

Appendix C: Skills Survey Results and Analysis

Section 1: Profile of respondents



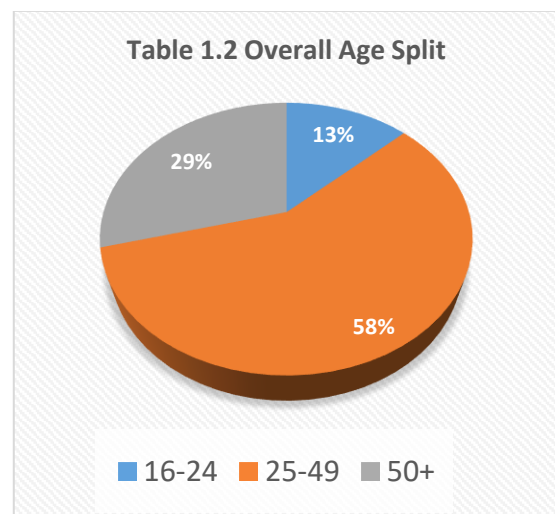
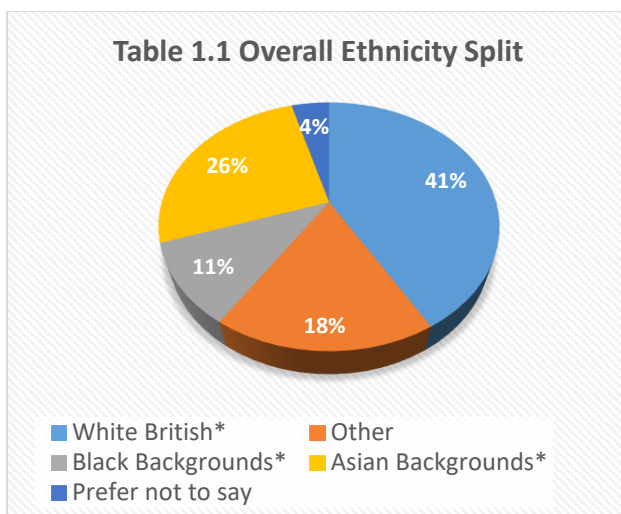
Completed by 259 people



37% Male and 62% Female



11% declared a disability



Section 2: Key Findings and Overall Conclusions

Why adults engage in skills courses:

The survey only asked about 'most recent qualification' which will not capture all reasons respondents may have engaged with adult skills courses. This will be addressed in future surveys. In addition, for younger respondents their 'most recent qualification' may have been statutory education. There was also not the option of 'to gain skills for work' which may have affected the results.

Taken into account these limitations, we can learn:

- **Personal development:** High numbers of adults take courses for personal development – wanting to 'learn something new' (27.8%) or to 'gain confidence' (18.5%).
- **Hobbies:** Undertaking courses for 'hobbies and interests' is still important for many with 11.3% of overall respondents and 25% for respondents with a declared disability. However only 2.4% of respondents from Asian Backgrounds* selected this option and also lower proportions of the 25-49 year old age group (8.3%).

*Black Backgrounds includes – Mixed White and Black Caribbean, Black/African, Caribbean Black or Black British Caribbean, Black or Black British, Black African Other, Mixed White and Black African

*Asian Backgrounds includes - Asian or Asian British Chinese Asian, Asian British Bangladeshi, Asian or Asian British Pakistani, Asian or Asian British Indian, Mixed White and Asian

* White British includes - White English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British

- **Career Change:** Selected by 10.3% overall respondents with higher proportions of White British* respondents (12.3%) and 24-49 year olds (12.6%). No 16-24 year olds selected this option.

How to promote skills courses:

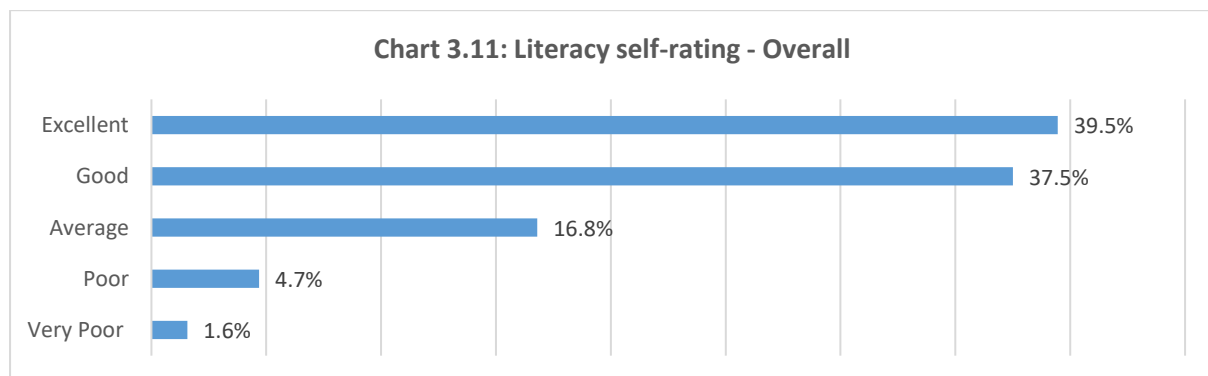
- **Online:** Good online information is key with 60.6% of respondents finding they found out about courses this way.
- **Face to Face:** Still important for many, especially the Job Shop with 41.5% stating they would use the Job Shop to find out about skills courses.
- **Younger people favoured Face to Face:** Lower proportions of 16-24 year olds said they would find out about courses online (42.1%) with higher proportions from this age group selecting the Job Shop (54.5%) and Job Centre plus (33.3%- compared with only 10.49% of 25-49 year olds and 13.7% of those who were 50+).

How to remove barriers:

- **Flexible course provision:** 47.6% of survey respondents stated that ‘time’ was a barrier to accessing skills courses, with this rising to 48.3% of 25-49 year olds and 58.7% of White British* respondents. 49.6% of survey respondents stated that ‘more flexible course solutions’ would remove barriers for them. Comments from survey respondents included; ‘more evening courses’, ‘more weekend courses’ and ‘being able to do courses flexibly in my own time’.
- **Address concerns around fees:** 41.9% of survey respondents stated that ‘low/no fees’ would support them to access more courses with this rising to 49.2% of respondents from Asian Backgrounds*. This could be reflective of the high percentage of respondents who were ‘employed full time’ (58.9%), as the majority of those who are out of work can access courses for free, as can many who are in low paid work. This may also relate to respondents needing ‘better information on courses’ as it may be that some are not aware of what they can access for free, for a low fee or options to use the student loans system.
- **Increase online provision:** 37.8% of survey respondents wanted more online courses. However, when asked how they preferred to learn 54.5% wanted ‘blended’ learning with only 22.2% opting for solely online.
- **Childcare:** 21.5% of survey respondents stated childcare was a barrier with most of these being respondents from Asian Backgrounds*.

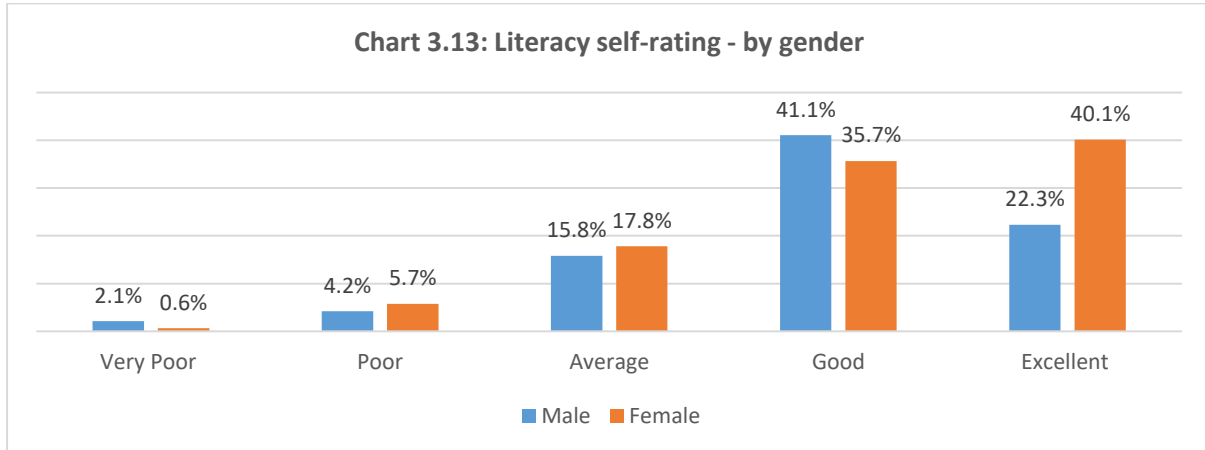
Section 3: Learning levels and employment status of respondents

3.1 Literacy self-rating – overall: The majority of respondents rated their literacy as either excellent or good (77%):

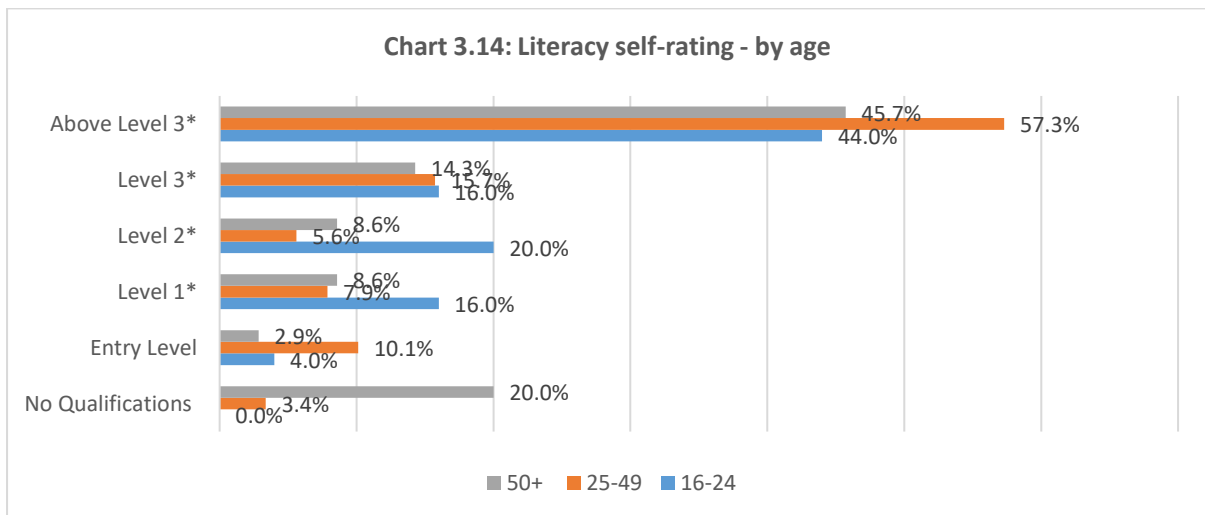


3.12 Literacy self-rating for respondents with a declared disability: For respondents with a declared disability the pattern of responses is broadly the same as in Table 3.11.

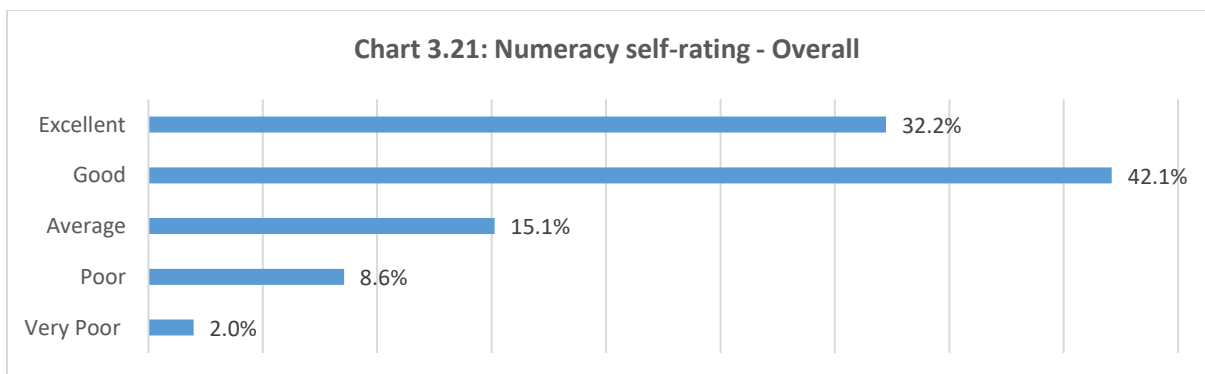
3.13 Literacy self-rating by gender: A much higher percentage of female respondents rated their literacy as 'excellent' than males:



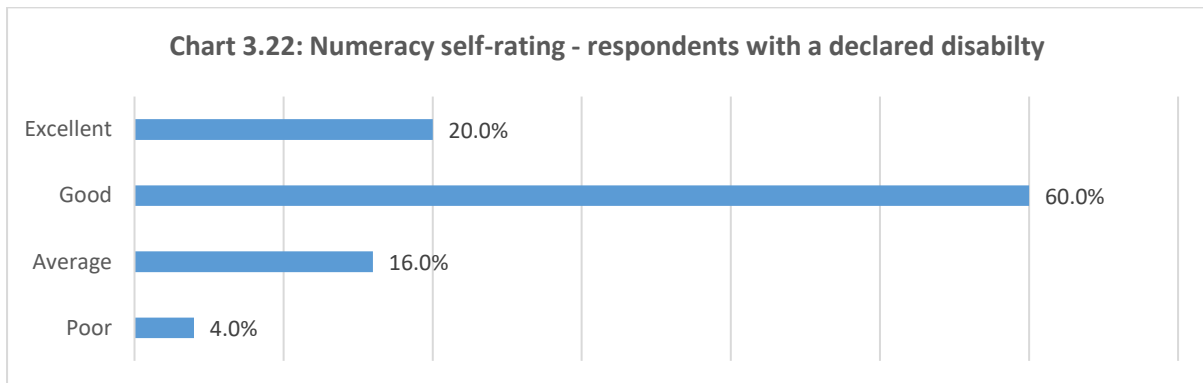
3.14 Literacy self-rating by age: Significantly lower numbers of 18-24 year old respondents rated their literacy as 'excellent' with 76% in this age category instead opting for 'average' and 'good':



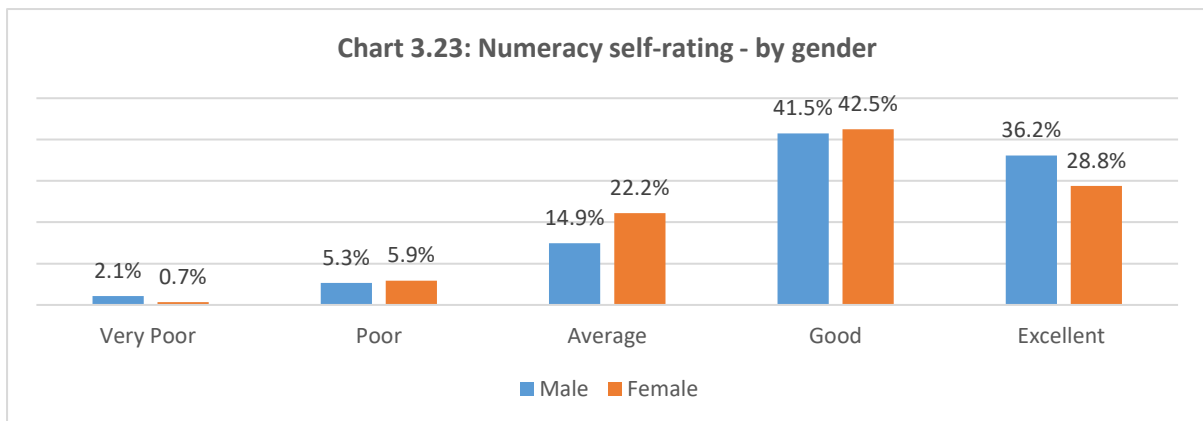
3.21 Numeracy self-rating: Overall, most respondents (74%) rated their numeracy as either 'excellent' or 'good'. This is a lower % than for literacy (77%) and also far fewer rated their numeracy skills as 'excellent' – '32.2%' compared with '39.5%' for numeracy:



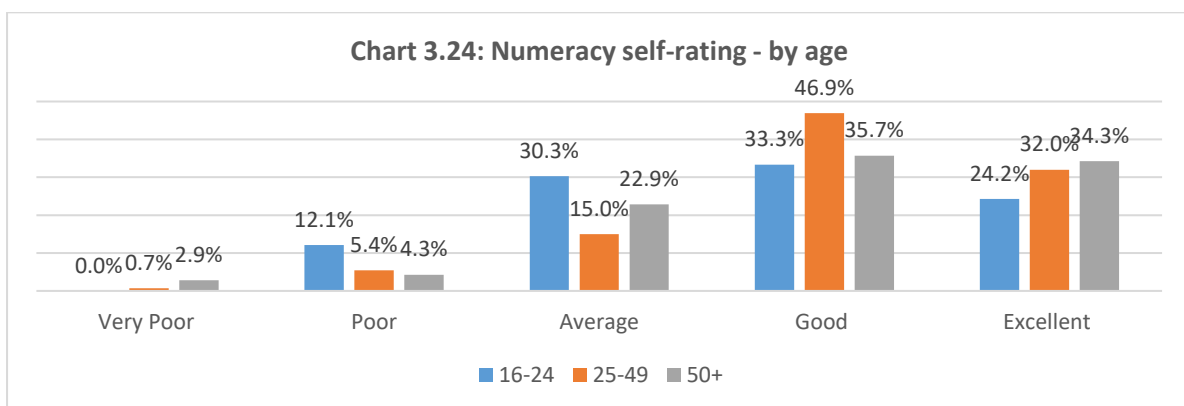
3.22 Numeracy self-rating for respondents with a declared disability: A far higher proportion of respondents with a declared disability rated their numeracy as ‘good’, although less rated their numeracy as ‘excellent’:



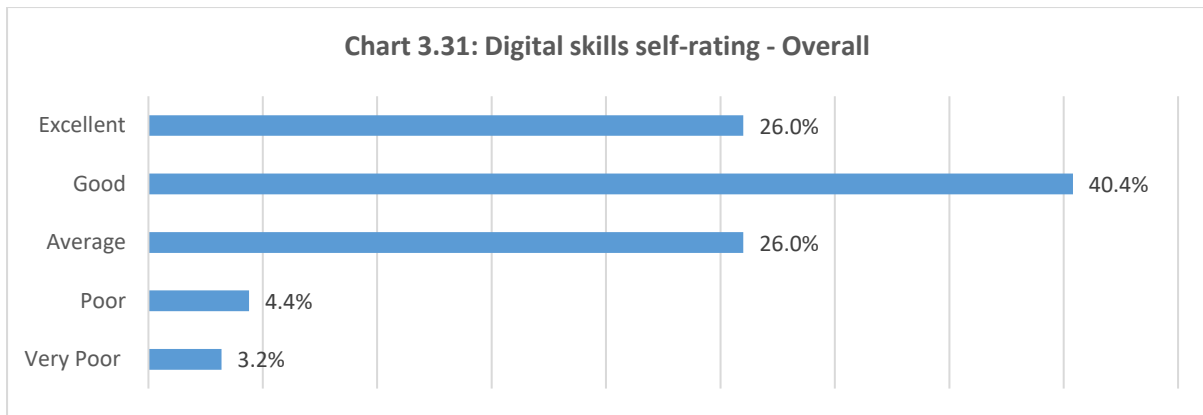
3.23 Numeracy self-rating by gender: A lower percentage of female respondents rated their numeracy as ‘excellent’ than male respondents. This contrasts with literacy self-rating which showed the reverse:



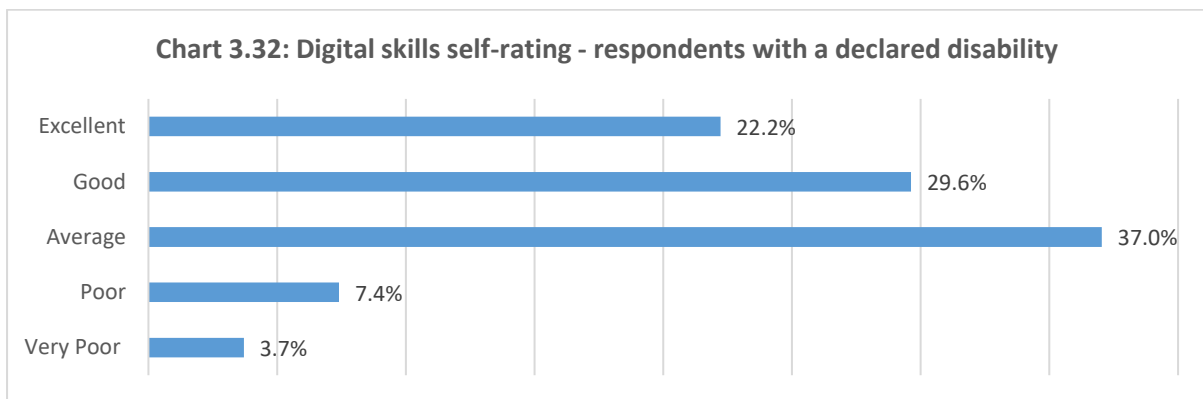
3.24 Numeracy self-rating by age: Higher proportions of young people (16-24) rated their numeracy as either ‘poor’ or ‘average’ – 40.4% compared with 20.4% of 25-49 year olds and 27.3% of those who are 50+. The 25-49 year old group rated their numeracy the highest with 78.9% rating themselves as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’:



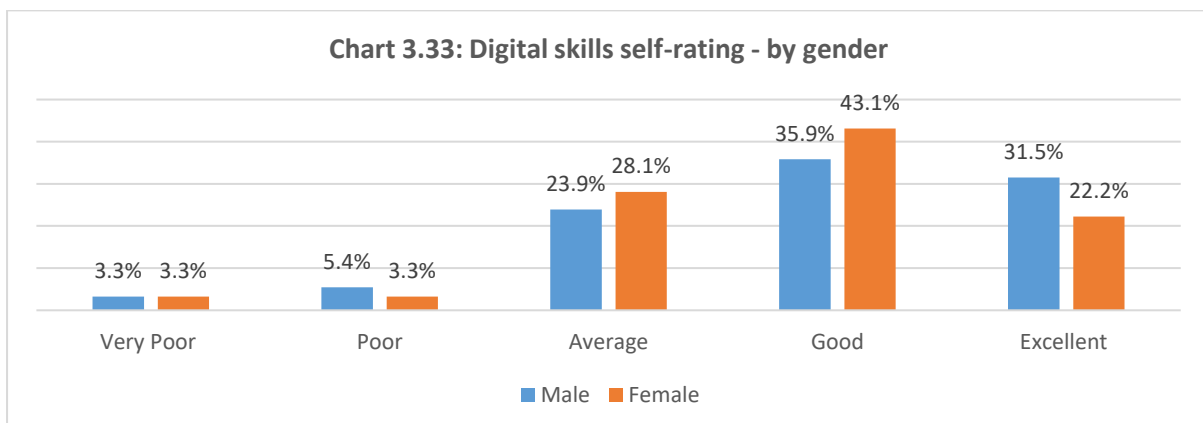
3.3 Digital skills self-rating: Overall, 66% of respondents rated their digital skills as either ‘good’ or ‘excellent’. This is lower than both the self-rating for numeracy and literacy:



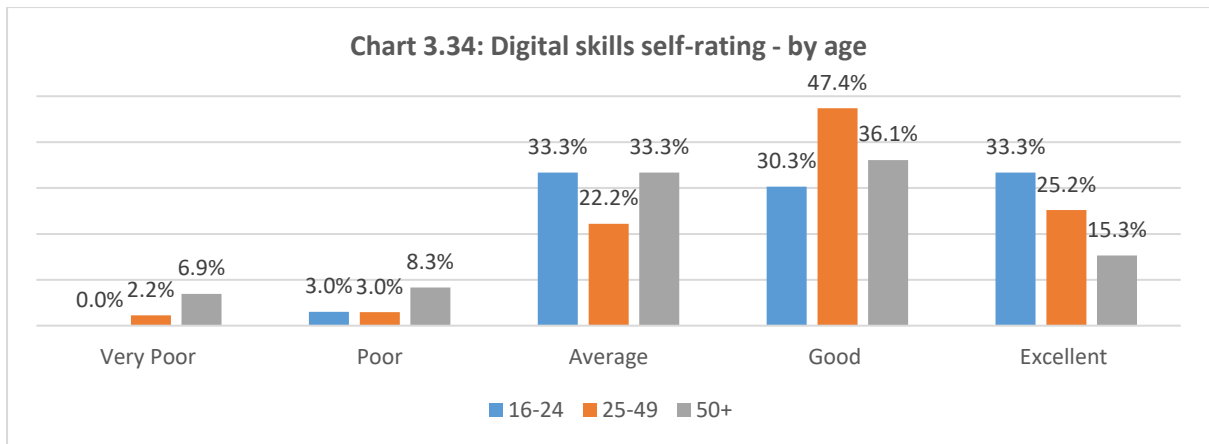
3.32 Digital skills self-rating for respondents with a declared disability: For respondents with a declared disability a lower percentage rated their digital skills as either ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ with a higher percentage opting for ‘average’:



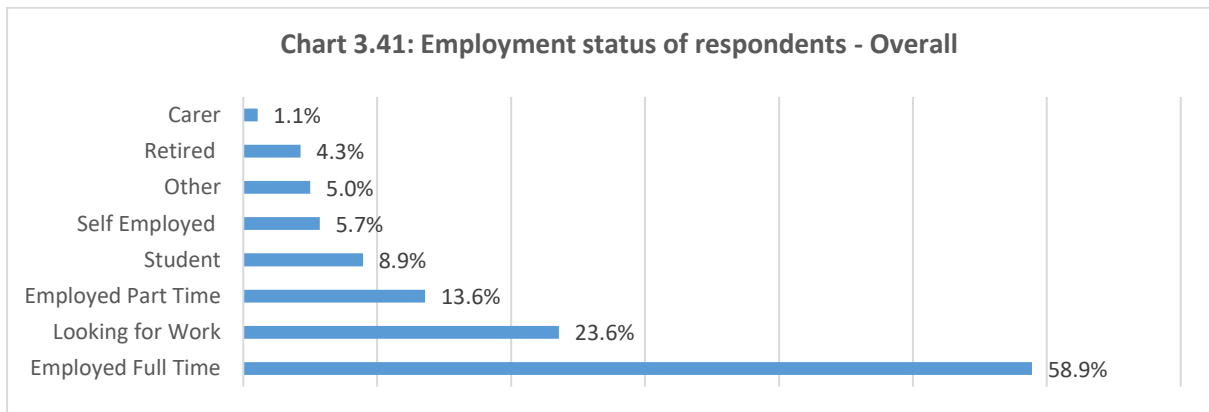
3.33 Digital skills self-rating by gender: A higher proportions of male respondents rated their digital skills as ‘excellent’, although when combining ‘good’ and ‘excellent’ male and female self-ratings are nearly inline:



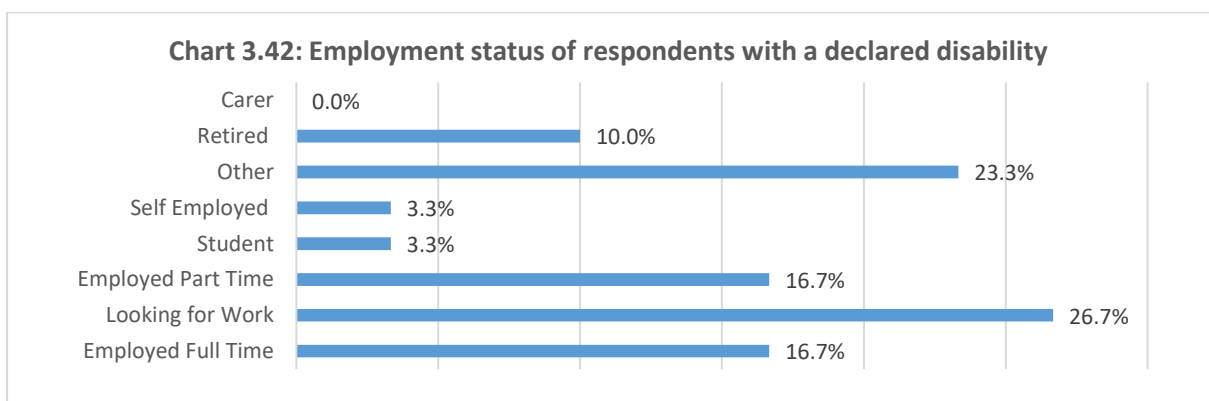
3.34 Digital skills self-rating by age: Significantly lower proportions of respondents who are 50+ rated their digital skills as either ‘good’ or excellent’ with a combined total of 50.4% compared to 67.6% of 25-49 year olds and 63.6% of 16-24 year olds:



3.41 Employment status of respondents – overall: The majority of respondents (58.9%) were employed full time. However, a significant proportion were either looking for work or employed part time – combined this makes up 37.2% of responses:

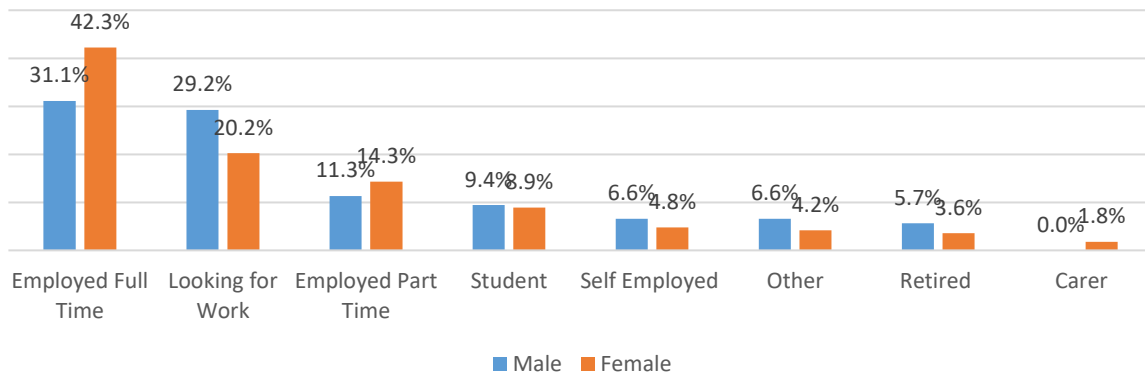


3.42 Employment status of respondents with a declared disability: Far fewer respondents with a declared disability were ‘employed full time’. Slightly higher proportions were ‘employed part time’ and ‘looking for work’:



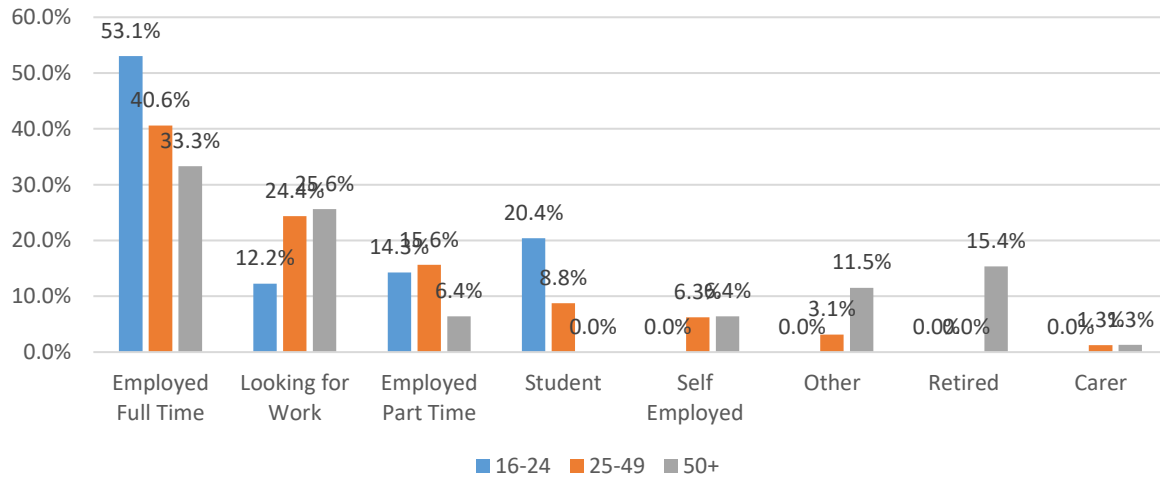
3.43 Employment status of respondents by gender: A lower proportion of male respondents were in full time work, with a higher proportion ‘looking for work’:

Chart 3.43: Employment status of respondents - by gender



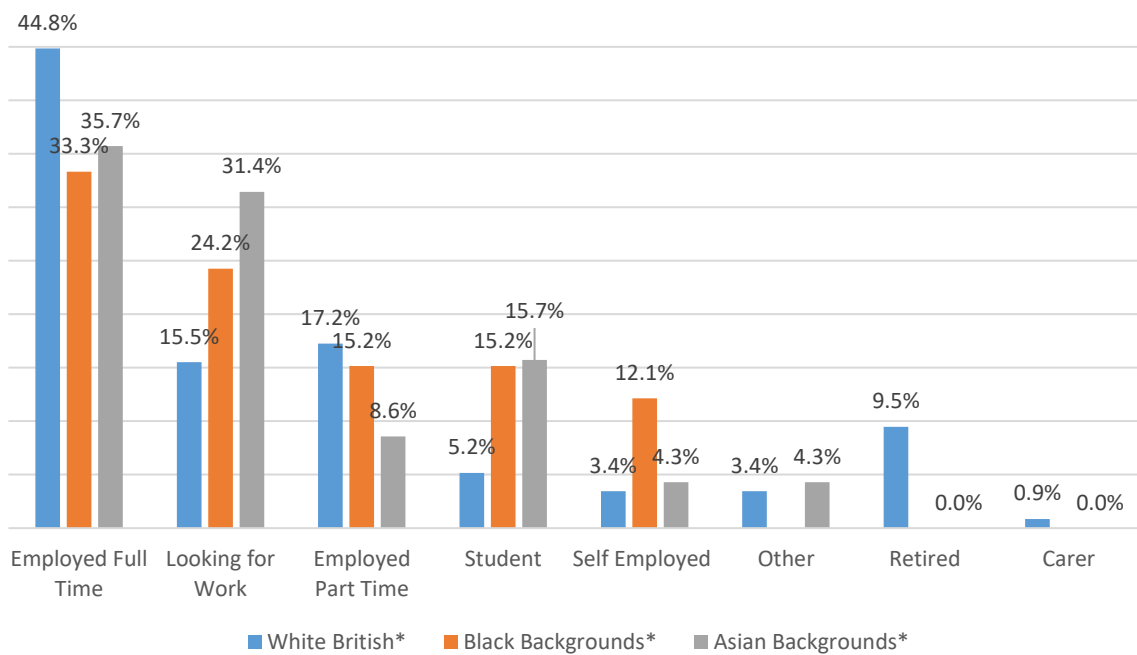
3.44 Employment status of respondents by age: Significantly more 16-24 year old respondents were 'employed full time' with a higher proportion of those who were 50+ 'looking for work':

Chart 3.44: Employment status of respondents - by age



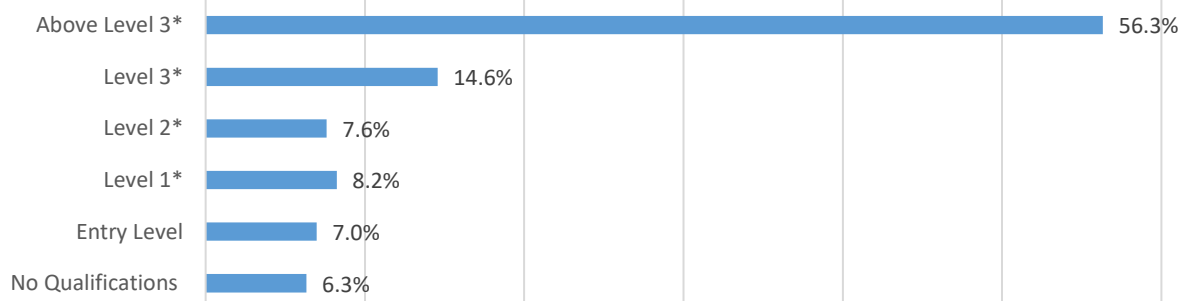
3.35 Employment status of respondents by ethnicity: A higher proportion of White British* respondents were 'employed full time' and also 'employed part time'. Respondents from Asian Backgrounds* were the most likely to be 'looking for work':

Chart 3.35: Employment status of respondents - by ethnicity



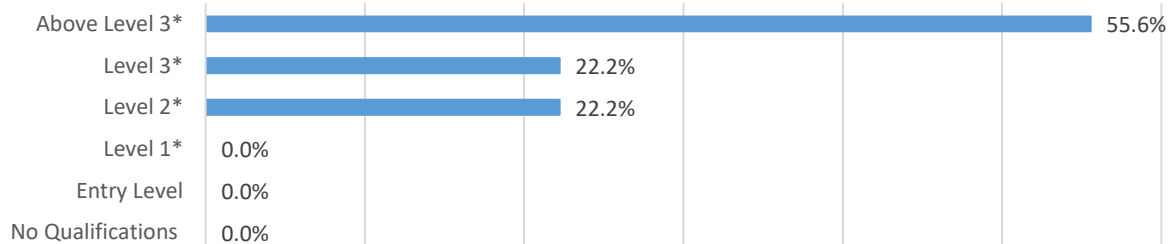
3.5 Highest Level Qualification – Overall, the majority of respondents were qualified to above Level 3. However, a significant proportion (21.5%) were below Level 2 (GCSE Grades A-C/9-4):

Chart 3.51: Highest Level of Qualification - Overall

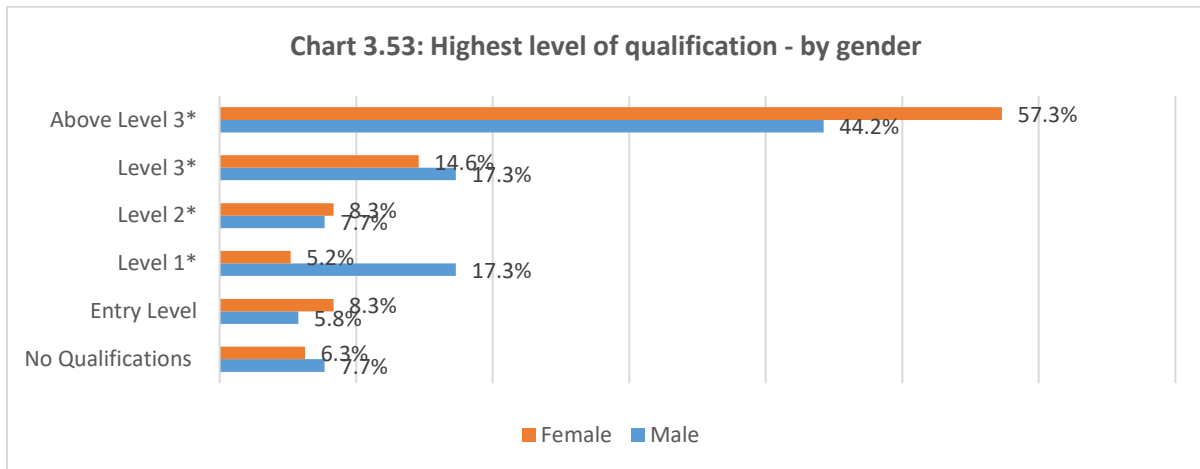


3.52 Highest level of qualification for respondents with a declared disability: No respondents with a declared disability were qualified below Level 2:

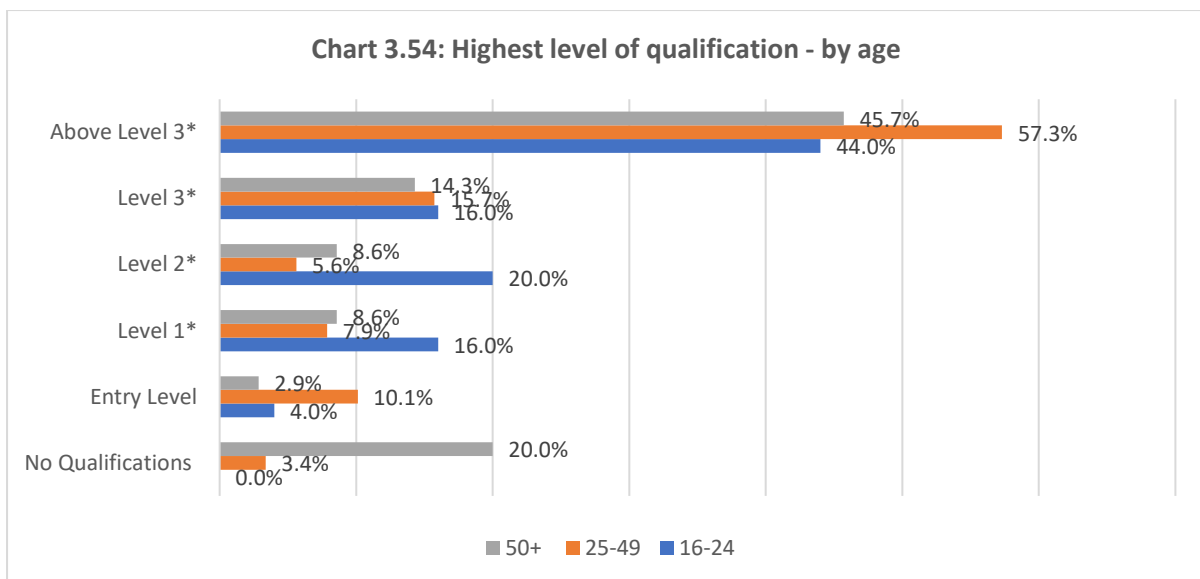
Chart 3.52: Highest level of qualification for respondents with a declared disability



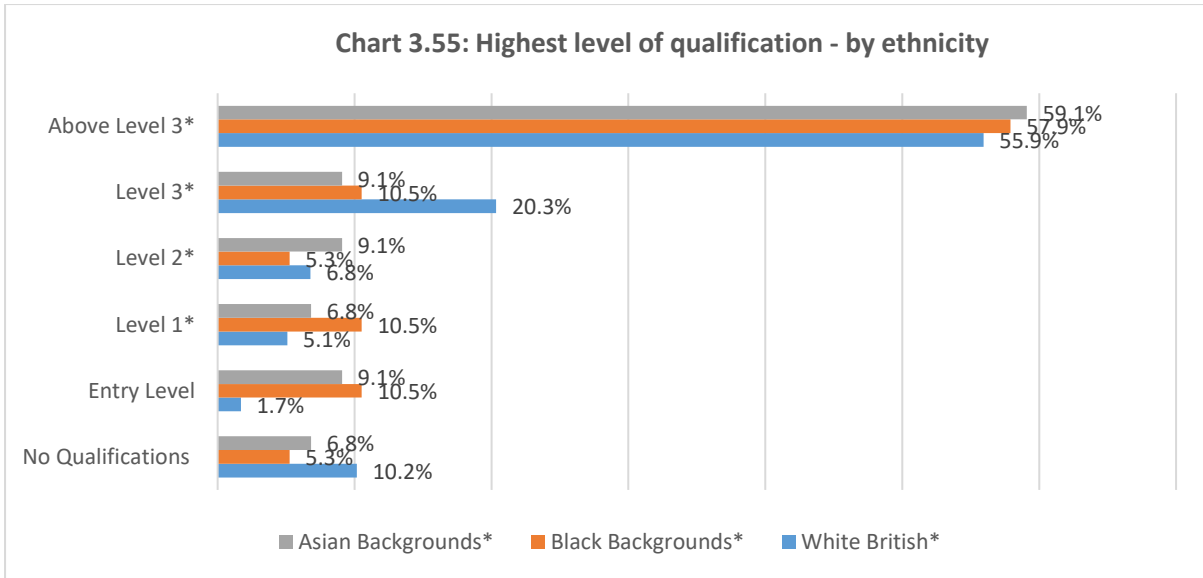
3.53 Highest level of qualification by gender: A higher proportion of female respondents were qualified to above Level 3 with higher proportions of male respondents being below Level 2:



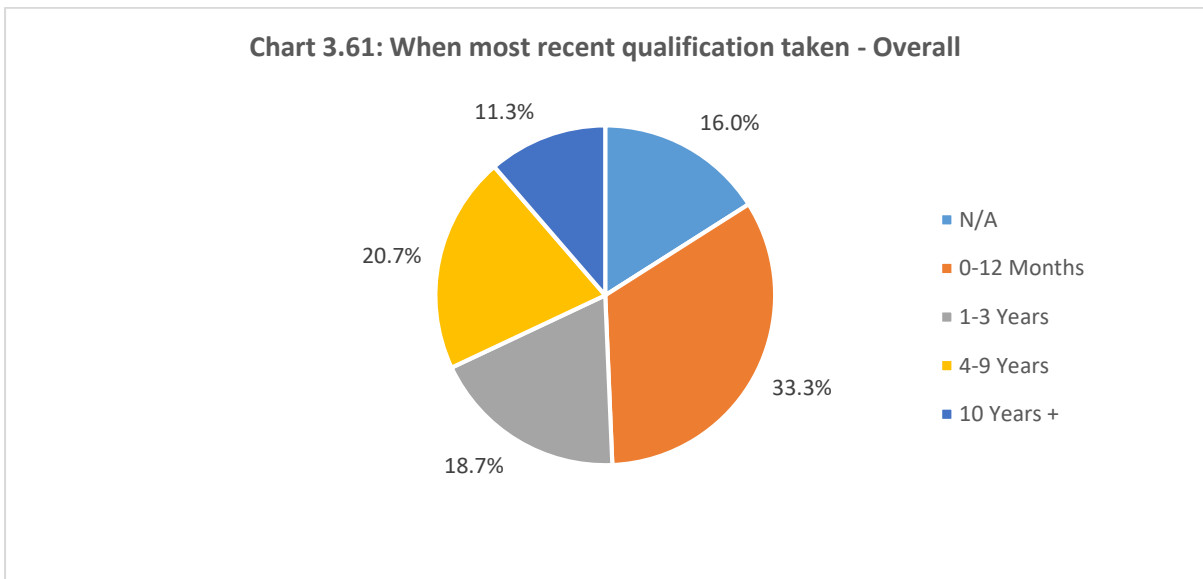
3.54 Highest level of qualification by age: A higher proportion of 25-49 year old respondents were qualified to above Level 3, although it should be noted that some of those in the 16-24 year old category would not have reached an age where it is possible to achieve above Level 3. Significantly higher proportions of the 50+ group had no qualifications:



3.55 Highest level of qualification by ethnicity: Respondents from Asian Backgrounds* proportionality were most likely to be qualified to above Level 3, although taken together with those qualified to Level 3, White British* respondents were the highest qualified overall with 76.2% qualified to Level 3 or above:

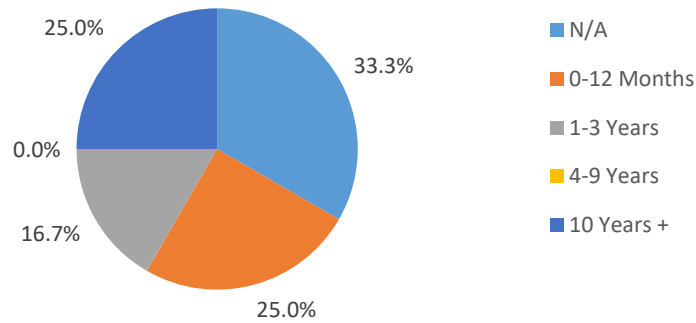


3.6 When most recent qualification was taken - The majority of respondents (52%) have taken their most recent qualification within the last 3 years, with 33.3% having taken a qualification within the last 12 months:



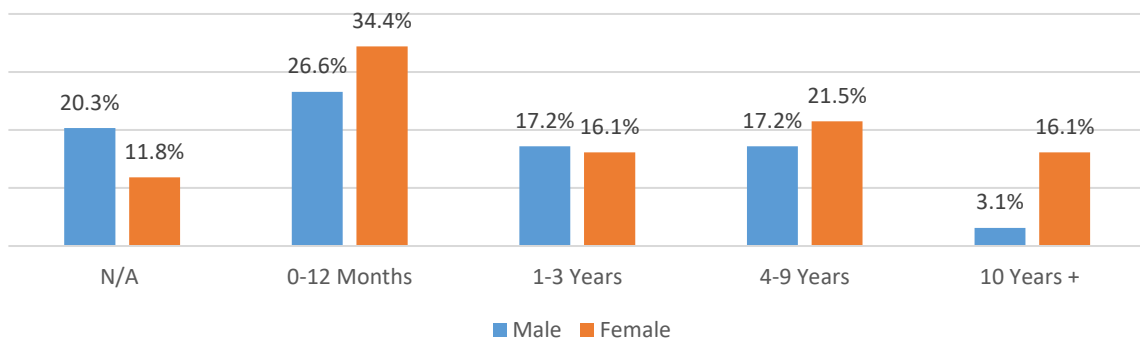
3.62 When most recent qualification taken - respondents with a declared disability: Higher proportions either answered 'NA' or that their last qualification was undertaken 10 or more years ago:

Chart 3.62: When most recent qualification taken - respondents with a declared disability

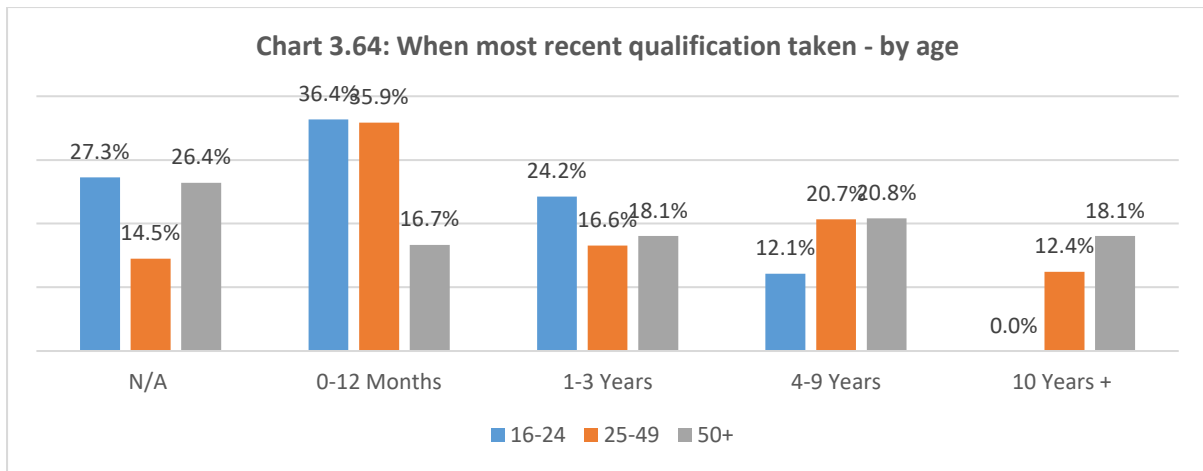


3.63 When most recent qualification taken – by gender: More female respondents have taken their most recent qualification in the last 12 months although there were also a large group of female respondents who took their last qualification more than 10 years ago.

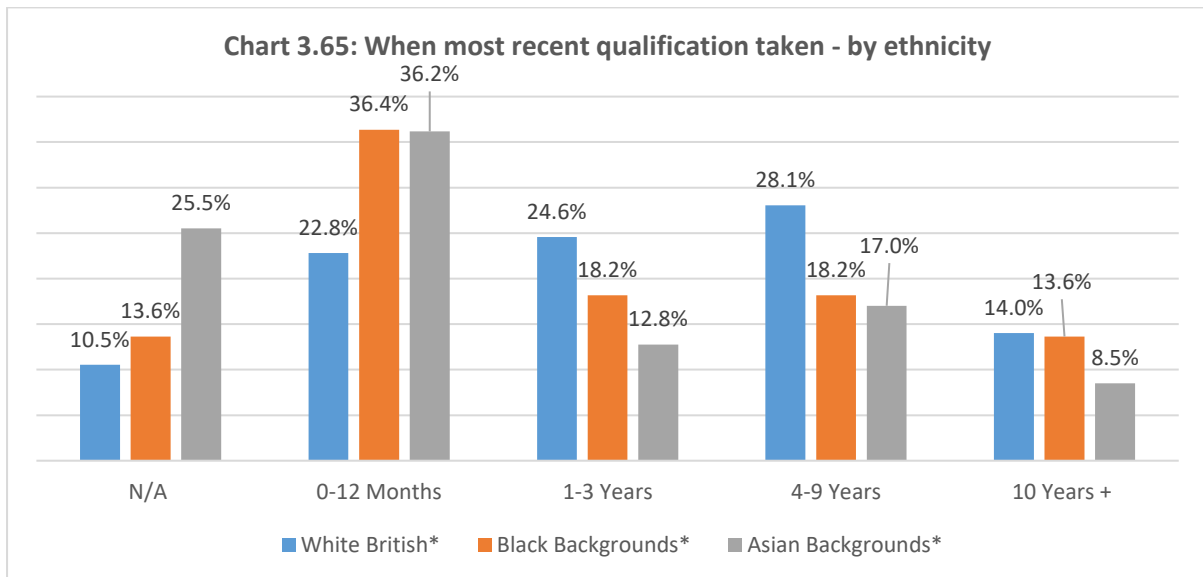
Chart 3.63: When most recent qualification taken - by gender



3.64 When most recent qualification taken – by age: Respondents who were 50+ were least likely to have taken a recent qualification. Understandably, 16-24 year olds were most likely to have taken a recent qualification, which is reflective of those within this age category who would have recently left statutory education (or still be within statutory education). However, a large percentage of 16-24 year olds selected N/A despite non from this age category stating they had 'no qualifications' on the previous question. This suggests some 16-24 decided not to include their statutory education for this question and took the question to mean any qualifications gained since leaving statutory education:



3.65 When most recent qualification taken - by ethnicity: Higher proportions of respondents from Black Backgrounds* and Asian Backgrounds* had taken a course in the last 12 months compared with respondents who were White British*. A high proportion of the White British* respondents had taken their last course 4 or more years ago.



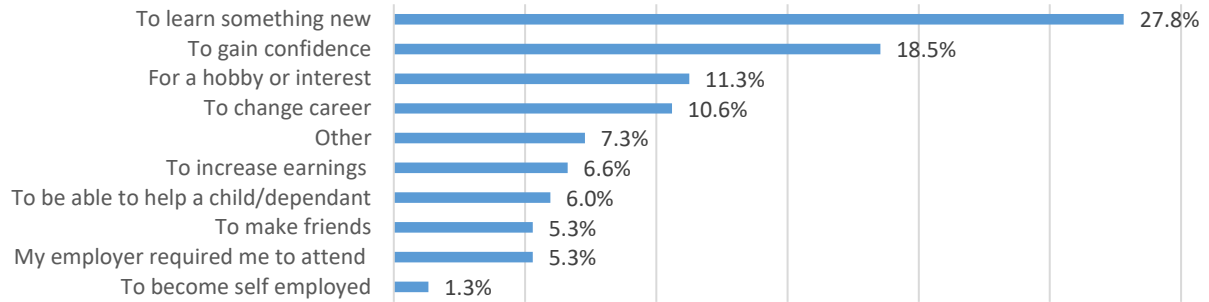
Section 4: Analysis of Individual Questions

Note questions 1-4 responses are contained in Section 3.

Question 5: Why did you take you most recent qualification (tick all that apply)

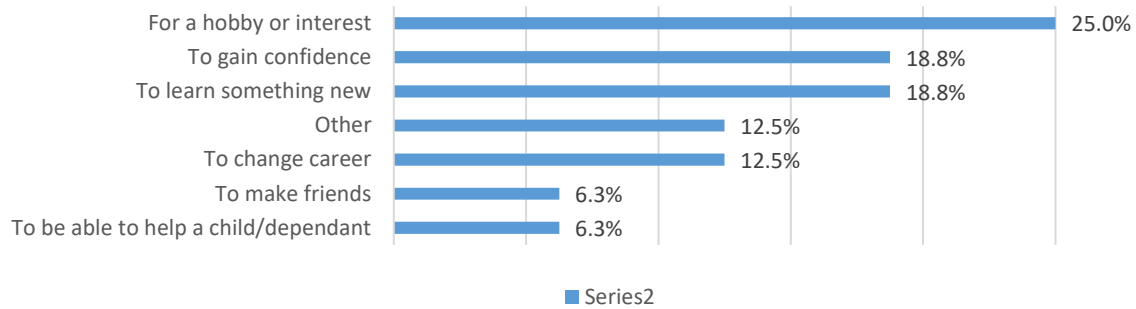
5.1 Reasons for taking most recent qualification – overall: ‘Learning something new’ was the most common response for survey respondents with 27.8% of respondents selecting this option, followed by wanting to ‘gain confidence’ – 18.5%. This focus on learning being more for personal development as opposed to ‘change career’ (10.6%) or ‘increase earnings’ (6.6%) is an interesting contrast in light of the current funding focus for Adult Education. The Department for Education (DfE) ‘Skills for Jobs White Paper’ and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) ‘Regional Skills Plan’ focus the Adult Education Budget (AEB) much more on skills for employment. This said we need to explore more what ‘learn something new’ means for respondents and it could be that some survey respondents meant this more in terms of learning something new for work. Likewise gaining confidence could be to do with gaining confidence to gain a job, or securing a better job.

Chart 5.1: Reasons for taking most recent qualification - Overall



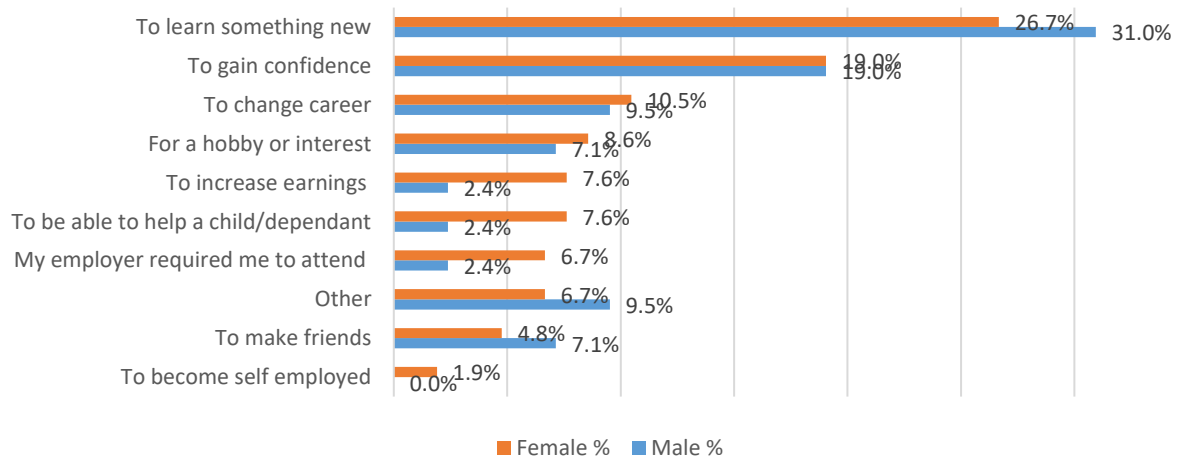
5.2 Reasons for taking most recent qualification – respondents with a declared disability: A much higher proportion of respondents with a declared disability selected ‘for a hobby or interest’ as their reason for doing their most recent course, with less selecting ‘to learn something new’ and none selecting ‘to make friends’, ‘my employer required me to attend’ or ‘to become self employed’:

Chart 5.2: Reasons for taking most recent qualification - respondents with a declared disability

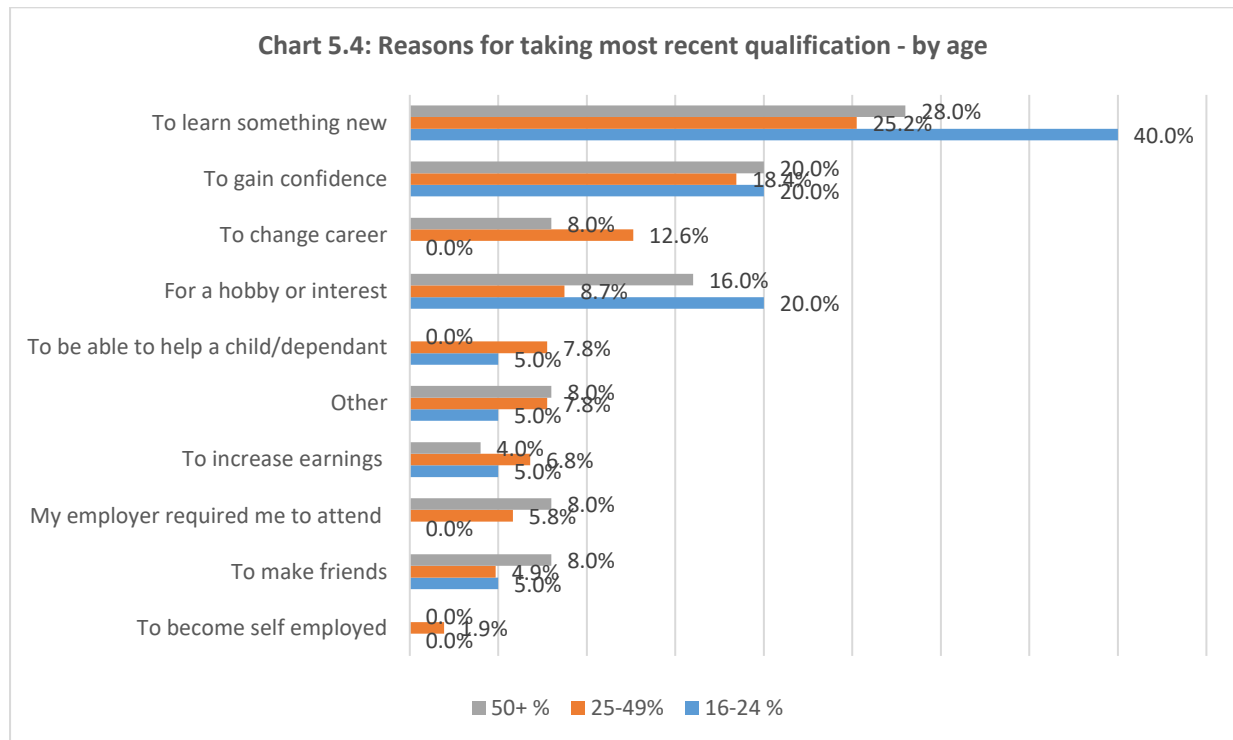


5.3 Reasons for taking most recent qualification – by gender: Slightly higher proportions of male respondents opted for ‘learn something new’, with lower proportions opting for ‘to increase earnings’, ‘to be able to help a child/dependant’ and ‘my employer required me to attend’:

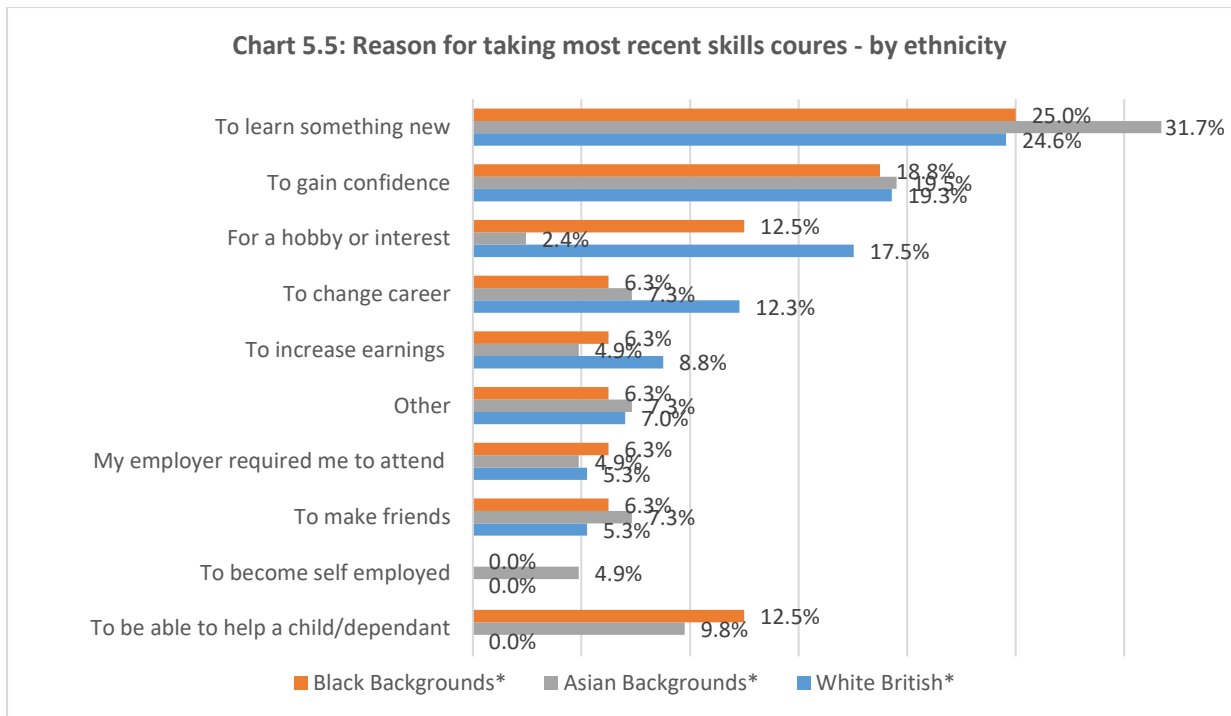
Chart 5.3: Reasons for taking most recent qualification - by gender



5.4 Reasons for taking most recent qualification – by age: Significantly higher proportions of 16-24 year old respondents selected ‘to learn something new’ and ‘for a hobby or interest’. Non in this age category selected ‘to change career’, or ‘my employer required me to attend’. This despite higher proportions of respondents in this age category being in full time employment. However, it may be reflective of more being at the start of their careers and doing their first jobs. Higher proportions of 25-49 year olds selected to ‘change career’ and ‘to increase earnings’ with less selecting ‘for a hobby or interest’. This perhaps shows greater focus for this age group compared to the other age groupings in using skills provision for career development and increasing earnings as opposed to more social or wellbeing related reasons:

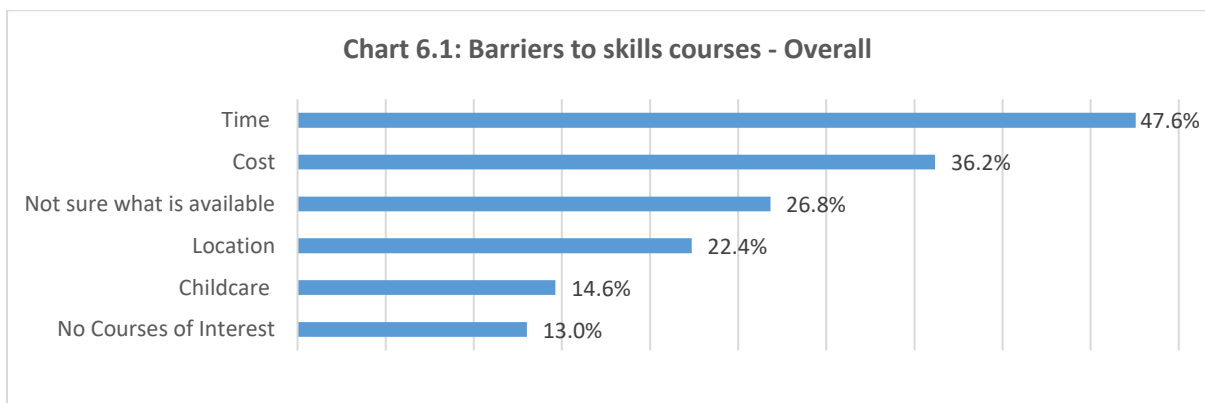


5.5 Reasons for taking most recent qualification – by ethnicity: Higher proportions of respondents from Asian Backgrounds* selected to ‘learn something new’, although significantly less opted for ‘hobby or interest’. Respondents from Asian Backgrounds* were also the only ethnic grouping who stated that they did their last course ‘to become self-employed’. No respondents from White British* backgrounds selected ‘to be able to help a child/dependant’.



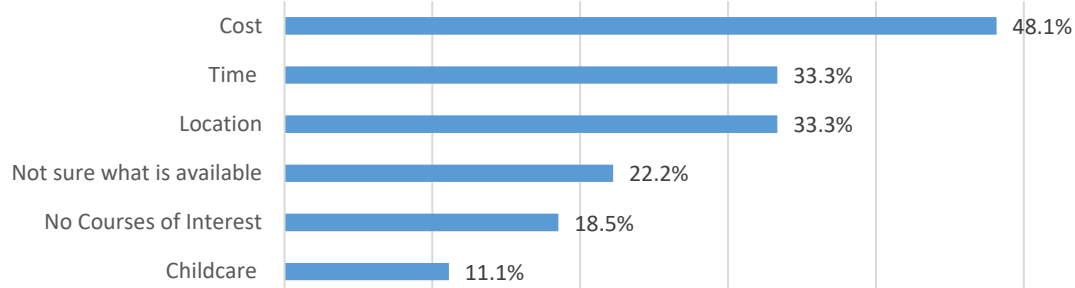
Question 6: What has stopped you from doing a skills course in the past? (tick all that apply)

6.1 Barriers to skills courses – overall: The most common barrier was time, followed by cost and then ‘not being sure what is available’:



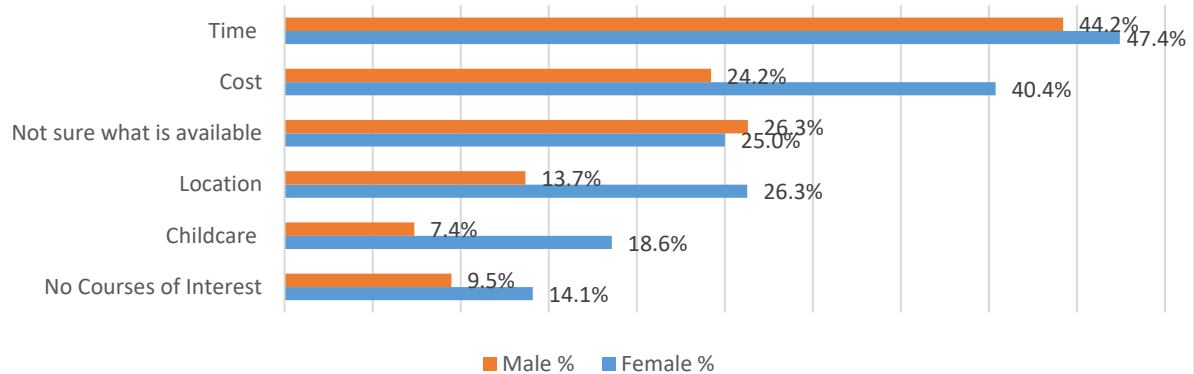
6.2 Barriers to skills courses – respondents with a declared disability: Cost was more of a barrier, with also a higher proportion of respondents with a disability stating location as a barrier (33% compared with overall average of 22.4%). More blended provision may better support those with disabilities to access courses where location is a barrier.

Chart 6.2: Barriers to skills courses - respondents with a declared disability



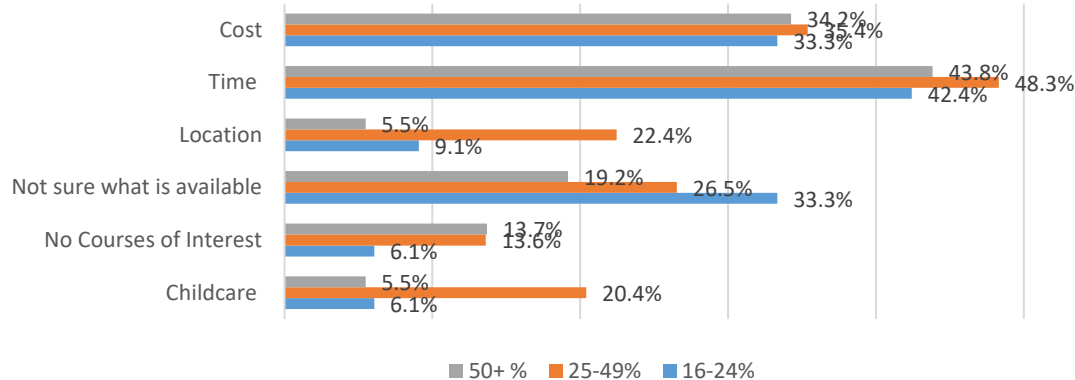
6.3 Barriers to skills courses – by gender: Cost was more of a barrier for female respondents as was the location of courses and childcare. This suggests that providers who want to attract more female learners need to think carefully about course location. It is of interest that childcare was a barrier for some male respondents as well, showing that this can be a general issue for families and more flexible provision may be needed.

Chart 6.3: Barriers to skills courses - by gender

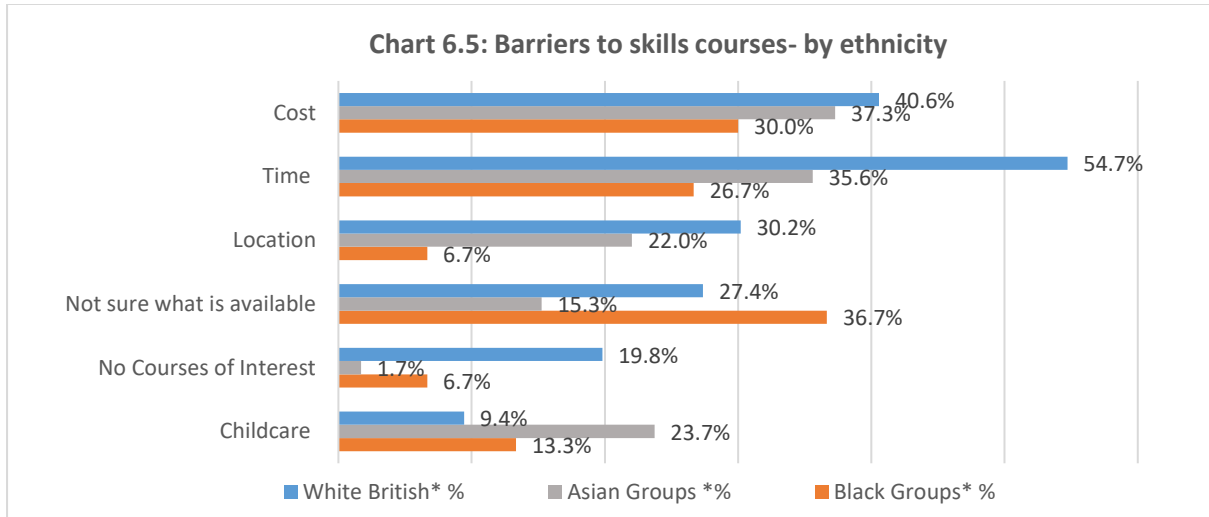


6.4 Barriers to skills courses – by age: Not being sure what was available features as a more prominent barrier for 16-24 year olds, suggesting that training providers need to work harder with this age group to promote their offers. In turn employment support providers, including careers guidance professionals need to ensure that young people understand their training options.

Chart 6.4: Barriers to skills courses - by age



6.5 Barriers to skills courses – by ethnicity: For the White British* group ‘time’ features more prominently as a barrier. This may be reflective of a higher proportion of this group being in full time employed as shown by table 3.35. For respondents from Black Backgrounds* we can see that ‘not being sure what is available’ is the most prominent barrier. This suggests that skills providers and employment support providers may need to work harder with this group to ensure their offers are clearly communicated. For respondents from Asian Backgrounds* childcare is a far more significant barrier than for the other two ethnicity groupings.

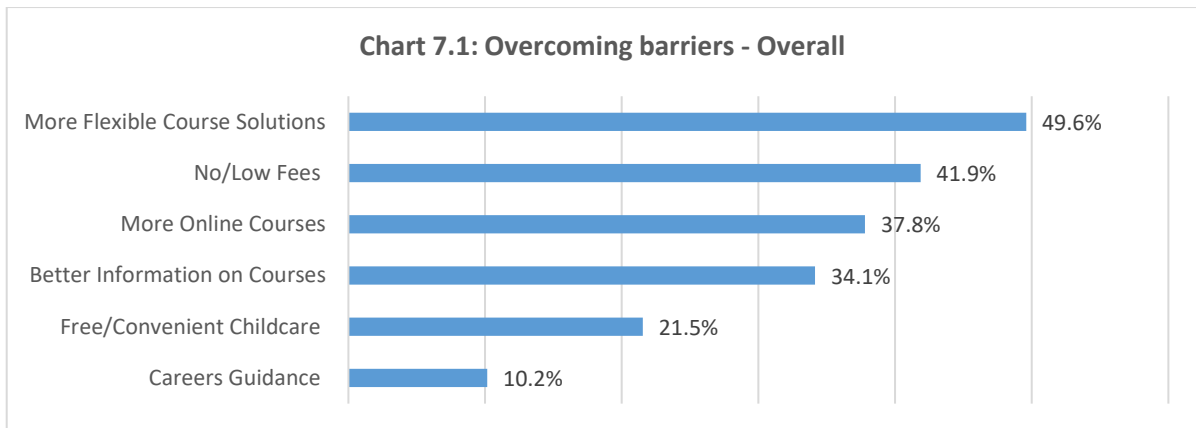


Question 7: What would help you overcome these barriers (please tick all that apply)

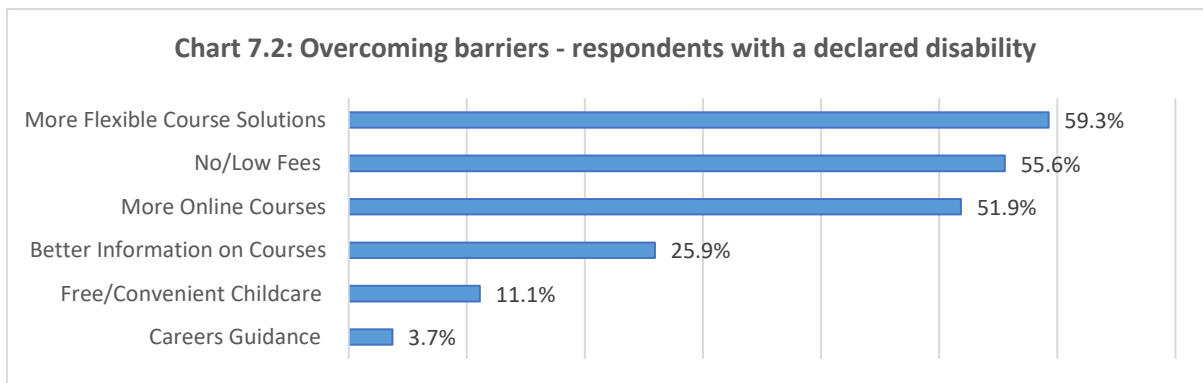
7.1 Overcoming Barriers – Overall: It is clear that Adult Skills Providers need to make courses as flexible as possible, with just under 50% of survey respondents stating that this would help overcome barriers. In addition they need to continue to increase their online offer with 37.8% of respondents stating this would help them. Providing good information on courses is also key and is a challenge also to Employment Support Providers such as JobCentre Plus (JCP), Coventry Job Shop and the National Careers Service (NCS) who can serve as a key referrer to adult skills courses (see Q9).

A lot of respondents have stated that ‘no/low fees’ would help them to access more skills courses. This could be reflective of the high percentage of respondents who were ‘employed full time’ (58.9%), as the majority of those who are out of work can access courses for free, as can many who are in low paid work. Also, respondents may need ‘better information on courses’ as it may be some are not aware of what they can access for free, for a low fee, or options to use the student loan system.

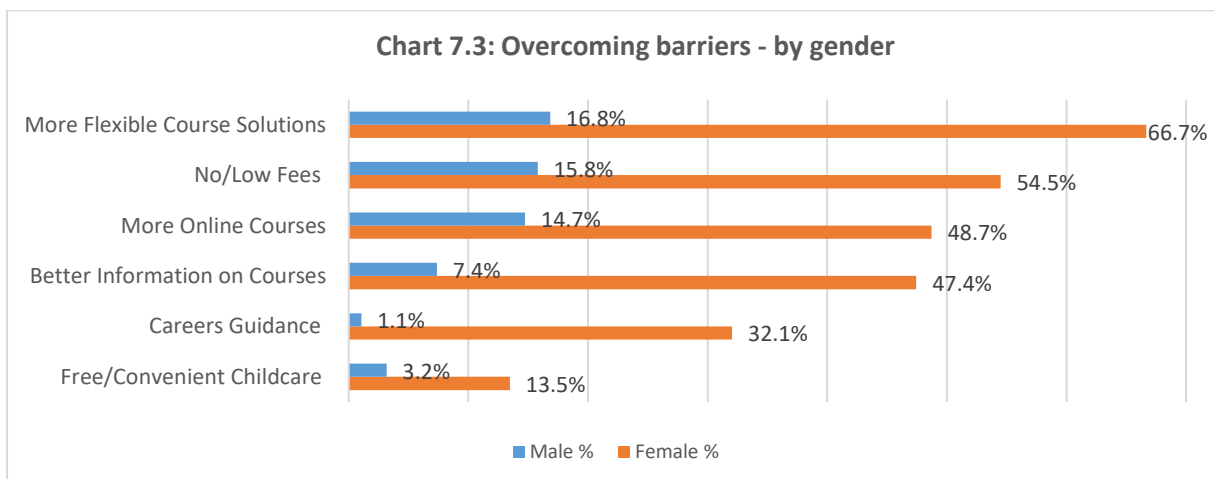
As with question 6, childcare should not be underestimated as a barrier, with 21.5% of respondents stating that free/convenient childcare would support them to access skills courses. This can be linked to needing more flexible courses solutions and more online courses as both of these could make it easier for parents to access courses:



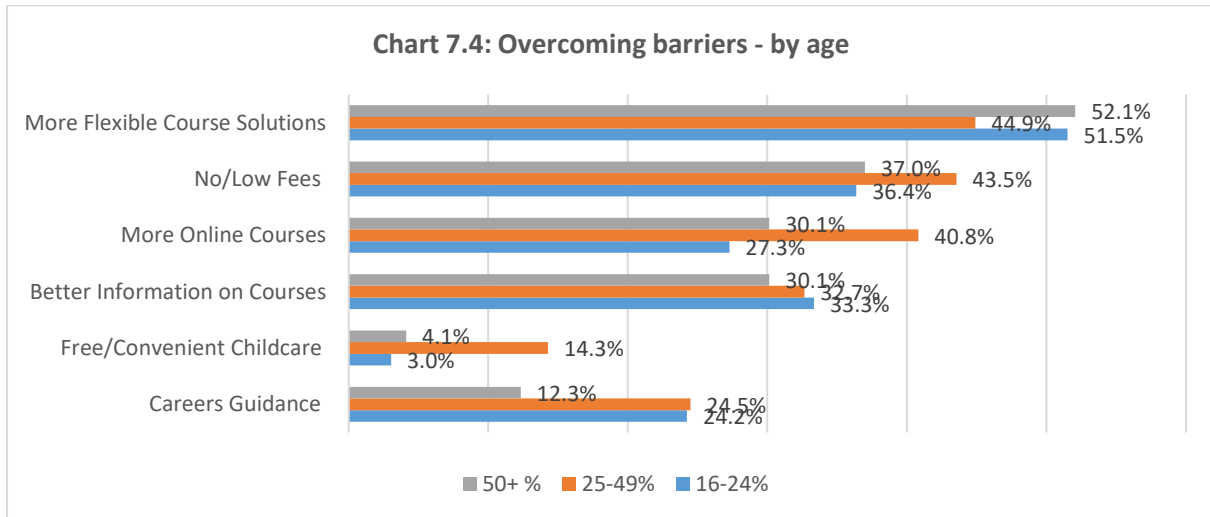
7.12 Overcoming barriers – respondents with a declared disability: For respondents with disabilities there was a significantly larger percentage who stated that they wanted ‘more flexible course solutions’, ‘no/low fees’ and ‘more online courses’. Slightly less from this group stated that they needed ‘better information on courses’ and significantly less stated ‘free/convenient childcare’ and better careers guidance.



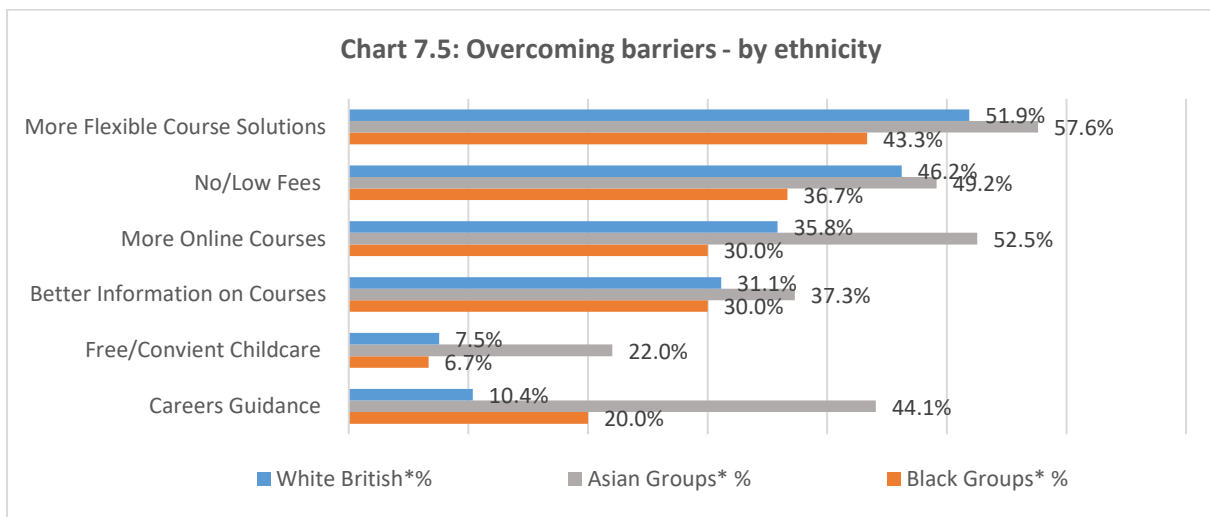
7.13 Overcoming barriers – by gender: Female respondents were more ‘vocal’ in their response to this question with considerably higher percentages responding to all barriers. This suggests Adult Skills Providers need to particularly think about barriers for female learners. This said both nationally and locally there are considerably more female respondents accessing Adult Education Budget (AEB) courses with a ratio of around 60% female to 40% male. This suggests there may be other reasons, not picked up in this survey, for males not accessing courses this is a point to address when this survey is ran again in subsequent years.



7.4 Overcoming barriers – by age: Course flexibility was a bigger issue for both the 16-24 and 50+ age groups. Conversely ‘no/low fees’ was a bigger issue for the 24-49 year old group. Interestingly wanting more courses online was not as big an issue for 16-24 year olds as for 25-49 year olds. This perhaps goes against assumptions and shows offering more online solutions could actually attract more 25-49 year olds than 16-24 year olds. ‘Free/convenient’ childcare was understandably a bigger issue for the 25-49 year old group, reflective of increased likelihood of childcare responsibilities.



7.5 Overcoming barriers – by ethnicity: Respondents from Asian Backgrounds* were considerably more responsive with much higher percentages for ‘more flexible course solutions’, ‘more online courses’, ‘better information on courses’ and ‘careers guidance’. ‘Careers guidance’ also features more prominently for respondents from Black Backgrounds* as well.

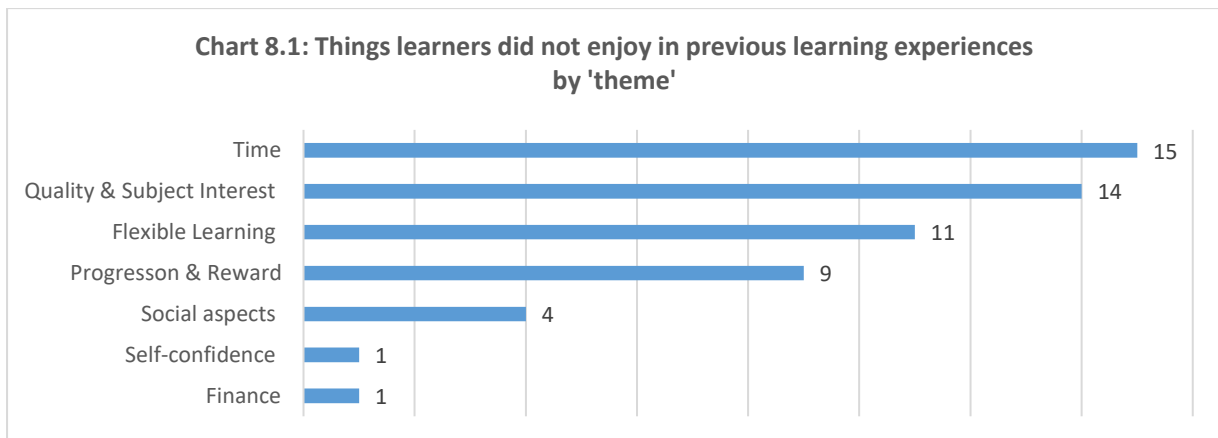


Q8 What, if anything, did you not enjoy about your previous learning experiences (open text responses)

This question was answered by 55 of the survey respondents. Responses have been grouped into themes to show patterns:

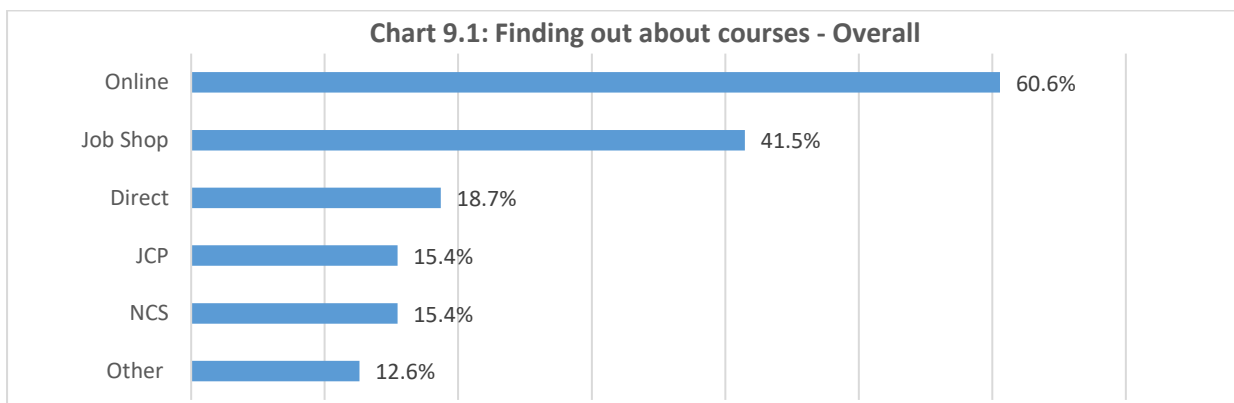
- **Time (15 responses):** For example - ‘Not having enough time in work to do it’ or ‘having to fit studies around my part time job’.

- **Quality and Subject Interest (14 responses):** For example - 'staff were not well prepared' or 'some of the topics in the course felt irrelevant'.
- **Flexible Learning (11 responses):** For example – 'Too much time traveling to the location' or 'fixed hours of delivery even though it was an online course'.
- **Progression and Reward (9 responses):** For example – 'it didn't help me to get a new job' or 'sometimes courses were very vague with no qualification'.
- **Social Aspects (4 responses):** For example – 'bullies in the class', or 'loudest people get the most attention'
- **Other:** 'Self confidence' and 'finance' with one response each.



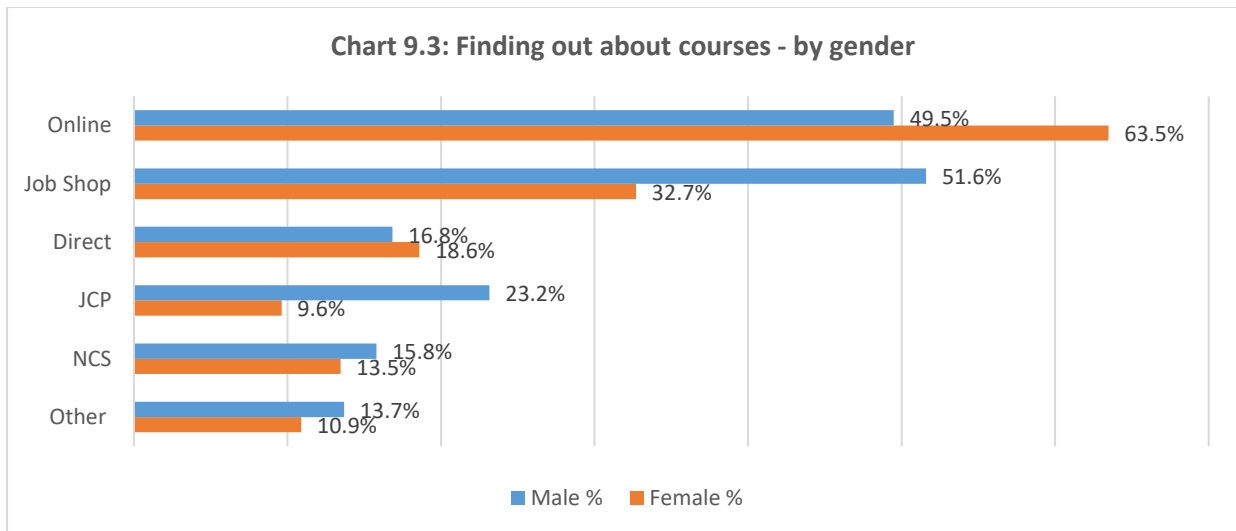
Q9: Where would you go to find out information on available courses? (Tick all that apply)

9.1 Finding out about courses – overall: It is clear that Adult Skills Providers need to have a strong online presence with 60.6% of survey respondents saying they would find out about courses this way. However, it is still important for Skills Providers to work closely with referral partners especially the Coventry Job Shop with 41.5% stating they would use the Job Shop to find out about courses.

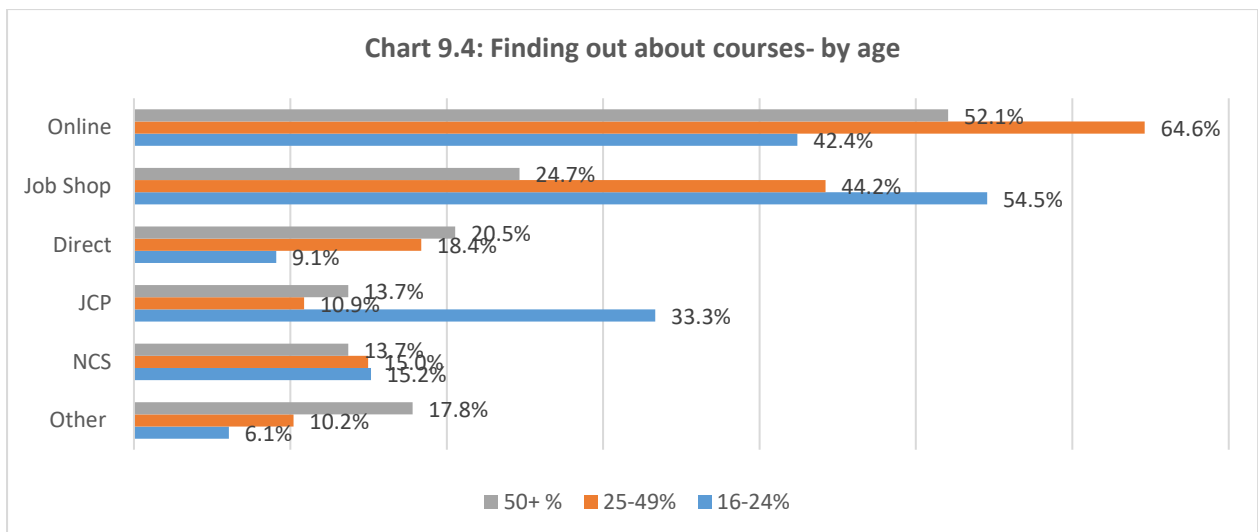


9.2 Finding out about courses- respondents with a declared disability: Responses from this group were roughly in line with overall responses.

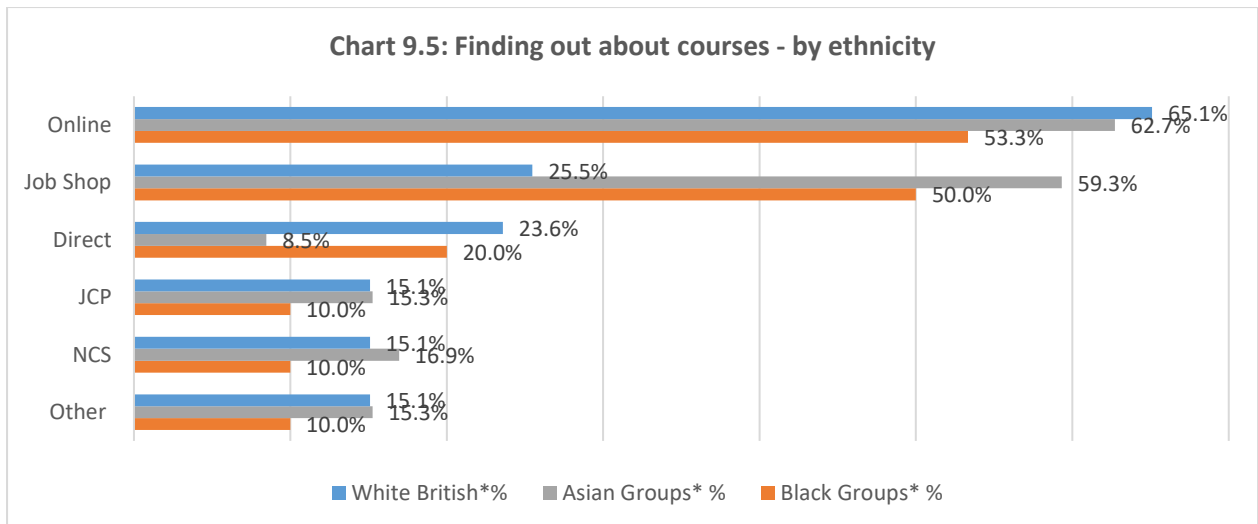
9.3 Finding out about courses – by gender: Higher proportions of female respondents favoured finding out about courses online, whereas a significantly higher proportion of male respondents favoured face to face information – especially from the Job Shop (51.6 compared to 32.7 of female respondents) and JCP (23.2 compared to 9.6% of female respondents).



9.4 Finding out about courses – by age: The 16-24 age group showed the lowest preference for finding out about online courses, which is consistent with responses to question 7 with lower proportions of 16-24 year olds wanting online course delivery compared with the other age groupings. The 16-24 year old group were much more likely to want face to face information then the other two age groupings, especially from JCP and the Job Shop.



9.5 Finding out about courses – by ethnicity: Online information was selected by more White British* and Asian Backgrounds* respondents than Black Backgrounds* respondents. Both Black and Asian Backgrounds* respondents showed a significantly stronger preference for the Job Shop than White British* respondents. This was not the case for other face to face sources of information though with Black Backgrounds* respondents selecting NCS and JCP less than the other two ethnicity groupings.



Q10 What makes learning fun for you? (open text responses)

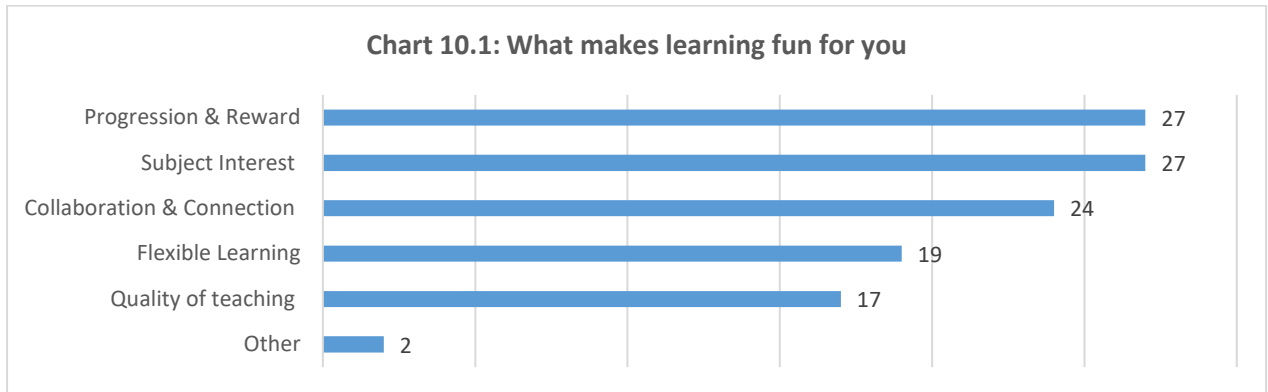


This question was answered by 116 of the survey respondents. The above word cloud shows the importance of other ‘people’ with several survey respondents expressing that they wanted to work in groups collaboratively and with ‘like-minded’ people. There was a lot of emphasise also on the quality of tutors especially their teaching style and passion for the subject they teach. Interest in the subject and the learning environment also feature quite strongly in the word cloud.

To consider whole responses rather than individual words, responses have been grouped into themes to show patterns. This shows a stronger emphasis on ‘subject interest’ and the ‘progression and reward’ then reflected in the word cloud:

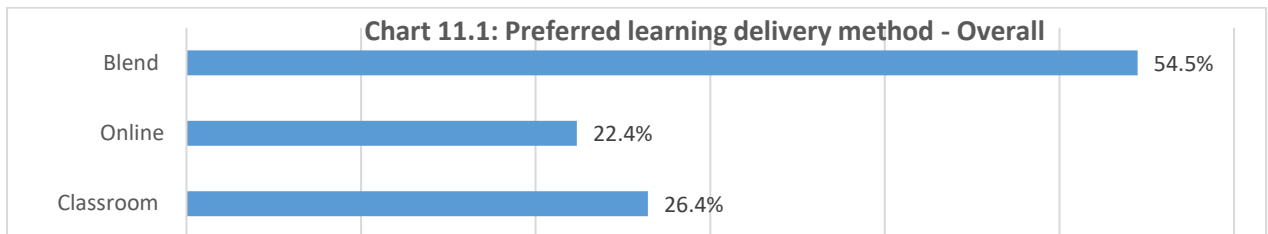
- **Subject Interest (27 responses):** For example – ‘learning something new’ or ‘passion for a particular subject/area’
- **Progression & Reward (27 responses):** For example - ‘learning something useful that will further progress my career’ or ‘transferrable skills and improved understanding’.
- **Collaboration & Connection (24 responses):** For example – ‘Having like-minded people with you’ or ‘interaction with peers and networking’.
- **Flexible Learning (19 responses):** For example – ‘Easy bite-sized lessons’ or ‘flexible time scheduling’
- **Quality of teaching (17 responses):** For example - ‘Passionate teachers that enjoy the content being taught’ and ‘good tutor support with helpful feedback’.

- **Other (2 responses)**

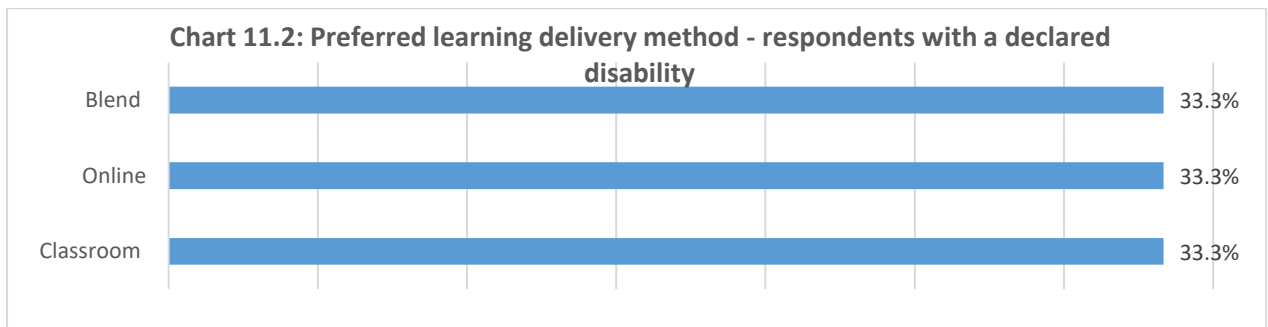


Q11 How do you prefer to learn (tick one)

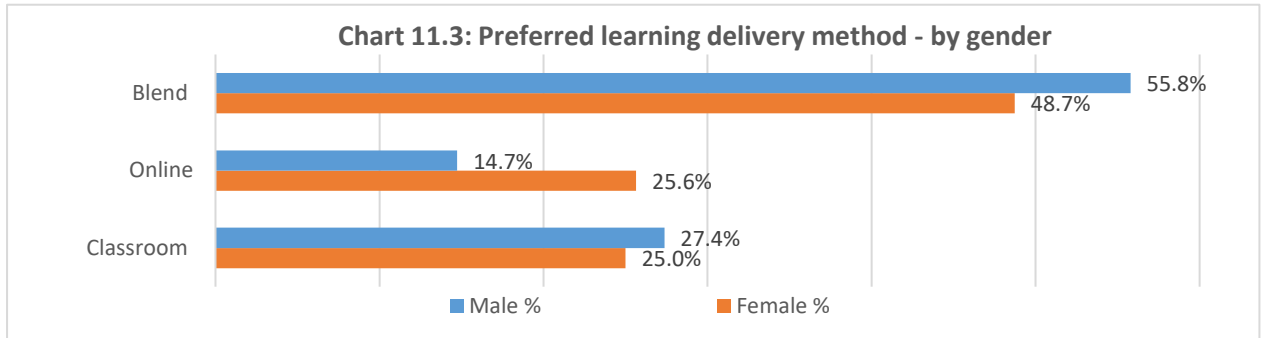
11.1 Preferred learning delivery method – overall: Overall there was clear preference for blended learning. Slightly higher numbers of respondents preferred solely classroom over solely online.



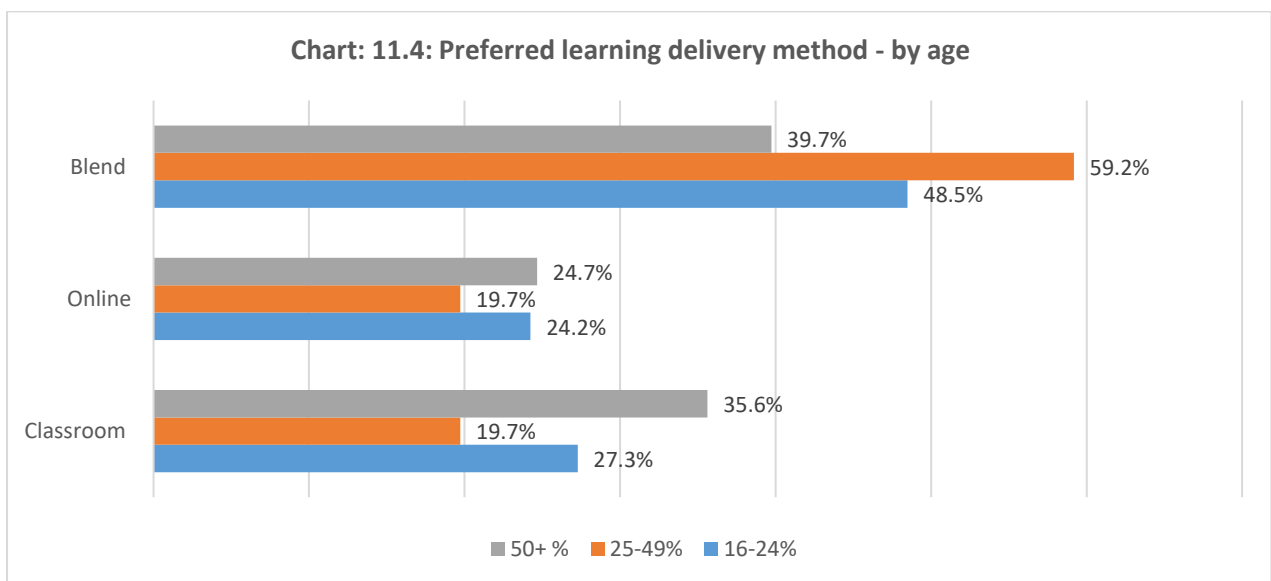
11.2 Preferred learning delivery method – respondents with a declared disability: There was a lower preference for blended learning from respondents with a declared disability, with responses being evening split between the 3 options.



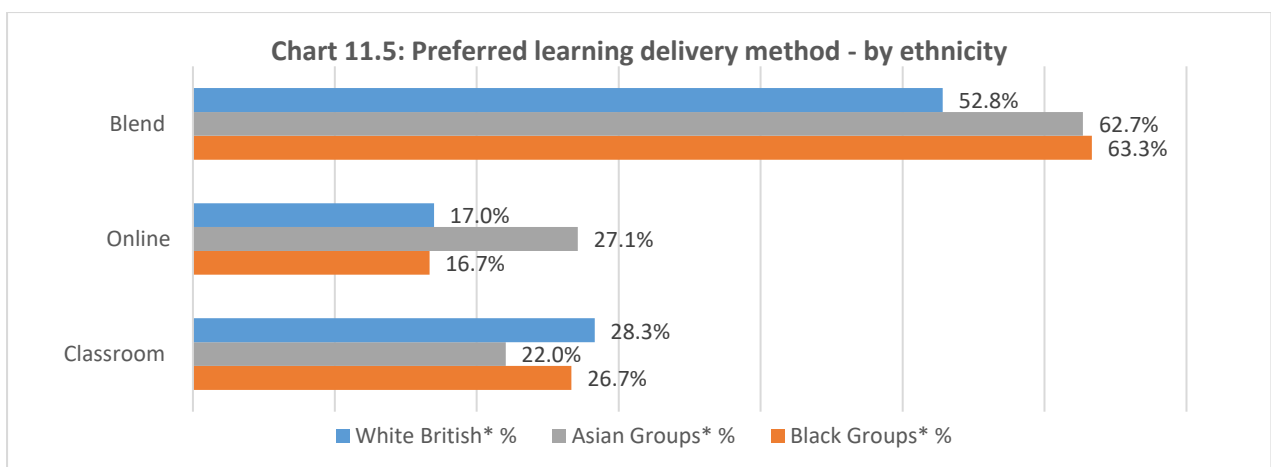
11.3 Preferred learning delivery method – by gender: Slightly higher percentages of male respondents opted for blended and classroom-based learning, but much lower percentages of male respondents opted for online learning compared to female respondents.



11.4 Preferred learning delivery method – by age: Blended learning was the most common response for the 25-49 age group. The 50+ group were the most likely to choose classroom learning with nearly as many choosing this option as blended.



11.5 Preferred learning delivery method – by ethnicity: A significantly higher percentage of respondents from Asian Backgrounds* opted for online learning then the other two ethnicity groupings.



Q12 & 13: These questions didn't add anything of note for the purposes of this report.

Q14: Do you have any suggestions for how we can improve skills provision in Coventry (open text responses)



This question was answered by 86 survey respondents. The above word cloud shows that many felt courses could be better advertised and promoted. Respondents showed a preference for 'in person'/'face to face' courses. However, some did state that they wanted courses to be streamed. Flexibility of course delivery also featured with some wanting evening or weekend courses. Also featured were responses around good 'prior information' on course content.

To consider whole responses rather than individual words, responses have been grouped into themes to show patterns. This reflects the word cloud in showing the most common responses were around promotion and advertising of courses. 'Flexibility' features more strongly than in the word cloud as does 'progression and reward':

- **Promotion and advertising (24 responses):** For example – 'Increasing advertising of courses', or 'better promotional materials.'
- **Flexibility (20 responses):** For example – 'More out of hours courses' and 'more weekend courses.'
- **Progression and reward (12 responses):** For example – 'Progressing to a higher level, after learning the basics' and 'have an end destination such as an interview with an employer'.
- **Widening the range of learning (10 responses):** For example – 'More 'refresher' courses for people who have been away from a job for a few years' or a 'design courses that meet real work world needs'.
- **Quality (7 responses):** For example – 'Trainers need to better apply information.' Or 'having extra teachers in the class to provide more 1 to 1 support'
- **Venue (6 responses):** For example – 'a more central training venue' and 'a venue with better parking'.

Chart 14.1: Suggestions for improving skills provision in Coventry

