

**apprentice-feedback.com**  
**Listening to the Work-based  
Learner**  
**A Report on the Piloting of the  
National Trainee Feedback  
System for Engineering  
Modern Apprentices**

John Berkeley OBE  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the Government's overall strategy for the education and training of young people, it is planned that in future increased numbers of 16-24 year-olds will benefit from high quality work-based training in the form of Modern Apprenticeships. Trainees themselves represent one of the most important and influential sources of information on the quality of apprenticeship programmes and all employers, colleges and other training providers involved are encouraged to develop effective systems for trainee feedback.

However, inspection reports have revealed that arrangements for obtaining feedback from trainees are frequently inadequate, with little use being made of the information that is gathered to inform management decisions and achieve the necessary quality improvements.

SEMTA, the national Sector Skills Council for science, engineering and manufacturing technologies, with more Modern Apprentices in training than any other single occupational group, has launched a national initiative to ensure that all engineering employers and training providers have access to a common trainee feedback system designed to help raise standards and improve trainee satisfaction. SEMTA's National Apprenticeship Monitoring Unit, based in the Centre for Lifelong Learning at the University of Warwick, has developed a unique online system, the very first of its kind, which has now been piloted successfully by a range of employers and Group Training Associations, with support from the Department for Education and Skills.

The purpose of the **National Trainee Feedback System** is twofold. Firstly, it is designed to enable employers and other training providers to conduct comprehensive surveys of their engineering trainees, produce instant analyses and reports of the results, compare their results with other providers and use the information to assist their annual Self Assessment process, identifying opportunities for improvement. Secondly, it has been created to provide national benchmark data for the engineering sector, highlight overall strengths and weaknesses, identify areas requiring increased intervention and support and help raise standards. In addition, the information gathered will be used to help promote Engineering Modern Apprenticeships and to contribute to future debate on modern apprenticeship policy and practice.

A total of 1128 engineering apprentices in England, Scotland and Wales have taken part in the pilot project and preliminary analysis of the results has not only produced evidence of the high regard that engineering trainees have for the quality of their training, but has revealed the very high standard of many of the young people attracted to work-based training in this vital sector of the economy.

Two surveys were conducted during the pilot, one for First Year apprentices and the other for those in their second, third or fourth years. 641 trainees (517 Advanced MAs and 124 Foundation MAs) completed the First Year survey, 63% being aged 18 or over. 57% of the AMAs reported that they had passed 8 or more GCSEs at Grades A\* to C before starting their apprenticeship. Almost a quarter of the AMAs had also achieved at least one GCE 'A' Level prior to entering training.

One of the important areas explored in the First Year survey was trainees' experiences and opinions on the advice and guidance they received whilst at school. Although half most wanted to leave at 16 to start their training, two-thirds were advised by their teachers to remain in full-time education, almost all to study 'A' Levels. Only 19% of the AMAs had been advised at school to apply for an apprenticeship and, when asked how much information they had been given on apprenticeships, 83% said "not very much" or "none at all".

Parental advice on what to do beyond school was more favourable towards the apprenticeship route, with a third of AMAs and 41% of FMAs being most strongly advised by their parents to seek an apprenticeship place. However, staying on for GCE 'A' Levels was still the most favoured option, with the parents of 45% of AMAs encouraging them to take the 'A' Level route. Finally, more than a third (35%) of AMAs said the careers advice they had at school seemed to them to be influenced more by what their school wanted, than by what would be best for them.

When it came to deciding to apply for an apprenticeship, parents and family were overwhelmingly the most influential, with 40% of AMAs and 35% of FMAs putting them top of the list. Despite the Government's promotion of Modern Apprenticeships using the slogan *Real Work – Real Pay*, the salary they were offered was only rated in fourth place by the respondents to the survey.

Overall levels of satisfaction with initial engineering workshop training were high and, in the final section of the survey which invited trainees' to give their general impressions of the first year of training, 55% of AMAs and 40% of FMAs said it had been even better than they had expected. 70% said they were completely, or mostly, satisfied with their training and almost all would recommend it to other young people.

Among the 413 Post First Year trainees, two-thirds had previously achieved five or more GCSE passes at Grades A\* to C and more than three-quarters described the overall quality of their on-the-job training as either "very good" (31%) or "good" (46%). However, 65% said they believed that they could make faster progress towards completing their qualifications and the training programme.

Trainees were asked how important it was for them to have the opportunity, once they finished their apprenticeship, to get further qualifications, such as a degree. 42% of AMAs and 49% of FMAs said it was 'very important', with a further 38% of AMAs and 27% of FMAs saying it was 'quite important'. For most (62% of AMAs and 68% of FMAs), their preferred mode of study would be to take a part-time course, whilst continuing at work. Moving on to a full-time course was only preferred by 15% of AMAs and 5% of FMAs and, given the choice, most (41%) would prefer to study for a higher qualification such as a degree or HNC/D as an integral of their apprenticeship or, alternatively, immediately after having finished their training (36%).

The choice of future course favoured by most apprentices was a Higher National Certificate or Diploma, preferred by more than half of all trainees (52% of AMAs and 54% of FMAs) and twice as popular as a two-year Foundation Degree (26% of AMAs and 17% of FMAs). Just under a third (31%) of AMAs and 27% of FMAs would opt at present for a full 3- or 4-year degree.

Asked whether, in their opinion, more young people would choose an engineering apprenticeship at 16 if, like GCE 'A' Levels, it was accepted for entry to university, 38% said they thought they definitely would and a further 40% thought it would probably be so.

Overall impressions of their training were generally very favourable, with 84% describing it as at least as good, if not better, than they had expected, including 18% who said it was much better than anticipated. 81% of all trainees said they were enjoying the training at the time of the survey and found it interesting, even when the work was hard or difficult, and 87% would recommend an engineering apprenticeship to other young people.

Group Training Associations are estimated to provide around 60% of all engineering Modern Apprenticeships and nine took part in the piloting of the **National Trainee Feedback System**. Three major national employers were also involved and all praised the system's ability to generate immediate results and reports. Trainees too liked being able to complete the surveys online, preferring this approach to conventional paper questionnaires. However, the system is designed for use in either mode and some trainees who had difficulty obtaining internet access at work completed their questionnaires on paper first, with the responses being entered later without breaching the confidentiality of the system.

The majority of the questions in both surveys are linked to the criteria used by the Adult Learning Inspectorate in England, and by Estyn in Wales, when inspecting work-based training. Providers can produce instant reports of their results, comparing performance against the Common Inspection or Estyn Framework. Other report formats range from a summary analysis, with coloured stars used to help highlight relative strengths and weaknesses, to detailed reports in which trainees' answers to one particular question can be correlated with any of the other survey responses.

Having successfully developed and piloted the **National Trainee Feedback System**, SEMTA will be consulting with employers and other training providers before decisions are taken on extending its use across the sector. The results of the pilot will also be disseminated to other sectors, to the funding and regulatory authorities, to national organisations concerned with the training of young people and the provision of careers information and guidance, to the national Modern Apprenticeship Task Force and to the Working Group on 14-19 Reform.

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## **2 Background, aims and objectives**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The issue of learner satisfaction and the need to obtain feedback on the quality of training has become a significant feature of national policy, with important implications for employers and training providers.

Not only are providers now required to introduce and maintain effective systems for trainee feedback as part of their local Learning and Skills Council contracts, but they are also encouraged to incorporate the results of such feedback within their annual self-assessment and development planning process.

Inspection reports and other sources had suggested that relatively few employers and training providers were currently operating effective policies and procedures for trainee feedback and it was proposed that the introduction of a common system for all engineering trainees could:-

- help to raise the standard of apprentice training across the sector
- avoid wasteful duplication of effort on the part of providers in developing their own trainee feedback systems
- provide valuable opportunities for sector-wide data collection and quality benchmarking
- provide an effective means by which to monitor the performance of proposed company-based apprenticeship schemes.

SEMTA's Sector Workforce Development Plan includes targets for a significant expansion of engineering Modern Apprenticeships and it was proposed that the introduction of a national trainee feedback system could not only provide valuable data to assist in the achievement of these targets, but generate positive evidence of trainee satisfaction to be used in promoting work-based training to young people, their parents, teachers and Connexions Personal Advisers.

Finally, against a background of ongoing policy review and the introduction of new Government targets for extending the proportion of young people progressing through Modern Apprenticeships, it was envisaged that a national trainee feedback system could provide an effective and efficient means by which to obtain the views of apprentices on a range of issues, from their experience of careers guidance in schools to their aspirations for entering Higher Education.

### **2.2 Aims**

The overall aim of the project was therefore to develop a pilot web-based survey process for engineering Modern Apprentices in preparation for introducing an effective national trainee feedback system to:-

- Identify opportunities for improving the standard of training and support for trainees
- Provide Engineering Modern Apprentices with an effective means by which to provide feedback on their experiences, expectations and aspirations to their employer and/or training provider and to the sector skills body
- To gather sector-wide data on the recruitment, education and training, employment and progression of Engineering Modern Apprentices as a basis for future target-setting, promotion, benchmarking and strategic planning

## **2.3 Objectives**

The objectives for the project were:-

- To establish a consortium of engineering employers and training providers to assist in the development and trialling of a pilot survey process, in conjunction with other relevant national agencies
- To develop appropriate survey methods, capable of eliciting the required information and feedback from trainees
- To customise survey software to meet the requirements of the project, provide the agreed outputs for employers, training providers and the sector skills body and facilitate feedback to participating trainees
- To design a feedback system which will encourage maximum use by trainees and take-up by employers and training providers
- To develop and refine the prototype survey process to a stage where the system is 'live' and ready for piloting via the consortium partners

## **2.4 The Report**

The purpose of this preliminary report is to:-

- Outline the structure and content of the National Trainee Feedback System
- Summarise the methods used to achieve the agreed aims and objectives and how the partners contributed to the project
- Summarise the outcomes of the project, highlighting key findings of importance to the sector
- Summarise the feedback received from project partners and trainees

## **3 An overview of the Project and its outcomes**

### **3.1 The Project Partners**

During 2001 and 2002, as part of the preliminary research for the project, surveys had been conducted with groups of engineering employers and GTAs regarding their existing arrangements for trainee feedback and their attitudes towards a future national system. These not only provided the original evidence of potential support for the introduction of an online system but an initial list of those organisations expressing interest in using web-based surveys and likely to be willing to take part in their subsequent development.

The partners whose involvement was secured at this early stage ranged from major private sector companies to local Group Training Associations. Several other training providers were invited to join the project during the later stages of preparation but played an active part in developing and refining the final version of the pilot system. The involvement of the armed forces was sought, partly because of the high proportion of engineering MAs being trained within the services, but also because of its continuous roll on/roll off recruitment process, which represented a significant departure from that practised by the majority of training providers and with which any future national trainee feedback system would need to cope.

When it appeared that two of the original GTAs might not be able to contribute any input to the pilot, an additional provider was invited to take part. Later still, when the numbers of trainees being surveyed fell below the levels predicted by several of the partners, the survey period was extended to the end of June and two additional GTAs were offered the opportunity to join the pilot. Although these only contributed small numbers, they demonstrated that the system could be operated successfully by providers who had no previous contact with the project, as would be required if the system were subsequently introduced on a nationwide basis.

Existing provision for feedback amongst the project partners differed widely across the twelve organisations that took part in the pilot. Neither of the two major private sector employers had a company-wide system and, among the GTAs, current practice ranged from fairly comprehensive paper-based questionnaires, some utilising Reference Point's *Quality Monitor* software, to annual surveys comprising as few as eight questions. On completion of the project, there is general agreement that the SEMTA system would provide a more comprehensive approach to trainee feedback than the present arrangements, although further development is required to refine and extend the system.

### **3.2 The survey questionnaires**

Two surveys were developed for use during the pilot, one for trainees in the first year of their apprenticeship and the other for those who had already completed their first year of training.

The First Year questionnaire was designed to be administered to trainees, many of whom would have completed, or be nearing the end of, their initial off-the-job workshop training and would therefore be able to comment on its quality and suggest how it could be improved.

For most, it would also be less than a year since their recruitment, selection and induction, on which they could also be asked to reflect in terms of their satisfaction with these processes. Finally, it was hoped that they would also be able to comment on the advice, guidance and influence they had received, prior to applying for their engineering apprenticeship.

The full range of subjects covered in the First Year survey questionnaire were:-

- Personal details, including type of apprenticeship, training status, region, age, gender, ethnicity and disability
- Qualifications gained prior to starting training
- Career choice information, including personal preferences for post-16 progression, parental and teacher advice, provision of information on apprenticeships and factors affecting the choice of apprenticeship
- Details of the initial selection process, satisfaction with the induction programme and coverage of Employment Rights and Responsibilities
- Evaluation of initial assessment, understanding of the training programme and its qualification components
- Satisfaction with initial engineering workshop training
- Details of progress reviews and satisfaction with various aspects of trainee support
- Experience of teambuilding activities
- Equality of opportunity
- Progression to employment and Higher Education
- Overall impressions and suggestions for improvement

The full range of subjects covered in the Post First Year survey questionnaire were:-

- Personal details, including type of apprenticeship, subject area and industry sub-sector, training status, size of employer, stage of training, region, age, gender, ethnicity and disability
- Qualifications gained prior to starting training
- Understanding of, and progress in, the NVQ, Key Skills and Technical Certificate components of the training programme
- Evaluation of on- and off-the-job education and training provision
- Conduct of NVQ assessments
- Details of progress reviews and satisfaction with various aspects of trainee support
- Experience of teambuilding activities
- Career and further learning intentions and aspirations, including attitudes towards language skills and inter-cultural competence
- Equality of opportunity in the workplace and in further education
- Overall impressions and suggestions for improvement

### **3.3 Response rates**

Response rates varied enormously and further investigation will be necessary to discover the full range of circumstances that influenced these variations. However, several factors appear to have had a significant impact.

Firstly, there is a marked difference between the two major private-sector employers and the GTAs as a whole. The reasons for this are quite clear since the circumstances under which they operate their respective training schemes are completely different. Company trainees represent a largely captive population, employed within a system characterised by well-established channels of communication, clear lines of management control and a culture in which trainees have a strong vested interest in complying with their employer's requests for co-operation. At one of the employers, approximately 80% of those asked to complete a questionnaire did so, without any incentives being offered.

However, the pattern of responses from one GTA to another was also extremely variable. One reported a slightly better than average response to the web-based surveys compared with that for their existing paper-based system, commenting that "trainees are probably more open and honest about their views using the online system. Even though our system, has been anonymous in the past, the fact that questionnaires are filled in as a class activity made some trainees feel uneasy about airing their true feelings."

In contrast, another GTA experienced what they regarded as a poor response rate of around 50%, lower than that for their paper-based format. Most providers were able to secure a much higher success rate with their First Year trainees, many of whom were readily accessible in their training centres. Elsewhere, low response rates were clearly attributable to poor co-ordination of the feedback process by providers, a lack of management commitment, insufficient time being allowed for the distribution of postal questionnaires and leaving the surveys too late in the pilot programme to achieve the intended results.

Response rates were highest when providers used effective methods of communicating necessary information to trainees, either in face-to-face presentations to groups of apprentices as part of their normal training programme or using electronic communications. The GTAs and employers that achieved the highest level of response were those that presented the surveys primarily as an integral part of their organisations' ongoing process of continuous quality improvement. Those that attracted fewer responses from trainees tended to have emphasised that it was an external Government-supported project or linked to the next ALI inspection.

Finally, the other key factor was access to the internet. Several providers reported that it was shopfloor-based, predominantly craft apprentices, who were least likely to have ready access to an internet terminal at work. Amongst the GTAs, off-site trainees were almost always sent a paper questionnaire to complete, rather than being encouraged to use a home computer or an internet café for completing the survey online. Given the fact that, for the purpose of the pilot, both questionnaires (especially that for Post First Year trainees) were extremely long, it is hardly surprising that poorer response rates were achieved using this approach. When, as at the military training centre, trainees were actively encouraged, and regularly reminded, to use the internet to complete their surveys and were offered no alternative, the results were extremely positive, with trainees accessing the system late at night in order to complete their response.

### **3.4 Anonymity of respondents**

The debate over whether or not the survey process should be anonymous has continued and remains a subject for further consideration. Those that maintain the questionnaires themselves (and therefore each individual's responses) should be identifiable, not only argue that this would allow more effective follow-up of trainees' criticisms and problems but that higher response rates could be achieved as a result, by monitoring non-completion. However, as several providers have demonstrated, it is not necessary to compromise the anonymity of the trainee in order to manage the feedback process.

The approach taken by the military establishment is a good illustration of what can be achieved in a properly administered feedback process. Training staff first prepared what they describe as an 'idiot's guide' to using the internet for completing the survey. This consisted of a very simple 16-step checklist which told the trainee what to do, or to type, at every stage of the process, from visiting the website in the first place to closing down the system when he or she had finished. It was tested first on colleagues to ensure it was completely foolproof and was then given to every trainee during the face-to-face briefings that were held with each group of apprentices.

Training staff had already identified that, if they were to manage the process effectively, it was essential to be able to monitor which trainees had, or had not, completed the survey. In discussion with staff at Reference Point, it was agreed that they would use the facility whereby, having completed a questionnaire, a trainee can send an e-mail to their training officer requesting a follow-up. Trainees were simply instructed, as Step 11 on their checklist, to enter their name and course number at the CONTACT ME prompt.

Every morning, the Training Officer responsible for co-ordinating the pilot would print off the messages he had received from trainees and feed the information back to course instructors so that they could encourage those in their group who had still to complete the survey. By utilising an existing facility within the system, the organisation was able to monitor the process, without affecting trainees' anonymity or the confidentiality of their responses.

### **3.5 Follow-up action**

The actions taken by providers following closure of the surveys have varied, depending upon the results of their particular surveys and other factors, such as the summer holiday period. Many have yet to provide any feedback to trainees on the results of their survey but it is hoped that all will do so in due course. Extending the period for completing surveys has reduced the time during which providers have been able to print and study many of the more detailed reports and, at the time of writing, some had yet to produce a benchmarking report comparing their results with those of the other project partners.

However, those that have used the benchmarking facility have commented on how powerful a tool it is for encouraging continuous improvement and concentrating the attention and interest of senior management.

The use of the system of stars in the summary reports has not only helped to highlight potential priorities for subsequent action but, for those that have used the benchmarking report, to look at all those areas in which other providers achieved better results.

In many cases, providers have already taken specific actions in the weeks following the closure of the surveys. One GTA has modified its initial assessment procedures and introduced more frequent monitoring of progress reviews. Another has held discussions with its FE College and agreed remedial actions and further monitoring of their contribution to the apprentice training programme. Other examples can be found in the case studies

To date, it appears that the action planning template incorporated as part of the pilot system has not been used by any of the providers and will need to be reviewed to assess whether it should be removed altogether or, alternatively, enhanced and strengthened to make it a more useful facility in future.

With most of the project partners having contributed to the detailed design of the survey questionnaires, there have been very few criticisms of the survey content. One of the Equal Opportunities questions was found to include a double negative and an employer partner has said that it would prefer to see changes made to the question that appears in both surveys on GCSE grades achieved prior to entry, to highlight results in English, Maths and Science, rather than merely record the number of passes at Grades A\*-C and below.

No other amendments have yet been suggested. Nevertheless, it would seem highly likely that some reductions could be made in the overall number of questions, particularly in the Post First Year questionnaire, if the system is subsequently to be introduced on a national scale.

## **4 The National Trainee Feedback System**

### **4.1 Outline of the system**

The [www.apprentice-feedback.com](http://www.apprentice-feedback.com) system is a web-based, online application and database, specifically designed to capture and analyse engineering apprentice feedback in relation to their training provision. For the purposes of the pilot, access has been given to selected training providers to use the system to create surveys, gather responses and analyse the results.

In addition to centre (i.e. training provider) access, the system also allows higher levels of access, so that SEMTA can look at apprentice feedback at a regional or national level.

The system has been designed specifically to be used without any formal training, although a helpdesk service has been provided throughout the pilot. In brief, the system facilitates the following:

1. Survey creation based on a pre-defined questionnaire template, but allowing for additional “site specific” questions to be added.
2. Survey Publication. The system is designed to encourage web-based responses to a survey, so centres simply publish the surveys they create online, allocating the same username and password to all respondents to a particular survey. This ensures that while surveys are not “open” to the public by being password-controlled, they are nevertheless anonymous.
3. Response Capture. Questionnaires are either completed online directly by the apprentice or the apprentice completes a printed paper version of the questionnaire and an administrator then inputs the responses online at a later date.
4. Closing the Survey. Training providers assign to any published survey a duration during which it be available online for response capture. During this period, the system automatically provides high-level analysis of response rates and trends during the lifetime of the online survey, without allowing any analysis of the actual results. It is the provider’s decision when to close a survey, at which point analysis can begin, but no more responses can be entered once a survey has been closed.
5. Report Generation. The powerful analysis function comprises a wizard, which guides the training provider through a series of choices when deciding the type of report required. For example analysis includes high-level survey summary information combining text and simple graphics, through to detailed analysis of how apprentices’ views relate to the requirements of the relevant Inspection Framework. Comments based reports are also available. There is also a summary of results available automatically to all respondents, so they can see how their views have contributed to the overall results.
6. Action Planning. An action planning facility is incorporated to enable providers to plan how to address any weaker areas in their provision.
7. Benchmarking. There is also a benchmarking facility that allows centres to compare the views of their apprentices with those in other centres. A strict protocol was agreed between SEMTA and the DfES in order to protect the anonymity of individual providers’ data. This is shown at Annex 1.

For each approved training provider with access to the system, the following is stored:

- Centre Name,
- Unique Centre Number
- Type (i.e. College, Employer or GTA);
- Region
- Address
- Main contact info.

During the pilot, Reference Point has controlled the allocation of usernames and passwords to approved centres.

#### **4.2 Use of the system by training providers**

On visiting the apprentice-feedback.com website, the user is offered the choice of proceeding to logon as a trainee or a centre administrator, or to see brief details of the SEMTA system.

Before being able to logon, training providers are presented with a comprehensive Data Protection statement. Unless this is agreed, they cannot proceed.

### Data Protection Statement

1. By accessing SEMTA's National Trainee Feedback System ("the NTFS") you agree to be bound by the terms set out below. If you do not agree to these terms, please leave the NTFS immediately.
2. You have a non-exclusive, non-transferable licence to access and use the NTFS for the purpose set out in Paragraph 3c below.
3. For the purposes of the Data Protection Act, you are the data controller for the personal records that you enter onto the NTFS. Under the terms of the Act, you have the following obligation. You must notify each individual whose data you enter onto the NTFS, that:
  - a) you have recorded their details on the National Trainee Feedback System
  - b) the information recorded will be seen by authorised personnel within your organisation and will be supplied to authorised personnel within SEMTA and SEMTA's National Apprenticeship Monitoring Unit at the University of Warwick
  - c) the information stored is to be used for gathering, analysing and reporting feedback from engineering apprentices and trainees for the purposes of monitoring trainee satisfaction, improving training performance and informing reviews of policy and practice
  - d) the information recorded will also be accessed by authorised personnel from Reference Point Ltd, solely for the purpose of data processing.
4. Information recorded on the NTFS must not be passed on to any unauthorised persons without the prior consent of the individual.
5. You must ensure that the information contained in the NTFS is used solely for gathering, analysing and reporting feedback from engineering apprentices and trainees for the purposes of monitoring trainee satisfaction, improving training performance and informing reviews of policy and practice. The use for any other purpose is strictly prohibited.
6. If you become aware of any errors, omissions or problems with the data contained within the NTFS and/or with the NTFS itself these must be reported to SEMTA's National Apprenticeship Monitoring Unit at the University of Warwick.
7. All actions taken by users of the NTFS are logged and subject to audit.
8. While SEMTA will take reasonable steps to ensure that:
  - \* the data contained within the NTFS is accurate, complete and up-to-date
  - \* the software and files used or contained within the NTFS are virus free, and
  - \* the service is continuous and that no interruption in the access to the NTFS or the data contained within it relating to an event within SEMTA's control is longer than one working weekno warranties or assurances are given by or on behalf of SEMTA.
9. The use of this site is at your own risk. Neither SEMTA, the University of Warwick, nor their agents, employees and sub-contractors shall be liable to you or any other party for any losses or damages whatsoever arising in connection with the NTFS (whether under this Licence or other contract or in consequence of any misrepresentation [excepting fraudulent misrepresentation], misstatement or tortuous act or omission including negligence).
10. These terms are governed by English law and you submit to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts

Having logged on, the approved user within a centre accesses the Centre's homepage. This summarises all surveys created by the centre and displays their status. From this homepage, the user can then:

- Add/ publish or close a survey
- Generate reports
- Action plan
- Obtain benchmark data.

### Adding a survey

Having selected this option, the user picks the template required from a dropdown list of pre-defined templates. There are currently six developed for use during the pilot, which are:

1. English Year 1 apprentices;
2. Welsh Year 1 apprentices;
3. Scottish Year 1 apprentices;
4. English Post Year 1 apprentices;
5. Welsh Post Year 1 apprentices;
6. Scottish Post Year 1 apprentices.

Selected questions on each template are linked to the relevant Inspection Framework indicators, the Adult Learning Inspectorate for England and Estyn for Wales. For the purposes of the pilot, the Scottish surveys were also linked to the ALI Common Inspection Framework.

The user then gives the survey a unique name and adds any comments that will appear at the start of the survey once it is published.

It is at this stage that the user is prompted to add any “site specific” questions required that might be of value to the individual training provider but have not been covered in the template. These tend to be additional demographic questions, such as “At which of the following sites are you based?”.

The survey can be reviewed and printed out (so that paper copies can be distributed for manual completion) before being saved under the heading “Pending”. At this stage, it can be accessed again and amended, as the survey has not been published online.

### Publishing a survey

Once the user is satisfied with the survey, it can be published so that responses can be gathered. To do this, the user clicks on the word “Publish” alongside the survey title. The user is immediately prompted to set a closing date for the survey from an online calendar and to allocate the username and password for all respondents to the survey. From this moment, the survey is available online to any respondents with the correct username and password accessing the apprentice-feedback.com website.

Responses are then either gathered online directly from respondents or via paper forms, which are then entered onto the system by a centre administrator.

If respondents answer online, they have the option to e-mail their provider requesting a follow up discussion and have the choice whether or not to attach their survey responses. Respondents are also provided with useful links to other sites, such as the IIE, together with other options.

### Monitoring response levels

While a survey is open and responses are gathered, the centre administrator can monitor response rates. The administrator cannot obtain any information regarding what respondents have said, only how many have answered and when they did. This enables centres to decide, for example, whether to extend the duration of an online survey if the response rate is poor. Equally, if there are 15 apprentices in training and 15 responses have been gathered after 3 days, the centre can choose to close the survey early as all possible responses have been obtained.

### Generating reports

This option is selected when the user wishes to analyse results of 1 or more closed surveys. The entire reporting process is enabled through a simple, yet powerful step-by-step wizard, which helps the user define the type of report required from a range of choices.

Report options include:

Questionnaire based (i.e. based on one of the templates); 1 or more surveys, summary, detailed with graphics or detailed text only, comments only. All of these report types also allow comparative analysis (e.g. “compare site a with sites b and c” or “compare survey 1 with surveys 2, 3 and 4”);

Inspection Framework based (i.e. surveys linked either to the Common Inspection Framework or Estyn); 1 or more surveys; summary, detailed with graphics or detailed text only. All of these report types also allow comparative analysis (e.g. “compare site a with sites b and c” or “compare survey 1 with surveys 2, 3 and 4”).

#### Action Plans

This option allows the user to create an action plan based on the inspection framework results of a survey. The user simply clicks on the survey title within the action plan module and an rtf format file is instantly created and downloaded for use in Word or in a similar editor.

#### Benchmarking

The benchmarking module follows a similar Wizard step-by-step approach to the reporting module, but has a significantly different function. Through the benchmarking module, users can compare the views of their own trainees with others. The benchmarking centre can identify its own results and benchmark its own position without being able to identify other centres. Benchmark options include the ability to compare centre with others in same area or same provider type, such as GTA.

### 4.3 Use of the system by trainees

Trainees are also presented with an introductory page, containing very brief details of the purpose of the system, with options to request further information before proceeding, move on to answer a survey or, having answered a survey which is now closed, to call up a summary report of the results. This is supported by a more detailed introduction to the system, accessed by selecting the Guidance button

#### Completing A Survey Online

You have been asked to complete a questionnaire as part of a national survey of engineering trainees. The answers you give will remain completely confidential.

You will have been given a login by your employer, college or training organisation. This login identifies the organisation that is responsible for your training and also the particular questionnaire you are going to complete but it does NOT identify you. You can now use this login to access and answer the survey online.

There are no right or wrong answers to most of the questions. We simply want your honest opinions, based on your own experience.

Do please try to respond to ALL of the questions. However, you can leave any questions that you would prefer not to answer.

#### How long will it take?

It should take about 15-20 minutes. Unfortunately, because this survey is anonymous, you cannot part-save your responses. You will need to answer the questionnaire in one sitting, so do make sure that you have 20 minutes or so to do this.

#### To complete the Survey

All you need to do is read the questions and select your answer by clicking on the circle beside your chosen option. A red tick will appear to highlight your answer.

To change your answer, simply click on your preferred response and the red tick will move.

To add any comments in the final section of the questionnaire, just click in the relevant box and type in whatever you would like to say. Pressing the <Tab> key on your keyboard is a quick shortcut to the next comments question. Alternatively, just click in the next comments space.

Work through the questionnaire to the end and then click the Finish button.

Your answers will be included with those of other trainees and will be used by your Training Provider and by SEMTA to help improve engineering training.

**What if I decide I don't want to submit the answers I have entered?**

Simply scroll to the bottom of the survey and click the <Cancel> button.

Trainees are then asked to agree a brief Data Protection statement before being able to logon to the system.

If they have answered online, trainees have the option to e-mail their provider requesting a follow up discussion and have the choice whether or not to attach their survey responses. They are also provided with useful links to other sites, such as the IIE, together with other options.

#### **4.4 System Administration**

Throughout the pilot, the system has been administered by Reference Point. Although individual centres control the allocation of usernames and passwords for their own surveys, the central online database crosschecks these to ensure that no 2 centres can choose the same username for their surveys.

There are 4 broad categories of users:

1. Super User (i.e. Reference Point, hosting and supporting the system)
2. SEMTA administrator
3. Centre Administrator
4. Respondents (centre-defined logins).

SEMTA's access level allows it to take an overview of system usage and monitor user logs and audits. Reporting is also available to SEMTA, but SEMTA cannot identify individual centre data. Benchmarking is also not available to SEMTA since it too reports results from individual providers.

The data and user capacity for the pilot included:

- No limit on the number of surveys created by each centre, as well as multiple surveys of the same respondents
- 6 questionnaire templates and 2 inspection frameworks.
- Approximately 15 approved providers, plus SEMTA (at least 2 surveys per centre)
- Approximately 2000 respondents, but option for multiple surveys of same respondents

System access

- All system functions are implemented through a browser interface;
- Browser connections are made via a secure Internet protocol (HTTPS/SSL);
- System checks that a valid password has been supplied before granting access to any page except the initial login pages.

To maximise response times, Reference Point ensured:

- A minimum number of page transitions occur for primary functions;
- Page sizes are kept to a minimum.

## **4.5 System Architecture**

### Application architecture

The application has been designed and written for Microsoft .NET. and Microsoft SQL Server. Microsoft .NET brings together the broad range of traditional and new Internet technologies that have been used for developing such applications in the past into a single coherent environment. Specifically the application has been written using server & client side JavaScript, C#, and DHTML.

Use of Internet Explorer version 5.5 or above is recommended, as earlier versions impose limitations on application functionality. The system has been designed and implemented to be available 365 days a year and 24 hours a day, with the exception of certain routine backup, maintenance and upgrade times. The system has been developed as an Internet-based application and has been hosted upon servers located at Reference Point for the duration of the pilot (concludes September 30<sup>th</sup> 2003). A schematic of the system appears as Annex 2.

### Monitoring the system

The software has been designed to allow detailed monitoring of the operation of the system, a feature that proved invaluable throughout the pilot and revealed much useful information which will need to be thoroughly evaluated prior to extending the system to cover all engineering providers.

A general log recorded every individual use, or attempted use, of the system. The identity of each successful or failed logon was listed, revealing which organisations or individuals experienced difficulties with the system and the specific cause of such difficulties.

Inclusion of the date and time enabled the pattern of responses from each project partner to be monitored and to identify where trainees were accessing the system in their own time, outside of normal working hours.

In addition to recording logons by respondents, the system also provided for the monitoring of other types of activity by the project partners. This included the opening and closing of surveys and every instance of accessing the system to produce reports.

The relevant entry records the type of report requested, including the parameters for any particular breakdown of results. The log also identifies when benchmarking reports are selected.

## **5 The Case Studies**

### **Case Study 1**

This Group Training Association, based in the North-West, was formed in 1998 and offers training and education facilities for young people entering the engineering, construction, manufacturing, marine and technology related industries. The organisation supports the training of Modern Apprentices in engineering, ship repair, construction and ICT and, at the time of the pilot, had a total of 120 engineering MAs in training.

The organisation had been conducting its own internal survey since 1999 in the form of a single questionnaire for completion by all First Year and Post First Year apprentices. This comprehensive survey included 80 questions and covered trainees' views on the value of a range of learning methods, assessment and progress reviews, personal support and development and training facilities. Both groups undertook their surveys during formal in-house learning activities, with First Year trainees doing so as an integral part of relevant Key Skills sessions. For Post First Year trainees, the process was incorporated within the periods set aside for their vocational education programme. Analysis of the data from these questionnaires was undertaken manually and, although results had some impact on Self Assessment, training staff acknowledged that the extent of such analysis was fairly limited. All trainees received a summary report of the survey results but the ALI inspection report of May 2002 concluded that this "was difficult to interpret and it was not possible to relate feedback given to the questions asked".

Inspectors also drew attention to the fact that learners' feedback was not anonymous, that there was "no process to collect or evaluate formal feedback from staff" and that "employers' questionnaires were devised poorly and did not identify the strengths and weaknesses of the training providers' performance".

When communicating details of the pilot surveys to trainees, staff emphasised that the organisation had been chosen specially to take part in the trial, that the apprentices were among the very first to use an online survey and that their results would also contribute to the development of a new national feedback system.

The information was presented at face-to-face briefings with small groups of trainees immediately prior to their completing the survey. Trainees had already answered the internal questionnaire 6-8 weeks earlier and staff explained the key differences between that and the online system

A total of 108 trainees completed the relevant survey, comprising all 70 First Year apprentices who were in training at the time of the pilot and 38 out of 50 Post First Year trainees, an overall response rate of 90%. All surveys were answered online between May 8th and June 27th and staff are planning to provide feedback of the results in due course.

The pilot surveys were felt to have provided immediate and important evidence for use in future self assessments, revealing a healthy balance of positive feedback and opportunities for improvement. Staff believed that participation in the pilot project had done much to help emphasise the importance of feedback within the organisation and the need for it to be linked to subsequent action, without which the process could have a demoralising effect. Overall, the surveys had revealed higher than expected levels of satisfaction in many areas. Staff confirmed that action plans would be drawn up to address specific weaknesses, although no use had yet been made of the standard template on the system.

The feedback of results to training staff had been incorporated within a series of staff training days and a summary document was due to be produced for staff to highlight the key areas of positive and negative response.

The website was criticised for being rather slow at times, although it was not clear whether this was a local problem or a temporary weakness of the system itself. Staff were very pleased with the survey reports and found the summary format, with its additional graphics, particularly useful. Trainees were found to have made rather less use of the comments boxes than staff had hoped and it was felt that the opening pages of the site could have been better designed with more on-screen guidance.

Training staff had considered using the facility for local customisation at the start of the surveys to enable them to compare results across the different trades but decided not to do so. They recognised that much greater data analysis was possible using the information that had been collected and were planning to make full use of the results when time permitted.

Overall, training management and staff hoped that the pilot system would be developed as a set of inter-related and nationally-recognised tools for feedback, to be used for all Engineering MAs but extended to cover other occupational areas offered by engineering training providers and encompassing a wider range of those involved, from employers and their workplace supervisors to provider training staff.

Training staff also believe that, in the future, trainees might be encouraged to use the feedback system to help review their own progress and development, comparing past and present attitudes to learning and achievements.

## **Case Study 2**

This provider was set up as a Group Training Association in 1978 to meet the training and development needs of a small group of local engineering employers in the South-West. It now provides services to around 140 member companies across the region, including the training of Modern Apprentices and, at the time of the pilot, there were 277 engineering MAs in training. The organisation has played an active part in the development and championing of the engineering Modern Apprenticeship and received a Grade 3 for Engineering in its 2001 ALI inspection report.

Prior to the pilot, the GTA used its own feedback questionnaire which was mailed out every September to all Post First Year trainees, either at their home address or via their employer. It was designed to provide data relating to the Common Inspection Framework criteria and the results were used to contribute to the organisation's annual Self Assessment process. The survey, consisting of eight questions, invited trainees to assess the initial interview and induction process, the support they were receiving, including the effectiveness of progress reviews and overall training quality, satisfaction with their college course and other comments. The survey was not anonymous and no feedback was provided to trainees following its subsequent analysis. The typical response rate was estimated to be around 30% and training staff acknowledged that the questionnaire covered a relatively limited range of issues compared with those included in the online feedback system.

A random sample of 70-75 trainees had been contacted in early-May by telephone and via their Training Officer, with a request for them to participate in the pilot.

Although the system was available for use from April 22nd, the GTA's two surveys were not published on the website until May 21<sup>st</sup> and, following a poor initial response, further efforts were made during June to encourage more trainees to take part. Overall, 54 trainees responded to the surveys, 35 of whom completed paper questionnaires which were loaded by training staff. Only 19 were completed via the website. This represented a significantly higher response rate than had previously been achieved with the internal survey, despite the much greater length of the pilot questionnaires.

In communications with trainees, staff reported that they placed the greatest emphasis on the surveys being an extension to their existing internal feedback arrangements and a preparation for the next ALI inspection.

To date, the organisation has not sought any feedback from trainees or training staff on their reaction to the pilot surveys, and information on the results has not yet been provided to trainees although plans are in place to discuss a detailed report on the pilot at the next management meeting on quality assurance. Seven trainees indicated in their response that they would like to discuss issues raised in the surveys but the trainees concerned have yet to be contacted.

Training staff did consider the possible use of monetary incentives as a method of encouraging more trainees to respond but it was decided not to do so as it could set a dangerous precedent for the future. They believe that the pilot system provided a much wider range of data than had previously been gathered using the internal questionnaire and that this will help focus greater attention on performance against the Common Inspection Framework. Benchmarking reports have been produced and were felt to be useful but await further detailed analysis before action is taken. No use has yet been made of the action planning facility.

Overall, training staff found the pilot report formats easy to use and commented on the helpful graphics in the summary reports.

Although the organisation would hope to use the online feedback system to replace its own internal surveys as soon as possible, staff consider that internet access may well be a potential problem for some trainees. Nevertheless, they strongly support the adoption of a common national trainee feedback process for all those involved in the delivery of engineering MAs.

### **Case Study 3**

The Company has a worldwide reputation for engineering, has been involved in the introduction and development of Modern Apprenticeships since their inception and is currently training approximately 250 Advanced Modern Apprentices at its various sites in the UK. At the time of the surveys, 56 were in their first year of training and a further 51 AMAs are due to be recruited during 2003.

Prior to the pilot, there had been no previous Company-wide survey of trainees, although an annual training evaluation questionnaire had been used at one plant for the past 4-5 years. The aims of this questionnaire had been to gather feedback on the performance of the Engineering Apprentice Training Team and the level of service provided to trainees and to identify opportunities for improvement.

It covered areas such as communications, Training Officer support and effectiveness, personal development and further education. The questionnaire also gathered feedback from First Year apprentices on their engineering workshop training and asked other trainees for details of on-the-job placements in Company departments.

Learner feedback had been highlighted as a strength in two ALI site inspection reports but as a weakness in the earlier TSC inspection of another Company site in 2000.

Most apprentices have access to the Company e-mail system and, in March, they were sent an initial message with details of the pilot, stressing its anonymity and making clear that all trainees would be expected to complete the relevant questionnaire. This, and subsequent communications, also emphasised the importance of the initiative as an external project which would help to highlight strengths and weaknesses in the quality of the Company's apprentice training and enable improvements to be made. As soon as the website went live on April 17<sup>th</sup>, all trainees were contacted again with the appropriate survey logon and password details and trainees began responding to the surveys from April 24<sup>th</sup>.

The e-mail system was also used throughout the period during which surveys were open, to provide updates on response rates for each Company site for both trainees and their Training Officers and to encourage apprentices to complete their questionnaires.

Staff report that the overall level of response to the online system was much higher than for the previous internal questionnaire, although rates varied considerably between sites, amongst the different business units and between First Year and Post First Year trainees.

Overall, two-thirds of all apprentices took part in the survey. Company staff believe that non-participation was highest amongst those apprentices undertaking their training in shop-floor production environments, where internet access during working hours may be more difficult.

As well as keeping both trainees and training staff informed of the progress of the pilot surveys, response analysis charts and other information was displayed prominently at the Company's Training and Development Centre.

Comparing the pilot system with the previous Training Evaluation Questionnaire, the other significant differences were felt to be the immediacy of access to data analysis and the opportunity to communicate results, quickly and efficiently, to Company training staff and, especially, to senior HR management. This helped to promote interest and encourage discussion of the impact and implications of the results and what actions should be taken in the light of those results. Indeed, the level of interest the pilot has generated across the business units, particularly amongst senior management, is viewed as the most significant result to date, especially the extent to which the results have permitted direct comparisons to be made between the Company's performance and that of other employers and training providers.

Training staff were particularly enthusiastic about the value of the benchmarking facility, developed in response to the needs of the project partners and introduced following the end of the survey period. It was acknowledged that the discovery that the Company had performed less well in one or two areas, when compared to the mean, maximum and minimum scores achieved by other pilot organisations, was already focussing attention on the need for improvements to be made.

The results of the pilot have already been considered by the Company's Quality Review Board for training and all twelve Training Officers have been given full access to the results via the website across all sites. A summary report has been submitted to senior HR management in preparation for developing Company-wide and site action plans. It was noted that the process would have been made easier if the reports generated by the system could have been downloaded for transmission as e-mail attachments.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Copies of the action planning template included in the pilot system are automatically downloaded as rich text format Word files for printing and completion.

Consideration was being given as to how feedback will be provided to trainees, although this too may be in the form of a full summary report rather than the much more limited standard feedback reports developed for the purpose of the pilot and incorporated within the system.

No use had yet been made of the action planning facility that is built into the system.

The report formats were felt to be entirely fit for purpose, with the star system used in the summary reports proving especially helpful and the Common Inspection Framework report being the most useful for operational training staff.

Overall, the pilot system was judged to have been even more successful and simpler to operate than had been anticipated. Training staff recognised that colleagues and trainees alike had high expectations of the quality of training provision. It was significant that attention was not only being focussed in those few areas where trainees were indicating a degree of dissatisfaction, but on every rating in which the Company had not achieved five stars in the summary reports!

Training staff could not identify any aspect of feedback that had been overlooked or omitted and, with the exception of being able to download reports for internal electronic transmission, believed no changes or improvements were required. Staff were now convinced that Company-wide online data collection was the way forward and they would not wish to return to paper surveys. It was clear that some of the Post First Year trainees may have limited internet access in the workplace and further efforts would need to be made to overcome this problem or to encourage more off-site completion of future surveys.

#### **Case Study 4**

This provider was established as a Group Training Organisation over 30 years ago, initially to provide vocational training to the engineering and manufacturing sector in South Wales. A total of 150 Modern Apprentices are currently in training, including 80 engineering MAs and 40 engineering FMAs. The Company serves around 50 employers, the majority of which are SMEs. Because of the nature of the region, the GTA does not operate its own first-year off-the-job training centre, but works in partnership with a network of FE Colleges, with its Training Advisers maintaining regular contact with engineering employers and trainees.

An internal feedback survey had been introduced in 2001, concentrating on three specific areas only. Trainees were asked first to rate their satisfaction with the "recruitment and selection process used" and "the quality and availability of support". The second section covered aspects of the learning and development process including discussion of the individual training plan, progress reviews, key dates for NVQ progress and completion and the importance of Health and Safety in the workplace. The final section concentrated on trainees' satisfaction with Training Adviser relationships and communications. The questionnaire consisted of 14 questions in all and trainees could choose whether or not to remain anonymous. The response rate was around 30%.

Although involved throughout the development process for the SEMTA pilot, following its completion training staff said that they felt the surveys appeared to focus more on national sector-wide measures than on the performance of individual training centres.

The GTA published just one questionnaire, for Post First Year trainees, on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, five weeks after the system first went 'live'. A member of the training staff wrote to a total of 103 trainees on May 27<sup>th</sup> with details of the pilot, offering three alternative methods of completion. They could respond to the survey online, using the logon and password provided; they could complete the paper questionnaire enclosed with the letter and return it in the stamped addressed envelope supplied; or they could wait until the next visit of their Training Adviser and complete the survey then, online, using his/her laptop computer.

Training Advisers were supplied with a survey log on which to record whether a trainee had confirmed that they were going to complete the survey and, if so, by which method. Of the 33 trainees whose responses were recorded between June 2<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 16 did so online and the remainder used the paper questionnaire. These were then sent to the project's software partners, Reference Point, where they were loaded onto the system.

Staff said that they were pleased with the overall levels of satisfaction expressed by their trainees, although they acknowledged that, with more consistent planning and co-ordination through a central point, a much higher response rate could have been achieved. The pilot survey had produced a wider range of data than that to which the organisation had previously had access and this would provide a very useful basis for Self Assessment against the new Estyn inspection framework to be introduced in 2004.

No specific action plans had yet been developed, although reports had been shared with relevant Training Advisers and discussed at training staff team meetings, and feedback of the results to trainees had still to take place,

Because the GTA was the only organisation to use the Welsh version of the Post First Year survey questionnaire, no benchmarking was possible, either against other providers or in relation to the new Estyn inspection framework.<sup>2</sup> No use had yet been made of the action planning template incorporated within the pilot feedback system.

The pilot had suffered in its early stages from changes in staff and the absence of a first-year training centre which would have provided easy access to a relatively captive trainee population. However, despite the response rate, training staff do not see online access as a major problem for the future and are confident that, with effective planning and co-ordination, trainees can be encouraged to use internet facilities at college, in the workplace and at home. Staff found the summary report format the most useful and thought the use of stars was extremely helpful in highlighting key areas of performance. They recognised the benefits of devoting more time to analysing the many different combinations of data provided by the system in order to derive the maximum benefit for the organisation and its trainees.

Overall, staff believed the pilot had succeeded in fulfilling their expectations and felt strongly that the system should form an integral part of SEMTA's arrangements for Modern Apprenticeships as soon as possible.

### **Case Study 5**

This provider was established in its present form in 1993 and is the training division for ten Chambers of Commerce, operating across the West Midlands. It has a total of ten centres and offers Modern Apprenticeship programmes in six occupational areas. At the time of the pilot, the organisation had a total of 112 engineering MAs in training, comprising 73 FMAs and 37 AMAs, and was awarded a Grade 3 for engineering in its 2002 ALI inspection report.

The GTA had previous experience of using the Quality Monitor software produced by the project's IT partners, Reference Point, to create and analyse trainee surveys for new starters, those in training at around the 12 week mark and leavers, the latter being posted to home addresses. In 2001, training staff had also developed a quarterly telephone survey to be conducted amongst a random sample of trainees. This was introduced to explore such areas as their understanding of which programme and NVQ they were undertaking, awareness of appeals and other procedures, who they would contact in the event of a personal or work problem and when they next expected to meet with their Training Officer.

Following several changes in the staff responsible for co-ordinating the pilot, the surveys were not published until May 19<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, towards the end of the original period for completion. As a result, most of the responses took place in June, with some being loaded in early July, the organisation having been given a further extension. Of the 21 First Year trainees invited to complete the survey, five did so on line having been introduced to the system with a face-to-face briefing, emphasising the confidentiality of the process. Because of the delays in starting the survey process, the remaining 16 had to be sent by post. Seven were returned and loaded onto the system by training staff. All 19 of the Post First Year trainees asked to complete the survey were sent their questionnaire by post and only one was returned.

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<sup>2</sup> See Benchmarking Protocol at Annex 1 for details of the limits imposed in order to protect the confidentiality of results.

Following completion of the survey, training staff sought informal feedback and commented on the very positive response from those trainees who had taken part. This was attributed largely to the novel experience of a web-based questionnaire, with staff reporting that the trainees concerned had appeared genuinely appreciative of the opportunity to provide detailed comments on their training.

Following the pilot, the ability of the system to produce instant reports and highly detailed comparisons had enabled staff to respond quickly to the results. Despite the very small sample, training staff believed the pilot had provided valuable data on the sources that influence young people when making their post-16 choices, the lack of information on work-based training provided in schools and the effectiveness of the induction programme. The latter had already been modified in the light of the survey results and the careers advice and guidance issues taken up with the local LSC.

A report had been produced for the senior management team, highlighting both the positive evidence from the surveys and the need for improvements in certain areas. Plans had been made to provide feedback to trainees in September, using a presentation to small groups in preference to a written report.

Neither the benchmarking facility nor the action planning template incorporated within the system had yet been used, although the potential value of both was well appreciated.

Training staff had found the report formats easy to use and particularly liked the use of the stars in the summary version. However, they recognised that they had yet to utilise the full potential of the system and that they would benefit from more experience of its use. The pilot process had entirely met their expectations and there were no changes which they would recommend at present.

For the future, whilst completion by centre-based trainees presented no difficulties, extending the surveys to all Post First Year trainees would pose some problems. Training staff proposed incorporating the feedback process as part of the regular progress review visits to the workplace, with apprentices using Training Officers' laptop computers to complete questionnaires. Alternatively, it might prove necessary to bring some trainees back to the training centre, whilst encouraging others to use home computers for the purpose.

In the longer-term, staff believed that the system should be extended to include an employer survey and one for trainers.

## **Case Study 6**

This military training centre provides training in a wide range of engineering skills, with an annual throughput of around 1200 Advanced Modern Apprentices. The School operates as part of the Training Group Defence Agency and runs its MA programmes under contracts with the National Contracting Service.

Apprentices begin their 12 month off-the-job training at the centre after completing their initial basic training as new recruits. The training centre operates a roll on/roll off programme of intakes throughout the year and provides the necessary education and training to cover all NVQ, technical certificate and Key Skills requirements for the AMA. Following successful completion, trainees are posted to operational stations to complete their apprenticeship.

At present, the first opportunity for systematic and anonymous trainee feedback occurs 6-12 months after apprentices leave the training centre. The Course Evaluation Questionnaire (CEQ) forms part of the organisation's Integrated Training Quality Management System and is used periodically to analyse the views of a sample of apprentices from a particular trade group. The CEQ concentrates on issues relating to course content, its relevance to subsequent duties and the overall effectiveness of training, but also provides an opportunity for apprentices to comment on any other aspect of their programme.

However, many trainees fail to take up this opportunity and, despite the service environment, response rate for the CEQ are only between 40% and 60%. CEQs are also completed from time-to-time by workplace supervisors and training instructors.

Approximately 400 First Year AMAs from five different trade groups were invited to take part in the pilot survey, with the emphasis being placed on its importance as a national project. It had been recognised from the outset that, given the external (i.e. civilian) nature of the project and the very limited internet access available for trainees, there might be considerable difficulty in achieving an adequate response. Several terminals had been installed in an internet café setting and trainees were each given £1.00 for one hour's access. Although some may have completed the survey during working hours, the vast majority will have done so in their own off-duty time. Training staff were able to monitor who had responded, without breaching the confidentiality of trainees' answers or comments, and regular checks were made throughout the survey period, with information on response rates being passed to shopfloor staff in order that they could if necessary encourage participation within their particular trade group. In all, 269 apprentices completed the survey, a response rate of nearly 70%.

In contrast with most of their private sector counterparts, training staff found the detailed report by questionnaire the most useful and trainees' individual comments especially revealing. Although still at an early stage in their analysis of the breakdown reports, staff acknowledge that the data would be even more valuable if it could be broken down by trade group. Consideration had been given to including this as one of the local customised questions that can be added to the standard survey format but this option had not been taken up.

Training staff believe that the pilot survey has provided an important source of baseline data, much of it new, across a wide range of Common Inspection Framework criteria and that this will prove invaluable when preparing for their first ALI inspection. The survey results have also provided useful data with which to engage senior management interest in training quality issues. Meetings had been planned to discuss the key areas of the survey but consideration was still being given to the question of feedback to trainees, with the station magazine as one possible method.

Whilst internet access had proved a difficulty for some trainees, staff are confident that this can be resolved for the future and action is already underway to extend the number of terminals. Training staff would welcome the adoption of the online system on a national scale for use by all providers and, if available, would plan to run 3-4 surveys a year. The extension of the feedback process for use by apprentices after they leave the training centre would present a further challenge but an online system could offer significant advantages over paper-based alternatives and have considerably greater appeal to trainees.

### **Case Study 7**

This organisation is a Group Training Association and was established in 1967 by local industry in the Home Counties to train engineering apprentices. It was one of two additional GTAs invited to take part in the surveys during the closing weeks of the pilot and had no previous involvement in the project. The GTA provides apprentice training services to around 250 employers and, at the time of the pilot, had a total of 700 engineering MAs in training, including 25 First Year trainees.

During the past year, the organisation had introduced an internal questionnaire comprising 37 questions which combined some aspects of trainee feedback, such as an assessment of the effectiveness of training and suggestions for improvement, with questions designed to test knowledge and understanding of the MA programme, a wide range of Health and Safety issues and contractual matters such as holiday entitlement and deductions from pay.

Without any prior knowledge of the system or briefing on its operation, the GTA published its survey for First Year trainees on June 12<sup>th</sup> and, by the end of the month, it had been completed online by 10 trainees. Training staff reported that the response from young people to the web-based system was considerably better than for the paper questionnaires, some of which had been illegible (even to the trainees concerned!). The survey had proved easy to complete and provided instant reports and analysis, although staff had only had time to study the summary format.

If the pilot system were to be extended to all providers in future, training staff believed the results should be disseminated to all trainees, in their case via their Apprentice Council and notice boards etc., providing as much information as possible. They also believed that the surveys should include questions on the specific content of the Engineering MA programme, providing a valuable input to future reviews of the SEMTA framework.

Another point raised by training staff was the potential for linking the completion of an online feedback survey to the development of trainees' Key Skills, especially in IT and Improving Own Learning and Performance. With increased interest and activity in online assessment, they felt the introduction of a national trainee feedback system offered considerable opportunities for such integration with the learning and development process itself.

## **6 The survey results**

The survey questionnaires designed for the piloting of the National Trainee Feedback System were both long and detailed. The First Year survey for apprentices in England contained 74 separate questions, with a total of 343 possible answer options. Over half of the questions were linked to the Common Inspection Framework. The Post First Year survey for apprentices in England was even larger, comprising 105 separate questions, with a total of 466 possible answer options. With its increased focus on providing evidence for Self Assessment and inspection, 64% of the questions were linked to the ALI framework criteria.

Given the number of items and the potential for analysing every set of individual question responses in relation to every other individual question in each of the surveys, it is only possible to provide a high-level overview in this preliminary report. The following results are taken from the surveys of apprentices in England, who constituted 97.6% of the First Year total and 88.9% of all Post First Year respondents.

### **6.1 The First Year survey**

A total of 641 trainees responded to the First Year survey of engineering apprentices in England, comprising 517 Advanced MAs and 124 Foundation MAs, with half of the FMAs claiming to be non-employed status at the time of the survey.

Trainees were asked to say whether they thought of themselves as a Craft or Technician apprentice and most of the AMAs (71%) said it was the latter. However, no fewer than 40% of the FMAs also said they too regarded themselves as Technician Apprentices.

The largest proportion of AMAs (37%) and FMAs (39%) were aged 16 or 17 at the time of the survey, closely followed by 18 and 19 year-olds (34% AMAs and 33% FMAs). A further 29% of the AMAs and 27% of the FMAs reported that they were aged 20 or over. Females constituted 5% of the sample, rather higher than the sector average, with 1.4% describing their ethnic origins as either Indian, Pakistani, Black Caribbean or Mixed White Asian, and 1.9% said they considered themselves to have a disability or health problem that affected their day-to-day activities.

Trainees were asked how many GCSEs they had passed before starting their training and 57% of the AMAs responded that they had 8 or more passes at Grades A\* to C. The same level of achievement was reported by 19% of the FMAs. Of the other qualifications already obtained, GCE 'A' Level was the most prevalent, and more than a quarter (26%) of all AMAs said they had achieved at least one 'A' Level or Advanced GNVQ.

The survey was used to explore a range of issues relating to education and career choices and the influences on young people's decisions. Half of all the trainees said that, while at school, they most wanted to leave at 16 to start work or training. 37% of AMAs and 32% of FMAs indicated that their preference had been for staying on at school or college until 18 before starting work or training.<sup>3</sup> Almost two-thirds (62%) of the AMAs had been most strongly advised by their teachers and careers advisers to stay at school or college to study GCE 'A' Levels, as had 31% of the FMAs. Only 19% of AMAs had been advised at school to apply for an apprenticeship and, when asked how much information on apprenticeships they had been given at school, 82% of AMAs and 85% of FMAs said *not very much or none at all*.

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<sup>3</sup> Further analysis of the relationship between these personal preferences and the age of the respondents will be necessary in order to assess the full impact of these results.

Parental advice on what to do beyond school was more favourable towards the apprenticeship route, with a third of AMAs and 41% of FMAs being most strongly advised by their parents to seek an apprenticeship place. However, staying on for GCE 'A' Levels was still the most favoured option, with the parents of 45% of AMAs encouraging them to take the 'A' Level route. Finally, more than a third (35%) of AMAs said the careers advice they had at school seemed to them to be influenced more by what their school wanted, than by what would be best for them.

Parents once again played a key role when it came to finding out about apprenticeships in the first instance. More AMAs (21%) said that they first found out about their training programme from their parents or family than any other single source, followed by someone who worked for their present employer or training provider (13%) and the employer's careers brochure (12%). In the case of FMAs, the most important initial source (20%) were careers advisers. When it came to deciding to apply for an apprenticeship, parents and family were overwhelmingly the most influential, with 40% of AMAs and 35% of FMAs putting them top of the list.

Despite the Government's promotion of Modern Apprenticeships using the slogan *Real Work – Real Pay*, the salary they were offered was only rated in fourth place by the respondents to the survey. Being trained for a particular type of work came out top, chosen by 36% of trainees as the biggest attraction for them in choosing their apprenticeship, followed by the reputation of their employer or training organisation (20%) and the opportunity to gain relevant vocational qualifications (14%). Only 8% of all trainees said they were not at all satisfied with the information they were given when they applied.

Levels of satisfaction with the induction process were generally fairly high, with 71% of AMAs and 68% of FMAs saying it gave them most or all of the information they needed at the start of their apprenticeship. However, 24% of AMAs and 28% of FMAs said it had not helped very much, or not at all, in settling into their new training programme. Most were positive about the provision of information on Employment Rights and Responsibilities during the induction, with the highest rating (92%) being given to the coverage of Health and Safety and the lowest (75%) to the timetable for the apprenticeship and details of attendance.

Asked about initial assessment on entry to the apprenticeship, 90% of FMAs confirmed that they had been given English, Maths or practical tests, although the figure for AMAs was lower at 77%. Most FMAs (79%) and AMAs (71%) said they felt their previous achievements, and what they already knew and were able to do, were most, or fully, taken into account in planning their first year's training. However, there remained 26% of AMAs who felt little or no such account had been taken.

Over a third of all trainees (36%) claimed not to have discussed and agreed a personal development plan or individual training plan listing everything they were aiming to achieve during their apprenticeship, or not to know whether they had. 14% said they didn't know which NVQ they would be taking during their apprentice and 25% of First Year AMAs said they didn't know which FE qualification they would be taking. Nearly a third of all trainees (31%) also claimed not to have been set target dates for achieving key stages of their apprenticeship, or not to know whether they had.

Overall, levels of satisfaction with initial engineering workshop training were high, although 26% of all trainees said they did not (or had not) had access to up-to-date computers and ICT during that period.

30% of all trainees claimed to have progress reviews less frequently than every 12 weeks, or not to have them at all (9%), and 14% of those that did have them described them as not very useful or not useful at all. Satisfaction with the extent to which they were encouraged to discuss any work or training difficulties they were having was higher than for personal difficulties, with one in five trainees saying they were only sometimes, or never, encouraged to discuss personal issues. However, most (85%) said they knew who to go to for advice/support on personal matters.<sup>4</sup>

The questions regarding teambuilding activities were added at a fairly late stage in the development of the survey questionnaires and, in the First Year survey, showed that a surprisingly high proportion of the pilot sample were benefiting from such development.

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<sup>4</sup> Once again, a further level of analysis would need to be built into the system to examine, for example, how many of those who felt they were not encouraged to discuss personal difficulties, also did not know who to go to for advice, should they require it.

Overall, 74% (79% of AMAs and 51% of FMAs) said that their training programme had already included a teambuilding activity, such as an 'Outward Bound'-type event, at which groups of trainees learn how to work together and solve problems. For most, this had taken place away from the workplace or training centre and lasted four days or more. 92% of those who had taken part in such an activity described it as very, or fairly, useful.

Levels of satisfaction with equal opportunities were generally high, with 83% of all trainees saying that everyone at their workplace or training centre seems to be treated fairly and is given the help they need and 80% confirming that male and female trainees are offered the same opportunities. However, one in eight answered no when asked if they had always been treated fairly in their training (i.e. had not come across any discrimination because of gender, race, disability etc.)

Trainees were asked whether they knew what job they would be doing at the end of their apprenticeship, which could be three or more years away. Perhaps surprisingly, as many as 43% said they knew exactly what job they would be doing when they finished although, by contrast, one in eight said they had no idea at all what they would be doing. They were also asked to say whether they thought more young people would choose an engineering apprenticeship at 16 if, like 'A' Levels, it was accepted for entry to university. 45% of AMAs said this was definitely the case and one in five (79%) of all trainees thought it was probably, if not definitely, true.

The final section of the First Year survey invited trainees' overall impressions of their training so far and 55% of AMAs and 40% of FMAs said it had been better than they had expected. Only 7% of trainees said that it had not been as good as they had anticipated. 70% (72% of AMAs and 60% of FMAs) said they were completely, or mostly, satisfied with their training so far and only 5% of AMAs and 10% of FMAs would not, at this early stage in their training, recommend an engineering apprenticeship to other young people.

Asked whether they were happy with the title 'Modern Apprentice', or thought that MAs would be respected more if they were given another name, FMAs were happier with the title, with 87% suggesting it was left as it is, compared with 76% for AMAs, although nearly one in five (17%) of all trainees said they would like it changed to something else.

## **6.2 Post First Year**

A total of 413 Post First Year trainees completed survey questionnaires. 90% of these were Advanced Modern Apprentices and, given the relatively small proportion of Foundation Modern Apprentices, most of this initial report will refer to the overall survey sample only.

Most were in the second (38%) and third (42%) years of their apprenticeship, with 16% in their fourth year and just 2% in the fifth year or beyond. A third (34%) reported that, at the time of the survey, they were in their final year.

Female trainees represented 2.2% of the sample, with 1.7% describing their ethnic origin as either Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Mixed White Asian, Mixed White and Black Caribbean or Mixed White and Black British. The majority (57%) were aged 18 or 19, with a further third aged 20 or over.

Asked for details of their employer, 27% said they were being trained for the aerospace sector. Other sub-sectors represented in the sample include mechanical engineering (20%), shipbuilding and repair (18%), electrical engineering (12%) and maintenance (8%). Just under two-thirds (63%) were employed by a large company, with more than 500 employees, 16% by a small company (<100), 11% by a company with 250-500 employees and 9% by a medium-sized employer with a workforce of 100-250.

Almost all (85%) of the FMAs and half (51%) the AMAs said they thought of themselves as a craft apprentice, with the remainder considering themselves to be technician apprentices.

Two-thirds (65%) of all trainees reported having achieved 5 or more GCSE passes at A\* to C prior to starting their training (68% of AMAs), with 37% of the sample (40% of AMAs) having 8 or more passes at that level.

Trainees were asked a series of questions to establish the extent of their understanding, and progress towards completion, of the NVQ, Key Skills and further education components of their apprenticeship. Most said they understood completely, or mostly, what they had to do to complete the qualification (91% NVQ, 85% Key Skills and 91% FE) and most claimed to be on target to complete the qualification by the agreed target date (83% NVQ and 82% FE). A third (36%) had already finished their Key Skills and, of the remainder, most (77%) said they were on target to do so. Most (88%) felt that their FE course had fitted in very well, or fairly well, with the rest of their training programme and 82% said that clear objectives were always (40%) or usually (43%) discussed and agreed with them for each of their on-the-job training placements.

Describing their training during the week in which they completed the survey, some (22%) said they felt they had not learned anything new and two-thirds (65%) believed that they could make faster progress towards completing their qualifications and the training programme.<sup>5</sup> The one word chosen by most trainees (50%) to describe the range of tasks they had undertaken that week was 'varied', followed by 'repetitive' (16%) and 'complex' (13%).

In a sequence of questions on their on-the-job learning, more than a third (37%) said their workplace supervisors always helped them to learn as much as they could when they were at work, with a further 47% reporting that this occurred most of the time. Three-quarters (77%) described the overall quality of on-the-job training as either 'very good' (31%) or 'good' (46%) and most (76%) were satisfied with the equipment and facilities provided, although one in five trainees said that they had no access to up-to-date computers and other ICT as part of their on-the-job training at work. 62% said that the importance of Health and Safety was always stressed wherever they went in the workplace, with a further 27% saying that this was usually the case.

Amongst those who had received formal off-the-job training since they completed their First Year practical workshop training, 29% described the overall quality as 'very good', with the majority of the remainder (58%) regarding it as 'good' and most (86%) were satisfied with the equipment and facilities provided. Nearly half (47%) said their off-the-job instructors always helped them to learn as much as they could, two-thirds confirmed that the importance of Health and Safety was always stressed during off-the-job training and a similar proportion (69%) said that they had access to computers and ICT for at least most of the time. However, 18% said that there was nowhere they could continue to work on their own if they wished, with enough books and computers for them to use.

Almost all (96%) had yet to complete their further education course and, of these, 62% were doing so at college, but the remainder were receiving their further education at their training organization (26%) or via their employer (12%). The proportion who said that FE tutors always helped them to learn as much as they could (28%) was smaller than that for those responsible for either on- or off-the-job learning, although 56% said they did so 'most of the time'. Fewer trainees also described the overall quality of their FE course as 'very good' (14%) although 52% said it was 'good', and the importance of Health and Safety was stressed less often, with 29% saying it was only 'sometimes' or 'hardly ever'. Equipment and facilities provided for their further education course were described as 'good' by 40% and 'very good' by a further 11% and most (67%) were satisfied with access to computers and other ICT. Asked whether their tutors discussed and agreed how they could improve their performance, most said 'usually' (44%) and 22% said 'always'. Most (81%) said they knew how much of their course they still needed to complete and (78%) how to appeal if they felt a further education course assessment was not fair. Finally, 11% claimed that there was nowhere they could work on their own if they wished, with enough books and computers.

After they had been assessed for their NVQ, 60% said that they were always given feedback by the assessor on how they were doing, with a further 32% confirming that this usually happened. Over half (52%) said they always discussed and agreed how that could improve their performance, most (85%) claimed to know how much of their NVQ they had still to complete and 77% said they knew how to appeal against an NVQ assessment they believed to be unfair.

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<sup>5</sup> The full significance of these results will only be apparent when analysed by stage of training.

Most Post First Year trainees (89%) reported that their formal progress reviews took place 'at least every 12 weeks' (56%) or more often (33%) and, in general, found these either 'very useful' (32%) or 'fairly useful' (55%). 40% said action was always taken, when necessary, on issues raised during reviews, with a further 46% saying this was usually the case, and more than three-quarters confirmed that their personal development plan or individual training plan was 'always' (45%) or 'usually' (32%) updated to include any NVQ, Key Skills or further education course assessments.

On personal support and development, 88% reported that they were encouraged to discuss any work or training difficulties they were having, with a slightly lower response (70%) for personal difficulties. Most (83%) said they knew who to go to for advice and support on personal issues and that they felt they would 'definitely' (38%) or 'probably' (45%) get the help they needed. Asked about relationships with those responsible for supporting their learning, the response was most positive for training staff. 94% said that they 'always' (53%) or 'usually' (42%) enjoyed a good relationship with their trainers, while the corresponding figures for workplace supervisors were 48% and 43%, and for further education course tutors, 34% and 47%.

A total of 67% of the Post First Year trainees had, at some stage in their training, undertaken teambuilding activities. Most of these (91%) had taken place away from the workplace or training centre, had lasted four days or more (60%) and had been run by another organisation specialising in teambuilding events (81%). Overall, 90% of trainees described these activities as 'very useful' (42%) or 'fairly useful' (48%).

Looking ahead, over a third (35%) said that, at the time of the survey, they thought their training was preparing them very well for their future work, although 45% thought that, when they finished their apprenticeship, they might still need additional practical training in order to meet the requirements of their first job. A further 15% thought that would definitely be the case.

Trainees were asked how important it was for them to have the opportunity, once they finished their apprenticeship, to get further qualifications, such as a degree. 42% of AMAs and 49% of FMAs said it was 'very important', with a further 38% of AMAs and 27% of FMAs saying it was 'quite important'. For most (62% of AMAs and 68% of FMAs), their preferred mode of study would be to take a part-time course, whilst continuing at work. Moving on to a full-time course was only preferred by 15% of AMAs and 5% of FMAs and some trainees (23%) didn't know which they would prefer at present. Given the choice, most (41%) trainees would prefer to study for a higher qualification such as a degree or HNC/D as an integral of their apprenticeship or, alternatively, immediately after having finished their training (36%).

The choice of future course favoured by most apprentices was a Higher National Certificate or Diploma, preferred by more than half of all trainees (52% of AMAs and 54% of FMAs) and twice as popular as a two-year Foundation Degree (26% of AMAs and 17% of FMAs). Just under a third (31%) of AMAs and 27% of FMAs would opt at present for a full 3- or 4-year degree, with another NVQ being favoured by only 19% of all trainees. 56% of trainees had been given some, or a great deal of, advice and information on future educational opportunities, by training staff or their employer, although 15% had received none at all.

Asked whether, in their opinion, more young people would choose an engineering apprenticeship at 16 if, like GCE 'A' Levels, it was accepted for entry to university, 38% said they thought they definitely would and a further 40% thought it would probably be so.

45% of trainees thought it was 'essential' (17%) or 'very important' (28%) for engineering apprentices to learn about life in other countries as part of their training for the future, with just under a third (29%) saying they believed it was 'essential' (10%) or 'very important' (19%) for apprentices to learn a foreign language during their training, if they wanted to do so.

On equal opportunities, most of those surveyed (83%) said that everyone seemed to be treated fairly and given the help they need and that both sexes were offered the same opportunities (79%). Most said that they had always been treated fairly at work (87%) and had not come across any discrimination, with that figure rising to 91% when asked about their treatment during training or further education.

Overall impressions of their training were generally favourable, with 84% describing it as at least as good, if not better, than they had expected, including 18% who said it was much better than anticipated. Half said that they had used the skills they had learned during the first year initial engineering workshop training for much, or all, of the time and 81% of all trainees said they were enjoying the training at the time of the survey.

Almost all were either 'fairly' (26%), 'mostly' (45%) or 'completely' (19%) satisfied with their training so far and 80% said they found it interesting, even when the work was hard or difficult. Most (86%) said they felt they were treated much the same as other employees and knew as much about what was going on and 87% would recommend an engineering apprenticeship to other young people.

Asked whether they were happy with the title Modern Apprentice or would prefer it to be called something else, 81% opted for leaving the title as it is.

### **6.3 Comments**

Both survey questionnaires gave trainees the opportunity to write their own answers to some of the questions. Examples include, in the First Year survey, Q4.6 *How did you FIRST find out about your apprenticeship programme?* This offered a list of ten options, followed by a box in which trainees could enter an alternative response of their own. An example from the Post First Year survey was Q1.4, which asked trainees to choose, from a list of sub-sectors, the one for which they were currently being trained. If none of the eight were appropriate, they could enter their own answer in the box provided.

Both groups of trainees were also asked about the title 'Modern Apprentice' and, if they thought it should be changed to something else, offered the opportunity to write in their alternative suggestion. Finally, under the heading *Your final views*, both questionnaires asked *What is the best thing about your training so far?* and *Has here been anything missing from your training so far that should be included for future apprentices?* First Year trainees were also asked if there was any one change that could have been made to improve their training. As with the questions listed above, a box was provided in which trainees could choose, if they wished, to write their own answers, of any length.

Overall, the survey responses include a total of 2,625 such comments, 70% of which are from First Year trainees. At this stage, no analysis has yet been made of these responses, although it is intended to do so in due course.

### **6.4 Analysis of responses by inspection framework**

Of the 74 questions in the First Year survey for apprentices in England, 39 are linked to the Common Inspection Framework. These include all those in the sections on induction, Employment Rights and Responsibilities, initial assessment, the training programme, personal support and development and equal opportunities. They also include one or more questions in each of the sections on initial engineering workshop training, teambuilding activities and overall impressions.

In the Post First Year survey for England, 67 of the 105 questions are linked to the Common Inspection Framework. These include all those in the sections on the NVQ, Key Skills and Further Education components of the programme, on-the-job training, NVQ assessments, progress reviews, personal support and development and equal opportunities. They also include one or more questions in each of the sections on 'Your training this week', off-the-job training, further education, teambuilding activities, 'Your future' and overall impressions.

The equivalent survey questionnaires for use in Wales are linked in exactly the same way with the new Estyn quality framework due to come to force in 2004.

The relationship between an individual question and the relevant criteria in the Common Inspection or Estyn Framework is established by means of a points system. The highest number of points is assigned to the most positive of the answer options and the lowest number for the least positive. In a simple YES/NO question, the yes option would attract six points and the no option, nil points. In a simple graded answer sequence (e.g. Always, Usually, Sometimes, Not at all), the respective options would be assigned six, four, two and nil points.

Where the answer options are not sequential (e.g. in the question *How often do you have a formal review to discuss your progress?* with the answer options At least every 12 weeks, More often than every 12 weeks, Less often than every 12 weeks, Not at all), the points assigned will follow a different pattern (in this case six, six, three and nil points).

Since a comprehensive summary of the results from both surveys is included above, no separate analysis of the inspection framework reports has been prepared for this initial report.

## **6.5 Benchmarking reports**

One other important aspect of the results and their analysis forms an integral part of the benchmarking facility, which was added during the pilot project and became available to the project partners from August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Benchmarking reports can be selected by a provider in either summary form, or as inspection framework reports. Providers can use the benchmarking facility to compare their results with the entire population of trainees who have completed that particular survey questionnaire, or with selected groups of providers, such as those from a specified region. For both summary and inspection framework formats, in addition to the relevant results for that particular provider, the report shows the mean result for all providers in the category selected for benchmarking, together with the lowest and highest results for all providers in that category.

This opportunity for a provider to identify the range of results for a particular aspect of the survey, and to compare trainees' rating of their performance against that of trainees at all other providers in the selected category, has proved an extremely valuable feature of the system for those project partners that have used it.

## **7 Trainees' views of the pilot system**

If a feedback system is to have credibility amongst those for whom it is designed, it is vitally important to make sure that, as well as satisfying the requirements of employers and training providers, it also meets the needs of trainees. Any future national surveys must allow trainees to comment on the process itself as an integral component of the system. However, for the purposes of the pilot, trainees were consulted directly in order to encourage a wide range of feedback.

In all, meetings were held with seven separate groups of trainees, representing all three employer organisations and four of the participating GTAs. The average size of each group was 7-8 and the discussions typically lasted for 35-45 minutes. No training staff were present and the meetings were structured to gather a consistent range of views on the content of the surveys and other aspects of the pilot process. Where appropriate, both First Year and Post First Year trainees were consulted, with copies of the relevant questionnaires being available for reference purposes, if required.

### **7.1 The content of the survey questionnaires**

All of the trainees, whether employer-based or on Group Training schemes, said that they were generally happy with the content of the surveys, found the multiple-choice format easy to use and felt that the questionnaires had enabled them to say everything they wanted.

Most believed that the questions were directly relevant to the programme they were following and that few, if any, were difficult to answer. However, a small number of trainees commented that they thought a few of the questions were a little long-winded.

Three specific issues were raised by some of the trainees. The first concerned those questions which had asked for just one option to be selected from a list of possible answers. Examples cited from the First Year questionnaire were 4.7 *Which of the following influenced you MOST in deciding to apply for your apprenticeship?*, which has eleven options, and 4.9 *What was the BIGGEST attraction for you in choosing your engineering apprenticeship?*, which has six options. It was suggested that being able to choose more than one option was preferable, possibly using some form of rank-ordering.

The second issue concerned the relevance of specific questions, given the stage they had reached in their training programme. It was suggested, for example, that Section 17 in the Post First Year questionnaire, which asks about preferences for studying further qualifications after having completed their apprenticeship, was quite difficult to answer for a trainee in their second year.

Some trainees thought it would be better to have several different Post First Year questionnaires, possibly with a common entry point but with navigation to the most appropriate combinations of questions following an initial item asking for current year of training. The military trainees felt that this approach might be particularly appropriate for service apprentices, allowing the surveys to take account of the differences in training process and terminology compared with civilian training schemes.

The third issue concerned trainees' views on the relative difficulty of certain types of questions. Some said that they found it easier to answer questions which called for them to express an opinion than those that asked for the recall of information, although it was acknowledged that this could depend on the length of time that had elapsed between the relevant event and being asked to complete the survey.

Other trainees reported finding it difficult to generalise when answering questions such as Post First Year question *14.4 Do you feel you would get the help you needed if you had any personal difficulties?* This, they suggested, could very well vary from one placement area to another. Some trainees also said that they found Post First Year question 1.4, which asks them to select, from a list, for which engineering sector they are currently being trained, difficult to answer.

Finally, although all the trainees liked having the opportunity to enter their own comments, in their own words, using the boxes at the end of each questionnaire, opinions differed as to the best approach to such items. Several trainees suggested the addition of a final comments box, without any specific question, in which they could simply add anything that had not been covered in the survey itself. Others suggested that, by the time one had reached the end of the questionnaire, fatigue had set in and there was little motivation left to think about, or respond to, an invitation to enter personal comments. The frivolous entries of many trainees would seem to bear this out. The suggested alternative, at least for questions such as *What is the best thing about your training so far* and *Has there been anything missing from your training so far that should be included for future apprentices?*, which appear in both pilot surveys, was that these should appear at the beginning of the questionnaires, rather than at the very end.

Other trainees suggested having a comments box, again without a specific question, at the end of each section or group of questions so that one could add anything that might be relevant to that particular subject, although this was certainly not advocated by all of the groups consulted.

## **7.2 The design of the feedback system**

Whilst many trainees had no criticisms of the system itself, some groups, both from employer-based and Group Training schemes, felt that more attention should be paid to the design of the website for any future national trainee feedback system. Suggestions were made for improving its appearance, including better use of colour, introducing different styles and layouts for each section of the questionnaire to help maintain interest and generally 'jazzing-up' the site for what is, after all, a predominantly young user group.

Many trainees said that they would have liked to have automatic scrolling of the questions, rather than having to use the Page Down button or the scroll bar, and recommended the introduction of some degree of navigation, allowing questions to be skipped, where appropriate. However, it was felt by some that this could obscure the length of the survey. Whilst some appreciated being able, if they wished, to print off their completed questionnaire, others could see little point in doing so. Many commented on the advantages of completing the survey online, where answers could be changed without it being obvious that they had done so.

Suggested improvements included having an introduction at the start of the questionnaire itself, with details such as how many sections there were and whether there would be boxes for comments. In view of the length of the questionnaires, some trainees felt that there should be an estimate of the likely completion time, although one remarked, "If I'd known how long it was going to take, I wouldn't have started it!" Other suggestions included displaying 'page x of y' at the start of each section.

Trainees who had completed the survey in the form of a paper questionnaire observed that it certainly needed an introduction, since those responding in this way would not have seen any of the preceding information on the website, and drew attention to the very small size of the comments boxes in the printed form of the questionnaire.

Finally, there were suggestions from some employer-based trainees that the website should be more interactive, with “things to read as well as questions to answer, such as information from the previous year’s surveys.” Also, from the same group, came the idea that training providers should be encouraged to customise questionnaires by being able to add their own information on the actions they had taken to address problems and improve training since the last survey.

### **7.3 Feedback to trainees following the pilot**

One of the principles agreed at an early stage of the development of the pilot project was that every effort should be made to encourage feedback to trainees, following the closure of the relevant surveys. A standard model for doing so was incorporated as an integral feature of the pilot system. Each of the groups was therefore asked whether they had received any feedback on the results of their particular survey and in which of the results they would be most interested.

The meetings with trainees took place between late-May and early-August and, when questioned, very few had yet been given any feedback at all, although most expected to receive some in due course and many had certainly been promised feedback. One group of employer-based trainees, all of whom have access to e-mail at work, had received a thank-you message from their Training Manager, together with details of the respective response rates for each Company site and business unit.

Opinions as to what they considered would be the most interesting results differed, although many were most keen to know what others in their organisation had said was wrong with the training at present (e.g. First Year question 16.2 *Is there one change that could be made to improve your training?*). Other areas that were mentioned specifically included trainees’ views on Key Skills, failures to recognise prior achievement, whether apprentices found their training easy or difficult and comments on college courses and the NVQ. Overall, it tended to be the responses to the open questions that generated the greatest interest, although one employer-based group said they did not want to see lists of comments at all.

However, at least two groups expressed more interest in seeing a comparison between their organisation and other training providers, and in knowing what actions was going to be taken as a result of the surveys, than in the responses themselves.

### **7.4 Other views**

For many of the trainees who were consulted, this was their first experience of a formal and comprehensive feedback process. Typically, according to the trainees’ own estimates, it had taken 15-20 minutes to complete the First Year survey online and between 20 and 30 minutes for the Post First Year questionnaire. Those who had done so online believed the survey looked much longer in paper form, although some complained that the system had seemed rather slow at times and a few claimed that it had crashed at the final save prompt.

Some insisted that they were not told that they could print off their completed questionnaire, had not noticed the reference to going so on the website itself and claimed that they did not see the final page, with its various follow-up options, at all. All who had completed the survey online said that they would prefer doing so by this means and one group observed that positive comments from future trainees about the system, its design and features etc., would help encourage others to complete a feedback questionnaire.

As another group commented, “the most important thing about the system is what difference it is going to make for us.”

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November 2003

## ANNEX 1      Benchmarking Protocol

### Introduction

The purpose of this protocol is to define the rules to be incorporated within SEMTA's National Trainee Feedback System to protect the anonymity of individual employers, colleges and other training providers when using the system's benchmarking facility to produce reports comparing their survey results with those of other centres.

### Data Selection

1. No benchmark report will be available if fewer than 7 centres would appear.<sup>6</sup>
2. Centres will only be able to apply a single filter to benchmark data (e.g. trainee gender or ethnic origin but not both simultaneously). This will prevent centres drilling down in a number of reports to try to identify other centres/ trainee groups. As well as using a survey question to filter, centres will also be able to filter by the centre demographic data held on the system.<sup>7</sup>
3. Certain questions will not be available for filtering at all, as they could identify trainee groups/ centres.<sup>8</sup>

### Data Output

4. The way in which the benchmark data is displayed will prevent centres identifying others. For example, where Centre X has chosen a benchmarking report of overall First Year Trainee satisfaction for all centres in the South East, this will also include scores from, say, Centres A, B, C, D, E, F & G as well as X. The only data that Centre X will be able to view is their own score, and the mean score of data from centres A to G and X, together with the lowest score and the highest across all benchmarked centres.
5. In cases where the centre is benchmarking itself against centres in, for example, another region, this will also be possible but the benchmarking centre's scores would NOT then be included in the mean. For example, Centre X is in the South East and wants to benchmark its overall Trainee Satisfaction score with all centres in the North West. This would be made clear on the report.
6. The data would be presented as 4 bars on a chart:  
Bar 1 = centre X score  
Bar 2 – mean score from all benchmarked centres (i.e. A-G and X, where applicable)  
Bar 3 = highest centre score  
Bar 4 = lowest centre score
7. The benchmark report will confirm how many centres' data has been included, as this adds value to the report for the benchmarking centre.<sup>9</sup>
8. The report will also show the total number of respondents included in the benchmark report, but these will not be identified for any individual centre.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> During the pilot phase, while a relatively small number of centres are participating, several types of benchmark report will be unavailable to all users: e.g. any report that looks at centres in one region only.

<sup>7</sup> This is currently small and includes information such as region and provider type.

<sup>8</sup> An example of this would be question 1.2 and 1.3 in the Post First Year Questionnaire, which identify the programme type by NVQ3 title.

<sup>9</sup> If the benchmarking centre has achieved a score considerably higher than the mean and has been benchmarked against 150 others, then the centre knows its trainees have a more positive perception about its services than those at many other centres.

<sup>10</sup> Knowing the number of respondents is seen as adding value to the report in the same way as knowing the number of centres.

9. Only those outputs to which points are allocated within the system to produce a quantifiable result will be available on benchmark reports. Centres will not be able to run a report on any of the demographic questions alone. No answer options will ever be visible on a benchmark report, only the relevant score for the question answered.<sup>11</sup>
10. Benchmark reports will only be available at certain predetermined “levels”. These are: Overall Questionnaire, covering all scored questions; each “scoring” section; each “scoring” question; each Aspect of Provision within an Inspection Framework; each relevant indicator within an Inspection Framework.

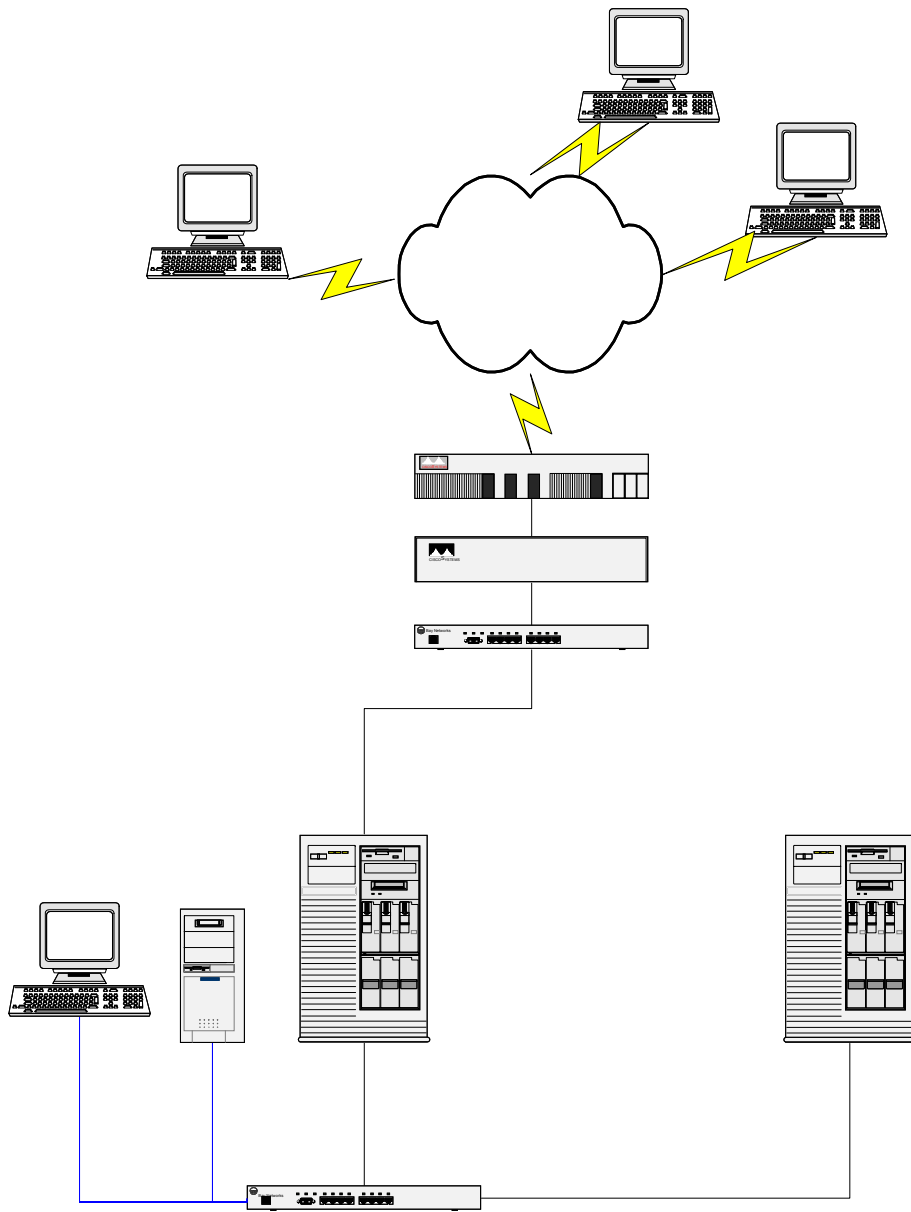
### **Other Constraints**

11. For any benchmark report, a timeframe will need to be specified, such as the year of the survey, to ensure that centres are comparing like with like.

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<sup>11</sup> An example of a “scoring” question would be: “In general, has your training so far been better, the same or worse than you expected?” Answer options are: Much better; Slightly better; About the same; Slightly worse and Much worse.

Annex 2 Outline of system components



**Annex 3      Survey questionnaire for First Year Apprentices  
In England**

## First Year Apprentices Questionnaire

### 1 About you

#### 1.1 Which apprenticeship programme are you following?

- Advanced Modern Apprenticeship
- Foundation Modern Apprenticeship

#### 1.2 What is your training status?

- Employed
- Non-employed

#### 1.3 Do you think of yourself as

- a Craft Apprentice?
- a Technician Apprentice?

#### 1.4 How far through your first year are you?

- Less than half way through
- More than half way through

#### 1.5 Some apprentices are recruited from the start by an employer, some by an FE college and others by a training organisation. Which ONE applies to you?

- I was recruited by my employer and they are organising my training
- I was recruited by an FE college and they are organising my training
- I was recruited by a training organisation (such as a Group Training Association) and they are organising my training

#### 1.6 In which of the following regions is your first-year training taking place? (Tick ONE box only)

- South East Region (Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Surrey, East/West Sussex, Kent)
- London Region
- Eastern Region (Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex)
- South West Region (Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Dorset, Avon, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire)
- West Midlands Region (Shropshire, Staffordshire, Black Country, Birmingham, Solihull, Hereford and Worcester, Coventry and Warwickshire)
- East Midlands Region (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire/Rutland, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire)
- North West Region (Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Cheshire)
- North East Region (Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham, Tees Valley)
- Yorkshire and Humberside Region
- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern Ireland

**1.7 How old are you now?**

- |                             |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 21  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 22 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 | <input type="checkbox"/> 24+ |

**1.8 Are you male or female?**

- Male  
 Female

**1.9 What is your ethnic origin?**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White British-English         | <input type="checkbox"/> White British-Scottish      | <input type="checkbox"/> White British-Welsh         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Irish                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other White Background      | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian Background      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black African                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean             | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Black Background      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White Asian           | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White & Black African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White & Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White & Black British | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not known/prefer not to say   |  |  |

**1.10 Do you consider yourself to have a disability or health problem that affects your day-to-day activities?**

- Yes  
 No

**2 How many GCSEs had you passed BEFORE starting your training?**

- |                |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|                | <b>None</b>              | <b>1</b>                 | <b>2</b>                 | <b>3</b>                 | <b>4</b>                 | <b>5</b>                 | <b>6</b>                 | <b>7</b>                 | <b>8</b>                 | <b>9</b>                 | <b>10+</b>               |
| At grades A*-C | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Below Grade C  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**3 Which of the following qualifications had you already completed BEFORE starting your training? (Please tick ALL that apply.)**

- |  | <b>Yes</b>               | <b>No</b>                |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Part One GNVQ                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Foundation/Intermediate GNVQ             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| NVQ Level 1                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| NVQ Level 2                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| BTEC First Certificate/Diploma           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| GCE A Level                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Advanced GNVQ/AVCE                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| NVQ Level 3                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| BTEC National Certificate/Diploma        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| NVQ Level 4                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| BTEC Higher National Certificate/Diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Degree                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**4 Before you began your training**

**4.1 When you were at school, what did you MOST want to do?**

- Leave school at 16 to start work or training
- Stay on at school or college until 18 before starting work or training
- Go on to university before starting work or training

**4.2 When you were at school, what did your teachers and career advisers MOST STRONGLY advise you to do?**

- Stay on at school or college to study A-levels
- Stay on at school or college to study vocational qualifications
- Apply for an apprenticeship
- Some other option

**4.3 When you were at school, what did your parents MOST STRONGLY advise you to do?**

- Stay on at school or college to study A-levels
- Stay on at school or college to study vocational qualifications
- Apply for an apprenticeship
- Some other option

**4.4 Did the careers advice you had at school seem to you to be**

- Completely impartial, concerned only with what would be best for me?
- Influenced more by what my school wanted, rather than what would be best for me?

**4.5 When you were at school, how much information about engineering apprenticeships were you given by teachers and careers advisers?**

- A great deal
- Not very much
- None at all

**4.6 How did you FIRST find out about your apprenticeship programme? (Tick ONE box only)**

- From friends
- From parents or family
- From a teacher at school or college
- From a careers adviser
- From my Connexions personal adviser
- From someone who works for my employer or training provider
- From a careers magazine or other advertisement
- From an employer's careers brochure
- From a careers conference or similar event (e.g. College Open Evening)
- From the internet
- None of these (please give details in the box below)

**4.7 Which of the following influenced you MOST in deciding to apply for your apprenticeship? (Tick ONE box only)**

- Friends
- Parents or family
- A teacher at school or college
- A careers adviser
- My Connexions personal adviser
- Someone who works for my employer or training provider
- A careers magazine or other advertisement
- An employer's careers brochure
- A careers conference or similar event (e.g. College Open Evening)
- The internet
- None of these (please give details in the box below)

**4.8 At the time when you applied for your apprenticeship, were you:**

- At school?
- At 6th form college?
- At FE college?
- On a previous Modern Apprenticeship programme?
- On a pre-apprenticeship training programme?
- At university?
- At work?
- Unemployed?
- Other including a combination of the above (please give details in the box below)?

**4.9 What was the BIGGEST attraction for you in choosing your engineering apprenticeship? (Tick ONE box only)**

- The pay I was offered
- The reputation of my employer, FE college or training organisation
- Being trained for a particular type of job
- The opportunity to gain relevant vocational qualifications
- Getting away from school
- Another reason

**4.10 How satisfied were you with the information you were given when you applied for your apprenticeship?**

- Very satisfied
- Quite satisfied
- Not at all satisfied
- Can't remember

**5 Selection process**

**Which of the following were used during your selection for the apprenticeship?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Application form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selection tests (pencil and paper)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practical tests (of manual skills)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group exercises (with other applicants)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**6 Your induction**

**6.1 Did your induction programme provide the information you needed at the start of your apprenticeship?**

- Gave me all the information I needed
- Gave me most of the information I needed
- Gave me some of the information I needed
- Gave me none of the information I needed
- Did not attend any induction sessions

**6.2 How much did the induction programme help in settling into your apprenticeship?**

- A great deal
- Quite a lot
- Not very much
- Not at all

**7 Induction information**

**During your induction, were you either told about, or given information on, each of the following:**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
A statement of your rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A statement of your responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Health and Safety policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Equal Opportunities policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The content of your apprenticeship programme and what you would be doing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The timetable for your apprenticeship programme and details of attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grievance procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disciplinary procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appeals procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 8 Initial assessment

Before starting an apprenticeship, an employer, college or training organisation will often assess trainees' individual needs so that, if necessary, they can be given additional help. This may include English, Maths and practical tests, or Basic and Key Skills.

### 8.1 Did you have an initial assessment (such as English, Maths or practical tests)?

- Yes
- No

### 8.2 Did the initial assessment identify the need for any additional support to help you during your apprenticeship?

- Yes
- No
- I didn't have an initial assessment

### 8.3 If the need for additional support was identified, are you getting that support?

- Yes
- No
- I didn't have an initial assessment

### 8.4 Overall, did you feel that your previous achievements, and what you already knew and were able to do, were taken into account in planning your first year's training?

- Fully taken into account
- Mostly taken into account
- Hardly taken into account
- Not taken into account at all

## 9 Your training programme

### 9.1 Have you discussed and agreed a personal development plan or individual training plan that lists everything you are aiming to achieve during your apprenticeship?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

### 9.2 Do you know which NVQ you will be taking during your apprenticeship?

- Yes
- No

**9.3 Do you understand what you have to do to get your NVQ?**

- Understand completely
- Understand most of it
- Understand some of it
- Don't understand at all

**9.4 Do you know which further education qualifications you will be taking?**

- Yes
- No

**9.5 Do you understand what you have to do to get your further education qualifications?**

- Understand completely
- Understand most of it
- Understand some of it
- Don't understand at all

**9.6 Do you know which Key Skills you will be taking?**

- Yes
- No

**9.7 Do you understand what you have to do to get your Key Skills?**

- Understand completely
- Understand most of it
- Understand some of it
- Don't understand at all

**9.8 Have you been set target dates for achieving key stages of your apprenticeship?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**9.9 Do you know when you are expected to complete your apprenticeship?**

- Yes
- No

**10 Initial Engineering (workshop) Training**

**10.1 Where are you undertaking (or did you undertake) your First Year Initial Engineering Training?**

- At an FE college
- In my employer's training workshops
- In my training organisation's training workshops

**10.2 To what extent do (or did) the staff enable you to make the most of your training?**

- Always
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Hardly ever

**10.3 How well does (or did) the equipment provided meet the needs of your training?**

- Very well
- Fairly well
- Not very well
- Not well at all

**10.4 How well do (or did) the facilities provided meet your needs?**

- Very well
- Fairly well
- Not very well
- Not well at all

**10.5 To what extent is (or was) the importance of health and safety procedures stressed throughout your workshop training?**

- Always
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Hardly ever

**10.6 Do (or did) you have access to up-to-date computers and information and communications technology within your training?**

- Always
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Not at all

**10.7 Is (or was) there somewhere with enough books and computers for you to use, so that you can (or could) continue to work on your own when you wish(ed)?**

- Yes
- Yes, but I choose (or chose) not to use them
- No
- I don't (or didn't) do any extra learning by myself

**11 Personal support and development**

**11.1 How often do you have a formal review to discuss your progress, identify any particular difficulties and review/revise what you are aiming to achieve?**

- At least every 12 weeks
- More often than every 12 weeks
- Less often than every 12 weeks
- Not at all

**11.2 In general, do you feel your progress reviews are useful and effective?**

- Very useful
- Fairly useful
- Not very useful
- Not useful at all
- I don't have progress reviews

**11.3 Is action taken, when necessary, on issues raised during your progress reviews?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

**11.4 Are you encouraged to discuss any WORK or TRAINING difficulties you are having?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

**11.5 Are you encouraged to discuss any PERSONAL difficulties you are having that could affect your training?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

**11.6 Do you know who to go to for advice/support on personal issues?**

- Yes
- No

**11.7 Do you feel you would get the help you needed if you had any personal difficulties?**

- Definitely
- Probably
- Possibly
- No, I don't

**11.8 Even when your training feels hard or difficult, do you still find it interesting?**

- Yes
- No
- My training is too easy for me

## **12 Teambuilding activities**

Some employers, colleges and training organisations include teambuilding or 'Outward Bound'-type events as part of their apprentice training programme, during which groups of trainees learn how to work together and solve problems. These may be run at a special centre, away from the workplace or training centre, and may last up to a week and be residential.

### **12.1 Has your training programme so far included any teambuilding activity of the type described above?**

- Yes
- No (Please move to section 13)

### **12.2 If so, did it take place away from the workplace/training centre?**

- Yes
- No

### **12.3 Was it four days' or more duration?**

- Yes
- No

### **12.4 Was it run by your own training staff?**

- Yes
- No

### **12.5 Was it run by another organisation specialising in teambuilding events?**

- Yes
- No

### **12.6 How useful was this in developing your teamworking and problem solving skills?**

- Very useful
- Fairly useful
- Not very useful
- Not useful at all

## **13 Equal opportunities**

From what you have seen so far, which of the following apply to your apprenticeship scheme?

### **13.1 Everyone seems to be treated fairly and is given the help they need**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

### **13.2 There are no signs of discrimination, harassment or bullying**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**13.3 Male and female trainees are offered the same opportunities**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**13.4 Have you always been treated fairly in your training (i.e. you have not come across any discrimination because of your gender, race, disability, etc.)?**

- Yes
- No

**13.5 If you have found discrimination, have your complaints been dealt with effectively?**

- Yes
- No
- I haven't found any discrimination
- Although I have experienced discrimination, I haven't complained about it

**14 Progression opportunities**

**14.1 Some apprentices are recruited and trained for a particular job. Do YOU know what job you will be doing at the end of your apprenticeship?**

- I know exactly what job I will be doing when I finish
- I have some idea what job I will be doing when I finish
- I have no idea at all what job I will be doing when I finish

**14.2 Do you think that more young people would choose an engineering apprenticeship at 16 if, like A-levels, it was accepted for entry to university?**

- Definitely
- Probably
- Possibly
- No

**15 Your overall impressions**

**15.1 In general, has your training so far been better, the same or worse than you expected?**

- Much better
- Slightly better
- About the same
- Slightly worse
- Much worse

**15.2 How satisfied are you with your training so far?**

- Completely satisfied
- Mostly satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Not very satisfied
- Not satisfied at all

**15.3 Would you recommend an engineering apprenticeship to other young people?**

- Yes
- No

**15.4 Are you happy with the title 'Modern Apprentice' or do you think engineering apprenticeships would be respected more (by teachers and universities for example) if they were called something else?**

- Leave the name as it is
- Change it to something else (if you can think of an alternative title, please enter it in the box below)

**16 Your final views**

**16.1 What is the best thing about your training so far?**

**16.2 Is there any one change that could have been made to improve your training?**

**16.3 Has there been anything missing from your training so far that should be included for future apprentices?**

**Annex 4      Survey questionnaire for Post First Year  
Apprentices in England**

## Post First Year Apprentices Questionnaire

### 1 You and your training programme

#### 1.1 Which apprenticeship programme are you following?

- Advanced Modern Apprenticeship
- Foundation Modern Apprenticeship

#### 1.2 If you are an Advanced Modern Apprentice, which programme are you following?

- Engineered Systems Maintenance
- Engineering Production
- Electrical and Electronics Servicing
- Engineering Maintenance
- Technical Services
- Engineering Installation and Commissioning
- Engineering Design
- Engineering Manufacture (NVQ4)
- Instrument Servicing
- Aircraft Engineering Maintenance

#### 1.3 If you are a Foundation Modern Apprentice, which programme are you following?

- Engineering Production
- Electrical and Electronics Servicing
- Engineering Maintenance
- Technical Services
- Engineering Installation and Commissioning
- Instrument Servicing
- Aircraft Engineering Maintenance
- Performing Engineering Operations
- Business Improvement Techniques

#### 1.4 There are many different types of engineering. For which ONE of the following are you currently being trained?

- Aerospace
- Automotive
- Basic Metals/Metal Products
- Electrical
- Electronics
- Marine (ship/boatbuilding and repair)
- Maintenance
- Mechanical
- Other (please give details in the box below)

#### 1.5 What is your training status?

- Employed
- Non-employed

#### 1.6 Do you think of yourself as

- a Craft Apprentice?
- a Technician Apprentice?

**1.7 Some apprentices are recruited from the start by an employer, some by an FE college and others by a training organisation. Which ONE applies to you?**

- I was recruited by my employer and they are organising my training
- I was recruited by an FE college and they are organising my training
- I was recruited by a training organisation (such as a Group Training Association) and they are organising my training

**1.8 Is your employer?**

- A small company, with less than 100 employees
- A medium-sized company, with up to 250 employees
- A larger company, with up to 500 employees
- A company (or one of the Armed Forces), with more than 500 employees

**1.9 In which year of your training are you ?**

- My second year
- My third year
- My fourth year
- My fifth year (or beyond)

**1.10 Is this the final year of your training?**

- Yes
- No

**1.11 In which of the following regions is your first-year training taking place? (Tick ONE box only.)**

- South East Region (Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Surrey, East/West Sussex, Kent)
- London Region
- Eastern Region (Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex)
- South West Region (Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Dorset, Avon, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire)
- West Midlands Region (Shropshire, Staffordshire, Black Country, Birmingham, Solihull, Hereford and Worcester, Coventry and Warwickshire)
- East Midlands Region (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire/Rutland, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire)
- North West Region (Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Cheshire)
- North East Region (Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham, Tees Valley)
- Yorkshire and Humberside Region
- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern Ireland

**2 About you**

**2.1 How old are you now?**

- |                             |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 21  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 22 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 | <input type="checkbox"/> 24+ |

**2.2 Are you male or female?**

- Male
- Female

**2.3 What is your ethnic origin?**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White British-English | <input type="checkbox"/> White British-Scottish | <input type="checkbox"/> White British-Welsh    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Irish           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other White Background | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian                | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian Background |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black African         | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Black Background |

- Chinese
   
  Mixed White Asian
   
  Mixed White & Black African  
 Mixed White & Black Caribbean
   
  Mixed White & Black British
   
  Any other  
 Not known/prefer not to say

**2.4 Do you consider yourself to have a disability or health problem that affects your day-to-day activities?**

- Yes  
 No

**3 How many GCSEs had you passed BEFORE starting your training?**

	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
At grades A*-C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Below Grade C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4 Which of the following qualifications had you already completed BEFORE starting your training? (Please tick ALL that apply.)**

	Yes	No
Part One GNVQ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation/Intermediate GNVQ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NVQ Level 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NVQ Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BTEC First Certificate/Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GCE A Level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced GNVQ/AVCE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NVQ Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BTEC National Certificate/Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NVQ Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BTEC Higher National Certificate/Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**5 Your NVQ training programme**

**5.1 Are clear objectives discussed and agreed with you for EACH of your on-the-job training placements?**

- Always  
 Usually  
 Sometimes  
 Never

**5.2 Do you understand what you have to do to complete your NVQ?**

- Completely  
 Mostly  
 Not much  
 Not at all  
 I've already completed my NVQ (if so, please go to section 6)

**5.3 If you are still working towards your NVQ, are you on target to complete it by the date on your personal development plan or individual training plan?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't have any target dates for completion
- I don't have a personal development plan or an individual training plan

**5.4 Have you met all of your NVQ targets so far?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't have any NVQ targets

## **6 Your Key Skills training programme**

**6.1 Do you understand what you have to do for your Key Skills?**

- Completely
- Mostly
- Not much
- Not at all
- I've already completed my Key Skills

**6.2 Are you on target to complete your Key Skills by your agreed target date?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't have any target dates for completion
- I've already completed my Key Skills

**6.3 Have you met all of your Key Skills targets so far?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't have any Key Skills targets
- I've already completed my Key Skills

**6.4 To complete your Modern Apprenticeship, you have to take a number of Key Skills units. How useful and important do you think these are for your future?**

- Very useful and important
- Of some use and importance
- Not very much use or importance
- Of no use or importance at all
- I don't know enough about Key Skills to answer

## **7 Your further education programme**

**7.1 Do you understand what you have to do for the further education qualifications you are working towards?**

- Completely
- Mostly
- Not much
- Not at all
- I've already completed my FE qualifications

**7.2 How well has your FE course fitted in with the rest of your training programme?**

- Very well
- Fairly well
- Not very well
- Not at all well

**7.3 Are you on target to complete your further education qualifications by your agreed target date?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't have any target dates for completion
- I've already completed my FE qualifications

**7.4 Have you met all of your further education qualifications' targets so far?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't have any FE qualifications' targets
- I've already completed my FE qualifications

**8 Your training this week**

**8.1 Do you feel that you have learned anything new this week?**

- Yes
- No

**8.2 Which ONE word best describes the range of tasks you have undertaken this week?**

- Varied
- Narrow
- Complex
- Repetitive
- Boring
- Difficult
- Easy

**8.3 Do you feel that you could make faster progress towards completing your qualifications and your training programme?**

- Yes
- No

**9 On-the-job training**

This section is all about what you are learning when you are at work.

**9.1 Do your workplace supervisors help you to learn as much as you can when you are at work?**

- Always
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Hardly ever

**9.2 How would you describe the overall quality of the on-the-job training you receive at work?**

- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very poor

**9.3 How would you describe the equipment and facilities that are provided for on-the-job training at work?**

- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very poor

**9.4 Is the importance of Health and Safety stressed wherever you go at work?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Hardly ever

**9.5 Do you have access to up-to-date computers and other information and communications technology as part of your on-the-job training at work?**

- Always
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Not at all

**10 Off-the-job training**

This section is all about any off-the-job training you have, either provided by your employer or by your training organisation. It will probably be linked to your NVQ or Key Skills, but it does NOT include your further education or college course.

**10.1 Have you had any formal off-the-job training since you finished your Initial Engineering Training in practical workshop skills?**

- Yes
- No (if NO, go straight to SECTION 11)

**10.2 During formal off-the-job training, do your instructors help you to learn as much as you can?**

- Always
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Hardly ever

**10.3 How would you describe the overall quality of your off-the-job training ?**

- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very poor

**10.4 How would you describe the equipment and facilities that are provided for your off-the-job training?**

- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very poor

**10.5 Is the importance of Health and Safety stressed during your off-the-job training?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Hardly ever

**10.6 Do you have access to up-to-date computers and other information and communications technology as part of your off-the-job training?**

- Always
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Not at all

**10.7 During your off-the-job training, is there somewhere with enough books and computers for you to use, so that you can continue to work on your own when you wish?**

- Yes
- Yes, but I choose not to use them
- No
- I don't do any extra learning by myself

## **11 Further Education**

This section is all about the teaching of your further education course. It may take place at a college, at your training organisation or even with your employer.

**11.1 Who provides your further education course?**

- My college
- My training organisation
- My employer
- None of these. I have completed the further education course for my apprenticeship. (If so, please answer the following questions for the course you have completed.)

**11.2 During your further education course, do (or did) your tutors help you to learn as much as you can (or could)?**

- Always
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Hardly ever

**11.3 How would you describe the overall quality of your further education course?**

- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very poor

**11.4 How would you describe the equipment and facilities that are (or were) provided for your further education course?**

- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very poor

**11.5 Is (or was) the importance of Health and Safety stressed during your further education course?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Hardly ever

**11.6 Do (or did) you have access to up-to-date computers and other information and communications technology as part of your further education course?**

- Always
- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Not at all

**11.7 Do (or did) your tutors discuss and agree how you can (or could) improve your performance?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

**11.8 Do you know how much of your further education course you have completed and what you still have to do?**

- Yes
- No
- I've already completed my further education course

**11.9 Do (or did) you know how to appeal if you feel (or felt) one of your further education course assessments is (or was) not fair?**

- Yes
- No

**11.10 During your further education course, is (or was) there somewhere with enough books and computers for you to use, so that you can (or could) continue to work on your own when you wish(ed)?**

- Yes
- Yes, but I choose (or chose) not to use them
- No
- I don't (or didn't) do any extra learning by myself

## **12 Your NVQ assessments**

**12.1 After you have been assessed for your NVQ, does the assessor give you feedback on how you are doing?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

**12.2 Do you discuss and agree how you can improve your performance?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

**12.3 Do you know how much of your NVQ you have completed (how many units, etc.) and what you still have to do?**

- Yes
- No
- I've already completed my NVQ

**12.4 Do you know how to appeal if you feel an NVQ assessment is not fair?**

- Yes
- No

### **13 Progress reviews**

**13.1 How often do you have a formal review to discuss your progress, identify any problems and review/revise what you are aiming to achieve?**

- At least every 12 weeks
- More often than every 12 weeks
- Less often than every 12 weeks
- Not at all

**13.2 In general, do you feel your progress reviews are useful and effective?**

- Very useful
- Fairly useful
- Not very useful
- Not useful at all
- I don't have progress reviews

**13.3 Is action taken, when necessary, on issues raised during your progress reviews?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Not at all

**13.4 During each progress review, is your personal development plan or individual training plan updated to include any NVQ, Key Skills and further education course assessments?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never
- I don't know

### **14 Personal support and development**

**14.1 Are you encouraged to discuss any WORK or TRAINING difficulties you are having?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

**14.2 Are you encouraged to discuss any PERSONAL difficulties you are having that could affect your training?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

**14.3 Do you know who to go to for advice/support on personal issues?**

- Yes
- No

**14.4 Do you feel you would get the help you needed if you had any personal difficulties?**

- Definitely
- Probably
- Possibly
- No, I don't

**14.5 Do you enjoy a good relationship with your workplace supervisors?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

**14.6 Do you enjoy a good relationship with training staff?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

**14.7 Do you enjoy a good relationship with your further education course tutors?**

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Never

**15 Teambuilding activities**

Some employers, colleges and training organisations include teambuilding or 'Outward Bound'-type events as part of their apprentice training programme, during which groups of trainees learn how to work together and solve problems. These may be run at a special centre, away from the workplace or training centre, and may last up to a week and be residential.

**15.1 Has your training programme so far included any teambuilding activity of the type described above?**

- Yes
- No (please move to section 16)

**15.2 If so, did it take place away from the workplace/training centre?**

- Yes
- No

**15.3 Was it four days' or more duration?**

- Yes
- No

**15.4 Was it run by your own training staff?**

- Yes
- No

**15.5 Was it run by another organisation specialising in teambuilding events?**

- Yes
- No

**15.6 How useful was this in developing your teamworking and problem solving skills?**

- Very useful
- Fairly useful
- Not very useful
- Not useful at all

## 16 Your future

### 16.1 At present, how well do you think your training is preparing you for your future work?

- Very well
- Fairly well
- Not very well
- Not at all well
- I can't say

### 16.2 Do you think that you will need additional practical training when you finish your apprenticeship in order to meet the requirements of your first job?

- Definitely, yes
- Possibly
- Probably not
- Definitely not
- I don't know

### 16.3 Many engineering apprentices take further qualifications once they finish their apprenticeship and some go on to university. How important is it for you to have the opportunity to get further qualifications, such as a degree?

- Very important
- Quite important
- Not very important
- Not important at all

### 16.4 If you took a further qualification after you finish your apprenticeship, would you prefer to study:

- On a part-time course, whilst continuing at work?
- On a full-time course?
- Don't know at present?

### 16.5 If you were able to choose, would you prefer to study for a higher qualification (such as a Degree or HNC/D):

- As part of your apprenticeship?
- Immediately after you have finished your apprenticeship?
- After you have worked for a few years?

### 16.6 How much advice and information have you been given, by training staff or your employer, on further education opportunities after you finish your apprenticeship?

- A great deal
- Some
- A little
- None at all

### 16.7 Do you think that more young people would choose an engineering apprenticeship at 16 if, like A-levels, it was accepted for entry to university?

- Definitely
- Probably
- Possibly
- No

### 16.8 With many engineering employers now involved in international operations, how confident are you that you could work in a country where English is NOT the main language when you finish your apprenticeship?

- Completely confident
- Fairly confident
- Not very confident
- Not confident at all

**16.9 Living and working abroad can be difficult if you don't understand the local customs and way of life. How important do you think it is for engineering apprentices to learn about life in other countries as part of their training for the future?**

- Essential
- Very important
- Fairly important
- Not important at all

**16.10 How important do you think it is for engineering apprentices to have the opportunity to learn a foreign language during their training if they want to do so?**

- Essential
- Very important
- Fairly important
- Not important at all

**17 Choice of further qualifications**

Engineering apprentices go on to study for many different types of qualification after they finish their training. Which of the following would you like to do?

	Yes	No	I don't know yet
Another NVQ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Higher National Certificate or Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A two-year Foundation Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A full 3-or 4-year Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**18 Equal opportunities**

From what you have seen so far, which of the following apply to YOUR apprenticeship scheme?

**18.1 Everyone seems to be treated fairly and given the help they need**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**18.2 There are no signs of discrimination, harassment or bullying**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**18.3 Male and female trainees are offered the same opportunities**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**18.4 Have YOU always been treated fairly whilst at work and not come across any discrimination because of your gender, race, disability, etc.?**

- Yes
- No

**18.5 If you have found discrimination in the workplace, have your complaints been dealt with effectively?**

- Yes
- No
- I haven't found any discrimination
- Although I have experienced discrimination, I haven't complained about it

**18.6 Have YOU always been treated fairly during your training or further education and not come across any discrimination because of your gender, race, disability, etc.?**

- Yes
- No

**18.7 If you have found discrimination during your training or further education, have your complaints been dealt with effectively?**

- Yes
- No
- I haven't found any discrimination
- Although I have experienced discrimination, I haven't complained about it

## **19 Your overall impressions**

**19.1 In general, has your training so far been better, the same or worse than you expected?**

- Much better
- Slightly better
- About the same
- Slightly worse
- Much worse

**19.2 To what extent have you used the skills you learned during your First Year Initial Engineering Training?**

- All the time
- Much of the time
- Some of the time
- Very seldom
- Not at all

**19.3 How satisfied are you with your training so far?**

- Completely satisfied
- Mostly satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Not very satisfied
- Not satisfied at all

**19.4 Are you enjoying your training at present?**

- Yes
- No

**19.5 Even when your training feels hard or difficult, do you still find it interesting?**

- Yes
- No
- My training is too easy for me

**19.6 Do you feel part of your employer's workforce?**

- Yes. I feel I am treated much the same as other employees and know as much about what is going on
- No. I feel I am treated quite differently to other employees and know little about what is going on

**19.7 When you are at work, do you think supervisors see you as:**

- a trainee, who is there mainly to learn?
- an employee, who is there mainly to work?
- a combination of the two?

**19.8 Overall, do you think your apprenticeship is designed to:**

- give me the skills and knowledge I need for one particular job?
- develop the much wider range of skills and knowledge I may need for a choice of future careers in engineering?
- both of these?

**19.9 Would you recommend an engineering apprenticeship to other young people?**

- Yes
- No

**19.10 Are you happy with the title 'Modern Apprentice' or do you think engineering apprenticeships would be respected more (by teachers and universities for example) if they were called something else?**

- Leave the name as it is
- Change it to something else (if you can think of an alternative title, please enter it in the box below)

**20 Your final views**

**20.1 What is the best thing about your training so far?**

**20.2 Has there been anything missing from your training so far that should be included for future apprentices?**

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