

Evaluating the impact of the GIF and EOS pilots in Greater Manchester

A report for

Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce

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Executive Summary

EOS and GIF programmes in Greater Manchester

As part of the Employer Ownership of Skills (**EOS**) and Growth Innovation Fund (**GIF**) programmes, Greater Manchester (**GM**) received £11m of funding to be spent on piloting new methods of supporting employers to allow investment in their own skill requirements. Greater Manchester has delivered this activity through the GM Chamber of Commerce (**GMCC**), aggregating employer demand via the route of sector specific Employer Skills Groups. The intention was to develop a system that opened new markets for work based learning, and encouraged training providers and Further Education Colleges to work with employers in new sectors.

In return for government funding, the GM pilot agreed to deliver 1,843 training outputs, made up of:

- **410: 16 to 18 year old apprenticeships**
- **763: 19+ apprenticeships**
- **670: 19+ other qualifications**

Over the past 18 months New Economy has been undertaking a variety of research tasks to evaluate the impact of EOS and GIF programmes within GM.

Headline performance

GM's pilot has exceeded the headline target it was set, delivering 1,969 training starts since its launch and helping nearly 1,800 individuals and 350 companies to benefit from training and skills development. The pilot exceeded its target number of starts thanks to a strong performance in relation to starts on non-apprenticeship courses.

The pilot has funded high quality training, with participants praising the intensive, highly practical approach designed into pilot funded courses.

Impact of the pilot

Two-thirds of the trainees who we surveyed feel that they are more effective in their day-to-day work thanks to the training they have received. The training has also had a beneficial impact upon trainees' general skills and their technical skills.

It is too soon to be able to identify whether trainees have enjoyed wage increases or promotions due to the pilot, or whether companies are now more productive and competitive.

Achievement against objectives

At the outset the pilot was set four objectives; we judge that two of these objectives have been fully met and two have been partially met.

There is clear evidence that GM's pilot has helped employers across many sectors to engage with high quality, highly regarded training which results in trainees accessing good and challenging employment opportunities.

From the research it is clear that participating employers have been *shaping* skills and employment activity in their sectors rather than directly *leading* this activity; in the sectors where the pilot has had the greatest impact there has been a heavy reliance upon GMCC infrastructure to design training courses, select training providers and administer payments. Many employers say they lack the capacity and/or desire to lead the skills system.

GM's adoption of a sector-by-sector approach has enabled the pilot to broaden and deepen its impact across the GM economy, generating new discussions and networks around training issues within sectors that previously showed little collaborative training activity.

Encouragingly, the pilot appears to be driving a move towards Advanced and Higher apprenticeships in several sectors, which is a strategic objective for GM. However, the profile of trainees accessing pilot funded training appears to be less diverse than would be expected given GM's labour market.

Finally, whilst GMCC has significantly enhanced its knowledge and role in relation to apprenticeships in GM, other agencies within the GM apprenticeship market continue to operate seemingly without much awareness or acknowledgement of what the pilot is trying to achieve. A commonly expressed view is that the pilot has been too small and too brief to effect a significant change in the relationship between employers and training providers.

Recommendations

Our evaluation of GM's pilot provides several pointers on the future design and delivery of skills and training systems. Firstly, a sector-led approach under which groups of employers are able to design the training their staff take part in appears to have been a success. The sector-led model also appears to offer a quick way of scaling up well received training and thereby meeting the large-scale challenge GM faces around workforce productivity.

A significant amount of 'infrastructure' has been needed to drive starts within sectors. If GM's pilot was to be repeated there would be a strong case for focusing on fewer sectors of the economy, dedicating more support to each sector, running the pilot for longer and channelling more funding through the pilot.

Whilst the pilot has introduced new flexibilities in how GM's businesses can shape the training market there is still more that could be done. Employers can invest time in developing new training modules and approaches but if this training still has to be delivered within an overarching accreditation and payment framework that is only available through certain providers and/or assessors then the value from attempting to redesign things is lost.

Finally EOS has been a national pilot, with 35 different approaches/areas involved. However, there does not appear to have been the coordination needed to enable the potential benefits of all the national activity to be realised.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce (**GMCC**) commissioned New Economy to undertake an evaluation of the Growth Innovation Fund (**GIF**) and Employer Ownership of Skills (**EOS**) pilot run in Greater Manchester (**GM**).
- 1.2 GIF and EOS are separate government skills programmes: GIF is aimed at supporting employers to bring forward powerful, integrated, proposals for industrial partnerships to take wider responsibility for skills development in a place or sector; EOS builds upon this by orientating entire sectors of the economy towards an employer-led skills model, with a particular focus on increasing the numbers of employers engaged with apprenticeships.
- 1.3 More detail on GIF and EOS is included in chapter 2.

Research methodology

- 1.4 The research team adopted a multi-dimensional methodology:
 - A **literature/policy review** of the different ways in which skills and training can be funded and delivered was completed
 - **Consultations** were held in October 2013 and again in November 2014 with individuals who had a detailed knowledge of the implementation and impact of the pilot
 - Regular **reviews of projects management information** were undertaken
 - **Online surveys of trainees** who have had their studies funded through the pilot were conducted. 63 trainees completed an initial survey (which ran in March 2014 and achieved an 11% response rate) which asked for their opinions on the quality of training they were receiving and its impact upon their skills and abilities. 74 trainees completed a follow-up survey (which ran in September – October 2014 and achieved a 4% response rate) where we sought evidence of how the training was impacting upon their earnings and career progression.
 - **5 Focus groups** were held in January – March 2014, on a sector by sector basis, to give participating companies the chance to give their views on the strengths and weaknesses of the pilot. The focus groups were facilitated by the report's author and recorded using a Dictaphone.
 - **Case studies** of individuals and companies who have taken part in the pilot were shared by GMCC
- 1.5 The initial and follow-up survey questionnaires and the consultation discussion topic list are included as an appendix to this report.

Research timescale

- 1.6** This is the third and final evaluation report on GM's pilot. Two earlier reports have been produced:
- A baseline report was produced in October 2013
 - An interim evaluation report was produced in April 2014
- 1.7** The baseline report was based upon a review of GIF and EOS policy and project documentation and consultations with stakeholders. It found that expectations of what the pilot would achieve in GM were high, with praise for the initial set up and management of the programme by GMCC but some concerns about the slow pace of progress in getting employees into training.
- 1.8** The interim evaluation drew upon a wider range of primary and secondary research. It found that, after a slow start, the GM pilot was making good progress and was on track to hit its targets – however, progress was uneven across sectors. The training that had been funded had been very well received by employees, suggesting that there are strong gains to be had from involving employers in training. The report noted that it had been resource intensive to get to this stage, with GM employers welcoming the pilot because it had come with a support system that takes the burdens of market research and funding red-tape away from the employer.
- 1.9** This final evaluation report considers whether this progress has been sustained, what more we now know about the medium-term impacts of the pilot, whether the original objectives have been met, and lessons for the future design and delivery of skills and training systems in GM.

2 GIF and EOS in Greater Manchester

Aims and Objectives of the pilot

- 2.1 The four main objectives of the pilot have been:
- To create an employer led skills system which leads to an increase in competitiveness and the provision of good jobs and training opportunities across Greater Manchester
 - To lead the marketplace by developing employers to take the opportunity to lead new activities to improve skills and employment in their sectors, supply chains and localities
 - Work with appropriate public/private/social sector partners to maximise employer take-up of Apprenticeships across the range of employment sectors
 - To improve the recruitment of young people and adults of all abilities into Apprenticeships

Funding

- 2.2 Greater Manchester received £8.5m of EOS funding to be spent on piloting new methods of supporting employers to allow investment in their own skill requirements. The pilot was delivered via the GM Chamber of Commerce aggregating employer demand, rather than only focussing on large employers, through the creation of sector specific Employer Skills Groups. The intention was to develop a system that opened new markets for work based learning, and encouraged training providers/Further Education Colleges to work with employers in new sectors. The aim of EOS was to deliver the following objectives:

- Increase the availability of skills training for the 16+ age group
- Identify and develop sector, spatial and supply chain projects
- Widen skills delivery in Greater Manchester by increasing the:
 - Volume of work based training that takes place
 - Variety of training that takes place (sectors & occupations)
 - New methods of delivery, using employers to deliver their own training in partnership with Training Providers/Colleges
 - Assist employers to 'navigate' the skills system, rather than solely creating a brokerage system, as well as helping employers to articulate their needs. Employer investment as well as public funding would help grow the model and the availability of training opportunities.

- 2.3 GM also received £2.4m of GIF funding to be spent on the development of the Greater Manchester Skills & Employment Hub – a strategic and operational relationship with New Economy to create a partnership between public and private sectors¹. The Skills Hub would be responsible for the engagement of 4,000 businesses (to promote the skills agenda and where eligible the EOS funding offer) and the development of an Occupational Competency Review (training needs analysis to identify skills gaps) with 400 employers. The fund allowed the development of GMCC infrastructure to enable the delivery of skills projects, testing innovation by creating pilot services such as the ‘Young Person’s Application Unit’ (to assist school leavers to be matched with apprenticeships) and the Collaborative Partnership Programme, development programme to support schools, training providers and colleges in the delivery of Greater Manchester skills priorities via a series of workshops.
- 2.4 It was also the intention that by spending these grants GM would leverage further investment in staff training and development from the companies who participated in the pilot.

Targets

- 2.5 In return for government funding, the GM pilot agreed to deliver 1,843 training outputs, made up of:
- **410: 16 to 18 year old apprenticeships**
 - **763: 19+ apprenticeships**
 - **670: 19+ other qualifications**
- 2.6 There were no additional targets as to the types of companies or individuals who could access these training opportunities. Companies and/or trainees could be based outside Greater Manchester and still access the pilot.

Management and governance

- 2.7 Whilst GMCC has been the manager of both GIF and EOS funding, the funds have been administered in slightly differing ways.
- 2.8 GIF is administered within the GMCC structure by the Greater Manchester Skills Hub, whose responsibility is to manage sector based Employer Skills Groups (ESG). Each ESG is coordinated by a GMCC Workforce Planner and chaired by an employer in the given sector, who are dually responsible for the governance of their group.

¹ Note: Whilst GMCC and New Economy have worked together to create the Skills & Employment Hub, this research and the staff who have led the research has been undertaken independently of this activity.

2.9 The terms of reference of each ESG are to:

- Work together to maximise employer take-up of Apprenticeship within their sector
- Establish an Apprenticeship offer in Greater Manchester which includes all frameworks and levels which are likely to employ young people
- To increase both the volumes and proportion of Advanced and Higher Apprenticeships for Greater Manchester residents
- To improve the recruitment of young people of all abilities into Apprenticeships

2.10 The EOS funding has been managed within the GMCC structure by the Contract and Claims team, who are responsible for allocating the funding for training to eligible beneficiaries, within the terms of the contract with government. The Contract and Claims team have also been responsible for the production of regular pilot management information reports.

2.11 The EOS Leadership Board (made up of cross-sector senior representatives of businesses across GM) is accountable for the governance of the programme, ensuring that funding is distributed fairly and the objective of upskilling the workforce to aid the local economy is occurring.

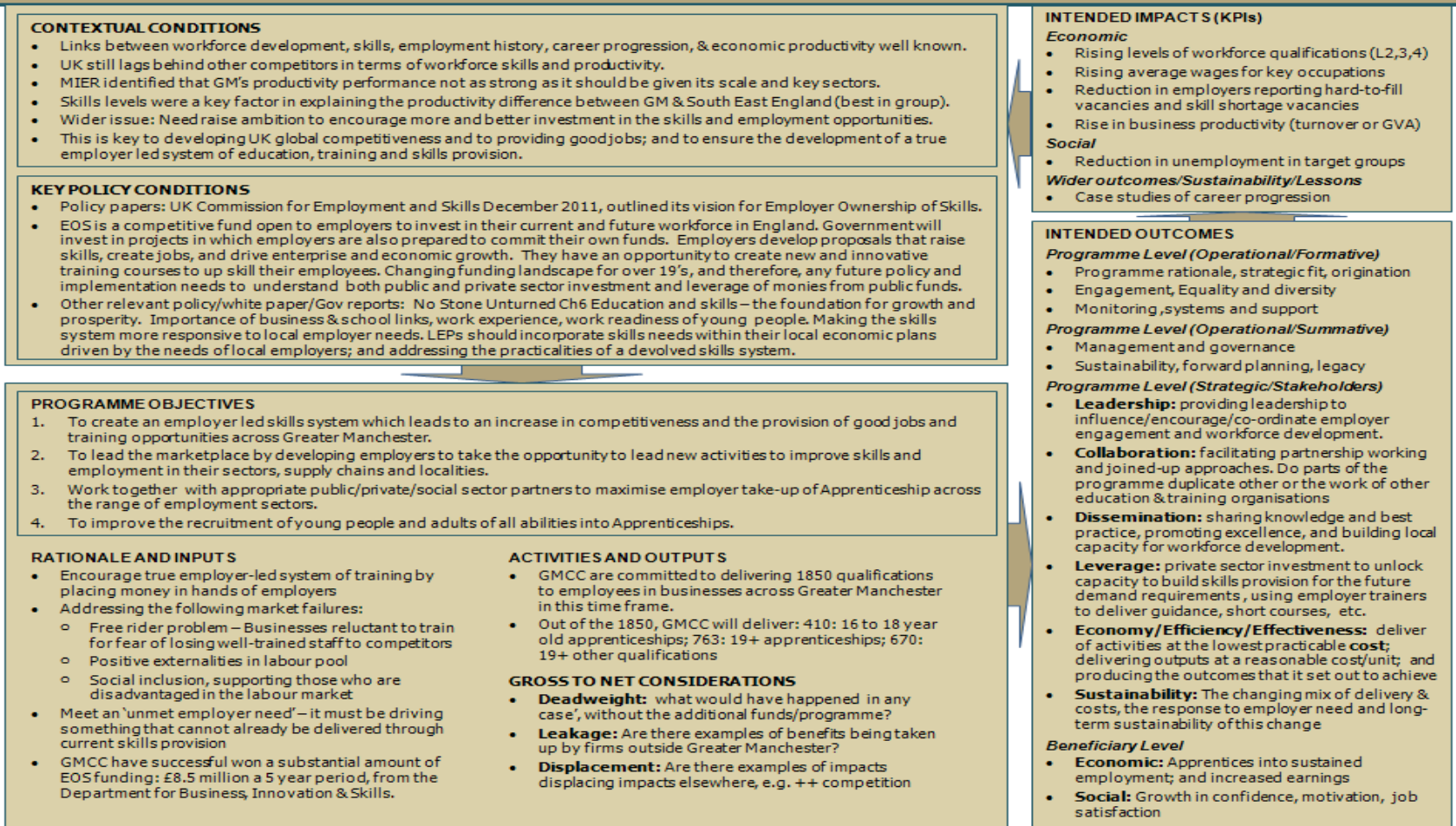
2.12 The Chamber Board has provided overall governance of the GIF and EOS contracts, ensuring that both contracts are performing against their objectives and are financially on target to succeed.

Logic Model

2.13 Based upon these descriptions of GIF and EOS, New Economy developed a Logic Model of the pilot. The Logic Model, reproduced on the next page, sets out the objectives of the pilot, the activities that were delivered in order to achieve these objectives, the outputs and outcomes for employers and employees that flowed from these activities, and the intended longer-term impacts of the pilot upon Greater Manchester's skills system and economy.

2.14 New Economy used the Logic Model to identify an hypotheses to test through the research and to develop different types of evaluation tools in order to cover the full range of pilot activity and outputs.

FIGURE 1: EMPLOYER OWNERSHIP OF SKILLS PILOT (AND THE GROWTH & INNOVATION FUND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK)



3 The performance of the pilot

3.1 At its outset the GM pilot was set the target of delivering:

- **410: 16 to 18 year old apprenticeships**
- **763: 19+ apprenticeships**
- **670: 19+ other qualifications**

3.2 Staff at the Chamber of Commerce produced regular updates on the numbers and types of training starts being made through the pilot. These updates included details such as which sectors were accessing pilot funding, the sizes of businesses who were benefiting, and the prior qualifications of learners who were placed on funded training courses thanks to the pilot.

3.3 In this chapter we present analysis of the project management information collected by the Chamber of Commerce, benchmarking pilot performance against GM's wider skills and training performance.²

Headline performance

3.4 The GM pilot exceeded its original target of delivering 1,843 training outputs, with out-performance in terms of the delivery of non-apprenticeship courses being the cause of this over-achievement. In terms of apprenticeship starts the pilot missed its original targets:

Table 3.1. Headline performance of GM pilot - starts by type of course

Type of course	Starts - Target	Starts - Actual	%
16-18 apprenticeship	410	265	65
19+ apprenticeship	763	679	89
19+ short course	670	1,025	153
Total	1,843	1,969	107

Source: GM Chamber of Commerce project management information

3.5 The figure of 1,969 does not mean that 1,969 people benefitted from the GM pilot. Individuals could undertake more than one training course funded by the pilot. Likewise, the number of employers who benefitted from the pilot was lower because businesses could send several members of staff on a pilot funded training course.

- **1,762 unique learners have been on a GM pilot funded training course.**
- **343 unique employers have benefited from the pilot.**

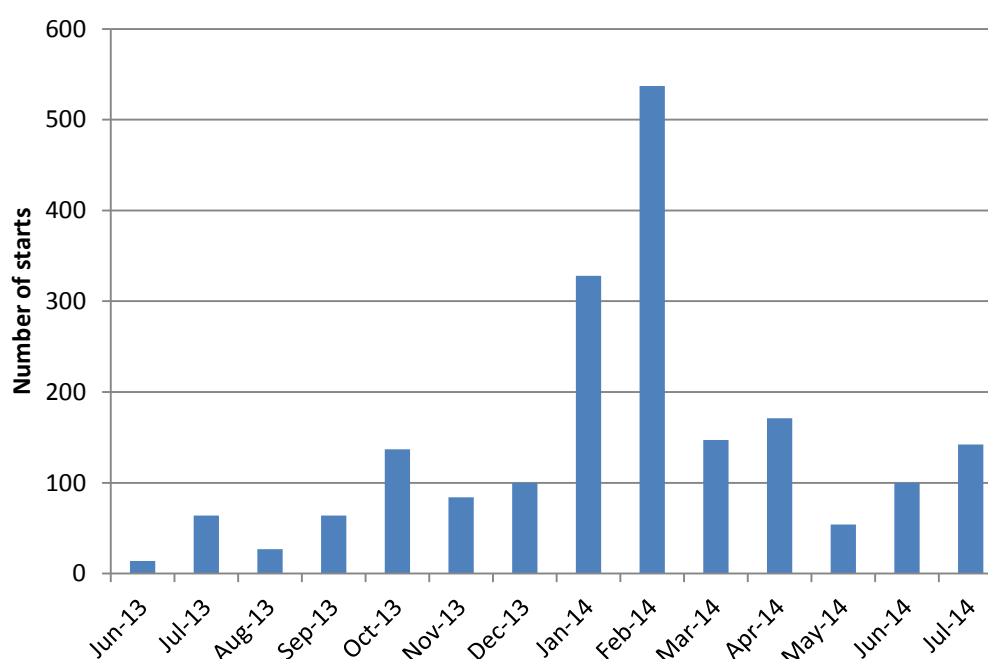
² All project management information analysed in this chapter was correct as of 27th October 2014. Subsequent revisions may mean that the final performance of the GM pilot is slightly different from what is presented here.

- 3.6 Between 2010/11 and 2012/13 the number of 16-18 year old apprenticeship starts in GM fell by 40% with changes to definitions and funding rules and more young people choosing to follow academic (as opposed to vocational) further study routes explaining this decline. Over the same period the number of apprenticeship starts by GM residents aged 19+ has increased by 10%. This is the context within which the pilot's performance on apprenticeship starts need to be considered.

Training starts – detailed analysis

- 3.7 A key finding from the baseline report consultations was that the pilot had made a slow start in terms of numbers of training starts. This is borne out from the more detailed analysis of when training starts were made, with a significant uplift in numbers of starts evident from late 2013 onwards.

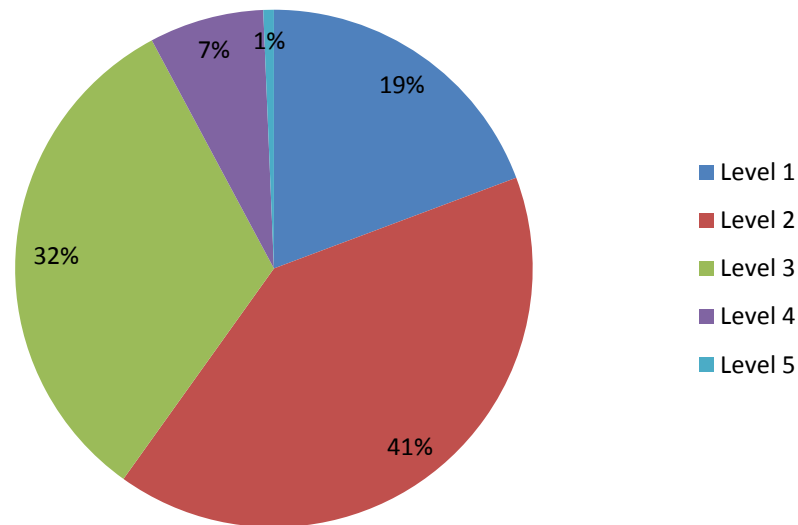
Figure 3.1. Profile of pilot training starts by month



Source: GM Chamber of Commerce project management information

- 3.8 Nearly three-quarters of these starts have been on Level 2 (equivalent to an A*-C GCSE) or Level 3 (equivalent to A/AS Level) training courses. 8% of starts have been at Level 4+ (equivalent to A Diploma or Foundation Degree).
- 3.9 Looking at all Skills Funding Agency funded starts in GM in 2012/13, 41% of these starts were at Level 2 or Level 3 and less than 1% were at Level 4+. Thus, the pilot has funded relatively more high-level training than other publicly funded training programmes in GM.

Figure 3.2. Pilot training starts by Level



Source: GM Chamber of Commerce project management information

- 3.10** All 944 apprenticeship starts funded by the pilot will result in Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) qualifications.
- 3.11** Of the 1,025 non-apprenticeship training starts funded by the pilot, 290 have been on QCF recognized training courses. This means that the pilot has funded 735 starts on training courses that are not on the QCF; however, the lack of official recognition does not mean that these courses will not impart benefits to the trainees and their employers.
- 3.12** To date, 136 training starts show an early finish date – i.e. the learner did not complete the training course – this represents a potential success rate of 93%.
- 3.13** Consultees were in broad agreement that the performance of the pilot in terms of numbers of training starts has been good, though a few consultees noted that progress within their sector had not been as great as in other sectors. Where slow progress was identified some felt this was due to sectors with a higher percentage of SMEs needing longer to understand training procedures in general and the pilot's processes; other consultees felt that a sector's progress was determined mainly by the commitment of individuals within that sector and the intensive and ongoing effort needed to design and administer training courses.
- 3.14** External factors that were felt to have influenced the pace of progress included the failure to ensure that partner agencies were fully aware and supportive of the pilot, and the overall lack of quality candidates to put onto apprenticeships.

Learners – detailed analysis

- 3.15 1,762 individuals have benefited from pilot funded training. A majority of these learners have been male, 15% have been aged under 19 and fewer than 1 in 10 have been from an ethnic minority background.

Table 3.2. Profile of learners – gender, age and ethnicity

Characteristic	%	All GM starts %
Males	59	48
Females	41	52
16-18	15	20
19+	85	80
White	93	78
Asian	3	8
Black	2	7
Mixed	2	2
Other	1	2
Not provided	<1	2

Sources: GM Chamber of Commerce project management information; all GM starts figures based on 2013/14 SFA funded course data; ethnicity profile statistics are national statistics taken from SFA, Statistical First Release, 2013

- 3.16 Direct benchmarking of the profile of pilot learners to all publically funded learning in GM is complicated by variations in data availability and definitions but, in broad terms, the pilot appears to have favoured:
- Male learners
 - Older learners
 - Non-ethnic minority learners
- 3.17 4% of pilot funded trainees stated that they had some form of learning difficulty or disability, most commonly dyslexia or visual impairment. Nationally 13% of FE and Skills Participation funded learners have a learning difficulty or disability (source: SFA Statistical First Release, 2013).
- 3.18 The under-representation of younger, female, disabled and ethnic minority learners within the GM pilot cohort is not necessarily a reflection of a failure of the pilot to be open to learners from these groups. The profile of those who could benefit from the pilot was always going to be heavily influenced by the profile of the workforce within the companies who participated in the pilot – i.e. the workforces of these companies may be disproportionately male, white, older etc.
- 3.19 In terms of where trainees live, one third of pilot funded learners live outside of Greater Manchester. When these non-GM residents are excluded from the analysis, residents from Manchester, Stockport and Salford are most heavily represented amongst the trainee cohort.

Table 3.3. Profile of learners – home address (n= 1,167)

Local authority	%	GM workforce %
Bolton	5%	9%
Bury	7%	5%
Manchester	20%	28%
Oldham	9%	6%
Rochdale	4%	6%
Salford	13%	10%
Stockport	14%	10%
Tameside	10%	6%
Trafford	7%	11%
Wigan	10%	8%

Note: Excludes non-GM learners

Sources: GM Chamber of Commerce project management information; Business Register and Employment Survey, 2013

- 3.20** Comparisons to the home address profile of the entire GM workforce shows that residents of Manchester, Bolton and Trafford have been under-represented in terms of pilot beneficiaries whilst residents of Stockport, Salford and Tameside have been over-represented.
- 3.21** The previous section showed that nearly three-quarters of pilot funded starts were on Level 2 or Level 3 courses. Information on learners' prior levels of qualification shows that 67% of trainees were qualified to Level 2 or below when they began on their pilot funded training.
- 3.22** Comparing a learner's prior Level of attainment with the Level of course they undertook through the pilot, we see that:
- 100 trainees (6%) started on a course that was *below* the Level of qualification they had already achieved
 - 267 trainees (15%) started on a course that was *identical* to the Level of qualification they had already achieved³
- 3.23** Just because a trainee is on a course that is at or below the Level of qualification they have already received does not mean that what they are learning is redundant; the individual may have received a qualification in a subject/area different to the sector they now work in, or they may be refreshing skills/qualifications gained some time ago.

Employers – detailed analysis

- 3.24** 343 employers have benefited from their staff taking part in pilot funded training.
- 3.25** Given that 1,969 training starts have been funded by the pilot, this means that the average employer has benefitted from 5.7 funded training places via the pilot. However, in some cases employers have put many more staff through training thanks to the pilot.

³ Note: For 50% of pilot funded trainees the Level of prior qualification is not known.

- 3.26 Micro (fewer than 10 employees) and small (10-49 employees) businesses account for just over 60% of the companies who have benefited from the pilot. 15% of companies who took part in the pilot employ more than 250 people but these 53 companies have accounted for 30% of all training starts funded by the pilot.

Table 3.4. Profile of employers – size

Number of employees	% companies	%training starts	% apprenticeship starts
9 or fewer	18%	6%	7%
10 to 49	43%	23%	32%
50 to 249	23%	40%	42%
250 +	15%	30%	19%

Source: GM Chamber of Commerce project management information

- 3.27 When the analysis is restricted to just apprenticeship starts, firms with more than 250 employees account for 19% of starts, showing that larger firms have been relatively more likely to put their employees onto pilot funded short courses.
- 3.28 Manchester and Salford based businesses account for the largest number of pilot beneficiaries. Just slightly more than 1 in 5 companies who took part in the pilot are based outside of Greater Manchester.

Table 3.5. Profile of employers – location

Local authority	% companies	% training starts
Bolton	5%	4%
Bury	3%	3%
Manchester	25%	19%
Oldham	5%	8%
Rochdale	3%	2%
Salford	11%	15%
Stockport	7%	8%
Tameside	6%	4%
Trafford	7%	5%
Wigan	5%	4%
Out of area	22%	29%

Source: GM Chamber of Commerce project management information

- 3.29 The large number of Manchester-based businesses is unsurprising given that Manchester accounts for 1 in 5 of all GM businesses⁴. Further comparison to the profile of the entire GM business base shows that when non-GM companies are excluded from the analysis, more companies from Manchester and Salford have taken part in the pilot than would be expected given the number of businesses within the two cities, whilst fewer companies from Trafford, Stockport and Bolton are represented.

⁴ ONS, UK Business Count - Enterprises, 2014

- 3.30 Sales and marketing, health and social care, and hospitality are the three sectors which account for the largest number of pilot business participants. When we look at starts by company sector, hospitality is the largest sector, accounting for 1 in 4 of all pilot starts – i.e. hospitality sector companies have sent relatively large numbers of employees on pilot funded training courses, whereas sales and marketing companies each sent relatively few employees.

Table 3.6. Profile of employers – sector

Sector	% companies	% training starts
Construction	12%	16%
Engineering	4%	2%
Facilities management	2%	1%
Financial services	2%	4%
HSC	17%	15%
Hospitality	14%	23%
Housing	2%	5%
IT	4%	6%
Legal	4%	4%
Logistics	4%	1%
Sales and marketing	35%	21%

Source: GM Chamber of Commerce project management information

Training providers

- 3.31 There have been 35 different training providers involved in delivering training funded by the pilot.
- 3.32 There have been seven training providers who have delivered 100 or more starts via the pilot, with the largest of these responsible for 459 starts, or 23% of all activity. At the other end of the scale there are two providers who have delivered just one pilot funded start.

Table 3.7. Most active training providers by number of training starts

Training provider	Training starts	%
Robinsons	459	23%
Winning Pitch	172	9%
Skills Solutions	147	7%
Morgan Sindall	128	7%
Progress to Excellence	115	6%
The Manchester College	113	6%
West Cheshire College	109	6%
Heyrod	106	5%
MMU	94	5%
Smart Platforms	90	5%

Source: GM Chamber of Commerce project management information

- 3.33 27 of the 35 training providers have been involved in delivering training within just one of the sectors covered by the GM pilot. Six providers have delivered training in two sectors, one provider covered five sectors and one provider covered six sectors.

Feedback on the training

- 3.34 In our survey of pilot funded trainees we asked for feedback on the design, delivery and overall quality of the training they had received. There was high praise for the design of the training:

- 84% of respondents (n=75) agreed or strongly agreed that their trainer was good at explaining the course content
- 80% agreed or strongly agreed that the training related to their daily work tasks
- 79% agreed or strongly agreed that they can see how the training will help them in their future career
- 77% agreed or strongly agreed that there was a clear structure to the training

'A well thought out process that has had a lot of time and effort put in to it by both the company and those involved'

'The content of the course is based on the foundations of my workplace and I am confident that I will gain the correct training to succeed in the course'

- 3.35 There was also praise for the delivery of training modules:

- 87% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they had had opportunities to ask questions about their training
- 83% agreed or strongly agreed that their trainer was a good teacher
- 74% agreed or strongly agreed that training materials were of a high standard

- 3.36 Respondents were more lukewarm about the feedback they had received on their work and the ability to balance work and training time demands, but on both these topics a majority of respondents were positive about their experiences.

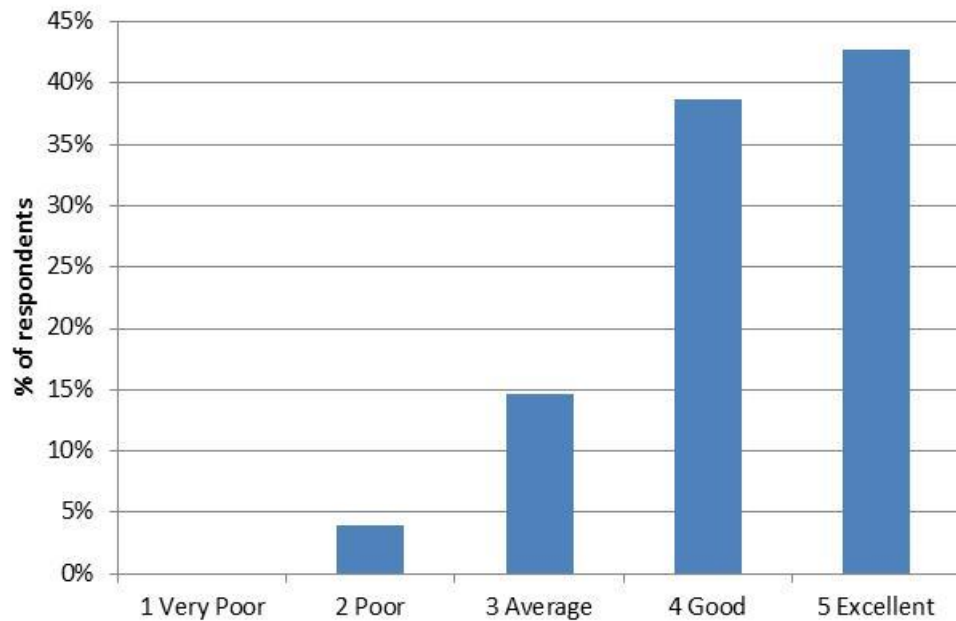
'The teachers are all very knowledgeable on these courses and I am confident they will help me in every way they can.'

'In order to get the maximum benefit from the course, it requires a commitment and substantial home study.'

- 3.37 Respondents were very complimentary about the support they had received from both the training provider and their employer when training – in both cases over three quarters of respondents rated the support as 'good' or 'excellent'.

3.38 Overall ratings for the training were very positive.

Figure 3.3. Overall, how would you rate the training?



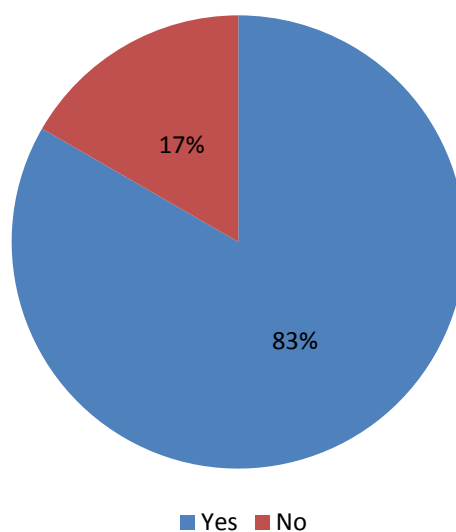
'Training has been thorough and allowed me to go from not knowing how to run a case to being able to issue court proceedings and settle cases'

'There were many appointments my training provider was late for or missed. A new training provider started with us to catch us up and she is absolutely fantastic and has made me feel really confident.'

'Not enough time to do assignments whilst in work hours'

3.39 A clear majority said they would recommend the training and many had already done so.

Figure 3.4. Would you recommend the training? (n=60)



Case study – EOS and GM's Legal sector

Participant A enrolled on the Legal Apprenticeship course after gaining excellent results at A-Level and is currently working for _____ whilst studying. They wanted to gain experience and a qualification at the same time and knew that they would be able to do both with a Legal Apprenticeship.

"I was keen to learn, earn money and study at the same time...I thought about studying for an undergraduate degree in law, but working in conjunction with learning was a critical factor for me. Being financially stable and making connections from an early stage was appealing.

My work at _____ covers so much and I'm learning every day. One day I might be checking the details of a claim, the next I might be creating physical case files for fee earners, no two days are the same. It's hard work but it's definitely rewarding.

At Manchester Metropolitan University I typically attend lectures for one day a month. The entire Legal Apprenticeship cohort is on the same initial pathway so I have developed good friendships.

Most of my other learning is by distance, but when we attend university, legal professionals teach us throughout the day. Each apprentice has an assessor assigned to them to whom we submit coursework. In addition, we also have internal assessments in which the assessor visits your firm to make sure you are progressing with the learning, undertaking jobs that are relevant to your course and keeping up to date with all learning assignments. I thought at first it would be a bit intimidating, but they really do help you and strive to push you forward at your own pace.

So far, it's been a great experience and I would thoroughly recommend it. Even if you only go on to complete the Legal Apprenticeship, which alone opens up many career paths, if you change your mind from law, it's still a very good thing to have on your profile. Personally, I want to progress through the apprenticeship stages, become qualified as a chartered legal executive and then later on undertake the legal practice course and qualify as a solicitor. Hopefully that will be whilst working for [my current employer]".

- 3.40 When trainees were asked to compare their experience of pilot funded training with other training that they had been on, comments often focused on the more intensive and practical nature of the pilot funded training, with praise for individual tutor's professionalism:

'I did a foundation degree which was two years long in graphic design. I feel I have learnt a lot more / learnt more relevant skills in this short period (2 months) than I did in those two years.'

'More intense than any other course I've ever been on.'

'My experience of this apprenticeship/NVQ is very similar to my experience with another training provider for an apprenticeship/NVQ which wasn't funded by EOS. This is both a positive and a negative. There are the same good things e.g. support with NVQ work from your assessor and getting a qualification at the end. But also the same bad points e.g. not being able to meet with other learners to share thoughts and ideas.'

'The trainers are more professional and I've found it challenging'

Case study – EOS and GM's Construction sector

Company B is large, GM-based construction company. Through the sector training forum supported by the pilot, the company worked with other construction businesses to identify specific trades where the current supply of training was felt to be in need of improvement/changes. The group developed a new two year apprenticeship framework which allowed employers to add modules to the training. It was agreed that specialist elements of the training would be delivered by Company B as local colleges and private training providers lacked the necessary equipment.

The construction apprentices started their courses in March 2014. All apprentices have achieved their first two modules in line with the framework for the relevant trades. They have also achieved a Level 2 award in Manual Handling – this being one of the priority skills gaps identified by the employer group.

Once the apprentices have achieved the modules required for the Technical certificate then they will progress to the NVQ. Concurrently they will receive further training in other specialist courses to prepare them for further employment with their employers. Company B is also planning their next apprenticeship programme which is due to commence in February/March 2015. It is intended to invite Civil Engineering companies to help shape this programme and drive up learner numbers.

4 The design of the pilot

- 4.1 The pilot in GM has been overseen by a Leadership Board. The Leadership Board (made up of cross-sector senior representatives of businesses across Greater Manchester) is accountable for the governance of the programme, ensuring that funding is distributed fairly and the objective of upskilling the workforce to aid the local economy is being met.
- 4.2 Day-to-day management and administration of the pilot has fallen to GMCC. Four staff within GMCC have been responsible for:
- Administering payments to employers who have put their staff through EOS funded training
 - Producing project management information
- 4.3 Underneath the Board and the management and administration teams, GMCC has recruited four Workforce Planners, plus a member of staff to manage them, to act as liaisons between sector employers, training providers and the pilot management team. Tasks for these Workforce Planners have included:
- Arranging employer skills group meetings
 - Helping employer skills group members to undertake staff competency reviews and from this drawing up training curricula
 - Managing the process of selecting a preferred training provider to deliver the training courses designed by the employer skills group
 - Ensuring that employers are able to draw down funding for the training they have purchased via the pilot

In our consultations with Board members, GMCC staff, company representatives and stakeholders we asked for opinions on how effective these structures had been in terms of delivering the pilot.

Workforce Planners

- 4.4 Workforce Planners were viewed as knowledgeable on the specific skills issues within their sector and as having the drive necessary to progress the pilot:

“X’s input was second to none – [they] took the time to explain the system to all sector group members”

“GMCC recruited good people who could move things along”

4.5 Workforce Planners are felt to have been most effective where they are good at networking with both employers and training providers, and have a commercial awareness such that they can engage training providers in discussions regarding the price of training. All Workforce Planners were experienced in identifying skills gaps with businesses and used these skills when conducting the Occupational Competency Reviews and then developing and commissioning training.

4.6 The true value of the Workforce Planners seems to have been their ability to take large amounts of administration away from the employers participating in their pilot, especially for smaller employers:

“the scale of work involved – pulling together a disparate group of firms, designing a new training course, selecting a provider, regular update meetings – is too much work for one company or a few companies to do themselves on top of daily tasks – really reliant upon Chamber support to drive the pilot forward”

GMCC administration

4.7 Consultees agreed that management and administration of the pilot by GMCC had improved significantly after a rocky and slow start. GMCC team members were viewed as easy to work with and vital to driving forward the pilot.

4.8 GMCC staff feel that managing the pilot has significantly enhanced the GMCC’s knowledge, capabilities and capacity in relation to the skills and training agenda, putting them in a position where they would be able to lead further GM initiatives in this field. GMCC also feels its relations with small and medium sized businesses have been strengthened thanks to EOS.

4.9 There were/are teething problems in delivering the pilot. These have included:

- The lack of a single CRM/software system through which to make funding claims – GMCC staff had to build their own system and there were no opportunities to learn from/replicate systems used by other EOS pilots.
- The process by which companies are reimbursed for training has not been perfect – in a few cases companies say they had to wait until GMCC drew down funding which created cashflow issues that would be challenging for SMEs.
- The changing of the paperwork that needed to be completed to register a learner/make a claim was annoying and companies felt that the paperwork asked for lots of information that was irrelevant to SMEs – e.g. describing their ‘training schedule’ when very few companies have a training schedule.
- Changes in personnel at the Skills Funding Agency (**SFA**) meaning that relationships between GMCC and SFA had to be rebuilt periodically.

- 4.10 As we noted in our previous evaluations, it did take some time for the pilot to get going in terms of numbers of training starts. Consultees feel that this was partly due to a lack of clear communications at the start about exactly what the pilot could and could not do. Once these misunderstandings were cleared up consultees still felt it took considerable time to design training courses and select preferred providers:

“[we] have only really been training people for last 6-9 months and now funding is at an end – [the pilot’s] timetable was not 100% clear at the outset.”

- 4.11 A further explanation for this slow start was the difficulty of operating a consortium led training programme across 15 sectors. Within each sector GMCC had to create a new network infrastructure (the employer skills groups), recruit staff to facilitate these groups (and this recruitment could not take place until GMCC was certain of the payments it was to receive), work with employers to identify skills needs, then conduct a training provider procurement exercise. Members of each employer skills group were giving their time to the pilot at the same time as continuing with their ‘day jobs’ and GMCC did not feel it would have been feasible for ESGs to have met more than once a month, which drew out the process even further.

- 4.12 The approach did not work for all sectors:

“activity within our sector sort of died – nobody attending meetings – disappointing after a good start”

EOS Leadership Board

- 4.13 GMCC staff view the Leadership Board as having played a very important role within the pilot. The Board has performed a performance monitoring role and it is intended for the Board to remain in place now that pilot starts have stopped. It is hoped that the Board’s future role will relate to keeping employers engaged with the skills and training agenda and broadening this discussion so that employers see skills as encompassing not just apprenticeships but also schools careers advice, short training courses and so on.
- 4.14 Few other comments were received on the role and the performance of the Leadership Board. One Board member said that the Board had been kept up to date on the overall progress of the pilot in terms of numbers of starts and funds drawn down. Another commented that the Board meetings had not provided an opportunity talk strategically about skills issues facing all sectors to which GM level responses could be designed; instead they felt that the focus had been more on the detailed issues being encountered sector-by-sector.

Strengths and weaknesses of the pilot

- 4.15 Consultees felt that the strengths of the pilot related to how it enabled employers to control the training process and thereby design training that was more relevant to the daily working environment. The sector-by-sector, consortium led approach was also praised as allowing the pilot to achieve a large number of starts relatively quickly.
- 4.16 By subsidising short courses as well as apprenticeship starts the pilot has been able to deliver a high number of training starts, with consultees pointing out that employers like having ‘bite sized’ courses available to them when they need to plug a skills gap without losing staff capacity for an extended period.
- 4.17 Where the pilot was weaker was in relation to its speed of activities and how it was linked to the wider skills and training infrastructure which operates in GM.

Table 4.1. Pilot strengths and weaknesses identified by consultees

Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>“The practical training focus has been great and much needed when you look at how TPs struggle to offer true on the job training”</i>	<i>“It took time for employers to learn and understand the process and to take ownership of it”</i>
<i>“[EOS] has given training providers in our sector a bit of a kick in relation to training young people”</i>	Too short in terms of timescale and slow start on top of this
Principle of putting employers in control	<i>“[GMCC] should have ensured that all employers were 100% clear about what could and could not be funded from day 1 – would have saved our sector some false starts”</i>
<i>“[I] feel that the pilot has won the hearts and minds of business regarding the need to train staff”</i>	Complications around accessing funds and being paid
Ability to be flexible and creative with the funding	Size and limited flexibilities of the pilot meant that it could never have a big strategic impact
Strong central management and administration, especially the Workforce Planners	Pilot implemented but other apprenticeship/training schemes also remained in place and operated alongside the pilot – i.e. NAS, SSCs, City and Guilds still pushing alternative training to sector
The sector-by-sector approach is different to the single employer model adopted elsewhere and better at delivering large numbers of starts	Too many sectors (15) chosen at the outset – would have chosen fewer sectors but offered them more central support

Innovations introduced through the pilot

- 4.18 The innovation highlighted most often in consultations was the sector-by-sector approach, underpinned by the ESGs and the Workforce Planners. Consultees praised this approach as:
- Encouraging companies to overcome the natural tendency to see other firms as competitors and instead collaborate to overcome skills issues that all firms face
 - Allowing the newly designed training courses to be cascaded through sector networks and down sector supply chains, meaning that the potential scale of the pilot was enhanced
- 4.19 Another key innovation mentioned was the flexibility the pilot offers to company: *“the ability to bolt on modules to create a bespoke apprenticeship [is] really valuable to a business like ours where you have lots of different roles and target markets”*
- 4.20 The pilot has encouraged companies to think outside of their traditional recruitment channels – for instance, one participating company is now targeting 16-18 year olds as potential recruits.
- 4.21 Having GMCC as an ‘independent broker’ meant that companies participating in the pilot did not feel that they were being pressured into signing up for staff training that would not ultimately meet their needs.

Case study – Playground Squad

Playground Squad is a Swedish company that provides training for individuals who wish to work in the computer games industry. The company had approached several UK cities to investigate the potential of establishing a UK presence but these discussions had not been fruitful. Key agencies in GM, including the Sharp Project and Manchester College were able to work with EOS funding to help the company to establish a presence in east Manchester.

Because Playground Squad was a Swedish company GMCC was not able to use EOS funding to directly contract the company to deliver training. Instead, an innovative approach was agreed whereby the contract was routed through The Manchester College with Playground Squad’s curriculum mapped against the UK curriculum. Being able to be flexible in this way meant that the delivery of much needed training did not have to wait until the company officially moved to the UK.

Through this approach it has been possible to develop 3 new Level 3 & 4 apprenticeships for GM digital companies to access, with two cohorts having started the two year apprenticeship.

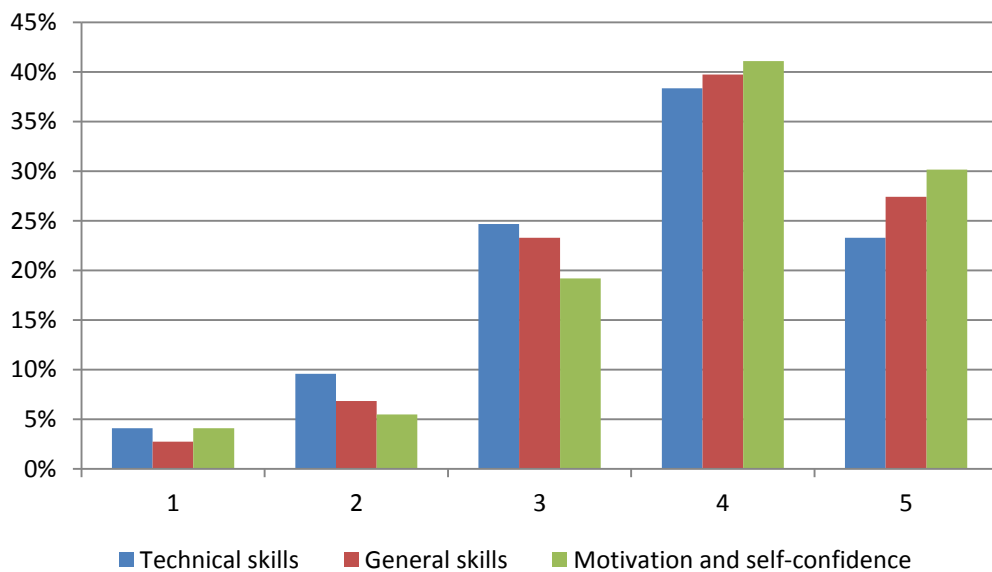
5 The impact of the pilot

5.1 The evaluation team undertook two rounds of trainee survey work. 73 trainees completed the first round survey, giving their views on the impact their training had had upon their skills and career plans. 43 of these trainees completed a second round survey, which again asked them to describe the impact of the training they had received upon their skills but which also looked for evidence that trainees had progressed in their careers and/or received wage increases.

Impact of the pilot upon trainees' skills

5.2 The training appears to have had the greatest beneficial impact upon trainees' motivation and self-confidence within the workplace. The training has also had a beneficial impact upon trainees' general skills (e.g. communication, team working, leadership etc.) and their technical skills (e.g. the specific skills needed to do their job) with fewer than 15% of trainees saying that the training has had little or no impact upon their skills.

Figure 4.1. Impact of the training upon trainees' skills (1 = no impact, 5 = very big impact, n = 73)



5.3 In the second round survey the percentages of trainees who said that the training had had a very big impact upon their skills and self-confidence fell, with the biggest fall being in the percentage of learners who said that their motivation and self-confidence had been positively influenced by the training; nevertheless, a majority of respondents to the second survey said that the training was still having a big or very big impact upon their skills and self-confidence.

5.4 Just less than two-thirds of respondents (n = 35) to the second survey said they felt that the training had made them more effective in their daily work. Examples of this increased effectiveness included:

'[I am] faster at producing work to the high standards needed and make less mistakes'.

'If a customer complains I feel I can handle the calls better.'

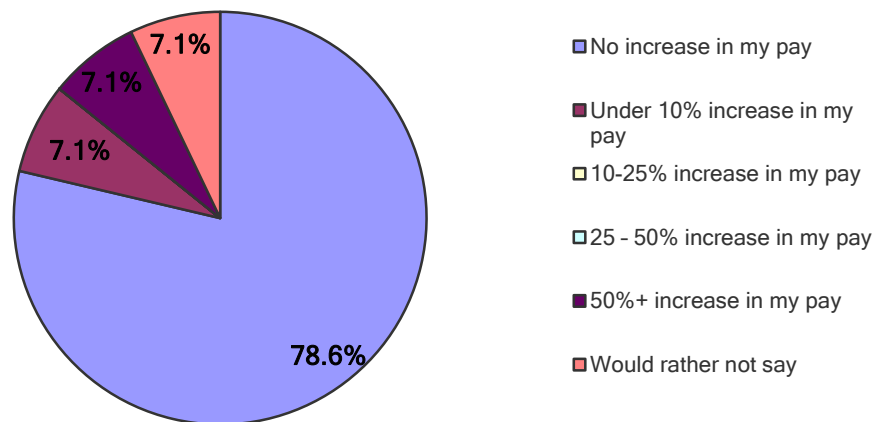
'I am more confident when dealing with our supply chain, holding face to face meetings, daily briefings and any on site issues that may arise.'

- 5.5 One of the consultees we spoke to echoed these points, praising the practical training approach that the pilot has enabled and saying *"existing courses are very much classroom based, training providers lack the employer contacts needed to offer young learners the practical experience they need."*

Impact of the pilot upon trainees' careers

- 5.6 In our round 1 survey only 21% of the respondents had completed the training; by the time of the follow-up survey that figure had increased to 49%. Given that many respondents were still on their training the following analysis of the impact of the training upon trainees' careers should be treated with caution as many trainees would be unlikely to see a significant change in their career circumstances until they finished the training.
- 5.7 In both surveys a clear majority (66-80%) of respondents said that they hoped to remain with their employer once they completed their training. Amongst those that had completed their training, 80-90% were still employed by the same company.
- 5.8 It seems that the surveys took place too soon to identify many examples of career progression; only 6% of respondents to the first survey and 14% of respondents to the second survey said that they were now in a more senior role. The majority of respondents remained in the role they were in when they started their training.
- 5.9 All the consultees we spoke to felt it was too early for them to reach a judgement on how the pilot would impact upon the careers of the trainees.
- 5.10 When respondents to the follow-up survey were asked whether their wages had increased following the training again the common picture was that this had not occurred.

Figure 5.2. Has your pay increased?



(n = 14 so results should be treated with caution)

- 5.11** This section of the survey concluded with a question asking respondents to explain how the training had influenced their career and education plans. Answers given included:

'The training has made me understand the complexity of working in the legal sector. I am planning to continue with the Cilex Qualification. However as of yet I am not sure of which legal sector I want to be involved in.'

'This training gave me clear idea such as which path I want to choose and where I want to go in future. I feel I could find the job in office as an admin/Pa.'

'This is a level 3 pathway, I am a bit confused how to progress as different providers have different options.'

'My career and education plans continue to be in a different direction to the training that I undertook earlier this year and are not really influenced by it.'

'The training has influenced me to stick with Insurance and further my career in that area. I plan to carry on with my studies and hopefully become an insurance underwriter.'

Impact of the pilot upon participating companies

- 5.12** Companies who have taken part in the pilot report a range of benefits from doing so. At a fundamental level companies attitudes towards training staff have been altered:

Involvement in the pilot has ignited a training debate within our company

EOS has shown that employers can develop a workforce 'from scratch' – you don't have to poach staff from rivals or only recruit qualified and experienced people – young people can be trained up

The pilot has brought smaller companies within our sector into the training fold for the first time

- 5.13 Consultees told us that being able to design training from the outset was massively important to them and has meant that they have moved away from seeing training as a ‘one size fits all’ approach and now realise that they can train recruits differently according to their existing skills and talents.
- 5.14 Another company representative described how involvement within the pilot had made their company target a new group of potential recruits – 16-18 year olds – who they had previously not considered as possessing the skills and aptitudes needed for working in the sector.
- 5.15 The companies we spoke to felt it is too early to be able to report hard evidence of how the pilot will impact their profitability or reduce staff turnover though one company representative reported that workforce relations were better thanks to the pilot. One consultee pointed out that generating such evidence should be a priority for all skills provision because without evidence that training leads to improvements in the bottom line there is always the risk that companies will see training as an unnecessary additional cost.
- 5.16 Two companies mentioned how involvement with the pilot had brought them into contact with a wider business network, in part through being invited to pilot events and in part through attending other GMCC events. Both consultees felt that their company’s profile had been raised at a national level as a result.

Impact of the pilot upon the relationship between training providers and employers

- 5.17 The consultees do not feel that the pilot has led to a significant change in the relationship between training providers and employers but several feel that given more time and greater budget the pilot could deliver a shift in this relationship:

“We have not been able to influence the training provider cartel – there is still red tape around the pilot – we had the freedom to choose a training provider but the training had to cover certain elements and only one training provider has the capacity to do this!”

“I definitely feel we have more power to influence provision in terms of core content”

“In the longer term an employer led approach should weed out the weaker training providers”

- 5.18** This final point around a longer-term pilot being able to weed out weaker training providers was mentioned a few times. Consultees pointed out that engagement with the pilot has made them and fellow companies within their sector more aware of what constitutes good training and less willing to accept training provision that is not up to date, lacking in practical instruction and so on. In time they feel that they and their contemporaries will channel more business towards training providers who offer up to date, on the job training.

Impact of the pilot upon Greater Manchester

- 5.19** Few consultees had a view on whether the pilot had changed attitudes towards skills and training in Greater Manchester either within sectors of the economy or within the public sector. One consultee said that the pilot was too small in terms of budget and too short in terms of timescale to have achieved wider recognition. Another pointed out that to achieve this wider recognition is always going to take time because skills training in the UK has traditionally (at least until 2010) been state-funded, resulting in employers having a reactive (they expect it to be offered to them) and negative (they doubt the quality of something not designed by the sector, for the sector) view of training provision. The consultee felt that the pilot was starting to challenge these views but much progress remained to be made.
- 5.20** A third consultee pointed out that the pilot is in tune with developments such as the devolution of powers to GM, and also noted the links between the pilot and the Advanced Manufacturing strategy that the LEP has developed.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

Headline performance

- 6.1 GM's pilot has exceeded the headline target it was set, delivering 1,969 training starts since its launch and helping nearly 1,800 individuals and 350 companies to benefit from training and skills development.
- 6.2 The pilot has funded high quality training – 83% of trainees say they would recommend the training that they have received via the pilot – with participants praising the intensive, highly practical approach designed into pilot funded courses. Potential success rates for the training are high.
- 6.3 The GM pilot exceeded its target number of starts thanks to a strong performance in relation to starts on non-apprenticeship courses – clearly bite-sized training is attractive to employers and offering access to such training should be central to GM's efforts to improve the skills of its workforce.
- 6.4 The pilot has found it harder to deliver apprenticeship start numbers due to the significant time and capacity that has been needed to help sectors which have traditionally not engaged with or collaborated on apprenticeships to come together to design frameworks, appoint training providers and put forward staff for training. However, we note that the EOS national programme as a whole had recorded 4,300 apprenticeship starts by July 2014; this means that despite the challenges identified above, the GM pilot has still managed to deliver 22% of all EOS apprenticeship starts nationwide.
- 6.5 Because the pilot activity has been largely shaped by employers' needs there has been reduced potential to shape delivery according to GM's strategic skills needs – i.e. companies in a specific sector or a certain location have benefitted more than would be expected given their importance within GM's economy. And one third of the individuals who have been on pilot funded training live outside of GM.
- 6.6 Two-thirds of the trainees we surveyed feel that they are more effective in their day-to-day work thanks to the pilot. The training has had a strongly beneficial impact upon trainees' motivation and self-confidence within the workplace. The training has also had a beneficial impact upon trainees' general skills and their technical skills.
- 6.7 Our research has taken place too soon to be able to identify whether trainees have enjoyed wage increases or promotions thanks to the pilot or whether companies are now more productive and competitive. However, there is no evidence that trainees are leaving their employer for a better job elsewhere when they complete their training – the fear of this occurring is often cited by employers as a reason for not investing in their staff's development.

Achievement against objectives

- 6.8 Four objectives were identified at the outset of GM's pilot. Evidence from our three rounds of evaluation research can help us to judge to what extent these objectives have been achieved:

To create an employer led skills system which leads to an increase in competitiveness and the provision of good jobs and training opportunities across Greater Manchester

- 6.9 There is clear evidence that GM's pilot has helped employers in many sectors to shape the skills system in order to deliver high quality, highly regarded training which results in trainees accessing good and challenging employment opportunities. We do not yet have evidence that the pilot has led to an increase in the competitiveness of GM companies.

To lead the marketplace by developing employers to take the opportunity to lead new activities to improve skills and employment in their sectors, supply chains and localities

- 6.10 This objective has been broadly achieved. From the research it is clear that participating employers have been *shaping* skills and employment in their sectors rather than directly *leading* this activity; in the sectors where the pilot has made the greatest impact there has been a heavy reliance upon GMCC infrastructure to design training courses and select training providers. Many employers say they lack the capacity and/or desire to lead the skills system.

- 6.11 GM's adoption of a sector-by-sector approach for the pilot, as opposed to a lead employer model, has enabled several employers within the same sector to take a collaborative approach to addressing their skills needs, whilst also providing examples of large companies disseminating new approaches to training via their supply chains.

Work with appropriate public/private/social sector partners to maximise employer take-up of Apprenticeships across the range of employment sectors

- 6.12 We have found less evidence that this objective has been achieved. As noted, the pilot's headline apprenticeships start target was not achieved. And whilst GMCC has significantly enhanced its knowledge and role in relation to apprenticeships in GM, other agencies within the GM apprenticeship market continue to operate seemingly without much awareness or acknowledgement of what the pilot is trying to achieve. A commonly expressed view is that the pilot has been too small and too brief to affect a significant change in the relationship between employers and training providers.

To improve the recruitment of young people and adults of all abilities into Apprenticeships

- 6.13 Again, there is limited evidence that the pilot has succeeded against this objective. The pilot has made a small but not insignificant addition to the total number of apprenticeship starts in GM, in line with what would be expected given the total budget dedicated to the pilot. Encouragingly, it appears to be driving the move towards Advanced and Higher apprenticeships, which is a strategic objective for GM. However, the profile of trainees accessing pilot funded training appears to be less diverse than would be expected given the overall profiles of GM's learner and employee bases.

Recommendations on future skills delivery in GM

- 6.14 Our evaluation of GM's pilot provides several pointers on the future design and delivery of skills and training systems. Firstly, a sector-led approach under which groups of employers are able to design the training their staff take part in appears to have been a success. It has led to good quality training, at Advanced and Higher levels than the traditional training market offer, with high learner success rates. The sector-led model also appears to offer a quick way of scaling up well received training and thereby meeting the large-scale challenge GM faces around workforce productivity.
- 6.15 One alternative to GM's sector-led model would have been a single employer-led approach. But our research found little appetite from employers to engage directly with the skills funding system due to the perceived bureaucracy of that system. Also, GM's business base is predominantly made up of small and medium sized businesses who lack the manpower needed to *lead* the skills and training market.
- 6.16 If GM's pilot was to be repeated there would be a strong case for focusing on fewer sectors of the economy, dedicating more support to each sector, running the pilot for longer and channelling more funding through the pilot. Establishing employer-led systems has proved difficult in sectors where there has been no major employer(s) to act as a figurehead and to encourage smaller companies to take part. A significant amount of 'infrastructure' has been needed to drive starts within sectors – for instance, the Workforce Planner for GM's hospitality sector EOS pilot has been employed full-time by the sector's lead employer to ensure that all tasks are undertaken as required. If GM wants to drive the uptake of training by our employers efforts will be needed to develop and maintain this infrastructure on a sector by sector basis.
- 6.17 The pilot's success in putting people onto Short Courses is striking. It suggests that despite the strong policy push to boost the number of people undertaking Apprenticeships, employers still like to engage with training providers through shorter training activity.

- 6.18** Having a body such as GMCC to administer the pilot does not represent the insertion of an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy. If a sector-led approach is adopted, having an agency who can act as an independent broker between employers and training providers raises the confidence of businesses in the training that is being procured.
- 6.19** If GM's pilot had run for longer and had a larger budget it would have had more chance of changing the relationship between employers and training providers when it comes to designing and delivering training. It would also have had a greater chance of raising employer awareness GM-wide of different models of staff training.
- 6.20** Whilst the pilot has introduced new flexibilities in how GM's businesses can shape the training market there is still more that could be done. Employers can invest time in developing new training modules and approaches but if this training still has to be delivered within an overarching framework that is only available through certain providers and/or assessors then the value from attempting to redesign things is lost.
- 6.21** EOS has been a national pilot, with 35 different approaches/areas involved in Round 1. However, there does not appear to have been the coordination needed to enable the potential benefits of all the national activity to be realised. For instance:
- Joining up different pilots' efforts to develop monitoring and reporting systems could help pilots to progress to training delivery more quickly
 - Ensuring that other elements of the skills and training system are aligned with the pilot so that employers are not offered multiple ways of training their staff to achieve the same or slightly varied qualification which risks confusing employers and encouraging them to walk away

Appendix: Survey questionnaires and consultation topic guide

GM GIF AND EOS EVALUATION – STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PROFORMA

Consultee name	
Job title	
Organisation	
Contact telephone	
Contact email	
Interviewer	
Date/time of interview	
Face-to-face/telephone	Face-to-face <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/>
Venue (if appropriate)	

A. INVOLVEMENT

1. Could you outline the nature of your involvement with the Programme?

B. ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

2. What do you understand the key activities of the programme to have been?
 - a. Were you aware of the original objectives of the programme?
 - b. Do you see a clear link between these objectives and the activities that have been funded?
3. Are you aware of the programmes achievement in terms of outputs (employers engaged, training courses developed, training starts etc)?
4. What is your opinion of this level of achievement? How does it compare to previous skills provision/performance? Have certain groups benefited more from the programme?

C. OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

5. What do you see as the key beneficial outcomes for employers (improved retention, fewer skills gaps, increased productivity etc?) and employees (new skills – hard and soft, promotions, pay increases etc) from engaging with the programme?
6. Are these outcomes sustainable / likely to be sustainable?
7. Have there been any 'soft' or unexpected outcomes?
8. Would employers have invested in skills training without the programme?
9. What do you think are the wider impacts of the Programme in terms of altering the relationship between employers and training providers? And the ways in which training courses are designed and the fees charged etc – are employers shaping the market more?

D. PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

Management and governance

10. Do you think that the **programme was well managed**, with robust and accountable governance structures? Did it flex or change its approach as evidence was uncovered or needs articulated?

Systems and support

11. Do you think the Programme was **sufficiently resourced** (funding and manpower) to achieve all the objectives it had set for itself?
12. How effective was the **administration** of the programme?
13. Have processes been clear in terms of **milestones**, outcomes, **performance indicators and delivery dates and achievements**? Communicating/disseminating best practice etc.

E. SUMMARY

14. What do you consider to have been the **key strength of the Programme**? Where has it added most value?
15. Are there any areas where you think the Programme was particularly **innovative**?
16. Are there any **weaker areas** that you would like to highlight?
17. We've covered everything I need to – is there anything else that you would like to add?

GM GIF AND EOS EVALUATION – INITIAL TRAINEE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Greater Manchester is currently piloting a new way of designing and delivering training, with employers being given greater say over what skills their employees are trained in and in what ways.

Research is being undertaken with those employees who have received or are receiving training as a result of the pilot. Our records show that you are on a training course funded by the pilot. We would like to ask you a set of questions regarding your course and the impact it has had upon you. All the answers you give will be confidential and will not be shared with your employer. By taking part in the training you will be helping to ensure that you, your colleagues and others have access in future to training that makes a real difference to skills and career prospects. The findings from the survey will be included in a report that will be made public, but your name and the name of your employer will not be included. The survey takes 10 minutes to complete and by completing the survey you will be entered into a prize draw to win an iPad Mini. If you are willing to complete the survey please click on the following link:

If you would like any further information on the research please contact

info@gmchamber.com

Background

1. How old are you? [OPEN]	
2. Are you... [TICK BOX]	
Female	
Male	
3. How long have you been working for your current employer?	(Months/Years)
4. What type of training did you receive / are you on... [TICK BOX]	
Short-course (1 day or less in length)	
NVQ	
Diploma	
Apprenticeship	
Other:	
5. Start date of your training:	(Month/Year)

The design and delivery of your training

1. Is your training being delivered... [TICK BOX]

At your place of work	
At the Training Providers venue or another location other than your place of work	
Both at your place of work and at the Training Providers venue	

The design of the training

2. Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following statements...

	Scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree plus a N/A box
The Training Provider was good at explaining the course content	
There is a clear structure to the training	
I understand how the training relates to my daily work tasks	
I can see how the training will help me in my future career with the company/in this industry	

Space for further comments...

The delivery of the training

3. Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following statements...

	Scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree plus a N/A box
The person delivering the training is a good teacher	
Training materials are of high quality	
Training venues are suitable for learning/studying	
I have received detailed comments on my work	
I have the ability to ask question about my training	
The training course is well organised and is running smoothly	
The demands the training puts upon me fit well with my other work activities	

Space for further comments...

3. Are there any particularly positive or negative aspects of your training you would like to highlight?

Positive

[OPEN]

Negative

[OPEN]

4. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the support given to you by:
(1= very poor and 5= excellent plus N/A)

a. your employer?	
b. by the Training Provider?	

4. Please score the training overall (scale where 1 = very poor, 5 = excellent)

1		2		3		4		5	
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Impact of the training upon your skills

<p>1. On a scale of 1-5, what impact has the training had on your technical skills (e.g. the specific skills you need to do your job)? (1=no impact and 5=very big impact plus N/A)</p>	
<p>2. On a scale of 1-5, what impact has the training had on general skills (e.g. communication, team working, leadership etc)? (1=no impact and 5=very big impact plus N/A)</p>	
<p>3. On a scale of 1-5, what impact has the training had on your motivation & self-confidence? (1=no impact and 5=very big impact plus N/A)</p>	

Impact of the training upon your career plans

1. Have you completed the training? [TICK BOX]	
Yes (question logic skips to question 3)	
No (question logic skips to question 2)	

2. Do you hope to remain with the company once your training has completed? [TICK BOX]	
Yes (question logic skips to question 6)	
No (question logic skips to question 6)	
Don't know (question logic skips to question 6)	
Would rather not say (question logic skips to question 6)	

3. Are you still employed by the company you undertook your training with? [TICK BOX]	
Yes (question logic skips to question 4)	
No (question logic skips to question 5)	
Would rather not say	

4. In what role? [TICK BOX]	
Same	
More senior	
More junior	
Would rather not say	

5. What are you currently doing? [TICK BOX]	
Employed	
Unemployed	
Studying	
Other	
Would rather not say	

6. How has the training influenced your career or education plans? (for example, are you planning to start another training course, or do you have a firmer idea about what you want to be doing in 5 years time?)	
[OPEN]	

Concluding thoughts

1. Is there anything you would like to change about the training?

[OPEN]

2. How does the training compare to other training courses you have been on?

[OPEN]

3. Would you recommend your training course to others?

[OPEN]

Many thanks for completing the survey. Please provide a contact email address to be entered into the prize draw to win...

Email address: _____

GM GIF AND EOS EVALUATION – FOLLOW-UP TRAINEE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The follow-up survey included a filter question at the start asking respondents whether they had completed an initial survey. All those who said no were routed to complete the initial survey questions set out above. All those who said yes answered the following additional questions in an effort to judge the ‘distance travelled’ by trainees.

Impact of the training upon your skills

<p>26. On a scale of 1-5, what impact has the training had on your technical skills (e.g. the specific skills you need to do your job)? (1=no impact and 5=very big impact plus N/A)</p>	
<p>27. On a scale of 1-5, what impact has the training had on general skills (e.g. communication, team working, leadership etc)? (1=no impact and 5=very big impact plus N/A)</p>	
<p>28. On a scale of 1-5, what impact has the training had on your motivation & self-confidence? (1=no impact and 5=very big impact plus N/A)</p>	
<p>29. Generally, do you feel that the training has made you more effective in your job on a day-to-day basis? [TICK BOX]</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>If yes, can you give some real life examples of how you are now more effective in your job? [OPEN]</p>	

Impact of the training upon your career plans

30. Have you completed the training? [TICK BOX]	
Yes (question logic skips to question 32)	
No (question logic skips to question 31)	

31. Do you hope to remain with the company once your training has completed? [TICK BOX]	
Yes (question logic skips to question 36)	
No (question logic skips to question 36)	
Don't know (question logic skips to question 36)	
Would rather not say (question logic skips to question 36)	

32. Are you still employed by the company you undertook your training with? [TICK BOX]	
Yes (question logic skips to question 33)	
No (question logic skips to question 35)	
Would rather not say	

33. In what role? [TICK BOX]	
Same	
More senior	
More junior	
Would rather not say	

34. Has your pay increased? [TICK BOX]	
No increase in my pay	
Under 10% increase in my pay	
10-25% increase in my pay	
25 – 50% increase in my pay	
50%+ increase in my pay	
Would rather not say	

35. What are you currently doing? [TICK BOX]	
Employed	

Unemployed	
Studying	
Other	
Would rather not say	

36. How has the training influenced your career or education plans?
(for example, are you planning to start another training course, or do you have a firmer idea about what you want to be doing in 5 years time?)

[OPEN]

Concluding thoughts

35. How would you summarise your experience of the training you have been on as a result of the pilot?

[OPEN]