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# **Skill and Training Requirements in the Vehicle Maintenance Industry in Devon and Cornwall**

## **Report for Local FE Colleges and Training Providers On Recent Survey Findings**

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## **Introduction**

In June-July 2004 the Sector Skills Development Agency commissioned a telephone survey of local employers in selected regions and industries in order to learn more about the skills and training needs of those employers and the extent to which their skill upgrading needs were being met by local FE colleges and commercial training providers.

This report presents the main survey results for vehicle maintenance employers in Devon and Cornwall and also, by way of comparison, shows results for another very different region of England, namely Greater Manchester.

The employers were asked about:

- the main skills upgrading requirements for the occupation groups which they deemed to be most 'critical' to their future performance
- the extent to which they relied – or plan to rely – on FE colleges and other external training providers to help meet these skills upgrading needs
- the main factors which influence them in deciding whether or not to make use of training and related services supplied by local colleges and other external training providers
- the effectiveness of any previous involvements which these firms had had with local colleges and training providers
- the extent of any contacts and enquiries initiated by local colleges and training providers which had been received by these firms

## **Results**

Table 1 shows the distribution by size group of the 74 vehicle maintenance employers in Devon and Cornwall who were interviewed for the survey.

As expected, the great majority of establishments (89%) employed less than 25 people.

Employers with ten or more employees were asked to identify their ‘core group’ of employees, defined as “the group of employees at this establishment - *excluding managers* - whose skills and knowledge you feel make the greatest contribution to the success of your business”.

Almost three quarters of them nominated ‘vehicle trades’ as their ‘core group’ of employees for purposes of answering survey questions (Table 2). Establishments with less than ten employees answered questions about core groups on behalf of all their employees.

Some 69% of vehicle maintenance establishments in Devon and Cornwall said that the technical and practical skills of their core group employees (mainly in vehicle trades) needed improving or upgrading (Table 3). Other types of skills mentioned as in need of upgrading included ‘generic’ skills such as problem-solving skills, customer handling skills, teamworking skills and communication skills. Table 4 shows that some 57% of the vehicle maintenance establishments in Devon and Cornwall actually wanted combinations of *both* technical and generic skills to be upgraded.

This survey was able to gather information on the specific types of skills that need improving in more detail than most such surveys. Table 5 groups these detailed responses under several different headings.<sup>1</sup> For example, the technical skill requirements strongly emphasise new skill needs in diagnostics, electronics and keeping up to date with new technology. The IT skill requirements range from use of standard programmes to use of new MOT software and diagnostic equipment. Communication skills need to be upgraded in order to improve employees’ ability to deal with both customers and work colleagues. The survey responses also identify a need for vehicle trades and other employees to develop leadership, motivation and team-working skills that would equip more of them to be promoted to supervisory positions.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that the bullet-points under each sub-heading in Table 5 refer to different establishments in each case. Repetition occurs when responses from different establishments were identical. The same applies to Tables 8-9 below.

Not surprisingly, a large proportion of establishments intend to rely heavily on their own resources or to make use of training offered by equipment suppliers in order to meet these skill improvement needs (Table 6). However, a sizeable minority say that they intend to call on the services of other types of external training supplier as well. About 22% of vehicle maintenance establishments in Devon and Cornwall said they were 'very likely' to make use of FE colleges to meet their training needs and another 23% said they were 'quite likely' to do so. The proportions saying they might call on the services of commercial training providers were somewhat smaller: 12% 'very likely' and another 12% 'quite likely' (Table 7).

Table 8 shows the detailed reasons that were given why these employers would or would not use commercial training providers. The positive reasons cited for using these organisations included the expertise and specialist knowledge which they are regarded as having. However, the list of reasons for not using commercial training providers is much longer, with a lot of emphasis given to their costs and the fact that some employers feel no need to call on external organisations because they regard their internal training resources as sufficient.

Table 9 shows several positive reasons given for making use of FE colleges, in particular, to take advantage of apprenticeship and other training courses and the convenience of their locations for employers. At the same time the reasons for not making use of FE colleges are also extensive, for example, training not relevant to employer needs, insufficient time and a preference for relying on internal training resources.

To what extent are these comments made on the basis of past experience of using commercial training providers and colleges? Some 46% of vehicle maintenance establishments in Devon and Cornwall have used colleges for technical or practical skills training in the last 2-3 years for technical/practical skills training and 31% of them have used commercial training providers, (Table 10). Much smaller proportions of establishments have used external training providers for generic skills training.

When asked about the effectiveness of the training providers they have used for technical/practical skills training in the last 2-3 years, the responses are generally

positive for both commercial training providers (Table 11) and for colleges (Table 12). This bodes well for colleges and commercial training providers who are wishing to step up their business relationships with vehicle maintenance employers in the future.

Table 13 shows that colleges and training providers in Devon and Cornwall seem to have already provided course information to a significantly larger proportion of employers than is the case in Greater Manchester.<sup>2</sup> This may be attributable to operating in smaller towns and semi-rural communities in Devon and Cornwall.

Whatever the reason for this difference, the evidence in this report shows that there are many new opportunities in Devon and Cornwall for colleges and training providers to approach employers, discuss their skill upgrading requirements and to demonstrate how external providers might be helpful in meeting those training needs.

**Table 1: Vehicle maintenance and repair establishments, analysed by size-group**

		<b>Devon and Cornwall</b>	<b>Greater Manchester</b>	<b>Total</b>
		<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
<b>Number of Employees</b>	5-9	47	54	50
	10 – 24	42	25	34
	25 – 49	9	17	13
	50 – 99	1	0	1
	100-199	0	0	0
	200 – 249	0	2	1
	250-499	0	2	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
	<i>n =</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>137</i>

Note:  
Regional differences are not statistically significant.

<sup>2</sup> As it turns out, this is the only important difference between the two regions in the pattern of employers' responses to survey questions shown in this report.

**Table 2: ‘Core groups’ of employees nominated by establishments with 10 or more employees**

		<b>Devon and Cornwall</b>	<b>Greater Manchester</b>	<b>Total</b>
		<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
SOC code				
212	Engineering professionals	0	4	2
311	Science and engineering technicians	0	4	2
353	Business and finance associate professionals	0	4	2
354	Sales and related associate professionals	5	0	3
412	Administrative occupations: Finance	3	0	2
522	Metal machining, fitting and instrument making trades	3	0	2
523	Vehicle trades	73	71	72
524	Electrical trades	3	0	2
711	Sales assistants and retail cashiers	8	0	5
712	Sales related occupations	0	4	2
813	Assemblers and routine operatives	0	7	3
821	Transport drivers and operatives	5	4	5
822	Mobile machine drivers and operatives	0	4	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
	<i>n</i> =	<i>37</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>65</i>

Notes:

(a) Establishments with fewer than 10 employees responded to questions about ‘core groups’ of employees on behalf of all employees. A small number of establishments selected ‘Managers’ as their core groups.

(b) Regional differences are not statistically significant.

**Table 3: Types of skill that need improving among core groups of employees**

	<b>Devon and Cornwall</b>	<b>Greater Manchester</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
<b>Types of skills that need improving</b>			
General IT or computing user skills	46	35	41
IT or computing professional skills	11	13	12
Communication skills	38	40	39
Customer handling skills	45	46	45
Team working skills	43	44	44
Foreign language skills	4	2	3
Problem solving skills	49	46	47
Leadership or supervisory skills	31	41	36
Numeracy skills	18	16	17
Literacy skills	20	21	20
Technical or practical skills	69	71	70
None	9	11	10
	<i>n</i> =	<i>74</i>	<i>63</i>
			<i>137</i>

Notes:

(a) Refers to ‘All employees’ in the case of establishments with less than ten employees

(b) Respondents could cite more than one type of skill in need of improvement

(c) No regional differences are statistically significant

**Table 4: Combinations of types of skill that need improving among core groups of employees**

	<b>Devon and Cornwall</b>	<b>Greater Manchester</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
Technical/practical, generic & IT skills	30	29	29
Technical/practical and generic skills	27	25	26
Technical/practical & IT skills	5	2	4
Generic & IT skills	7	5	6
Technical/practical skills only	7	16	11
Generic skills only	8	6	7
IT skills only	7	6	7
No skills need improvement	9	11	10
Total	100	100	100
<i>n</i> =	74	63	137

Notes:

(a) Refers to 'All employees' in the case of establishments with less than ten employees

(b) No regional differences are statistically significant.

**Table 5: Types of skill that need improving among employees in selected occupations, verbatim responses, establishments in Devon and Cornwall only**

<b><u>CORE GROUP IS 'SKILLED METAL AND ELECTRICAL TRADES' (SOC 523)</u></b>
<b>Technical and practical skills</b>
<i>IT skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to vehicles and computerisation</li> <li>• Computer technology</li> </ul>
<i>New technology including operating new machinery and equipment</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning to use new equipment; varies depending on what manufacturers bring out</li> <li>• Technical knowledge, keeping up with advances</li> <li>• New technology-engine and vehicle electronics</li> <li>• New technology on the tools</li> <li>• Changes to vehicles and computerisation</li> <li>• Ability to change to new technology</li> </ul>
<i>The employee's ability to adapt, learn and change</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modern technology</li> <li>• Use of new products</li> </ul>
<i>Dealing with new materials</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of new steels and welding techniques</li> </ul>

<i>Diagnostic skills</i>
• Diagnosis
• Diagnostics
• Diagnostic skills; cars are very complex these days need more training.
• In general repair skills
<i>Electronic and engineering knowledge</i>
• Checking electronics in vehicles
• Electronics
• Electronics
<i>Technical skills including mechanical and sewing skills</i>
• Technical knowledge, keeping up with advances
• Introduction of new steels and welding techniques
• Use of chemicals and knowledge
• Their technical knowledge
• Brake work skills
• They constantly work on upgrading their technical and practical skills. It's ongoing and a requirement of (*manufacturer name*) who also provide the training
• The way cars are developing
<i>Practical/general skills</i>
• General
• General
• They constantly work on upgrading their technical and practical skills. It's ongoing and a requirement of (*manufacturer name*) who also provide the training
<b>IT skills</b>
<i>Basic skills/progression (e.g. Word, excel, communication skills etc.)</i>
• Basic keyboard skills
• Using windows XP
• General
• Just basic IT level
• Use of computer
• Word, excel, basic things and using the actual vehicle management system
<i>Company specific skills (systems, databases and software)</i>
• In the MOT testing area, it's being computerised-keyboard use, basic computer
• Using new MOT systems
• Estimating
• Specialised programme
• MOT service is centralised, reports on PC, all linked up to central system, testing of mechanics
• For MOT's new software

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy access, hard to get into brain of car, cars computerised.</li> </ul>
<i>Diagnostic skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic computer related</li> <li>• Accessing vehicle data using engine diagnostics</li> </ul>
<i>Industry specific</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using new MOT system</li> <li>• Estimating product knowledge</li> <li>• MOT system</li> <li>• Engine diagnostics</li> </ul>
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications with manufacturers</li> </ul>
<b>Communication skills</b>
<i>Customers/client services/dealing with customers</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealing with customers</li> <li>• Communication with the customers and one-verbal</li> <li>• Customer skills</li> <li>• Customer problems and diagnosing the right choice for faults on cars</li> <li>• Customer skills</li> <li>• Better with customers about their needs</li> </ul>
<i>Teamwork/internal communication/communicating with colleagues</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the mechanical trade you're not exactly dealing with university graduates, they're just not very good at talking to each other- communication skills</li> <li>• Internal</li> <li>• Communication with the customers and one-verbal</li> <li>• Reporting internally to staff</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> </ul>
<i>Face to face</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal</li> <li>• General communication skills</li> <li>• Face to face</li> </ul>
<i>Telephone manner</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the phone</li> <li>• On the phone</li> </ul>

<b>Leadership and supervision skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliant on manager- he needs cover when he's not in office to share his workload</li> <li>• Man-management</li> </ul>
<i>Supervisory skills/supervision</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working together</li> <li>• Training the operatives</li> <li>• Possibly teamleading</li> <li>• Learning to take charge of themselves and as a group</li> </ul>
<i>Communication skills/interpersonal skills/passing on of information</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better communication with the others and better planning</li> <li>• Senior communication</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>
<i>Organisational skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better communication with the others and better planning</li> <li>• Planning and organising the workshop skills</li> </ul>
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliable and honest</li> </ul>

**ESTABLISHMENTS WITH FEWER THAN 10 EMPLOYEES (CORE GROUP IS ALL EMPLOYEES)**

<b>Technical and practical skills</b>
<i>IT skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees need to be able to diagnose faults with vehicles using computer based equipment, they need to learn how to use it</li> <li>• Product knowledge</li> <li>• It's going to be product knowledge, keeping up with land rover's products</li> </ul>
<i>New technology including operating new machinery and equipment</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping up with new technology</li> <li>• New machinery training</li> <li>• As new technology comes out don't know yet - but it's as and when new technology arises</li> <li>• Keeping up with the new software which is used to diagnose electrical faults in motor vehicles</li> <li>• Just training on the job, keeping pace with technical updates all job related to the tyre industry</li> <li>• To keep up to date with new technologies</li> <li>• To be able to use new equipment that is developed.</li> </ul>

<i>The employee's ability to adapt, learn and change</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In terms of repairs, learning new techniques</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the end of the day the qualified guys might come across a vehicle they haven't seen before, or a new vehicle so they need to be kept up-to-date on different techniques</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As we get new cars they have different set-ups. We have to learn how to deal with each car as it comes in</li> </ul>
<i>Diagnostic skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees need to be able to diagnose faults with vehicles using computer based equipment, they need to learn how to use it</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostics</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic equipment</li> </ul>
<i>Electronic and engineering knowledge</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be able to work with electronics</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the field of electronics in vehicles</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electrical</li> </ul>
<i>Technical skills including mechanical and sewing skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wiring diagrams, technical information, being able to understand better, it's a continuous and evolving process</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanical skills</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhaust fitting</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanical repairs</li> </ul>
<b>IT skills</b>
<i>Basic skills/progression (e.g. Word, excel, communication skills etc.)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We now have ability to download from the internet rather than buying set piece equipment; upgradeable software. So they'll need more it skills, but not that dramatic, just a case of familiarity with word processing work and using internet</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General skills</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General computer using skills</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic skills</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just ability to use a computer generally.</li> </ul>
<i>Company specific skills (systems, databases and software)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coming up to speed with the new web service which we are introducing, for orders, and using our new stock management system basic invoicing and retailing</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New electronic MOT system</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOT online services</li> </ul>
<i>Diagnostic skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic computer use for diagnostic equipment</li> </ul>

<b>Communication skills</b>
<i>Customers/client services/dealing with customers</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealing with other staff and customers</li> <li>• All aspects of communication, namely telephone (with customers) and inter-staff</li> <li>• Customer communications skills</li> <li>• Just as people progress (in terms of promotion) they will become more customer facing and need to improve their customer facing skills</li> </ul>
<i>Teamwork/internal communication/communicating with colleagues</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal; telling people what needs to be done at what time, keeping management informed just the way they speak to each other</li> <li>• Dealing with other staff and customers</li> <li>• With customers and younger staff</li> </ul>
<i>General skills/basic skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic</li> </ul>
<i>Telephone manner</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership and supervision skills</b>
<i>Man management skills/management/delegating/team building</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assertiveness and awareness</li> </ul>
<i>Supervisory skills/supervision</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management related</li> <li>• An NVQ in team leading that is being brought out across the company so everyone will need it</li> </ul>
<i>Leadership skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking responsibility for staff- making sure the jobs are done in a reasonable time</li> </ul>
<i>Organisational skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking responsibility for staff- making sure the jobs are done in a reasonable time</li> </ul>
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That's just part of job development and promotion, nothing specific</li> </ul>

<b><u>CORE GROUP IS 'SALES OCCUPATIONS' (SOC 71)</u></b>
<b>Technical and practical skills</b>
• Electrical skills and IT
<b>IT skills</b>
• Finance and accountancy
• Upgrades
<b>Communication skills</b>
• Customer communication skills
<b>Leadership and supervision skills</b>
• Control and assertiveness

**CORE GROUP IS 'TRANSPORT AND MOBILE MACHINE DRIVERS AND OPERATIVES' (SOC 82)**

<b>Technical and practical skills</b>
• Vehicle maintenance skills

**CORE GROUP IS 'BUSINESS AND PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS' (SOC 35)**

<b>IT skills</b>
• General user skills that we have

**Table 6: Extent of planned reliance by vehicle maintenance establishments on different types of training provision to meet skill improvement needs among core groups of employees**

	Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
Own resources, equipment suppliers and other external training suppliers	43	52	47
Own resources & equipment suppliers	14	11	12
Own resources and external (non-equipment) training suppliers	22	22	22
Equipment suppliers and other external training suppliers	3	2	2
Own resources only	8	6	7
External (non-equipment) training suppliers only	7	0	4
No training provision	4	6	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>n</i> =	74	63	137

Notes:

- (a) Refers to 'All employees' in the case of establishments with less than ten employees
- (b) Percentages refer to establishments which said that it was either 'Very likely' or 'Quite likely' that each type of training would be used in the next 12 months.
- (c) No regional differences are statistically significant.

**Table 7: Likelihood of using different kinds of external training supplier to meet skill improvement needs of core groups of employees**

		Devon and Cornwall	Greater Manchester	Total
		<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
<b>Commercial organisations</b>				
	Very likely	12	11	12
	Quite likely	12	16	14
	Not very likely	18	16	17
	Not at all likely	32	33	33
<b>Non-profit making organisations</b>				
	Very likely	0	5	2
	Quite likely	14	10	12
	Not very likely	20	27	23
	Not at all likely	41	35	38
<b>FE colleges</b>				
	Very likely	22	27	24
	Quite likely	23	27	25
	Not very likely	11	10	10
	Not at all likely	19	13	16
<b>Universities or other Higher Education institutions</b>				
	Very likely	1	2	1
	Quite likely	3	0	1
	Not very likely	12	22	17
	Not at all likely	58	52	55
	<i>n</i> =	74	63	137

Note:

No regional differences are statistically significant.

**Table 8: Reasons for using or not using commercial training suppliers to meet skill improvement needs among employees in selected occupations, verbatim responses, establishments in Devon and Cornwall only**

<b>CORE GROUP IS 'SKILLED METAL AND ELECTRICAL TRADES' (SOC 523)</b>
<b>Reasons why employers would consider using commercial training providers</b>
<i>Quality/standard of training</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expertise</li> <li>• They have expertise</li> </ul>
<i>Specialist and specific job training</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expertise</li> <li>• They have expertise</li> <li>• They have the knowledge, they are training on the equipment we use</li> <li>• They know the specialist businesses and tailor the training</li> </ul>
<i>Experience and knowledge of commercial training providers/lack of in-house knowledge</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They have the knowledge, they are training on the equipment we use</li> </ul>
<i>Qualifications/certificates</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You've got an independent qualification</li> </ul>
<i>Locality/saving time/reliability</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are local and good value for money</li> </ul>
<i>Cost effective</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are local and good value for money</li> </ul>
<b>Reasons why employers would NOT consider using commercial training providers</b>
<i>No need/not applicable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We don't need them</li> <li>• We don't need them as we can do it all through the college</li> <li>• Not applicable</li> <li>• Does not offer up to date services for industry</li> </ul>
<i>Cost/charge/too expensive</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Cost and convenience</li> <li>• Price</li> <li>• Training is too far away, too expensive and there are bad learning outcomes</li> <li>• Cost</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forming a new in house training program, cost</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Money</li> </ul>
<i>They don't provide required training/we're too specialised</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of training not supplied</li> </ul>
<i>Train in-house (inc. Supplier/manufacturer/parent company)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't need to - training members of Thatcham - training centre for this business</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have in house training</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forming a new in house training program, cost</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because the manufacturer (Renault) provides all the training</li> </ul>
<i>Not enough time/time</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost and convenience</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cannot afford to lose staff for time</li> </ul>
<i>No reason/nothing</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not looked in to it</li> </ul>
<i>Not available locally/location</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training is too far away, too expensive and there are bad learning outcomes</li> </ul>
<i>Lack of interested or suitable candidates</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have no offers for it</li> </ul>
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't have relevant information</li> </ul>
<b><u>ESTABLISHMENTS WITH FEWER THAN 10 EMPLOYEES (CORE GROUP IS ALL EMPLOYEES)</u></b>
<b>Reasons why employers would consider using commercial training providers</b>
<i>Quality/standard of training</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They offered the best training</li> </ul>
<i>Specialist and specific job training</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They are specialist and the industry standard related</li> </ul>
<i>Qualifications/certificates</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To get the certificate we need for our practice</li> </ul>
<i>To gain knowledge and skills, e.g. Product knowledge, job specific skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To learn about new technology</li> </ul>

<i>To improve standards/understand new technology/keep up with the industry</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As new technology develops we get training from those who are responsible for it, such as the supply companies who create the new technology</li> <li>• We need to use NVQ auditors (the British Standards Institute) to ensure every depot is up to the required standards and all are run in the same way</li> </ul>
<b>Reasons why employers would NOT consider using commercial training providers</b>
<i>No need/not applicable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not applicable</li> <li>• We don't need them</li> <li>• No need</li> <li>• No need for training</li> <li>• Not required</li> <li>• Don't need them</li> </ul>
<i>Cost/charge/too expensive</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost and we don't have any locally</li> <li>• Cost, and sometimes they can be biased, they can end up trying to sell you specific products, they can be tied-in with a supplier the cost, and I don't think anyone else provides the training</li> <li>• Training is too expensive.</li> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Too expensive</li> </ul>
<i>Train in-house (inc. Supplier/manufacturer/parent company)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We train the staff on a hands on &amp; ongoing basis, so there's no need for them to</li> <li>• Basically we are a franchise and are obliged to use land rover</li> <li>• It can be done in house</li> <li>• Because training is determined and provided by the parent company</li> <li>• The cost and we would also lose production seeing as there are only 8 of us</li> <li>• We do it in house only</li> </ul>
<i>Not enough time/time</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time away from work, lack of local day release course</li> </ul>
<i>No reason/nothing</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preference</li> </ul>
<i>Not available locally/location</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost and we don't have any locally</li> </ul>

<i>Not my decision/decided by head office</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I would have to say that as we are part of a national organisation, everything is decided at head office level, and generally they prefer people to learn on the job, and there are no specific courses for us anyway</li> </ul>
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost, and sometimes they can be biased, they can end up trying to sell you specific products, they can be tied-in with a supplier</li> </ul>
<b><u>CORE GROUP IS 'SALES OCCUPATIONS' (SOC 71)</u></b>
<b>Reasons why employers would consider using commercial training suppliers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None listed</li> </ul>
<b>Reasons why employers would NOT consider using commercial training suppliers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost</li> <li>Not worthwhile</li> <li>In house training covers most our needs</li> </ul>
<b><u>CORE GROUP IS 'TRANSPORT AND MOBILE MACHINE DRIVERS AND OPERATIVES' (SOC 82)</u></b>
<b>Reasons why employers would consider using commercial training suppliers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They can offer suitable training in relation to the breakdown and recovery industries</li> </ul>
<b>Reasons why employers would NOT consider using commercial training suppliers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost</li> </ul>
<b><u>CORE GROUP IS 'BUSINESS AND PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS' (SOC 35)</u></b>
<b>Reasons why employers would consider using commercial training suppliers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None listed</li> </ul>
<b>Reasons why employers would NOT consider using commercial training suppliers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No need for training</li> </ul>

**Table 9: Reasons for using or not using FE colleges to meet skill improvement needs among employees in selected occupations, verbatim responses, establishments in Devon and Cornwall only**

<b><u>CORE GROUP IS 'SKILLED METAL AND ELECTRICAL TRADES' (SOC 523)</u></b>
<b>Reasons why employers would consider using FE colleges</b>
<i>For workers and apprentices to gain more knowledge/skills/experience</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The skills they provide that we don't possess can be passed on to our staff</li> <li>• Youth training</li> <li>• Locality, cost and learning outcome</li> <li>• Do their apprenticeship schemes there</li> <li>• It's the future; need to send young employees on NVQ courses</li> </ul>
<i>In order to find apprentices/apprenticeship schemes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We base our apprenticeships there</li> <li>• The apprentices are registered with the college</li> </ul>
<i>Due to the training provided and suitable courses</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The courses they do are adaptable to mode of training</li> <li>• Have the skills required on offer</li> <li>• Convenient and reliable in training</li> <li>• Good standard they have a good standard of training</li> </ul>
<i>Locality and convenience</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easiest way of doing training and they are always in touch</li> <li>• They are local and good value for money</li> <li>• Convenient and reliable in training</li> <li>• Already have a good working relationship</li> <li>• Locality, cost and learning outcome</li> </ul>
<i>Formal qualifications</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To gain basic qualifications in the industry</li> </ul>
<i>Cost of training</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are local and good value for money</li> <li>• Locality, cost and learning outcome</li> </ul>
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convention</li> <li>• Already have a good working relationship</li> </ul>

<b>Reasons why employers would NOT consider using FE colleges</b>
<i>No need/not applicable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students there so not needed</li> </ul>
<i>Cost/charge/too expensive</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost and convenience</li> <li>• Cost and time</li> <li>• The cost of the time required away from work</li> </ul>
<i>They don't provide required training/we're too specialised</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colleges don't run the advanced courses we need</li> <li>• Level of training not supplied</li> <li>• Their equipment isn't up to date</li> <li>• They don't do relevant training</li> <li>• They don't offer anything different than what they do</li> </ul>
<i>Train in-house (inc. Supplier/manufacturer/parent company)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The manufacturer and parent company (Renault) provides all the training</li> </ul>
<i>Not enough time/time</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can't afford to lose the time</li> <li>• Cost and time</li> <li>• The cost of the time required away from work</li> </ul>
<i>Our staff are fully trained/arrive fully trained</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students there so not needed</li> </ul>
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost and convenience</li> </ul>
<b><u>ESTABLISHMENTS WITH FEWER THAN 10 EMPLOYEES (CORE GROUP IS ALL EMPLOYEES)</u></b>
<b>Reasons why employers would consider using FE colleges</b>
<i>For workers and apprentices to gain more knowledge/skills/experience</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More experience</li> </ul>
<i>In order to find apprentices/apprenticeship schemes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For apprenticeship schemes and it gives them the qualifications that are acceptable within the industry</li> <li>• We need them for our apprentice.</li> <li>• To train for the apprentices</li> </ul>

<i>Due to the training provided and suitable courses</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because they are our only option for our business needs.</li> <li>• Training apprentices and providing specialist courses</li> <li>• Cover all levels of training and to gain the relevant qualifications for the job</li> <li>• We have to use them, we have an apprentice who goes there, there's nowhere else</li> </ul>
<i>Locality and convenience</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because they are our only option for our business needs.</li> <li>• Convenience because of closeness and they provide a good service</li> </ul>
<i>Formal qualifications</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To get appropriate qualifications</li> <li>• Cover all levels of training and to gain the relevant qualifications for the job</li> </ul>
<i>To obtain and have access to technology/equipment</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They have the right technology for NVQs</li> <li>• To provide more information about new technology for students</li> </ul>
<i>Other</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We want them to provide the right information to future apprentices so we want to have a good dialogue with them</li> </ul>
<b>Reasons why employers would NOT consider using FE colleges</b>
<i>No need/not applicable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don't think they're very good</li> <li>• No need all done on site</li> <li>• No need for training</li> <li>• Not required</li> <li>• The level of courses is not necessarily relevant to people at this site, the courses are too high a level and would only be applicable to HQ</li> </ul>
<i>Cost/charge/too expensive</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost</li> </ul>
<i>They don't provide required training/we're too specialised</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They don't offer what we need.</li> <li>• They probably don't do the sort of thing we want. After they have finished college they are fully qualified and don't need to go back</li> </ul>
<i>Train in-house (inc. Supplier/manufacturer/parent company)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All these decisions would be made by head office, and they prefer practical experience, on the job learning</li> <li>• Because of our franchise agreement we have to use the parent company and no one</li> <li>• In house</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We do it all in house</li> </ul>
<i>Not enough time/time</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't have time to send people to college</li> <li>Time away from work, courses not available</li> <li>We do use colleges from time to time</li> </ul>
<i>Lack of interested or suitable candidates</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The fitters are given the option so is there for them but they are just not interested</li> </ul>
<i>Not my decision/decided by head office</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All these decisions would be made by head office, and they prefer practical experience, on the job learning</li> </ul>
<b><u>CORE GROUP IS 'SALES OCCUPATIONS' (SOC 71)</u></b>
<b>Reasons why employers would consider using FE colleges</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convenient</li> </ul>
<b>Reasons why employers would NOT consider using FE colleges</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The training they give staff is specialized</li> <li>Being a (*manufacturer name*) cars; dealer we are linked to the manufacturer</li> </ul>
<b><u>CORE GROUP IS 'TRANSPORT AND MOBILE MACHINE DRIVERS AND OPERATIVES' (SOC 82)</u></b>
<b>Reasons why employers would consider using FE colleges</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None listed</li> </ul>
<b>Reasons why employers would NOT consider using FE colleges</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I don't think they would offer the services that are appropriate to us</li> <li>They do not offer training appropriate to our industry namely the breakdown and recovery industry</li> </ul>
<b><u>CORE GROUP IS 'BUSINESS AND PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS' (SOC 35)</u></b>
<b>Reasons why employers would consider using FE colleges</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None listed</li> </ul>
<b>Reasons why employers would NOT consider using FE colleges</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not need training</li> </ul>

**Table 10: Use of external training providers by vehicle maintenance establishments in the last 2-3 years**

	<b>Devon and Cornwall</b>	<b>Greater Manchester</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
<b>A: For technical/practical skills training</b>			
Commercial organisations	31	32	31
Non-profit making organisations	15	13	14
FE colleges	46	49	47
Universities or other HE	4	2	3
Equipment producers/suppliers	58	60	59
<b>B: For generic skills training</b>			
Commercial organisations	7	6	7
Non-profit making organisations	3	0	1
FE colleges	12	19	15
Universities or other HE	1	0	1
<i>n =</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>137</i>
Note: No regional differences are statistically significant			

**Table 11: Effectiveness of main commercial training providers used for technical/practical skills training in last 2-3 years**

	<b>Devon and Cornwall</b>	<b>Greater Manchester</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
<b>Extent of training providers understanding of companies technical/practical skills needs</b>			
Very good	57	75	65
Quite good	43	20	33
Not very good	0	5	2
<b>Relevance of training providers provision to companies technical or practical skills needs</b>			
Very relevant	70	80	74
Quite relevant	30	15	23
Not very relevant	0	5	2
<b>Flexibility of training provider in adjusting time and mode of technical or practical skills training provision to meet companies needs</b>			
Very flexible	48	50	49
Quite flexible	39	20	30
Not very flexible	9	20	14
Not at all flexible	4	10	7
<b>Cost effectiveness of training providers technical or practical skills training provision</b>			
Very cost-effective	30	25	28
Quite cost-effective	52	70	60
Not very cost-effective	17	5	12
<b>Overall effectiveness of training providers technical practical skills training</b>			
Very effective	48	60	53
Quite effective	52	35	44
Not very effective	0	5	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>n</i> =	23	20	43
Note: No regional differences are statistically significant			

**Table 12: Effectiveness of main FE colleges used for technical/practical skills training in last 2-3 years**

	<b>Devon and Cornwall</b>	<b>Greater Manchester</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
<b>Extent of college's understanding of companies technical/practical skills needs</b>			
Very good	44	36	40
Quite good	41	48	45
Not very good	9	16	12
Not at all good	6	0	3
<b>Relevance of college's provision to companies technical or practical skills needs</b>			
Very relevant	50	45	48
Quite relevant	35	48	42
Not very relevant	15	7	11
<b>Flexibility of college in adjusting time and mode of technical or practical skills training provision to meet companies needs</b>			
Very flexible	29	39	34
Quite flexible	35	35	35
Not very flexible	29	16	23
Not at all flexible	6	10	8
<b>Cost effectiveness of college's technical or practical skills training provision</b>			
Very cost-effective	56	45	51
Quite cost-effective	29	45	37
Not very cost-effective	12	3	8
Not at all cost-effective	3	6	5
<b>Overall effectiveness of college's technical practical skills training</b>			
Very effective	41	42	42
Quite effective	47	52	49
Not very effective	9	6	8
Not at all effective	3	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>n</i> =	34	31	65
Note: No regional differences are statistically significant			

**Table 13: Contacts with vehicle maintenance establishments initiated by external training suppliers**

	<b>Devon and Cornwall</b>	<b>Greater Manchester</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<i>Percentage of establishments</i>		
<b>Course information provided by:</b>			
Local colleges	61***	32	47
Local commercial training providers	47**	27	38
National or non-local providers	35	27	31
<b>Asked views about courses by:</b>			
Local colleges	28	19	24
Other local training providers	11	13	12
National or non-local providers	15	13	14
<b>Involved in curriculum development by:</b>			
Local colleges	16	10	13
Other local training providers	3	3	3
National or non-local providers	5	2	4
<b>Have been offered tailor made courses by:</b>			
Local colleges	9	3	7
Other local training providers	1	5	3
National or non-local providers	7	5	6
<i>n=</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>137</i>
***Regional differences statistically significant at 1% level ** 5% level * 10% level			