Private Match Funders	Revenue	15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
		Total Private	Revenue	15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
Actual	Public	WAG DCELLS Lifelong Learning and Skills	Revenue	15	6,593,413.47	2,516,987.62	4,076,425.85	-19
		Total Public	Revenue	15	6,593,413.47	2,516,987.62	4,076,425.85	-18.92
		Total Actual			6,593,413.47	2,516,987.62	4,076,425.85	
		Total In Kind			0.00	0.00	0.00	
		Total Capital			0.00	0.00	0.00	
		Total Revenue			6,593,413.47	2,516,987.62	4,076,425.85	
		Total			6,593,413.47	2,516,987.62	4,076,425.85	

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Indicators

Indicator Code	Indicator	Indicator Type	Category	Criteria	Cumulative Achievement To Date	Variance To Date (%)	Projected Final Achievement	Total Variance from DP (%)
2100	Participants	Output			7,793	14	7,793	14
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Cardiff	2,710	0	2,710	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Flintshire	462	0	462	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Monmouthshire	398	0	398	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Newport	1,138	0	1,138	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Outside of Wales	0	0	0	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Powys	1,413	0	1,413	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Vale of Glamorgan	595	0	595	0
2100	Participants	Output	Unitary Authority	Wrexham	1,077	0	1,077	0
2100	Participants	Output	Migrant	No	6,903	0	6,903	0
2100	Participants	Output	Migrant	Yes - EU	751	0	751	0
2100	Participants	Output	Migrant	Yes - non-EU	139	0	139	0
2100	Participants	Output	Gender	Female	4,993	0	4,993	0
2100	Participants	Output	Gender	Male	2,800	0	2,800	0
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	At NQF level 2	1,551	0	1,551	0
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	At NQF level 3	1,352	0	1,352	0
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	At NQF level 4-6	1,212	0	1,212	0
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	At NQF level 7-8	387	0	387	0
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	Below NQF level 2	1,962	0	1,962	0
2100	Participants	Output	Existing qualifications	None	1,329	0	1,329	0
2100	Participants	Output	Employment status	Employed (excluding self employed)	7,761	0	7,761	0
2100	Participants	Output	Employment status	Self-employed	32	0	32	0
2100	Participants	Output	Disabled	No	7,571	0	7,571	0
2100	Participants	Output	Disabled	Yes	222	0	222	0
2100	Participants	Output	Black and Minority Ethnic group	No	7,178	0	7,178	0

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Indicators

Indicator Code	Indicator	Indicator Type	Category	Criteria	Cumulative Achievement To Date	Variance To Date (%)	Projected Final Achievement	Total Variance from DP (%)
2100	Participants	Output	Black and Minority Ethnic group	Yes	615	0	615	0
2100	Participants	Output	Age	15-24	1,029	0	1,029	0
2100	Participants	Output	Age	25-54	5,698	0	5,698	0
2100	Participants	Output	Age	55-64	920	0	920	0
2100	Participants	Output	Age	65+	146	0	146	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result			5,000	13	5,000	13
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Cardiff	1,747	0	1,747	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Flintshire	290	0	290	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Monmouthshire	252	0	252	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Newport	700	0	700	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Outside of Wales	0	0	0	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Powys	947	0	947	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Vale of Glamorgan	350	0	350	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Unitary Authority	Wrexham	714	0	714	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Qualification gained	At NQF level 2	2,505	0	2,505	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Qualification gained	At NQF level 3	156	0	156	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Qualification gained	At NQF level 4-6	73	0	73	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Qualification gained	At NQF level 7-8	12	0	12	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Qualification gained	Below NQF level 2	2,254	0	2,254	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Migrant	No	4,464	0	4,464	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Migrant	Yes - EU	459	0	459	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Migrant	Yes - non-EU	77	0	77	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Gender	Female	3,269	0	3,269	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Gender	Male	1,731	0	1,731	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Employment status	Employed (excluding self employed)	4,977	0	4,977	0

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Indicators

Indicator Code	Indicator	Indicator Type	Category	Criteria	Cumulative Achievement To Date	Variance To Date (%)	Projected Final Achievement	Total Variance from DP (%)
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Employment status	Self-employed	23	0	23	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Disabled	No	4,846	0	4,846	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Disabled	Yes	154	0	154	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Black and Minority Ethnic group	No	4,616	0	4,616	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Black and Minority Ethnic group	Yes	384	0	384	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Age	15-24	641	0	641	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Age	25-54	3,642	0	3,642	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Age	55-64	619	0	619	0
2101	Participants gaining qualifications	Result	Age	65+	98	0	98	0
2118	Employers assisted	Output			1,794	6	1,794	6
2118	Employers assisted	Output	Unitary Authority	Cardiff	583	0	583	0
2118	Employers assisted	Output	Unitary Authority	Flintshire	104	0	104	0
2118	Employers assisted	Output	Unitary Authority	Monmouthshire	140	0	140	0
2118	Employers assisted	Output	Unitary Authority	Newport	203	0	203	0
2118	Employers assisted	Output	Unitary Authority	Outside of Wales	0	0	0	0
2118	Employers assisted	Output	Unitary Authority	Powys	391	0	391	0
2118	Employers assisted	Output	Unitary Authority	Vale of Glamorgan	130	0	130	0
2118	Employers assisted	Output	Unitary Authority	Wrexham	243	0	243	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result			0	-100	0	-100
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Cardiff	0	0	0	0

**Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report**

Indicators

Indicator Code	Indicator	Indicator Type	Category	Criteria	Cumulative Achievement To Date	Variance To Date (%)	Projected Final Achievement	Total Variance from DP (%)
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Flintshire	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Monmouthshire	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Newport	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Outside of Wales	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Powys	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Vale of Glamorgan	0	0	0	0
2121	Employers adopting or improving equality and diversity strategies and monitoring systems	Result	Unitary Authority	Wrexham	0	0	0	0

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Payment Summary

Approved Values	Capital	Revenue	Total
Approved Intervention Rate (%)		39.999986	39.999986
Total Approved Grant		3,351,670.00	3,351,670.00
Grant Approved This Period	0.00	3,351,670.00	3,351,670.00
Eligible Expenditure Approved		8,379,178.00	8,379,178.00
Eligible Income Approved		5,027,508.00	5,027,508.00

Calculation Summary	Submitted		
	Capital	Revenue	Total
			Total Paid to Date
Cumulative Eligible Expenditure To Date		8,379,178.00	8,379,178.00
Cumulative Eligible Income To Date		4,076,425.85	4,076,425.85
Grant Entitlement To Date (A)		3,351,670	3,351,670
Paid To Date (B)		2,340,287.68	2,340,287.68
Grant Due - This Period (C = A - B)		1,011,382.32	1,011,382.32
Advance - Next Claim Period (D)			
Grant Due - Including Advance (C + D)			
Grant Entitlement After Retention		676,215.32	676,215.32
Adjusted Amount To Pay			
Amount To Pay			

Welsh European Funding Office
2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Messages	Submitted
Capping Reason - Capital	
Capping Reason - Revenue	Grant Rate exceeds approved
Next Period Capping Reason - Capital	
Next Period Capping Reason - Revenue	
Retention Reason	Your Grant Entitlement has hit retention. Your Grant Payment may be reduced

Welsh European Funding Office 2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Validation Failures

Type	Message	Submitter Comment
Expenditure	[Revenue] Total: Forecast gross expenditure is greater than forecast gross income plus approved grant - income shortfall indicated. Explanation required	Expenditure was higher than initially forecast and additional funds were granted, expenditure and income have been maximised
Expenditure	[Staff] [Revenue] Eligible expenditure to date: tolerance breached - explanation required	Increase in staffing numbers due to volume of work, which was not anticipated or forecast previously.
Expenditure	[Staff] [Revenue] Total forecast eligible project costs: tolerance exceeded - explanation required	Increase in staffing numbers due to volume of work, which was not anticipated or forecast previously.
Income	[Actual] [Public] [WAG DCELLS Lifelong Learning and Skills] [Revenue] Eligible income to date: tolerance breached - explanation required	Tolerance breached and in eligible income has been increased to account for the overspend on the project
Income	[Actual] [Public] [WAG DCELLS Lifelong Learning and Skills] [Revenue] Total forecast eligible project income indicates shortfall - explanation required	Expenditure was higher than initially forecast and additional funds were granted, expenditure and income have been maximised
Income	[Revenue] Total: Eligible project income: Total Forecast is less than approved - explanation required.	Forecast spend is lower than required
Income	Total Eligible income to date: tolerance breached - explanation required. Please discuss 'Project Forecasts' with WEFO.	Tolerance breached and in eligible income has been increased to account for the overspend on the project
Indicator	[2100] [Employment status] [Self-employed] Achievement to date is less than last period - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported
Indicator	[2118] [Unitary Authority] [Monmouthshire] Achievement to date is less than last period - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported
Indicator	[2118] [Unitary Authority] [Powys] Achievement to date is less than last period - explanation required	Due to the closure of the project and the reconciliation work taking place there have been ineligible participants removed resulting in figures being lower than previously reported
Indicator	[2121] Achievement to date - tolerance breached - explanation required	The monitoring team have been working on the CCT targets and have had discussions with the CCT team in WEFO it is looking unlikely that we will be able to report anything on these figures and if any are reported it will be on the final claim. This has also been raised as part of the evaluation

Welsh European Funding Office 2007-13 European Funding Claim Form Report

Validation Failures

Type	Message	Submitter Comment
Indicator	[2121] Projected final achievement is less than approved target - explanation required	The monitoring team have been working on the CCT targets and have had discussions with the CCT team in WEFO it is looking unlikely that we will be able to report anything on these figures and if any are reported it will be on the final claim. This has also been raised as part of the evaluation



Sponsors preferred language is English