Framework for Excellence 2009/10 Learner Destinations Survey
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q - Why is the Learner Destinations survey being conducted?

A - Learner Destinations is one of the Performance Indicators reported in the Framework for Excellence. The aim of the Learner Destinations survey is to establish the impact of learning that has been funded by the Government. In particular, the research questions explore learners' progression into employment, further education and training.

The LSC will use the results to help improve courses for future learners and to provide information on the choices they have after they finish their courses.

Q - Who is being contacted?

A - The LSC's research contractor, Ipsos MORI, will try to contact all learners who completed substantial LSC-funded learning programmes in 2007/08 to find out what they did during 2008/09. It does not matter whether learners actually passed their course or not as long as they stayed to the end.

Q - Where does Ipsos MORI get learners' contact details from?

A - The data comes from the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). The ILR comes from the data that colleges and learning providers hold about learners on LSC-funded provision, which is based on the information learners supply when they enrol on their course.

No learner is contacted if they declined permission for research contacts on their enrolment form. Permission status is recorded on the ILR in field L27 and each learner falls under one of five categories:

The learner
1. has withheld permission for the LSC or other users to contact them;
2. is not to be contacted, for example where the learner has died, or suffered severe illness during the programme;
3. has only withheld permission to be contacted about courses or learning opportunities by post;
4. only withheld permission to be contacted for surveys and research; and
5. has no additional restrictions.

Only learners whose permission statement matches 3 or 5 above have been passed to Ipsos MORI.

Q - What do the research contractors do with the data (including learners’ contact details)?

A - Details of the learners that participate, and all the information they provide, will be kept confidential to the research teams at Ipsos MORI, RCU (our partner research company), the LSC and BIS.
Survey data is matched to the learner record on the ILR, which saves the LSC from having to ask learners a lot of background information about themselves and their learning. The analysed results for all learners at each organisation can then be used in the performance measures published by the LSC. This is done for research purposes only and the data processing for this phase of the work is done by Ipsos MORI and RCU.

All contact details will be separated from the responses to the survey, before it is shared with the LSC or BIS so that no survey responses link to any individual learner.

Only where learners give their permission will their individual answers be passed on to the college or training provider where they did their learning. Learners are asked for this permission at the end of the survey, and this sharing of information is for research purposes only.

**Q - We work with sub-contractors, and learners may not recognise the name or the ILR code for the learning they did. How is that managed?**

**A -** The interviewers are given the provider’s name and formal course title as a guide but are briefed to explain to learners that this may not be the names they were familiar with. Learners on sub-contracted provision are flagged up to the interviewers before the interview starts so that they can anticipate this.

**Q - Why does Ipsos MORI ask some learners questions about salary and working hours?**

**A -** The aim of the Learner Destinations survey is not to find out how satisfied learners are with an individual college or training provider, but to establish what impact their learning has had on them. Therefore, we will ask some learners questions about their current pay and hours to establish their economic situation following their learning. Ipsos MORI interviewers have been trained to be explicit about the aims of this research and to reassure respondents at the beginning of the survey, and again when it comes to the questions about pay and hours, that their responses will not be passed on to the former college/learning provider or any third party.

**Q - Why does Ipsos MORI ask some learners questions about their caring responsibilities and personal circumstances?**

**A -** Sometimes learners are not able to progress straight away into further learning or employment because of their personal circumstances. If we know about this we take it into account when considering the overall results of the survey.

**Q - When will the LSC get the results of this survey?**

**A -** The telephone research period for the Learner Destinations survey will finish in October 2009. The survey data is then matched with information about learners who have progressed into further learning. The final performance figures are supplied to the LSC in spring 2010.

**Q - Why has our organisation not received a response update?**

**A -** Some learning providers are exempt from the calculation of a Learner Destinations Performance Indicator. The reason an organisation is exempt is specified in the daily updates section of the provider’s secure survey website.