

# **University is Not Just for Young People**

## **Working Adults' Perceptions of and Orientation to Higher Education**

Emma Pollard, Peter Bates,  
Will Hunt and Anne Bellis  
Institute for Employment Studies

DIUS Research Report 08 06

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**DIUS Research Report 08 06**

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## Executive Summary

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This study explores the attitudes and intentions towards higher education (HE) amongst working adults in England. The research involved 1,401 individuals in a 20 minute telephone survey during early summer 2007, and was restricted to those aged between 22 and 55 (inclusive) with no university level (level 4) qualification. A series of non-interlocking quotas were set using the Labour Force Survey covering age, gender, ethnic origin and region, to ensure the responding sample broadly represented the adult working population and to provide a good indicative base for perceptions about HE of all working adults.

### Key findings

- Working adults see university as open to all since over 80 per cent of all responding adults agreed that ‘people like me do go to university’ and that ‘university is not just for young people’.
- University is seen as something adults would or could consider for the future. Six per cent are already considering it, 24 per cent would consider applying in the future, and a further 55 per cent could be encouraged to apply. Only 15 per cent are not in the least interested and cannot be encouraged to consider university as an option.
- Adults feel they know what HE has to offer but are less sure of how to access it and the costs involved. Fifty-eight per cent of respondents feel very or fairly well informed about the opportunities available in HE, but adults are less confident about their knowledge of entry requirements, the costs of study and the financial support available.
- Adults feel that going to university improves employability and career prospects and aids personal development and these are key motivators to consider applying to university.
- Adults want a different type of HE experience from the traditional model, preferring to study part-time, in evenings and weekends and at a university or

college close to home, and the availability of this type of study experience would overcome adults' reluctance to consider HE and overcome difficulties in balancing work and family commitments with study.

- Employer encouragement and support is also important in overcoming reluctance to consider HE. Of those not considering applying to university in the future (70 per cent of all respondents), 56 per cent would be willing to think about HE if they were given encouragement from their employer, and 69 per cent of employees would do so if they were given paid time off to study.
- Despite positive attitudes to learning, a lack of interest and a perceived lack of the value in the HE experience are the main reasons why adults do not consider HE, and 15 per cent of all responding adults do not see HE as an option for them – they are not in the least interested and cannot be encouraged to consider applying in the future.
- HE is seen as costly and concerns about the costs of study and the potential to run up debt act as a barrier to HE entry, however the availability of funding support would encourage individuals to consider HE.

## Implications for policy

There is an interest in HE amongst working adults. In general, adults have positive attitudes to HE and many are considering HE or could be encouraged to consider HE in the future.

### Who would consider going into HE?

There are three groups of adults who are more likely to consider HE.

1. **Traditional mould** – adults who have considered HE in the past and are consequently more likely to consider it as an option for the future. They have similar characteristics to traditional HE entrants, in that they are:
  - younger (22 to 30 years old)
  - in social networks where HE is the norm (those with family and peer group experience of HE)
  - those with higher level qualifications
  - those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.
2. **Second-chancers** – those for whom HE can be a second chance or way out of disadvantage. They may not have considered HE in the past but, along with group one, are also more likely to be considering HE for the future. These are more likely to be currently unemployed, to be disabled, have had negative experiences of school, be living in social housing, or reporting financial difficulties.

3. **Waverers** – those who may need a little more convincing to consider HE. They have a lower tendency to consider HE for the future but could be encouraged to apply. These include: adults from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those in mid-career.

However it must be acknowledged that HE is not right for everyone and that there is a group of adults who will never be convinced about HE and for whom HE is an irrelevance.

### Six steps to encourage adult participation

To engage working adults and encourage them to consider applying to university there is a need to:

- firstly **overcome attitudinal and motivational barriers** to get adults to consider HE – overcome a lack of interest and perceived lack of value or usefulness in HE study
- then **remove structural obstacles** to convert thought into action – addressing concerns about the costs of study and running up debt, availability of financial support, and the ability to balance work and family commitments with study.

The research indicates six ways to encourage and support participation.

1. **Promoting HE as an option early on** (whilst at school) so that individuals understand what HE is and know that it can be accessed at any point in their working lives (or beyond), perhaps when they are more decided about what they want to do. Those who consider HE early on are more likely to continue to consider HE in the future.
2. **Promoting the value of HE** so that individuals appreciate and understand the benefits both in terms of career benefits and also wider personal development benefits. These are key motivators to consider HE.
3. **Providing clear information** about the full range of options HE has to offer and particularly about the real costs of HE study and the financial support available. These are areas where adults lack understanding and confidence. The internet and colleges and universities appear to be the most appropriate channels for spreading these messages.
4. **Providing the right HE offer:** courses that meet adults' preferences for location and mode of study. Adults want local part-time study options delivered in the evenings and at weekends as this allows individuals to balance study with family commitments and allows them to continue working so that they can fund their studies.
5. **Providing financial support** that is tailored to adults' preferred mode of study – part-time study. Concerns over the costs of study and running up debt and the need to earn money act as a deterrent to considering HE and a barrier to HE entry.

6. **Continuing to engage employers** as they have an important role in overcoming attitudinal and motivational barriers to participation through providing encouragement to study and more concrete support such as paid time off for study.

## Further messages from the research

### HE is open to all, relevant and accessible

HE is regarded positively, and is perceived as something available to all ages (not just for young people) and all types of individuals, and on the whole it is regarded as something everyone should consider. It is recognised as costly: 72 per cent of all respondents feel people who go to university end up with heavy debts, but 68 per cent feel it is worth the costs. There are mixed feelings about how difficult it is to get in and those from lower socio-economic groups (routine/manual work roles), with limited experience of HE and with lower level qualifications are the most concerned about the accessibility of HE.

In general, going to university is not felt to be necessary to gain quality employment (56 per cent of adults feel that the best jobs do not go to those who have been to university) but can be something to consider when in employment.

Adults feel they are informed about the opportunities available in HE even though they generally have not looked for information about HE (either for themselves or for someone else). This could suggest that adults may not know about all the options available such as studying in FE, studying in the workplace and distance learning.

### 30 per cent would take the plunge

Eighteen per cent had considered applying to university when they left full-time education and 24 per cent had seriously considered HE at some point since leaving school. Those most likely to have considered HE in the past were younger, from higher socio-economic backgrounds (managerial/professional occupations), with family and peer group experience of HE, those that did well at school (in terms of the qualifications achieved and their own subjective assessment of performance) and those working in the high value service sector and public sector.

Thirty per cent would consider applying in the future and tend to feel confident that they would get in. Socio-economic background had an influence on past consideration of HE but is not linked to future consideration. Experience at school continues to have an influence on intentions but whereas a negative experience deters individuals from considering HE during their early careers, it makes them more likely to consider HE in the future. Generally, past consideration of HE is linked to future consideration, as are positive attitudes to HE.

## HE improves career prospects not jobs

HE is seen as a way to develop your career, enable you to change the work you do and earn more money, and adults are most likely to consider HE for career and employability reasons. Forty-eight per cent of those considering going to university say this is their main reason for doing so and few think that it will not improve their job prospects, and 52 per cent of those not considering HE still recognise it as a benefit. Thus over half of all respondents (51 per cent) saw career benefits to participating in HE.

Another key motivator is personal development with 34 per cent of adults giving this as their main reason for considering going to university, and 26 per cent of those not considering HE recognising this as a benefit of HE. Together this represents almost one-third (29 per cent) of responding adults who see this particular benefit to HE. Personal development is particularly a key driver for older adults and those from managerial/professional backgrounds.

HE appears to be less about improving your current job (in terms of job skills, pay, promotion or satisfaction) than your longer-term career, as a quarter (25 per cent) of adults recognise this particular benefit (22 per cent give this as their main reason for considering HE, and 26 per cent of those not considering HE recognise this as a benefit of going to university). This may be an issue when trying to get employers to engage with HE, as working adults and employers appear to have differing motivations for involvement. For employers, engagement with HE is about up-skilling their workforce, but for individuals it is about moving on. The findings also indicate that HE is viewed differently from other types of learning, which does tend to be undertaken for reasons relating to an individual's current job.

## Some lingering concerns

Of those considering going to university in the future (30 per cent of all respondents), almost all (96 per cent) have concerns about the HE experience. Key concerns reflect reasons for past non-participation and centre around:

- finance – the availability of financial support (80 per cent) and running up debts (69 per cent)
- being able to balance study with other commitments (75 per cent)
- being able to cope with the workload and getting back into study (59 per cent and 51 per cent respectively).

However working adults are not really worried about fitting in, reflecting their general perception that the university experience is open to all.

## What kind of HE do adults want?

Adults have a preference for local provision and for part-time study in evenings and weekends, especially those adults with family commitments, from lower socio-economic backgrounds and from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. This preference reflects worries about being able to balance work and family commitments with study, and also allows adults to combine work with study.

Working adults also have a preference for face-to-face provision rather than distance learning or work-based learning. Although adults tend to think they do know about the opportunities, this may reflect a limited understanding of the range of ways HE can be delivered or what is available locally.

Working adults are generally decided about the area they would like to study (more sure than they are about how and where they want to study) and there is a preference for vocational study especially amongst those who are motivated to consider HE for career reasons. Those motivated by personal development reasons are more likely to want academic courses.

## Changing hearts and minds

Seventy per cent would not consider HE in the future despite a high incidence of learning since school and generally positive attitudes towards learning (seeing it as enjoyable and an investment, and recognising the importance of qualifications). These individuals tended to:

- be older
- have no family or peer group experience of HE
- be ambivalent about their time at school and/or felt they were average at school
- have lower level qualifications (or no formal qualifications)
- be living with a partner
- consider themselves to be living comfortably
- own their own homes
- be less likely to have considered HE as an option in the past.

Perceptions about the costs and accessibility of HE are not linked with future intentions and adults who feel HE is costly or difficult to get into are no more likely to be deterred from considering HE in the future.

Key barriers to HE, both in the past and in terms of future consideration, for those who do not intend to go to university (representing 70 per cent of all respondents) are:

- A lack of interest and perceived lack of value. Twenty four per cent would not consider HE in the future because they cannot see the usefulness of HE and 23 per cent would not consider HE out of a lack of interest. Yet career and employability reasons are key drivers for adult engagement in HE – so some individuals *do* see the value in HE.
- Finance (15 per cent consider this a barrier to future participation), a lack of time due to other commitments (20 per cent) and age (18 per cent), although this was not a barrier to past consideration of HE. Age becomes a barrier when considering HE as a future option despite the general perception that HE is not just for young people. Eighteen per cent would not consider HE in the future because of reasons relating to their age but this increases to 35 per cent amongst older adults (45-55).

Non-participation is not really about concerns over fitting in, feeling a lack of necessary qualifications, worries about coping with HE study or a lack of information.

Although 70 per cent would not consider HE as a future option, almost all recognised that HE can bring benefits to adults and the majority felt they could be encouraged to apply, particularly if HE was made more convenient (ie they were able to study from home/work, if there were a suitable course close to home, and they could study during evening and weekends), if they were encouraged by employers or their family and friends, and if they were given financial support. A change in circumstance could also encourage them to consider HE.

### The role of finance

There is a general perception that HE is costly but the 30 per cent of adults considering going to university feel ill-informed about the costs (57 per cent feel they are not very/not at all well informed) and particularly the financial support available in HE (72 per cent not very/not at all well informed).

Concerns over finance can act as a barrier to HE and can deter participation, however it appears to be less of a barrier to future participation than to past consideration (as other barriers become more prominent). The financial aspects of HE participation only appear to be an issue for those seriously considering HE, and impact upon some groups more than others:

- younger adults (aged 22 to 30)
- those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds
- those reporting financial difficulties.

It is not, however, linked to attitudes to debt and those with negative attitudes to debt are no more likely to be deterred from HE by financial concerns than others.

Providing financial support would encourage working adults to apply to HE and the availability of this form of support is particularly influential to those from black and

minority ethnic backgrounds and those concerned about costs of study (citing it as a reason for not thinking of HE in the future). Paid time off to study is also a key encouraging factor particularly for full-time employees, men, younger adults and those with higher level qualifications.

Availability of financial support was a key concern for the 30 per cent of respondents who would consider going to HE in the future, and 67 per cent of this group believed they could help finance their studies through a government grant or university bursary. Overall, there was a general feeling that the government should contribute to the costs of adult study. However there was an acknowledgement that an individual should contribute towards their own HE study costs and the key ways to fund HE are to undertake paid work and use savings. There was also an expectation that employers would contribute towards adult study and 59 per cent of those considering going to HE expected some form of employer support or sponsorship.

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# 1 Introduction

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This report presents findings from a quantitative survey of 1,401 working adults to explore their perceptions of and intentions towards entering higher education (HE). It is a unique study firstly as it focuses on adults, a group that is often overlooked in participation research; secondly it focuses on those who could potentially enter HE rather than those already in the system (applicants and/or mature students); and lastly it specifically focuses on HE rather than learning in general. The research shows who would consider going to university, for what reasons and in what circumstances, what barriers would need to be tackled to raise interest in HE and then to move interest on to real action, and what HE for working adults might look like.

## 1.1 Research rationale

The research was commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills (now Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills) in 2006 to understand better the perceptions of HE that are held by young people and working adults so that government could work to encourage higher participation rates and widen participation to groups that are less represented or under-represented in HE. The research has two strands: one focused on young people making choices about staying on in education (aged 16/17), which will report separately in late 2008; and one focused on working adults which forms the basis of this report.

### 1.1.1 Aims and objectives

The specific aims of this research were to explore:

- overall attitudes towards HE
- intentions towards HE
- perceptions of the benefits of HE
- reasons for non-participation, essentially barriers to HE

- potential encouraging factors
- views on financial issues around HE and learning
- and preferences for different forms of HE study.

### 1.2 Research context and key policy issues

The study is set against an interesting and evolving context. Over the last 30 years HE in the UK has changed dramatically, the numbers of students have increased and the range and backgrounds of those participating has broadened with better representation of those from ethnic minority backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, women (in particular), and also older individuals (as evidenced by HESA and UCAS statistics). In the last ten years student numbers have increased from 1.72 million in 1995/06 to 2.34 million in 2005/06<sup>1</sup>. Increasing participation in HE is a key policy drive for the government and forms part of the ambition for the UK to become a ‘world leader in skills’ by the year 2020 (defined as being in the upper quartile of the OECD rankings), embodied in the Leitch Review and the government’s response to this<sup>2</sup>. Securing higher levels of educational attainment and skill acquisition will also contribute towards three broader policy goals: improving productivity and contributing to economic growth; facilitating social mobility; and minimising social exclusion. To this end specific targets have been set for England including: participation in HE of 18 to 30 year olds should work towards 50 per cent by 2010; and that by 2020<sup>3</sup> more than 40 per cent of adults will be qualified to at least Level 4 (traditionally HE level qualifications). Participation of young people is currently around 43 per cent<sup>4</sup>; and in 2005, 29 per cent of adults were qualified to Level 4 and above. Participation, therefore, needs to rise for the targets to be achieved, participation among both young people as they emerge from sixth form education and from more mature adults looking to return to education.

More recently and following from the Leitch skills target, the government has made a commitment to strengthen employer engagement in higher level learning by incentivising and funding provision which is partly or wholly designed, funded or provided by employers, and this will lead to ‘radical changes in the provision of HE’<sup>5</sup> with more part-time and short-cycle courses, two-year Fast Track honours degrees, a

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<sup>1</sup> Numbers from HESA Students in Higher Education Institutions Reports for 2005/06 and 1995/06.

<sup>2</sup> Leitch Review of Skills (2006) Prosperity for all in the Global Economy – World Class Skills, Final Report; and DIUS (2007) World Class Skills: Implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England, TSO.

<sup>3</sup> DIUS (2007) World Class Skills: Implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England, TSO.

<sup>4</sup> DfES Statistical First Release 10/2007; uses revised methodology for calculating HEIPR.

<sup>5</sup> DfES Grant Letter to HEFCE, 31 Jan 2006.

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more responsive curriculum and diverse range of providers (including FE and private providers in delivering HE). Indeed, the 2007 grant letter from government asked HEFCE to support 5,000 additional places in demand-led, employer co-funded provision in the academic year 2008/09, and to deliver further growth of at least 5,000 additional entrants year-on-year in each year up to 2010/11. Foundation degrees are one vehicle to achieve this with 61,000 enrolments to date and a target of 100,000 by 2010. This change in focus provides opportunities for HE to reach out to new markets but, as recognised in a recent report, this will require a significant cultural change to embrace a 'new tradition' of HE.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to increasing participation and employer engagement, widening participation has been, and continues to be, a key policy drive. This focuses funding and activity on attracting learners from groups that are under represented in higher education (or with non-traditional backgrounds) including those from families with no experience of HE, children leaving care, those from lower socio-economic class groups, those in areas of low participation, those with vocational qualifications, and, of particular relevance to this research, older or second chance learners, and those combining learning with working (see Action on Access website [www.actiononaccess.org](http://www.actiononaccess.org)). Ensuring that those who have the talent to benefit from HE are given the opportunity to do so, regardless of their background, is a central feature of HE in the UK, driven from government and supported by the funding bodies. There has been a raft of initiatives operating at a national level to address issues of under-representation. These include the Aimhigher programme (primarily focused on young people); the creation of the Office of Fair Access (OFFA) and requirement for HEIs to draw up access agreements; recognising and rewarding quality teaching and learning; curriculum development, including new qualifications to meet the needs of the more diverse student body and to create pathways for progression particularly for those with vocational qualifications (aided by Lifelong Learning Networks); the re-introduction of grants for students from lower income families (Higher Education Grant) and some continued support for tuition fees; and continued use of the Widening Participation (WP) premium for HEIs to support their non-traditional students. However, despite these top level initiatives to widen access and improve social equality of access to HE, which have been aimed primarily at tackling differences in participation by socio-economic class groups, participation in real terms of some disadvantaged groups has remained stable and vocational entry routes to HE remain 'poorly regarded and misunderstood'.<sup>2</sup> Further work is, therefore, required to truly understand motivations towards HE and barriers that prevent participation.

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<sup>1</sup> Wedgewood M (2008), Higher education for the workforce: barriers and facilitators to employer engagement, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills Research Report 08 04.

<sup>2</sup> DfES 2003 21st century skills: realising our potential: individuals, employers, nation. Skills Strategy White Papers.

Other areas of policy activity in the HE arena include changes to the way HE is funded, shifting more of the costs onto students themselves in order to build on the principle of equity – those who benefit from HE should contribute towards its costs. However, there is a concern that these changes should not negatively impact on the under-represented groups that the government are keen to encourage to participate. Thus student finance and also student support have undergone radical changes in the recent past. In England, this has included the introduction of up-front tuition fees in 1998, and increases in fees in 2006/07 (for new entrants) up to a maximum of £3,000<sup>1</sup> but with fees paid for by loans which do not need to be repaid until students have left their courses and are earning above a set threshold. In terms of support, there have been developments in England in the fields of grants, loans for maintenance or living costs, subject or institution-specific bursaries, and fee waivers/remission. This situation continues to change, with – most recently – the announcement that thresholds for eligibility to grants are to be substantially raised and that five year repayment holidays will be introduced for student loans. However, we should note that most developments in student finance have tended to focus on the full-time undergraduate model of participation, whereas adult participation in HE is predominantly at below first degree level (or postgraduate level) and through part-time study.

It is important to understand potential HE students' perceptions of the funding and support arrangements and how these impact on decisions about HE. A generalised perception of high costs, patchy support and uncertain rewards could easily deter potential applicants and impair efforts to maintain and widen participation in HE.

Another area of policy focus has centred around the need to ensure the supply of people with STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) qualifications at higher levels. Entries to these subjects are declining across Europe, and in the UK the number of young people choosing sciences at ages 16 and 18 is falling. Existing research indicates that, for young people at least, attitudes to STEM subjects are formed at an early age and also often on the basis of poor information or misinformation<sup>2</sup> and from poor teaching and learning experiences. For adults, decisions made early in life about qualifications can restrict subsequent career options and retraining in science and technology can be a lengthy process. Retention in HE on STEM courses is also an issue, with research indicating that some engineering and technology courses do not reflect the work environment which can discourage mature returners to HE.

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<sup>1</sup> Various referred to as 'top-up fees' or 'variable fees' as institutions can vary the amount they charge up to a maximum of £3,000 per year.

<sup>2</sup> See for example, Gettys L D and Cann A, *Children's perceptions of occupational stereotypes, Sex Roles*, 7, 1981 and Munro M and Elsom D *Choosing Science at 16: the influences of science teachers and careers advisers on students' decisions about science subjects and science and technology careers*. Cambridge: CRAC, 2000.

In addition to the key aims, this research also provides the opportunity to explore:

- ways to encourage participation in HE amongst working adults
- perceptions of HE amongst widening participation groups within the adult population
- perceived understanding of the costs of HE and the financial support available, and the impact this has
- expectations from HE and potential rewards
- and to some extent, preferences for STEM subjects.

### 1.3 Key issues in adult participation in HE

Before setting out the research methodology and the findings from the survey, it is important to recognise the key issues in adult participation in HE outlined in existing research literature, as this forms the foundation upon which our study builds.

Over recent decades, there has been a steady rise in the numbers of mature students participating in HE. For example, whereas in 1970, the participation rates of students over 21 stood at about a quarter of a million, this figure had risen to 1.5 million by 2000.<sup>1</sup> Recent statistical evidence from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) indicates that mature students now constitute over 50 per cent of the total HE population.<sup>2</sup>

The substantial numbers of students on part-time HE courses is one significant contributing factor to this profile, and is a distinctive feature of the UK HE system, compared to other Western European countries.<sup>3</sup> The part-time route to HE qualifications is typically followed by adults over 25 years, who pay their own fees and remain in paid employment while studying. Fuller concludes from this that:

*'The predominance of mature students in their 30s and above who are taking up part-time courses is indicative, then, of the growing appeal to many people of combining a return to study with other domestic and, or employment commitments.'*<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fuller A (2006) Mid-Life Transitions to Higher Education: Developing a multi-level explanation of increasing participation, University of Southampton. This paper will shortly be published as an article in *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 39 (2): 217-235.

<sup>2</sup> 52 per cent of first year undergraduate entrants were classed as mature students in 2003-04 (*Students in Higher Education Institutions 2003/04* (2005), Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

<sup>3</sup> Ramsden B (2003) 'Euro Student 2000: Comparisons with the UK' in Slowey M and Watson D (eds) *Higher Education and the Lifecourse*, SRHE and Open University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Fuller (2006: 3).

However, according to Fuller and other commentators, this trend is largely ignored within current widening participation policy and research, which focuses mainly on the under-representation of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### 1.3.1 Reasons for entering/returning to HE

Adults aspire to enter, or return to, HE for a number of different and complex reasons. One factor identified in the literature is that changing patterns of employment in recent years, linked to a shift in demand from manual to cognitive skills, are likely to have led to a growing perception among the adult population of the need for higher level skills and qualifications. This, in turn, can have an impact on decisions to return to study in later life. This emphasis on developing the national skills base has been reinforced in recent government policy documents, such as the Leitch Review.<sup>1</sup> As Fuller points out, the role of lifelong learning within these current debates about employability and upskilling is viewed by many as ‘critical to survival.’<sup>2</sup> Davies et al.<sup>3</sup> also identified motivating factors among mature HE entrants which were strongly linked to career advancement and higher earnings.

Adult motivation to participate in HE can also be influenced by the desire for personal development, often linked to ‘life transitions’ such as career change, redundancy, children going to school or growing up, divorce, bereavement, ill health etc. According to Smith,<sup>4</sup> the concept of ‘transition’ has attracted increasing attention within theories of educational participation, and there have been a number of studies in recent years exploring this theme. For example, Fuller’s study of older mature students completing first degrees provides evidence of people making use of education and qualifications ‘as a resource for managing change.’<sup>5</sup>

Research<sup>6</sup> has also found that the concept of ‘risk’ is useful in understanding the complexity of factors which could influence adult perceptions of the implications of HE study for their lives. Respondents in one study balanced and assessed key risk factors such as: personal achievement and fulfilment; financial and time pressures; and future rewards. Another study<sup>7</sup> found that mature students had been prepared to

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<sup>1</sup> HM Treasury (2006) *Prosperity for All in the Global Economy – World Class Skills*, The Stationery Office.

<sup>2</sup> Fuller (2006: 9).

<sup>3</sup> Davies M et al (2001) *For Me or not for Me? That is the Question: A report on mature student participation in Higher Education*, DFES.

<sup>4</sup> Smith MK (2005) *Participation in Learning Projects and Programmes*, Infed.

<sup>5</sup> Fuller (2006: 25).

<sup>6</sup> Davies M (2001).

<sup>7</sup> Fuller (2006).

take on the risks and uncertainties associated with such a significant life change, in order to pursue the goals of self-improvement and self-development.

Another theoretical concept which has recently attracted considerable interest within the field of education relates to issues of social capital and the impact of social and cultural networks on educational decision-making. For example, current research being conducted at the University of Southampton is employing social network analysis to explore the influence of inter-personal and inter-generational relationships on the educational choices of a group of adults who are 'potentially recruitable' to HE.<sup>1</sup> These in-depth qualitative studies are aiming to illuminate the ways in which decisions to participate or not participate in HE are embedded within complex social interactions, which are subject to change over the individual's life-course.

### 1.3.2 Barriers to participation for adults

According to the research literature, there is a wide and complex range of barriers to adult participation in HE, which tend to be categorised under different headings such as structural, institutional, socio-cultural and motivational/attitudinal, although there is a degree of overlap and interaction between these different groups of factors.

#### Structural barriers

#### **Social and educational inequalities:**

Despite the overall increase in adult participation in HE, it is important to note that such educational opportunities are unevenly distributed across the population. People from lower socio-economic groups and other disadvantaged backgrounds face a disproportionately wide range of barriers to participation:

*'There remains substantial quantitative and qualitative evidence that shows that the relatively advantaged in UK society (and western industrial society more widely) have been best placed to benefit from the expansion of the HE sector.'*<sup>2</sup>

A recent wide-ranging review of existing evidence on barriers to participation in HE emphasises that, historically, post-compulsory education in England has been clearly differentiated along lines of social class, and that this is replicated in patterns of HE participation. There is also evidence of a tendency for patterns of educational inequality to be reinforced throughout the life-cycle, eg those who participate in post-compulsory education tend to have HE qualifications already; well-educated and

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<sup>1</sup> See for example: Heath S et al. *Network-based ambivalence and educational decision-making: a case study of 'non-participation' in Higher Education*; and Paton K et al *Educational and Career decision-making: Challenging the context of choice*; Papers presented at the SRHE Annual Conference, Brighton, December 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Fuller (2006: 28).

qualified people are more likely to receive work-related training leading to formal vocational qualifications.

*'This means that post-compulsory participation becomes a lifelong pattern for some, while non-participation becomes an alternative lifelong pattern for others...'*<sup>1</sup>

Such habitual patterns of behaviour can become reinforced by an individual's identification with the social or cultural group to which they belong. According to this 'Reference Group Theory', non-participants in post-compulsory education, including HE, tend to belong to social groups where engagement in this type of learning is not viewed as 'normal behaviour'.<sup>2</sup>

The recognition that socio-economic background can have such a strong influence on an individual's attitude and orientation towards education has led to a growing interest in issues of 'learner identity' within the widening participation literature. For example, a sense of alienation or 'dislocation' can be experienced by individuals from working-class or minority ethnic backgrounds in predominantly white, middle-class educational institutions. A recent study by Bowl describes this 'experience of difference' as a key characteristic of the experiences of a group of mature 'returners' from disadvantaged backgrounds.<sup>3</sup> The research also highlighted problems associated with: lack of earlier interest and encouragement from teachers; inadequate advice and guidance about educational opportunities; and a lack of social and cultural capital within the families of the respondents:

*'Family circumstances, coupled with poor access to information and support, meant that participants were unable to use the education system to their advantage.'*<sup>4</sup>

This interaction of factors had resulted in many of the research participants having the impression that HE was '*not for the likes of them.*'<sup>5</sup>

Gorard et al. also cite studies of mature working-class students who felt out of place in the university setting and perceived themselves as less able than students from 'traditional' backgrounds. These studies highlight the powerful influence which socio-economic factors can continue to exert, even after successful entry into higher education. They also indicate the importance of HE institutions recognising the diversity of the student population and providing appropriate forms of support.

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<sup>1</sup> Gorard et al (2006), *Review of widening participation research: addressing the barriers to participation in higher education: A report to HEFCE by the University of York, Higher Education Academy and Institute for Access Studies.*

<sup>2</sup> McGivney (1996); Smith (2005).

<sup>3</sup> Bowl M (2003), *Frustrated Participants: Adult learners and higher education aspiration*, University of Birmingham.

<sup>4</sup> Bowl (2003: 5).

<sup>5</sup> Bowl (2003: 8).

**Financial factors:**

Recent studies into barriers (actual and perceived) to HE among adults identified financial difficulties as the most significant factor, whether through direct costs such as fees and study materials or the additional costs of transport and childcare.<sup>1</sup> Gorard et al. point out that growing financial debt resulting from increased participation in HE generally, can disproportionately penalise mature students and those on low incomes:

*'The increase in students continuing to HE has been accompanied by an increase in the number in debt and the situation is often worse for mature students ....'*<sup>2</sup>

Linked to the problem of debt and fear of debt, is evidence of a lack of accessible information and advice about forms of financial support available to mature and part-time students. Davies et al. also identified the costs of study as the most important barrier to HE entry and highlighted the need for additional financial support as well as easier accessibility of financial advice and information:

*'There was considerable lack of knowledge about both costs and, importantly, forms of available support, shown by potential entrants even late in the admissions cycle.'*<sup>3</sup>

For adults in employment, there can be both 'push' and 'pull' factors associated with a decision to participate in HE. For example, the prospect of higher level qualifications could act as a motivator (desire for career advancement; getting away from an unsatisfactory job) or an inhibitor (the need to stay in employment and maintain a regular source of income).<sup>4</sup> For unemployed adults, on the other hand, there can be problems associated with the inflexibility of the benefits system and its incompatibility with part-time or flexible modes of study.<sup>5</sup>

**Caring responsibilities:**

Strongly linked to financial constraints, a major barrier for many adults to returning to study is that posed by caring and family responsibilities and the lack, in many areas, of accessible and affordable childcare facilities. The particular barriers to education faced by women from disadvantaged backgrounds and with childcare responsibilities

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<sup>1</sup> Davies et al. (2001); Bellis A and Hyde S (2003) *Sussex University and the Mature Student Market*, University of Sussex.

<sup>2</sup> Gorard et al. (2006:10).

<sup>3</sup> Davies et al. (2001).

<sup>4</sup> Davies et al. (2001).

<sup>5</sup> Gorard et al. (2006).

is a recurrent theme in the participation literature.<sup>1</sup> For example, in one survey of HE students, one-fifth of those over 25 identified childcare as a barrier to access.<sup>2</sup>

Various examples of community-based interventions aimed at encouraging access to HE for women returners have addressed this problem through the provision of integrated childcare support, either through on-site crèche facilities or subsidising childcare costs. Research focusing on the personal narratives of a group of women who successfully progressed into HE from one such programme in Sussex indicated that such early forms of support can be a vital element in encouraging the first step back into learning.<sup>3</sup>

### **Geographical factors:**

Some widening participation research has focused on the impact of geographical factors on patterns of participation. For example, there can be wide variations in the availability of access points to educational provision for adults in different parts of the country, which may limit opportunities for progression into HE.<sup>4</sup>

Although some mature applicants to HE are in a position to travel anywhere in the UK to find the course that best suits their requirements, many more are restricted in their choice of HE by financial constraints or family commitments. Evidence from one regionally-based study into mature HE entrants indicated that some potential applicants were even restricted from progressing to their nearest HEI because of transport or childcare problems.<sup>5</sup> Similar studies have focused on the particular difficulties faced by residents in rural areas, such as poor or non-existent public transport and limited access to HE provision locally.<sup>6</sup>

### **Barriers at policy and institutional level**

According to some commentators, despite the significant increase in adult participation in HE in recent years, little action has been taken, at policy level, to provide appropriate incentives and forms of support for this target group. For example, under the 2004 Higher Education Act, part-time students in England are not

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<sup>1</sup> McGivney (1996); Smith (2005); Gorard et al. (2006).

<sup>2</sup> Hogarth et al (1997) *'The Participation of Non-Traditional Students in Higher Education'* The University of Warwick Institute.

<sup>3</sup> Carroll S and Jones R (2007) *'Researching ourselves: a participatory exploration of the impact of a learning intervention for women returners'*, Paper presented at the 37th SCUTREA Conference, Queen's University, Belfast.

<sup>4</sup> McGivney (1996); Gorard et al. (2006).

<sup>5</sup> Bellis and Hyde (2003).

<sup>6</sup> Moreland N et al. (2003) 'Rurality and higher education: a conceptual analysis' in Slowey M and Watson D (eds) *Higher Education and the Lifecourse*, SRHE and Open University Press.

eligible for income-contingent loans for tuition fees, unlike students in full-time study. They are also required to pay tuition fees up-front but can receive a non-repayable fee grant and/or a course grant to help towards course costs such as travel expenses and purchasing of text books<sup>1</sup>. However, those studying very part-time (less than 50 per cent of full-time study) do not qualify. As a recent HE briefing document concludes:

*'Policy and funding initiatives need to match the reality and diversity of the lives of widening participation, mature and part-time students and those with caring responsibilities'*<sup>2</sup>

Recent work by Wedgewood (2008) exploring the challenge of providing HE for the workforce and encouraging employer engagement, highlighted concerns amongst those in the HE sector about the inequities in public funded student support systems (grants and loans) for full-time and part-time students.

Another policy issue highlighted by the research literature is the need for better provision of information, advice and guidance services for adult learners, particularly for the over 25 age group. Fuller argues that the weakness of adult careers information services is at odds with the significant increase in mature student numbers in recent years:

*'The rise in mid-life transitions to HE...can be seen as all the more powerful for happening in spite of apparent policy indifference and lack of professional resources allocated to supporting this form of lifelong learning.'*<sup>3</sup>

Some of the literature considers the barriers at institutional level arising from more traditional university admissions policies and practices and timing of provision. Many mature students require flexibility of provision:

*'People want to fit learning around other tasks of equal importance in their lives, since they cannot always get time off. They often have interrupted patterns of participation and diverse progression routes.'*<sup>4</sup>

A lack of flexibility, for example in relation to timetabling, can be just one aspect of an institutional ethos which is not 'adult friendly'. McGivney (1996) refers to 'a mystique of unfamiliarity and remoteness surrounding further and higher education' which can be particularly alienating for non-traditional learners:

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<sup>1</sup> To be eligible part-time students must be following their first undergraduate level course and be studying at a rate equal to at least 50 per cent of a full-time course, and their course must last at least one year. The level of grant available (fee or course grant) depends on a student's gross household income (ie will take into account the income of a partner), see 'A Guide to Financial Support for Part-time Students in Higher Education in 2006/07', DfES 2006.

<sup>2</sup> CMU Universities Group Briefing Paper, March 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Fuller (2006: 29-30).

<sup>4</sup> Gorard et al. (2006: 11).

*'... some universities have done little to indicate that they are not predominantly preoccupied with school leavers, full-time study and professional elites. No matter how accessible institutions claim to be, they will not recruit non-traditional learners if their 'body language' contradicts their words.'*<sup>1</sup>

Wedgewood (2008) also points to the critical nature of accessible and flexible provision in HE being able to meet the needs of both employers and also employees.

### Motivational / attitudinal barriers

As discussed above, attitudes at the individual level and adults' self-perceptions of themselves as learners are also important. Lack of confidence, often linked to negative earlier experiences of formal education, can play a significant role in limiting participation in learning. Many adults consider themselves to be 'too old to learn' or can undervalue their accumulated experience and 'life skills'.<sup>2</sup>

#### 1.3.3 How could barriers for 'non-traditional' adults be addressed?

The widening participation literature puts forward various strategies and initiatives for addressing barriers to adult participation in HE, as well as highlighting case studies of good practice, which have been successful in encouraging engagement, particularly among groups of non-traditional learners.

### Flexible modes of study to cater for different circumstances

Many adults are interested in flexible forms of study which would allow them to continue in part-time work while studying, or would make life easier for those with family/caring responsibilities. Fuller's study of mature undergraduates indicated a positive attitude towards part-time study:

*'... because it offered a way in which individuals could develop personally and in their careers, at the same time as fulfilling their existing domestic, financial and employment commitments.'*<sup>3</sup>

Some adults may prefer to take a HE degree in a further education institution. In 2005, 'HE in FE' constituted 11 per cent of all HE provision.<sup>4</sup> Other flexible routes for adults include Access to HE courses; open and distance learning; and supported progression pathways linked to the workplace or community-based provision:

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<sup>1</sup> McGivney (1996).

<sup>2</sup> McGivney (1996); Smith (2005).

<sup>3</sup> Fuller (2006: 26).

<sup>4</sup> *Adults in Higher Education*, NIACE Briefing Sheet 61, March 2005.

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*'Adult students are by definition likely to need HE provision that is local to their homes. This depends therefore on local and regional structures for progression and lifelong learning.'*<sup>1</sup>

Locally based provision includes the two-year Foundation Degrees, developed collaboratively between employers and academics.

As Mark comments:

*'Diversity of provision is a powerful way of addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups.'*<sup>2</sup>

The notion of flexibility should be extended to include Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and credit transfer; 'adult-friendly' timetabling; different approaches to teaching and learning; and the curriculum. Adult students typically have concerns about the relevance of the curriculum to their future career aspirations. As one study has indicated, adults often tend to choose more vocationally-related courses.<sup>3</sup> The recent work of Wedgewood (2008) exploring employer engagement in HE would indicate that some good practice is emerging with examples of HEIs using 52 weeks of the year for course delivery, of variable start dates, credit accumulation and transfer schemes, and multi-site delivery including delivering learning in the workplace combined with distance learning.

### Recruitment strategies

It is important that these should include access to good quality, well-targeted information, advice and guidance (eg in community and workplace settings). Some universities have also developed strategies designed to de-mystify the culture of HE and to combat the impression among non-traditional learners that HE is 'not for the likes of me.' Such initiatives have included university open days targeted at the mature student market and outreach information sessions in economically deprived neighbourhoods.<sup>4</sup>

### On-course support for mature students

As discussed above, additional student financial support is viewed by many as the most effective solution for the under-representation of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Other proposed learner support strategies include more effective

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<sup>1</sup> NIACE (2005).

<sup>2</sup> Mark R, *Strategies for Widening Adult Participation in HE: A European perspective*.

<sup>3</sup> Perryman S, Pollard E, Hillage J, Barber L, *Choices and Transitions: A Study of the Graduate Labour Market in the South West*. A HERDA-SW report, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Bellis and Hyde (2003); Walters M, *Mature Students: Overcoming the barriers to higher education*.

targeting of resources to support payment of course materials, childcare and travel costs.<sup>1</sup>

Study support systems for mature students are also important, particularly for those who have been out of full-time education for many years. These can take the form of short courses in academic study skills, one-to-one tutorial support or mentoring. Information about the availability of all forms of support for mature students should be provided in the early stages of the application process.

The findings from this research project reinforce many of the themes and issues identified within the widening participation literature. In particular, the survey of adult perceptions of HE has provided further evidence that:

- Strong motivating factors for adults considering HE are employability/career reasons and personal development
- Perceived barriers to studying at HE level include the costs of study and concerns about running into debt; balancing study with work and family commitments; keeping up with the workload and the availability of learning support.
- There is a strong preference among adults contemplating HE for flexible and part-time forms of provision and opportunities to study at an institution close to home.

## 1.4 Structure of the report

The remainder of this report is structured (around the aims of the research) as follows:

- Chapter 2 outlines the research methodology including research design, sampling methodology, survey questions and analysis techniques.
- Chapter 3 provides further information about the personal characteristics, prior learning experiences and current work situation of our respondents to assess relevance of and readiness for HE.
- Chapter 4 explores attitudes to HE and the foundations of these views.
- Chapter 5 focuses on reasons for lack of engagement with HE in the past and also future intentions towards HE.
- Chapter 6 outlines motivations towards HE amongst those considering applying to university in the future but also the factors that could inhibit actual entry.
- Chapter 7 outlines the barriers to future participation amongst those who would not consider applying to university but also the factors that could encourage them to change their minds.

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<sup>1</sup> Mark R, *Strategies for Widening Adult Participation in HE: A European perspective*.

- Chapter 8 explores the financial aspects of HE participation including perceived understanding of costs and support available and methods to fund adult participation in HE.
- Chapter 9 looks at preferences for HE amongst those considering applying to university in the future – what, where and how adults would prefer to study.
- Chapter 10 presents the conclusions from the research and implications for policy.

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## 2 Outline of the Methodology

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This chapter sets out the methodology we employed to undertake the exploratory data collection and analysis. Essentially this was a 20 minute telephone survey which was administered by BMRB during May, June and July 2007, to a sample of 1,401 members of the adult labour force with no previous experience of HE. The sample was drawn using a technique to introduce a degree of randomness, and a series of eligibility screening questions were used to ensure the survey was correctly targeted and the responding sample broadly reflected the main characteristics of the survey population – working adults.

### 2.1 Sample

#### 2.1.1 Who we targeted

The research was targeted towards adults active in the labour market, that is working adults both employed and self-employed and also those unemployed but actively seeking work. Those further from the labour market, for example women looking after children, are an interesting group of potential HE entrants but they fall beyond the scope of this research. The survey was confined to England and 'adult' was defined as individuals between the ages of 22 and 55 (inclusive). During discussions with the Department the survey was further targeted towards those who had not been to university before (ie did not hold a Level 4 qualification), given the policy focus of 'firstness', and so the research excluded adults potentially returning to HE to complete a second undergraduate or post-graduate qualification.

#### 2.1.2 Reaching our target sample

To ensure we surveyed our target group, a series of eligibility screening questions were used. However we also wanted our sample to broadly reflect the working adult population so that when discussing the views, perceptions and plans of our respondents these could provide a good indicative base for all working adults. However, it should be noted that the survey was designed to be exploratory in nature.

We were not aiming to produce entirely representative data as the achieved sample (at 1,401 individuals) would represent only a very small proportion of the working adult population. So to broadly reflect the survey population a series of non-interlocking quotas were set using the Labour Force Survey (household data for April-June 2006). These covered age (within our eligibility boundaries of 22 to 55), gender, ethnic origin, and region as indicators. The quotas on age and gender were restrictive quotas, driven by responses in the questionnaire. The ethnicity quota was a monitoring quota to examine any skews in participation during the fieldwork (rather than a restrictive quota), as having ethnicity at the beginning of a survey as a restrictive quota involves difficult sensitivities. Finally the region quota was driven by the sample and used telephone numbers to assign records to regions<sup>1</sup>.

Once interviewers reached a household containing an eligible individual, they were able to interview any eligible person (provided that they were still 'in quota'). If the person who answered the phone was ineligible or out of quota, the interviewer asked if there was anyone else eligible and in quota and interviewed them. Interviewers also collected the number of adults at the address where the phone was who were eligible for the survey. This enabled us to understand the differential probability of selection *within households* for respondents according to how many eligible adults there were in a household and to take this into account when preparing the data for analysis (see weighting below) in order to maximise the validity of the responses.

### 2.1.3 Who we got

By the beginning of July we had achieved 1,401 interviews. However some specific quota cells proved particularly hard-to-fill with some resulting loss in representativeness. The responding sample had fewer than anticipated male respondents (but this follows patterns found in most social science research where women are much more willing to participate in research), fewer younger respondents (22 to 30), fewer respondents from black backgrounds, and fewer from the South East (see Table 2.1). To correct for this and to bring our responding sample broadly back into line with the target population, the data were weighted prior to analysis and the following chapters present findings based on the weighted data.

### 2.1.4 Weighting the data

A weight was calculated for the analysis to take account of the response bias outlined above across four variables: age, gender, ethnicity and region. It took into account the differential probability of selection within a household (according to how many eligible adults there were in the household), and was checked to ensure that there

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<sup>1</sup> It is not possible to assign comprehensively all telephone numbers to their correct geographical regions, however the match rate was assumed to be sufficient to ensure that the overall sample was broadly representative by region.

were no differences in response for ex-directory households (compared with those with directory numbers, see below).

## 2.2 Methodological approach

### 2.2.1 Designing the survey

The research involved a 20 minute computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) to provide indicative quantitative data on working adults' perceptions and intentions towards HE. The questionnaire was developed by IES with support from BMRB (who were undertaking the fieldwork) and the research steering group. In developing the questionnaire we took account of the aims of the research, the constraints of the methodology and research budget, and the impact on participants. To ensure relevance of questions for individuals and to maintain their interest in the research (and also to reduce the elapsed time of the interview), questions were targeted to specific groups of respondents depending on whether they would consider HE in the future or not. We also took into account the questions to be asked of young people in the other strand of the study (focused on young people aged 16/17 who had just finished their compulsory education), other existing surveys of adults such as the British Social Attitudes Survey, the National Adult Learners Survey, the Skills Survey, and the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education, and the literature on widening participation and adult learning (outlined in Chapter 1). We also drew together an external expert panel of researchers and practitioners<sup>1</sup> with considerable understanding of adults' experiences of learning and HE. We are extremely grateful to the panel for providing valuable input into the design of the survey.

Careful consideration was given to the introduction to the survey (including reassurance about the bona fides of the survey) and to the flow of questions so as to engage with all respondents, not just those considering HE, as we wanted to explore attitudes and perceptions across the range of the adult working population. It was important not to introduce the HE focus of the research too early on in the survey as this could alienate respondents, affecting their willingness to take part in the research and their responses to the questions (for example 'satisficing' that is selecting answer choices based on minimal thought). The survey, therefore, started with eligibility screening questions (see above) and then moved to ask about learning experiences (compulsory schooling and any additional learning experiences), current labour market status and current (or most recent) work experience, and future plans. This then led into questions focused on HE. These explored:

- general attitudes towards HE

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<sup>1</sup> The panel comprised: Steve Babbidge, Pam Coare, Helen Connor, Professor Alison Fuller, Dr Veronica McGivney and Cherie Woolmer.

- personal and family experience of HE
- awareness and understanding of HE
- decisions about HE (at different life stages) – past, present, future
- motivations to HE and preferences for HE (for those considering HE in the future)
- barriers to HE, encouragement factors and general benefits of HE (for those not considering HE)
- awareness of the costs of HE, how HE study might be funded, and attitudes towards debt.

Following the HE section there were a final few questions to collect personal details to allow sub-groups of respondents to be identified in the analysis. These personal questions are usually placed at the end of surveys to reduce the impact on response rates/survey drop-out. The introduction and flow of the survey, along with the eligibility screening questions, was piloted (in March) prior to the main fieldwork. The pilot was designed to test and refine the approach and the documentation to be used.

A range of question types were used in the survey including scale questions (eg to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement), factual questions with given response categories that were read out (eg at what age did you leave full time education), and open questions where the answers given were either coded against a set of pre-codes or recorded verbatim (see Appendix 2 for a copy of the questions).

### 2.2.2 Developing the sample

There are two main sampling methods for surveys of the general public, both of which aim to ensure representation of unlisted/ex-directory telephone numbers. The first of these methods (EPSEM – equal probability of selection method), uses a directory of all known ‘blocks’ of numbers<sup>1</sup> and then adds all possible combinations of the final four digits to create full numbers. This is a costly method as it generates a great deal of non-working telephone numbers (or ‘deadwood’) but is better for selecting a comprehensive probability sample. The second method uses a *directory plus n* method. This involves taking known numbers from directories and changing the last one or two digits to random other digits. This is more cost effective as it allows new numbers to be created that have a high probability of being ‘live’ numbers. It can under-represent ex-directory numbers but the potential under-representation can be monitored and corrected for with weighting (if ex-directory status is felt to introduce

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<sup>1</sup> A block is equal to an ‘exchange’ and covers all but the last four digits of a telephone number – eg in the number 020 8566 5000, the block is 0208566.

significant skews). However, this sampling method is less pure as it does not satisfy true random probability sampling (not all households have a known and non-zero chance of selection).

We used the *directory plus n* method using a sampling frame held by UK Changes.

## 2.3 Data analysis

The final dataset was cleaned and input into a statistical analysis package (SPSS) to explore statistically significant relationships between variables and the differing impact of characteristics. Key variables included:

- **Personal characteristics** – gender, age, ethnicity, family experience of HE and peer group experience of HE. In addition, where considered appropriate, the data were also explored by region, family make-up, living arrangements, housing tenure and financial self assessment.
- **Employment** – status and occupation (as a proxy for socio-economic background). In addition, where considered appropriate, the data were also explored by sector.
- **Learning** – highest level of qualification (at the time of the survey). In addition, where considered appropriate, the data were also explored by level of qualification achieved at school, subjective experience of school, and engagement with learning since continuous full time education (CFTE).

The findings outlined in the remaining chapters and presented in the tables are based on weighted data and show only those relationships that were statistically significant (at the 95 per cent confidence level). Each table indicates the size and nature of the responding group. In most cases, where individuals were able to give a non-response (such as ‘don’t know’) these have been excluded when calculating frequencies to provide valid responses only. However, in some circumstances, ‘don’t know’ is construed as a valid response and, therefore, appears in the tables. The bases presented in the tables are based on weighted cell counts and due to the SPSS rounding mechanism may differ by +/- 1. In the tables, data are not reported where the relevant row or column has an unweighted base of 30 or fewer cases. Where the base is between 31 and 50 the data are reported in brackets.

The data were also input into an econometric analysis package (STATA) to undertake multivariate analysis which allowed for modelling of factors associated with attitudes towards higher education and intentions towards HE.

Table 2.1: Target and number of interviews achieved, by group

	Target number	Target proportion, %	Achieved number	Achieved proportion, %	Weighted number	Weighted proportion, %
<i>Sex</i>						
Male	770	55	677	48	771	55
Female	630	45	724	52	630	45
<i>Age Group</i>						
22-30	320	23	230	16	322	23
31-44	630	45	663	47	630	45
45-55	450	32	508	36	448	32
<i>Ethnicity</i>						
White	1,260	90	1,274	91	1,262	91
Black	70	5	36	3	70	5
Asian	42	3	44	3	42	3
Others	28	2	47	3	13	1
<i>Region</i>						
North East	70	5	84	6	70	5
North West	196	14	162	12	196	14
Yorks and Humber	154	11	140	10	154	11
East Midlands	126	9	172	12	126	9
West Midlands	154	11	157	11	154	11
East of England	168	12	224	16	168	12
London	182	13	158	11	182	13
South East	210	15	129	9	210	15
South West	140	10	175	12	140	10
Total	1,400	100	1,401	100	1,401	100

Base: All

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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## 3 Sample Background

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This chapter focuses on the background of our responding sample. Given our methodology we know they are between the ages of 22 and 55, they live in England, they are in work or actively seeking work and they do not have a university level qualification already – but, beyond that, who are they? Firstly we describe their personal characteristics. We then look at their learning experiences both in school (continuous full-time education) and since, exploring the qualifications achieved and how they felt about their learning experiences, and more generally, their attitudes to learning and proximity to HE. Finally we look at their economic activity at the time of the survey and focus on their current, or most recent (if they are unemployed) work experience to understand the sector they work in, the job they do, and how they feel about their job; and then look at plans for the future – where our sample would like to be in five years time. This provides us with a picture of the history and current life stage of our respondents to set against attitudes and decisions about HE.

### 3.1.1 Personal characteristics

Just under half (45 per cent) of our respondents were female; approximately a quarter (23 per cent) were aged 30 or younger, 45 per cent were ‘in mid career’ in that they were between 31 and 44, and 32 per cent were between 45 and 55. Nine per cent of our respondents were from black and minority ethnic backgrounds<sup>1</sup> (five per cent from black backgrounds, three per cent from Asian backgrounds and one per cent from other or mixed backgrounds). In addition, four per cent reported that they had a

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the size of the respondent population, those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds have been analysed together as one group. However it should be noted that research, such as that undertaken by Connor et al. in 2004, shows significant differences between black and other minority ethnic groups and so this group should not be seen as homogeneous.

disability or health problem that limited their ability to carry out day to day activities.<sup>1</sup> (see Table 3.1).

Almost three-quarters (70 per cent) of respondents were married or lived with a partner and the remaining 30 per cent were single. Just over half (54 per cent) had financially dependent children that normally lived with them. Looking at family make-up as a whole, there was a small group of single parents (nine per cent), but the largest group in the responding sample were those married or living with a partner and with dependent children (44 per cent). The vast majority of respondents were home owners – either owning their home outright (14 per cent) or through a mortgage (59 per cent). Just over a quarter (27 per cent) were in rented accommodation – and there was a roughly equal balance between those renting privately through a private landlord or letting agency and those in council or housing association accommodation (13 per cent and 14 per cent respectively) (Table 3.1 below).

The vast majority (93 per cent) were in employment at the time of the survey, most commonly full-time employment. Using occupation, current or previous, as a proxy for socio-economic background or social class, two-fifths (43 per cent) of respondents were from lower socio-economic backgrounds – that is from lower technical, semi-routine, routine and manual occupations.

It is interesting to note that the group of younger adults (22 to 30 years old) had quite a different profile to those in mid career or older. Younger respondents were relatively less likely to be in managerial or professional occupations (a proxy for higher socio-economic background), were less likely to be in part-time or self employment, and less likely to own their own home (either outright or via a mortgage). Their family make-up also differed from mid career and older respondents, in that they were more likely to be single. Those in mid career were similar to older respondents with the exception that a very high proportion of those in mid career were married with children (62 per cent).

Similarly those from different socio-economic backgrounds had differing profiles. Those from managerial and professional occupational backgrounds were more likely to be working full-time and were less likely to be unemployed than those from lower groups, and were less likely to report financial difficulties. Those from managerial and professional background were also less likely to be from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, and men were over-represented in this group. Those from routine and manual work backgrounds were more likely to report financial difficulties (feeling they were just about getting by or finding quite or very difficult) and were more likely to be in private rented accommodation or council/housing

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<sup>1</sup> This is the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) definition of disability. It should be noted that it is based on an individual's perception of their condition, and may therefore underestimate the true extent of disability in the sample.

association accommodation. However there was no difference in family make-up (including having dependent children).

Table 3.1: Personal background of the responding sample

	Frequency	%
<i>Sex</i>		
Male	771	55.5
Female	630	45.0
<i>Age Group</i>		
22-30	322	23.0
31-44	630	45.0
45-55	448	32.0
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
White	1,262	91.0
Black	70	5.1
Asian	42	3.0
Other	13	0.9
<i>Disability</i>	59	4.2
<i>Family make-up</i>		
Married/living with partner (no children)	357	25.6
Married/living with partner (with children)	619	44.4
Single/divorced (no children)	288	20.7
Single parent	129	9.3
<i>Housing tenure</i>		
Own home outright	195	14.2
Own home mortgage	803	58.5
Rent/part rent (private landlord)	186	13.5
Rent/part rent (social housing)	188	13.7
<i>Employment status</i>		
Full-time employee	881	62.9
Part-time employee	283	20.2
Self employed	134	9.6
Unemployed and available for work	97	6.9
Other (but currently in paid work)	5	0.3
<i>Socio-economic background</i>		
Higher managerial/large employers	99	7.1
Higher professional	49	3.5
Lower managerial and professional/higher technical and supervisory	260	18.9
Intermediate	263	19.0
Small employers	111	8.1
Lower technical and supervisory	93	6.7
Semi-routine	338	24.4
Routine	150	10.8
Never worked/LT unemployed	18	1.3

Base: All

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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## 3.2 Educational background and learning experiences

### 3.2.1 Leaving Continuous Full-time Education (FTE)

The vast majority (87 per cent) of our respondents left school before the age of 19 and this corresponds closely with the population of adults surveyed via the National Adult Learners Survey (NALS, 2002, at 81 per cent). Only one in eight of our respondents stayed on in full-time education until they were at least 19 (see Appendix Table A3.1). The age that respondents left continuous full-time education varied by socio-economic background, gender, ethnicity and age at the time of survey. Men, those from white backgrounds, older respondents, and those from lower socio-economic groups were more likely to have left FTE at an earlier age (see Appendix Table A3.2).

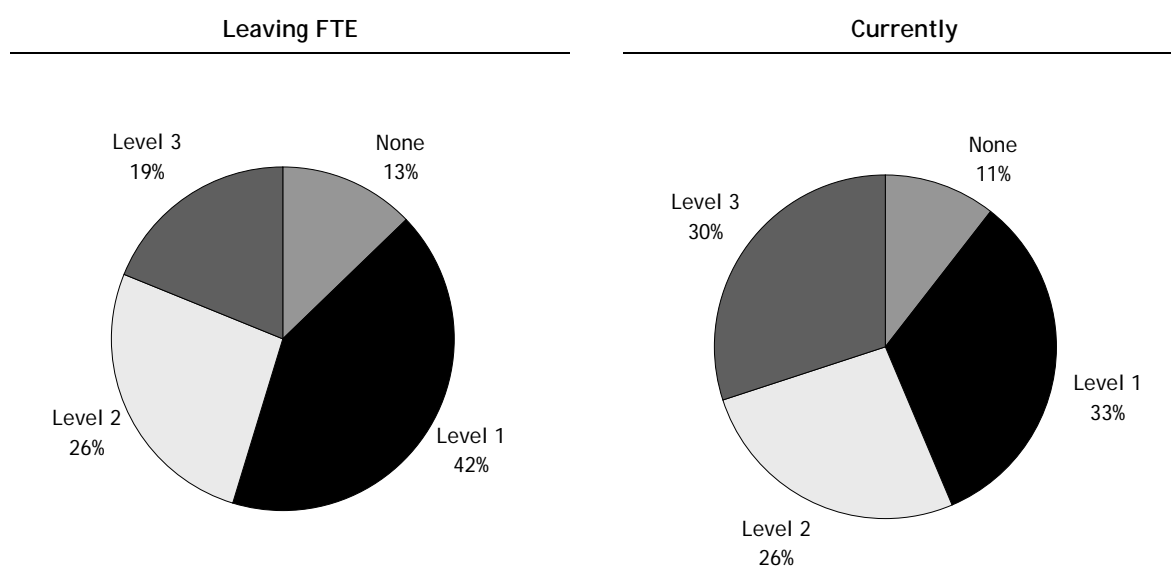
Over half of respondents (55 per cent) left school with a qualification level below Level 2. This is a lower level of achievement than found amongst current school leavers, where 61.5 per cent leave compulsory full-time education with at least a qualification equivalent to Level 2<sup>1</sup>. However, approximately one quarter (27 per cent) left school with a Level 2 qualification<sup>2</sup>, and just under one-fifth (19 per cent) stayed on to achieve a Level 3 qualification – the qualification level generally required to progress to HE (see Figure 3.1). The highest qualification level achieved upon leaving continuous FTE varied by age and socio-economic backgrounds. Older respondents and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds were much more likely to have left school with no formal qualifications, and conversely, younger respondents and those from managerial and professional backgrounds were much more likely to have achieved a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification by the time they left school (see Appendix Table A3.3). As might be expected, qualification level attained upon leaving FTE was strongly linked to the age at which respondents left – the longer individuals were in continuous full-time education the greater their qualification level achieved. Just over half (51 per cent) of those leaving before the age of 16, left with no formal qualifications. It is also interesting to note that those who left at or before sixteen were also less likely to have achieved a higher level of qualification in later years (see Appendix Table A3.5).

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<sup>1</sup> *GCSE and Equivalent Results in England 2006/07* (Provisional), DCSF Statistical First Release 34/2007.

<sup>2</sup> Level 2 qualification is equivalent to 5 or more A\*-C grade GCSEs. This includes: NVQ Level 2, intermediate GNVQ, RSA Diploma, City and Guilds Craft, BTEC/SCOTVEC first diploma, BTEC/SCOTVEC general diploma, 5 O levels, 1 A level, 2 AS levels, SCE higher.

Figure 3.1: Qualification level achieved - on leaving FTE, and currently



Base: All with known qual levels

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

### 3.2.2 Feelings about school and learning

Generally, respondents were more positive about their time at school than negative – over one-third of respondents (37 per cent) said that they had generally positive feelings about school or college whereas only 17 per cent said that they had negative feelings about school. However, almost half (45 per cent) had mixed feelings or no strong feelings either way. Subjective experience of school varied significantly by ethnicity and socio-economic background. Those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and from managerial and professional backgrounds were much more likely to have reported positive feelings (see Appendix Table A3.6). The age at which respondents left school was also significantly associated with subjective experience of education. Those who reported a negative experience of school/college were more likely to have left at a younger age (see Appendix Table A3.7).

Respondents' feelings about their overall performance at school were cool on the whole with just over a quarter (29 per cent) saying that they did well at school/college, and the majority reporting that their performance was average (57 per cent, see Appendix Table A3.8). Feelings about performance at school varied significantly by gender, age, and socio-economic background – women, younger respondents, and those from managerial, professional or intermediate occupations were more likely to report feeling they had done well at school (see Appendix Table A3.8). Subjective performance at school was also significantly related to respondents' subjective experience of school. Essentially if someone felt they had done well at school they were more likely to feel positive about their school experience and, conversely, if they felt they had done poorly they were more likely to feel negative about their time at

school (see Appendix Table A3.9). Subjective rating of performance also reflected attainment levels, so had some grounding in real achievement. Those who felt they had done well were much more likely to have achieved at least a Level 2 qualification (71 per cent), whereas few of those who felt they had done poorly left with even a Level 2 qualification (23 per cent, see Appendix Table A3.9).

### 3.2.3 Learning and training since school

We not only measured attainment (using both subjective and objective measures) at school, we also asked respondents if they had undertaken any learning or training since school and about their current qualification level.

The majority of respondents (80 per cent) had engaged in some form of organised training or learning since leaving school (continuous FTE) which corresponds closely with findings from the National Adult Learning Survey (NALS) 2005<sup>1</sup>. Most commonly this additional learning led to a formally recognised qualification and was undertaken part-time rather than full-time (see Table 3.2). This differs slightly from the NALS findings where learning was mainly informal. However, engagement with learning and training amongst our respondents varied significantly by age, with older respondents more likely to report learning and training; and also by socio-economic background with a higher incidence of learning and training amongst managerial/professional respondents. Respondents who were unemployed and looking for work at the time of interview were least likely to report having undertaken further learning or training (since school, see Appendix Table A3.14). Again these findings correspond closely with the finding from the most recent NALS with the exception that younger adults were the most likely to undertake some form of further learning.

Table 3.2: Type of learning engaged in since leaving continuous FTE

	Frequency	%
Full-time course leading to a qualification	207	19.5
Part-time course leading to a qualification	601	56.7
Taught course not leading to a formal qualification	380	35.9
Job related training courses	44	4.2
Self directed learning	9	0.9
Other type of learning	71	6.7
Any learning	1059	80.0

Base: Those engaged in training since cont FTE

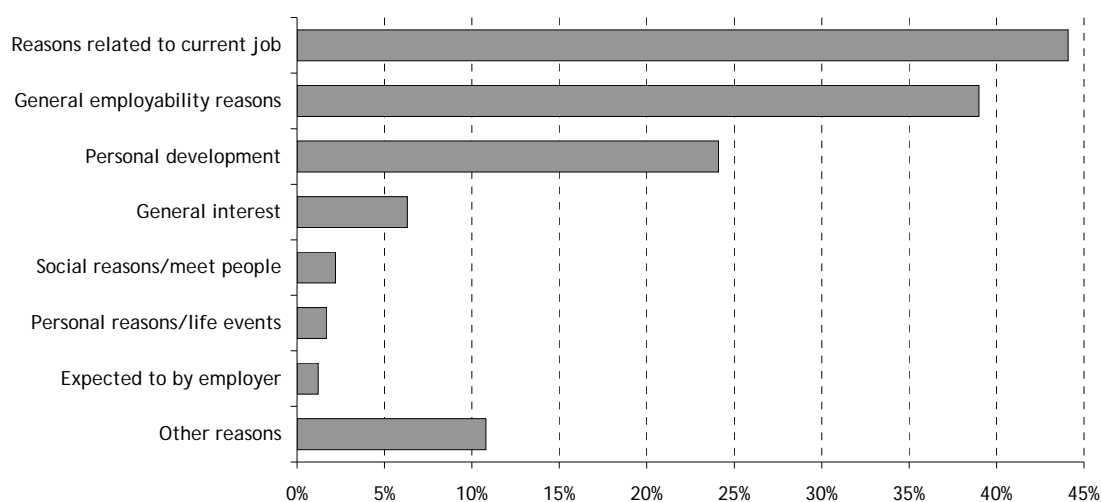
Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted however that the NALS 2005 survey population differs slightly from our survey population, as NALS covers 16 to 69 year olds.

Where respondents had taken part in some form of learning and training they were generally positive about their experience (62 per cent had generally positive feelings compared with 18 per cent with negative feelings), considerably more so than when thinking about their experience at school. The most commonly cited benefits of further learning (or learning outside of school) related to their current job (44 per cent), general employability (39 per cent), and personal development (24 per cent). Again these findings correspond closely with the most recent NALS where key benefits after a taught course were job related (finding work more enjoyable, 54 per cent, and getting paid more, 47 per cent), and with the National Learner Satisfaction Survey (NLSS, 2005<sup>1</sup>) where the most common benefit cited (along with greater enthusiasm for their subject) was developing skills they can use for their job. However both NALS (2005) and NLSS (2005) also highlight the wider benefits of learning such as improved confidence (socially and about learning) and higher levels of self esteem.

Figure 3.2: Perceived benefits of learning experiences since leaving continuous FTE



Base: Those who reported generally positive experience of learning since FTE

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

There also appeared to be a continued interest in learning and training among our respondents, particularly younger respondents. Almost a quarter (23 per cent) of all respondents, rising to 29 per cent of those aged 30 or younger, had looked for training or a taught course in the six months prior to the survey (see Appendix Table A3.11).

<sup>1</sup> National Learner Satisfaction Survey: Highlights from 2003-04 (2005) Learning and Skills Council, Coventry (note NLSS covers post-16 learners in England learning through FE, work-based learning and adult and community education providers which may differ slightly to our survey population).

## Had this further learning translated into improved qualification levels or upskilling?

At the time of the survey, 30 per cent had a Level 3 qualification, 26 per cent had a Level 2 qualification, and 44 per cent were qualified to below Level 2 (see Figure 3.1)<sup>1</sup>. As before, qualification level varied in relation to age and socio-economic background (with younger respondents and those from higher socio-economic groups more likely to have higher level qualifications) but at the time of the survey it also varied by employment status. Those employed full-time or self employed were relatively more likely to be qualified to Level 3 than others, whereas those who were employed part-time or were looking for work, were relatively more likely to have no formal qualifications (or for part-timers to be qualified only to Level 1). (see Appendix Table A3.12).

The size of the group now qualified to Level 3 had increased by 11 percentage points from school leaving to the time of the survey (from 19 per cent to 30 per cent). A sizeable group (17 per cent) had increased their level of qualification since they left school. Those most likely to have ‘up skilled’ were: those who reported engaging in formal learning since school, from white backgrounds, those who left school early (at or before 16) and those who left school with a Level 1 qualification. Those leaving school with no formal qualifications were the least likely to have improved their qualification status (ie achieved a higher level qualification) in later years (see Appendix Table A3.13). Thus the relative size of this group hardly changed over time – 13 per cent to 11 per cent at the time of the survey (see Figure 3.1).

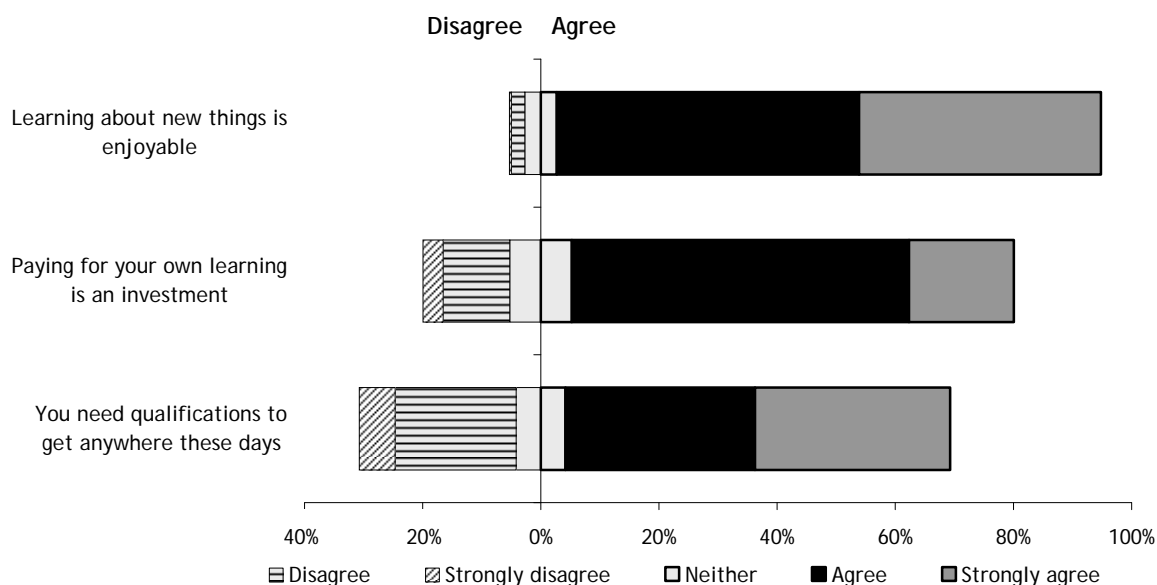
### 3.2.4 Attitudes towards learning

Respondents were generally positive about learning which reflects their engagement with further learning since school. The vast majority of respondents (92 per cent) agreed that *‘learning about new things is enjoyable’* and there was little difference across different groups of respondents in this respect. Three-quarters (75 per cent) agreed with the statement *‘I see paying for your own education as an investment’*, and men were more likely to agree with this statement than women. Two-thirds (65 per cent) felt qualifications were important, agreeing with the statement *‘You need qualifications to get anywhere these days’*. However, just over a quarter of respondents (27 per cent) did not feel that qualifications were needed to get anywhere (see Figure 3.3). Those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, older respondents and those from intermediate occupational backgrounds were significantly more likely to agree that qualifications were needed to get anywhere (see Appendix Table A3.17).

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<sup>1</sup> It should perhaps be noted that while the Level 3 responding population is similar to that found in the LFS (Spring 2006), those qualified below Level 3 were more likely to have lower level qualifications than those in the Labour Force Survey.

Figure 3.3: Attitudes towards learning



Base: All, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Attitudes to learning were linked with previous learning experiences. Although on the whole still positive about learning, those who had reported negative feelings about school and/or who reported they had done poorly at school or college, or were negative about learning experiences since school were not as strongly in agreement about the benefits of learning.

### 3.3 Experiences of HE

We know that our responding sample have not been to university but do they know people, family and/or friends that have? Knowing someone who has been to university provides individuals with indirect experience and information about HE that could shape their attitudes and perceptions about HE (see Chapter 4), and also influence their decisions about participation (see Chapter 5). Research has shown that these informal sources (friends and family) are key influencers on choices about HE<sup>1</sup> and other forms of post compulsory education.

The majority of respondents had some family experience of HE (68 per cent) or knew someone who had been to or were at university (73 per cent). As the numbers of individuals participating in HE rise and the types of people going to university broaden, this increases and will continue to increase the likelihood of an individual

<sup>1</sup> See for example, Connor et al. (1999) *Making the Right Choice: How Students Choose Universities and Colleges*, CVCP; and UCAS (2002) *Paving the Way*, UCAS.

having someone in their family and social circle with some knowledge and/or experience of HE.

Few respondents (eight per cent) had a parent who had experienced HE, and those that did tended to be younger respondents. The vast majority (61 per cent) had wider family experience of HE including a substantial minority (21 per cent) with a child or children who had been or were at university (this tended to be older respondents). Just under one-third (32 per cent) had no family experience of HE (see Table 3.3). It is interesting to note that those in mid-career (aged 31 to 44) were the least likely to have family experience of HE.

Table 3.3: Family experience of HE

	Frequency	%
- Mother	75	5.3
- Father	61	4.4
<i>Parent</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>7.6</i>
- Spouse/partner	145	10.3
- Brother	227	16.2
- Sister	228	16.3
- Child(ren)	287	20.5
<i>Wider family</i>	<i>847</i>	<i>60.5</i>
<i>None</i>	<i>448</i>	<i>32.0</i>

Base: All

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

A slightly greater proportion of respondents had peer group experience of HE, in that they had friends who had studied or were at university. Just over a quarter (27 per cent) knew no-one who had been to university (see Table 3.4). Those from lower socio-economic groups were less likely to have peer group experience of HE, as were older respondents (45 and older). Only a small group (13 per cent) reported that most of their friends had experienced HE, and these individuals would have been having a different life experience to the bulk of their peer group.

Table 3.4: Peer group experience of HE - number of friends who have studied/are in HE

	Frequency	%
None	374	26.8
Yes, just a few	517	37.1
Yes, several	325	23.3
Yes, most	178	12.8

Base: All (excludes don't knows)

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

### 3.4 Work experiences and goals

As noted above, the vast majority (93 per cent) of respondents were employed at the time of the survey, more were employed in a full-time capacity than part-time (63 per cent compared with 20 per cent) and one in ten were self employed (ten per cent). A small group (seven per cent) were unemployed and looking for work. This corresponds closely with figures from the Labour Force Survey (LFS, Spring 2006) for a similar population, where 94 per cent were in employed and 13 per cent were in self employment.

Table 3.5: Current employment status of current or previous job (if not currently employed)

	Frequency	%
FT employee	881	62.9
PT employee	283	20.2
Self employed	134	9.6
Unemployed and available for work	97	6.9
Other (but also undertaking paid work)	5	0.3
Total	1,401	100.0

Base: All

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

The most common sector of employment (based on current job for those employed or working for themselves or previous job for those looking for work) was the public sector (accounting for 30 per cent of respondents), followed by banking and finance 17 per cent), wholesale and retail (15 per cent), and manufacturing (13 per cent). Again this corresponds closely with figures from the LFS in 2006 for a similar population, although the proportion working in the public sector is marginally higher amongst our sample (30 per cent compared to 23 per cent in LFS).

Table 3.6: Current industry of current or previous job (if not currently employed)

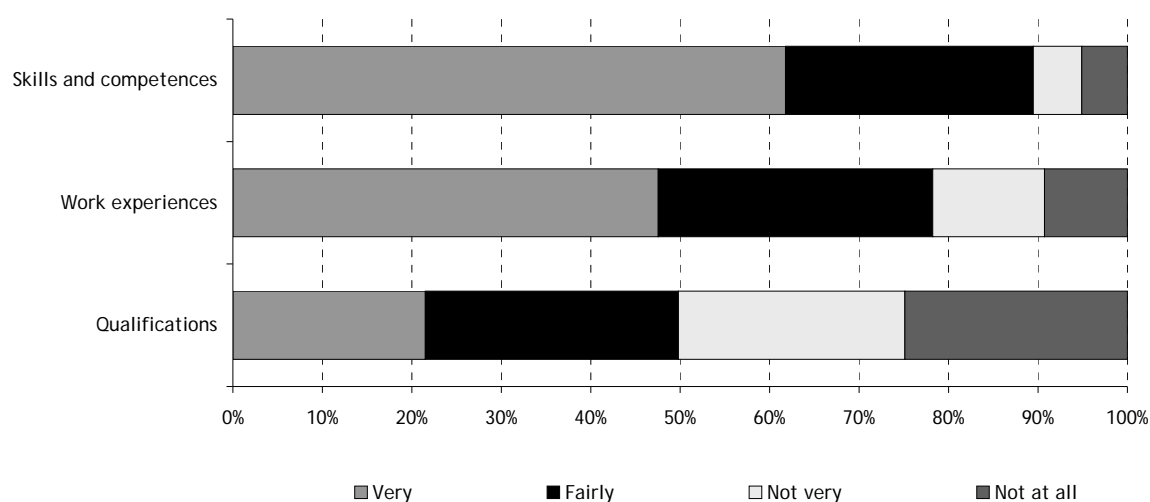
	Frequency	%
Agriculture	12	0.9
Mining/utilities	10	0.7
Manufacturing	169	12.5
Construction	113	8.4
Wholesale/retail	200	14.8
Hotels/restaurants	42	3.1
Transport/communications	119	8.8
Banking/finance/property services	225	16.7
Public services	400	29.7
Other services	59	4.4
Total	1,348	100.0

Base: All, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Respondents tended to feel that it was their work experience and particularly skills and competencies that secured their job, rather than their qualifications. Indeed whilst half (50 per cent) felt their qualifications were fairly or very important to their employer when taking them on, 78 per cent and 89 per cent respectively felt it was their work experience and skills and competencies that were important. It should be remembered that this is based on individuals' *perceptions* about the factors that were important to their employer when deciding to employ them, which may differ from what employers actually valued. However this does give an insight into the perceived value, in employment terms, of qualifications relative to other attributes and would appear to correspond with recent research on the value of qualifications from an employer perspective (Bates et al., 2008<sup>1</sup>). This survey of the recruitment and training practices of large firms shows that half of these organisations look at qualifications when recruiting but only 11 per cent regard qualifications as the main attribute they look for. Employers instead tend to prioritise motivation and attitude. However when recruiting to higher level occupations (eg managerial/ professional roles) they are more likely to require qualifications as they are regarded as a good indicator of skills at this level.

Figure 3.4: Perceived importance of factors in getting current (or previous) job



Base: All, excluding don't know

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

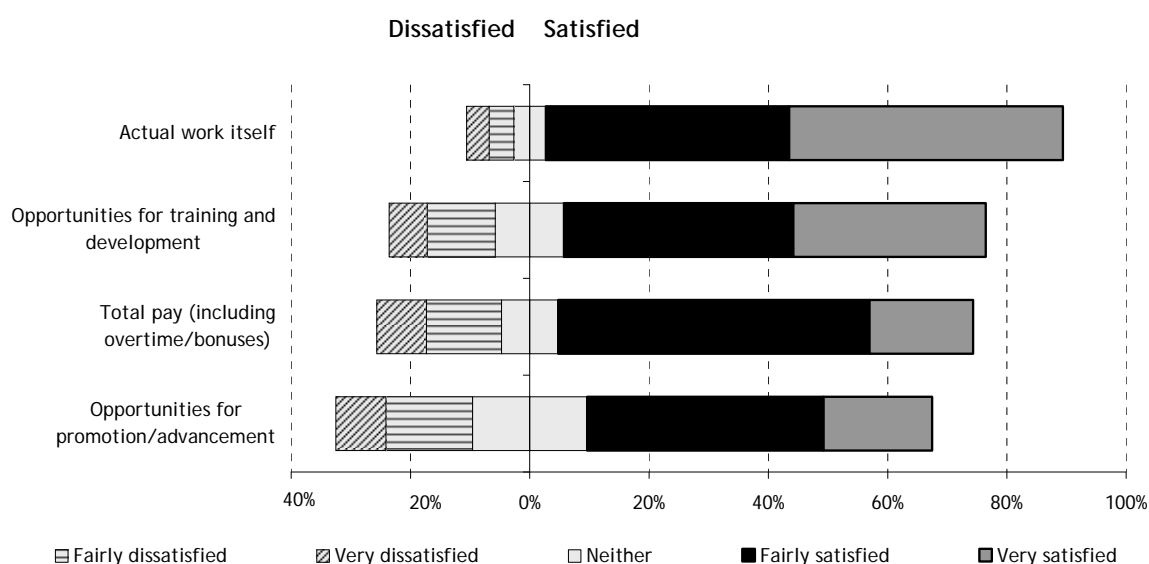
Not surprisingly, those with higher level qualifications were more likely to note the importance of qualifications in getting their job. However qualifications were also perceived to be relatively more important to those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and those working in intermediate occupations (rather than routine or manual work). This links with attitudes to learning described earlier, where these

<sup>1</sup> Bates P, Johnson C and Gifford J (2008), Recruitment and Training Among Large National Employers, Learning and Skills Council report.

groups were more likely to see qualifications as important (ie you need qualifications to get anywhere these days). Those working in retail/hospitality and in transport and communications were significantly less likely to rate the importance of their qualifications (see Appendix Table A3.23).

Those in work at the time of the survey tended to be satisfied with their jobs – in that a greater proportion were satisfied than were dissatisfied with various measured aspects of their employment. Respondents were most satisfied with the work itself, followed by opportunities for training and development and then pay. They were least satisfied with opportunities for promotion/advancement. Just under a quarter (23 per cent) were dissatisfied with this aspect of their job, so this group could be feeling stuck in their current work.

Figure 3.5: Satisfaction with job aspects



Base: Those currently in work, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

### 3.4.1 Future plans

Respondents were asked about their medium term goals, where they would like to see themselves in five years time. Employees and those unemployed at the time of the survey tended to anticipate some sort of change – generally in terms of their employment rather than in terms of learning or taking time out of the labour market – and tended to be confident that they could achieve these goals, although they were relatively less confident about being able to take time out of the labour market.

Just under two-thirds (66 per cent) of employees anticipated some sort of change, most commonly doing a higher level job, but self employment and working whilst pursuing further qualifications were also cited. However, approximately one-third (34 per cent) wanted to remain in the same job with the same employer (see Appendix

Table A3.24). Far fewer of those who were unemployed at the time of the survey anticipated making no change to their working life (nine per cent) whereas the majority anticipated getting a job (65 per cent) and a sizeable group (20 per cent) anticipated undertaking learning (see Appendix Table A3.25). The vast majority of those who were self employed at the time of the survey planned to stay that way (see Appendix Table A3.26).

Those anticipating making some change in their working lives were asked an open question about what they thought would help them achieve their goal and a range of facilitating factors were cited. Focusing on the largest group (those in employment but who anticipated making a change in their employment), they most commonly felt that their own personal attributes and some further training might help them achieve their goal of a change in their employment. Other aspects considered helpful were having more money and work experience (see Appendix Table A3.27). Those who were unemployed at the time of the survey, but who planned to gain employment in the medium term, were considerably more likely to feel that gaining new skills and qualifications would help them in achieving their goal (than those already in employment) – for this group skills and qualifications may be perceived as a route back to the labour market (see Appendix Tables A3.24 and A3.25).

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## 4 Attitudes, Experiences and Awareness of HE

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This chapter focuses on the views of our respondents about HE and their opinions on studying at university be it full-time study, part-time study or study through institutions like the Open University. We then move on to explore the foundations of these views including their own perceptions of how well informed they believe themselves to be and the sources of information and advice they have used or would use when thinking about going to university.

### Key messages - opportunities

- Attitudes to HE, across all groups of respondents, were positive. Those with family and peer group experience of HE held the most positive views of HE.
- Although respondents felt that people who go to university end up with heavy debts, going to university was considered to be worth the costs, something everyone should consider and both relevant (even if you have a job) and accessible.
- Adults generally felt informed about the opportunities available in HE. Those with family and, particularly, peer group experience of HE were most likely to feel well informed about how to get into university and what you could do at university. Yet friends and family tended not to be recognised as sources of information and advice about HE.
- Key sources of information about HE were the internet and universities and colleges themselves.

### Key messages - challenges

- HE was not seen as a passport to the best jobs
- For some, HE was still regarded as 'not for the likes of them'. Men, those in manufacturing, utilities and land-based and construction industries, those from lower socio-economic groups, those who had a poor experience at school and with no real experience of HE (via friends or family) may need more convincing that university could be something they could consider.

- There were some concerns about getting into university particularly among lower socio-economic groups, those with lower level qualifications and with limited experience of HE (no friends or family with experience of HE). One third (36 per cent) thought it would be difficult to get in and over half (53 per cent) felt not at all or not very well informed about entry requirements. These groups may need more information about the routes into HE.
- Two-thirds (65 per cent) had not looked for information or advice about HE. Employers are not regarded as a key source of information.

#### Key messages for sub groups

- For all groups the most strongly positive attitudes to HE were that university is not just for young people, people like me do go to university, going to university is still relevant even when you have got a job, and going to university is worth the cost.
- However men were relatively more likely to feel university is only for young people and not for people like themselves but were more likely to feel the best jobs go to graduates. Women however were more likely to feel that going to university would lead to heavy debt. Women were also more likely than men to have sought information and advice about HE and were correspondingly more likely to feel informed about opportunities available in HE.
- Age had no real effect on attitudes to HE. Those in the mid-age group felt least well informed about HE but were less likely to have sought information and advice.
- Adults from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were more likely than white respondents to feel that going to university is something that everyone should consider but were more likely to question the value of HE - feeling that going to university is not worth the cost and that, once in work, going to university becomes irrelevant. This group were relatively more likely to have sought information and advice and thus to feel informed about HE - both in terms of opportunities available and entry requirements.
- Those from lower socio-economic backgrounds (routine and manual work roles) were more likely to feel that people like themselves don't go to university and that it would be difficult to get into university, and those from mid socio-economic groups were more likely to feel that going to university is not worth the cost. Those from lower socio-economic groups were relatively less likely to have sought information or advice about HE.

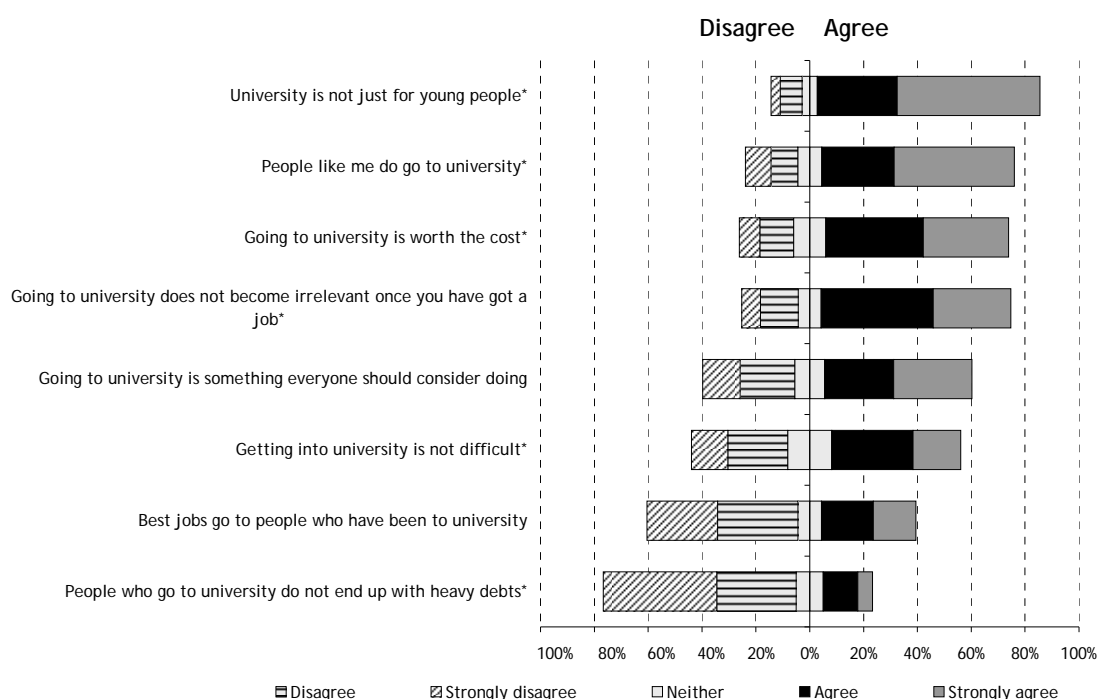
## 4.1 Attitudes towards HE

Generally attitudes towards HE were positive. Although respondents tended to agree that people who go to university end up with heavy debts (72 per cent), over two-thirds (68 per cent) felt going to university was worth the cost. Also over half (55 per cent) felt that going to university was something that everyone should consider, even older people (83 per cent felt that university was not just for young people) and people like themselves (82 per cent felt people like themselves go to university), and

that university was accessible (48 per cent felt getting into university was not difficult). This general perception that HE could be an option for anyone, even someone like themselves, is an important but relatively recent change in attitudes about HE that has occurred over the last decade or so.

Respondents tended to feel that HE was not necessary to gain employment (56 per cent felt the best jobs do not go to people who have been to university); but could be something to consider once you were in employment, as 71 per cent felt going to university was still relevant, even once you got a job (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Attitudes towards HE



Base: All, excluding don't knows

Note: \* these statements have been reversed, so that all agreements are associated with positive attitudes to HE, and disagreements are associated with negative attitudes to HE.

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

#### 4.1.1 Determining perceptions of HE

We can explore influences on attitudes or perceptions of HE using bivariate analysis and multivariate analysis. Bivariate analysis looks at connections between attitudes and each of a number of background characteristics, whereas multivariate analysis

uses regression-based modelling<sup>1</sup> to estimate how attitudes are influenced by a range of factors in conjunction.

### University open to all

It would appear that HE is regarded positively, as something available to all ages and not just for young people and this view was almost universal (with little variation across different types of respondents, even regardless of the age of the respondent). It is interesting to note, however, that men were perhaps more concerned about the age factor (more likely to feel university is only for young people), which is confirmed by the regression model, as were those in manufacturing, utilities, land-based and construction sectors (where men are over-represented in the workforce).

Although the majority of respondents felt that *'people like me do go to university'*, there was some variation in views about university fit. Men (and again those from manufacturing, utilities, land-based and construction sectors), were relatively more likely to think *'people like me do not go to university'*, as were those from lower socio-economic backgrounds (using occupation as a proxy), those with lower level qualifications, and those with no family or friends with experience of HE. These determinants of perception were confirmed by the regression model. Statistics of participation in HE indeed show that these groups are under-represented in the HE student body, suggesting that their perception is grounded in reality but these may be mutually reinforcing each other. These findings also confirm previous research.

Conversely, those from higher socio-economic backgrounds, with higher qualifications and those with parents or with friends who had been to university, and those who own their own home rather than live in social housing were more likely to feel that *'people like me do go to university'*.

Again, there was some variation in views about whether going to university is something everyone should consider. No clear patterns emerged with the exception that those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were more likely to feel HE is something everyone should consider, and the regression model confirmed that those from Asian or other ethnic groups (rather than white or black backgrounds) were driving this relationship.

As noted above, just under half (48 per cent) of our respondents felt getting into university was not difficult, however, just over one-third (36 per cent) did feel it would be difficult. Respondents who reported not being well informed about the entry requirements to go to university were more likely than those who felt informed

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<sup>1</sup> Regression based modelling, in this case ordered logistic regression, holds a set of baseline characteristics constant in order to identify factors associated with a particular outcome – the extent to which respondents agree or disagree with given statements about HE.

to think that getting into university is difficult, suggesting that this group may need more information about the accessibility of HE.

Other groups most likely to have felt getting in would be difficult were those from lower socio-economic groups (routine and manual occupations), those with lower level qualifications, and those with no friends with experience of HE – all these were confirmed in the regression model. Those in social housing, those unemployed at the time of the survey, and single respondents with no children (arguably those with limited family support) were also more likely to have felt that getting into university is difficult (although these were not significant in the regression model). It is perhaps interesting to note that these groups were no less likely to feel they lacked information about entry requirements.

### Value of HE

The majority of respondents agreed that people who go to university end up with heavy debts and those who were most likely to have agreed were women, those working in the public sector (where women are over-represented in the workforce), and those working part-time at the time of the survey (again where women are over-represented) – again confirmed in the regression model. This links with women's greater concerns over debt (outlined later in Chapter 8). Yet there was no difference between men and women in their cost benefit analysis of HE, in that their patterns of responses to the statement '*going to university is worth the cost*' were similar. However, there was some variation noted by ethnicity. Those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were more likely to have felt HE was not worth the cost (although this was not significant in the regression model). Again this links with attitudes but this time in terms of financing adults' HE study (see Chapter 8). Those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were more likely to think that the government and/or taxpayers should contribute (more so than an individual) to their own study. Also younger adults were marginally more likely than older respondents to have felt going to university was not worth the cost. The regression model highlighted that those from intermediate occupations (so neither managerial and professional nor routine and manual occupations), and those with no or few friends with experience of HE, were also more likely to have felt going to university was not worth the cost.

In terms of the value to be gained from HE participation, measured through perceptions about improved access to jobs and usefulness to one's career, there was some variation noted by gender, friends and family experience of HE, and also age, level of qualification and ethnicity. Those who were most likely to have agreed with the statement '*the best jobs go to people who have been to university*' were men, and those with friends and/or sibling or wider family member (not parent) who had been to university (confirmed by the regression model). Also older respondents and those with higher level qualifications were more likely to believe graduates get the best jobs but this was not significant in the regression model. Interestingly, those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were marginally more likely to have felt that the

best jobs go to people who have been to university but were also significantly more likely (than those from white backgrounds) to have felt that going to university becomes irrelevant once you have got a job. This suggests that for this group, university may be seen as a way of getting you in (to work) but not on (in work).

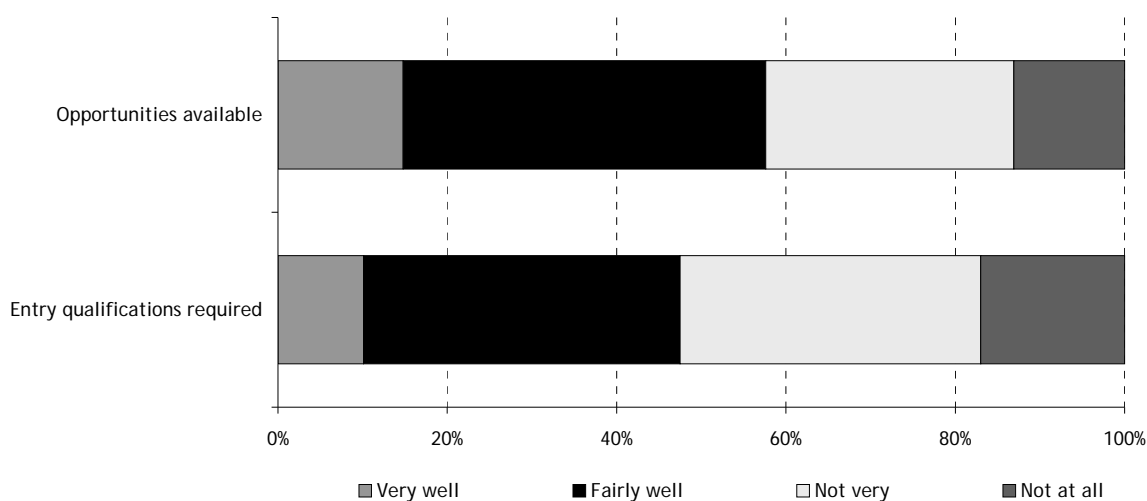
It is perhaps interesting to note that there was no real difference across this group of measured attitudes to HE, found by socio-economic background. So those from lower socio-economic backgrounds were no more likely than those from other backgrounds to have felt that HE leads to heavy debt, that HE is not worth the cost, that going to university becomes irrelevant once you have got a job, or that the best jobs go to those who have been to university. However the regression model indicated that those from intermediate occupational backgrounds were more likely to feel that going to university was not worth the cost (see Appendix Table A4.1 for a summary of statistically significant results from the eight regression models).

## 4.2 Awareness and information gathering

Generally, respondents felt they had some knowledge about the opportunities available in HE, by which we mean the types of qualifications you can take, the subjects you can do, the places you can study and the ways in which you can study. Those who were most likely to consider themselves well informed about this aspect were older, from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, were women, and had friends at or who had been to university. Only 13 per cent said they knew nothing about the opportunities available (see Figure 4.2).

A greater proportion felt they knew about the opportunities available than felt they knew about the entry qualifications required (based on their own opinion). Over half (53 per cent) said they knew nothing or not very much about entry requirements. Those most likely to consider themselves well informed (in terms of entry requirements) were again, those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and those with friends at or who had been to university but also those with family experience of HE and with higher level qualifications. Younger respondents appeared to be the most well informed about entry requirements and those mid-age considered themselves the least well informed in this respect. This mid-age group were also less likely than those older or younger to feel well informed about the opportunities available in HE.

Figure 4.2: How well informed about aspects of HE (self perception)



Base: All, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Although respondents felt they had some knowledge about HE in terms of opportunities and access, approximately two-thirds (65 per cent) said they had not looked for information or advice about HE (either for themselves or for someone else in their family). However 35 per cent had sought information or advice about HE. Those most likely to have looked for information or advice were women, younger and older (rather than those in mid career), from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, from higher socio-economic backgrounds (managerial/professional and intermediate occupations), those with parental experience of HE, those with peer group experience of HE and those with higher levels of qualification (see Appendix Table A4.6). These groups closely correspond with the groups most likely to consider themselves to be well informed about HE, which would indicate that seeking information or advice leads to greater perceived awareness.

Amongst the one-third that had looked for information, the most common sources consulted were the internet and educational establishments, either universities or HE colleges themselves or local schools and colleges. These sources were also the most commonly cited by those who had not looked for information, when asked where they would go if they wanted to find out more about HE (see Table 4.1). Given the potential 'influence' of family and friends it is perhaps notable that these were rarely cited as actual or potential sources of information amongst our respondents. It would appear that they may be regarded more as a source of encouragement rather than as a source of information. Similarly it is interesting to note that respondents in the main did not see employers as a potential source of information or advice about HE, and few went to, or would consider going to, a careers advisor or careers service (such as learndirect). However, the importance and visibility of formal careers advice may increase in the future with the planned introduction of the new adult advancement and careers service, which aims to be fully operational by 2010/11. This will bring

together existing adult services and provide support online, via telephone and face to face (as outlined in Opportunity, Employment and Progression: Making Skills Work (2007) DIUS/DWP).

Table 4.1: Advice and information about HE

	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<b>Looked for information/advice*</b>				
Yes	493	35.2		
No			907	64.8
<b>Source#</b>	<b>Used</b>		<b>Would use</b>	
Internet	223	45.2	424	46.7
University/HE college	171	34.7	203	22.4
School/local college	124	25.2	142	15.7
Careers advisor	28	5.8	47	5.2
Friends/work colleague	21	4.3	40	4.4
Family	13	2.6	19	2.1
Newspaper, magazine, directory	11	2.3	15	1.6
Library	8	1.7	56	6.1
Telephone helpline/learndirect	7	1.4	8	0.9
Employer	5	1.0	13	1.5
Trade Union	0	0.0	1	0.1
Base	493		907	

Base: \*All, # whether looked for advice/info or not.

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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## 5 Decisions About HE Entry

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This chapter looks at decisions about going to university made in the past and also future intentions towards HE. We first look at decisions our respondents made at the time of leaving full-time continuous education, a key transition stage and a time when many young people decide whether to pursue HE or move into the world of work. We then explore whether our respondents had considered going to university at any time since then. Finally we look at intentions, to explore thoughts about going to university at some time in the future.

### Key messages - opportunities

- Twenty-four per cent of working adults had considered HE during their career since leaving school. Some groups were more likely to have considered HE than others and past consideration of HE was found to be strongly linked to future consideration of HE. These included: younger adults, those from managerial and professional backgrounds, individuals with family and peer group experience of HE, those who stayed in full-time education longer, those who achieved higher levels of qualification (at school and since) and felt they had done well at school, and those working (at the time of the survey) in the high value service sector and in public sector.
- Thirty per cent of working adults would consider going to university at some point in the future, including six per cent who were already seriously considering it. Taking into account a range of educational and personal background characteristics those most likely to consider HE in the future were: from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, with a disability/health problem, living with their parents, with parental and/or peer group experience of HE, with a negative experience of school and/or a negative self assessment of their school performance, and living in social housing. These groups may feel more strongly about the benefits that HE can bring such as overcoming existing disadvantage and/or feel that HE is a more real possibility for them (ie is more accessible).
- Indeed positive attitudes to HE were strongly associated with propensity to consider HE in the future particularly that 'university is not just for young people', 'people like me do go to university', 'going to university is not irrelevant once you get a job', 'the best jobs go to those who have been to university' and 'going to university is something everyone should consider'.

- Yet future consideration of HE was not determined by age, gender, socio-economic background or level of qualification nor perceptions about how easy or difficult it is to get into university or perceptions about the costs involved.

### Key messages - challenges

- Key reasons for not going to university amongst working adults with no previous experience of HE were: a perceived lack of need or value of the HE experience (didn't need it to get work/career, easier to get a job); concerns around finances (concerns with the costs of study/debt issues, needed to earn money); a lack of interest (not interested, didn't see the point, had enough of studying); and other commitments (lack of time due to work or family reasons).
- For those who had not considered HE during their careers, their reasons for not going centred around a perceived lack of value and a lack of interest, whereas those who had considered HE were more likely to be deterred by concerns around finances and work or family commitments.

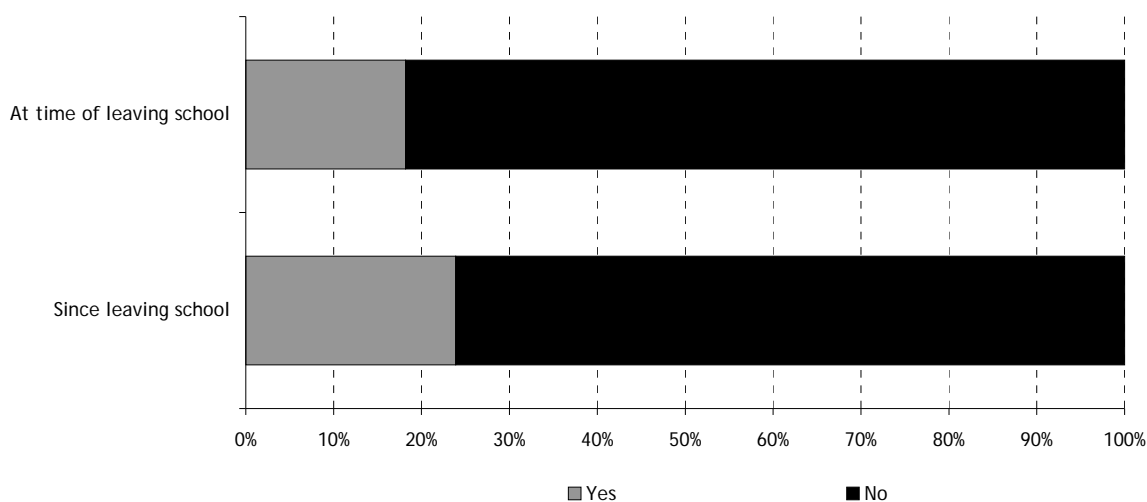
### Key messages for sub groups

- There was no real difference between men and women in the propensity to consider HE either during one's career nor in the future. However there was a difference when looking at reasons for past non-participation. Men appeared less interested in HE or did not think they needed to go, which fits with earlier attitudes to HE where men were more likely to regard HE as 'not for the likes of them', whereas women were relatively more likely to have been put off going to HE during their careers to date by work and family commitments.
- Younger working adults (those aged 22 to 30) were more likely than older respondents to have considered going to university both at the time of leaving their continuous full-time education and during their careers. This group however were more likely to have been deterred by the financial aspects of HE participation. Younger adults also appeared to be more likely to consider HE in the future but this appeared to be driven by factors other than age.
- Adults from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were relatively more likely to consider going to university in the future. In terms of past non-participation, this group appeared to have been less deterred by a perceived lack of value than white working adults.
- Those from lower socio-economic backgrounds (routine and manual work roles) were relatively less likely to have considered HE both after school and during their careers, whereas those from managerial and professional backgrounds were more likely to have considered going to university but this latter group were relatively more likely to have reported not going because they did not see the value in attending. Yet socio-economic background was not linked to future consideration of HE despite differences in attitudes towards HE (outlined in the previous chapter).

## 5.1 Past consideration of HE

Respondents were asked to think back to when they finished their full-time education and whether they had seriously thought about applying to university around that time. Just under one-fifth (18 per cent) reported that they had considered it but 82 per cent had not (see Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Whether considered going to HE at time of leaving school/college or since



Base: All, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Research<sup>1</sup> indicates that staying in education beyond the age of 16, and staying on to go into HE, is determined by success in school and so level of qualification at age 16 predicts educational pathway. It is also influenced by parents and peer group. Young people from managerial/professional family backgrounds are more likely to aspire to HE, whereas those from routine/manual family backgrounds are more likely to want to leave school. It is, therefore, perhaps worth re-capping on the make-up of our respondent group and to remind ourselves that this group have not been to university, so although they may have seriously considered going to university this was not translated into action<sup>2</sup>. Just over half (55 per cent) had left school by the age of 16, 55 per cent left school with a qualification below Level 2, 17 per cent had negative feelings about their time at school, and 15 per cent felt they did poorly at school.

Amongst our respondents, those least likely to have considered going to university as an option at the time they left school were older respondents and not surprisingly those who left school by age 16 (although about six per cent of this group did think

<sup>1</sup> See Gorard et al. (2006), Review of Widening Participation Research: Addressing the Barriers to Participation in HE, HEFCE, for a good discussion of research findings.

<sup>2</sup> A small number (13 unweighted) did report that they started university but left early.

seriously about HE). Also, corresponding with existing research, those least likely were from lower socio-economic backgrounds<sup>1</sup>, those whose parents did not attend university, those with no, or few friends with experience of HE (measured at the time of the survey, rather than when they left school), those who left school with lower qualifications, who felt negatively about their school experience and felt they did poorly at school (see Appendix Tables A5.1 and A5.2). Alternatively, those most likely to have considered applying to university after school were younger, those with friends and/or family with experience of HE, from managerial and professional backgrounds, and with positive objective and subjective school outcomes. For some groups, those with family and peer group experience of HE and generally younger respondents, this greater interest in HE persists and they continue to consider HE as an option (see below).

Respondents were asked an open question about what they considered were the main reasons why they did not go to university after school. The most commonly cited reasons for not going at that time were a lack of interest (28 per cent gave answers around *'not interested/didn't see the point/had enough of studying'*) and a perceived lack of value (25 per cent gave answers around *'didn't need it to get work/easier to get job'*). Fifteen per cent cited financial reasons (answers around *'concerns with the costs of studying/debt issues/needed to earn money'*) for not considering HE when they left school, and approximately one-tenth (12 per cent) of respondents cited *'not having the necessary qualifications'* as a reason for not going. This proportion citing lack of qualifications is perhaps lower than we could expect given that a large proportion of respondents left school/college with a low level of qualification (55 per cent left with a qualification below Level 2). A further five per cent said they did not go because they lacked encouragement or it wasn't expected of them (see Figure 5.4). These findings again fit with previous research<sup>2</sup> focused on young people in that key reasons for non-participation centre around wanting to get a job and earn a wage, not needing a degree to pursue chosen career and wanting to stop studying and leave education. Research also indicates finance to be a consideration in decisions about HE at an early age, in terms of not wanting to end up in debt, but these tend to be mediated by personal and private reasons. It is interesting to note that respondents who had said they had not considered going to university were significantly more likely to say this was because they were not interested and could not see the point in going, whereas those who had seriously considered going to HE were significantly more likely to say they had not gone due to financial reasons (see Figure 5.2).

Other differences were noticed in reasons for non-participation in HE following on from full-time education. Those with no family experience of HE were much more likely than those with some family experience to say they had not considered going to

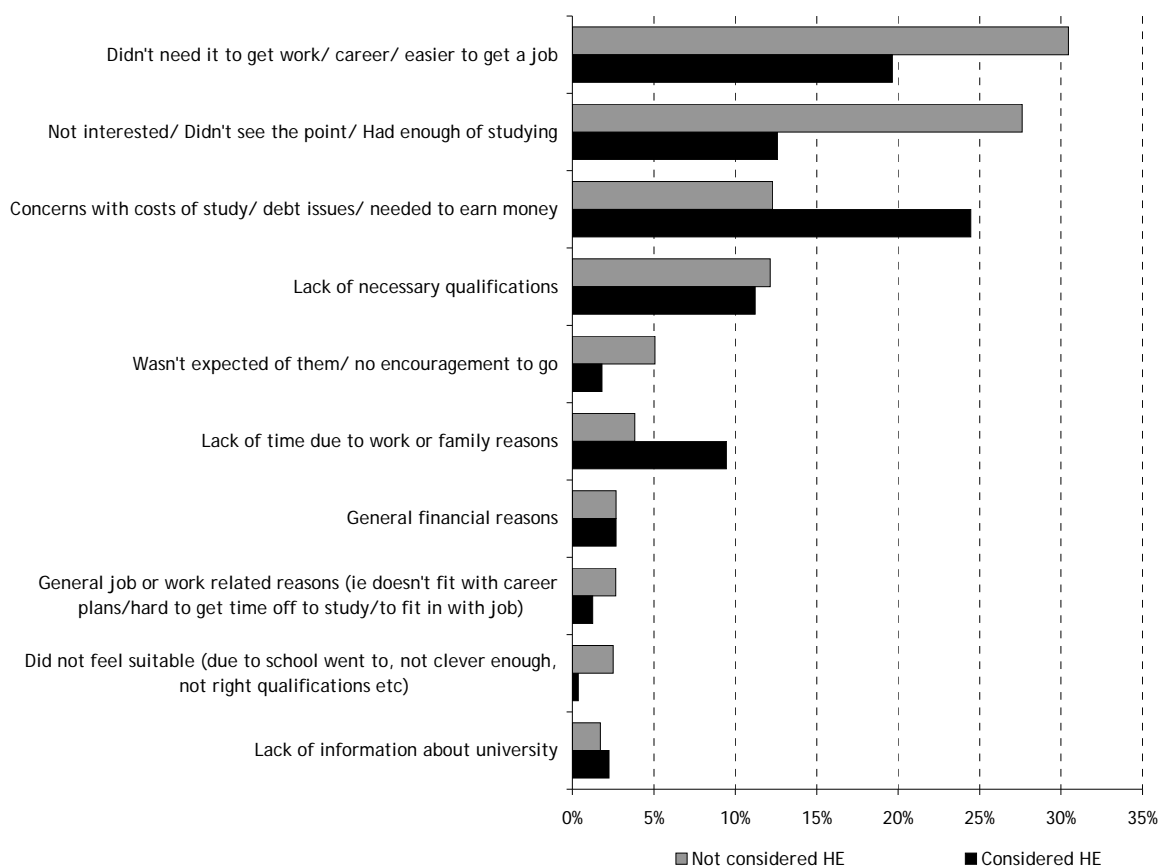
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<sup>1</sup> This is a proxy measure using existing occupation rather than parental occupation.

<sup>2</sup> Again see Gorard et al. (2006) Review of Widening Participation Research: Addressing the Barriers to Participation in HE, HEFCE.

university after school because they did not see the value in it. Older respondents were relatively more likely than their younger counterparts to feel they did not go because they lacked the necessary qualifications and, unsurprisingly, those who left school/college with lower level qualifications were also more likely to give this as a reason for non-participation. Younger respondents were more likely to cite financial reasons for non-participation, as were those leaving school/college with higher levels of qualification and those from intermediate occupational backgrounds (see Appendix Table A5.4).

Figure 5.2: Reasons for non-participation in HE by whether they had considered or not considered HE when leaving school/college



Base: All

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % does not equal 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

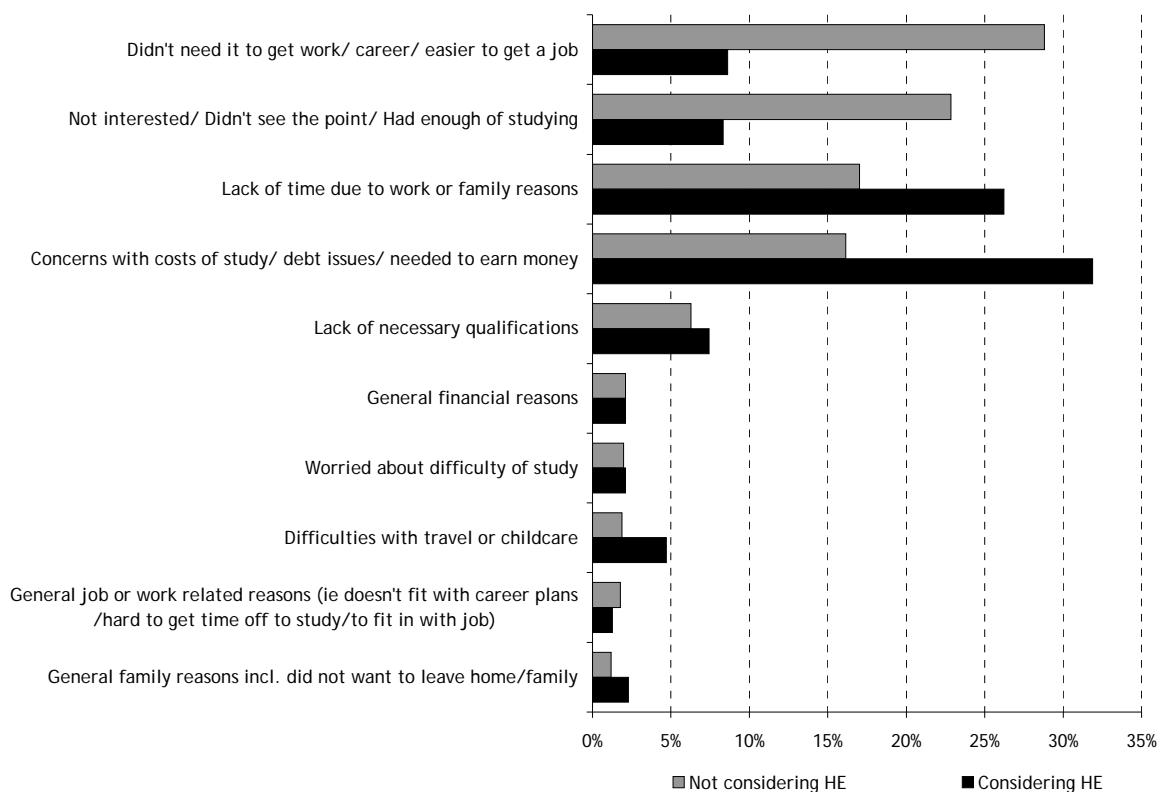
### 5.1.1 Consideration of HE during career

Respondents were also asked if they had considered applying to go to university at any time during their life/career after leaving their continuous full time education and around a quarter (24 per cent) reported that they had (see Figure 5.1). Age, socio-economic background, family and friends' experience of HE, region and industrial sector were all found to be significantly associated with considering HE during an

individual's life/career since school (see Appendix Table A5.3). As with early consideration of HE, younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to have considered going to university, those from managerial and professional backgrounds were more likely to have considered HE and so were those with family and/or friends with experience of HE. In addition, those who had worked in the high value service sector (banking, finance and property rather than wholesale, retail, catering, transport and communications) and in the public sector were more likely to have considered applying to HE during their career. This is perhaps not surprising as analysis of the Labour Force Survey indicates that the high value service sector and public sector have a larger proportion of their workforce qualified to degree level (or higher) than other sectors, and so individuals working in these sectors are more likely to be working with highly qualified individuals. Early educational experiences appeared to continue to influence consideration of HE during one's career, as again those who were more likely to have considered applying to university during their life/career since school were those who stayed in full-time education for longer, who achieved higher levels of qualifications at school (and since) and who felt they had done well at school. Interestingly, feelings about school experience no longer had a significant influence on consideration of university (see Appendix Table A5.4) Lastly, those who had considered applying when they left their continuous full-time education, were again significantly more likely to have seriously considered going to university at some point since then (45 per cent of this group continued to consider HE during their career). Although a sizeable group (19 per cent) appeared to have changed their mind and, whilst not considering going to university when they left school, had considered applying at some point since then.

The most commonly cited reasons for not going into HE at any time since leaving continuous FTE, again centred around perceived lack of value (*'Didn't need it to get work/career /easier to get a job'*) and lack of interest (*'Not interested/didn't see the point/had enough of learning'*) and financial concerns (*'Concerns with the cost of study/ debt issues/ need to earn money'*). However, lifestyle barriers were now much more apparent with more respondents citing reasons for non-participation around lacking time due to work or family reasons (which as outlined in Chapter 1 can be strongly linked to financial constraints) (see Figure 5.4). As before, those who said they had not considered going to university since leaving school were more likely to say this was because they were not interested and could not see the point in going, whereas those who had seriously considered applying were much more likely to say they had not gone due to financial reasons and work or family commitments (see Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3: Reasons for non-participation in HE since leaving school/college by whether they had considered or not considered HE



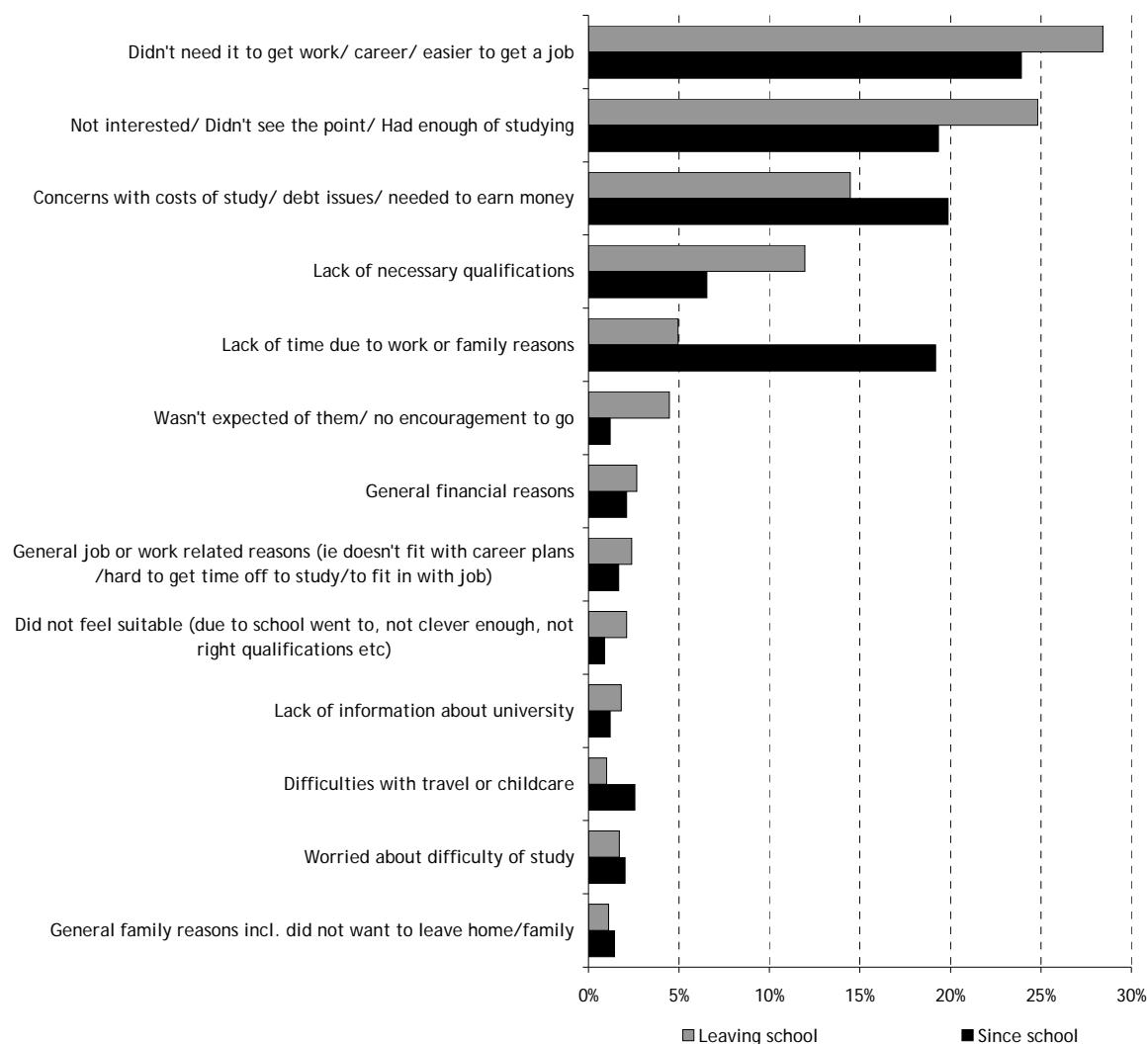
Base: All

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % does not equal 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Other differences were noticed in reasons for non-participation in HE during one's life/career. Men were more likely than women to say they had not considered applying to university because they were not interested or because they didn't think they needed to go, whereas women were more likely to say they had not participated due to work and family commitments. This was also the case for those working part-time and for those working in the public sector (where women are over-represented), and those respondents with children, particularly single parents. As with earlier non-participation (at the point of completing full-time education), financial aspects appeared to be of a greater concern to younger respondents. Those aged 22 to 30 at the time of the survey were considerably more likely to have cited financial reasons for not going to university during their life/career since leaving school/college. It is also interesting to note that those who were in managerial and professional occupations, in full-time employment, or were self-employed at the time of the survey were more likely to have reported not going to university because they did not see the value in it. This group may feel they had done well in their career to date without having been to university. Indeed, those who were self-employed and/or in managerial and professional occupations were the most satisfied with all of the measured aspects of their jobs (ie pay, promotional opportunities, opportunities for training and development, and with the work content itself). (see Appendix Tables A5.8-A5.11)

Figure 5.4: Reasons for non-participation in HE at time of leaving school and since then



Base: All

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % does not equal 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

## 5.2 Looking to the future

When asked about their thoughts on going to university in the future, 30 per cent indicated that they would consider this option. Across all of our respondents, six per cent reported that they were already considering it (when we surveyed them), five per cent said they would definitely consider going to university in the future and 19 per cent said they would probably consider going (see Table 5.1).

Using bivariate analysis, a range of background factors were found to be associated with future consideration of HE. It is firstly interesting to note that socio-economic background (measured via occupation at the time of the survey) was not statistically linked with HE *intentions* but, as noted above, was found to be linked with *past* consideration of HE.

Table 5.1: Whether would consider HE in the future

	Frequency	%
Already considering it	78	5.6
Would definitely consider it	69	4.9
Would probably consider it	270	19.4
Unlikely to consider it	532	38.3
Not interested in HE at all	441	31.7

Base: All, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Those most likely to consider going to university in the future were younger respondents and those whose parents had been to university and those with friends who had experienced HE – groups that were also more likely to have considered HE in the past (see above). However looking to the future, respondents from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and those not currently living with a partner were also more likely to consider HE. Interestingly those who report some financial difficulties, who live in social housing and/or were unemployed at the time of the survey, were all more likely to consider HE in the future – they may consider this a pathway out of their current situation. Those who felt they did poorly at school were also more likely to consider going to university in the future and this group may see university as a second chance and a way to prove themselves. However those with higher level qualifications (both at the time of the survey and on leaving school) were more likely to consider going on. Also past consideration of HE is strongly linked to future consideration, so even if individuals had considered applying in the past, but had not done so, they still consider this an option for the future (see Appendix Tables A5.12 to A5.14, summarised in Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Groups most likely to consider HE in the future

Key groups	% already considering or definitely/probably would consider going
Young (22-30)	53
Black and minority ethnic background	66
Single parent, single	34, 43
Just about getting by, finding it quite/very difficult to manage financially	39, 36
Living in private rented accommodation, living in council or housing association accommodation	49, 47
Parental experience of HE	57
Most friends at HE	44
Level 3 qualification, Level 2 qualification	35, 33
Unemployed	49
Working in the public sector	35
Previously considered HE: leaving school, since then	50, 68
All (benchmark)	30

Base: All, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Correspondingly, those least likely to consider going to university at some time in the future were: older (45 to 55), white, living with a partner, those with no family and/or peer group experience of HE, those who were ambivalent about their time at school and/or felt they were average at school, those with no formal qualifications or qualifications equivalent to Level 1, those who have not considered going to HE at any time in the past, those who consider themselves to be living comfortably and/or own their own home, and those working part-time or self employed.

However some of these findings may be driven by a combination of factors, so we can explore the influence of particular factors in isolation through the use of multivariate analysis.

### 5.2.1 Factors determining propensity to consider HE in the future

Logistic regression modelling, a form of multivariate analysis, allows us to determine more clearly the factors associated with an individual's propensity to consider entering HE. In this technique the outcome to be modelled takes the value 1 if the respondent would be prepared to consider HE in the future, and 0 if they would not. A range of factors which might be thought, *a priori*, to be associated with the likelihood of being interested in HE are tested.

Alongside personal characteristics, key factors related to intentions to undertake some form of action could be regarded as:

1. Attitudes and subjective norms, essentially the extent to which you think others/society think such an action is desirable. In our case this can be measured by attitudes to HE (particularly '*going to university is something everyone should consider doing*') and family and peer group experience of HE (these are described in Chapter 4).
2. Perceived behavioural control, the extent to which you think you are capable of such an action. In our case this is measured via perceived likelihood of getting in to university (although this was only asked of those considering HE for the future so could not be included in the model) and extent of agreement/disagreement with the statement '*getting into university is difficult*'.
3. Previous behaviour, this is measured via previous qualification achieved and experience in school

We therefore tried two models, the first model tested a range of personal, social and employment characteristics (see Appendix Table A5.15) that the bivariate analysis indicated could to be linked to future consideration of HE, and the second model also included a set of attitudes towards HE (as outlined in Chapter 4) to test the hypothesis that positive or negative perceptions of HE will have an influence on an individual's propensity to consider HE in the future (see Appendix Table A5.16).

The models are broadly reassuring in that they generally confirm the findings outlined above (using bivariate analysis). It is clear that relatively few of the variables (and none of the key characteristics such as sex and occupation/socio-economic background) appear to have a statistically significant influence on the propensity to consider future participation. However, the models also indicated that age and qualification level, taking other aspects into account, did not influence propensity to consider HE.

There are, nonetheless, some factors which influence an individual's propensity to consider HE in the future. In particular, the following variables are associated with a willingness (or unwillingness) to enter HE:

**Personal characteristics:**

- Ethnicity – all minority ethnic groups are more likely than their white counterparts to be positively disposed to the idea of entering HE. Black respondents had the greatest propensity to consider HE, closely followed by Asian respondents.
- Disability – disabled people had a higher propensity to consider HE than their non-disabled counterparts.
- Cohabitation status – respondents who were living with their parents were more likely than those who were single to have a positive propensity to consider HE in the future. (This result is only significant in the model that does not include HE attitude measures.)
- Housing tenure – individuals who owned their homes outright or had mortgages were less likely than those in rented accommodation to be interested in future participation in HE.

**Subjective norms:**

- Friends who had HE experience – respondents who suggested that most of their friends had been to university had a greater propensity to say that they may consider HE in the future than those who suggested that none of their friends had been to university. (This result is only significant in the model that does not include HE perception measures.)
- Parental involvement in HE – having a parent who has experience of HE increases the propensity of respondents to consider HE themselves in the future.

**Previous behaviour:**

- School experiences – individuals who had a negative experience of formal education were more likely than those who were neutral about their formal educational experience to consider entering HE in the future. Similarly those who felt they had done poorly at school were more likely than those who assessed their performance as average to consider university as a future option. Interestingly, as

noted above, qualification did **not** appear to have a statistically significant influence on the propensity to consider future participation.

**Behavioural control:**

- Perceptions regarding the difficulty of getting into university were **not** associated with propensity to consider HE
- Perceptions of HE – those respondents who disagreed with the statements that ‘university is only for young people’, ‘people like me don't go to university’ and ‘going to university is irrelevant once you've got a job’ or agreed with the statements that ‘the best jobs go to people who have been to university’ or ‘going to university is something everyone should consider doing’ were more likely to believe that they would consider HE in the future. Interestingly, perceptions regarding the cost of university, the difficulty of getting into university and debts associated with studying did not affect the respondents’ desire, or otherwise, to consider HE in the future.

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## 6 Motivations and Concerns About HE Entry

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This chapter focuses on the 30 per cent of respondents who would consider going to university in the future, to explore their main reasons or motivations for doing so. However, we also look at whether this group would have any concerns about going to university, this gives an indication of the areas of policy focus and institutional action that may be required to ensure that positive thoughts towards HE are converted into actual entry.

### Key messages - opportunities

- The majority of those considering HE in the future were confident that they would get in, those most confident about being accepted if they applied had higher levels of qualification and had peer group experience of HE.
- Improving employability and careers are key motivators to HE, with 48 per cent of all those considering going to university in the future giving this as a reason for doing so. In particular HE is seen as a way to develop your career, to enable you to change the type of work you do and earn more money, and few were concerned that going to HE would not improve their job prospects. Other common reasons for going to university include personal development and to improve one's current job situation.
- However the potential value of HE appears to be different for different groups of individuals, particularly those from different socio-economic backgrounds and of different ages.

### Key messages - challenges

- Those who felt less well informed about entry requirements were generally less confident about being accepted to university if they applied.
- Although considering applying for HE in the future, almost all (96 per cent) had some concerns about going to university. Most commonly these concerns centred around the availability of financial support, which was more important to some groups than others, and being able to balance study with work commitments which was generally a universal concern. These major

concerns reflect the key reasons for non-participation to date amongst those who had considered HE in the past. Other common concerns were running up debts, coping with the workload and getting back into study and the availability of learning support.

- Availability of childcare was also a concern particularly for women, younger adults, those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, those working part-time and single parents.

### Key messages for sub groups

- There were no real differences between men and women in terms of their motivations to HE however there were differences in their concerns about going to university. Women were significantly more likely than men to be concerned about the availability of financial support and availability of childcare.
- Younger working adults (those aged 22 to 30) were more likely to be motivated by employability/career reasons than older adults, whereas older adults were relatively more likely to be motivated by a general interest in learning and, in particular, by personal development reasons. Indeed this was the key motivator for older adults to consider HE. This indicates that the value of HE may be different for adults of different ages. Those mid career (aged 31 to 44) appeared to have more concerns about HE than older or younger working adults, particularly about getting back into study and the availability of learning support. Despite the relatively greater influence of financial issues on previous non-participation amongst younger adults (Chapter 5) this group were no more likely than older adults to be concerned about the availability of financial support or running up debts if they went to university in the future.
- Adults from black and minority ethnic backgrounds did not appear to be motivated to consider HE for reasons related to their current job but were considerably more likely to be motivated by general career reasons. Those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were relatively more confident about being accepted to university if they applied. However this group of individuals had more concerns about HE than those from white backgrounds, and were more likely to be concerned about availability of financial support and about running up debts (which links with greater concern about debt amongst this group outlined in Chapter 8), availability of childcare, and being able to cope with the workload. Although having concerns about being able to balance study with work commitments, financial concerns and worries about the workload were particularly key for those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Those from lower socio-economic backgrounds (routine and manual work roles) were relatively less confident about their chances of being accepted to university if they applied and had more concerns about going to university than those from other socio-economic backgrounds. Those from lower groups were more likely to be concerned about coping with the workload, and getting back into study and the availability of study support. This group were more likely to cite employability and career reasons for considering applying to university in the future whereas those from managerial and professional backgrounds were more likely to be motivated to consider HE out of personal development reasons. This group, along with those from intermediate occupations, were also relatively more likely to be motivated by a general interest in learning compared to those from routine and manual work backgrounds. This

indicates that the value of HE may be different for those from different socio-economic backgrounds. Those from managerial and professional backgrounds tended to be equally concerned about being able to balance studying with work commitments as with the availability of financial support.

## 6.1 Getting in

Before moving on to look at motivators it is useful to look at the likelihood of getting in as a measure of perceived behavioural control – this is the extent to which individuals think they are capable of carrying out an action, in this case getting into university.

Those who said they would consider HE (either probably, definitely, or already) were asked how likely they thought it would be, given their life and work experiences, that they would be accepted if they applied. The majority (80 per cent) said that they thought it very or fairly likely that they would get in (see Table 6.1). As might be expected those with a higher level of qualification were more likely to be positive about their chances of getting in and so were those with peer group experience of HE and those with stronger feelings about HE (in that they were already considering applying or would definitely consider applying). Those from black minority ethnic backgrounds were also significantly more likely to think they would be accepted (see Appendix Table A6.1). However, respondents from lower socio-economic groups were less positive about their chances of getting in than others. In general, those who were less confident about being accepted to university if they applied also felt less well informed about entry requirements.

Table 6.1: Perceived likelihood of getting in to university if made an application

	Frequency	%
Very likely	114	29.6
Fairly likely	194	50.1
Not very likely	59	115.4
Not at all likely	19	4.9
Total	386	100.0

Base: Those who would consider HE, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

## 6.2 Motivators

For respondents who indicated that they would consider HE in the future, the main reasons (see Figure 6.1) given for considering it were to do with:

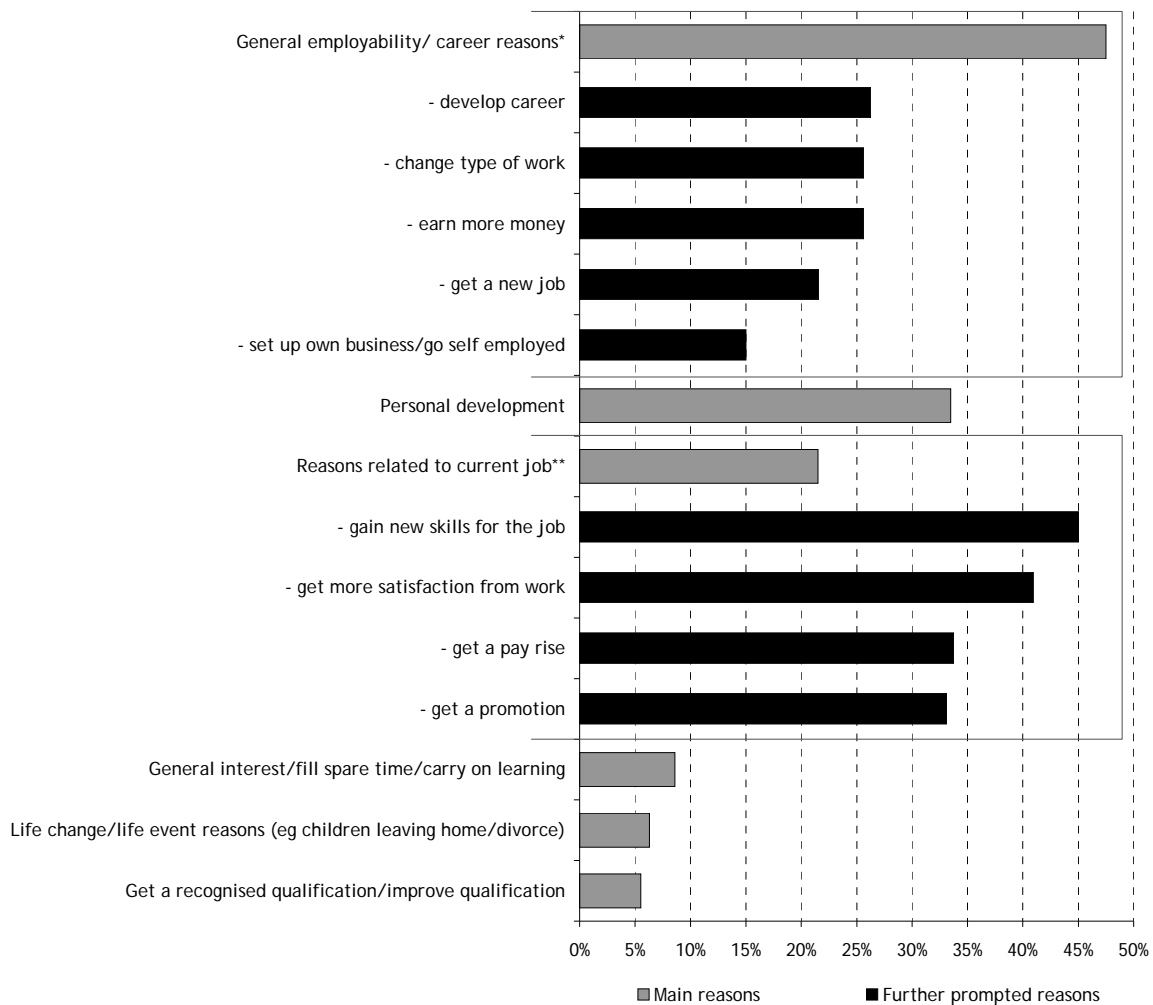
- general employability/career reasons (48 per cent), this tended to be about developing one's career, changing the type of work undertaken and earning more money rather than getting a new job or becoming self employed
- personal development reasons such as self confidence, intellectual challenge (34 per cent)
- reasons related to their current job (22 per cent), this tended to be about gaining new skills for one's job and improving work satisfaction and to a lesser extent access to better pay and promotional opportunities.

It is perhaps interesting to note that job reasons figured less highly here when compared to the perceived benefits of wider learning and training that respondents had undertaken (see Chapter 3, where job benefits were the most commonly cited outcomes from such learning). This could suggest that HE may be regarded quite differently from wider learning and training.

Other motivators included: general interest, desire to fill spare time and carry on learning (nine per cent), life event reasons such as children leaving home, divorce, retirement, redundancy etc. (six per cent), and desire to improve qualifications or get a recognised qualification (six per cent) (see Figure 6.1 and Appendix Table A6.2).

These motivators fit with the research literature outlined earlier (see Chapter 1) in that there is a growing perception of a need for higher level skills and qualifications which is impacting on decisions to return to study. The findings also fit with respondents' attitudes to learning outlined in Chapter 3 (65 per cent felt you needed qualifications to get anywhere these days). The literature also highlights the importance of personal development, self improvement and self development, which is often linked to life changes, which motivates participation in HE. Education and the softer outcomes it can provide, such as increased confidence, can be a resource for managing change.

Figure 6.1: Main reasons for considering HE



Base: Those who would consider HE

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

In general there was little variation across the respondents in terms of reasons for considering applying to HE in the future. However, younger respondents were more likely to be motivated by employability or career reasons (more so than older respondents), so were those with parents who had been to university and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. It is interesting to note that those in managerial and professional occupations at the time of the survey and older respondents were significantly less likely than other groups to cite career reasons for considering applying to university. These groups of respondents were much more likely to be motivated by personal development reasons. Similarly those from higher socio-economic backgrounds (managerial/professional and intermediate occupations) were relatively more likely to be motivated by a general interest in learning than those from routine and manual work backgrounds. Finally, white respondents were relatively more likely to cite job reasons for considering HE than those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, whereas for this latter group general employability or career

motivations were key (which fits with their greater recognition of the value of qualifications outlined in Chapter 3) (see Appendix Table A6.3).

## 6.3 Concerns

Although a sizeable group (30 per cent) reported that they would consider HE in the future, they were asked if they had any concerns about going to university – these could be potential barriers to actual entry or impact on retention within HE. Respondents were given a list of potential issues and only four per cent said they would not be concerned about any of these.

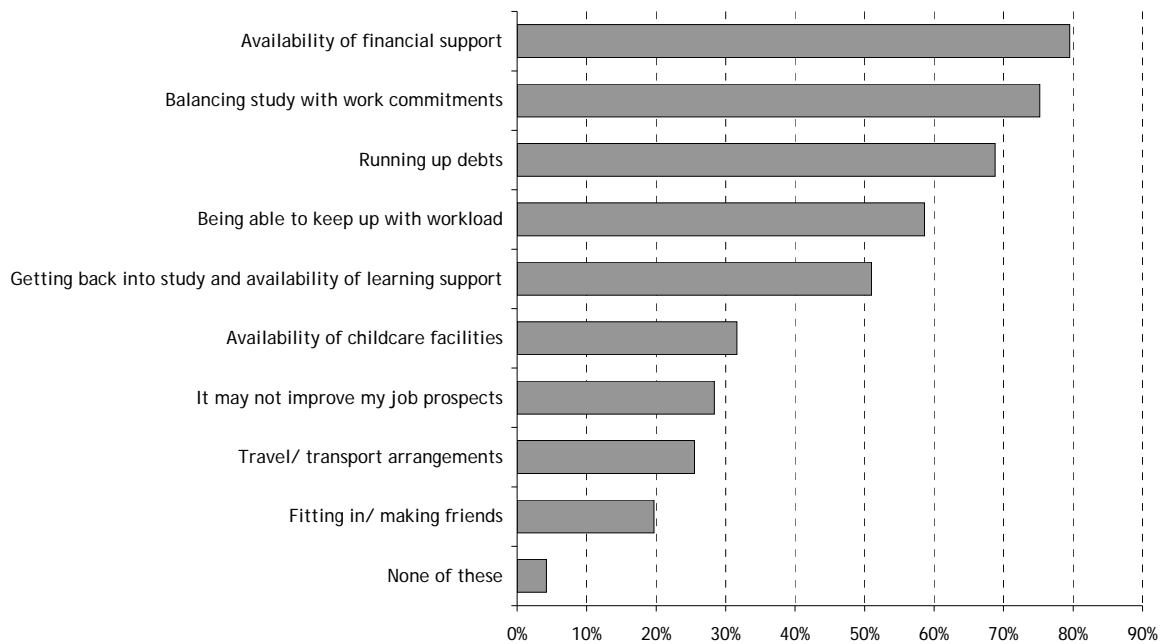
The most commonly cited concerns were the availability of financial support and being able to balance study with work commitments with over three-quarters of those considering HE stating they would be worried about these aspects (80 per cent and 75 per cent respectively). These reflect the reasons for non-participation during respondents' careers and lives to date (see Chapter 5) – that is, concerns over the costs of study, debt issues and the need to earn money; and lack of time due to family and work commitments. So even for these respondents – who reported they would consider HE in the future – finances and balancing commitments were still a concern.

These concerns were followed by: running up debts (69 per cent), being able to keep up with the workload (59 per cent), and getting back into study/availability of learning support (51 per cent) (see Figure 6.2). Almost one-third (32 per cent) were concerned about the availability of childcare (although this was largely confined to particular groups of respondents, see below). Although a smaller proportion cite availability of childcare as a barrier than were found to cite other barriers, it should not be dismissed as a potential barrier to entry. As the majority of our responding sample were employed at the time of the survey, and if they had children, they will have already made childcare arrangements (to enable them to work) the true size of childcare barrier is likely to be under-represented.

Relatively few (28 per cent) were concerned that going to HE might not improve their job prospects which emphasises the value/rewards that individuals feel can be gained from HE. Also few (26 per cent) were concerned about travel/transport arrangements but this is likely to reflect their preference for studying close to home (see Chapter 9). There was also only limited concern (20 per cent) about fitting in, which was identified in the research literature as a key issue in widening participation.

The key concerns of those from different backgrounds were generally the same with a few exceptions. Those from managerial and professional backgrounds tended to be equally concerned about being able to balance study with work commitments as with the availability of financial support. Those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were more concerned about both the availability of financial support and running up debts as well as being able to cope with the workload, rather than being able to balance study with work commitments.

Figure 6.2: Key concerns about HE for those considering going to university in the future



Base: Those who would consider HE in future

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

It is perhaps important to note that some groups had more concerns about HE than others. Those from black and minority ethnic groups had more concerns than those from white backgrounds, as did those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, with little peer group experience of HE and those perhaps in mid career (age 31 to 44).

Looking at the potential concerns in more detail:

### Concerns over finance

Those who were most likely to be concerned about financial support available to them, if they went to university were: women, those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, those with higher level qualifications and those working part-time or who were unemployed at the time of the survey. Unsurprisingly, those who considered themselves to be finding it quite or very difficult to manage financially or felt they were just about getting by were also significantly more likely to be concerned about the availability of financial support. There was little variation in concerns about running up debts with the exception that those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were relatively more likely to cite this as a concern (see Appendix Tables A6.5 and A6.7). This links with a greater concern about debt amongst this group as outlined in Chapter 8.

### Concerns over childcare provision

Those most concerned about availability of childcare facilities were women (particularly those aged 22 to 30), younger adults (aged under 45), those working part-time (where women are over-represented) and, unsurprisingly, those with children, particularly single parents. Those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were also more concerned than those from white backgrounds about this aspect of HE (see Appendix Table A6.6).

### Concerns about coping with study

There was no real difference across the groups of respondents in terms of their concerns over being able to balance studying with work commitment – this generally was a universal concern. However, there were differences in concerns over coping with the workload and with getting back into study (and the availability of learning support, see Appendix Tables A6.8 and A6.9). Those from lower socio-economic backgrounds (from routine and manual work backgrounds) were most likely to be concerned about these aspects of HE; as were those working part-time or who were unemployed at the time of the survey<sup>1</sup>. Those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were more likely than those from white backgrounds to worry about being able to cope with the workload. Interestingly, those respondents who were married or living with a partner and with no dependent children were least concerned about this aspect. Other groups who were significantly more likely to cite concerns about getting back into study and availability of learning support were those in the mid age range (31 to 44) and those with lower level qualifications.

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<sup>1</sup> Although the base numbers here are small, weighted bases are as follows: part-time N=65, unemployed N=47.

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## 7 Barriers to and Encouragement Factors for HE Entry

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This chapter focuses on the 70 per cent of respondents who would not consider going to university in the future, to explore their main reasons for continued non-participation. We then look at what, if anything, might encourage them to consider applying in the future (potential motivators); and specifically highlight the possible influence of employer support on potential participation. Finally we examine the perceived benefits of going to HE amongst our group of non-participants, to understand whether those who do not wish to go (or feel they cannot go) to university see any advantages in this for adults in general. Again, this could suggest areas of policy focus and institutional action to overcome barriers to participation and get adults to seriously consider HE.

### Key messages - opportunities

- Although 70 per cent said would not consider going to university in the future, the majority of these felt that they might be encouraged to apply particularly if: they were able to study from home or work (overcoming barriers of work and family commitments); they had a change in their personal circumstances; they were given encouragement by their employer; and if there was a suitable course close to their home. Convenience, encouragement and timing are therefore key factors in helping adults change their minds about HE. Only 21 per cent said nothing would encourage them.
- Those most likely to change their minds about non-participation and so potentially the easiest to encourage to apply were younger adults and those with higher level qualifications (Level 2 or 3). This also applied to those with family commitments (eg dependent children, married/living with partner) and those reporting financial difficulties, ie individuals in circumstances that could constrain participation in HE.
- Whilst 56 per cent might consider HE if their employer were to encourage them, a greater proportion (69 per cent) would do so if their employer gave them support in terms of paid time-off for study. Both encouragement and support from an employer appeared to have the greatest potential influence on full-time employees and those with higher qualification levels.

Paid time-off in particular was more likely to influence men, younger adults and those finding it difficult to manage financially.

- Availability of funding support appeared to have the greatest potential influence on those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and those who had concerns over the costs of study, overcoming financial barriers for non-participation
- Even those who would not consider going to university themselves saw that HE had advantages for adults particularly in terms of employability and career benefits and to some extent personal development and helping an individual get the most from their job. Only 12 per cent were unsure of the benefits or saw no benefits.

### Key messages - challenges

- The main reasons for not considering HE in the future were a perceived lack of value and a lack of interest, reflecting the main reasons for past non-participation. Other common reasons were lack of time due to work and family commitments, age (despite university being regarded as NOT just for young people) and financial concerns. Further reasons emerged relating to preferring other learning environments, believing that suitable courses were unavailable, and lacking time, energy and commitment required.
- Providing information and advice about the opportunities available appeared to have the least potential to encourage adults to consider going to university in the future, yet this would give adults a better sense of the flexible and local opportunities available (aspects that they indicated would encourage them to apply).
- Those least likely to be encouraged to consider HE in the future were older, those married or living with a partner and with no dependent children, or those who considered themselves to be living comfortably.

### Key messages for sub groups

- For men, a perceived lack of value in HE study acts as the key barrier to future participation whereas for women it was a lack of time to be able undertake study due to work and family commitments. These reflect patterns found for past non-participation. However, men were more likely than women to be encouraged to consider HE if their employer were to give them paid time-off to study (which may reflect their greater likelihood of being in full-time employment).
- For older adults the key barrier to future HE consideration is age and for this group, future non-participation is less about a perceived lack of value of HE study or a lack of time to undertake study. Older adults were also relatively less likely than younger adults (those under 45 years old) to be deterred by financial concerns. Those mid career were deterred by a lack of time due to work and family commitments and a perceived lack of value, and younger adults were put off by a perceived lack of value and no real interest in further study. In general, older adults (45 and over) were the least likely to be encouraged to consider HE whereas younger adults (those aged 22 to 30) appeared to be easier to encourage and in particular were more likely to be encouraged by paid time off to study from their employer.

- For those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds the key barrier (most frequently cited) to future HE participation was concern over study costs and debt. Indeed, black and minority ethnic adults were more likely to cite concerns with the costs of study as a reason for not considering going to university in the future and correspondingly were considerably more likely to be encouraged to apply if funding support were available.
- For those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, the main deterrent to future consideration of HE was a lack of interest and issues around age, whereas those from higher socio-economic groups (measured via occupation) were most likely to be put off by a perceived lack of value in HE study. It could be argued that this group (in managerial and professional occupations) have already been successful in their lives and careers without going to university so it is perhaps understandable that they do not see the need for it.

## 7.1 Barriers to future HE participation

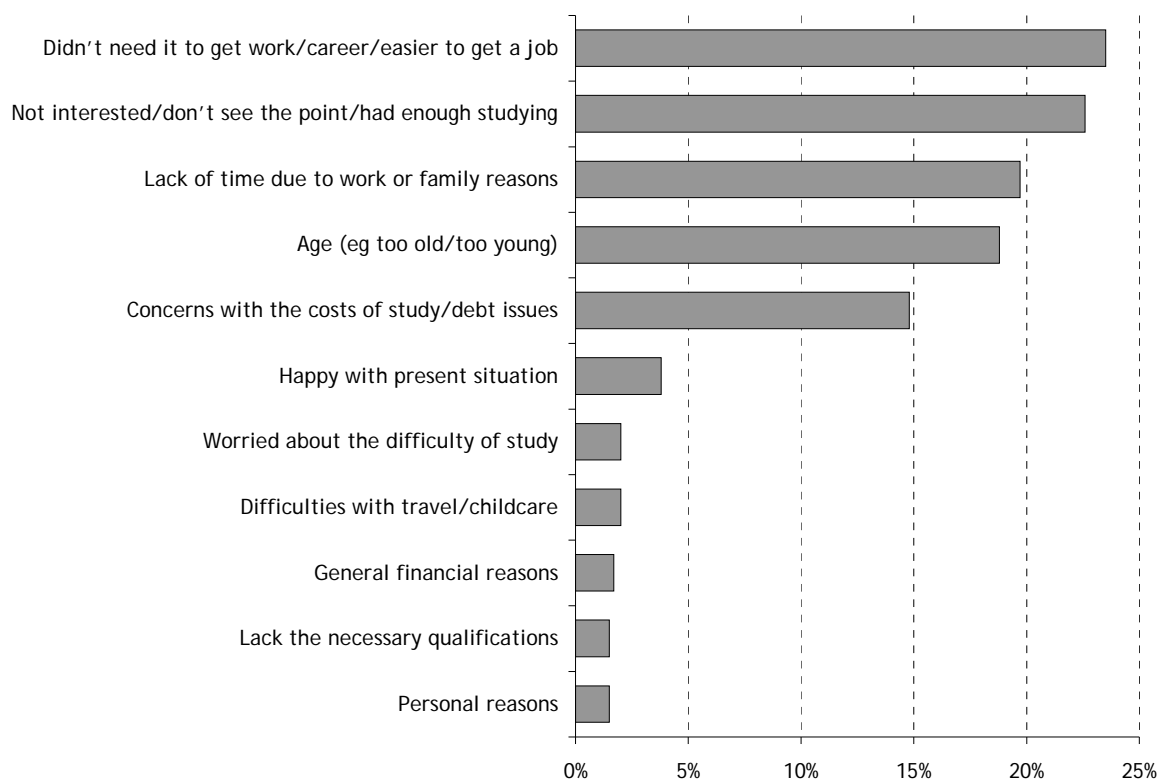
Seventy per cent of respondents said they were either not interested in HE at all, or would be unlikely to consider going to HE in the future. A wide range of reasons were given for not wanting to go to university, however the main reasons for not considering HE were around a perceived lack of value (*'Didn't need it to get work/career/easier to get job'*, 24 per cent) and lack of interest (*'Not interested/don't see the point/had enough studying'*, 23 per cent, see Figure 7.1 and Appendix Table A7.1). Lifestyle barriers (*'Lack of time due to work or family reasons'*, 20 per cent) were also frequently cited as were age (eg too old/too young, 19 per cent), and financial concerns (*'Concerns with the costs of study/debt issues'*, 15 per cent). Again these key reasons for future non-participation closely match those given for past non-participation. It is interesting to note, however, that age now appears to have an influence when looking to the future.

Respondents could also give other reasons and themes emerged around:

- preferring other learning environments: *'I think I can gain the qualification I need at college without going to university'*, *'I prefer hands on learning rather than in a class room'*
- believing that suitable courses were not available (although generally respondents believed they were informed about opportunities, see Chapter 4)
- lacking time, energy and commitment for university (particularly long courses)
- believing that HE qualifications were not necessary (again reflecting the perceived lack of value to individuals): *'I cannot see that getting any further qualifications would do any good'* *'I have nothing to gain from it , I am happy with my life. I can't be bothered really I have other things to do in my life and I can't keep up with the drinking the other students do'*

- and age (although in general HE was seen as open to all ages): *'my retirement is up front of me and I have done enough courses' 'I just want to sit down and enjoy myself, I've worked hard'*.

Figure 7.1: Main reasons for not considering HE now



Base: Those not considering HE now

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

For older adults the key barrier to future HE consideration is age, and for this group future non-participation is less about a perceived lack of value of HE study or a lack of time to undertake study, whereas for those in mid career (31 to 44) it appears to be a lack of time and a perceived lack of value that deters individuals from considering HE as an option. For younger respondents the key barriers were a perceived lack of value and no real interest in further study. For those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds the key barrier (most frequently cited) was concern over study costs and debt. For men, the key barrier was a perceived lack of value in HE study but for women it was a lack of time to be able undertake study due to work and family commitments. It is also interesting to note that for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, the main deterrent to future consideration of HE was a lack of interest and issues around age, whereas those from higher socio-economic groups were most likely to be put off by a perceived lack of value in HE study (see Table 7.1).

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Table 7.1: Main reasons for not considering HE for the future by gender, age, ethnicity and socio-economic background.

	Not needed %	Not interested %	Work/family commitments %	Age %	Costs/debt %	Base (N)
Male	26.1	24.2	16.8	17.5	13.2	530
Female	20.3	20.6	23.0	20.3	16.7	443
22-30	34.2	27.0	19.1	5.3	16.3	152
31-44	24.7	21.1	24.7	9.8	18.9	450
45-55	17.8	22.6	13.7	35.0	9.2	371
White	23.7	22.5	19.6	18.7	14.1	923
BME	16.3	23.3	20.9	20.9	30.2	43
Managerial/professional	32.4	24.1	18.8	16.1	13.9	287
Intermediate occupations	22.2	18.8	20.3	18.0	16.5	266
Routine/manual	18.5	24.0	19.7	21.2	14.3	406

Base: Those not considering HE now, includes don't knows. Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Looking at each potential barrier in detail:

### Don't want to study

Men, those who were in managerial and professional occupations and those who were self employed at the time of the survey were more likely to say they would not consider HE because they didn't see a need for it (which follows patterns identified earlier for non-participation during one's career to date). However, those with higher level qualifications and those working in the high value service sector (banking, finance and property services) were also more likely than others to cite this as a reason for continued non-participation (see Appendix Table A7.2). There was very little difference across the respondents in terms of the likelihood of citing lack of interest as a reason for not considering going to university in the future. However again, the self employed were most likely than employees to say they were just not interested in HE. (see Appendix Table A7.3).

### Not able to study

Work and family commitments were more of a constraining factor for women, those in the mid age group (31 to 44), those working part-time (who were mostly women), those with lower level qualifications and those with children (particularly those who were single parents). All these groups were more likely to cite lack of time due to work and family commitments as reasons for not considering HE in the future (see Appendix Table A7.4). Those who were most likely to give their age as reason for non-participation in the future were older (so would consider themselves too old

rather than too young) and were married or living with a partner but no children (see Appendix Table A7.5).

Financial concerns were a more likely barrier to future consideration of HE amongst younger and mid age respondents and amongst those with higher level qualifications which again reflects earlier barriers to participation outlined in Chapter 5. Concerns with the costs of study were also more likely to be cited as reasons for not going to HE in the future by those from black and minority ethnic groups and those finding it quite or very difficult to manage financially (see Appendix Table A7.6). Interestingly, this potential barrier to future participation does not appear to be linked with attitudes to debt so those with negative attitudes to debt were statistically no more likely to cite this as a reason for non-participation.

## 7.2 Overcoming barriers

The widening participation literature outlined in Chapter 1 puts forward various strategies and initiatives for addressing barriers to adult participation in HE including introducing flexible modes of study to cater for people's multiple commitments, different locations of study (HE in FE and open and distance learning), well targeted information, advice and guidance to de-mystify the culture of HE, and student financial support and on-course learner support. Efforts to de-mystify HE may go some way to combat lack of interest, perceived lack of value and concerns over being too old to study but it should be noted that our respondents generally felt themselves to be informed about HE (in terms of the opportunities available). Efforts here may, therefore, need to be very specific, ie setting out the **returns** to HE, particularly to adults in work, whereas efforts to introduce flexible and local delivery of HE would work towards addressing barriers around work and family commitments, enabling people to fit HE in with their working and home lives. Targeted financial support coupled with clear information about what is available (to whom and in what circumstances) would address concerns about costs and debt.

We were able to test whether these and other factors might encourage our respondents to consider applying to HE in the future, effectively to change their mind about going to university, and also to explore which groups of adults were more likely to respond to various facilitators.

### 7.2.1 Changing minds

The hardest to encourage

Only a minority of people (21 per cent, see Appendix Table A7.7) said that nothing would encourage them to consider HE in the future, and this group could be considered to have the least potential for future participation. This group were more likely to be older, married or living with a partner and with no dependent children,

and consider themselves to be living in comfortable financial circumstances. The group of individuals who felt nothing would encourage them were more likely than others to give their reasons for future non-participation as lack of interest, perceived lack of value and their age. They were not put off HE by lifestyle factors (fitting in with work and family) or by financial concerns.

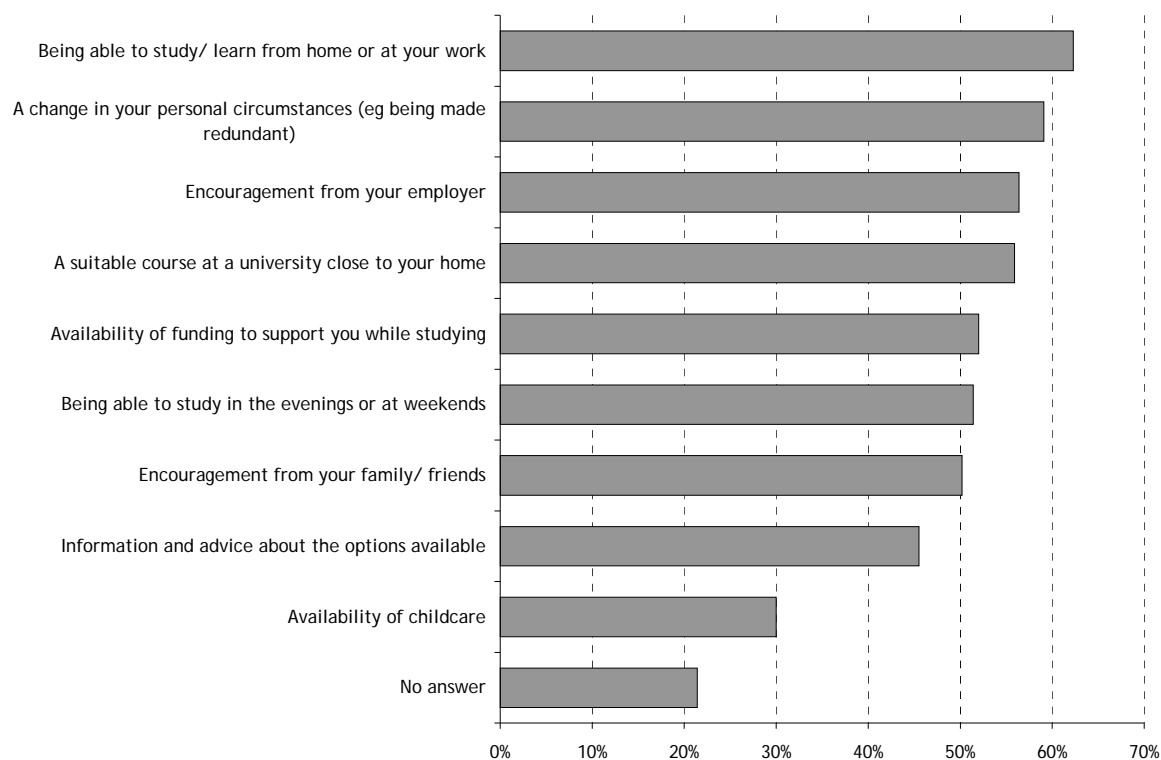
### Those with the greatest potential for encouragement

The majority, 79 per cent, said that at least one of the given factors would encourage them to consider applying for university in the future. Looking across the whole group of respondents that were not considering going to university in the future, younger respondents appeared to be the group most likely to be positively influenced by the given factors and 90 per cent of those aged 22 to 30 felt they could be encouraged compared to 69 per cent of older adults. Those with higher level qualifications (Level 2 or 3) and those with peer group experience of HE are also more likely to be encouraged to apply. Interestingly those most likely to be encouraged are also those potentially facing the greatest barriers, that is those with family commitments (those married with children, and particularly single parents), those who don't own their own home and/or those finding it hard to get by financially (see Appendix Table A7.8). These are potentially the easiest to encourage to consider HE.

### 7.2.2 Facilitators

The factors with the greatest positive response were: *'being able to study from home or work'* (62 per cent said this would encourage them to consider applying); *'A change in their personal circumstances such as being made redundant'* (59 per cent); *'encouragement from their employer'* (56 per cent); and *'a course at a university close to home'* (56 per cent, see Figure 7.2 and Appendix Table A7.7). Although *'Availability of funding to support you while studying'* was cited by over half of our respondents (52 per cent) it was not the most frequently cited factor. Provision of information and advice about the options available would encourage less than half (46 per cent).

Figure 7.2: Factors that might encourage you to consider HE in the future



Base: Those not considering HE now

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Looking only at those who could be encouraged to change their minds about HE, there was little difference in the likelihood of citing particular encouragement factors. The exception is that employees with entry level qualifications and those working full-time were significantly more likely to be positively influenced to apply with encouragement from their employer (compared to those with lower level qualifications or working part-time). Availability of funding support was also more likely to positively influence those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and also, naturally, to make a difference to those who gave their reason for future non-participation as concerns with costs of study. This suggests that financial barriers may not be a post-hoc rationalisation for decisions about future non-participation and that targeted support could overcome this barrier.

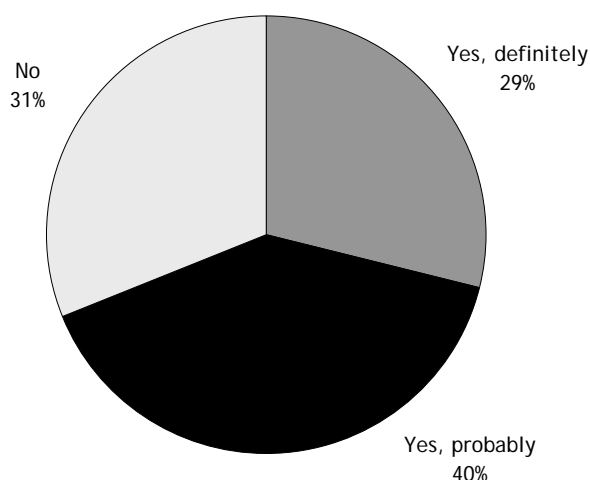
Finally, those who gave their reason for not considering HE in the future as lack of time due to work and/or family commitments were considerably more likely to be influenced by being able to study from home or work (see Appendix Tables A7.10-12).

### 7.2.3 Influence of employer support

Over half (56 per cent) of those who would not consider going to university in the future said they would be encouraged to consider applying if they were encouraged

by their employer. To explore this further, we asked a direct question about the potential influence of employer support (beyond mere encouragement) on consideration of HE. We asked all full- and part-time employees if they would be willing to consider HE if their employer was to support them by giving them paid time off for study. Overall more than two-thirds (69 per cent) said it would have a positive impact, with 29 per cent who said it would make them definitely consider HE, and 40 per cent saying it would probably make them consider HE. Less than one-third (31 per cent) said this would have no impact on them (see Figure 7.3).

Figure 7.3: Influence of employer support



Base: Employees not considering HE now, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Those most open to this form of encouragement (paid time off to study) were younger respondents, men, those with higher levels of qualification (particularly Level 3), those working full-time rather than part-time and those in financial difficulty (see Appendix Table A7.13).

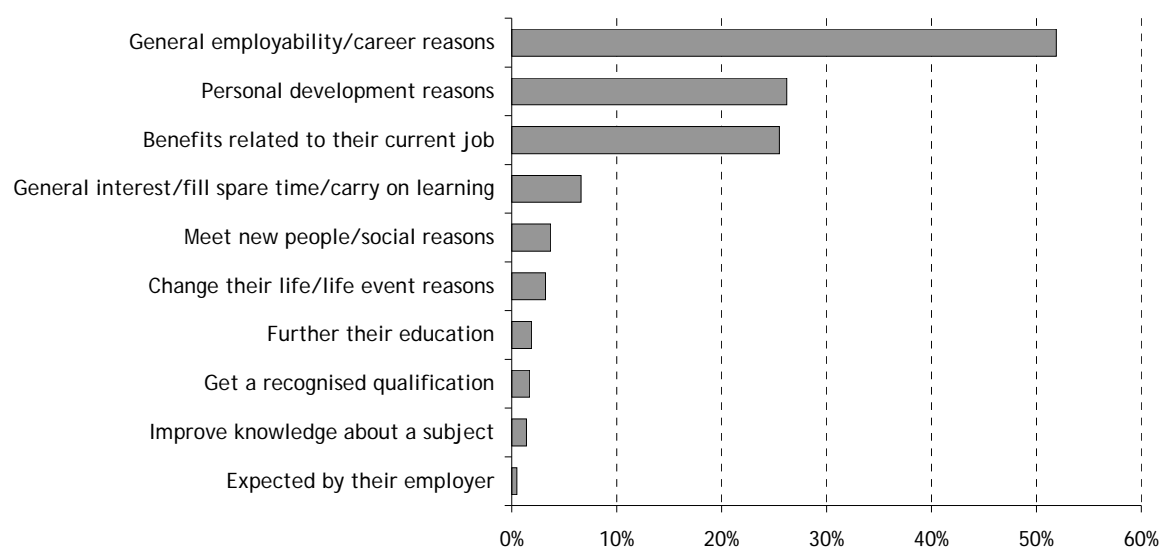
### 7.3 Perceived potential benefits

Although a large group of our respondents reported they would not or would be unlikely to consider HE for themselves in the future, they do see advantages for adults in going to university. Indeed only 12 per cent were unsure about the potential benefits or saw no benefits.

A wide range of benefits were given but those most commonly cited benefits centred around employability/careers including access to higher earnings (52 per cent), followed by personal development (26 per cent) and benefits relating to a person's job (26 per cent, see Figure 7.4 and Appendix Table A7.14). This closely mirrors the motivations for considering applying to university in the future found amongst our group of respondents who were positively disposed towards HE (see Chapter 6). So

even though this group of respondents do not see going to university as something they will do, they appreciate that it can enhance one's career, help individuals to grow and also aid a person get the most from their job. Responses also indicated that adults could benefit from HE because they may have a better idea than young people about what they want to do, and because they have a greater life experience to draw from once in HE. They also indicate that HE will enable them to catch-up or keep up with younger people: *'you are better equipped to deal with the educational requirements when you are mature'*, *'it is a better time for people to learn because when you are younger there are a lot of distractions'*, *'adults can inspire the younger generation, you are never too old to learn'*, *'they can catch up on what they missed out when they were younger'*.

Figure 7.4: Potential benefits for adults of going to HE



Base: Those not considering HE now

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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## 8 Financial Aspects of HE Participation

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This chapter examines the financial aspects of studying in HE. We look at the extent to which those considering HE feel informed about the costs of studying and the financial support available and then the methods they believe they would use to finance their study. We then look across all respondents to assess their attitudes to debt.

### Key messages - opportunities

- Of those considering HE in the future, just under half (43 per cent) felt informed about the costs of HE study however fewer felt informed about the financial support available in HE. The groups who felt most informed about the financial aspects of HE were younger (aged 22 to 30). Those with peer group experience of HE were more likely to feel informed about the costs, and those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were more likely to feel informed about financial support available (which would correspond with their greater concern over this aspect of HE participation).
- Seventy-two per cent of all respondents felt that learners themselves should contribute towards their own HE costs and indeed the most commonly anticipated method of funding HE was through paid work. Seventy-nine per cent of those considering HE felt they would fund their studies in this way. This reflects the reality of student funding as evidenced by the Student Income and Expenditure Survey (SIES). However, SIES indicated that working whilst studying was felt to negatively impact on the quality of HE experience and HE outcomes particularly for part-time students.
- Generally working adults had positive attitudes to debt, seeing debt as a normal part of today's lifestyle and that owing money is not wrong. However there was an acknowledgement that debt can be difficult to get out of. Those least concerned about debt tended to be younger, male and white, those who claimed to be living comfortably, those with mortgages, and those from higher socio-economic groups (managers, professionals and those in intermediate occupations).

### Key messages - challenges

- Generally those considering HE in the future did not consider themselves to be well informed about the financial support available with only six per cent claiming they were very well informed about this aspect of HE. Overall, there appeared to be greater awareness of the opportunities available in HE and the entry requirements than the costs and financial support available. This suggests that some messages about HE are getting through but the more complex situation over costs and support arrangements is perhaps more difficult to convey.
- There was a strong relationship between *concerns* over financial aspects of studying (availability of financial support and running up debts whilst studying) and perceived *awareness* of the financial aspects of studying. Those least likely to feel informed were the most likely to be concerned about these financial aspects, which suggests that those who are concerned about the financial aspects of HE participation require more information and/or reassurance about the real costs and support available to them.
- Sixty-six per cent of all respondents felt that the government/taxpayer should contribute towards the costs of adult study at HE level and indeed a high proportion of those considering HE felt they would fund their HE studies through a grant or bursary (67 per cent). Similarly 68 per cent of all respondents felt that employers should contribute towards adult HE costs and 59 per cent of those considering HE felt they would be able to fund at least part of their studies through support from an employer (59 per cent). This may not reflect the likely support available to working adults.
- Less than a quarter expected to use commercial credit sources to fund their future HE study yet SIES indicates these are a key source of finance, particularly for adults from lower socio-economic groups.
- One-third of respondents felt owing money is basically wrong, particularly those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

### Key messages for sub groups

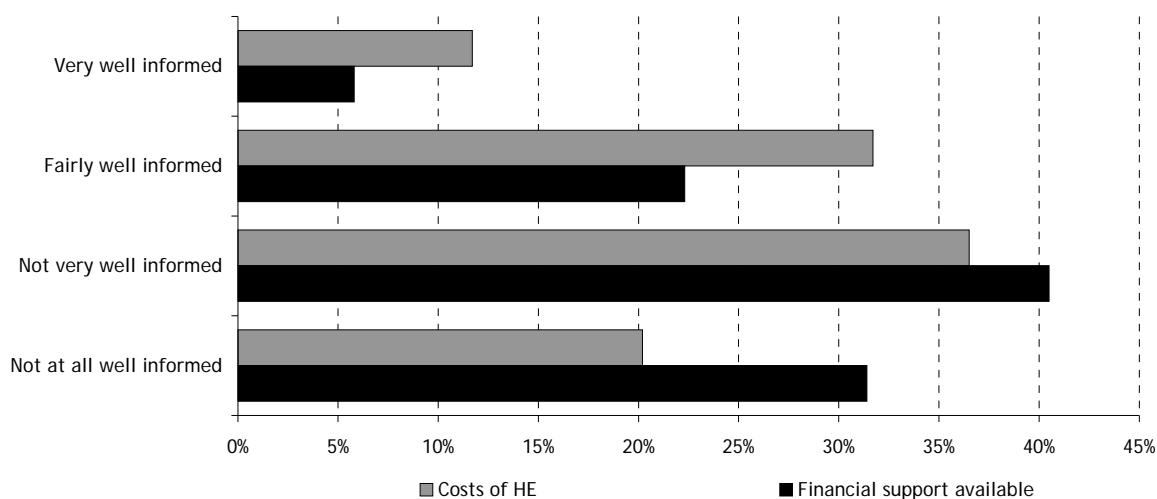
- Women were generally more concerned about debt issues than men.
- Those mid career (aged 31 to 44) felt least informed about the costs and financial support available and there was a greater expectation amongst this group that employers should contribute towards the costs of adult HE study. Younger adults (aged 22 to 30) felt most informed about costs and financial support and this group were the most likely to feel an individual should contribute towards their own study costs. This group also had the most positive attitudes to debt. Older adults were the most likely to consider government as the key source of finance for HE study.
- Black and minority ethnic adults were more likely than white respondents to feel well informed about the financial support available to adults in HE, and availability of financial support is a particular concern for this group of adults. Adults from black and minority ethnic backgrounds tended to feel that the government/taxpayer should contribute towards the costs of adult study in HE. This group were also more likely to hold negative attitudes to debt.

- Those from managerial and professional backgrounds were the least likely to believe they were well informed about the costs of university and the support available but were the least concerned about these aspects of participation. This group were also more likely than those from other groups to feel that a person should contribute to their own study costs. Those from lower socio-economic backgrounds (routine and manual work occupations) were most concerned about debt generally.

## 8.1 Understanding financial aspects

The survey examined the extent to which respondents who would consider entering HE (30 per cent, see Chapter 6) felt they were aware of the costs and financial support open to them. Looking at the overall awareness of the financial aspects of HE there appeared to be greater perceived knowledge/awareness about costs than about support available (Figure 8.1). Around 12 per cent said that they were very well informed of the costs of HE with another 32 per cent suggesting that they were fairly well informed of the costs; this compares with only six per cent who claimed to be very well informed of the financial support available and 22 per cent who were fairly well informed. Conversely, at the other end of the spectrum, 20 per cent reported that they were not at all well informed of the costs of HE and 31 per cent suggested that they were not informed of the financial support available.

Figure 8.1: Financial understanding of higher education



Base: Those who would consider HE in future, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

There was little variation across the group of respondents considering HE in terms of their financial awareness of HE. However there were some differences noticed by age, socio-economic background and peer group experience of HE (the extent to which the respondent had friends that had gone to university, see Appendix Table A8.1). Those respondents with several or most of their friends who had gone to university were

more likely to suggest that they were well informed about the costs of HE than those who claimed that a few or none of their friends had gone to university. Yet having friends who had attended university does not appear to have a bearing on perceived awareness of financial support available to students. Family experience of HE also appeared to have no significant influence on perceived awareness of either costs or support. Generally those in mid career (31 to 44 year olds) were the least likely to believe that they were well informed about costs and financial support, whereas those in the youngest age category (22 to 30 year olds) appeared to be the most well informed. This corresponds with the greater impact financial considerations appear to have on younger respondents in decisions about whether or not to participate in HE (see Chapters 5 and 7). Those in managerial and professional occupations were the least likely to claim that they were well informed about both the costs of university and financial support available. Those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were more likely than those from white backgrounds to suggest that they were informed of the financial support associated with university (but there were no real differences in perceived awareness of costs). This would correspond with the greater concerns that those from black and minority ethnic groups have over the financial aspects of HE participation.

It is interesting to note the similarities between financial awareness of HE and wider awareness of HE (discussed in Chapter 4). Overall, it would appear that respondents had a greater awareness of the opportunities available at university and the entry qualifications or requirements for university than they did about the costs of HE or the financial support available (Table 8.1). While only 11 per cent of respondents suggested that they were *'not at all aware'* of the opportunities available at university, the figure for *'not at all aware'* rises to 15 per cent when a more specific question on entry requirements is asked, 20 per cent for awareness of costs and 31 per cent for the awareness of financial support.

Among those who have some interest in studying at HE in the future, there was a strong correlation between their financial concerns associated with studying in HE and the extent to which they felt informed about the costs of HE. For example, those who suggested that they did not have concerns about the availability of financial support (for fees/study costs) were more likely than those who did have these concerns to suggest that they were *'very well'* or *'fairly well'* informed about the costs of HE (60 per cent compared to 39 per cent). Likewise, those respondents who did not have concerns about running up debts were more likely than those who did to suggest that they were informed about the costs of HE (54 per cent compared with 39 per cent, see Table 8.2).

Table 8.1: General awareness of HE and financial aspects of HE

	Opportunities available	Entry qualifications/ requirements	Costs of HE	Financial support available for adults
Awareness:	%	%	%	%
Very well informed	17.1	12.8	11.5	5.6
Fairly well informed	42.4	36.2	31.3	21.8
Not very well informed	28.5	35.1	36.0	39.7
Not at all well informed	10.9	14.7	19.9	30.8
Don't know	1.1	1.3	1.3	2.1
Total	416	416	416	416

Base: Those who would consider HE in future

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Again, the correlation between financial concerns and awareness of financial support available indicates that those who have such concerns (eg availability of financial support for fees/study costs, and running up debts), considered themselves less well informed (see Table 8.3). This suggests that individuals who are concerned about the financial aspects of HE participation require more targeted and widespread information about the real costs and the financial support available to them. However, it could also suggest that those who are unconcerned about the financial aspects of HE do not feel they need to know about costs and support available.

Table 8.2: Concerns over financial aspects of HE by extent to which respondent feels informed about costs

Key concerns:	Very well informed %	Fairly well informed %	Not very well informed %	Not at all well informed %	Total (N)
Not concerned about availability of financial support for tuition fees/study costs	22.6	36.9	23.8	16.7	84
Are concerned about availability of financial support for tuition fees/ study costs	8.9	30.3	39.8	21.1	327
Not concerned about running up debts	18.9	34.6	31.5	15.0	127
Are concerned about running up debts	8.5	30.3	38.7	22.5	284
Total	11.7	31.6	36.5	20.2	411

Base: Those who would consider HE in future, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table 8.3: Concerns over financial aspects of HE by extent to which respondent feels informed about financial support

Key concerns:	Very well informed %	Fairly well informed %	Not very well informed %	Not at all well informed %	Total (N)
Not concerned about availability of financial support for tuition fees/study costs	13.3	28.9	31.3	26.5	83
Are concerned about availability of financial support for tuition fees/ study costs	3.7	20.7	42.9	32.7	324
Not concerned about running up debts	12.5	25.0	33.6	28.9	128
Are concerned about running up debts	2.9	21.1	43.6	32.5	280
Total	5.9	22.3	40.4	31.4	408

Base: Those who would consider HE in future, excluding don't knows

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

## 8.2 Financing studies

### 8.2.1 Funding my own study

Those considering HE were asked how they might pay for going to university. It should be noted here that this reflects the respondents' perceptions of how they might fund their learning rather than what support is actually available. The most common method reported was paid work with over three-quarters (79 per cent) thinking they would fund their studies through work. This was followed by a grant or bursary, and approximately two-thirds (67 per cent) thought they would be able to access this form of support. Interestingly, nearly three-fifths (59 per cent) thought they would get employer support, while five per cent suggested using money from friends. Few thought they would borrow money from commercial sources (25 per cent expected to borrow from banks and 17 per cent from other loans such as credit cards (Figure 8.2).

Evidence from the Student Income and Expenditure Survey (2004-05)<sup>1</sup> suggests that older students and particularly those from lower socio-economic groups rely less on student loans to support them whilst studying than their younger peers. They are more likely to engage in paid work, which reflects the views of our respondents. However, the SIES study indicated that working whilst studying was felt to impact negatively on health and well-being, study outcomes and the quality of HE experience, especially for part-time students (where mature students are concentrated) who work much longer hours. The survey also found that financial

<sup>1</sup> Finch S et al. (2006) Student Income and Expenditure Survey 2004/05, DfES Research Report 725.

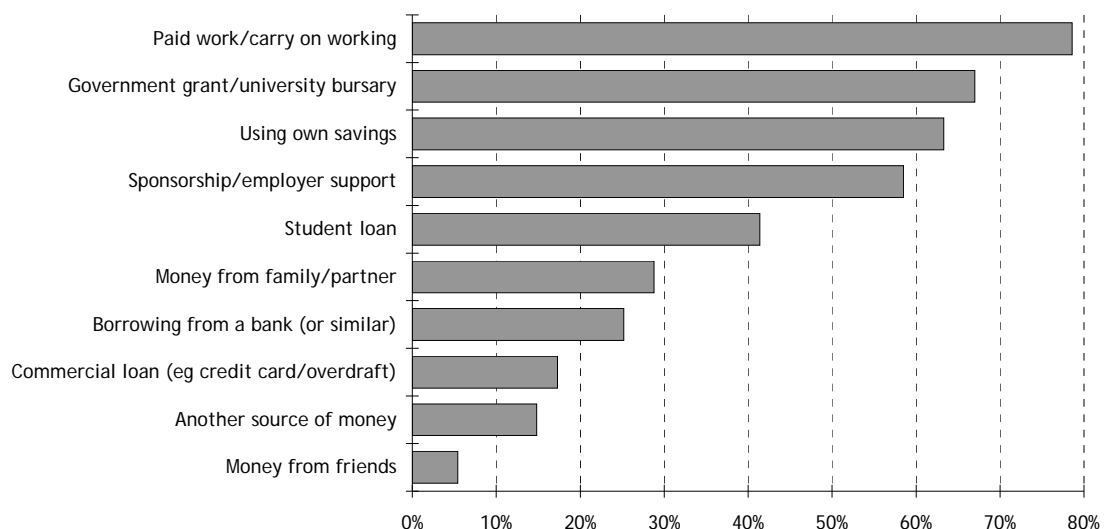
employer support was limited. Only two per cent of full-time and five per cent of part-time students received financial support from their employers although the report did acknowledge that employers could provide support in other and non-financial ways, through secondments, flexible working hours and time off to study for example.

The SIES study also showed that older students were relatively more likely to receive other support such as NHS bursaries and social security benefits (eg child benefits, disability/incapacity benefits, unemployment benefits and pensions). The study suggested that older students have higher incomes, but this does not equate to being better off as older students also have higher expenditure, particularly participation costs (the costs incurred as a direct result of attending university) and living costs. Older students and those from lower socio-economic groups are more likely to borrow (and borrow at higher levels) from commercial sources, sources with generally a higher cost of borrowing – and this appears to be an important way for adults from lower socio-economic groups to fund their studies (particularly full-time study). Perhaps that is something that our respondents have not considered.

### 8.2.2 Funding adult HE in general

All the respondents were also asked who they felt should contribute towards the costs of adult study at HE. The most commonly held view was that the learners themselves should contribute towards their study (72 per cent), followed by their employer (68 per cent) and the government/taxpayer (66 per cent). A minority (17 per cent) felt that the learner's family should contribute (see Table 8.4).

Figure 8.2: Ways to finance higher education study



Base: Those who would consider HE in future

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table 8.4: Attitudes towards financing higher education study - who should contribute towards costs?

	Frequency	%
Person themselves	1,010	72.1
Person's family	242	17.3
Government/taxpayer	920	65.7
Person's employer	954	68.1
Don't know	23	1.7

Base: All

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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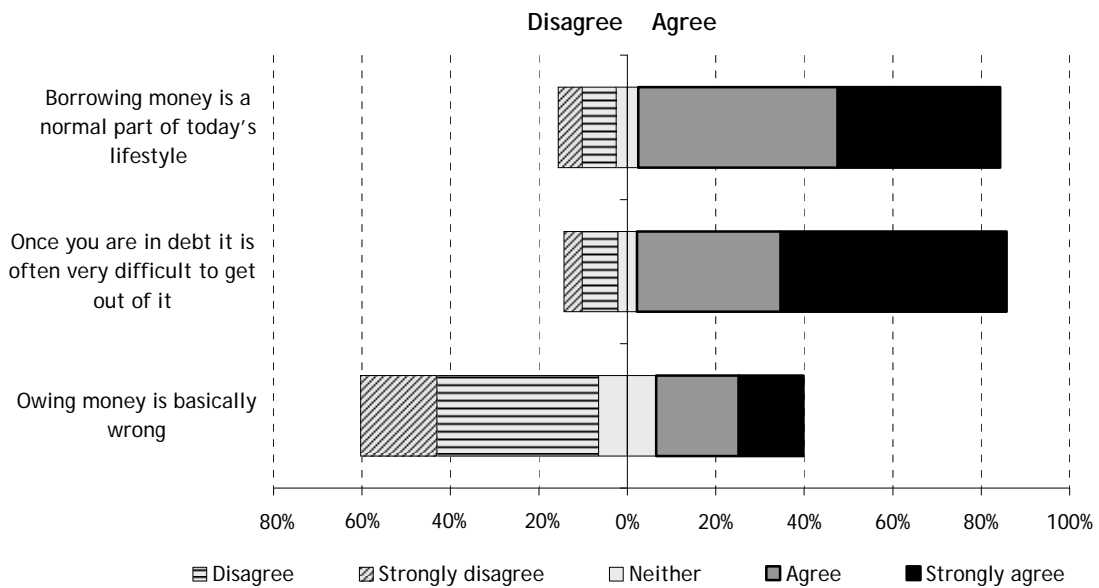
There were strong associations between potential sources of adult funding and an individual's background. Those more likely to feel a person should contribute to their own study were younger, white, from a higher socio-economic background, with parental experience of HE, and with higher level qualifications (ie more akin to the traditional HE student). Those more likely to think the employer should contribute were in mid career (aged 31 to 44), white, with parental experience of HE and with higher level qualifications. Those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were both relatively more likely than white adults to say government/taxpayers should contribute and also more likely to feel the government should contribute rather than individual students. Indeed for black and minority ethnic respondents and older individuals the key source of funding for adult study in HE was considered to be the government/tax payers.

In addition, individuals with more positive attitudes to the benefits of HE and/or less concerned by debt were more likely to feel an individual should contribute towards the costs of their own study.

### 8.3 Attitudes to debt

All the respondents were asked a series of questions aimed at capturing their attitude to debt (see Figure 8.3). Looking at attitudes to debt across the whole group of respondents, there were no real neutral attitudes, individuals were either in agreement or disagreement, to statements about borrowing being normal or debt being difficult to get out of. However respondents were less decided about the third statement about owing money being wrong. The majority of respondents (82 per cent) felt that borrowing was a normal part of today's lifestyle and a slightly higher proportion (84 per cent) agreed with the statement that once you are in debt it is often very difficult to get out of it. Over half (54 per cent) did not feel that owing money was wrong, but one-third did.

Figure 8.3: Attitudes to debt



Base: All

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Attitudes to debt differed significantly according to several key socio-demographic characteristics.

Looking at personal characteristics, younger respondents (22-30 year olds) were more likely to disagree with the statements about 'debt being difficult to get out of' and 'owing money being wrong'. Conversely, the older age group held the highest level of agreement with those statements and were most likely to disagree with the comment that borrowing money is part of today's lifestyle. This suggests that younger people have a more positive (or accepting) attitude to debt.

Men were more likely than women to agree that borrowing money is part of everyday life and were relatively less concerned about being able to get out of debt or that owing money was wrong. This links with attitudes to HE outlined in Chapter 4, where women were more concerned that people who go to university end up with heavy debts. However, it perhaps worth noting here that women earn less than men, that household money is not even distributed and that women are more likely to spend money on their children than on themselves.

Respondents from black and minority ethnic groups were more likely than their white counterparts to believe that owing money was basically wrong (NB it is against the Muslim religion).

Looking at measures of economic status, those least concerned about debt were those who claimed to be living comfortably, those with mortgages (the largest debt individuals are likely to have during their lives), those who were self-employed, in managerial and professional occupations and in intermediate occupations (the former

group were less concerned about being able to get out of debt, and the latter tended not to feel that owing money is basically wrong) and those working in banking and finance sectors. Correspondingly, those most concerned about debt were those living in council or housing association accommodation, having financial difficulties, and in intermediate or routine and manual work occupations.

Attitudes or views on debt may be based on actual risk. The Student Income and Expenditure Survey (2004-05)<sup>1</sup> suggests that adults from lower socio-economic groups are more likely to come out of HE with higher debts and to be concerned about their financial situation, and they are less optimistic about the real financial returns in the longer run.

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<sup>1</sup> Finch S et al. (2006) Student Income and Expenditure Survey 2004/05, DfES Research Report 725.

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## 9 Preferences for HE

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This chapter focuses on the 30 per cent of respondents who would consider going to university in the future to explore what they would prefer their university experience to be like – essentially how and where they would most like to study. Here we examine preferences for subject, institution location/proximity to home, and mode of study.

### Key messages - opportunities

- Those considering HE were generally decided about the kind of subject they would like to study. Although a wide range of subjects were considered, vocational subjects were most common, particularly business, computing and nursing.
- Location of study appeared to be key with adults preferring to study somewhere close to home (62 per cent) or within commuting distance (21 per cent). This was particularly important to those with family commitments, those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.
- There was a general preference for part-time study particularly during evenings or at weekends rather than during the day. This was particularly key for full-time employees and those with a greater level of financial worries allowing them to combine study with work. It was a greater preference amongst those from black and minority backgrounds.
- Though the numbers are small, the findings suggest that adults may be more willing to commute for part-time study delivered during evenings and weekends than that delivered during the day.

### Key messages - challenges

- Only one-fifth of those considering HE would prefer to study a subject related to science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM). However these were more popular amongst women, those from black and minority backgrounds and those with no previous family experience of HE.

- There was some demand for distance and online learning, yet few said they would prefer to study with the Open University. This suggests that there may be limited understanding of the Open University provision.
- Adults were least decided about their preferred mode of study (such as full-time, part-time during evenings and weekends, part-time during the day or learning in the workplace), with 21 per cent saying they had no preference, yet mode of study is a key determinant of both costs of HE and the financial support available (key concerns of those considering HE).
- Only three per cent would prefer to study in the workplace.

#### Key messages for sub groups

- There were no real differences in terms of study preferences between women and men.
- Younger adults and those mid career (aged 31 to 44) were more likely to prefer to study a vocationally oriented course which corresponds with their employability and career motivations towards HE study. Conversely older adults (45 and older) had a greater preference for academic subjects corresponding with their personal development orientations to HE. Those mid career were also more likely to prefer to study part-time during evenings and weekends than older or younger adults.
- Black and minority ethnic adults were more likely to cite a preference for studying close to home and to study part-time during the weekends and evenings.
- Those from lower socio-economic backgrounds (routine and manual work occupations) were also more likely to want to study close to home.

## 9.1 Subject

Respondents were asked what subject or area of interest they would ideally like to study at university and almost all were able to state a preference (only four per cent did not give a preference). A wide range of subjects were reported by respondents. The most commonly cited subjects tended to be vocationally oriented subjects such as business, computing, and nursing (see Table 9.1). Overall, of all those who gave a subject preference, vocational subjects were the preferred choice of around two-thirds of respondents<sup>1</sup> (65 per cent). However, even though we phrased the question in terms of what they would 'ideally' like to study, respondents may lean towards vocational subjects as they are perhaps regarded as more 'acceptable' linking in with

<sup>1</sup> Vocational subjects include medicine/dentistry, nursing, veterinary science/agriculture, computing, engineering/technology, architecture/building/planning, law, business, teaching/education, childcare, and beauty. Academic subjects were biological sciences, physical sciences, general science, mathematics, social studies, media studies, English, languages, history/philosophy, and creative arts and design.

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career and job motivations to study rather than subjects to study for personal fulfilment reasons.

Age and employment status were found to be associated with the likelihood of respondents reporting a vocational or academic subject as their study preference. Younger respondents and those in mid career (those under 44) and employees (both full-time and part-time) were more likely to choose a vocational subject whereas older respondents (45 to 55 year olds) were more likely to choose an academic subject (Appendix Table A9.1). These patterns reflect respondents' stages in their career and also their motivations to HE. Younger respondents were more likely to be at an earlier stage of their career, or at a stage where they would like to make a change, and they were more likely to report general employability as a motivation to study. Older respondents were more likely to cite personal development as motivation. In general, those who were considering HE for career reasons or for reasons relating to their job were more likely to choose a vocational subject (Appendix Table A9.2).

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Table 9.1: Subject preferences (most cited)

	Frequency	%
Business	36	8.7
Computing	36	8.6
Nursing	32	7.8
Engineering/technology	24	5.7
Teaching/education	23	5.4
Creative arts and design	22	5.3
No answer	17	4.1

Base: Those who would consider HE in future

Source: *PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007*

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Another grouping of subjects of particular relevance in relation to current policy are subjects related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)<sup>1</sup>. Only one-fifth (21 per cent) of respondents said they would prefer to study in these areas (Appendix Table A9.3). It would appear that these subjects were more popular with men than with women, black and minority ethnic respondents, and interestingly, respondents who had no previous family experience of HE. Unlike with the vocational grouping of subjects, preference for a STEM subject was not found to be related to any particular motivation to study.

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<sup>1</sup> STEM subjects include biology, physical sciences, general science, mathematics, computing, and engineering/technology.

## 9.2 Proximity to home

Respondents were asked which of a number of options best represented where they would most like to study. Nearly two-thirds (62 per cent) said that they would like to study at a university or college close to their home. A further one-fifth (21 per cent) said that they would like to study at a university/college within commuting distance of their home. Very few (two per cent) said that they would like to study through the Open University or to study somewhere that would require them to move/spend time away from home (one per cent). One in seven respondents (14 per cent) said that they did not mind where they studied or had no preference. However, overall this suggests that respondents want or need a convenient study location.

Table 9.2: Preferences for higher education study

	Frequency	%
Close to home	252	61.5
Within commuting distance	86	20.9
Require me to move/spend time away from home	4	0.9
Open University	7	1.7
No preference/don't mind	59	14.3
Other answers	3	0.6

Base: Those who would consider HE in future

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Inevitably respondents' family situation was found to have an impact on their desire to study close to home. Those who were married/living with a partner and had children were the most likely to report studying close to home as a preference, whereas those with fewer family commitments (those who were single or divorced with no children) were the most likely to have no preference as to where they would study indicating greater flexibility (or less constraints on choice).

Ethnicity and socio-economic background were also associated with respondents' propensity to want to study close to home. Black and minority ethnic respondents were much more likely than white respondents to want to study near home (74 per cent compared to 58 per cent). Respondents from intermediate and particularly routine and manual occupational backgrounds were more likely than those from managerial and professional occupations to want to study close to home. Financial concerns do not appear to influence preferences directly as those who said they would be concerned about the financial aspects of HE study were no more likely to prefer a local study location.

### 9.3 Study pattern

Respondents were also asked which of a number of options best described how they would like to study, in terms of study pattern. By far the most commonly preferred mode of study was part-time, either during the day (18 per cent) or, more often, in the evening or at weekends (32 per cent). So the majority of respondents who would consider HE in the future have a preference for face to face delivery of HE. However this may reflect respondents' knowledge of how they see HE is normally delivered.

Indeed, only 13 per cent said they would prefer distance learning or study online and one per cent of respondents said that they would like to study during the summer (ie through summer school). Yet this is still considerably higher than the proportion who said they would prefer to study with the Open University when looking at preferences for study location (only two per cent). This suggests that there are some individuals who would like to study virtually but perhaps through a local university or it could suggest that there is a lack of awareness about the type of opportunities afforded through the Open University.

Only twelve per cent of those who suggested they would probably or definitely consider HE in the future said that they would prefer to study full-time. Perhaps surprisingly given that many cited motivations related to employment, only three per cent of respondents said that they would like to study in the workplace. This may be worthy of further exploration, to gain a clearer view of the understanding of work-based learning and willingness to consider this as an option amongst adults. However, one in five (21 per cent) of those asked said that they had no preference in terms of study pattern.

Table 9.3: Preferences for study pattern

	Frequency	%
Full-time	49	11.9
Part-time (day)	74	18.0
Part-time (eves/weekends)	131	31.8
Summer/summer school	4	1.1
Distance learning/online	53	13.0
In the workplace	11	2.7
No preference/don't mind	85	20.6
Other	4	0.9

Base: Those who would consider HE in future

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Those in mid career (aged between 31 and 44) and those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, in particular, were more likely to say they would like to study part-time during evenings and/or weekends. However a number of factors related to respondents' current employment and financial situation were also found to be

associated with study pattern preference. Understandably, respondents who were working as full-time employees were more likely than part-time employees to want to study part-time during evenings and weekends. Part-time employees and those who were unemployed at the time of the survey were relatively more likely than full-time employees to consider full-time study.

In terms of respondents' financial situation, those who reported that they were finding it quite, or very difficult to get by, were nearly twice as likely than those who reported a lower level of financial worries to want to study during evenings and weekends. This could suggest that those finding it difficult to manage financially may have to combine study with work.

It is interesting to look at preferred location and preferred study pattern together, but as the numbers are small this provides indicative patterns only. It suggests that those preferring to study part-time during the day generally want to study close to home. Those wanting to study part-time during evenings and weekends, although preferring to study close to home, may be willing to commute whereas those wanting to study full-time have less restriction on where they study.

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## 10 Conclusions and Implications for Policy

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This report has so far set out some of the key findings about working adults' perceptions of and intentions towards entering HE. In this chapter we attempt to draw out conclusions and implications for policy on participation in HE.

### 10.1 Interest in HE among working adults

#### 10.1.1 Working adults have a positive view of HE

Despite having decided not to go to university in the past, attitudes to HE were remarkably positive amongst our group of working adults, and this represents a change over the past decade or so. The university experience was universally regarded as something that is open to everyone regardless of age, background and circumstances, although understanding of entry routes was perhaps limited. The university experience was also seen as having some value although it was not perceived as automatically providing access to the best jobs. Qualifications per se were regarded as important but work experience and skills and competencies were felt to have greater currency in the labour market.

#### 10.1.2 Three in ten working adults hope to go into HE

There is an interest in HE amongst working adults: 30 per cent of our group of respondents would consider applying to university at some point in the future, and they want to study vocational subjects in local universities part-time in the evenings and at weekends. Those most likely to consider HE were younger (aged 22 to 30), with family and/or peer group experience of HE, from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, with higher level qualifications, who felt they had done well at school, or had considered applying to HE at some point in the past. Also those more likely to apply were individuals reporting financial difficulties, living in social housing, who were unemployed, or felt they did poorly at school.

Of the remaining 70 per cent, most could be encouraged to consider HE if HE was more accessible and they could be provided with financial support. The easiest groups to encourage are younger adults (22 to 30) and those with higher level qualifications. However those with family commitments and financial difficulties, could also be encouraged, indicating that lifestyle and financial barriers to participation can be overcome. Yet there is a small group of working adults for whom university is not an option – they are just not interested and think they are too old – and so for this group HE will always be seen as an irrelevance.

### 10.1.3 HE improves career prospects

Working adults tend to have a mainly instrumental attitude to HE and think it will or could help them in their careers, helping them to develop their career, change the type of work they do and earn more money. Personal development reasons such as intellectual challenge and improved self confidence are also key motivators and perceived benefits of going to university, and these softer or wider benefits of HE should not be overlooked. HE is seen as less about improving an individual's current job, which tends to be a key perceived benefit of (or motivator for) wider learning, than about improving longer-term prospects.

### 10.1.4 Series of hurdles

Although the majority of our adults do see benefits to HE for adults, some do not see it as relevant to their working lives. Indeed, to engage working adults, to encourage them to consider participating in HE and help them access HE there are a series of hurdles or barriers to overcome. Firstly, there is a need to overcome a lack of interest and a perceived lack of value/usefulness in HE study. These are key attitudinal barriers that have prevented participation of our working adults in the past and may prevent future consideration. Individuals do not feel they need to go to university to get work or to get on in their career. Secondly there is a need to remove structural obstacles to participation for those who would like to go (have an interest and see the benefits HE study can bring) but feel they cannot. The key barriers here, for those seriously considering HE, are the costs of study and concerns over balancing work and family commitments with study. These concerns have deterred individuals from applying in the past and continue to trouble them. Understanding about the financial aspects of HE, the costs of study and particularly the financial support available, is limited.

## 10.2 Implications for policy: six steps to encourage adult participation

The research has indicated a number of areas which could encourage and/or support participation in HE amongst working adults which include:

1. Promoting HE as an option early on (whilst at school) to all individuals, as those who seriously consider HE whilst in full-time education are more likely to continue to consider it. Those who report a negative experience in school may well consider returning to HE to have a second chance at education and to prove themselves. It is important to get the idea of HE into people's mindset early on so they can understand what HE study is, the range of options available and where they can find out further information. However care needs to be taken to ensure that HE is not just seen as a 'now or never' option but something that is 'never off the table'. HE should be promoted as something individuals could consider for later when they are more decided about what they want to do, can make the most of their experiences and make informed decisions. This is perhaps particularly important given the funding focus on first degrees, and therefore it is important that individuals go at a time when they can make the most of the opportunity.
2. Promoting the value of HE particularly in career development terms, which may include promoting aspects around the skills and knowledge gained during study and access to higher level jobs. As Wedgewood (2008<sup>1</sup>) notes, HE has an important quality assurance role, providing qualifications that are credible and recognised. Some groups may be harder to convince than others particularly those who feel they have done well in their careers without the need for university and have high job satisfaction (ie managers/professionals and the self employed). So other values of HE should also be promoted such as the personal development benefits and softer outcomes of self confidence and self efficacy. Indeed, there is a need to recognise the diverse role of HE including its role in lifelong learning and personal development. HE can provide individuals with a place to grow and enhance their skills to function as global citizens as well as a place to develop skills for employment. Wedgewood in her work exploring how HE can be delivered to and for the workforce feels there is a lack of knowledge and appreciation of the value of HE and has recommended a national communications campaign aimed at employers and employees that emphasises the benefits and value of HE.
3. Providing clear information about the range of ways adults can access HE, and about the costs and the financial support available to adults. There is a need to provide information about the range of ways HE can be delivered. Being able to study at home or in the workplace is a key encouraging factor but few cite a

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<sup>1</sup> Wedgewood M (2008), Higher education for the workforce: barriers and facilitators to employer engagement, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills Research Report 08 04.

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preference for distance learning or work-based learning which could indicate a lack of awareness of all the options in HE. In general few working adults actively sought information about HE for themselves or other members of their family, yet many felt they knew little about HE (particularly those in mid-career, aged 31 to 44). However most working adults have some family or peer group experience of HE and this may be a key but unrecognised source of information, although it may be out of date given the fast pace of change in the HE market. Key places to provide information are the internet and in colleges and universities themselves, as these are the places where working adults are most likely to look for information about HE. While it might be useful to explore what sites and types of information on the internet are being used and examine the quality and currency of this information, there does not appear to be an official single point of net-based information for adults considering HE. Existing sources about HE tend to be aimed at young people whilst sources for adult learners do not tend to focus on HE. This means that interested parties have to navigate through various sources and may lose interest before they find the information they need. A dedicated web-based information source targeted towards adults considering HE would be beneficial. This could provide information on the value and benefits of university education along with likely costs and information about the range and levels of qualifications available, about delivery mechanisms, entry routes (including APEL), and what flexible provision is available both locally and further afield. Another implication is the reliance on universities and colleges to provide information – they may be the first port of call for potential students and there may only be a small number of individuals in these institutions who are in a position to offer sound advice, particularly on the financial aspects of HE study. Universities and colleges need to ensure they have appropriately skilled individuals on the frontline who can advise or refer potential students appropriately.

4. Providing the right HE offer. Working adults want local and flexible courses. In the main they want to study part-time in the evenings and weekends, as they intend to keep on working to finance their studies, and they particularly want to study in an institution close to home. If individuals could find a suitable course close to home or could study at home or in the workplace they would be particularly encouraged to consider HE and this would overcome concerns about balancing work and family commitments with study. Face to face delivery in an institution is considerably more popular than distance learning, and work-based learning hardly features at all, but this may reflect a limited understanding of the range of ways HE can be delivered. On the surface, adults want to study vocational courses such as business, computing and nursing, which reflects their career motivations towards HE. However vocational courses may be regarded as more ‘acceptable’ choices for adult study and reflect the type of courses that adults perceive to be on offer. There is some interest in STEM courses particularly amongst men and adults from black and minority ethnic backgrounds yet most initiatives to encourage participation in these subjects are aimed at young people. Working adults may, therefore, be an

untapped resource for STEM and adults should not just be offered a limited range of courses thought to be suitable.

5. Providing tailored financial support that takes into account the ways in which adults are most likely to participate. Financial issues such as worries over the costs of study, about running up debt and a need to earn money have acted as a deterrent to HE entry and continue to act as a barrier to, or a key concern about, future participation in HE. Finance is particularly a concern to those considering HE and also to younger adults (aged 22 to 30), those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, women, unemployed adults and those reporting financial difficulties. The perception that working adults have of the availability of financial support and of the costs involved in study impacts upon their decisions about HE, but these perceptions may not reflect the reality of the financial situation. Indeed working adults feel they have limited understanding of costs and even less about financial support, but there is a general expectation that they can access a government grant or university bursary to help fund their studies. However, the support system is targeted towards first time high level study and full-time or traditional methods of study, although some provisions are in place for those wishing to study part-time and/or by non-traditional routes. Working adults would prefer part-time study, and study that may fall outside of the eligibility criteria for funding in terms of the number of hours (given the preference for evening and weekend study). Provision of financial support, particularly that tailored to the learning patterns and preferences of working adults could overcome their concerns and encourage them to apply to HE. Similarly better information about the costs and support available may help to allay fears, as generally those who felt less well informed were most concerned about the financial aspects of HE study.
6. Continuing to engage employers. There is a significant expectation that employers will support working adults in their endeavours to access HE. Many (59 per cent) of those thinking of going to HE believed that employers would help them fund their studies and an even higher proportion of all working adults surveyed (68 per cent) felt that employers should contribute towards the costs of adult HE. However, very few (only three per cent) of adults considering HE anticipate studying in the workplace itself, although this may again reflect limited awareness of the range of HE delivery mechanisms. Employers appear reluctant to invest in developing high level skills within their workforce yet support from employers would have a positive impact on working adults. With encouragement from employers and particularly paid time off to study, many working adults who were not considering HE as an option felt they could be encouraged to consider applying to HE at some time in the future. Employer encouragement would encourage 56 per cent to apply and more concrete support would have a positive impact on 69 per cent of working adults. This form of support appears to be particularly influential to men, full-time employees and those with higher level qualifications. However there may be an issue in engaging employers with HE as working adults and employers appear to have differing motivations for involvement. Employers

want to upskill their workforce, but for individuals a key motivator to HE (or perceived benefit to be gained from HE) is increased employability and enhanced long-term career prospects.

### 10.3 Reaching out to working adults

Adults want a different type of HE to that traditionally on offer, they want local part-time vocational courses. There is a need to provide something different for adults, something that is packaged specifically for them and marketed to them through the internet and universities and colleges. However it should be viewed as an important aspect of HE provision, not just an add-on. Although adults generally felt informed about the opportunities available, few had actually sought information so it is important to promote other flexible forms of learning (beyond part-time face to face delivery in institutions) such as the Open University and work-based learning which may better meet their needs.

The study indicates that working adults are not all the same; although holding generally positive views about HE, they have different orientations to study and different concerns about it and some individuals are just not interested at all. For some, university is a 'normal' consideration whilst for others it could be regarded as providing a pathway out of disadvantage. Other groups may need more convincing of the benefits and of the opportunities available. However there are some individuals for whom HE is an irrelevance. Each of these groups is considered in turn:

#### 10.3.1 HE always been a real possibility

This group have very positive attitudes to HE, they have thought about going to university at some point in their career and are most likely to consider applying in the future. They are also the easiest group to encourage to think about HE (if they are not already doing so). This group tend to be well connected (with extensive family and peer group experience of HE), they are also younger, more likely to come from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, have higher level of qualifications and have done well at school. They are relatively less concerned about the difficulties of getting into HE but are concerned about the financial aspects of participation and about balancing work and family commitments with study. This group need clear information about the costs of HE, ways to finance studies and the financial support available. In particular:

- **Younger adults**, although they feel informed about the costs of study and are most accepting of debt, are particularly concerned about financial aspects of participation and have concerns about the benefits outweighing the costs. This group is the most open to encouragement from employers. They are also the most likely to think that an individual should contribute towards the cost of their own study which corresponds with their greater likelihood of being motivated to consider HE for career and employability reasons.

- Those from **black and minority ethnic backgrounds** (although not a homogeneous group) are relatively more concerned about and potentially deterred from considering HE by issues around finance (ie availability of financial support and running up debts). They have some concerns about whether university is worth the cost although they do see the value of HE in terms of access to jobs and they recognise the importance of qualifications. They are generally less accepting of debt and have a greater tendency to think that government should contribute towards HE study costs. As with younger adults, they tend to feel informed about the financial support in HE. Provision of financial support and wider support such as childcare would encourage them to apply. As a group they are relatively less concerned about balancing commitments but are concerned about being able to cope with the study workload.

Although there is no difference between men and women in their propensity to consider HE either during their careers or in the future, **women** do have a different orientation to HE than men. They appear to need less convincing about the value of HE than men, as they have relatively more positive attitudes to HE. However they have greater concerns about the HE experience. They are particularly concerned about finance and the availability of financial support (and are more concerned about debt generally) and about balancing work and family commitments with study. Indeed family and work commitments act as a key deterrent to future participation for women. Women are less likely to be influenced by employer support but this is likely to be driven by their working patterns (ie greater incidence of part-time work).

### 10.3.2 HE as a second chance/a way out of disadvantage

This group includes those who have had a negative experience at school or felt they had done badly and want a second chance to prove themselves. It also includes those with other aspects of disadvantage (those with a disability, living in social housing, unemployed, or with poor finances). Although they have tended not to have really considered HE before, they are relatively more likely than others to apply in the future. This group have concerns about the availability of financial support and about coping with the demands of study but could be encouraged with provision of financial support.

### 10.3.3 Still need some convincing but if the opportunity arose ...

This group have a lower tendency to consider HE as a future option but could be persuaded. It includes those who would consider HE for personal development reasons. These tend to be less worried about their careers, are happy in their jobs and less worried about their finances. They tend to be older adults (45 and over) and to come from higher socio-economic backgrounds (managerial/professional occupations). Another sub-group that may need a little more convincing are those in mid career (aged 31 to 44) and from lower socio-economic backgrounds. In particular:

- Adults in **mid career** tend to feel least well informed about all aspects of HE (including finance) but are least likely to have looked for any information and also have less family experience of HE. They have the greatest family commitments (most likely to have dependent children) and generally have the most concerns about the HE experience. They are particularly concerned about getting back into study and the availability of study support. They are deterred from considering HE by their work and family commitments and so have a greater preference for part-time study in the evenings and weekends. This group also expects employers to contribute towards study costs.
- Those from **lower socio-economic backgrounds** have a different profile in terms of relative advantage and engagement with learning which impacts on their attitudes to HE and intentions. They are more likely to report financial difficulties, less likely to own their own home, less likely to be in full-time work and more likely to be unemployed. They are also less likely to have higher level qualifications, less likely to have positive feelings about their time at school or to feel they did well at school, more likely to have left school early, and less likely to have engaged in learning since school. Although they are less likely to have considered HE in the past they are no less likely than those from other backgrounds to consider HE in the future. However they may need some convincing that HE is for the likes of them and that they will be able to get in, and to overcome a lack of interest and concerns about being too old. They generally have few of their peer group with experience of HE and are less likely to have looked for information about HE. They are motivated to consider HE out of career/employability reasons but do tend to have more concerns about the HE experience, particularly in terms of coping with the workload, and getting back into study (and availability of study support). They are generally more concerned about debt than other groups but are no more likely to be deterred by or concerned by financial issues. This group have a preference for study close to home.
- Those from **higher socio-economic backgrounds** (managerial/professional occupations) and **older adults** have a greater tendency to recognise the importance of qualifications and to have engaged in learning since leaving school. Although those from managerial and professional backgrounds are more likely to have considered HE in the past, older learners are both less likely to have considered it in the past or to consider it an option for the future. Generally older adults are less concerned about the financial aspects of HE participation but are more likely to think they lack the necessary qualifications or that they are too old. Those from higher socio-economic backgrounds and older adults are more likely to be motivated to consider HE for personal development reasons and out of a general interest in learning, and correspondingly are more likely to prefer an academic course. They tend to feel that an individual should contribute to their own study costs but older learners are most likely to consider government a key source of funding for adult HE.

#### 10.3.4 HE not an option

There is a small group for whom HE is just not relevant. They have not considered HE in the past, do not consider it an option for the future and cannot be encouraged to consider it. In general this group think they are too old to study and/or think they do not need HE. They are not deterred by financial issues or lifestyle factors. They tend to be older, married with no dependent children, and consider themselves to be financially comfortable.

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## Appendix 1: Additional Tables

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### Chapter 3

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Table A3.1: Age left continuous full-time education (FTE)

Age left continuous FTE	Frequency	%
Before the age of 16	188	13.5
16 years old	577	41.3
17-18 years old	448	32.1
19-20 years old	108	7.8
21 or older	75	5.3
Total	1,396	100.0

Base: All

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A3.2: Age left FTE, by personal background

Personal characteristics	Before 16 %	16 years old %	17-18 years old %	19-20 years old %	21 or older %	Total N
All	13.5	41.3	32.1	7.8	5.3	1,396
<i>Sex</i>						
Male	13.0	44.3	27.6	9.2	5.9	768
Female	14.1	37.7	37.5	5.9	4.8	629
<i>Ethnicity</i>						
White	13.7	43.6	32.1	6.8	3.8	1,257
BME	10.4	18.4	32.8	17.6	20.8	125
<i>Age group</i>						
22-30	7.8	29.5	37.3	15.7	9.7	319
31-44	10.6	44.8	32.7	7.0	4.9	630
45-55	21.5	45.0	27.5	3.1	2.9	447
<i>Socio-economic background</i>						
Managerial/professional	8.3	42.3	36.4	7.8	5.1	409
Intermediate	11.1	38.0	37.2	10.0	3.8	371
Routine/manual/never worked	18.7	42.5	26.1	6.6	6.2	595

Base: All

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.3: Highest qualification level on leaving continuous FTE, by personal background

	No formal qualifications %	Level 1 %	Level 2 %	Level 3 %	Total N
All	12.9	41.8	26.5	18.9	1,291
<i>Age</i>					
22-30	7.5	30.2	34.1	28.2	305
31-44	9.8	49.2	24.7	16.3	590
45-55	21.3	39.8	23.4	15.5	394
<i>Socio-economic background</i>					
Managerial/professional	7.5	37.4	31.4	23.6	385
Intermediate occupations	10.8	39.9	25.9	23.3	343
Routine/manual/never worked	17.9	45.9	23.6	12.7	543

Base: All with known qual level (on leaving FTE)

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.4: Qualification level achieved - on leaving FTE, and currently

	Leaving FTE		Currently	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
None	166	12.9	145	10.5
Level 1	539	41.8	453	33.0
Level 2	342	26.5	362	26.3
Level 3	244	18.9	414	30.1
Total	1,291	100.0	1,374	100.0

Base: All with known qual levels

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.5: Qualification level on leaving FTE and now, by age left FTE

	Before 16 %	16 years old %	17-18 years old %	19-20 years old %	21 or older %	All ages %
<i>Qualification level on leaving FTE</i>						
No formal qualifications	50.9	11.5	3.1	4.9	6.6	12.9
Level 1	37.7	58.2	32.1	13.7	18.0	41.7
Level 2	8.8	26.4	30.6	29.4	39.3	26.5
Level 3	2.5	3.9	34.2	52.0	36.1	19.0
Total N	159	541	421	102	61	1,284
<i>Current qualification level</i>						
No formal qualifications	37.3	9.6	2.5	4.8	5.6	10.5
Level 1	31.9	44.3	26.4	13.3	12.7	32.9
Level 2	15.1	27.7	28.0	26.7	33.8	26.4
Level 3	15.7	18.3	43.1	55.2	47.9	30.2
Total N	185	573	436	105	71	1,370

Base: All with known qual level

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.6: Feelings about school/college, by personal background

	Generally positive feelings %	Mixed feelings %	No strong feelings either way %	Generally negative feelings %	Total N
All	37.1	24.2	21.7	17.0	1,379
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
White	35.8	24.5	22.1	17.7	1,239
BME	50.8	22.6	17.7	8.9	124
<i>Socio-economic background</i>					
Managerial/professional	41.5	19.8	20.0	18.8	405
Intermediate occupations	38.0	20.9	22.3	18.8	368
Routine/manual/never worked	33.6	28.8	23.0	14.5	586

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.7: Age left FTE by feelings about school/college

Age left FTE	Generally positive feelings %	Mixed feelings %	No strong feelings either way %	Generally negative feelings %	All %
Before 16	8.0	9.9	16.1	26.9	13.4
At 16	32.5	45.2	48.7	44.9	41.2
17-18	42.2	33.2	25.2	18.4	32.3
19-20	10.8	5.7	6.0	6.0	7.7
After 20	6.5	6.0	4.0	3.8	5.4
Total N	510	334	298	234	1,376

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.8: Feelings about how well did at school/college, by personal background

	Well %	Average %	Poor %	Total N
All	28.6	56.5	14.9	1,396
<i>Sex</i>				
Male	24.9	58.1	17.0	770
Female	33.0	54.7	12.3	627
<i>Age</i>				
22-30	35.6	52.0	12.4	323
31-44	26.0	55.9	18.1	626
45-55	27.0	60.7	12.3	448
<i>Socio-economic background</i>				
Managerial/professional	34.2	52.3	13.5	407
Intermediate occupations	31.9	54.3	13.8	370
Routine/manual/never worked	22.9	60.9	16.2	598

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.9: General feelings about school and qualification level on leaving FTE, by how well respondent feels they did at school

	How well would you say you did in full-time education?			
	Well %	Average %	Poor %	All %
<i>General feelings about school</i>				
Generally positive	60.3	31.8	12.6	37.2
Mixed feelings	16.3	14.3	20.6	24.2
No strong feelings either way	14.8	29.0	23.6	21.8
Generally negative	8.7	24.8	43.2	16.9
Total N*	393	782	199	1,374
<i>Qualification level on leaving school</i>				
None of these/no formal qualifications	6.3	13.1	23.2	12.7
Level 1	22.7	48.4	53.7	41.9
Level 2	40.5	21.7	18.4	26.6
Level 3	30.4	16.8	4.7	18.9
Total N**	365	732	190	1,287

Base: \*All (excluding 'Don't know')

\*\* All with known qual level on leaving FTE (excluding 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.10: Perceived benefits of learning experiences since leaving continuous FTE

Benefits of learning	Frequency	% of total	Total N
Reasons related to current job	305	44.1	692
General employability reasons	270	39.0	692
Personal development	167	24.1	692
General interest	44	6.3	692
Social reasons/meet people	16	2.2	692
Personal reasons/life events	12	1.7	692
Expected to by employer	8	1.2	692
Other reasons	75	10.8	692

Base: Those who reported generally positive experience of learning since FTE

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.11: Interest in learning in the last six months, by age

	Reported looking for training N	Proportion of total %	Total N
All	316	22.6	1,401
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	93	28.9	322
31-44	140	22.2	630
45-55	83	18.5	448

Base: All

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.12: Highest qualification level achieved to date, by personal background

	No formal qualifications %	Level 1 %	Level 2 %	Level 3 %	Total N
All	10.5	33.0	26.3	30.1	1,374
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
White	10.1	34.0	25.5	30.4	1,240
BME	14.2	23.8	33.6	27.9	122
<i>Age</i>					
22-30	6.9	21.1	32.1	39.9	318
31-44	7.9	39.8	26.0	26.3	620
45-55	16.9	32.0	22.6	28.5	438
<i>Socio-economic background</i>					
Managerial/professional	6.5	28.8	26.8	38.0	400
Intermediate occupations	8.5	31.8	27.7	32.1	365
Routine/manual/never worked	14.7	35.9	25.4	24.0	591
<i>Employment status</i>					
FT employee	9.9	32.1	25.6	32.5	861
PT employee	11.5	38.0	25.8	24.7	279
Self employed	8.3	31.1	25.8	34.8	132
Unemployed	15.6	30.2	35.4	18.8	96

Base: All with known qual level

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.13: Comparing qualification level on leaving FTE and now (number), and looking at changes (row per cent)

	Qualification now					Total	Improvement %	No change %
	None	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3				
<i>Qualification leaving FTE</i>								
None	145	9	6	6	166	12.7	87.3	
Level 1	0	402	57	80	539	25.4	74.6	
Level 2	0	0	290	52	342	15.2	84.8	
Level 3	0	0	0	243	243	na	100.0	
	145	411	353	381	1,290			

Base: All with known qual levels

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.14: Engagement in learning since leaving continuous FTE, by personal background

	Yes %	No %	Total N
All	79.8	20.2	1,401
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	73.9	26.1	322
31-44	80.5	19.5	630
45-55	83.1	16.9	449
<i>Socio-economic background</i>			
Managerial/professional	86.8	13.2	408
Intermediate occupations	79.4	20.6	374
Routine/manual/never worked	75.9	24.1	598
<i>Employment status</i>			
FT employee	81.7	18.3	881
PT employee	78.8	21.2	283
Self employed	80.0	20.0	135
Unemployed	64.9	35.1	97

Base: All

*Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007*

Table A3.15: Feelings about learning since FTE

Feelings about post FTE learning/training	Frequency	%
Generally positive	692	62.3
Mixed feelings	180	16.2
No strong feelings either way	204	18.3
Generally negative	35	3.2
Total N	1,112	100.0

Base: Those reporting some learning since leaving school/college (excludes 'Don't know')

*Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007*

Table A3.16: Attitudes towards learning

	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Neither %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Total N
You need qualifications to get anywhere these days	33.0	32.1	8.3	20.5	6.1	1,398
Learning about new things is enjoyable	40.9	51.2	5.4	2.3	0.3	1,387
Paying for your own learning is an investment	17.7	57.1	10.5	11.3	3.4	1,376

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

*Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007*

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Table A3.17: Agreement with the statement - 'You need qualifications to get anywhere these days', by personal background

	Agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Disagree %	Total N
All	65.1	8.3	26.6	1,398
<i>Ethnicity</i>				
White	64.0	8.7	27.2	1,258
BME	76.0	4.8	19.2	125
<i>Age</i>				
22-30	51.0	9.4	39.7	320
31-44	65.0	8.7	26.2	630
45-55	75.0	6.9	18.0	448
<i>Socio-economic background</i>				
Managerial/professional	58.7	7.1	33.3	409
Intermediate occupations	63.7	9.4	27.0	374
Routine/manual/never worked	39.3	8.6	22.1	596

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A3.18: Agreement with the statement - 'I see paying for your own education as an investment', by sex

	Agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Disagree %	Total N
All	74.9	10.5	14.6	1,376
<i>Sex</i>				
Male	78.1	8.4	13.4	759
Female	71.0	13.0	16.0	616

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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**Table A3.19: Attitudes towards learning (per cent agreeing with statement), by experience of school/college**

	Generally negative feelings towards school/college	Generally positive feelings towards school/college	Mixed feelings towards school/college	Total N (agree, neither, and disagree)
You need qualifications to get anywhere these days, % agreeing	55.1	69.5	62.8	1,079
Learning about new things is enjoyable, % agreeing	87.9	95.5	93.4	1,072
Paying for your own learning is an investment, % agreeing	75.2	77.4	77.3	1,057

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know' and 'No strong feelings either way [about school/college]')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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**Table A3.20: Attitudes towards learning (per cent agreeing with statement), by how well did at school/college**

	Feel did well at school/college	Feel did average at school/college	Fell did poorly at school/college	Total N (agree, neither, and disagree)
You need qualifications to get anywhere these days, % agreeing	68.5	65.1	57.5	1,393
Learning about new things is enjoyable, % agreeing	94.0	91.6	89.8	1,381
Paying for your own learning is an investment, % agreeing	79.7	74.0	68.8	1,372

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A3.21: Attitudes towards learning (per cent agreeing with statement), by experience of post school/college learning

	Generally negative feelings towards further learning	Generally positive feelings towards further learning	Mixed feelings towards further learning	Total N (agree, neither, and disagree)
You need qualifications to get anywhere these days, % agreeing	65.7	68.1	62.2	905
Learning about new things is enjoyable, % agreeing	77.1	94.6	89.3	903
Paying for your own learning is an investment, % agreeing	70.6	79.1	63.8	895

Base: Those who have taken part in training since leaving school/college (excludes 'Don't know' and 'No strong feelings either way [about learning since school/college]')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.22: Perceived importance of factors in getting current (or previous) job

	Very %	Fairly %	Not very %	Not at all %	Total N
Qualifications	21.5	28.3	25.3	24.9	1,203
Skills and competences	61.7	27.7	5.4	5.1	1,212
Work experiences	47.6	30.7	12.5	9.3	1,214

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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 Table A3.23: Perceived importance of qualifications in getting current (or previous) job, by personal background

	Very %	Fairly %	Not very %	Not at all %	Total N
All	21.5	28.3	25.3	24.9	1,203
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
White	19.5	29.0	26.2	25.4	1,088
BME	43.1	23.5	14.7	18.6	102
<i>Current qualification level</i>					
No formal qualifications	17.6	16.0	23.7	42.7	131
Level 1	18.8	22.9	32.9	25.4	389
Level 2	19.7	28.5	26.2	25.6	309
Level 3	25.6	38.6	17.2	18.6	355
<i>Occupation (socio-economic background)</i>					
Managerial/professional	21.8	28.7	26.8	22.7	362
Intermediate occupations	20.5	38.9	20.8	19.8	303
Routine/manual	21.9	21.6	26.9	29.6	524
<i>Industry</i>					
Agriculture/fishing/mining/utilities	16.9	32.6	26.7	23.8	172
Construction	24.6	21.7	18.8	34.8	69
Retail/hospitality	12.1	26.6	26.6	34.6	214
Transport and communication	14.8	20.4	27.8	37.0	108
Banking/finance and property services	19.7	28.8	33.3	18.2	198
Public admin/defence/education/health/other services	30.0	30.0	21.2	18.8	416

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A3.24: Employees' future plans - 'where you would like to see yourself in five years time' (column per cent). How achievable is this, and to what extent will new qualifications and skills help you achieve this goal?

	Frequency	%	Very/fairly likely to achieve this goal %	New quals/skills essential /great help %
No change (ie same job/same employer)	384	34.2	na	na
Change in employment	451	40.1	87.0	60.1
- <i>Doing higher level job</i>	296	26.4		
- <i>Becoming self employed</i>	127	11.3		
- <i>Other employment change</i>	28	2.5		
In learning	90	8.0	82.0	82.2
- <i>Full-time education/training</i>	11	1.0		
- <i>Working and pursuing further qualifications</i>	79	7.1		
Moving out of labour market	177	15.7	63.7	30.5
- <i>Taking time out</i>	98	8.7		
- <i>Retired</i>	79	7.0		
Other	21	1.9		
All employees (Base)	1,125	100.0		

Base: Those currently working as an employee (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.25: Unemployed, future plans - 'where would you like to see yourself in five years time' (column per cent). How achievable is this, and to what extent will new qualifications and skills help you achieve this goal?

	Frequency	%	Very/fairly likely to achieve this goal %	New quals/skills essential /great help %
No change (ie not working)	8	8.6	na	na
Change in employment	60	65.0	87.7	78.3
Learning	18	19.5	-	-
Other	6	6.9	-	-
All unemployed (Base)	95	100		

Base: Those currently unemployed (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.26: Self employed, future plans - where you would like to see yourself in five years time

	Frequency	%
No change (ie self employed)	90	67.1
Change in employment	18	13.5
Learning	5	3.7
Moving out of labour market	19	14.4
Other	2	1.2
All self employed (Base)	135	100.0

Base: Those currently self employed (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A3.27: Factors that might help an individual achieve their goal (employees expecting a change in employment)

	Frequency	%
Personal attributes (ie hard work)	92	20.5
Training/a course	86	19.0
More money	51	11.4
Work experience	46	10.3
Change of job	31	7.0
Further learning	22	4.8
Opportunities	21	4.6
Continue with current activity/job	15	3.4
Employees hoping to make a change in employment (Base)	451	100.0

Base: Those currently working as an employee and hoping to make a change in their employment

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

## Chapter 4

Table A4.1: Summary of ordinal logistic regression models of perceptions of HE

Perception	Only for the young	Best jobs go to grads	End up in heavy debt	Difficult to get in	Not worth the cost	All should consider it	Likes of me don't go	Not relevant if you've a job
<b>Independent variable</b>								
Age								
Age squared								
Sex (Male=1)	-ve	-ve	+ve				-ve	
Ethnicity: black								
Ethnicity: Asian						-ve		-ve
Ethnicity: other						-ve		
Disability (yes=1)								
Dependent children					+ve			+ve
Living with parents				-ve		-ve		+ve
Living with partner								
FT employee								
PT employee			-ve		-ve			
Self-employed								
Tenure: outright	-ve							
Tenure: mortgage	-ve						+ve	
Tenure: priv't rental								
Highest qual: Level 3				+ve			+ve	
Highest qual: Level 2								
Highest qual: Level 1								
Friends in HE: few	+ve			+ve			+ve	
Frnds in HE: several	+ve			+ve			+ve	+ve
Frnds in HE: most	+ve	-ve		+ve	+ve		+ve	+ve
Parents in HE							+ve	
Sibling / university (yes=1)		-ve				-ve	+ve	+ve
Experience of school: positive					+ve		+ve	+ve
Experience of school: negative							-ve	
Region: Midlands and East of Eng								
Region: North of England								
Occupational group: manager and prof				+ve			+ve	
Occupational group: intermediate				+ve	-ve			

In the models here, one category of each of the independent variables is chosen as the reference category (for example, in the case of sex, the reference category is female, in the case of

qualifications, the reference category is having no qualifications *etc.*). A positive sign indicates that the variable in question increases the propensity for an individual to disagree with the statement compared with the reference category; a negative sign indicates that the variable increases the propensity for an individual to agree with the statement compared with the reference category.

Notes: Reference categories are: sex (female); ethnicity (white); disability (non-disabled); dependent children (none); cohabiting (single); employment status (unemployed); tenure (social rental); highest qualifications (none); Friends in HE (none); parents in HE (no); sibling / university (no); experience of school (mixed/ neutral); region (south of England) and occupational group (routine)

*Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007*

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Table A4.1a: Ordinal logistic regression model on whether respondent believes university is only for young people (dependent variable = 5 strongly disagree and 1 = strongly agree)

	Coef.	Std. Err	. z	P> z	[95% Con	f. Interval]
Age	-0.045	0.061	-0.740	0.458	-0.165	0.074
Age squared	0.001	0.001	0.830	0.404	-0.001	0.002
Sex (Male=1)	-0.432	0.126	-3.430	0.001	-0.679	-0.186
Ethnicity: Black	-0.432	0.431	-1.000	0.316	-1.278	0.413
Ethnicity: Asian	-0.495	0.353	-1.400	0.161	-1.188	0.197
Ethnicity: Other	0.459	0.411	1.120	0.264	-0.346	1.265
Disability (yes=1)	-0.023	0.337	-0.070	0.945	-0.684	0.638
Dependent children (yes=1)	0.171	0.140	1.220	0.223	-0.104	0.446
Cohabiting: living with parents	0.200	0.313	0.640	0.522	-0.413	0.814
Cohabiting: living with partner	-0.037	0.155	-0.240	0.811	-0.340	0.266
Employment status: FT employee	0.378	0.218	1.730	0.084	-0.050	0.806
Employment status: PT employee	-0.029	0.230	-0.120	0.901	-0.480	0.423
Employment status: self-employed	-0.122	0.283	-0.430	0.667	-0.676	0.433
Tenure: outright	-0.524	0.254	-2.060	0.039	-1.021	-0.026
Tenure: mortgage	-0.469	0.215	-2.180	0.029	-0.890	-0.047
Tenure: private rental	-0.247	0.254	-0.970	0.330	-0.744	0.250
Tenure: don't know	0.485	0.496	0.980	0.328	-0.487	1.458
Highest qualification: Level 3	0.179	0.227	0.790	0.430	-0.266	0.623
Highest qualification: Level 2	0.215	0.231	0.930	0.352	-0.238	0.669
Highest qualification: Level 1	0.124	0.215	0.580	0.563	-0.297	0.545
Friends / university: few	0.382	0.149	2.560	0.010	0.090	0.673
Friends / university: several	0.491	0.165	2.970	0.003	0.166	0.815
Friends / university: most	0.777	0.222	3.500	0.000	0.341	1.212
Friends / DK	0.232	0.863	0.270	0.788	-1.459	1.924
Parents / university (yes=1)	0.402	0.263	1.530	0.127	-0.114	0.917
Sibling / university (yes=1)	-0.030	0.126	-0.240	0.813	-0.278	0.218
Experience of school: positive	0.256	0.132	1.940	0.053	-0.003	0.516
Experience of school: negative	0.156	0.161	0.970	0.334	-0.160	0.471
Region: Midlands and East of Eng	-0.203	0.137	-1.480	0.138	-0.472	0.065
Region: North of England	-0.143	0.146	-0.970	0.330	-0.430	0.144
Social class: manager and prof	-0.079	0.154	-0.510	0.609	-0.381	0.224
Social class: intermediate	0.106	0.141	0.750	0.453	-0.171	0.383
/cut1	-3.992	1.219			-6.382	-1.602
/cut2	-2.645	1.209			-5.015	-0.276
/cut3	-2.164	1.204			-4.523	0.195
/cut4	-0.641	1.199			-2.990	1.708

Notes: Reference categories are: sex (female); ethnicity (white); disability (non-disabled); dependent children (none); cohabiting (single); employment status (unemployed); tenure (social rental); highest qualifications (none); friends in HE (none); parents in HE (no); sibling / university (no); experience of school (mixed/ neutral); region (south of England) and occupational group (routine)

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.1b: Ordinal logistic regression model on whether respondent believes the best jobs go to graduates (dependent variable = 5 strongly disagree and 1 = strongly agree)

	Coef.	Std. Err	. z	P> z	[95% Con	f. Interval]
Age	-0.076	0.056	-1.360	0.175	-0.186	0.034
Age squared	0.001	0.001	0.760	0.446	-0.001	0.002
Sex (Male=1)	-0.395	0.119	-3.320	0.001	-0.629	-0.162
Ethnicity: Black	-0.432	0.352	-1.230	0.219	-1.122	0.257
Ethnicity: Asian	-0.177	0.333	-0.530	0.595	-0.831	0.476
Ethnicity: Other	-0.383	0.436	-0.880	0.379	-1.239	0.472
Disability (yes=1)	-0.170	0.290	-0.590	0.557	-0.739	0.398
Dependent children (yes=1)	0.011	0.122	0.090	0.926	-0.229	0.251
Cohabiting: living with parents	-0.428	0.255	-1.680	0.093	-0.928	0.072
Cohabiting: living with partner	-0.010	0.136	-0.070	0.943	-0.275	0.256
Employment status: FT employee	0.024	0.219	0.110	0.915	-0.407	0.454
Employment status: PT employee	-0.241	0.239	-1.010	0.313	-0.709	0.227
Employment status: self-employed	0.236	0.268	0.880	0.378	-0.289	0.760
Tenure: outright	0.119	0.212	0.560	0.575	-0.297	0.534
Tenure: mortgage	0.124	0.181	0.680	0.495	-0.231	0.479
Tenure: private rental	-0.257	0.227	-1.130	0.258	-0.702	0.188
Tenure: don't know	-0.218	0.345	-0.630	0.527	-0.894	0.458
Highest qualification: Level 3	0.199	0.234	0.850	0.397	-0.261	0.658
Highest qualification: Level 2	0.275	0.233	1.180	0.238	-0.182	0.731
Highest qualification: Level 1	0.352	0.221	1.590	0.111	-0.081	0.786
Friends / university: few	0.059	0.144	0.410	0.683	-0.224	0.342
Friends / university: several	-0.247	0.172	-1.440	0.149	-0.584	0.089
Friends / university: most	-0.455	0.206	-2.210	0.027	-0.859	-0.051
Friends / DK	0.244	0.224	1.090	0.276	-0.195	0.682
Parents / university (yes=1)	-0.027	0.217	-0.130	0.900	-0.452	0.398
Sibling / university (yes=1)	-0.411	0.121	-3.400	0.001	-0.648	-0.174
Experience of school: positive	-0.163	0.118	-1.380	0.169	-0.395	0.069
Experience of school: negative	-0.038	0.172	-0.220	0.824	-0.376	0.299
Region: Midlands and East of Eng	-0.105	0.126	-0.830	0.404	-0.351	0.142
Region: North of England	0.069	0.136	0.510	0.611	-0.198	0.336
Social class: manager and prof	0.189	0.139	1.360	0.173	-0.083	0.462
Social class: intermediate	-0.047	0.132	-0.350	0.723	-0.306	0.212
/cut1	-4.237	1.140			-6.472	-2.003
/cut2	-3.125	1.134			-5.347	-0.903
/cut3	-2.701	1.133			-4.921	-0.480
/cut4	-1.333	1.129			-3.546	0.880

Notes: Reference categories are: sex (female); ethnicity (white); disability (non-disabled); dependent children (none); cohabiting (single); employment status (unemployed); tenure (social rental); highest qualifications (none); friends in HE (none); parents in HE (no); sibling / university (no); experience of school (mixed/ neutral); region (south of England) and occupational group (routine)

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.1c: Ordinal logistic regression model on whether respondent believes that people who go to university end up in heavy debt (dependent variable = 5 strongly disagree and 1 = strongly agree)

	Coef.	Std. Err	. z	P> z	[95% Con	f. Interval]
Age	0.027	0.057	0.460	0.642	-0.086	0.139
Age squared	0.000	0.001	-0.220	0.824	-0.002	0.001
Sex (Male=1)	0.408	0.125	3.270	0.001	0.163	0.654
Ethnicity: Black	-0.465	0.355	-1.310	0.190	-1.159	0.230
Ethnicity: Asian	0.633	0.333	1.900	0.057	-0.019	1.285
Ethnicity: Other	-0.538	0.434	-1.240	0.215	-1.389	0.313
Disability (yes=1)	-0.526	0.298	-1.760	0.078	-1.111	0.059
Dependent children (yes=1)	0.031	0.132	0.230	0.816	-0.228	0.290
Cohabiting: living with parents	-0.013	0.269	-0.050	0.960	-0.541	0.514
Cohabiting: living with partner	-0.134	0.144	-0.930	0.351	-0.417	0.148
Employment status: FT employee	-0.237	0.185	-1.280	0.201	-0.600	0.126
Employment status: PT employee	-0.431	0.211	-2.040	0.041	-0.845	-0.018
Employment status: self-employed	-0.066	0.264	-0.250	0.803	-0.584	0.452
Tenure: outright	-0.129	0.228	-0.560	0.573	-0.576	0.319
Tenure: mortgage	0.000	0.185	0.000	0.999	-0.362	0.363
Tenure: private rental	0.069	0.236	0.290	0.769	-0.394	0.532
Tenure: don't know	0.245	0.403	0.610	0.544	-0.546	1.035
Highest qualification: Level 3	-0.282	0.204	-1.390	0.166	-0.681	0.117
Highest qualification: Level 2	0.014	0.207	0.070	0.947	-0.392	0.419
Highest qualification: Level 1	-0.301	0.195	-1.540	0.123	-0.683	0.082
Friends / university: few	-0.122	0.138	-0.880	0.379	-0.392	0.149
Friends / university: several	0.120	0.157	0.760	0.445	-0.188	0.428
Friends / university: most	-0.318	0.217	-1.470	0.143	-0.743	0.107
Friends / DK	-0.958	0.739	-1.300	0.195	-2.406	0.490
Parents / university (yes=1)	-0.086	0.267	-0.320	0.747	-0.610	0.438
Sibling / university (yes=1)	-0.069	0.118	-0.590	0.558	-0.300	0.162
Experience of school: positive	0.042	0.123	0.340	0.732	-0.198	0.282
Experience of school: negative	-0.149	0.166	-0.900	0.369	-0.474	0.176
Region: Midlands and East of Eng	-0.026	0.133	-0.190	0.846	-0.288	0.236
Region: North of England	0.023	0.137	0.170	0.869	-0.245	0.291
Social class: manager and prof	-0.092	0.141	-0.650	0.513	-0.369	0.184
Social class: intermediate	-0.117	0.134	-0.870	0.383	-0.380	0.146
/cut1	-0.132	1.108			-2.304	2.039
/cut2	1.078	1.107			-1.092	3.247
/cut3	1.857	1.110			-0.319	4.033
/cut4	3.262	1.115			1.077	5.448

Notes: Reference categories are: sex (female); ethnicity (white); disability (non-disabled); dependent children (none); cohabiting (single); employment status (unemployed); tenure (social rental); highest qualifications (none); friends in HE (none); parents in HE (no); sibling / university (no); experience of school (mixed/ neutral); region (south of England) and occupational group (routine)

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.1d: Ordinal logistic regression model on whether respondent believes university is difficult to get into (dependent variable = 5 strongly disagree and 1 = strongly agree)

	Coef.	Std. Err	. z	P> z	[95% Con	f. Interval]
Age	-0.096	0.062	-1.540	0.124	-0.218	0.026
Age squared	0.001	0.001	1.570	0.117	0.000	0.003
Sex (Male=1)	0.140	0.121	1.150	0.249	-0.098	0.378
Ethnicity: Black	-0.544	0.383	-1.420	0.156	-1.294	0.207
Ethnicity: Asian	0.041	0.362	0.110	0.911	-0.670	0.751
Ethnicity: Other	0.157	0.393	0.400	0.689	-0.613	0.928
Disability (yes=1)	-0.536	0.289	-1.860	0.063	-1.102	0.029
Dependent children (yes=1)	-0.159	0.130	-1.220	0.222	-0.414	0.096
Cohabiting: living with parents	-0.663	0.318	-2.080	0.037	-1.287	-0.039
Cohabiting: living with partner	-0.083	0.145	-0.570	0.566	-0.368	0.201
Employment status: FT employee	0.166	0.224	0.740	0.460	-0.274	0.605
Employment status: PT employee	0.140	0.243	0.580	0.565	-0.337	0.617
Employment status: self-employed	0.358	0.271	1.320	0.187	-0.174	0.890
Tenure: outright	0.251	0.220	1.140	0.255	-0.181	0.683
Tenure: mortgage	0.169	0.177	0.950	0.340	-0.178	0.517
Tenure: private rental	-0.172	0.236	-0.730	0.466	-0.635	0.290
Tenure: don't know	-0.086	0.368	-0.230	0.816	-0.806	0.635
Highest qualification: Level 3	0.570	0.237	2.400	0.016	0.105	1.034
Highest qualification: Level 2	0.303	0.232	1.300	0.192	-0.152	0.758
Highest qualification: Level 1	0.039	0.221	0.180	0.859	-0.393	0.472
Friends / university: few	0.373	0.141	2.640	0.008	0.096	0.651
Friends / university: several	0.557	0.158	3.520	0.000	0.247	0.867
Friends / university: most	0.806	0.216	3.730	0.000	0.382	1.229
Friends / DK	-0.765	0.527	-1.450	0.146	-1.798	0.267
Parents / university (yes=1)	0.208	0.248	0.840	0.403	-0.279	0.694
Sibling / university (yes=1)	0.076	0.117	0.650	0.517	-0.153	0.305
Experience of school: positive	-0.165	0.124	-1.340	0.181	-0.407	0.077
Experience of school: negative	-0.277	0.160	-1.740	0.082	-0.590	0.035
Region: Midlands and East of Eng	-0.127	0.133	-0.960	0.338	-0.387	0.133
Region: North of England	-0.104	0.138	-0.760	0.450	-0.374	0.166
Social class: manager and prof	0.305	0.138	2.210	0.027	0.034	0.575
Social class: intermediate	0.300	0.139	2.160	0.031	0.028	0.572
/cut1	-3.119	1.276			-5.621	-0.617
/cut2	-1.812	1.275			-4.311	0.687
/cut3	-0.660	1.274			-3.157	1.836
/cut4	0.806	1.277			-1.697	3.309

Notes: Reference categories are: sex (female); ethnicity (white); disability (non-disabled); dependent children (none); cohabiting (single); employment status (unemployed); tenure (social rental); highest qualifications (none); friends in HE (none); parents in HE (no); sibling / university (no); experience of school (mixed/ neutral); region (south of England) and occupational group (routine)

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.1e: Ordinal logistic regression model on whether respondent believes university is not worth the costs (dependent variable = 5 strongly disagree and 1 = strongly agree)

	Coef.	Std. Err	. z	P> z	[95% Con	f. Interval]
Age	-0.060	0.058	-1.040	0.297	-0.173	0.053
Age squared	0.001	0.001	1.500	0.133	0.000	0.003
Sex (Male=1)	-0.180	0.121	-1.490	0.137	-0.417	0.057
Ethnicity: Black	-0.136	0.392	-0.350	0.728	-0.904	0.631
Ethnicity: Asian	-0.659	0.467	-1.410	0.159	-1.575	0.257
Ethnicity: Other	0.314	0.391	0.800	0.423	-0.453	1.081
Disability (yes=1)	-0.181	0.259	-0.700	0.485	-0.688	0.326
Dependent children (yes=1)	0.271	0.128	2.120	0.034	0.021	0.521
Cohabiting: living with parents	0.470	0.275	1.710	0.087	-0.068	1.009
Cohabiting: living with partner	0.143	0.143	1.000	0.318	-0.138	0.424
Employment status: FT employee	-0.193	0.222	-0.870	0.386	-0.629	0.243
Employment status: PT employee	-0.497	0.248	-2.000	0.045	-0.984	-0.011
Employment status: self-employed	-0.207	0.284	-0.730	0.466	-0.763	0.349
Tenure: outright	0.188	0.225	0.830	0.404	-0.253	0.628
Tenure: mortgage	0.036	0.188	0.190	0.849	-0.333	0.405
Tenure: private rental	0.370	0.246	1.500	0.133	-0.113	0.852
Tenure: don't know	-0.112	0.354	-0.320	0.752	-0.805	0.581
Highest qualification: Level 3	0.049	0.229	0.210	0.830	-0.400	0.499
Highest qualification: Level 2	0.031	0.230	0.130	0.893	-0.420	0.482
Highest qualification: Level 1	0.013	0.218	0.060	0.951	-0.413	0.440
Friends / university: few	0.101	0.138	0.730	0.464	-0.169	0.370
Friends / university: several	0.100	0.157	0.640	0.522	-0.207	0.408
Friends / university: most	0.473	0.209	2.270	0.023	0.064	0.882
Friends / DK	-0.964	0.626	-1.540	0.123	-2.191	0.263
Parents / university (yes=1)	0.364	0.261	1.400	0.163	-0.147	0.875
Sibling / university (yes=1)	0.223	0.117	1.910	0.056	-0.006	0.451
Experience of school: positive	0.354	0.123	2.870	0.004	0.113	0.596
Experience of school: negative	-0.110	0.150	-0.730	0.464	-0.405	0.185
Region: Midlands and East of Eng	0.070	0.126	0.550	0.580	-0.177	0.317
Region: North of England	-0.047	0.133	-0.350	0.723	-0.308	0.213
Social class: manager and prof	-0.208	0.134	-1.550	0.121	-0.470	0.055
Social class: intermediate	-0.302	0.141	-2.140	0.032	-0.579	-0.026
/cut1	-2.954	1.125			-5.158	-0.750
/cut2	-1.793	1.124			-3.995	0.410
/cut3	-0.921	1.119			-3.114	1.273
/cut4	0.583	1.116			-1.604	2.769

Notes: Reference categories are: sex (female); ethnicity (white); disability (non-disabled); dependent children (none); cohabiting (single); employment status (unemployed); tenure (social rental); highest qualifications (none); friends in HE (none); parents in HE (no); sibling / university (no); experience of school (mixed/ neutral); region (south of England) and occupational group (routine)

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.1f: Ordinal logistic regression model on whether respondent believes all should consider university (dependent variable = 5 strongly disagree and 1 = strongly agree)

	Coef.	Std. Err	. z	P> z	[95% Con	f. Interval]
Age	0.016	0.057	0.280	0.783	-0.096	0.128
Age squared	0.000	0.001	-0.310	0.755	-0.002	0.001
Sex (Male=1)	-0.179	0.116	-1.540	0.123	-0.407	0.048
Ethnicity: Black	-0.303	0.331	-0.910	0.361	-0.952	0.346
Ethnicity: Asian	-0.821	0.325	-2.530	0.011	-1.457	-0.184
Ethnicity: Other	-0.718	0.346	-2.080	0.038	-1.395	-0.040
Disability (yes=1)	-0.346	0.283	-1.220	0.222	-0.901	0.210
Dependent children (yes=1)	-0.244	0.125	-1.950	0.051	-0.489	0.001
Cohabiting: living with parents	-0.539	0.255	-2.110	0.035	-1.039	-0.039
Cohabiting: living with partner	0.096	0.136	0.710	0.479	-0.170	0.362
Employment status: FT employee	-0.058	0.207	-0.280	0.779	-0.464	0.348
Employment status: PT employee	0.180	0.231	0.780	0.436	-0.273	0.632
Employment status: self-employed	0.462	0.259	1.780	0.074	-0.046	0.970
Tenure: outright	0.387	0.218	1.780	0.076	-0.040	0.815
Tenure: mortgage	0.267	0.168	1.590	0.111	-0.062	0.596
Tenure: private rental	-0.056	0.213	-0.260	0.794	-0.473	0.362
Tenure: don't know	0.799	0.439	1.820	0.069	-0.061	1.660
Highest qualification: Level 3	-0.182	0.229	-0.790	0.427	-0.630	0.267
Highest qualification: Level 2	-0.372	0.218	-1.710	0.087	-0.799	0.055
Highest qualification: Level 1	-0.058	0.210	-0.280	0.783	-0.470	0.354
Friends / university: few	-0.089	0.140	-0.640	0.522	-0.363	0.184
Friends / university: several	-0.253	0.153	-1.660	0.098	-0.553	0.046
Friends / university: most	-0.367	0.227	-1.620	0.106	-0.812	0.078
Friends / DK	0.655	0.685	0.960	0.339	-0.688	1.999
Parents / university (yes=1)	-0.303	0.234	-1.300	0.194	-0.761	0.155
Sibling / university (yes=1)	-0.234	0.119	-1.980	0.048	-0.466	-0.002
Experience of school: positive	-0.069	0.117	-0.590	0.558	-0.298	0.161
Experience of school: negative	-0.120	0.161	-0.740	0.457	-0.435	0.196
Region: Midlands and East of Eng	-0.031	0.123	-0.250	0.802	-0.272	0.210
Region: North of England	0.047	0.132	0.350	0.724	-0.212	0.306
Social class: manager and prof	0.002	0.135	0.020	0.988	-0.263	0.267
Social class: intermediate	0.067	0.133	0.500	0.616	-0.193	0.327
/cut1	-1.187	1.098			-3.339	0.965
/cut2	-0.074	1.100			-2.230	2.082
/cut3	0.474	1.102			-1.685	2.633
/cut4	1.683	1.107			-0.487	3.854

Notes: Reference categories are: sex (female); ethnicity (white); disability (non-disabled); dependent children (none); cohabiting (single); employment status (unemployed); tenure (social rental); highest qualifications (none); friends in HE (none); parents in HE (no); sibling / university (no); experience of school (mixed/ neutral); region (south of England) and occupational group (routine)

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.1g: Ordinal logistic regression model on whether respondent believes 'people like me don't go to university' (dependent variable = 5 strongly disagree and 1 = strongly agree)

	Coef.	Std. Err	. z	P> z	[95% Con	f. Interval]
Age	0.005	0.056	0.090	0.927	-0.105	0.115
Age squared	0.000	0.001	-0.170	0.863	-0.002	0.001
Sex (Male=1)	-0.414	0.123	-3.350	0.001	-0.655	-0.172
Ethnicity: Black	0.845	0.467	1.810	0.071	-0.071	1.761
Ethnicity: Asian	-0.405	0.301	-1.350	0.178	-0.994	0.185
Ethnicity: Other	0.349	0.385	0.900	0.366	-0.407	1.104
Disability (yes=1)	-0.612	0.328	-1.870	0.062	-1.254	0.030
Dependent children (yes=1)	0.061	0.130	0.470	0.642	-0.195	0.316
Cohabiting: living with parents	-0.231	0.313	-0.740	0.459	-0.844	0.381
Cohabiting: living with partner	0.042	0.146	0.290	0.771	-0.243	0.328
Employment status: FT employee	0.062	0.239	0.260	0.797	-0.407	0.530
Employment status: PT employee	-0.273	0.256	-1.070	0.286	-0.776	0.229
Employment status: self-employed	0.018	0.281	0.060	0.949	-0.533	0.569
Tenure: outright	0.441	0.229	1.930	0.054	-0.008	0.889
Tenure: mortgage	0.367	0.181	2.020	0.043	0.011	0.722
Tenure: private rental	0.056	0.238	0.240	0.813	-0.410	0.523
Tenure: don't know	0.907	0.462	1.960	0.050	0.002	1.813
Highest qualification: Level 3	0.554	0.219	2.530	0.011	0.126	0.983
Highest qualification: Level 2	0.211	0.214	0.990	0.323	-0.208	0.631
Highest qualification: Level 1	0.114	0.206	0.550	0.581	-0.290	0.518
Friends / university: few	0.483	0.135	3.570	0.000	0.218	0.747
Friends / university: several	0.861	0.168	5.110	0.000	0.531	1.192
Friends / university: most	1.370	0.211	6.480	0.000	0.956	1.785
Friends / DK	-0.005	0.680	-0.010	0.994	-1.338	1.328
Parents / university (yes=1)	0.833	0.279	2.990	0.003	0.286	1.380
Sibling / university (yes=1)	0.259	0.123	2.100	0.036	0.018	0.500
Experience of school: positive	0.354	0.126	2.800	0.005	0.106	0.602
Experience of school: negative	-0.411	0.163	-2.520	0.012	-0.732	-0.091
Region: Midlands and East of Eng	0.126	0.135	0.930	0.351	-0.139	0.391
Region: North of England	0.135	0.135	1.000	0.317	-0.130	0.400
Social class: manager and prof	0.343	0.147	2.330	0.020	0.054	0.632
Social class: intermediate	-0.040	0.135	-0.290	0.769	-0.305	0.225
/cut1	-1.182	1.101			-3.339	0.975
/cut2	-0.279	1.107			-2.448	1.891
/cut3	0.409	1.108			-1.763	2.580
/cut4	1.636	1.111			-0.541	3.813

Notes: Reference categories are: sex (female); ethnicity (white); disability (non-disabled); dependent children (none); cohabiting (single); employment status (unemployed); tenure (social rental); highest qualifications (none); friends in HE (none); parents in HE (no); sibling / university (no); experience of school (mixed/ neutral); region (south of England) and occupational group (routine)

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.1h: Ordinal logistic regression model on whether respondent believes university is not relevant if you have a job (dependent variable = 5 strongly disagree and 1 = strongly agree)

q5he_8	Coef.	Std. Err	. z	P> z	[95% Con	f. Interval]
Age	-0.080	0.060	-1.320	0.186	-0.198	0.038
Age squared	0.001	0.001	1.480	0.138	0.000	0.003
Sex (Male=1)	-0.159	0.119	-1.330	0.183	-0.392	0.075
Ethnicity: Black	0.423	0.310	1.370	0.172	-0.184	1.030
Ethnicity: Asian	-1.158	0.409	-2.830	0.005	-1.960	-0.355
Ethnicity: Other	0.008	0.422	0.020	0.984	-0.819	0.836
Disability (yes=1)	-0.421	0.323	-1.300	0.193	-1.054	0.212
Dependent children (yes=1)	0.256	0.123	2.080	0.037	0.015	0.497
Cohabiting: living with parents	0.694	0.290	2.400	0.017	0.126	1.262
Cohabiting: living with partner	-0.008	0.138	-0.060	0.954	-0.278	0.262
Employment status: FT employee	0.176	0.217	0.810	0.418	-0.249	0.600
Employment status: PT employee	-0.014	0.247	-0.060	0.955	-0.498	0.470
Employment status: self-employed	0.141	0.271	0.520	0.604	-0.391	0.673
Tenure: outright	-0.047	0.234	-0.200	0.842	-0.506	0.413
Tenure: mortgage	-0.106	0.190	-0.560	0.577	-0.479	0.267
Tenure: private rental	0.074	0.238	0.310	0.756	-0.393	0.541
Tenure: don't know	-0.478	0.382	-1.250	0.210	-1.227	0.270
Highest qualification: Level 3	0.183	0.219	0.830	0.405	-0.247	0.613
Highest qualification: Level 2	0.236	0.223	1.060	0.289	-0.200	0.673
Highest qualification: Level 1	0.162	0.210	0.770	0.441	-0.250	0.575
Friends / university: few	0.169	0.139	1.220	0.224	-0.103	0.441
Friends / university: several	0.348	0.161	2.170	0.030	0.034	0.663
Friends / university: most	0.865	0.206	4.200	0.000	0.462	1.269
Friends / DK	-0.896	0.453	-1.980	0.048	-1.783	-0.009
Parents / university (yes=1)	0.250	0.239	1.050	0.296	-0.218	0.717
Sibling / university (yes=1)	0.303	0.123	2.450	0.014	0.061	0.544
Experience of school: positive	0.265	0.122	2.170	0.030	0.026	0.504
Experience of school: negative	0.042	0.155	0.270	0.788	-0.262	0.345
Region: Midlands and East of Eng	-0.014	0.127	-0.110	0.912	-0.263	0.235
Region: North of England	0.211	0.134	1.570	0.116	-0.052	0.473
Social class: manager and prof	-0.183	0.143	-1.280	0.201	-0.464	0.098
Social class: intermediate	-0.068	0.139	-0.490	0.625	-0.339	0.204
/cut1	-3.244	1.192			-5.581	-0.908
/cut2	-1.903	1.189			-4.233	0.427
/cut3	-1.310	1.187			-3.637	1.017
/cut4	0.532	1.187			-1.794	2.859

Notes: Reference categories are: sex (female); ethnicity (white); disability (non-disabled); dependent children (none); cohabiting (single); employment status (unemployed); tenure (social rental); highest qualifications (none); friends in HE (none); parents in HE (no); sibling / university (no); experience of school (mixed/ neutral); region (south of England) and occupational group (routine)

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.2: Attitudes towards HE

	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Neither %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Total N
University is not just for young people*	53.0	29.7	5.6	8.1	3.5	1,399
Best jobs go to people who have been to university	15.8	19.2	8.8	29.8	26.3	1,387
People who go to university do not end up with heavy debts*	5.5	12.8	10.1	29.5	42.1	1,340
Getting into university is not difficult*	17.7	30.2	16.3	22.2	13.6	1,238
Going to university is worth the cost*	31.7	36.2	12.0	12.5	7.6	1,330
Going to university is something everyone should consider doing	29.1	25.6	11.1	20.3	13.9	1,381
People like me do go to university*	44.7	26.9	8.9	9.9	9.5	1,363
Going to university does not become irrelevant once you have got a job*	28.8	41.7	8.4	14.1	7.0	1,366

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Note: \* these statements have been reversed, so that all agreements are associated with positive attitudes to HE, and disagreements are associated with negative attitudes to HE

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.3: Knowledge of HE - 'how well informed do you feel about the ...'

Informed about	Very well %	Fairly well %	Not very %	Not at all %	Total N
Opportunities available	14.8	42.8	29.3	13.1	1,365
Entry qualifications required	10.1	37.4	35.5	17.0	1,334

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.4: Knowledge of HE - opportunities available, by personal background

	Very well %	Fairly well %	Not very %	Not at all %	Total N
All	14.8	42.8	29.3	13.1	1,365
<i>Gender</i>					
Male	13.0	42.5	29.2	15.3	751
Female	16.9	43.2	29.4	10.6	616
<i>Age</i>					
22-30	15.5	45.6	26.6	12.3	316
31-44	12.1	40.1	32.2	15.5	611
45-55	18.0	44.6	27.1	10.3	439
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
White	13.8	42.9	29.7	13.6	1,232
BME	23.3	41.7	25	10.0	120
<i>Peer group experience of HE</i>					
Most friends at HE	23.4	44	22.9	9.7	175
Several friends at HE	15.0	49.2	29.5	6.3	319
A few friends at HE	12.1	41.3	33.1	13.5	496
No friends at HE	13.9	38.7	26.7	20.7	367

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.5: Knowledge of HE - entry requirements, by personal background

	Very well %	Fairly well %	Not very %	Not at all %	Total N
All	10.1	37.4	35.5	17.0	1,334
<i>Age</i>					
22-30	13.3	40.2	33.9	12.7	316
31-44	8.1	33.8	37.6	20.5	591
45-55	10.5	40.3	33.7	15.5	227
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
White	8.8	37.5	35.9	17.7	1,202
BME	21.8	34.5	32.8	10.9	119
<i>Family experience of HE</i>					
Parent	10.9	28.7	51.5	8.9	101
Sibling or other family member	11.1	37.6	33.7	17.6	809
None	8.0	39.0	35.0	18.0	423
<i>Peer group experience of HE</i>					
Most friends at HE	17.6	44.9	25.0	12.5	176
Several friends at HE	10.2	41.5	38.0	10.2	313
A few friends at HE	8.5	32.9	38.9	19.7	483
No friends at HE	8.2	36.1	34.1	21.7	355
<i>Current level of qualification</i>					
No formal qualifications	12.0	34.6	33.8	19.5	133
Level 1	8.6	30.8	40.4	20.1	428
Level 2	10.5	37.3	33.8	18.4	343
Level 3	9.7	45.7	32.5	12.2	403

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A4.6: Whether respondent has sought information and advice about HE, by personal background

	Frequency	%	Total N
All	493	35.2	1400
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	239	31.1	770
Female	253	40.2	630
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	122	37.9	322
31-44	194	30.7	630
45-55	177	39.5	448
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
White	429	34.0	1,262
BME	56	44.8	125
<i>Socio-economic background</i>			
Managerial/professional	159	39.0	409
Intermediate occupations	147	39.3	374
Routine/manual	182	30.4	597
<i>Family experience of HE</i>			
Parent	51	47.8	106
Sibling or other family member	340	40.2	846
None	102	22.8	448
<i>How many friends go/have been to uni?</i>			
Most friends at HE	84	47.5	178
Several friends at HE	146	45.0	325
A few friends at HE	179	34.7	516
No friends at HE	82	22.0	374
<i>Current level of qualification</i>			
No formal qualifications	26	18.2	145
Level 1	123	27.2	453
Level 2	152	42.2	362
Level 3	177	42.8	414
<i>Qualification level on leaving school/college</i>			
No formal qualifications	34	20.6	166
Level 1	163	30.2	538
Level 2	146	42.8	342
Level 3	109	44.6	244

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

## Chapter 5

Table A5.1: Whether considered going to HE at time of leaving school/college, by personal background

	Yes %	No %	Total N
All	18.2	81.8	1,398
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	32.6	67.4	319
31-44	14.9	85.1	630
45-55	12.5	87.5	448
<i>Family experience of HE</i>			
Parent	40.4	59.6	104
Sibling or other family member	16.7	83.3	846
None	15.8	84.2	448
<i>Peer group experience of HE</i>			
Most friends at HE	37.1	62.9	175
Several friends at HE	24.9	75.1	325
A few friends at HE	15.1	84.9	517
No friends at HE	8.0	92.0	374
<i>Socio-economic background</i>			
Managerial/professional	23.1	76.9	407
Intermediate occupations	20.9	79.1	374
Routine/manual/never worked	13.1	86.9	597

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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**Table A5.2: Whether considered going to HE at time of leaving school/college, by personal background**

	Yes %	No %	Total N
All	18.2	81.8	1,398
<i>Age left continuous FTE</i>			
Before 16	6.9	93.1	188
16	6.2	93.8	577
17-18	28.9	71.1	447
19-20	42.6	57.4	108
21 or older	41.1	58.9	73
<i>Qualification level on leaving school/college</i>			
No formal qualifications	9.7	90.3	145
Level 1	7.0	93.0	454
Level 2	17.1	82.9	362
Level 3	34.3	65.7	411
<i>General feelings about school</i>			
Generally positive	23.9	76.1	510
Mixed feelings/no strong feelings either way	16.1	83.9	632
Generally negative	12.0	88.0	234
<i>Feelings about how well did at school/college</i>			
Well	31.9	68.1	398
Average	14.4	85.6	789
Poor	6.7	93.3	208

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A5.3: Main reasons for not going into HE at time of leaving school/college

Reasons for non-participation	Considered HE %	Did not consider HE %	All %
Didn't need it to get work/ career/ easier to get a job	19.6	30.4	28.4
Not interested/ Didn't see the point/ Had enough of studying	12.6	27.6	24.8
Concerns with costs of study/ debt issues/ needed to earn money	24.4	12.3	14.5
Lack of necessary qualifications	11.2	12.2	12.0
Wasn't expected of them/ no encouragement to go	1.8	5.1	4.5
Lack of time due to work or family reasons	9.4	3.8	4.9
General financial reasons	2.7	2.7	2.7
General job or work related reasons (ie doesn't fit with career plans /hard to get time off to study/to fit in with job)	1.3	2.7	2.4
Did not feel suitable (due to school went to, not clever enough, not right qualifications etc)	0.4	2.5	2.1
Lack of information about university	2.2	1.7	1.8
Base (N)	254	1,144	1,401

Base: All

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A5.4: Main reasons for not going into HE at time of leaving school/college, by personal background

	Frequency	%	Total N
Didn't need it to get work/ easier to get a job	398	28.4	1,401
<i>Family experience of HE</i>			
Parent	17	16.0	106
Sibling or other family member	233	27.5	847
None	148	33.3	148
<hr/>			
Concerns with the costs of studying/ debt issues/ needed to earn money	203	14.5	1,401
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	65	20.2	322
31-44	82	13.0	630
45-55	56	12.5	449
<i>Socio-economic background</i>			
Managerial/professional	55	13.4	409
Intermediate occupations	71	19.0	374
Routine/manual	71	11.9	599
<i>Qualification level on leaving school/college</i>			
no formal qualifications	14	8.4	166
Level 1	59	10.9	569
Level 2	63	18.4	342
Level 3	48	19.8	243
<hr/>			
Lack of necessary qualifications	168	12.0	1,401
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	19	5.9	322
31-44	88	13.9	631
45-55	61	13.6	448
<i>Qualification level on leaving school/college</i>			
no formal qualifications	19	11.4	166
Level 1	84	15.6	539
Level 2	34	9.9	342
Level 3	13	5.3	244

Base: All

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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**Table A5.5: Whether considered HE at any time SINCE leaving college/school, by personal background**

	Yes %	No %	Total N
All	23.9	76.1	1,398
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	34.3	65.7	321
31-44	22.9	77.1	628
45-55	18.0	82.0	449
<i>Family experience of HE</i>			
Parent	43.8	56.2	105
Sibling or other family member	24.3	75.7	846
None	18.6	81.4	447
<i>Peer group experience of HE</i>			
Most friends at HE	40.9	59.1	176
Several friends at HE	31.5	68.5	324
A few friends at HE	23.6	76.4	517
No friends at HE	10.4	89.6	374
<i>Socio-economic background</i>			
Managerial/professional	30.0	70.0	407
Intermediate occupations	25.2	74.8	373
Routine/manual/never worked	18.6	81.4	597
<i>Region</i>			
North	21.1	78.9	421
Midlands	22.1	77.9	447
South	27.7	72.3	531
<i>Industry</i>			
Manufacturing/utilities/construction/land-based	19.7	80.3	304
Wholesale/hospitality/transport/communication	21.6	78.4	361
Banking/finance and property services	26.9	73.1	223
Public admin/defence/education/health/other services	27.5	72.5	459

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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**Table A5.6: Whether considered HE at any time SINCE leaving college/school, by personal background**

	Yes %	No %	Total N
All	23.9	76.1	1,398
<i>Age left continuous FTE</i>			
Before 16	16.5	83.5	188
16	18.9	81.1	577
17-18	26.9	73.1	449
19-20	38.9	61.1	108
21 or older	44.4	55.6	72
<i>Qualification level on leaving school/college</i>			
no formal qualifications	11.4	88.6	166
Level 1	19.1	80.9	538
Level 2	28.9	71.1	342
Level 3	36.0	64.0	242
<i>Current level of qualification</i>			
No formal qualifications	9.0	91.0	144
Level 1	17.7	82.3	453
Level 2	24.9	75.1	361
Level 3	34.9	65.1	413
<i>Feelings about how well did at school/college</i>			
Well	28.9	71.1	398
Average	21.2	78.8	788
Poor	24.6	75.4	207

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

*Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007*

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Table A5.7: Main reasons for not going into HE at any time SINCE leaving school/college

	Considered HE %	Did not consider HE %	All %
Didn't need it to get work/ career/ easier to get a job	8.6	28.8	23.9
Not interested/ Didn't see the point/ Had enough of studying	8.3	22.9	19.3
Lack of time due to work or family reasons	26.2	17.0	19.2
Concerns with costs of study/ debt issues/ needed to earn money	31.9	16.1	19.9
Lack of necessary qualifications	7.4	6.3	6.5
General financial reasons	2.1	2.1	2.1
Worried about difficulty of study	2.1	2.0	2.0
Difficulties with travel or childcare	4.7	1.9	2.6
General job or work related reasons (ie doesn't fit with career plans /hard to get time off to study/to fit in with job)	1.3	1.8	1.7
General family reasons incl. did not want to leave home/family	2.3	1.2	1.4
Base (N)	335	1,063	1,401

Base: All

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A5.8: Common reasons for not going into HE at any time SINCE leaving continuous FTE - 'didn't need it to get work/ easier to get a job', by personal background

	Frequency	%	Total N
Didn't need it to get work/ easier to get a job	335	23.9	1,401
<i>Sex</i>			
Male	212	27.5	770
Female	123	19.5	630
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
White	314	24.9	1,261
black and minority ethnic	19	15.2	125
<i>Socio-economic background</i>			
Managerial/professional	118	28.9	408
Intermediate occupations	76	20.3	374
Routine/manual	137	22.9	599
<i>Industry</i>			
Manufacturing/utilities/construction/land-based	85	28.0	304
Wholesale/hospitality/transport/communication	97	26.9	361
Banking/finance and property services	68	30.2	225
Public admin/defence/education/health/other services	82	17.9	459
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	227	25.8	881
Part-time employee	56	19.7	284
Self employed	40	29.9	134
Unemployed and available for work	10	10.3	97

Base: All

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A5.9: Common reasons for not going into HE at any time SINCE leaving continuous FTE - 'Not interested/ didn't see the point/ had enough of studying', by personal background

	Frequency	%	Total N
Not interested/ didn't see the point/ had enough of studying	271	19.3	1,401
<i>Sex</i>			
Male	166	21.5	771
Female	105	16.7	630
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	150	17.0	881
Part-time employee	59	20.8	284
Self employed	44	32.8	134
Unemployed and available for work	17	17.5	97

Base: All

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A5.10: Common reasons for not going into HE at any time SINCE leaving continuous FTE - 'Concerns with the cost of studying/ debt issues/ needed to earn money', by personal background

	Frequency	%	Total N
Concerns with the costs of studying/ debt issues/ needed to earn money	278	19.9	1,401
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	82	25.5	322
31-44	130	20.6	630
45-55	66	14.7	449
<i>Current qualification level</i>			
No formal qualifications	22	15.3	144
Level 1	63	13.9	453
Level 2	89	24.7	361
Level 3	98	23.6	415
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	199	22.6	881
Part-time employee	42	14.8	284
Self employed	20	14.8	135
Unemployed and available for work	18	18.6	97
<i>Finances</i>			
Living comfortably	66	16.0	412
Doing alright	91	18.6	489
Just about getting by	85	22.9	371
Finding it quite/very difficult	32	29.1	110

Base: All

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A5.11: Common reasons for not going into HE at any time SINCE leaving continuous FTE - 'Work/ family commitments', by personal background

	Frequency	%	Total N
<b>Work/family commitments</b>	269	19.2	1,401
<i>Sex</i>			
Male	106	13.8	770
Female	163	25.8	631
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	144	16.3	881
Part-time employee	86	30.4	283
Self employed	18	13.3	135
Unemployed and available for work	20	20.6	97
<i>Industry</i>			
Manufacturing/utilities/construction/land-based	37	12.2	304
Wholesale/hospitality/transport/communication	75	20.8	361
Banking/finance and property services	46	20.5	224
Public admin/defence/education/health/other services	101	22.0	459
<i>Family make-up</i>			
Married/living with partner (no children)	54	15.1	357
Married/living with partner (with children)	133	21.5	618
Single/divorced (no children)	45	15.6	288
Single parent	36	27.9	129

Base: All

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A5.12: Future consideration of HE, by personal background

	Definitely/probably consider, already considering %	Not interested/ unlikely to consider %	Total N
All	30.0	70.0	1,389
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	52.5	47.5	320
31-44	28.2	71.8	625
45-55	16.3	83.7	443
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
White	26.1	73.9	1,249
BME	65.6	34.4	125
<i>Family situation</i>			
Married/living with partner (no children)	24.7	75.3	352
Married/living with partner, with children	27.6	72.4	615
Single/divorced	34.2	65.8	284
Single parent	43.0	57.0	128
<i>Family experience of HE</i>			
Parent	57.1	42.9	105
Sibling or other family member	28.6	71.4	842
None	26.1	73.9	441
<i>Peer group experience of HE</i>			
Most friends at HE	44.0	56.0	175
Several friends at HE	32.3	67.7	322
A few friends at HE	30.1	69.9	511
No friends at HE	21.7	78.3	373
<i>Housing tenure</i>			
Own home	14.4	85.6	195
Own home with mortgage	25.0	75.0	795
Renting Private	49.2	50.8	183
Social housing	46.8	53.2	186
<i>Finances</i>			
Living comfortably	21.2	78.8	411
Doing alright	28.9	71.1	484
Just about getting by	38.9	61.1	368
Finding it quite/very difficult	35.5	64.5	107

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A5.13: Future consideration of HE, by personal background

	Definitely/probably consider, already considering %	Not interested/ unlikely to consider %	Total N
All	30.0	70.0	1,389
<i>Considered applying to HE on leaving FTE</i>			
Yes	50.4	49.6	250
No	25.4	74.6	1,136
<i>Considered applying to HE since leaving FTE</i>			
Yes	68.3	31.7	331
No	17.9	82.1	1,057
<i>Qualification level on leaving school/college</i>			
No formal qualifications	27.1	72.9	166
Level 1	24.8	75.2	532
Level 2	33.0	67.0	342
Level 3	37.3	62.7	241
<i>Feelings about how well did at school/college</i>			
Well	34.7	65.3	395
Average	26.0	74.0	786
Poor	35.5	64.5	203
<i>Current level of qualification</i>			
No formal qualifications	25.5	74.5	145
Level 1	25.1	74.9	450
Level 2	33.1	66.9	360
Level 3	35.0	65.0	411

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A5.14: Future consideration of HE, by personal background

	Definitely/probably consider, already considering %	Not interested/ unlikely to consider %	Total N
All	30.0	70.0	1,389
<i>Employment status</i>			
FT employee	31.7	68.3	870
PT employee	23.2	76.8	284
Self employed	20.3	79.7	133
Unemployed	48.5	51.5	97
<i>Industry</i>			
Agriculture/fishing/ mining/ utilities	23.6	76.4	301
Retail/Hospitality/ Transport and communication	29.4	70.6	360
Banking/finance and property services	28.2	71.8	220
Public admin/defence/ Education/health/ other services	35.3	64.7	456

Base: All (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A5.15: Logistic regression model of the propensity of respondents to consider entering HE in the future (model excluding HE perception indicators)

HEint	Odds Ratio	Std. Err	. z	P> z	[95% Con	f. Interval]
Age	0.964	0.073	-0.490	0.627	0.831	1.118
Age squared	1.000	0.001	-0.150	0.884	0.998	1.002
Sex (Male=1)	0.847	0.141	-1.000	0.318	0.610	1.174
Ethnicity: Black	6.395	2.898	4.090	0.000	2.631	15.543
Ethnicity: Asian	5.668	2.440	4.030	0.000	2.438	13.176
Ethnicity: Other	3.530	1.298	3.430	0.001	1.718	7.256
Disability (yes=1)	2.011	0.626	2.250	0.025	1.093	3.701
dependent children (yes=1)	1.183	0.207	0.960	0.337	0.839	1.668
Cohabiting: living with parents	2.112	0.773	2.040	0.041	1.031	4.326
Cohabiting: living with partner	0.903	0.162	-0.570	0.570	0.636	1.283
Employment status: FT employee	0.937	0.256	-0.240	0.811	0.548	1.602
Employment status: PT employee	0.688	0.217	-1.180	0.236	0.370	1.277
Employment status: self-employed	0.552	0.207	-1.590	0.113	0.265	1.150
Tenure: outright	0.277	0.088	-4.040	0.000	0.149	0.517
Tenure: mortgage	0.545	0.122	-2.720	0.007	0.352	0.844
Tenure: private rental	1.060	0.294	0.210	0.834	0.615	1.826
Tenure: don't know	0.505	0.265	-1.300	0.194	0.180	1.415
Highest qualification: Level 3	1.590	0.470	1.570	0.116	0.891	2.837
Highest qualification: Level 2	1.292	0.379	0.870	0.383	0.727	2.297
Highest qualification: Level 1	1.271	0.364	0.840	0.402	0.726	2.227
Friends / university: few	1.349	0.261	1.550	0.122	0.923	1.971
Friends / university: several	1.331	0.307	1.240	0.215	0.847	2.091
Friends / university: most	1.900	0.468	2.610	0.009	1.172	3.079
Friends / DK	2.513	0.761	3.040	0.002	1.388	4.550
Parents / university (yes=1)	1.091	0.184	0.520	0.606	0.784	1.518
Sibling / university (yes=1)	0.818	0.149	-1.100	0.270	0.573	1.168
Experience of school: positive	1.505	0.298	2.070	0.039	1.022	2.218
Experience of school: negative	0.758	0.135	-1.560	0.119	0.535	1.074
Region: Midlands and East of Eng	0.785	0.149	-1.270	0.203	0.540	1.140
Region: North of England	0.997	0.186	-0.020	0.988	0.692	1.437
Social class: manager and prof	0.961	0.186	-0.210	0.837	0.658	1.403
Performance at school = good	1.490	0.263	2.260	0.024	1.054	2.107
Performance at school = poor	1.347	0.295	1.360	0.174	0.877	2.069

Notes: Reference categories are: sex (female); ethnicity (white); disability (non-disabled); dependent children (none); cohabiting (single); employment status (unemployed); tenure (social rental); highest qualifications (none); friends in HE (none); parents in HE (no); sibling / university (no); experience of school (mixed/ neutral); region (south of England), occupational group (routine), assessment of school performance (average).

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

**Table A5.16: Logistic regression model of the propensity of respondents to consider entering HE in the future (model including HE perception indicators)**

HEint	Odds Ratio	Std. Err	. z	P> z	[95% Con	f. Interval]
Age	0.956	0.075	-0.570	0.567	0.820	1.115
Age squared	1.000	0.001	-0.170	0.868	0.998	1.002
Sex (Male=1)	0.869	0.151	-0.810	0.421	0.618	1.223
Ethnicity: Black	6.745	2.877	4.480	0.000	2.924	15.562
Ethnicity: Asian	8.234	3.916	4.430	0.000	3.241	20.915
Ethnicity: Other	3.492	1.298	3.360	0.001	1.685	7.235
Disability (yes=1)	2.757	0.900	3.110	0.002	1.454	5.227
dependent children (yes=1)	1.080	0.201	0.410	0.680	0.749	1.556
Cohabiting: living with parents	1.688	0.648	1.360	0.173	0.795	3.582
Cohabiting: living with partner	0.902	0.168	-0.550	0.579	0.625	1.300
Employment status: FT employee	0.897	0.261	-0.370	0.709	0.508	1.586
Employment status: PT employee	0.731	0.240	-0.960	0.339	0.384	1.391
Employment status: self-employed	0.585	0.225	-1.400	0.163	0.275	1.243
Tenure: outright	0.279	0.093	-3.820	0.000	0.145	0.537
Tenure: mortgage	0.553	0.131	-2.490	0.013	0.347	0.881
Tenure: private rental	0.977	0.278	-0.080	0.935	0.559	1.707
Tenure: don't know	0.544	0.287	-1.160	0.248	0.194	1.527
Highest qualification: Level 3	1.408	0.435	1.110	0.269	0.768	2.580
Highest qualification: Level 2	1.153	0.357	0.460	0.646	0.628	2.116
Highest qualification: Level 1	1.199	0.359	0.600	0.545	0.666	2.157
Friends / university: few	1.188	0.238	0.860	0.388	0.803	1.758
Friends / university: several	1.002	0.246	0.010	0.993	0.620	1.622
Friends / university: most	1.254	0.326	0.870	0.384	0.753	2.089
Friends / DK	2.091	0.676	2.280	0.022	1.110	3.940
Parents / university (yes=1)	0.946	0.166	-0.320	0.753	0.670	1.335
Sibling / university (yes=1)	0.708	0.135	-1.820	0.069	0.488	1.027
Experience of school: positive	1.575	0.331	2.160	0.031	1.044	2.378
Experience of school: negative	0.750	0.136	-1.580	0.113	0.525	1.071
Region: Midlands and East of Eng	0.767	0.150	-1.360	0.174	0.522	1.125
Region: North of England	1.066	0.208	0.330	0.741	0.728	1.563
Social class: manager and prof	0.981	0.192	-0.100	0.920	0.668	1.440
q5he_1	1.251	0.110	2.560	0.011	1.054	1.486
q5he_2	0.870	0.048	-2.500	0.012	0.780	0.970
q5he_3	1.064	0.066	1.000	0.315	0.943	1.201
q5he_4	0.989	0.068	-0.160	0.873	0.864	1.132
q5he_5	1.000	0.072	0.010	0.995	0.870	1.151
q5he_6	0.868	0.051	-2.400	0.017	0.773	0.975
q5he_7	1.258	0.091	3.170	0.002	1.091	1.450
q5he_8	1.361	0.109	3.850	0.000	1.163	1.592
Performance at school = good	1.381	0.252	1.760	0.078	0.965	1.976
Performance at school = poor	1.377	0.320	1.380	0.168	0.874	2.172

Notes: Reference categories are: sex (female); ethnicity (white); disability (non-disabled); dependent children (none); cohabiting (single); employment status (unemployed); tenure (social rental); highest qualifications (none); friends in HE (none); parents in HE (no); sibling / university (no); experience of school (mixed/ neutral); region (south of England), occupational group (routine), assessment of school performance (average).

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

## Chapter 6

Table A6.1: Perceived likelihood of getting in to HE, by personal background

	Very likely %	Fairly likely %	Not very likely %	Not at all likely %	Total N
All	29.6	50.1	15.4	4.9	386
<i>Current qualification level</i>					
No formal qualifications	-	-	-	-	33
Level 1	24.5	48.0	16.7	10.8	102
Level 2	26.5	53.1	19.5	0.9	113
Level 3	35.8	52.2	10.4	1.5	134
<i>Socio-economic background</i>					
Managerial/professional	31.9	55.8	9.7	2.7	113
Intermediate occupations	39.4	43.4	15.2	2.0	99
Routine/manual/never worked	22.2	50.3	19.2	8.4	167
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
White	26.4	51.5	16.3	5.9	307
BME	43.1	45.8	9.7	1.4	72

Base: Those who would consider HE (excludes 'Don't know')

Note: '-' indicates fewer than 31 unweighted cases in this category, thus data not reported

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A6.2: Main reasons for considering HE

	Frequency	%
General employability/ career reasons	198	47.5
- get a new job	97	6.9 (50.0*)
- change type of work	116	8.2 (59.3*)
- set up own business/go self employed	68	4.8 (34.7*)
- develop career	118	8.4 (60.4*)
- earn more money	114	8.2 (58.7*)
Personal development	140	33.5
Reasons related to current job	91	21.9
- gain new skills for the job	59	14.4 (66.3**)
- get a pay rise	45	10.8 (50.7**)
- get a promotion	44	10.6 (49.9**)
- get more satisfaction from work	55	13.1 (61.5**)
General interest/fill spare time/carry on learning	36	8.6
Life change/life even reasons (eg children leaving home/divorce)	26	6.3
Get a recognised qualification/improve qualification	23	5.5
All those considering HE	416	100.0

Base: Those who would consider HE

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

\* employability reasons explored further, number in brackets shows proportion of those citing general employability reasons that cited that specific reason

\*\* job related reasons explored further, number in brackets shows proportion of those citing job related reasons that cited that specific reason

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A6.3: Main reasons for considering HE, by personal background

	Frequency	%	Total N
General employability/ career reasons	198	47.5	416
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	96	57.1	168
31-44	77	43.8	176
45-55	25	34.7	72
<i>Socio-economic background</i>			
Managerial/professional	42	35.9	117
Intermediate occupations	52	48.6	107
Routine/manual	101	54.3	186
<i>Family experience of HE</i>			
Parent	(37)	(60.7)	61
Sibling or other family member	115	47.7	241
None	47	40.5	116
Personal development	140	33.5	416
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	43	25.6	168
31-44	67	37.9	177
45-55	30	41.7	72
Reasons related to current job	91	21.5	416
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
White	84	25.7	327
BME	7	8.4	83

Base: Those who would consider HE

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Data in brackets indicates between 31 and 50 unweighted cases in this category, thus data should be treated with caution

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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**Table A6.4: Potential concerns amongst those considering HE in the future: 'If you were going to university would you be concerned about any of the following?'**

	Frequency	%
Availability of financial support	331	79.5
Availability of childcare facilities	131	31.6
Running up debts	287	68.8
Being able to keep up with workload	244	58.6
Fitting in/ making friends	82	19.7
Travel/ transport arrangements	106	25.5
Getting back into study and availability of learning support	212	51.0
Balancing study with work commitments	313	75.2
It may not improve my job prospects	118	28.4
None of these	18	4.2
All those considering HE	416	100.0

Base: Those who would consider HE

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

*Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007*

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Table A6.5: Concerned about - 'availability of financial support', by personal background

Concern: Availability of financial support	Frequency	%	Total N
All	331	79.5	416
<i>Sex</i>			
Men	179	76.8	233
Women	152	83.1	183
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
White	249	76.1	327
Black and minority ethnic background	76	91.6	83
<i>Managing financially</i>			
Living comfortably	57	65.5	87
Doing alright	111	78.7	141
Just about getting by	125	87.4	143
Finding it quite/very difficult	(32)	(84.2)	38
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	215	77.9	276
Part-time employee	58	89.2	65
Self employed	-	-	27
Unemployed	39	83.0	(47)
<i>Current qualification level</i>			
No formal qualification	(28)	(75.7)	37
Level 1	80	70.8	113
Level 2	106	89.1	119
Level 3	114	79.2	144

Base: Those who would consider HE

Note: '-' indicates fewer than 31 unweighted cases in this category, thus data not reported

Data in brackets indicates between 31 and 50 unweighted cases in this category, thus data should be treated with caution

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A6.6: Concerned about - 'availability of childcare', by personal background

Concern: Availability of childcare	Frequency	%	Total N
All	131	31.6	416
<i>Sex</i>			
Men	60	25.8	233
Women	72	39.1	184
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
White	94	28.7	327
Black and minority ethnic background	35	42.7	82
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	62	36.9	168
31-44	60	34.1	176
45-55	9	12.5	72
<i>Family make-up</i>			
Married (no children)	10	11.5	87
Married (with children)	78	45.9	170
Single (no children)	13	13.3	97
Single parent	(29)	(52.7)	55
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	65	23.6	276
Part-time employee	38	57.8	66
Self employed	-	-	26
Unemployed	(19)	(40.4)	47

Base: Those who would consider HE

Note: '-' indicates fewer than 31 unweighted cases in this category, thus data not reported

Data in brackets indicates between 31 and 50 unweighted cases in this category, thus data should be treated with caution

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A6.7: Concerned about - 'running up debts', by ethnicity

Concern: Running up debts	Frequency	%	Total N
All	287	68.8	416
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
White	212	64.8	327
Black and minority ethnic background	69	84.1	82

Base: Those who would consider HE

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A6.8: Concerned about - 'being able to cope with the work load', by personal background

Concern: Being able to cope with the workload	Frequency	%	Total N
All	244	58.6	416
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
White	176	53.8	327
Black and minority ethnic background	63	76.8	82
<i>Socio-economic background</i>			
Managerial/professional	58	49.6	117
Intermediate	62	57.9	107
Routine/manual	120	64.5	186
<i>Family make-up</i>			
Married (no children)	36	41.1	87
Married (with children)	111	64.9	171
Single (no children)	66	68.0	97
Single parent	(30)	(54.5)	55
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	152	55.1	276
Part-time employee	44	66.7	66
Self employed	-	-	27
Unemployed	(36)	(78.3)	46

Base: Those who would consider HE

Note: '-' indicates fewer than 31 unweighted cases in this category, thus data not reported

Data in brackets indicates between 31 and 50 unweighted cases in this category, thus data should be treated with caution

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A6.9: Concerned about - 'getting back into study/availability of learning support', by personal background

Concern: Getting back into study/availability of learning support	Frequency	%	Total N
All	212	51.0	416
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	73	43.5	168
31-44	107	60.8	176
45-55	33	45.8	72
<i>Socio-economic background</i>			
Managerial/professional	42	35.9	117
Intermediate	53	49.5	107
Routine/manual	114	61.0	187
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	136	49.3	276
Part-time employee	36	54.4	66
Self employed	-	-	27
Unemployed	(32)	(68.1)	47
<i>Current qualification level</i>			
No formal qualification	(30)	(81.1)	37
Level 1	66	58.4	113
Level 2	50	41.7	120
Level 3	66	45.5	145

Base: Those who would consider HE

Note: '-' indicates fewer than 31 unweighted cases in this category, thus data not reported

Data in brackets indicates between 31 and 50 unweighted cases in this category, thus data should be treated with caution

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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## Chapter 7

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Table A7.1: Main reasons for not wanting to go to HE in the future

	Frequency	%
Didn't need it to get work/career/easier to get a job	228	23.5
Not interested/don't see the point/had enough studying	219	22.6
Lack of time due to work or family reasons	191	19.7
Age (eg too old/too young)	183	18.8
Concerns with the costs of study/debt issues	144	14.8
Happy with present situation	37	3.8
Worried about the difficulty of study	19	2.0
Difficulties with travel/childcare	19	2.0
General financial reasons	17	1.7
Lack the necessary qualifications	15	1.5
Personal reasons	15	1.5
All those not considering HE	972	100.0

Base: Those not considering HE

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A7.2: Reasons for not considering HE - 'don't need it to get work/career/easier to get a job', by personal background

Don't need it to get work/career/easier to get a job	Frequency	%	Total N
All	228	23.5	972
<i>Sex</i>			
Male	138	26.1	529
Female	90	20.3	443
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	100	34.2	152
31-44	111	24.7	450
45-55	66	17.8	371
<i>Socio-economic background</i>			
Managerial/professional	93	32.4	287
Intermediate	59	22.2	266
Routine/manual	75	18.5	405
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	142	23.9	594
Part-time employee	39	18.0	217
Self employed	35	33.0	106
Unemployed	10	20.0	50
<i>Sector</i>			
Manufacturing, utilities, construction and land-based	51	22.2	230
Wholesale, retail, catering, transport and communication	54	21.3	254
Banking, finance and property services	51	32.5	157
Public sector	66	22.4	295
<i>Current qualification level</i>			
No formal qualification	21	19.6	107
Level 1	66	19.6	337
Level 2	54	22.4	241
Level 3	86	32.2	267

Base: Those not considering HE

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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**Table A7.3: Reasons for not considering HE - 'not interested/don't see the point', by personal background**

Not interested/don't see the point/had enough studying	Frequency	%	Total N
All	219	22.6	972
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	124	20.9	594
Part-time employee	55	25.2	217
Self employed	33	31.1	106
Unemployed	7	13.7	50

Base: Those not considering HE

*Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007*

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**Table A7.4: Reasons for not considering HE - 'lack of time due to work or family reasons', by personal background**

Lack of time due to work or family reasons	Frequency	%	Total N
All	191	19.7	972
<i>Sex</i>			
Male	89	16.8	529
Female	102	23.0	443
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	29	19.1	152
31-44	111	24.7	449
45-55	51	13.7	371
<i>Family make-up</i>			
Married (no children)	27	10.2	594
Married (with children)	119	26.7	217
Single (no children)	19	10.2	107
Single parent	26	36.1	50
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	116	19.5	265
Part-time employee	53	24.4	446
Self employed	11	10.3	187
Unemployed	10	20.0	72
<i>Current qualification level</i>			
No formal qualification	17	15.7	108
Level 1	81	24.0	337
Level 2	51	21.2	241
Level 3	41	15.4	267

Base: Those not considering HE

*Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007*

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Table A7.5: Reasons for not considering HE - 'age (eg too old/too young)', by personal background

Age (eg too old/too young)	Frequency	%	Total N
All	183	18.8	972
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	8	5.3	152
31-44	44	9.8	449
45-55	130	35.0	371
<i>Family make-up</i>			
Married (no children)	79	29.8	265
Married (with children)	63	14.2	445
Single (no children)	29	15.6	186
Single parent	10	13.7	73

Base: Those not considering HE

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A7.6: Reasons for not considering HE - 'concerns with the costs of study/debt issues', by employment sector, qualification level, financial situation and personal characteristics

Concerns with the costs of study/debt issues	Frequency	%	Total N
All	144	14.8	972
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	25	16.3	153
31-44	85	18.9	449
45-55	34	9.2	371
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
White	130	14.1	923
Black and minority ethnic background	(13)	(30.2)	43
<i>Sector</i>			
Manufacturing, utilities, construction and land-based	23	10.0	230
Wholesale, retail, catering, transport and communication	46	18.2	253
Banking, finance and property services	20	12.7	157
Public sector	53	18.0	295
<i>Current qualification level</i>			
No formal qualification	9	9.3	108
Level 1	39	11.6	337
Level 2	50	20.7	241
Level 3	42	15.7	267
<i>Managing financially</i>			
Living comfortably	32	9.9	324
Doing alright	61	17.7	344
Just about getting by	31	13.8	225
Finding it quite/very difficult	20	29.0	69

Base: Those not considering HE

Data in brackets indicates between 31 and 50 unweighted cases in this category, thus data should be treated with caution

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A7.7: Factors that might encourage you to consider HE in the future

	Frequency	%
Being able to study/ learn from home or at your work	606	62.3
A change in your personal circumstances (eg being made redundant)	574	59.1
Encouragement from your employer	548	56.4
A suitable course at a university close to your home	544	55.9
Availability of funding to support you while studying	506	52.0
Being able to study in the evenings or at weekends	500	51.4
Encouragement from your family/ friends	488	50.2
Information and advice about the options available	443	45.5
Availability of childcare	292	30.0
No answer	208	21.4
All those not considering HE	972	100.0

Base: Those not considering HE

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A7.8: Whether anything could encourage them to consider HE in the future, by personal background

	Yes %	No %	Total N
All	78.6	21.4	972
<i>Age</i>			
22-30	89.5	10.5	153
31-44	83.0	17.0	446
45-55	68.6	31.4	369
<i>Peer group experience of HE</i>			
Most friends at HE	86.5	13.5	96
Several friends at HE	83.3	16.7	216
A few friends at HE	79.2	20.8	356
No friends at HE	71.1	28.9	291
<i>Current level of qualification</i>			
No formal qualifications	63.0	37.0	108
Level 1	77.8	22.2	334
Level 2	83.3	16.7	239
Level 3	81.6	18.4	266
<i>Dependent children</i>			
Yes	82.1	17.9	514
No	74.5	25.5	451
<i>Family make up</i>			
Married (no children)	70.8	29.2	264
Married (with children)	81.7	18.3	442
Single (no children)	79.7	20.3	187
Single parent	84.7	15.3	72
<i>Managing financially</i>			
Living comfortably	73.3	26.7	322
Doing alright	80.0	272.0	340
Just about getting by	81.3	18.7	225
Finding quite/very difficult	88.6	11.4	70
<i>Housing tenure</i>			
Own home outright	69.9	30.1	166
Own home with mortgage	79.1	20.9	593
Rent/part-rent private landlord	83.9	16.1	93
Rent/part-rent social housing	84.8	15.2	99

Base: Those not considering HE

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A7.10: Encouragement factors - 'study/ learn from home or at your work', by whether work/family commitments is a barrier

Could be encouraged by -	Study/ learn from home/work		Total N
	Frequency	%	
All	606	79.3	764
<i>Barrier to future participation</i>			
Work/family commitments	143	85.6	167
Not work/family commitments	463	77.4	598

Base: Those not considering HE but who could be encouraged to consider it in future

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A7.11: Encouragement factors - 'encouragement from your employer' (employees only), by personal background

Could be encouraged by -	Encouragement from employer		Total N
	Frequency	%	
All	488	75.6	645
<i>Current qualification level</i>			
No formal qualification	40	70.2	57
Level 1	161	72.5	222
Level 2	119	71.3	167
Level 3	160	86.0	186
<i>Employment status</i>			
Full-time employee	376	78.2	481
Part-time employee	112	68.3	164

Base: Those employees not considering HE but who could be encouraged to consider it in future

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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Table A7.12: Encouragement factors - 'Availability of funding to support you while studying', by personal background

Could be encouraged by -	Availability of funding support whilst studying		
	Frequency	%	Total N
All	506	66.2	764
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
White	472	65.2	724
Black and minority ethnic background	(30)	(85.7)	35
<i>Current qualification level</i>			
No formal qualification	46	67.6	68
Level 1	149	56.7	263
Level 2	145	72.5	200
Level 3	154	71.0	217
<i>Barrier to future participation</i>			
Costs of study	393	62.5	629
Not costs of study	113	83.1	136

Base: Those not considering HE but who could be encouraged to consider it in future

Note: Data in brackets indicates between 31 and 50 unweighted cases in this category, thus data should be treated with caution

*Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007*

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Table A7.13: Whether would consider HE if your employer gave time off for study, by personal background

	Would consider if had employer support			Total N
	Yes, definitely %	Yes, probably %	No %	
All	28.8	40.1	31.1	802
<i>Age</i>				
22-30	37.0	44.9	18.1	127
31-44	33.5	40.8	25.7	358
45-55	20.3	37.3	42.4	316
<i>Gender</i>				
Male	33.5	38.8	27.7	415
Female	23.8	41.5	34.7	386
<i>Current qualification level</i>				
No formal qualifications	16.5	31.9	51.6	91
Level 1	27.6	38.7	33.7	279
Level 2	29.9	43.8	26.3	194
Level 3	35.5	42.3	22.3	220
<i>Managing financially</i>				
Living comfortably	30.5	36.5	33.1	266
Doing alright	22.8	45.9	31.4	290
Just about getting by	33.3	39.3	27.3	183
Finding it quite/very difficult	40.0	32.7	27.3	55
<i>Employment hours</i>				
Full-time	34.0	39.1	26.8	585
Part-time	14.8	42.6	42.6	216

Base: Employees not considering HE

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A7.14: Potential benefits for adults of going to HE

	Frequency	%
Benefits related to their current job	248	25.5
General employability/career reasons	505	51.9
Expected by their employer	5	0.5
Personal development reasons	255	26.2
General interest/fill spare time/carry on learning	64	6.6
Meet new people/social reasons	36	3.7
Change their life/life event reasons	31	3.2
Further their education	19	1.9
No benefits	27	2.8
All those not considering HE	972	100.0

Base: Those not considering HE

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

## Chapter 8

Table A8.1: How well informed feel about costs of HE, by personal background

	Very well informed %	Fairly well informed %	Not very well informed %	Not at all well informed %	Total N
All	11.7	31.7	36.5	20.2	411
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
White	10.2	31.3	38.4	20.1	323
BME	17.1	32.9	29.3	20.7	82
<i>Age</i>					
22-30	15.7	33.7	38.0	12.7	166
31-44	7.6	27.5	36.3	28.7	171
45-55	12.5	36.1	34.7	16.7	72
<i>Socio-economic background</i>					
Managerial/professional	6.9	28.4	44.8	19.8	116
Intermediate	18.3	25.0	33.7	23.1	104
Routine/manual	10.3	36.8	33.5	19.5	185
<i>Peer group experience of HE</i>					
No friends at HE	12.2	32.9	34.1	20.7	82
A few friends at HE	7.9	25.0	44.1	23.0	152
Several friends at HE	14.0	40.0	32.0	14.0	100
Most friends at HE	15.6	32.5	29.9	22.1	77

Base: Those who would consider HE (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A8.2: How well informed feel about financial support available for adults studying in HE, by personal background

	Very well informed %	Fairly well informed %	Not very well informed %	Not at all well informed %	Total N
All	5.8	22.3	40.5	31.4	408
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
White	5.0	20.5	41.9	32.6	322
BME	9.0	30.8	33.3	26.9	78
<i>Age</i>					
22-30	7.9	24.8	43.0	24.2	165
31-44	4.1	19.2	38.4	38.4	172
45-55	5.9	23.6	40.3	30.6	72
<i>Socio-economic background</i>					
Managerial/professional	0.9	15.4	43.6	40.2	117
Intermediate	11.7	22.3	33.0	33.0	103
Routine/manual	5.5	27.5	41.2	25.8	182
<i>Peer group experience of HE</i>					
No friends at HE	7.3	30.5	30.5	31.7	82
A few friends at HE	4.7	18.9	42.6	33.8	148
Several friends at HE	5.8	25.0	43.3	26.0	104
Most friends at HE	5.4	16.2	44.6	33.8	74

Base: Those who would consider HE (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A8.3: Who should contribute to the costs of an adult studying at university, by personal background

	Person themselves %	Government/ tax payers %	Person's employer %	Total N
All	72.1	65.7	68.1	1,401
<i>Age</i>				
22-30	76.1	-	64.9	322
31-44	73.8	-	72.1	630
45-55	66.7	-	64.8	448
<i>Ethnicity</i>				
White	73.1	64.9	69.3	1,262
BME	63.2	75.2	56.0	125
<i>Socio-economic background</i>				
Managerial/professional	77.0	-	-	409
Intermediate occupations	70.3	-	-	374
Routine/manual	69.8	-	-	599
<i>Family experience of HE</i>				
Parent	84.8	-	72.6	105
Sibling/other family member	72.5	-	70.4	847
None	68.4	-	62.7	449
<i>Current qualification level</i>				
No formal qualifications	59.3	-	57.2	145
Level 1	71.1	-	70.0	454
Level 2	72.9	-	65.4	362
Level 3	77.5	-	72.5	414

Base: All

Note: '-' data not reported as no statistically significant differences

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A8.4: Attitudes to debt

	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Neither %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Total N
Borrowing money is a normal part of today's lifestyle	36.7	45.1	5.0	7.7	5.4	1,390
Once you are in debt it is often very difficult to get out of it	51.0	32.5	4.4	8.0	4.1	1,386
Owing money is basically wrong	14.6	18.7	13.0	36.6	17.2	1,387

Base: All (excludes 'don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A8.5: How well informed about costs of HE and financial support available

	Costs of HE		Financial support available	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Very well informed	48	11.7	24	5.8
Fairly well informed	130	31.7	91	22.3
Not very well informed	150	36.5	165	40.5
Not at all well informed	83	20.2	128	31.4
Total (N)	411		408	

Base: Those who would consider HE (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A8.6: How would you finance going to university?

	Frequency	%
Student loan	172	41.4
Borrowing from a bank (or similar)	105	25.2
Commercial loan (eg credit card/overdraft)	72	17.3
Government grant/university bursary	279	67.0
Sponsorship/employer support	244	58.5
Paid work/carry on working	327	78.6
Money from family/partner	120	28.8
Money from friends	23	5.4
Using own savings	264	63.3
Another source of money	61	14.8
Don't know	6	1.6
All those considering HE	416	100.0

Base: Those who would consider HE

Note: multiple response question, therefore sum % greater than 100%

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

## Chapter 9

Table A9.1: Preference for vocational or academic subject, by personal background

	Subject preference %		Total N
	Vocational subject	Academic subject	
All	64.6	35.4	291
<i>Age group</i>			
22-30	78.3	21.7	120
31-44	58.5	41.5	123
45-55	46.9	53.1	49
<i>Region</i>			
North	68.1	31.9	72
Midlands	51.6	48.4	95
North	72.8	27.2	125
<i>Employment status</i>			
FT employee	70.5	29.5	193
PT employee	61.7	38.3	47
Self employed	35.3	64.7	17
Unemployed	51.5	48.5	33

Base: Those who would consider HE and who stated a subject preference

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A9.2: Preference for vocational or academic subject, by motivation for considering HE

	Subject preference %		Total N
	Vocational subject	Academic subject	
All	64.6	35.4	291
<i>Motivation related to current job</i>			
Yes	76.7	23.3	60
No	61.5	38.5	231
<i>General employability motivation</i>			
Yes	73.1	26.9	134
No	57.3	42.7	157
<i>Personal development motivations (eg self confidence, intellectual development)</i>			
Yes	50.0	50.0	102
No	72.5	27.5	189
<i>General interest</i>			
Yes	-	-	29
No	67.6	32.4	262

Base: Those who would consider HE and who stated a subject preference

Note: '-' indicates fewer than 31 unweighted cases in this category, thus data not reported

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A9.3: Preference for STEM or non-STEM subject, by personal background

	Subject Preference %		Total N
	STEM subject	Non-STEM subject	
All	20.6	79.4	417
<i>Sex</i>			
Male	30.0	70.0	233
Female	8.7	91.3	184
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
White	17.2	82.8	326
BME	36.1	63.9	83
<i>Family Experience of HE</i>			
Parent	(20.0)	(80.0)	60
Sibling or other family member	15.0	85.0	240
None	32.2	67.8	115

Base: Those who would consider HE

Note: Data in brackets indicates between 31 and 50 unweighted cases in this category, thus data should be treated with caution

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A9.4: University location preference, by personal background

	Close to home %	Commuting distance %	Away/no preference/OU %	Total N
All	61.5	20.9	17.6	410
<i>Family circumstances</i>				
Married/living with partner	60.5	24.4	15.1	86
Married/living with partner with children	68.9	21.0	10.2	167
Single/divorced	49.5	18.9	31.6	95
Single parent	60.7	19.6	19.6	56
<i>Ethnicity</i>				
White	58.4	22.4	19.3	322
BME	73.8	16.3	10.0	80
<i>Socio-economic background</i>				
Managerial/professional	50.9	26.7	22.4	116
Intermediate occupations	64.5	22.4	13.1	107
Routine/manual/never worked	66.9	15.5	17.7	181

Base: Those who would consider HE (excludes 'Don't know')

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

Table A9.5: Study pattern preference, by personal background

	Which best describes HOW you would like to study? %					Total N
	Full- time	Part-time during day	Part-time evenings/ weekends	Distance learning/summer school/workplace/ other	No preference	
All	11.9	18.0	31.8	17.6	20.6	411
<i>Age</i>						
22-30	16.0	12.3	28.2	19.0	24.5	163
31-44	9.1	21.7	36.6	18.9	13.7	175
45-55	9.7	20.8	29.2	11.1	29.2	72
<i>Ethnicity</i>						
White	12.0	16.9	28.3	20.6	22.2	325
BME	11.4	24.1	43.0	6.3	15.2	79
<i>Housing tenure</i>						
Own home outright	-	-	-	-	-	27
Own home with mortgage	8.2	15.9	29.7	22.6	23.6	195
Rent/part-rent, private landlord	16.5	19.8	30.8	17.6	15.4	91
Rent/part-rent, social housing	12.6	25.3	37.9	8.0	16.1	87
<i>Employment status</i>						
FT employee	8.9	15.5	36.2	18.1	21.4	271
PT employee	23.1	29.2	15.4	20.0	12.3	65
Self employed	-	-	-	-	-	27
Unemployed	(19.1)	(21.3)	(25.5)	(8.5)	(25.5)	47
<i>Financial circumstances</i>						
Living comfortably	6.8	15.9	30.7	26.1	20.5	88
Doing alright	13.1	17.5	29.2	19.0	21.2	137
Just about getting by	15.0	21.4	26.4	12.9	24.3	140
Finding it quite/very difficult	(7.9)	(15.8)	(57.9)	(10.5)	(7.9)	38

Base: Those who would consider HE (excludes 'Don't know')

Note: '-' indicates fewer than 31 unweighted cases in this category, thus data not reported.

Data in brackets indicates between 31 and 50 unweighted cases in this category, thus data should be treated with caution

Source: PHEES Strand 2 survey, IES/BMRB, 2007

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## Appendix 2: Strand 2 Survey

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## **PHEES Strand Two: Working Adults Attitudes to Higher Education -**

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Good morning/ afternoon. I am calling on behalf of BMRB Social Research. We are carrying out some research for the Department for Education and Skills, asking adults about their experiences and opinions of work and education.

IF NECESSARY: If you would like any further information about the study, I could send you more details through the post for you to look at or you could phone Geoffrey Shoemith at the Department for Education and Skills on 0114 259 3502.

As we are looking to speak to particular groups of people, I would just like to ask a few initial questions about you. IF ASKED: This shouldn't take more than a few minutes.

We can assure you that everything you say will be treated in the strictest confidence and nothing will ever be reported that would identify you from your answers.

IF NECESSARY: The results will be used to help make learning and training become more relevant and useful to people from different backgrounds and ages, and not just school leavers, and to help get better value for money from government spending.

IF REFUSED: Is there anyone else in the household aged between 22 and 55 we could speak to about this?

---

### **1. INTRODUCTION AND ELIGIBILITY CHECKS**

---

qAgeChk Could you tell me your age please?

IF NECESSARY: That is, how old you were last birthday.

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Refused \_\_\_\_\_ Z

Permitted Range  
0 TO 99 (Numeric Range)

---

**IF refused to give age (qAgeChk = Refused)**

---

qAgech2 Can you tell me which of the following bands your age lies in?

NOTE: RESPONDENT IS INELIGIBLE UNLESS AGED 22-55

21 or under	1
22 to 25	2
26 to 30	3
31 to 35	4
36 to 40	5
41 to 44	6
45 to 50	7
51 to 55	8
56 or over	9
Refused	Z

---

**IF INELIGIBLE (under 21 or 56 and over or Refused) JUMP TO CHECK FOR OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**

---

qsexquo CODE GENDER

Male	1
Female	2

---

qStatCh Can you please tell me what best describes your current situation?

CODE ONE ONLY. PROMPT TO PRECODES

Full-time employee (30 or more hours per week)	1
Part-time employee	2
Self employed	3
Voluntary work/ charity work	4
Unemployed and available for work	5
On government programme	6
Full-time education	7
Looking after family/ home	8
Retired	9
Long-term illness/ injury/ disability	10
Refused	Z
None of these	X

---

**IF NOT Full time employee, Part time employee OR Self employed OR Unemployed and looking for work OR on a government programme (QStatch = 4 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or none of these or refused)**

qAnyPay

Can I just check, did you do any paid work last week? That includes being self employed, or having a job that you were away from because of holidays or illness.

RESPONDENT ONLY ELIGIBLE IF "YES"

Yes	1
No	2
Refused	Z

**IF INELIGIBLE (Not in paid work or refused (QanyPay = 2 or Refused) - JUMP TO CHECK FOR OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**

qualch2 Can you tell me what is the highest level of formal qualification you have?

CODE NULL IF NO FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS.

A level	1
Advanced Higher National Qualification (Scotland)	2
Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE)	3
AS level	4
BTEC/ BEC National	5
BTEC General Certificate	6
BTEC First Certificate	8
BTEC First Diploma	9
BTEC Higher	10 ( <i>terminate</i> )
City and Guilds Foundation (part 1)	11
City and Guilds Craft (part 2)	12
City and Guilds Advanced Craft (part 3)	13
City and Guilds - other	14
CSE	15
Credits towards degree/ HND/ HNC/ HE Diploma/ BTEC/SCOTVEC Higher	16
Degree - Higher degree, first degree, other degree including foundation degree	17 ( <i>terminate</i> )
Diploma in HE	18
GCSE	19
GNVQ Foundation	20
GNVQ Intermediate	21
GNVQ Advanced	22
Higher national qualification (Scotland)	23
HNC/ HND	24 ( <i>terminate</i> )
NVQ Level 1	25
NVQ Level 2	26
NVQ Level 3	27
NVQ Level 4 or 5	28 ( <i>terminate</i> )
Nursing/ Medical qualification	29 ( <i>terminate</i> )
Masters	30 ( <i>terminate</i> )
O level	31
ONC/ OND	32
PhD	33 ( <i>terminate</i> )
RSA advanced certificate	34
RSA Diploma	35
RSA advanced diploma	36
RSA Higher diploma	37 ( <i>terminate</i> )
RSA - other	38

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SCE Higher (Scotland)	39
Scottish Certificate of 6th Year Studies (CSYS, Scotland)	40
SCOTVEC National	41
SCOTVEC General Certificate	42
SCOTVEC First Certificate	43
SCOTVEC General Diploma	44
SCOTVEC First Diploma	45
SCOTVEC modules	46
TEC National	47
Teaching qualification (eg PGCE)	48 ( <i>terminate</i> )
Trade apprenticeship	49
YP/YTP Certificate	50
Other professional qualification (NOT teaching, nursing, medical)	51
Other non-professional qualification	52
Don't Know	Y
Refused	Z
None of these	X

---

**IF have other non-professional qualification**

qualchX What qualification is this?

CODE WHETHER LEVEL 4 OR ABOVE (IN WHICH CASE WILL TERMINATE)  
OR BELOW LEVEL 4 (IN WHICH CASE SPECIFY ON NEXT SCREEN)

Level 4 +	1
Below Level 4	2
Don't Know	Y

---

**IF have other non-professional qualification is below Level 4 (at QualchX)**

qualO TYPE IN OTHER NON-PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

Refused	Z
---------	---

---

**IF INELIGIBLE : Above Level 4 qualification (IF qualch2 = BTEC Higher OR Degree OR HNC/ HND OR NVQ Level 4 or 5 OR Nursing/ Medical qualification OR Masters OR RSA Higher diploma OR Teaching qualification (eg PGCE) OR Diploma in HE OR PhD)**

**JUMP TO CHECK FOR OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**

**IF have other professional qualification (NOT teaching, nursing, medical)**

qualpro What professional qualification is this?

TYPE IN ANSWER. IF TEACHING, NURSING OR MEDICAL QUALIFICATION, GO BACK AND CODE THIS AT QUALCH1

Refused Z

**Ask All**

qHEchk Can I just check, are you currently studying at university or college of higher education?

Yes 1  
No 2  
Refused Z

**IF INELIGIBLE – currently studying at a university or college of HE (qHEchk = 1 OR qHEchk = Refused ) JUMP TO CHECK FOR OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**

qinel

RESPONDENT IS NOT ELIGIBLE - PLEASE ASK IF THERE IS ANOTHER [TEXTFILL: ADULT/MALE/FEMAL] IN THE HOUSEHOLD AGED BETWEEN 22 AND 55 THAT WE COULD SPEAK TO

IF SO, CODE 'Other household member eligible' BELOW - YOU WILL THEN BE SENT BACK TO THE CONTACT SCREEN TO ATTEMPT TO INTERVIEW/ MAKE APPOINTMENT WITH THIS PERSON

IF NOT, INTERVIEW WILL TERMINATE

Other household member  
eligible - AVAILABLE NOW 1  
Other household member  
eligible - MAKE  
APPOINTMENT 2  
No eligible household  
members - TERMINATE 3  
Respondent ineligible and  
refuses details of other  
household members -  
TERMINATE 4

**IF no eligible household members - TERMINATE**

That's all the questions I need to ask you.

THANK AND CLOSE

---

## 2. LEARNING EXPERIENCES

---

### ASK ALL

I'd now like to ask some questions about your experiences in education.

---

### ASK ALL

q2ageL Please could you tell me at what age you left (continuous) full-time education.

PROMPT TO PRE-CODES

NOTE: TAKING A GAP YEAR DOES NOT INTERRUPT FULL TIME EDUCATION

Before I was 16	1
16 years old	2
17-18 years old	3
19-20 years old	4
21 or older	5
Don't Know	Y
Other	0
Other specify... ..	

---

### ASK ALL

q2scexA Thinking back to when you first left full-time education/ school, would you say that you had...

READ OUT

Generally positive feelings about school/ college	1
Generally negative feelings	2
Mixed feelings	3
No strong feelings either way	4
Don't Know	Y

**ASK ALL**

q2scexB Thinking back, how WELL would you say you did in full-time education?

READ OUT

Well	1
Average	2
Poor	3
Don't Know	Y

**IF Highest qualification (at qualch2) is A level or SCE Higher (Scotland) or AS level or O level**

q2if1 You mentioned earlier that your highest formal qualification was [TEXT FILL: QUALIFICATION MENTIONED AT QUALCH2].

Can I just check, how many do you have?

ENTER NUMBER

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't Know Y

Permitted Range  
1 TO 99 (Numeric Range)

**IF Highest qualification (at qualch2) is GCSE**

q2if2 You mentioned earlier that your highest formal qualification was GCSE.

Can I just check, how many at grade A\* to C do you have?

ENTER NUMBER

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't Know Y

Permitted Range  
0 TO 99 (Numeric Range)

**IF Highest qualification (at qualch2) is CSE**

q2if3 You mentioned earlier that your highest formal qualification was CSE.

Can I just check, how many at grade 1 do you have?

ENTER NUMBER

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
 Don't Know Y

Permitted Range  
 0 TO 99 (Numeric Range)

---

**IF any qualification was mentioned at qualch2**

q2scquA [TEXT FILL: You mention earlier that you had NAME OF QUALIFICATION/ Was NAME QUALIFICATION  
 ] gained during your full time continuous education?

IF MORE THAN ONE, CODE YES IF ANY WERE GAINED DURING FULL TIME EDUCATION - ONLY CODE  
 NO IF ALL WERE GAINED SINCE THEN

Yes, gained (any) during  
 continuous full time  
 education 1  
 No, gained (all) since leaving  
 continuous full-time  
 education 2  
 Don't Know Y

---

**IF gained since living full time education or Don't know (q2scquA = 2 or Don't Know)**

q2scquB What was the highest formal qualification you had when you left full-time education?

READ OUT

First degree/ higher degree 1  
 A level/ SCE Higher 2  
 AS level 3  
 GNVQ 4  
 O Level 5  
 GCSE 6  
 CSE 7  
 NVQ 8  
 Don't Know Y  
 Refused Z  
 Other 0  
 Other specify... ..

**IF First degree/ higher degree (q2scuB = 1)**

q2degX Can I just confirm you said you had a first or higher degree?

RESPONDENT IS INELIGIBLE IF THIS IS SO

IF NO, PLEASE RECODE LAST QUESTION

Yes - INTERVIEW WILL TERMINATE	1
No - RECODE LAST QUESTION	2

**IF q2degX = Yes - INTERVIEW WILL TERMINATE**

That's all the questions I need to ask you

THANK AND CLOSE

**IF highest qualification when left school, record at q2scquB was A level/ SCE Higher or AS level or O Level (q2scuB = 2 OR 3 OR 5 )**

q2ifX1 How many of these did you have when you left full time education?

REFERS TO [QUALIFICATION MENTIONED AT Q2SCQUB]

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't Know Y

Permitted Range  
1 TO 99 (Numeric Range)

---

**IF highest qualification when left school, record at q2scquB was GNVQ or NVQ (q2scuB = 4 OR 8)**

q2ifX2 What level was this?

CODE HIGHEST LEVEL ACHIEVED WHEN LEFT CONTINUOUS FULL TIME EDUCATION

Level 1	1
Level 2	2
Level 3	3
Level 4/ 5	4
Don't Know	Y

---

**IF mention Level 4/ 5 OR Don't Know at q2ifX2, INTERVIEW WILL TERMINATE**

That's all the questions I need to ask you.

THANK AND CLOSE

---

**IF highest qualification when left school, record at q2scquB was GCSE (q2scuB = 6)**

q2ifX3 How many at grades A\*-C did you have when you left full time education?

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't Know Y

Permitted Range  
0 TO 99 (Numeric Range)

---

**IF highest qualification when left school, record at q2scquB was CSE (q2scuB = 7)**

q2ifX4 How many at grade 1 did you have when you left full time education?

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't Know Y

Permitted Range  
0 TO 99 (Numeric Range)

**Ask All**

q2more Have you taken part in any training or organised learning since leaving full-time education? This can be any kind of learning, such as learning towards a qualification, learning on your own, evening classes or job-related training, and includes any learning/ training that you may be doing at the moment, such as driving lessons.

- Yes 1
- No 2
- Don't Know Y

**IF have taken part in more training or organised learning (q2more = 1)**

q2Ltype Which of the following activities have you done/ are you doing (since leaving full-time education)?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

IF NO FURTHER LEARNING, GO BACK AND RECODE AT LAST QUESTION

- Full-time course leading to a qualification 1
- Part-time course leading to a qualification 2
- Taught course/ Instruction or tuition NOT leading to a formal qualification 3
- Don't Know Y
- Other 0
- Other specify.....

**IF have taken part in more training or organised learning (q2more = 1)**

q2LexpA Overall, would you say that you have...

READ OUT

- Generally positive feelings about your learning/ training since school 1
- Generally negative feelings 2
- Mixed feelings 3
- No strong feelings either way 4
- Don't Know Y

**IF have generally positive feelings about your learning/ training since school (q2LexpA = 1 )**

q2Lben What benefits, if any, do you think you got/ are getting from this/ these other learning experiences?

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY  
 PROBE: Any others?

Reasons related to CURRENT job (improve skills, pay, promotion, job satisfaction)	1
General EMPLOYABILITY/ CAREER reasons (get a job/ better job/ improve opportunities generally/ change careers)	2
Expected by employer	3
Personal development reasons (eg. self confidence, intellectual challenge)	4
General interest/ Fill spare time/ Carry on learning	5
Meet new people/ Social reasons	6
Change my life/ Life event reasons (eg. children leaving home/ divorce/ retirement)	7
Don't Know	Y
Other	0
Other specify... ..	

---

**Ask All**

q2Llook Have you looked for any training or taught courses in the last six months?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	Y

---

**Ask All**

I'm now going to read out some things people have said about training and qualifications. For each of these I would like you to tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with it.

**Ask All**

q2La ...

IF NECESSARY, ASK: To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

IF AGREE/ DISAGREE: Is that 'strongly (dis)agree' or just '(dis)agree'?

Strongly agree	1
Agree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Disagree	4
Strongly disagree	5
Don't Know	Y

This question is repeated for the following loop values:

- You need qualifications to get anywhere these days
- Learning about new things is enjoyable
- I see paying for your own learning as an investment

**3. WORK EXPERIENCES****Ask All**

I'd now like to ask about what you [Text fill: about what you are currently doing/have been doing recently]

**IF Employed full time or part time, or Self employed or on a government programme (qStatCh = 1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 6) (OR qAnyPay = Yes )**

q3wSIC [Text fill: What does the organisation that you work for mainly do or make/What sort of work do you do?]

IF RESPONDENT HAS MORE THAN ONE JOB, ASK ABOUT THEIR MAIN JOB

RECORD VERBATIM

Don't Know

Y

---

**IF Employed full time or part time, or Self employed or on a government programme (qStatCh = 1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 6) (OR qAnyPay = Yes )**

q3WstaY In what year did you start working for [TEXT FILL: your current organisation/yourself]?

IF RESPONDENT HAS MORE THAN ONE JOB, ASK ABOUT THEIR MAIN JOB

ENTER YEAR AS 4-DIGIT NUMBER

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't Know Y

Permitted Range  
1950 TO 2010 (Numeric Range)

---

**IF Employed full time or part time, or Self employed or on a government programme (qStatCh = 1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 6) (OR qAnyPay = Yes )**

q3wSOC What is the name or title of your job?

IF RESPONDENT HAS MORE THAN ONE JOB, ASK ABOUT THEIR MAIN JOB

RECORD VERBATIM

Don't Know Y

---

**IF Employed full time or part time, or on a government programme (qStatCh = 1 OR 2 OR 6) (OR qAnyPay = Yes )**

How important, if at all, were the following factors to your employer in deciding to take you on to do the job?

q3Wq ...

IF NECESSARY, ASK: How important, if at all, was this to your employer when you FIRST got your job?

IF RESPONDENT HAS MORE THAN ONE JOB, ASK ABOUT THEIR MAIN JOB

CODE NULL IF NOT APPLICABLE

Very important	1
Fairly important	2
Not very important	3
Not at all important	4
Don't Know	Y
None of these	X

This question is repeated for the following loop values:

- Your qualifications
- Your skills and competencies
- Your work experiences

A total of 3 iterations occupying columns (312) to (314)

**IF Employed full time or part time, or Self employed or on a government programme (qStatCh = 1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 6) (OR qAnyPay = Yes )**

I am now going to read out some different job aspects. For each one, please could you tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with that particular aspect of your present job?

q3Ws ...

IF NECESSARY, ASK: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this particular aspect of your current job?

IF RESPONDENT HAS MORE THAN ONE JOB, ASK ABOUT THEIR MAIN JOB

IF SATISFIED/ DISSATISFIED: Is that 'very (dis)satisfied' or 'fairly (dis)satisfied'?

Very satisfied	1
Fairly satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5
Don't Know	Y

This question is repeated for the following loop values:

- The total pay you get (including overtime and/ or bonuses) in your current job
- Your opportunities for promotion/ advancement
- Opportunities for training and development
- The actual work itself

**IF unemployed and looking for work (q3statch = 5)**

q3wrkEv Have you ever been in paid work since leaving full-time education?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	Y

**IF have ever been in paid work since leaving full time education (q3wrkEv = 1)**

q3Psinc

Thinking back to the last paid job you did, when did you leave this job?

PROMPT TO PRE-CODES

IF NEVER IN PAID WORK, GO BACK AND RECODE LAST QUESTION

Within last 12 months	1
1 year up to 5 years ago	2
5 years up to 10 years ago	3
10 years up to 20 years ago	4
Over 20 years ago	5
Don't Know	Y

**IF have ever been in paid work since leaving full time education (q3wrkEv = 1)**

Q3Pcon Can I just check, in your last paid job, were you an employee or were you self employed?

Employee	1
Self employed	2
Don't Know	Y

**IF have ever been in paid work since leaving full time education (q3wrkEv = 1)**

q3PSOC What was the name or title of your job?

RECORD VERBATIM

Don't Know	Y
------------	---

**IF have ever been in paid work since leaving full time education (q3wrkEv = 1)**

q3PSIC [TEXT FILL: what did the organisation you worked for mainly make or do/What sort of work did you do]

RECORD VERBATIM

Don't Know

Y

**IF unemployed and looking for work, and was an employee in last job (Q3Pcon = 1)**

Thinking back to your last job, how important, if at all, were the following factors to your employer in deciding to take you on to do the job?

q3Pq ...

IF NECESSARY, ASK: How important, if at all, was this to your employer when you got your job?

CODE NULL IF NOT APPLICABLE

Very important	1
Fairly important	2
Not very important	3
Not at all important	4
Don't Know	Y
None of these	X

This question is repeated for the following loop values:

- Your qualifications
- Your skills and competencies
- Your work experiences

**IF have ever been in paid work since leaving full time education (q3wrkEv = 1)**

I am now going to read out some different job aspects. For each one, please could you tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with that particular aspect of your last job?

q3Ps ...

IF NECESSARY, ASK: How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with this particular aspect of your last job?

IF SATISFIED/ DISSATISFIED: Is that 'very (dis)satisfied' or 'fairly (dis)satisfied'?

Very satisfied	1
Fairly satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5
Don't Know	Y

---

This question is repeated for the following loop values:

- The total pay you got (including overtime and/ or bonuses)
  - Your opportunities for promotion/ advancement
  - Opportunities for training and development
  - The actual work itself
- 

#### 4. FUTURE PLANS

##### ASK ALL

q4futpr Thinking about what may or may not happen in your working life, where would you LIKE TO SEE YOURSELF in five years' time?

##### READ OUT

(If currently an employee)

In the same job with the same employer	1 ( <i>route past q4golike, q4help, q4fulm</i> )
Doing a higher level job	2
Becoming self employed	7
In full time education or training	8
Working and pursuing further qualifications at the same time	9
Taking time out from working/learning	10 ( <i>route past q4help</i> )
Don't Know	
Other specify	

(If currently self employed)

Remaining self employed doing the same job	4 ( <i>route past q4golike, q4help, q4fulm</i> )
Remaining self employed doing a different job	5
Becoming employed/working for someone else	6
In full time education or training	8
Working and pursuing further qualifications at the same time	9
Taking time out from working/learning	10 ( <i>route past q4help</i> )
Don't know	

(If currently unemployed)

Getting a job	3
Becoming self employed	7
In full time education or training	8
Working and pursuing further qualifications at the same time	9
Taking time out from working/learning	10 ( <i>route past q4golike, q4help, q4fulm</i> )
Don't know	
Other specify	

---

---

**If doing a higher level job, or becoming self employed, or in full time education or training, or working and pursuing further qualifications at the same time, or learning or remaining self employed doing a different job, becoming employed/working for someone else or getting a job or (employed or self employed AND taking time out from working)**

q4golik In your view, how LIKELY is it that this will happen?

READ OUT

Very likely	1
Fairly likely	2
Fairly unlikely	3
Very unlikely	4
Don't Know	Y

---

**If doing a higher level job, or becoming self employed or in full time education or training or working and pursuing further qualifications at the same time or learning or remaining self employed doing a different job, becoming employed/working for someone else or getting a job**

q4fhelp What might help you achieve this goal?

Don't Know	Y
------------	---

---

**If doing a higher level job, or becoming self employed, or in full time education or training, or working and pursuing further qualifications at the same time, or learning or remaining self employed doing a different job, becoming employed/working for someone else or getting a job or (employed or self employed AND taking time out from working)**

q4fuLrn To what extent, if at all, do you feel that gaining new skills or more qualifications will help in achieving your career plans?

READ OUT

Will be essential	1
Will be a great help	2
Will help to some extent	3
Will have no effect	4
Will be a hindrance	5
Don't Know	Y

---

---

## 5. ATTITUDES TOWARDS, EXPERIENCES AND AWARENESS OF HE

---

### ASK ALL

We are interested in people's opinions on studying at university - this could include full-time study, part-time study and studying through places like the Open University or what used to be called polytechnics.

Even if you have never been to university and don't think you will ever go there in the future, we'd like to know what YOU think.

---

### ASK ALL

I am going to read out some things people have said about university. For each of these, could you tell me whether you agree or disagree.

q5HE ...

IF NECESSARY ASK: Do you agree or disagree with this?

IF AGREE/ DISAGREE: Is that 'strongly (dis)agree or 'slightly (dis)agree'?

READ OUT

Strongly agree	1
Slightly agree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Slightly disagree	4
Strongly disagree	5
Don't Know	Y

This question is repeated for the following loop values:

- University is only for young people
  - The best jobs go to people who have been to university
  - People who go to university end up with heavy debts
  - Getting into university is difficult
  - Going to university is not worth the cost
  - Going to university is something everyone should consider doing
  - People like me don't go to university
  - Going to university becomes irrelevant once you have got a job
- 

### ASK ALL

q5famHE

Has anyone in your family studied at university/ polytechnic/ college of higher education or are currently studying at one?

IF YES, PROMPT FOR WHO THIS IS, AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY  
OR CODE "NULL" FOR NO

---

Mother	1
Father	2
Spouse/partner	3
Brother(s)	4
Sister(s)	5
Child(ren)	6
Don't Know	Y
None of these	X
Other	0
Other specify.....	

---

**ASK ALL**

q5peerH

And do you have any friends who have studied at university/ polytechnic/ college of higher education or are currently at one?

IF YES, PROBE FOR JUST A FEW, SEVERAL, OR MOST

Yes - just a few	1
Yes - several	2
Yes - most	3
No	4
Don't Know	Y

---

**ASK ALL**

q5awarA

Generally how well informed, if at all, do you feel about the OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO STUDY at university? By this we mean the types of qualifications you can take, the subjects you can do, the places you can study, and the ways in which you can study.

READ OUT

Very well informed	1
Fairly well informed	2
Not very well informed	3
Not at all well informed	4
Don't Know	Y

---

**ASK ALL**

q5awarB

How well informed, if at all, do you feel about the ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS OR WHAT YOU NEED TO GET IN to university?

READ OUT

---

Very well informed	1
Fairly well informed	2
Not very well informed	3
Not at all well informed	4
Don't Know	Y

---

**ASK ALL**

q5infoL Have you looked for any information or advice about going to university for you or for someone else in your family?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	Y

---

**IF Have looked for information or advice about going to university (Q5infoL = 1)**

q5infoS Where did you look or who did you go to for information/ advice about going to university?  
DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Employer	1
Trade Union	2
Friends/ work colleagues	3
Family	4
School/ local college	5
University/ HE college itself	6
Library	7
Newspaper/ magazine/ directory	8
Internet	9
Careers advisor	10
Telephone helpline/ Learndirect (website or helpline)	11
Don't Know	Y
Other	0
Other specify... ..	

---

**IF Have NOT looked for information or advice about going to university (Q5infoL = 2 or DK)**

q5infoF Where or who would you go to for information about going to university if you wanted to find out more about it?

DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

CODE NULL IF WOULDN'T WANT TO FIND OUT ABOUT IT

Employer	1
Trade Union	2
Friends/ work colleagues	3
Family	4
School/ local college	5
University/ HE college itself	6
Library	7

---

Newspaper/ magazine/ directory	8
Internet	9
Careers advisor	10
Telephone helpline/ Learn direct (website or helpline)	11
Don't Know	Y
Wouldn't want to find out about it	X
Other	0
Other specify.....	

---

## 6. PLANS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

---

### ASK ALL

q6time1

Thinking back to when you finished your full-time education, did you ever think seriously about applying to university around that time?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	Y

---

### ASK ALL

q6barr1

What do you think were your MAIN reasons for not going to university at this time?

PROBE: Anything else?

DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Not interested/ Didn't see the point/ Had enough of studying	1
Didn't need it to get work/ career/ easier to get a job	2
Lack of time due to work or family reasons	3
Difficulties with travel or childcare	4
Concerns with costs of study/ debt issues/ needed to earn money	5
Lack of information about university	6
Lack of necessary qualifications	7
Worried about difficulty of study	8

Didn't know anyone going/ concerns about fitting in	9
Wasn't expected of them/ no encouragement to go	10
No reason	11
Did start but left	2
Don't Know	Y
Other	0
Other specify... ..	

**ASK ALL**

q6time2 Have you ever considered applying to go to university at all since then?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	Y

**ASK ALL**

q6barr2 What do you think were your MAIN reasons for not going to university?

PROBE: Anything else?

IF NECESSARY: Your reasons for not going to university at any time since leaving full time education.

DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Not interested/ Didn't see the point/ Had enough of studying	1
Didn't need it to get work/ career/ easier to get a job	2
Lack of time due to work or family reasons	3
Difficulties with travel or childcare	4
Concerns with costs of study/ debt issues/ needed to earn money	5
Lack of information about university	6
Lack of necessary qualifications	7
Worried about difficulty of study	8
Didn't know anyone going/ concerns about fitting in	9
Wasn't expected of them/ no encouragement to go	10
No reason	11
Did start but left	2
Don't Know	Y
Other	0
Other specify... ..	

**ASK ALL**

q6time3 And which of the following best describes your thoughts about going to university in the future?

READ OUT

I am already considering it	1
I would definitely consider it	2
I would probably consider it	3
I am unlikely to consider it	4
I am not interested at all	5
Don't Know	Y

**IF considering/probably consider HE (q6time3 = 1 OR 2 OR 3)**

q6getin Given your life and work experiences, how likely do you think it would be that you would get in if you did  
apply?

READ OUT

Very likely	1
Fairly likely	2
Not very likely	3
Not at all likely	4
Don't Know	Y

**IF considering/probably consider HE (q6time3 = 1 OR 2 OR 3)**

q6whygB What would you say are your MAIN reasons for considering going to university?  
PROBE: Anything else?

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Reasons related to CURRENT job (improve skills, pay, promotion, job satisfaction)	1
General EMPLOYABILITY/ CAREER reasons (get a job/ better job/ improve opportunities generally/ change careers)	2
Expected by employer	3
Personal development reasons (eg. self confidence, intellectual challenge)	4
General interest/ fill spare time/ carry on learning	5
Meet new people/ social reasons	6

Change my life/ Life event reasons (eg. children leaving home/ divorce/ retirement)	7
Don't Know	Y
Other	0
Other specify... ..	

**IF Reasons related to current job (Q6WhyGB = 1)**

q6whygX CURRENT JOB REASONS  
Can I just check, would this be to...

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Gain new skills for your job	1
Get a pay rise	2
Get a promotion	3
Get more satisfaction out of your work	4
Don't Know	Y
None of these	X

**IF general employability/careers reasons (Q6WhyGB = 2)**

q6whygY CAREER REASONS  
Can I just check, would this be to...

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Get a new job	1
Change to a different type of work	2
Set up your own business/ go self employed	3
Develop your career	4
Earn more money in the future	5
Don't Know	Y
None of these	X

**IF considering/probably consider HE (q6time3 = 1 OR 2 OR 3)**

q6proba If you were to go to university, would you be concerned about any of the following?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Availability of financial support for tuition fees/ study costs	1
Availability of childcare facilities	2
Running up debts	3

---

Being able to cope with the workload	4
Fitting in/ making friends	5
Travel/ transport arrangements	6
Getting back into study and availability of learning support	7
Balancing study with work commitments	8
It may not improve my job prospects	9
Don't Know	Y
None of these	X

---

**IF unlikely to consider/not considering HE (q6time3 = 4 or 5 or DK)**

q6barr3 What would you say are your MAIN reasons for not wanting to go to university in the future?  
 PROBE: Anything else?

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Not interested/ Don't see the point/ Had enough of studying	1
Don't need it to get work/ career/ easier to get a job	2
Lack of time due to work or family reasons	3
Difficulties with travel or childcare	4
Concerns with costs of study/ debt issues/ needed to earn money	5
Lack of information about university	6
Lack of necessary qualifications	7
Worried about difficulty of study	8
Don't know anyone going/ concerns about fitting in	9
Isn't expected of them/ no encouragement to go	10
No reason	11
Did start but left	2
Don't Know	Y
Other	0
Other specify.....	

**IF unlikely to consider/not considering HE (q6time3 = 4 or 5 or DK)**

q6enfac I am now going to read out a list of things which have influenced some people in deciding to apply for university. For each one, could you tell me whether or not this might encourage you to consider applying in the future.

READ OUT INCLUDING "OTHER". CODE ALL THAT APPLY OR "NULL" FOR "NONE OF THESE/ NOTHING WOULD ENCOURAGE ME"

- Availability of funding to support you while studying 1
- Information and advice about the options available 2
- A suitable course at a university close to your home 3
- Being able to study in the evenings or at weekends 4
- Being able to study/ learn from home or at your work 5
- Encouragement from your employer 6
- Encouragement from your family/ friends 7
- Availability of childcare 8
- A change in your personal circumstances (eg. being made redundant) 9
- Don't Know Y
- None of these X
- Other 0
- Other specify... (438 - 441)

---

**IF unlikely to consider/not considering HE AND employed full or part time (q6time3 = 4 or 5 or DK) AND (Statch = 1 or 2)**

q6empen Would you be willing to consider going to university if your employer were to support you by offering you paid time off to study (eg. day release)?

READ OUT

- Yes, definitely 1
- Yes, possibly 2
- No 3
- Don't Know Y

**IF unlikely to consider/not considering HE (q6time3 = 4 or 5 or DK)**

q6heben What, if any, do you think are the advantages for adults of going to university?  
 PROBE: Anything else?

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY OR NULL FOR "NO BENEFITS"

Reasons related to their CURRENT job (improve skills, pay, promotion, job satisfaction)	1
General EMPLOYABILITY/ CAREER reasons (get a job/ better job/ improve opportunities generally/ change careers)	2
Expected by their employer	3
Personal development reasons (eg. self confidence, intellectual challenge)	4
General interest/ fill spare time/ carry on learning	5
Meet new people/ social reasons	6
Change their life/ Life event reasons (eg. children leaving home/ divorce/ retirement)	7
Don't Know	Y
No benefits	X
Other	0
Other specify.....	

**IF considering/probably consider HE (q6time3 = 1 OR 2 OR 3)**

I would now like to ask you a few questions about how and where you would most like to study.

q6subty What subject or area of interest would you ideally like to study at university?

PROMPT: What is your best guess of what you think you would study if you went to university?

TYPE IN ANSWER OR CODE NULL FOR "HAVEN'T DECIDED YET"

Don't Know	Y
Haven't decided yet	X

**IF considering/probably consider HE (q6time3 = 1 OR 2 OR 3)**

q6locty Which of these best describes WHERE you would most like to study?

READ OUT

At a university/ college close to my home	1
At a university/ college within commuting distance	2
At a university/ college which would require me to move/ spend some time away from home	3
I have no preference/ Don't mind	4
Don't Know	Y
Other	0
Other specify... ..	

**IF considering/probably consider HE (q6time3 = 1 OR 2 OR 3)**

q6modty Which of these options best describes HOW you would most like to study?

READ OUT

Full-time	1
Part-time during the day	2
Part-time during the evenings/ weekends	3
During the summer/ Summer school	4
Distance learning/online learning	5
Study in the workplace	6
I have no preference/ Don't mind	7
Don't Know	Y
Other	0
Other specify... ..	

**IF considering/probably consider HE (q6time3 = 1 OR 2 OR 3)**

q6infA How well informed, if at all, do you feel about the COSTS of going to university?

READ OUT

Very well informed	1
Fairly well informed	2
Not very well informed	3
Not at all well informed	4
Don't Know	Y

**IF considering/probably consider HE (q6time3 = 1 OR 2 OR 3)**

q6infB How well informed, if at all, do you feel about the FINANCIAL SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR ADULTS STUDYING at university?

READ OUT

Very well informed	1
Fairly well informed	2
Not very well informed	3
Not at all well informed	4
Don't Know	Y

**IF considering/probably consider HE (q6time3 = 1 OR 2 OR 3)**

q6fund Which, if any, of the following ways do you think you would use to pay for going to university?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

A Student Loan	1
Borrowing money from a bank or similar organisation	2
Another sort of loan (eg. credit card, overdrafts etc)	3
Government grant or university bursary	4
Sponsorship or financial support from an employer	5
Doing paid work/ carry on working	6
Money from your family (partner/ parents)	7
Money from your friends	8
Your own savings	9
Money from another source (SPECIFY ON NEXT SCREEN)	10

Don't Know Y  
None of these X

---

**IF receive money from another source (q6fund = 10)**

q6fundX You mentioned money from another source. Please can you say what this is.

TYPE IN ANSWER

Don't Know Y

---

**ASK ALL**

q6fundN Who do you think should contribute towards the costs of an adult studying at university?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

The person themselves 1  
The person's family 2  
Government/ Tax payers 3  
Their employer 4  
Don't Know Y  
Other 0  
Other specify... ..

---

**ASK ALL**

I am now going to read out some things people have said about money. For each one, please tell me whether you agree or disagree.

q6de ...

IF NECESSARY ASK: Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

IF AGREE/ DISAGREE: Is that 'strongly (dis)agree' or just '(dis)agree'?

READ OUT

Strongly agree	1
Agree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Disagree	4
Strongly disagree	5
Don't Know	Y

This question is repeated for the following loop values:

- Borrowing money is a normal part of today's lifestyle
- Once you are in debt it is often very difficult to get out of it
- Owning money is basically wrong

---

## 7. PERSONAL DETAILS

---

**ASK ALL**

Finally I'd just like to ask you a few more questions about yourself.

q7livst Which of the following best describes your current arrangements?

READ OUT

Living with partner/married	1
Single, living with parents	2
Single/divorced/widowed and living independently	3
Don't Know	Y
Refused	Z
Other	0
Other specify.....	

**ASK ALL**

q7depen Do you have any children who normally live with you and who are financially dependent on you?

Yes	1	(512)
No	2	
Don't Know	Y	
Refused	Z	

**IF have dependent children (q7depen = 1)**

q7depNo How many children normally live with you who are financially dependent on you?

Permitted Range  
1 TO 10 (Numeric Range)

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_ Y

---

**IF have dependent children (q7depen = 1)**

q7ag How old is ...?

ENTER AGE IN YEARS

Permitted Range  
0 TO 18 (Numeric Range)

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_ Y

This question is repeated for the following loop values:

- [+v7ag+]
- the second of these children
- the third of these children
- the fourth of these children
- the fifth of these children
- the sixth of these children
- the seventh of these children
- the eighth of these children
- the ninth of these children
- the tenth of these children

**ASK ALL**

q7disab Do you have a disability or health problem that substantially limits your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't Know	Y
Refused	Z

**ASK ALL**

q7ethni To which of the following groups do you consider you belong?

READ OUT

White	1
Black	2
Asian	3
Mixed Ethnic group	4
Don't Know	Y
Refused	Z
Other	0
Other specify.....	

**ASK ALL**

q7tenur Thinking about the house/ flat you currently live in, do [TEXT FILL: you/your parents]...

READ OUT

Own it outright	1
Own it with a mortgage	2
Part own/ part rent	3
Rent it	4
Live there rent free	5
Don't Know	Y
Refused	Z
Other	0
Other specify.....	

**If in rented accommodation (q7tenur = 3 OR 4 OR 5)**

q7rent Who is [TEXT FILL: your/your parents'] landlord?

READ OUT

Private landlord/ letting agency	1
Housing authority	2
Local council/ authority	3
Employer	4
Friend/ relative	5
Don't Know	Y
Refused	Z
Other	0
Other specify... ..	

---

**ASK ALL**

q7finan How well would you say that you yourself are managing financially these days?

READ OUT

Living comfortably	1
Doing all right	2
Just about getting by	3
Finding it quite difficult	4
Finding it very difficult	5
Don't Know	Y
Refused	Z

---

**ASK ALL**

q7ukres Have you lived in the UK or wider European Union for at least the last three years?

Yes	1
No	2

---

**ASK ALL**

q7hhno How many OTHER people, not counting yourself, who normally live at this address are aged between 22 and 55?

ENTER NUMBER

---

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Permitted Range  
0 TO 20 (Numeric Range)

---

**IF other people live at the address aged 22-55 (q7hhno > 0)**

q7hhno2 And of them, how many are doing any paid work or looking for work?

REFERS TO THE [+Q7HHNO+] PEOPLE AGED 22-55 LIVING AT SAME ADDRESS AS RESPONDENT

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Permitted Range  
0 TO 20 (Numeric Range)

---

**IF q7hhno2 > q7hhno**

NUMBER IN AGE RANGE IN PAID WORK/ LOOKING FOR WORK CANNOT BE GREATER THAN TOTAL NUMBER WITHIN AGE RANGE

PLEASE CHECK AND RECODE

---

**IF other people live at the address aged 22-55 (q7hhno > 0)**

q7hhno3 And of them, how many of them have NOT been to university or polytechnic?

REFERS TO THE [+Q7HHNO2+] PEOPLE AGED 22-55 LIVING AT SAME ADDRESS AS RESPONDENT WHO ARE DOING PAID WORK OR LOOKING FOR WORK

Numeric Range \_\_\_\_\_  
Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_ Y

Permitted Range  
0 TO 20 (Numeric Range)

---

**IF q7hhno3 > q7hhno2**

NUMBER IN AGE RANGE IN PAID WORK/ LOOKING FOR WORK AND NOT BEEN TO UNIVERSITY CANNOT BE GREATER THAN TOTAL NUMBER WITHIN AGE RANGE AND IN PAID WORK/ LOOKING FOR WORK

PLEASE CHECK AND RECODE

---

**ASK ALL**

q7exdir Is your telephone number listed in the telephone directory?

Yes	1
No/ Ex-directory	2
Don't Know	Y
Refused	Z

---

**ASK ALL**

q7pcode Could you give me your full postcode?

TYPE IN ANSWER

Don't Know	Y
Refused	Z

---

**ASK ALL**

q7recon

Would you be willing for the DfES or someone working on behalf of the DfES to contact you again in the future as a follow-up to this survey to talk about your learning, training and work experience?

Yes - would be willing to be recontacted	1
No - would not be willing to be recontacted	2

---

**IF willing to be recontacted (q7recon = Yes - would be willing to be recontacted)**

---

street1 FULL Postal Address First Line \*

None of these

X

---

street2 Address Second Line \*

None of these

X

---

townAddress Third Line \*

None of these

X

---

ptown Fourth Line of Address \*

None of these

X

---

county County \*

None of these

X

---

**ADDRESS WILL APPEAR ON THE NEXT SCREEN**

**READ ADDRESS BACK TO RESPONDENT AND MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS CORRECT.**

addent 1st line of address: [+str1txt+]  
2nd line of address: [+str2txt+]  
3rd line of address: [+towntxt+]  
4th line of address: [+ptowntxt+]  
County: [+cntytxt+]  
Postcode: [+tpostcd+]

CHANGE FIRST LINE	1
CHANGE SECOND LINE	2
CHANGE THIRD LINE	3
CHANGE FOURTH LINE	4
CHANGE COUNTY	5
CHANGE POSTCODE	6
ALL OK	7

---

Qtel

Can I just check, is [TEXTFILL: Telephone number called on] the best number to contact you on?

THIS IS FOR RECONTACT

Yes	1
No	2
Refused	Z

---

**IF not the best telephone number to contact them on (Qtel = 2)**

q7telno

ENTER THE TELEPHONE NUMBER WHICH IS BEST TO RECONTACT THE RESPONDENT ON INCLUDING THE DIALLING CODE

THIS IS FOR RECONTACT

Refused	Z
---------	---

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**IF RESPONDENT HAS REQUESTED INFORMATION DURING THE INTERVIEW:**

For further information about going to university as a mature student, you can ring the UCAS Customer Services Unit on 0870 1122211 and request a copy of the Mature Guide to be posted to you free of charge.

Or you can download a copy of the UCAS Mature Guide from [www.ucas.com/guides/MatureGuide.pdf](http://www.ucas.com/guides/MatureGuide.pdf)

THANK AND CLOSE

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